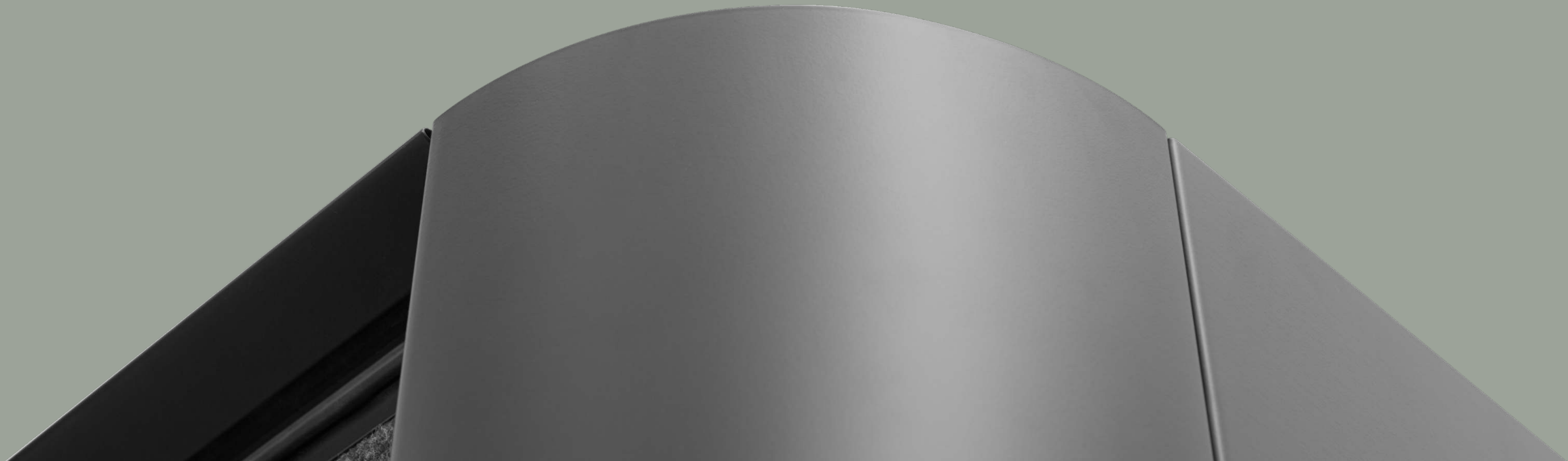


P4.

MUTE.

Consumer's Guide to Acoustic Pods



Less distractions, better workplace.

Did you know that **65% of office workers** report that noise and distractions significantly impact their efficiency? That's quite a lot. At Mute, we think that's 65% too much and one of the best ways to reduce the noise is to provide places where people can find a room to focus or carry out discussions and meetings. Acoustic pods are an excellent solution.

The guide we are proudly presenting here is based on our experience helping reshape the offices of **more than 3 000 companies**. We hope it will help you understand the products better, as well as choose, place, and introduce a pod into your own office space. Whether you're an interior designer or a company manager, we're sure you'll find plenty of valuable inspiration here.

Enjoy! ●

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What's inside?

Acoustic Pods Basics

- Choose the correct number and types.
- Place your pods wisely.
- Equip your pods with useful tools.
- Make pods part of an office well-being policy.

Function-based Guide

- Quick Call
- Concentration
- Collaboration
- Meeting
- Summary Chart

Five Features to Consider

- Soundproofing
- Ventilation
- Lighting
- User Experience
- Sustainability



MUTE.

Acoustic Pods Basics

There are countless purposes for acoustic pods. Regardless of what your goal is, there are few universal rules to follow.

Choose the correct number and types.

Selecting the correct number and correct variant of pods is crucial to make the most of each. Making the right choice helps you effectively transform your office and enhance your employees' well-being.

One is not enough (in most cases)

A common mistake that we see our clients make is choosing too few pods. As it's hard to utilize the same pod as a phone booth, place for focused work, and meeting room all at once, there is a risk it will always be occupied.

Consider your team's needs and expectations.

When you're deciding on how many of which pods your office needs, analyze your team's expectations and the nature of their work. There are at least four different purposes pods can serve: quick call, collaboration, meeting, concentration. We'll cover these later in the guide.



Place your pods wisely.

Choosing the correct number of pods is only the first step. The next one is placing them wisely in your office space to exploit their full potential. Here are some general rules you should follow.

Keep them close (in most cases)

Pods dedicated to short phone calls should be located in close proximity to potential users for quick access. However, due to running fans not closer than 2 m from workstations (acc. to ISO 23351-1). Also, you should direct the front doors towards users.

Give it space

Placing a pod too close to a window can heat up the pod. To ensure that pod fans can work properly, leave at least 20 centimeters of free space above the ceiling and on both sides of the pod walls.

Use pods as partitions

Use pods as partitions to separate zones in your open space. While enabling team members easy access, they can also serve as very effective sound blockers and provide some privacy for groups in your office.

Move them if you want to

In a dynamic business environment, reconfiguring an office space may be required from time to time. If you select pods with additional casters, you can rearrange your office very easily and quickly.





Place your pods wisely.

Three pre-purchase steps.

1/3

Observe your organization

Note where you hear people chatting, coworking or making phone calls. Think about the different teams' dynamics.

2/3

Survey a team

Send around a survey and ask your team what they lack the most. Check the answers to see if different teams have varying needs.

3/3

Check conference rooms

Observe how conference rooms are being used. If you see far fewer people inside than their capacity, it means you need a few pods to free them up.

Equip your pods with useful tools.

You can upgrade your pods with all sorts of handy tools and gadgets. Ask yourself what kind of functionality will help you make the most of your pod.

