



Ernst & Young Tokyo office  
designed by van der Architects:

1. Diversified and alternative meeting spaces
2. Total flexibility in office arrangement - even the plants are on casters
3. Individual work space efficiency increased dramatically by using 120 degree desks,
4. The library
5. The office entry



### Economic Motivation

*The concept of the office can be seen as one of the most consistent threads in any culture, for systems of government and manufacture might change beyond recognition, but in any organization of human beings that extends beyond the smallest group, the word office, and the idea it represents, emerge as stable components of language. The Architects' Journal 1973.*

The American architect Louis Sullivan coined the well-known phrase: Form follows function. Sullivan's masterpiece, the Guaranty Building in Buffalo of 1895, can be seen as the formulation of an architectural vocabulary appropriate for a high-rise office building. In Sullivan's writings he acknowledged the technological inventions that paved the way for the office tower he created. In 1859 Elisha Otis installed the first passenger elevator in the Haughwout Building in New York. The passenger elevator made it possible to double the usable height of buildings. The development of the fireproof steel frame by Jenney in 1890 made it possible to double the height again. These inventions---to build using lightweight materials and to access the building in its full height---created the archetypal office as we know it today: an identical floor plan that is translated to great heights. (Currently the tallest building is the 101 Tower in Taipei, 508m.)

Sullivan's "Form follows function" slogan was a reaction against the Beaux Arts style that dominated architecture both in the U.S. as in Europe, at the turn of the 20th Century. In a time when architecture was going through its first phase of industrialization, Sullivan thought it appropriate to "refrain entirely from the use of ornament for a period of years, in order to concentrate acutely upon the production of buildings well formed..." Sullivan believed that by focusing on the "hard" elements of architecture, by eliminating the ornament, a new architectural style could be developed that would seek its beauty in a "pure" form, a form created solely by its function.

External ornamentation might have reappeared in some form or another in office buildings, the office interiors, however, still echo Sullivan's aphorism. Offices are designed to be as rational and as functional as possible.

### Personal Motivation

*"The dumbest mistake is viewing design as something you do at the end of the process to 'tidy up' the mess, as opposed to understanding that it's a 'day one' issue and part of everything." Tom Peters in @issue magazine.*

In 1954 a highly influential book called "Motivation and Personality," by the psychologist Abraham Maslow, was published. According to Maslow, human beings all have desires that need to be fulfilled, the so-called "self-realization theory." This approach developed in the 1950s moved away from the deterministic ideas developed by Freud and B.F. Skinner. In his book, Maslow described a hierarchy of personal needs, a ladder (or pyramid) of unsatisfied needs where lower needs need to be satisfied before higher needs can be (Figure 2). On the bottom of the ladder are the basic or psychological needs such as the most elemental biological needs like oxygen, sleep, water, etc. When these needs are not fulfilled we might feel sick, pain, or discomfort. Once we have reached a satisfactory level of basic survival needs we want to protect what we have attained, such as the security of a family and a home. Adults have little conscious awareness of this need except in times of calamity. Social or belonging needs are halfway up the ladder, people are collective creatures and will gather in organizations, bars, sports, and work groups, etc.---all need to overcome feelings of loneliness or alienation. Identity or ego need is the need for self-respect, and includes status, recognition, attention, reputation, confidence, independence, freedom, and respect from others. If these needs are satisfied the person will feel self-confident, if not low self-esteem or inferior complex are felt. According to Maslow, the ego needs are never fully met, which accords for the constant setting of new goals for ourselves.

Figure 2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Basic needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Oxygen</li> <li>* Water</li> <li>* Food</li> <li>* Sleep</li> </ul>
Security needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Family</li> <li>* Home</li> <li>* Stability</li> <li>* Protection</li> </ul>
Social needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Friends</li> <li>* Bars</li> <li>* Sports club membership</li> </ul>
Identity and ego needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Status</li> <li>* Recognition</li> <li>* Reputation</li> </ul>
Self fulfillment or self actualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Search for knowledge</li> <li>* Aesthetic experiences</li> </ul>