**How to create happy and sustainable workplaces?**

*Poor ventilation and lack of natural light undermine productivity in the workplace.*

“Now, are all you sitting comfortably? Then let us begin.” Schoolmasters and storytellers know all about the importance of comfort. It’s the difference between a rapt audience and a frenzy of fidgeting.

Businesses need to get smart, too. Common sense suggests that employees who work in a comfortable environment are likely to be happier, healthier and more productive. Anyone who has sweated at their desk through the summer or suffered headaches because of garish office strip-lighting will concur.

If you find yourself in a modern commercial property, however, there’s a good chance you won’t have to wait for the person from facilities management to pick up the phone. You can take the initiative yourself. The equipment that regulates your office environment – heaters, ventilators, air-conditioners and the like – frequently have override options that allow you to personalise your immediate working areas to your own comfort levels.

But is individual control so welcome? Employees might think so, but environmentalists aren’t so sure. From an energy efficiency perspective, current thinking indicates that it’s preferable to centralise office management systems as much as possible. That way a building’s total energy consumption can be closely monitored and tightly regulated. So, no more lights left on overnight and an end to radiators heating empty rooms over the weekend.

The arrival of smart technologies, such as learning thermostats, could feasibly resolve this dilemma between personal choice and overall efficiency. Imagine an office that could teach itself your behavioural patterns and comfort needs, and could automatically adjust your working environment to fit. Sound implausible? The sci-fi office of the future may be closer at hand than you think.

Enter the so-called Internet of Things. The term refers to a new range of wireless-embedded devices equipped with tags and identification protocols that allow them to “talk” to one another. Unlike computational technology, this cutting-edge gadgetry doesn’t need humans to enter data and commands. They can do it for themselves.

Imagine an app on your phone that constantly measures your temperature or heart rate, and then triggers the air conditioner to inch up or down as required. Or a window that registers how sunny or cloudy it is outside and adjusts the lighting levels accordingly.

Such smart solutions are now technologically feasible. But do the economics work for them to be taken up by the mainstream? And, if intelligent systems turn out not to cost the earth, who will be responsible for managing them: the property owner, the tenant company, individual employees? Or could they just be left to autonomously manage themselves?

*The Guardian*, 22 October 2014

**TRAVAIL A FAIRE PAR LE CANDIDAT**

*Durée de l’épreuve : 2h – Dictionnaire UNILINGUE autorisé*

**I. COMPREHENSION 10 POINTS**

***Vous devez rédiger EN FRANÇAIS.***

Après avoir lu attentivement l’article, vous en dégagerez les idées essentielles en 180 mots (+ ou – 10%).

Vous indiquerez le nombre de mots utilisés.

Toute présentation sous forme de notes sera pénalisée.

**II. EXPRESSION 10 POINTS**

***Vous devez répondre aux DEUX questions EN ANGLAIS.***

**Question 1 (100 words minimum) 5 points**

Comment on this survey :



**Question 2 (100 words minimum) 5 points**

In your opinion which is more important: employees’ comfort or energy efficiency in the workplace? Explain, giving examples.