Connection

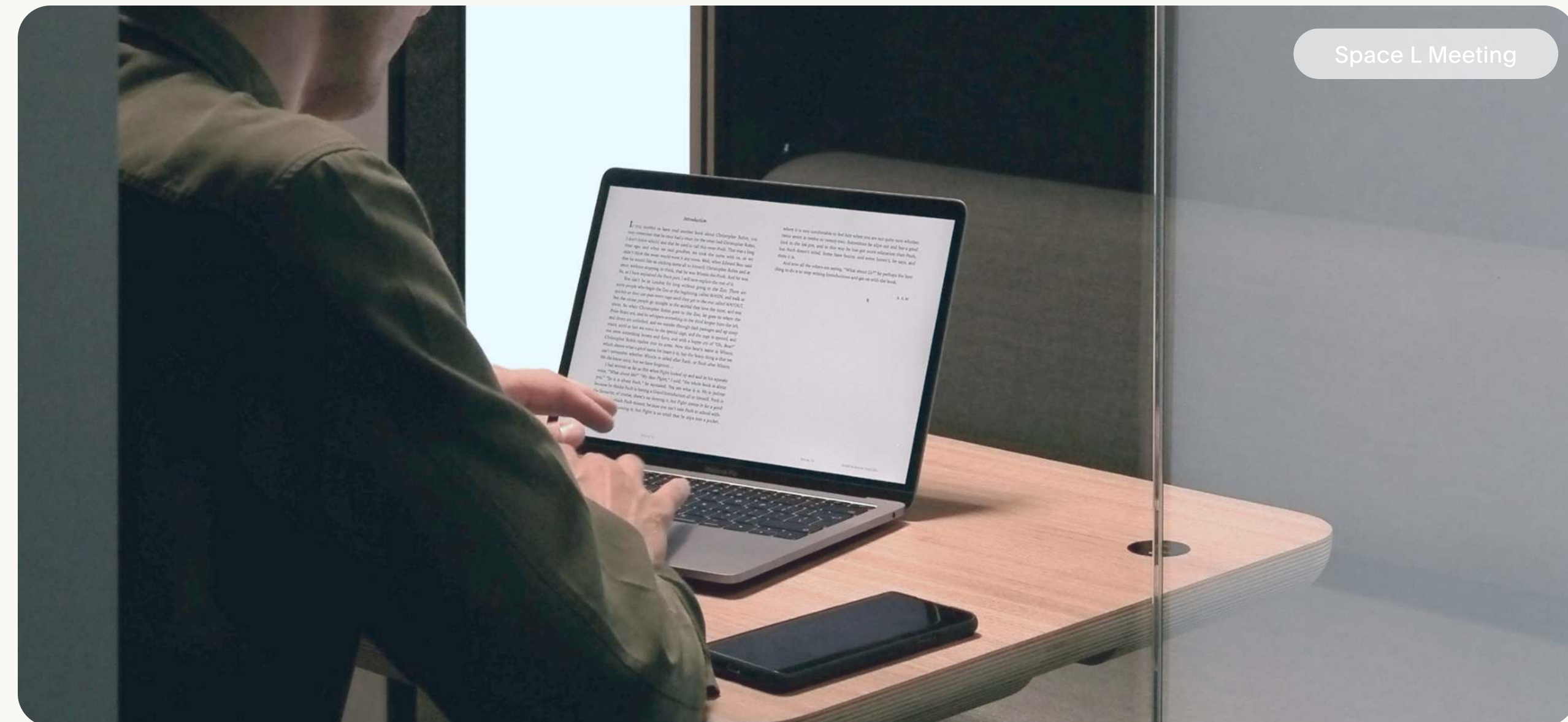
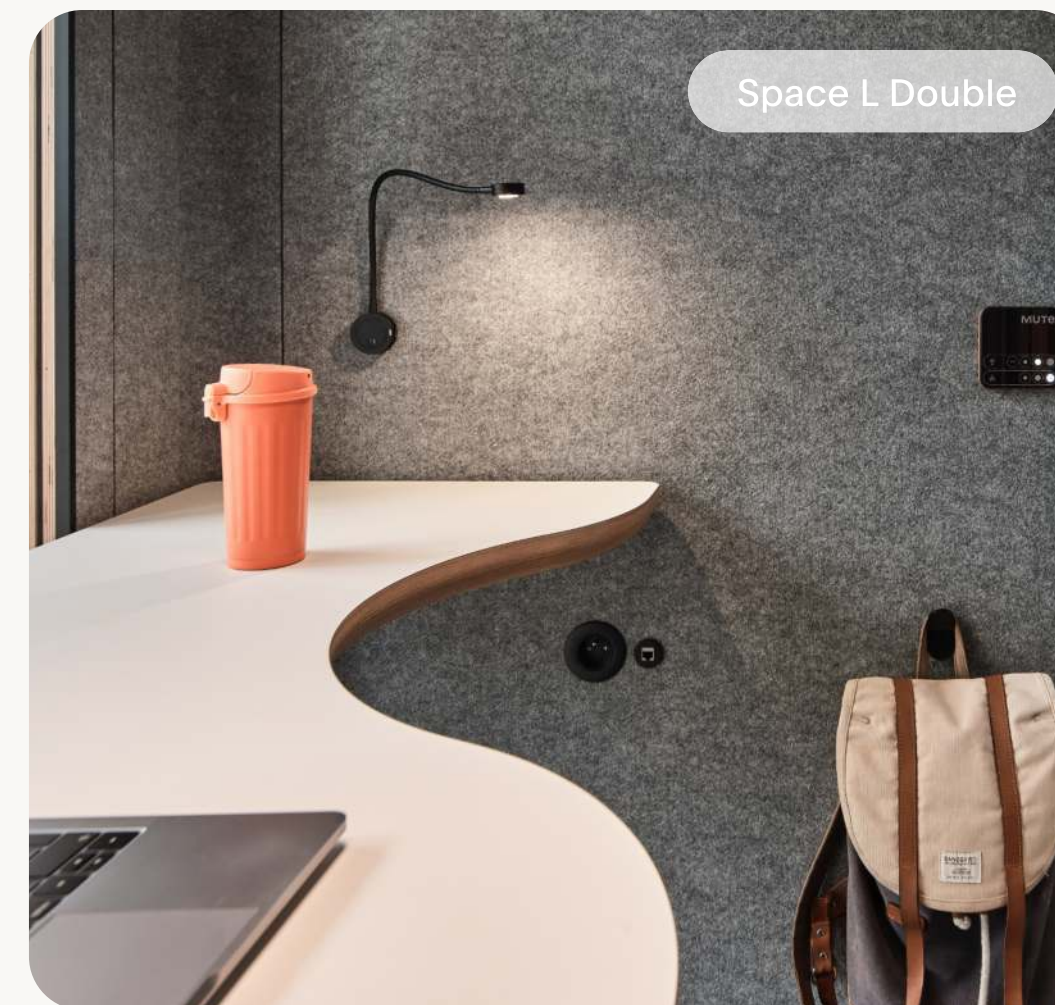
Equip your pod with LAN, USB ports, or an induction charger. They could be valuable additions, especially if the pod is a place for individual, focused work.

Reservation system

If the pod is dedicated to longer meetings rather than random chats, consider adding it into the company's room reservation system, just like a standard conference room.

Video calls

If your team uses video call apps, we recommend adding professional video conferencing equipment for high-quality audiovisual performance.





Make pods part of an office well-being policy.

You can make the pod an integral part of your employee satisfaction strategy with just a few smart and easy actions. Bring in the pod in three easy steps.

Introduce

Send a memo introducing the pod to your team. You can even organize a “Get to know the pod” party to encourage people to try it and all its features out. That can be a good icebreaker!

Educate

Put up posters that describe the function of each pod on its walls. For example, on the pod dedicated to quick phone calls, post a sign reminding everyone to keep their pod time short.

Analyze

Monitor how every pod is used. After teams have used them for a few months, send out a survey that asks employees about their feedback on pod functionality and placement.

MUTE.

Function-based Guide

Quiet space for individual work or a place to make a phone call? Cozy area for meeting with a client or for a brainstorm? Answer these questions and develop a clear strategy for implementing pods.



