



Bangkok Post Learning: *Test Yourself*

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No office, no problem!

 by Gary Boyle

Read the following story by Pattarawadee Saengmanee from the *Bangkok Post*. Then, answer the questions that follow.



Photo by Varuth Hirunyatheb

As the Covid-19 pandemic has forced people to work remotely, many companies are now rethinking the concept of office space.

OPEN HOUSE
At the moment, co-working spaces seem to be the best option for those wanting to change their

working environment. Adapting to new norms, co-working spaces are now providing more flexible deals to meet urban lifestyles as well as ensuring measures to provide safety in times of Covid-19.

In 2017, Central Embassy turned retail space on the 6th floor into "Open House" by promoting it as a co-living space that combines a shared working space, bookshop, kid's playground, restaurant, design shop and cinema under one roof. After being closed for three months, Open House came back to life and is now welcoming local families, foreign expats, freelancers, office workers and students.

"About 50%-60% of customers have returned. People want to meet their friends and keep connecting with society at large," said Barom Bicharnchitr, a managing director of Central Embassy.

Spread over 70,000m², Open House is the work of Japanese design studio which has worked for Google Japan, Nike and Uniqlo. Designed to resemble a living room, Open House is divided into seven zones, where visitors can come to hang out, work, eat or study in a nice atmosphere. Overlooking skyscrapers, the Co-Thinking Space is designed to resemble a shady garden complete with a shared working space, two meeting rooms, a coffee corner and high-speed Wi-Fi. Visitors can enjoy the space for 200 baht for three hours or 350 baht for the entire day.

HUBBA SATHORN

Hubba, another co-working space, is one of the pioneers of Thailand's co-working industry. The project is the brainchild of Charle Charoenphan, who has worked as a business consultant for many years. In 2012, Hubba was launched in Ekamai before relocating to Sathorn in the middle of last year.

"Fortunately, Thailand has been able to contain the spread of Covid-19, resulting in life returning to normal. We just resumed operations last month and customers are already coming back. If there's a second outbreak, I believe we can still survive because we have anticipated the situation and already prepared several plans," Charle said.

"The co-working business has also been affected by Covid-19. Some operators are facing a financial crisis after businesses were closed for several months.

With the idea to provide alternatives for those fed up with working in cafes, Charle has turned an old Thai house into a cosy co-working space in which visitors feel like being at home but also network with others.

Just a five-minute walk from BTS Chong Nonsi, Hubba Sathorn occupies 520m² on the 2nd floor of the Siamnara Food Work project and houses offices with 24-hour access, a private corner for online meetings and spacious shared working areas.

"Almost 50% of customers are expats while the other 50% are locals. Hubba Sathorn is a joint venture between us and a landlord. This new space is the result of a business remodelling of our co-working space two years ago to solve the problem of increasing rents," Charle said.

Focusing on the convenience and flexibility of remote work, Hubba offers various plans such as a choice of customised Hot Desk programmes, starting at 80 baht per hour, 290 baht for a day pass and 3,900 baht for a monthly membership, which includes snacks, beverages and a high-speed internet connection.

Section 1: Answer the following questions in the space provided.

1. Co-working spaces can be flexible and safe. True or false?
2. When did Open House first open?
3. How many zones does Open House have?
4. Co-Thinking Space has a garden. True or false?
5. Where did Hubba first open?
6. How large is the Hubba space?
7. Hubba has equal numbers of Thai and expat customers. True or false?
8. Which space is cheaper per day?

Section 2: Write the noun form of the following words in the space provided.

9. flexible
10. combines
11. closed
12. enjoy
13. solve

Section 3: Read the following passage. Then, fill in the blanks with the correct words from the choices given.

Charle thinks that Covid-19 is driving companies towards digital ...14... .

“Next year, the co-working business will be ...15... again as many companies seek shared offices to ...16... costs. Office complexes may ...17... a crisis in the near future. Many companies could be ...18... out of their traditional office and towards a co-working space. They can pay less for rent as well as take advantage of more ...19... conditions.”

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|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 14. A. transform | B. transformers | C. transformation |
| 15. A. boom | B. boomer | C. booming |
| 16. A. cut | B. make | C. have |
| 17. A. face | B. faced | C. facing |
| 18. A. drive | B. drove | C. driven |
| 19. A. flexing | B. flexibility | C. flexible |

Section 4: Find words that match the following definitions.

20. people who live outside their native country
21. people who work for themselves rather than a company
22. very tall buildings
23. something that someone thinks of and develops
24. to meet people and develop professional contacts

For the answers, find the story online at www.bangkokpost.com/learning. If you have any questions or feedback, please contact the Editor at garyb@bangkokpost.co.th