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IDEAS AND DESIGN FOR BETTER LIVING

WORKKIT

From contemporary, elegant spaces to vibrant spots that inspire creativity, we round up 12 of the country's most innovative offices — each with their own distinct personality



**OPPOSITE PAGE**

The reception sets the mood for the entire office with its straight-lined design, with an angular twist — as seen on the solid wood and PU-coated reception table, the smart metal sheet pendant light and the coloured jute roped screen.

THIS PAGE Set against a grey backdrop, a custom-designed comfortable sofa, two floor standing lamps, a soft rug and red and yellow artworks form the waiting zone opposite the reception table.

CONCEPT: To create a contemporary straight-lined office with an angular twist. Also, to make all the products locally and promote the Make in India movement.

angles. This permeated even the most micro of elements such as light fixtures.

The space handed to the architects was a bare shell, with nothing other than walls and windows. This was a boon as they could start almost immediately with the task on hand, without losing precious time 'undoing' elements of the space. The challenge, however, came in the form of fitting in the functional requirements within the footprint. "We didn't want the spaces to suffer area-wise," informs Ronak Patel, one of the three associate architects for this project — the other two being Jinal Patel and Naiya Patel. "We also didn't want everything to look like a 'cubicle-ized' confined space with set boundaries. We thus chose to use glass partitions only wherever required and divided other spaces using see-through screens," says Jinal.

This project followed the 'Make in India' theme, wherein the architects had the creative satisfaction of designing almost everything that went into its making. This is the design highlight of the project. "We become ambitious to the extent of creating even artefacts and lights and murals along with sofas and chairs and tables. The tables have also

been customized keeping in mind the 'angular' theme of the overall interior so that it doesn't look like it has been picked off the shelf," asserts Naiya. The highlight of the project is how everything follows this theme, how the angles are repeated everywhere, be it the lights, murals, tables, etc. And yet it doesn't look over-done or contrived.

The lighting design benefitted generously from intensive customization. Given the requirement for task lights, considering the nature of the space, the team decided to design the task light fittings along with hanging lights and pedestals. These fixtures, donned in bright colours, added to the aesthetics of the interiors, but were, most

MATERIALS

Walls Paint Floor Vitrified tiles Ceiling Gypsum board Partitions Plywood, glass Furniture Solid wood, veneer, new wood with PU Lighting fixtures Metal sheets Screens Solid wood frame, coloured jute ropes

Tailor-made in India

The office of Elegance Builders in Ahmedabad created by Vipul Patel Architects has a contemporary design, which is heightened by the fact that every single element here has a 'made in India' stamp.

TEXT: COMPILED BY DEEPA NAIR; PHOTOGRAPHS: PREACHART, COURTESY VIPUL PATEL ARCHITECTS

When Vipul Patel Architects received the commission to create an office for a client they have worked with earlier, one factor was established — they would enjoy a free hand in the designing of the project. "The client is a builder and our existing relationship had already established a rapport and, for the client, a familiarity with the firm's design language," says principal architect Vipul Patel who founded his namesake firm in 1994. The firm's designs are an amalgamation of contemporary straight line work, functional comfort, client satisfaction and requirements along with creativity which is well reflected in

over 200 projects ranging from individual residences, commercial complexes, apartment schemes, exhibition spaces, corporate offices, retail spaces and institutional buildings.

The brief for this office was for a director's cabin with enough space for seating, another smaller cabin with a desk, a staff room that would accommodate six to eight people, a conference room with the same capacity, a pantry and toilet, and a reception and waiting area. Besides this, the architects enjoyed carte blanche. Leveraging this freedom, they sought to do something different in this workspace. This came in the form of a slight twist to the philosophy of "minimum detailing and straight-line designing" — they played with angled lines instead of right