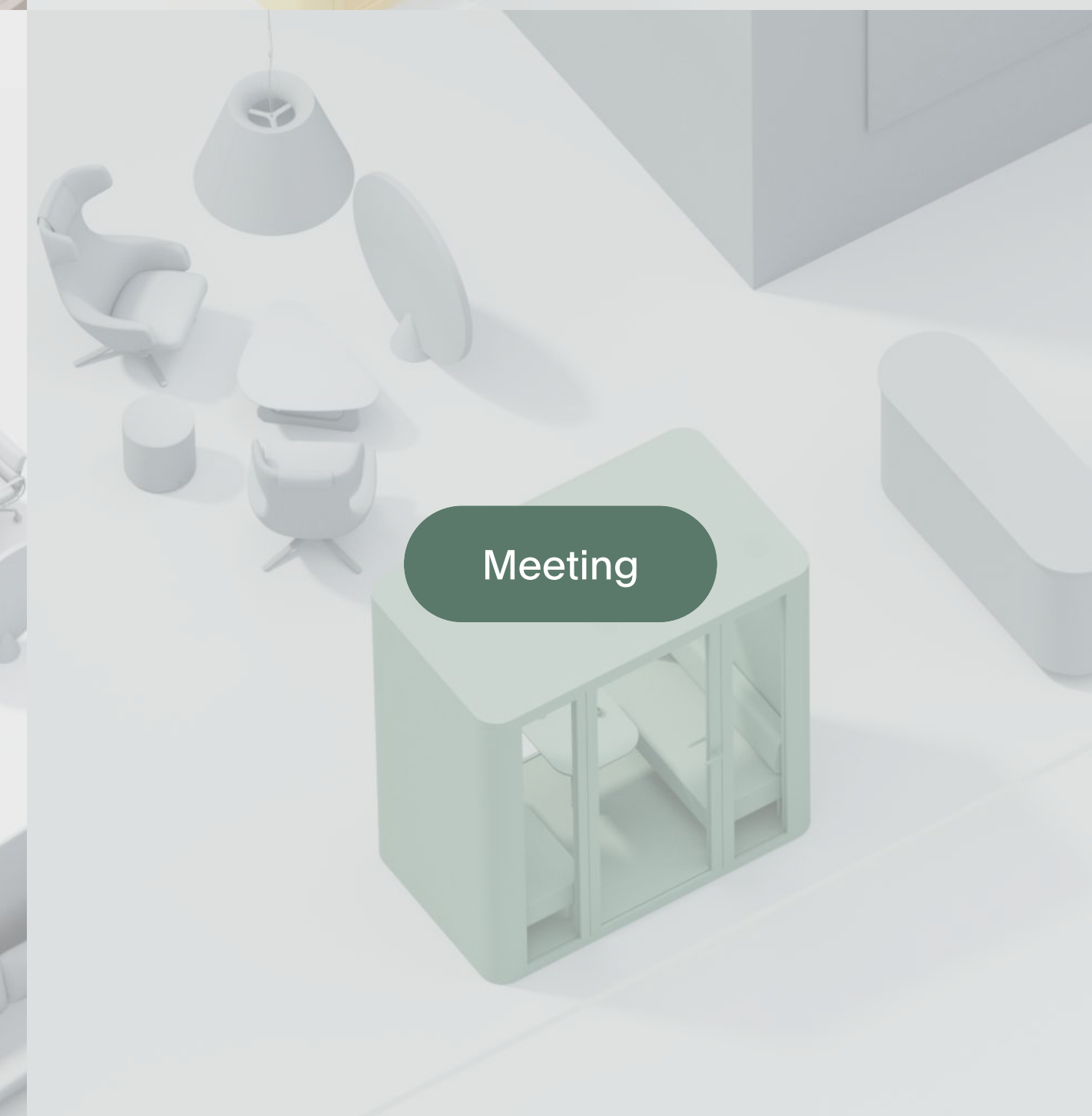
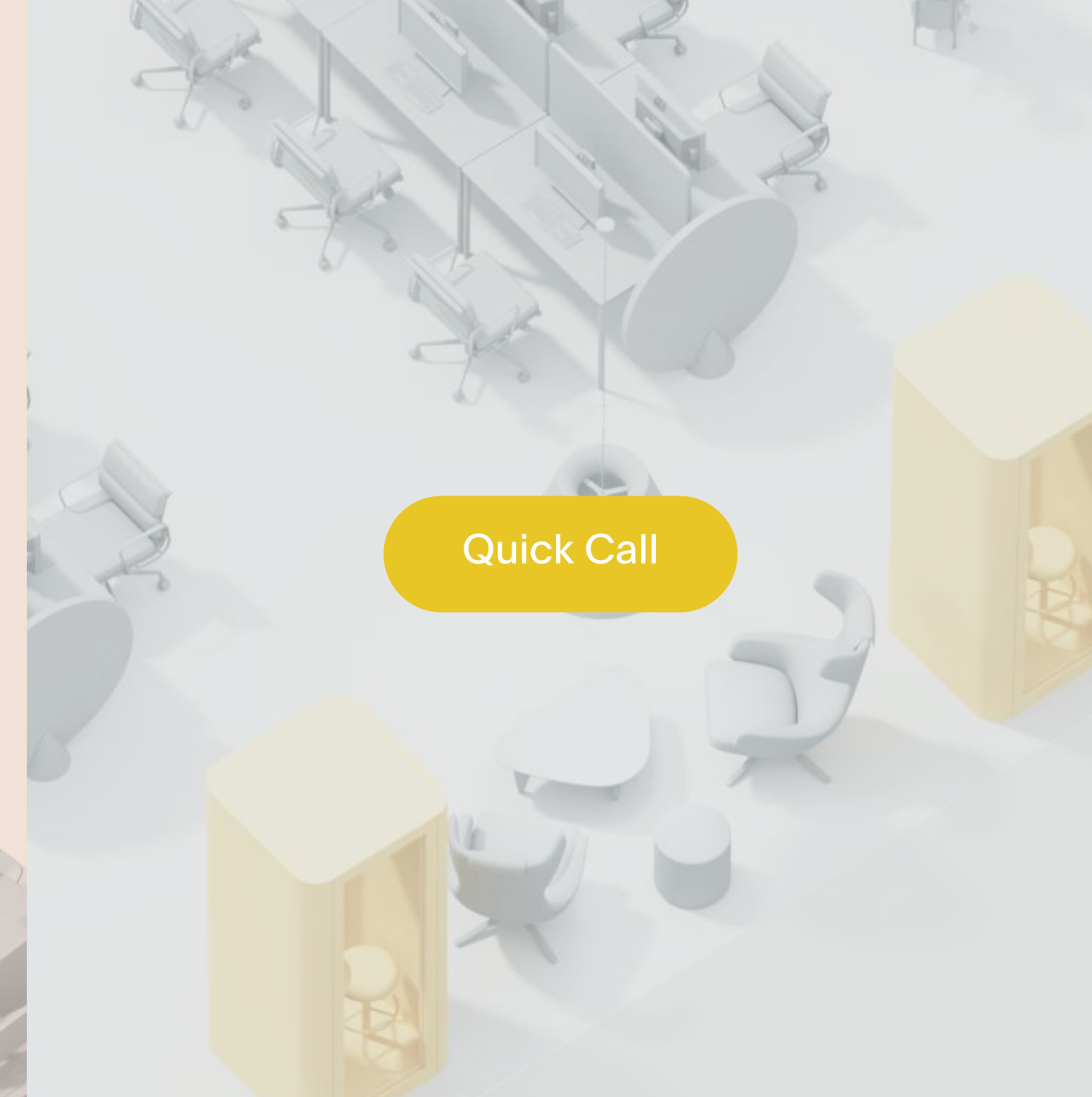
