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New invention tackles the noise level in the office



Open office landscapes often mean that the noise level is constantly high (Photo: Unsplash)

[Matilda Habbe](#)

Updated: Apr 21 2024
Published: Apr 21 2024

Open office landscapes in all their glory, but too much noise can drive even the most patient of workers insane. A new study may have found the solution.

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A new study from Högskolan Väst, led by researcher Martin Ljungdahl Eriksson, presents an inventive solution to tackle the sound problems in open office environments, something Forskning.se writes about.

The optimal sound level

According to a study conducted by researchers at the University of Arizona, office noise levels have a direct impact on employee well-being.

However, total silence is not the solution.

According to the researchers, both extremely loud noises and complete silence can be harmful to health in the workplace.

According to the study, the ideal noise level in an office is around 50 decibels, which corresponds to the noise level of birdsong or moderate rain.

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Creates a sound bubble

Eriksson's research follows the same line.

He has developed an office chair equipped with speakers in the headrest that create a discreet background sound and a "sound bubble" around the employee.

This background noise contributes to a more controlled sound environment where employees can choose when they want to engage with their surroundings.

"It should be a bit like being in a cafe and working. When you find your flow in such an environment, you do it because you don't have to focus on other guests' conversations. There are only pleasant, non-important sounds around you," says Eriksson in a press release.

Sound as a design element

The research underlines the importance of looking at sound not just as a disruptive element, but as part of office design.

"We need to use sound as a design element, but it must be pleasant and be a sound you don't notice, and which half protects you from the surroundings," says Eriksson.

The prototype chair has been tested in various office environments with positive results, where the sound bubble helps to protect the employees from disturbing sounds - without completely isolating them.

Given the positive reactions from the initial tests, Eriksson now plans to expand his studies to school environments.

The goal is to investigate how similar sound solutions can help students with concentration difficulties.

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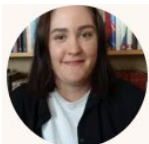
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Matilda Habbe

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