Heads up, not down.

Keilhauer believes the exchange of ideas is the most fundamental part of business. Conversations are held all day, every day, in small companies and large corporations around the world – and studies show that the most effective communication format is face-to-face. Face-to-face fosters teamwork, trust and engagement. That’s why Keilhauer designs and manufactures furniture that supports interaction in what we call “Heads up” spaces.
Face-to-Face
Keilhauer is...

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“For all of the beauty of technology and all the things we’ve helped facilitate over the years, nothing yet replaces human interaction—and I don’t think it will ever happen.”

Tim Cook, CEO, Apple Inc.
Why Meet Face-to-Face?

Text by Joe Mullich
Tennis legend Andre Agassi was coaxed back to being a Nike spokesman after he told Knight he wanted to have lunch and “look you in the eye.”

Between Twitter and texts, Skype and Slack, the idea of meeting face-to-face can seem like a waste of time and money. However, a growing body of scientific research supports Knight’s approach. Studies indicate that meeting face-to-face is a more effective way to build trust and sell your products and ideas than using electronic communications.

What’s truly surprising, though, is the ways in which face-to-face meetings impact people: these encounters actually stimulate areas of the brain that generate more ideas and a higher level of creativity. So if your business hinges on creative expression, you might think about putting away your phone, logging off your screen, and inviting people to come in for a face-to-face visit.

Quality Relationships
As electronic communications become more common, the drawbacks of virtual interactions have become more noticeable. More than half of executives admit they become distracted during digital meetings, according to a Forbes survey. On phone and video conferences, people surf the web, check their emails, browse other files and only give a part of their attention to the matter at hand.

This disengagement leads to distressing consequences. In a global survey of 2,000 business people, nearly half said they’ve lost a contract or client due to insufficient face-to-face meetings.

Phil Knight, founder of Nike, is notoriously private, but he doesn’t hide behind email and phone calls – many of his most striking business accomplishments came during face-to-face meetings. He invented his company on the spot during a meeting where he convinced a Japanese manufacturer to let him sell his shoes stateside. Many of his most striking business accomplishments came during face-to-face meetings. Knight’s appearances at Nike’s annual meetings have been noted for his “approachable body language” while he inspires employees and investors.

On the flip side, 81% said face-to-face meetings allow them to build stronger relationships, providing a significant advantage over virtual get-togethers.

One reason for the benefits of face-to-face probably won’t surprise you: A study in the prestigious journal *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* found that “lean communications” (like email and video conferencing) strip away body language and eye contact that cause people to develop trust in one another.\(^6\)

Researcher Gregory Northcraft believes that virtual meetings sacrifice the quality of relationships in the interest of saving time. “And quality of relationships matters,” he says. “Face-to-face, people just have more confidence that others will do what they say they’ll do.”

This is borne out in the real world. In an online forum, a businesswoman mentioned that the many virtual meetings her team held did little to connect her to her colleagues. But once she met them face-to-face, her deadlines took on greater importance, because they now affected friends and colleagues who were real to her, not just Skype, voices or faceless emails.

But precisely why does this happen? Why are face-to-face meetings so impactful?

### You Light Up My Brain

When people are engaged in a fruitful conversation, where everyone is bubbling with ideas, they often feel like they are “in sync” with everyone around them.

Researchers at Beijing Normal University made a startling discovery: This isn’t just a perception, it’s brain chemistry at work.\(^7\) Using brain imaging technology,
the researchers found that when people talk to each other up-close, face-to-face, areas of their brain associated with empathy and social cognition light up at the same time.

As a result, conversations are more harmonious. People take turns in the conversation more easily and seamlessly than they do when they are talking on the phone or through video conferencing.

And that’s a critical insight, because other research has discovered the most important factors in how well a group performs is whether they “read” each other and take turns in the conversation. In fact, taking turns in conversations is a bigger predictor of a successful collaboration than motivation going into the meeting and being satisfied with it immediately afterwards.

Interestingly, researchers found the quality of communication trumped the quantity of communication. This means an occasional face-to-face meeting may have more impact than a daily deluge of emails, phone chats, or video conferences. It’s the definition of less is more.

Clearly, much of the benefits of face-to-face communications are happening at a subconscious level. Consider a remarkable study, conducted by MIT, where meeting participants wore devices called “sociometric badges.”

These might be called un-tape recorders. Instead of recording what people they say, the devices captured almost every other element of verbal interaction – tone of voice; how often people interrupt each other; whether they lean forward as another person speaks.

Why Meet Face-to-Face?

85% of people have said that face-to-face meetings are more likely to result in “breakthrough thinking”

50% more ideas generated compared to collaboration over the phone

70% more ideas generated compared to collaboration over video chat

The researchers found these intimate gestures and almost imperceptible actions determine the outcome of a negotiation or a sales pitch, the quality of group decision making, and the roles people assume within the group.

Creative Facetime
Face-to-face meetings may be particularly important for designers and other people whose businesses depend on creativity and generating a stream of ideas.

Tellingly, the MIT study found that people said they had a “productive” or “creative” day when team members face one another, and their conversations and gestures were energetic. In other surveys, 85% of people have said that face-to-face meetings are more likely to result in “breakthrough thinking.”

