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CULTURE & QUALITY: JONY IVE ON DESIGN WITH PURPOSE

This interview with Jony Ive, Apple's former Chief Design Officer, offers a perceptive view on the intersection of culture, quality, and purpose. Among the many insights, one stood out: the belief that a creative team's state of mind—and the environment they operate in—will likely be reflected in the final product.

Ive described his team's rituals designed to foster trust, care, and creativity. On Fridays, team members would take turns preparing breakfast for the group. This practise made the (sometimes rookie) chef vulnerable and the team grateful—creating the conditions for open, constructive dialogue. At times, the team would work from each other's homes. The host, naturally anxious about opening their home, would strive to present their best self and ensure a pleasant experience for the team. Guests, meanwhile, would be more thoughtful and respectful than they might have been in a typical meeting. These subtle dynamics—gathering in a living room rather than a sterile meeting room—shifted the tone of collaboration and supported richer creative dialogue.
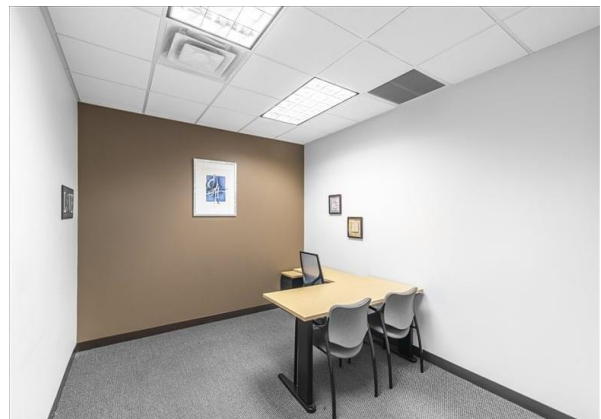

Photo: Stephen Busken

Photo: https://www.davincimeetingrooms.com/

Ive emphasized that trust and care within teams leads to deeper listening. Not the kind of listening that happens while waiting to speak, but the kind that invites insight. He also spoke about the importance of choosing the right language to frame a problem—because the words we use shape the way we solve it.

This philosophy echoes in our portfolio—particularly with Netflix, where the organizational culture is intentionally designed to foster accountability, speed, and trust. As outlined in its most recent culture memo, principles like decentralization and "freedom with responsibility" aim to empower decision-makers closest to the creative work. While the execution of this model has not been without challenges—especially as the company scales—it continues to shape how Netflix attracts talent, develops content, and refines user interface. The result, at its best, is a product experience that feels intuitive, personal, and

appealing to diverse audiences. As with any fast-growing enterprise, the ongoing test lies in preserving that cultural edge amid evolving leadership and competition.