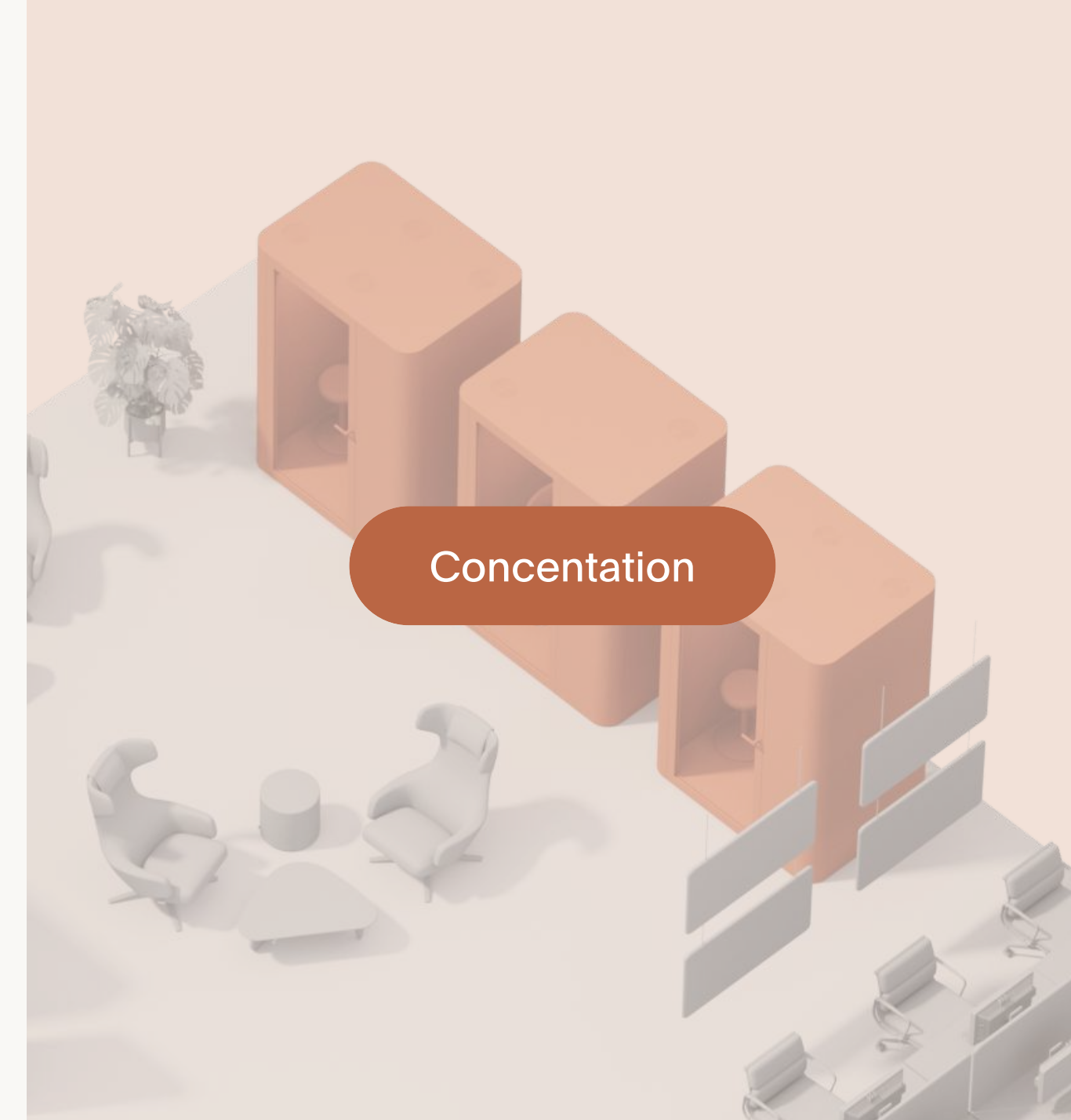
Space pods meet all office needs.