This perception translates into tangible results. For example, in another study, researchers asked people to conduct brainstorming sessions in three different ways: on the phone, in video chats, and in person. People in face-to-face meetings generated 50% more ideas than they did when they spoke on the phone. They came up with 70% more ideas than when they collaborated over video.

“A face-to-face meeting between two people who do not know each other resulted in more creative ideas than the other two methods,” explains Dr. Paul Redford, the consulting psychologist who conducted the study. “There is a significant difference in the number of creative ideas generated, a marginal but notable difference in the quality of those ideas and also a greater variety of ideas produced.”

The bottom line: The more people looked into each other’s eyes, the more likely they were to confide in each other. And this leads to a wellspring of ideas, because creativity is enhanced by openness and trust.

So don’t toss out your cellphone or cancel your email account – just use them to schedule more facetime with colleagues and clients.
For
Imagining
“Mind-reading or ridiculously good ad-tracking?”
“Okay agreed. George? George. George. Earth to George...GEORGE!”
Working in a modern office means meeting, chatting, brainstorming, laughing (or crying), concentrating, daydreaming, creating and everything in-between.

Here are some pay-offs of face-to-face communication.
Team Fuel

Gathering together to share stories, inspirations, and goals is a powerful motivator.
Community

Break-out and lounge areas keep employees engaged by providing a space to connect with colleagues and remind them they’re a valuable part of a group.

Juxta 47241
Round 36” Table, Bianco Male laminate top, Polished Aluminium base.

Plunk 68001
Ottoman in District 5 Feather Grass.

Juxta 48230
Sofa in Qana Persian Blue, Black urethane tablet, Polished Aluminium base.

Juxta 48130
Bench in Selva Midnight Sky, Black urethane tablet, Polished Aluminium base.
Rapport

Coincidences and shared interests are all part of feeling like one of the team. Discovering you share a love of cats or attended the same summer camp are fun, bonding moments.
Synergy

The combination of facial expression, body language and talking help to create better group cohesion – making it easier to break down corporate silos and find common ground.
Unexpected Insight

Eureka moments can’t be planned. Spontaneity, creativity and conversation are fundamental to building on ideas and tapping into something one-of-a-kind.
Trust

Eye contact is the single most important factor when building trust.
People don’t naturally speak while standing in parallel lines, nor do we stand off in direct opposition face-forward. What happens when you design a seat that mimics the way our bodies naturally move during conversation?
“As we studied the rituals of conversation we tried to understand what subtleties and unconscious body languages were at play. We noticed that 2 people, no matter which culture they belong to, instinctively move to a comfortable angle – not directly facing or standing parallel.”

Gernot Bohmann, EOOS

When two people speak, they will naturally turn towards each other at an angle of approximately 141 degrees. Keilhauer and EOOS employed this magic angle of communication in their seating to encourage the ease and flow of conversation.
Magic Angle In Action

1. 141 degree bench mimics the natural angle of communication
2. Sitting in the natural angle eases conversation and eye contact
3. High back provides visual privacy
4. The acoustical properties of textured fabrics minimize noise distraction

Talk 8713
High back 2-seater in Oona Spring, Chrome base.
For Talking
For Looking

A lookbook of Keilhauer meeting and collaboration furniture.
For Meeting

Juxta 45230
Low back chair in Haven Anthurium,
Chrome base.

Juxta 47241
Round 36” table,
Designer White laminate top,
Polished Aluminum base.
Juxta 46643
Bar stool in Haven Angelica, Polished Aluminum base.

Juxta 49395
Slab table in Designer White laminate.

Juxta 45250
Low back chair in Selva Night Black, Polished Aluminum base.

Juxta 47253
Round 42" table with power, Designer White laminate top, Polished Aluminum base.
Visit 68130
Bench with privacy screen in Haven Lava Rock, Natural Ash base.

Visit 68322
Bench with ledge in Haven Lava Rock, Nero Ingo laminate ledge, Natural Ash base.

Sip 68002
Natural Ash wood stool.

Collo 10373
Side chair in Oona Corn, Natural Ash base.

Juxta 47163
Square 48” table, Grigio Bromo laminate top, Dark Grey base.
Collo 10362
Lounge chair in Haven Wake Robin, Chrome base.

Boxcar 4382
End table with Chrome top, Onyx base.
For Collaborating

Talk 8722
Hexagonal table,
Black laminate top,
Onyx base.

Talk 8701
Low back chair
in Haven Dahlia,
Chrome base.

Talk 8702
Low back 2-seater
in Haven Lava Rock,
Chrome base.
Wheels 10002
2 seater bench in Sguig Pewter Joy, Onyx base.

Wheels 10004
Stool in Sustain Gypsum White, Onyx base.

Wheels 10005
Divider in Sguig Pewter Joy, Onyx base.

Wheels 10001
Armless lounge chair in Sguig Sapphire, Onyx base.

Wheels 10011
47.5" table, Designer White laminate top, Onyx base.
Talk 8712
High back 2-seater in Haven Lava Rock, Chrome base.