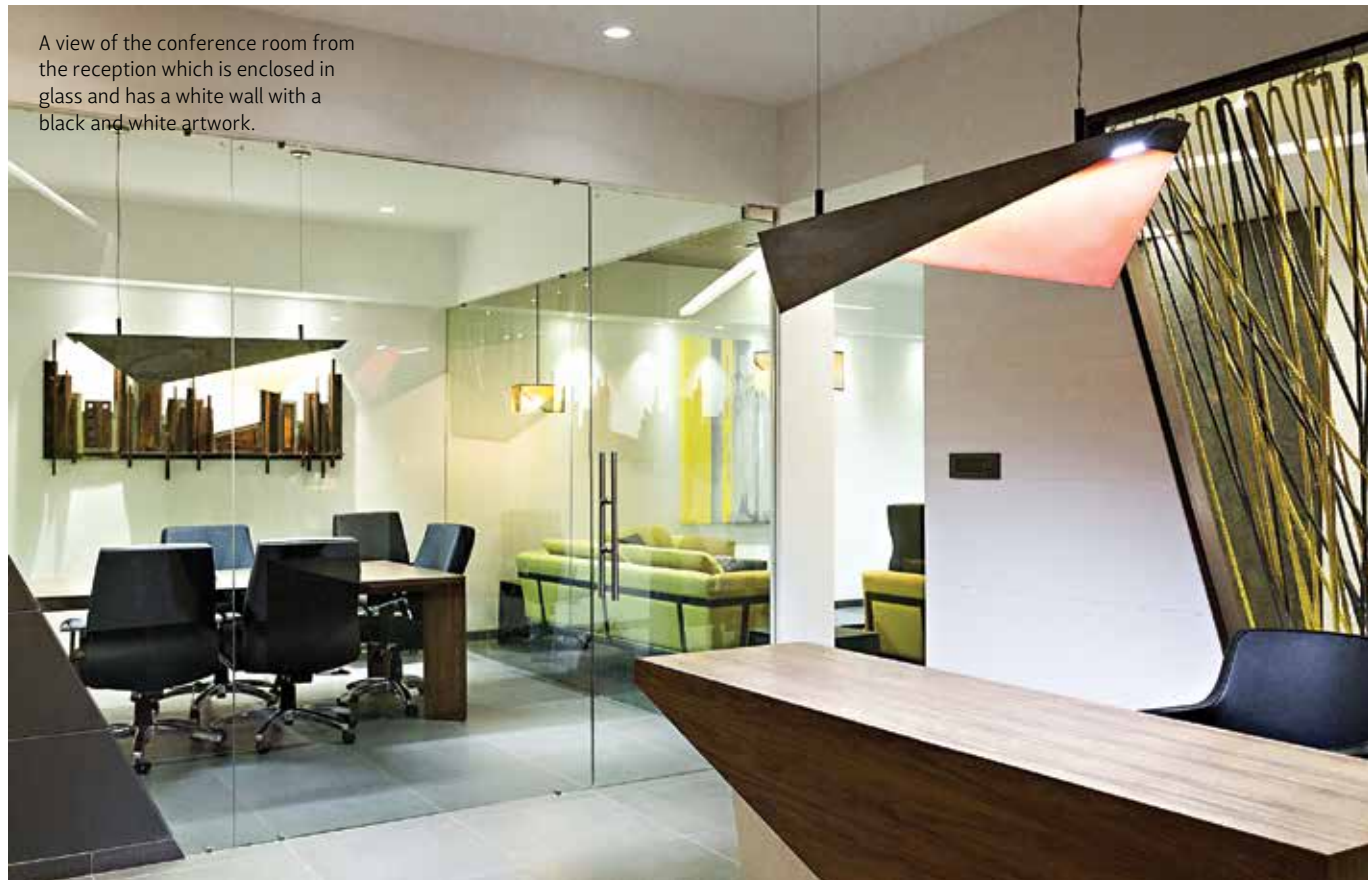


Team Vipul Patel Architects





The lounge space has straight-lined bespoke sofas in yellow, perfectly complemented by grey cushions, a low wooden coffee table and a tailor-made pendant light. This informal zone is marked by a gypsum wood ceiling which adds more warmth to the space.



A view of the conference room from the reception which is enclosed in glass and has a white wall with a black and white artwork.



TOP The passageway which leads to the pantry and the staff area is minimal. Though it looks like an artwork in itself, the red dot which you see at the far end is a custom-designed clock. On the right, note the coloured jute ropes which are strung on a wooden frame to form an unobtrusive screen.

ABOVE The Director's cabin is done in shades of yellow, browns and white, and sings a minimal tone like the rest of the office.

importantly, quite practical. Ambient lighting included LED COBs to create spots, thus adding to the play of light and shadow.

Materially speaking, the architects refrained from using an extensive palette, choosing, instead, to stick with the basics: wood, metal and glass. However, the application differed slightly. For example, metal features as a table-top in the director's cabin, with a natural rustic finish. This is repeated in a few murals and light fixtures (pendants and pedestals). Similarly, coloured rope functions as a partition between two spaces.

Colour became an important area of discussion. The architects used greys and whites for partitions and furniture, and added architectural yellows and reds in other elements such as lights and fabrics. "This being a builder's office, adding the Le Corbusier tones in elements was justified," Vipul signs off. **BI**

FACT FILE: Project Elegance Office
 Location Ahmedabad Area 1,501 sq ft
 Principal architect Vipul Patel Design team Ronak Patel, Jinal Patel and Naiya Patel Furniture manufacturer Naranbhai Graphics and creatives Vipul Patel Architects Paintings Chandrakant