The key to an effective pod location is clearly defining its function.

To start, ask yourself:

- Should it be a quiet space for individual, focused work or a place for making quick phone calls?
- Will the employees use it as a place for longer meetings or just for collaboration with one another?

From our experience, there are four essential pod functionalities. Let's see how you can think about choosing the right pod for each function.



Concentration

Some tasks require full concentration. That's why it's important to create cozy shelters for employees who need a place to focus.

Create place to focus

The main objective is to limit distraction. Such a pod does not need to be within close access to others. It's better to locate it a bit farther away from the office action. Why?

- An employee who wants to finish an important task can sit down and focus without being interrupted.
- Switching up a workspace from time to time enhances creativity.
- The more effort and time is put into getting to another part of the office for focused work time, the higher the chance to stay put and finish the task at hand.

Group pods together

To ensure that the pods are sufficiently distanced from distractions, try grouping them in one place and give the area a name, like "Focus Valley."



TIP

Time for deep work

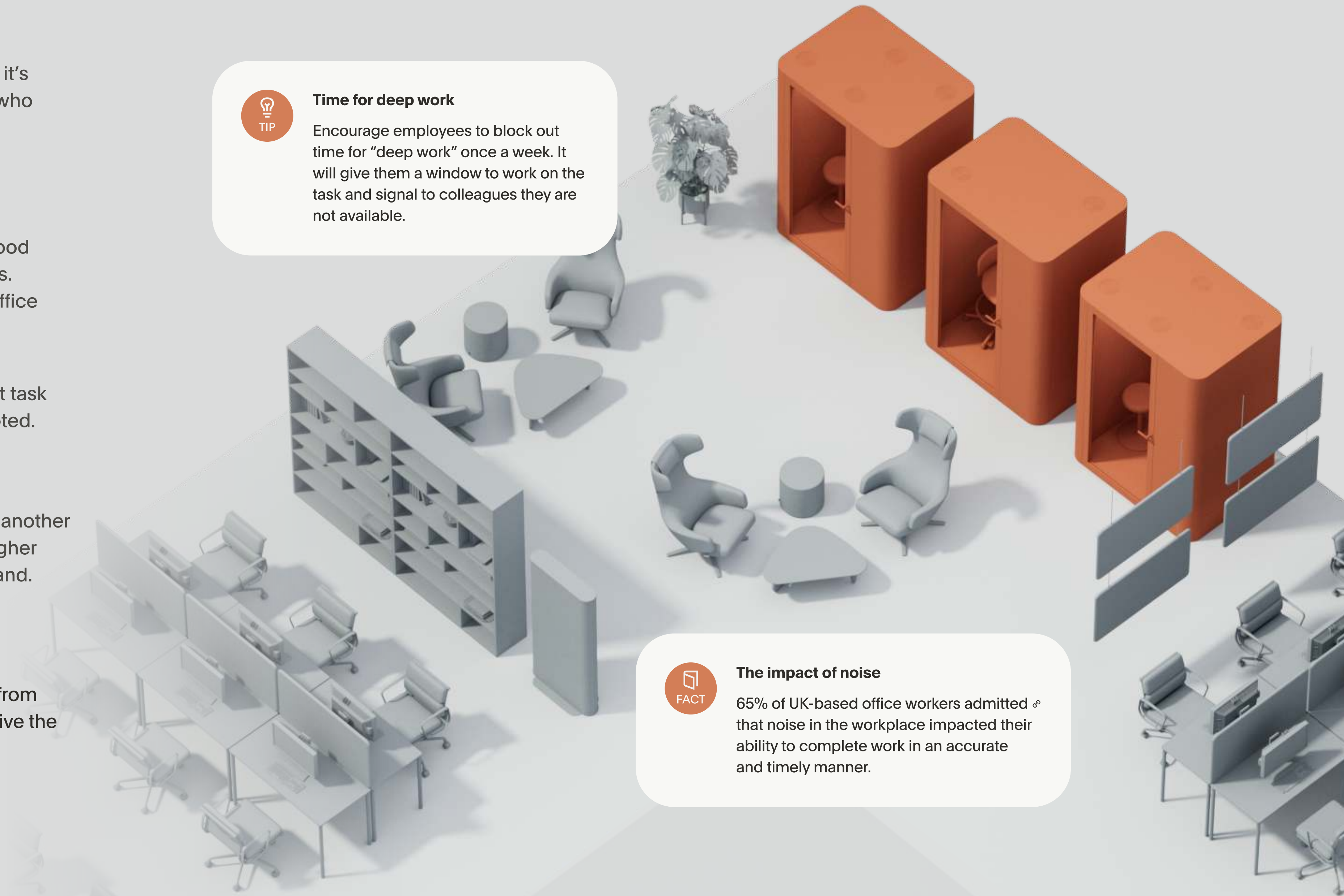
Encourage employees to block out time for "deep work" once a week. It will give them a window to work on the task and signal to colleagues they are not available.



FACT

The impact of noise

65% of UK-based office workers admitted [⊗] that noise in the workplace impacted their ability to complete work in an accurate and timely manner.



Quick Call

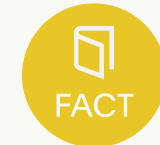
Listening to colleagues make phone calls is the typical open-plan office nightmare. That's why pods designated for quick calls and individual isolation can be helpful for overall productivity.

As close as possible

Locate pods for quick phone calls in close proximity to people's workspaces (keep in mind the "2 meters rule"), with the front doors turned towards employees so they can see if the pods is free and get inside quickly.

Define team needs

Adjust the number of the "Phone Booth" pods according to each team's needs. For example, a sales team will need more phone booths than the accounting department, even if they are both similar in size.



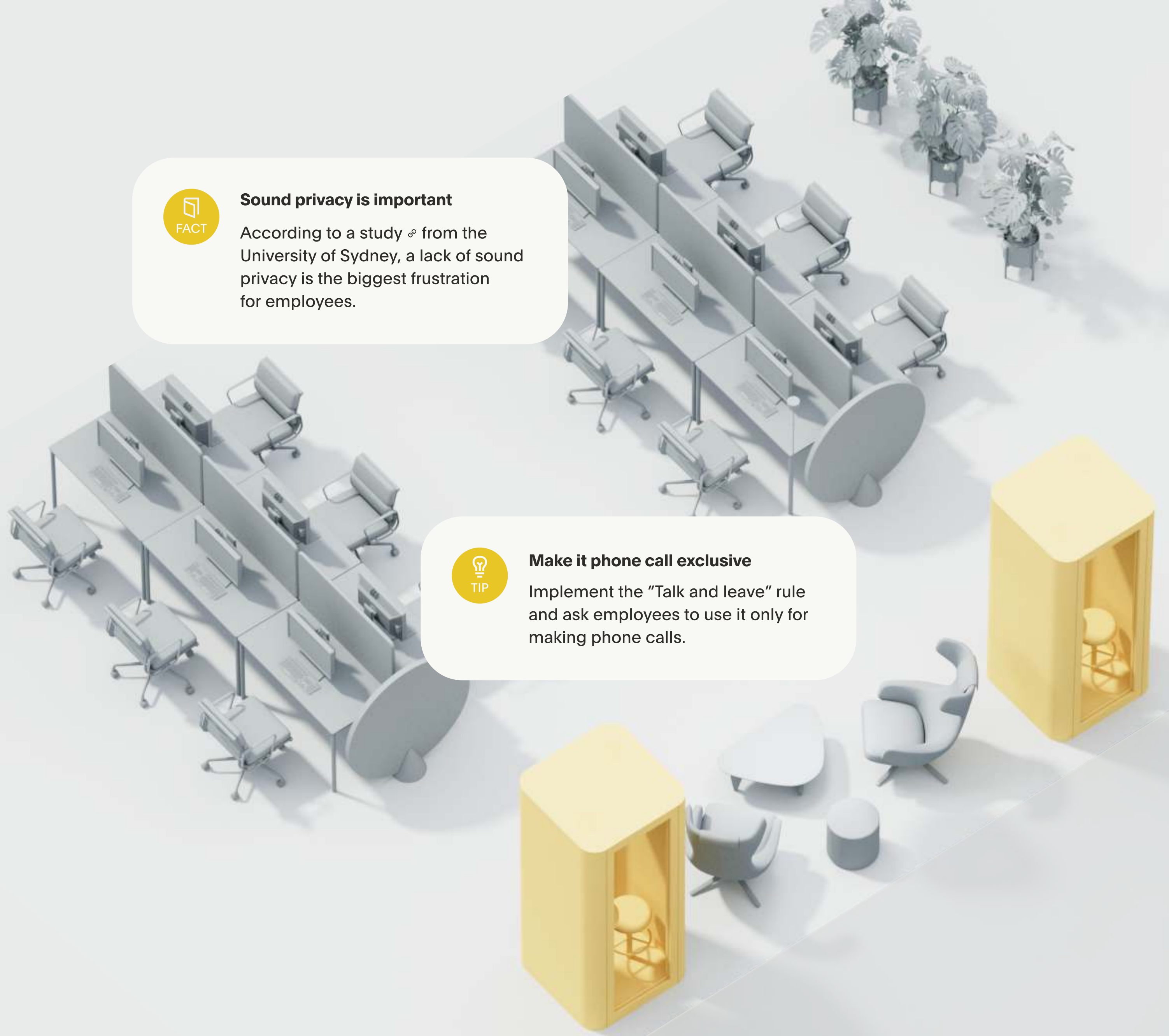
Sound privacy is important

According to a study ⁸ from the University of Sydney, a lack of sound privacy is the biggest frustration for employees.



Make it phone call exclusive

Implement the "Talk and leave" rule and ask employees to use it only for making phone calls.



Collaboration

The best ideas are usually the result of an exchange of opinions. By providing the right variety of pods, you will create comfortable spaces for brainstorming or co-working.