Talk 8721
Hexagonal table, Black laminate top, Onyx base.

Talk 8711
High back chair in Haven Balsam, Chrome base.

Talk 8724
Square end table, Black laminate top, Onyx base.
Visit 68550
Curved bench in Oona Teal.

Sip 68002
Natural Ash wood stool.

Visit 68131
Bench with privacy screen in Oona Teal.

Visit 68120
Bench with ledge in Oona Teal, Nero Ingo laminate ledge.

Visit 68603
Rectangle end table, Nero Ingo laminate top.

Collo 10372
Side chair in Haven Wake Robin, Chrome base.

Juxta 47433
36 x 60" table, Nero Ingo laminate top.
Doko 67023
Square perch, Black knit base and seat.

Doko 67025
Square pouf, Khaki and Pepper knit base and seat.

Doko 67026
Large round pouf, Pepper knit base and seat.

Talk 8724
Square end table, Black laminate top, Onyx base.
Cahoots 9020
Rotax chair on sled base.

Cahoots 9071
Side chair with arms.
Ponder 68712
High back chair in Oona Teal, Natural Ash base.

Plunk 68001
Ottoman in Haven Wave, Cosmos, Kenora Olive Tree, True Blue and Oona Charcoal.
For Chatting

Loon 1751
Round 36” table,
White laminate top,
Chrome base.

Loon 1713
Stacking chair,
Turquoise back and
arms, Chrome base.

Loon 1715
Bar stool,
Titanium back and
arms, Chrome base.
Chips 55160
Armless stacking chair,
White seat and back,
Chrome base.

Chips 55170
Stacking arm chair,
White seat and back,
Chrome base.

Juxta 37243
Round 36” Table,
Designer White laminate top,
Polished Aluminum base.
Juxta 47243
Round 36" Table,
Designer White
laminate top, Polished
Aluminum base.

Trua 65180
Armless sled base chair,
Steel Blue shell,
Chrome base.
Also 3520
Stacking chair with upholstered seat and perforated contour back.

Celia 6701
Armless chair.
Doko 67026
Large round pouf, Khaki and Pepper knit base and seat.

Doko 67016
Large round pouf, Storm plastic base and knit seat.

Plunk 68001
Ottoman in Haven Asiatic Lily.

Sip 68952
End table, Nero Ingo laminate top, Natural Ash column, Onyx base.

Sip 68953
Conversation table, Nero Ingo laminate top, Natural Ash column, Onyx base.

Sip 68002
Natural Ash wood stool.
Dario 7411
Chair in Gaby Nero leather, Polished Chrome base.

Dario 7413
3-seater sofa in Gona Black, Polished Chrome base.

Branden 2154G
Square table with glass top, Nickel Plate base.
Boxcar 4301
Armless chair in District 5
Red Rocket, Chrome base.

Boxcar 4382
End table with Chrome top,
Onyx base.

Boxcar 4314
Large sofa in Selva Night
Black, Chrome base.

Boxcar 4384
Coffee table with Black
glass top, Chrome base.
Juxta 45441
High back chair in Haven Dahlia, Black urethane tablet, Polished Aluminum base.

Juxta 44140
Stool in Haven Dahlia, Polished Aluminum base.

Plunk 68001
Ottoman in Haven Asiatic Lily.

Sip 68951
End table, Titanio Doha laminate top, Natural Ash column, Onyx base.

Sip 68964
Coffee table, Titanio Doha laminate top, Natural Ash column, Onyx base.

Ponder 68704
Low back chair in Oona Teal, Dark Grey base.
For Conferencing

Collo 10372
Side chair in Haven Wake Robin, Chrome base.

Syz 10643
96 X 44" table, Grey Oak top.
Syz 10413
Square 60” table,
Silver Glass top,
Polished Aluminum base.

Collo 10373
Side chair in Oona Teal,
Natural Ash base.
Cona 1171
Conference chair in Terra Fossi, Black base.
Aesync 11225
Conference chair, Shield mesh back and Vicolo Shield seat, Polished Aluminum frame.

Syz 10673
114 x 44" table, Dove Glass top, Polished Aluminum base.
6C 61629
Conference chair,
Twilight back and seat,
Polished Aluminum base.

Syz 10673
114 x 44" table,
White Glass top,
Polished Aluminum base.
Le 14100
Cushion in Vicolo Shield,
Chrome base.

Syr 10671
114 x 44” table,
Grey laminate top, Polished
Aluminum base.

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**Meeting**

- Juxta
- Collo
- Cahoots
- Juxta
- Visit

**Conferencing**

- Collo
- Cona
- Aesync
- 6C
- Vanilla
- Filo
- Syz
- Juxta

**Collaborating**

- Ponder
- Juxta
- Cahoots
- Jumble
- Plunk
- Chemistry
- Visit
- Talk
- Wheels

**Chatting**

- Loon
- Chips
- Trua
- Also
- Gym
- Fit
- Dario
- Boxcar
- Cela
- Sip
- Lo
Colophon

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Concrete

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Photography
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Writing
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Printing
Type A Print Inc.
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For talking.
For looking.