

Rotraut Walden

# Architectural Psychology: School, University and Office Buildings of the Future

With an introduction by Prof. Dr. W. F. E. Preiser, Cincinnati, Ohio

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People generally like to have "control" over their environments. This need is expressed through personal design of architecture and personal regulation of external stress factors. For this reason, the concept of control over the environment has been applied as a central criterion for three case studies of all grade school (Waldorf School, Cologne), university (University of Koblenz) and office (Post Tower, Bonn) buildings. Firstly, a monograph of psychological studies of innovative buildings modeled after the International Performance Evaluation has been described in German. The "Koblenz Architecture Questionnaire" is used as an instrument for evaluating the three structural environments examined in this study.

Up to 21 psychological criteria for a building's success are applied to each structure. The goal of all three studies is, above all, to be able to generate suggestions for improvements when renovating and constructing new buildings. The two most central questions are: Is there a difference between a User-Needs Analysis evaluation of the building "at present" and an evaluation of "importance for the future?" Do architectural elements impact performance criteria?

In the studies, three mapping sentences following the facet approach and two schemes for judging the quality of educational and office buildings have been developed. In the three studies, there are highly significant correlations between the most important performance criteria. These criteria reveal how targeted improvements made to specific aspects of environment can positively enhance user control over the environment, feeling of wellbeing and, subsequently, performance.

The target reader for this book is someone who would like a general understanding of how buildings can be improved from a psychological standpoint as well as what aspects of design are found in forward-looking buildings. Physical environment not only influences peoples' experience and behavior but it can also enhance performance in learning and work. What aspects of environment are responsible? Which methods of evaluation help identify these aspects? The role of real estate developers and contractors of schools, university campuses, representative office building and prize-winning administration buildings are considered along with the work psychologists, architects, planners, and sociologists.

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