Spread them around

Unlike phone booths, pods designated for collaboration don't have to be close at hand. However, it's vital to spread these pods around evenly so that every team has the opportunity to meet and talk anytime.

2-in-1

More and more companies invest in content marketing, creating materials like podcast, webinars, and live streams. Such pod can work as your own cozy, soundproof studio with impeccable acoustics.



TIP

Make it private

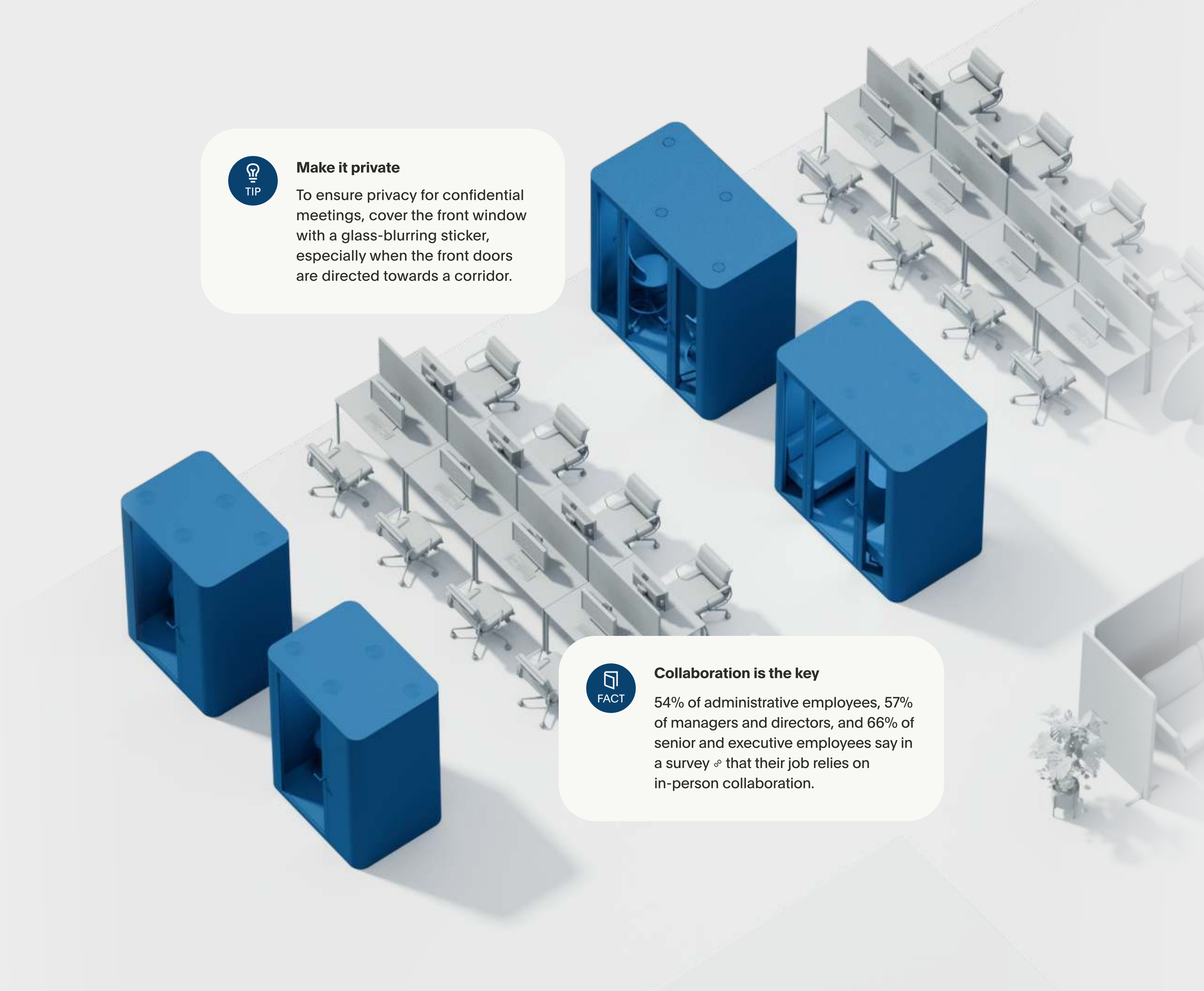
To ensure privacy for confidential meetings, cover the front window with a glass-blurring sticker, especially when the front doors are directed towards a corridor.



FACT

Collaboration is the key

54% of administrative employees, 57% of managers and directors, and 66% of senior and executive employees say in a survey ² that their job relies on in-person collaboration.



Meeting

As video calls become more popular, it's natural to ask whether you still need a traditional, spacious conference room. Acoustic pods are an excellent alternative and useful tool to ensure that more groups of people have a quiet place to meet.

Think small

76 percent of the time that conference rooms are occupied, they're being used by no more than four people. As studies show, they are occupied 36 percent of the time by just one person. So, locating several 4-person pods will be more efficient than building two big conference rooms.

Mix it up

Make sure to provide pods of different sizes. You can mix cozy 2-person and 4-person pods with larger 6-person ones.



TIP

Prepare for the hybrid office

Equip pods with a video call system to ensure an optimal user experience. You can connect the pod to your conference room reservation system to keep rooms organized.







TIP

Keep it close to an entrance

Locate at least one pod closer to your office's reception desk to provide a comfortable place for meeting clients and external partners.

Summary Chart

Function	Concentration	Quick Call	Collaboration	Meeting
Model	 Space M Single	 Space S Standard	 Space M Double, Space L Double	 Space L Meeting, Space XL
Location	A quiet corner, away from office traffic. Ideally group them in one place.	As close as possible to potential users.	Everywhere - place them throughout the whole office.	Place at least one close to the reception desk.
Tip	Encourage employees to block some time for deep work at least two hours a week.	Implement the "talk & leave" rule. Don't put unnecessary tools inside.	Cover the front doors with a blurring sticker to provide more privacy.	Equip each with a professional and easy-to-use video call system.

Five Features to Consider

There is a wide range of acoustic pods on the market and we understand that it can be difficult to decide what products to choose. It's even more complicated if you are not an expert on acoustics, so we put together a list of pod features you should consider closely.



Soundproofing

The level of soundproofing is a key factor of any pod. Some pods offer almost total sound isolation, while others have acoustic properties on their labels only. It's worth spending some time to hear the difference.

Sound insulation test

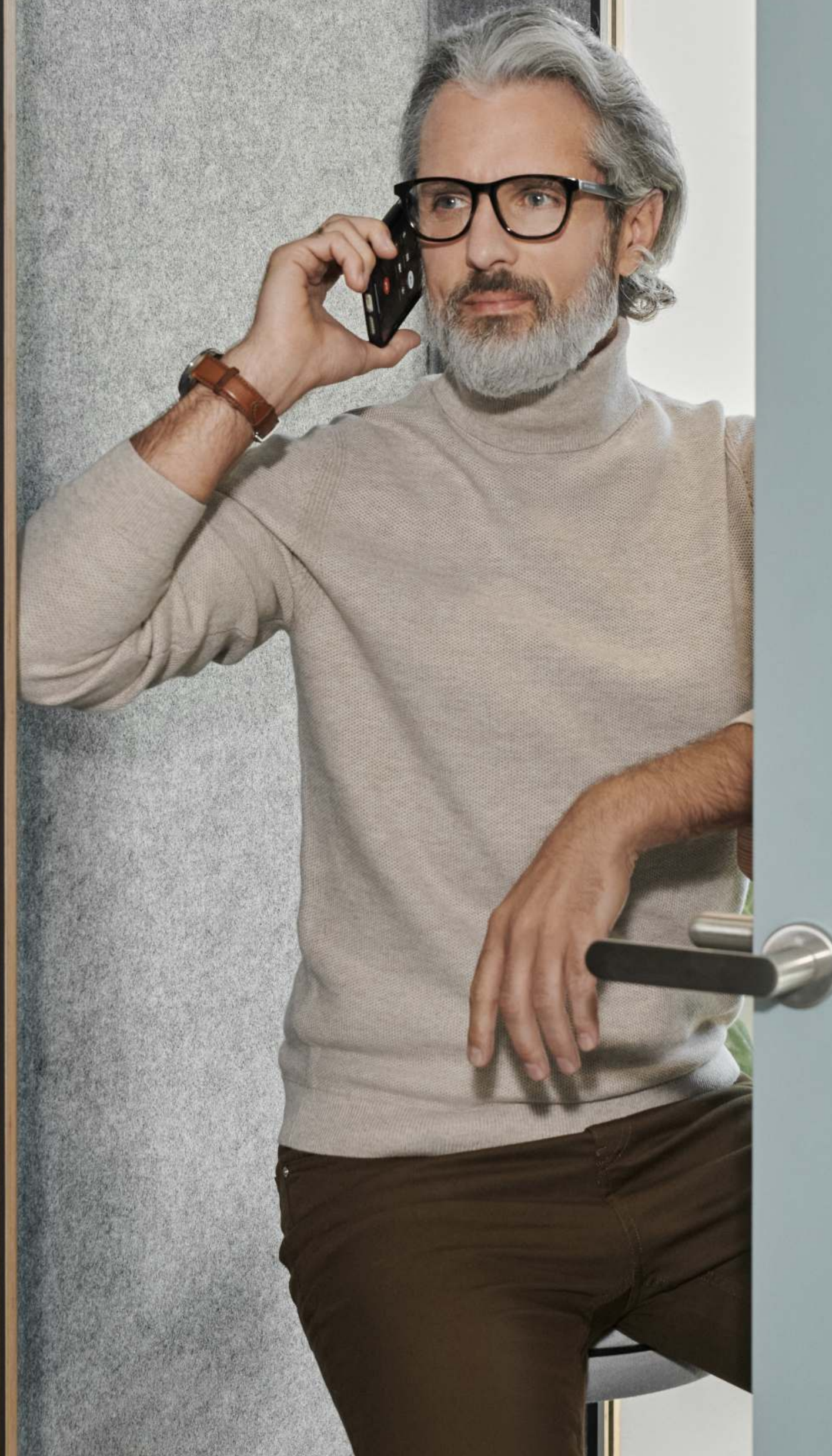
Visit a showroom, ideally with a colleague, and try a pod. You should hear a significant difference while talking through the pod's doors. If you are alone, take a Bluetooth speaker and test it with your favorite song playing loud. Test few pods in the same room to note the difference.

Internal vs. external sound insulation

A high-quality pod should have slightly less effective external isolation so that when a person is in the pod, they can hear a loud sound (like an alarm going off) outside of it.

Check reverberation time

Also look at the pod's internal reverberation time. A high-quality pod should limit reverberation time to 0.1–0.3 seconds.





Ventilation

Adequate ventilation is crucial for acoustic pods to remain comfortable and enjoyable, especially when working inside them for a long time.

Pay attention to noise

The noise caused by running fans, both inside and outside the pod, can disturb employees who work close to it. The level of noise should not be higher than 36 dB outside and 40 dB inside.

Check the airflow

In order to provide a comfortable atmosphere inside the pod minimal airflow should reach at least 40m³ per hour, per person. Remember to check if the information about the airflow is provided for the whole pod, not just for the fan installed inside.

Look for an occupancy sensor

See if the ventilation continues to work for a while after you leave it. This ensures fresh air is provided for the next user.

Lighting

Lighting is sometimes an overlooked aspect of pods, but it shouldn't be. Adequate lighting will boost your visual comfort and protect you from eyestrain.

Is there enough light?

Check that light provides at least 300 lux for sitting positions. Consider adding a control panel to adjust light intensity.

Provide proper light temperature

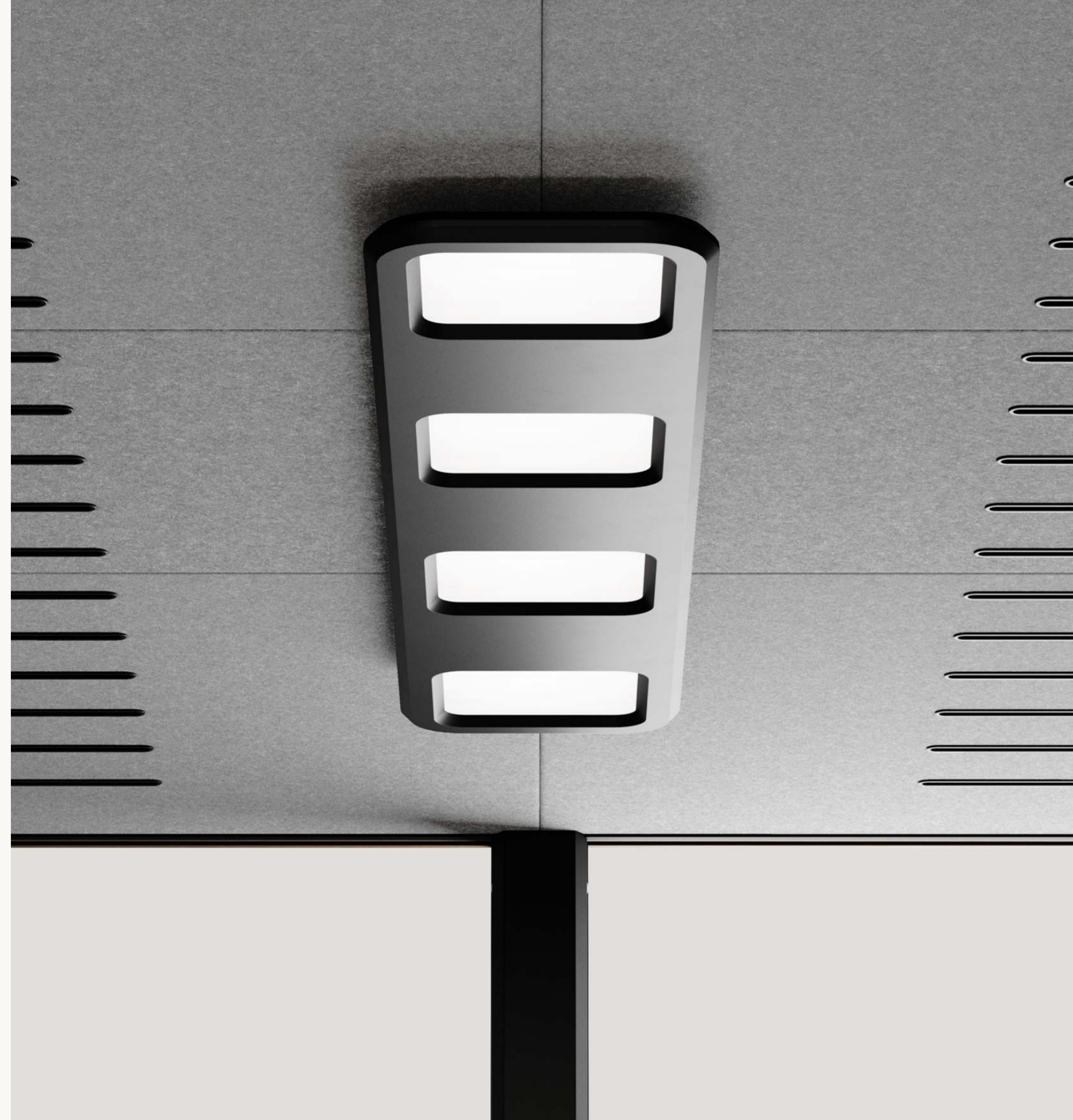
Ensure that the light color temperature is 4000 Kelvins. That is the recommended level for office work, as it fosters creativity and allows you to focus more easily.

Limit power consumption

Ask if the pod has an occupancy sensor that automatically switches electricity off after you leave.

Consider additional lighting

Check if the pod has extra side lamps, especially, if you're going to use it as a place for extended and focused work.





User Experience

How do you differentiate between an “average” pod and a top-quality one? In our opinion, it's the user experience. Here are some examples of useful features that make a top-quality product:

- Adjustable tabletop and seating
- Ergonomic desks
- Induction charger integrated into the tabletop
- Easy access to USB ports and power outlets
- Built-in casters so you can move the pod easily
- Modern design customizable with a variety of colors and finishes to match any office and brand.

Sustainability

Companies strive to reduce their environmental footprint and choose products that meet their ecological goals. Here's what to check:

Environmental impact

Check if the factory that constructs your pods uses renewable energy sources and if the production is ISO 14001 certified. Look at green certifications (like FSC), verify if the producer is officially certified, ask for documentation.

Power efficiency

Ask about the pod's average yearly power consumption and compare to other products on the market.

Check the lifespan

Ask suppliers about the product's Life Cycle Assessment. Check if components are sourced locally and what percentage is recyclable.

Safety first

Make sure that the product passed tests for VOC emission, formaldehyde, and other hazardous substances that affect indoor air quality.





Connectivity features

Connectivity
Twin charging USB
Twin charging USB socket mounted in tabletop [1pc]

Connectivity
Induction charger
Induction charger mounted in tabletop

Mobility & Control

Mobility
Optional casters
Casters for simple relocation of the pod

Control
Control panel
Dedicated control panel for light and ventilation adjustment

Other options

Configure Your Pod

→ Go to Configurator



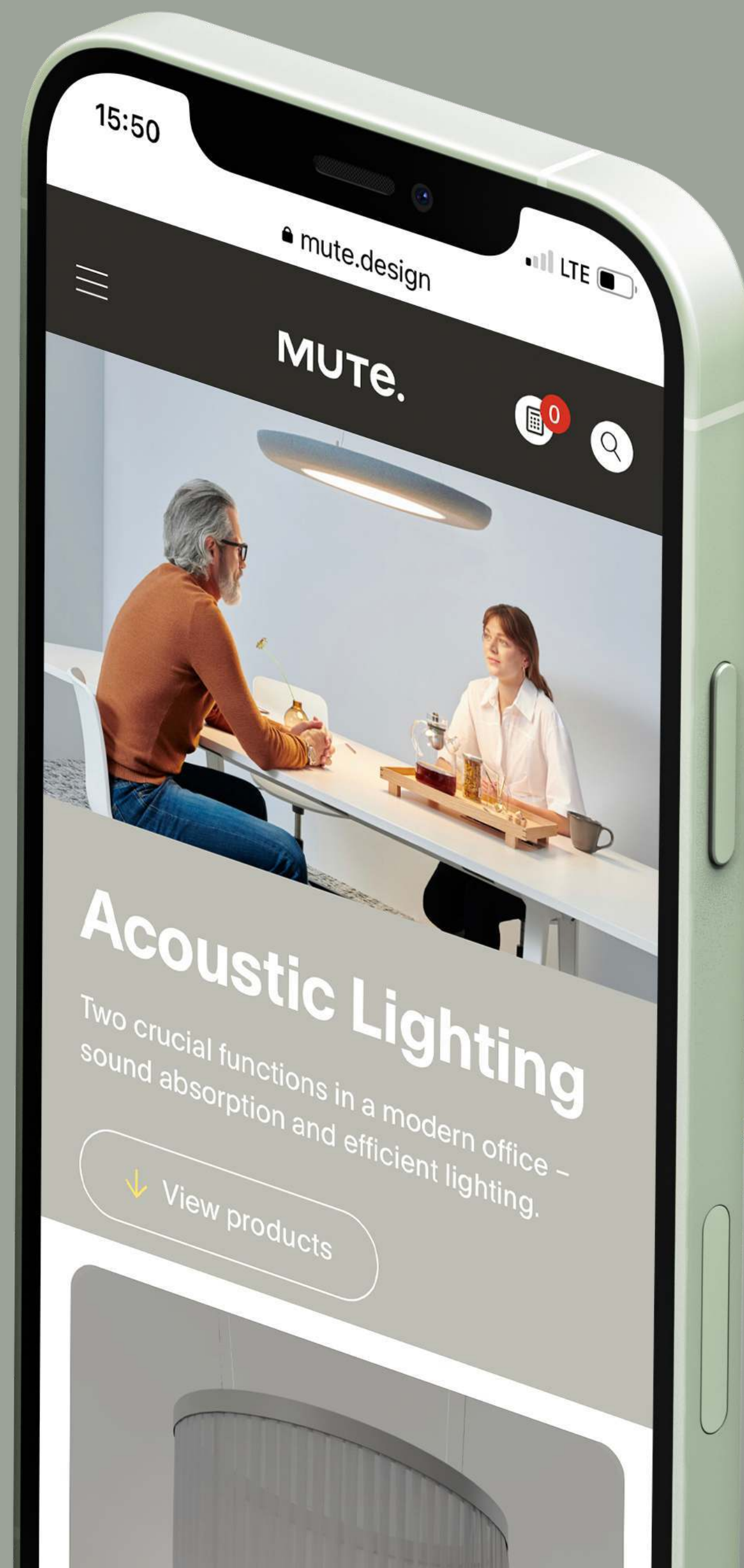
Compare Space Pods

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P4.