

NESTLÉ BUILDING
 By Vicky Rae Ellimore
DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION



1 Nestlé decided to only have two levels and an open-plan environment in the new building to foster communication.

2 Offering employees an improved work-comfort level in order to promote productivity was an important part of the design of the new Nestlé building.

3 The intended design was achieved by adopting an open-plan strategy, creating a light airy environment, providing unique services on site, involving the employees in the decision-making processes and clever desk-station layout.

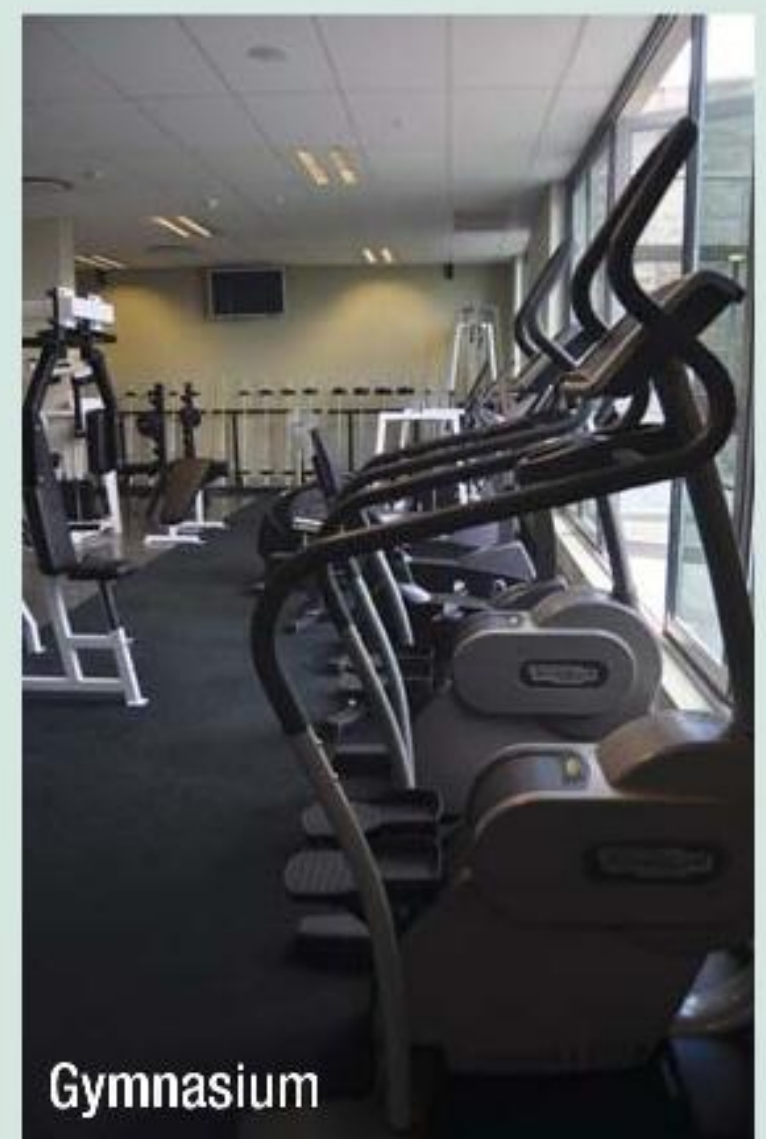
Quality work environment



Crèche



Open-plan leafy environment



Gymnasium

Employees given a vote

The Nestlé employees were involved in the decision-making process regarding the new office building right from the beginning – even in the site selection. Van Wyk tells *JFM* that the company conducted a survey to find out where employees lived and used this in making a decision about site selection. “We didn’t want half of our employees to be inconvenienced by travelling further to get to work all of a sudden,” he states.

In choosing the site, the availability of public transport in the immediate area was also a consideration. There is a taxi stop about 100 m from the gate, across the road, and the Gautrain bus stops there as well. This ensured that staff who commute using public transport could make it to work easily, on time and refreshed.

In addition, the unconventional services offered, such as the crèche, were chosen together with the staff complement. “There was a lot of discussion and communication with employees about the crèche,” Van Wyk notes. “We conducted an internal survey to determine the number of employees with children who would be interested in using it and the age of their children.”

Concerning the gym, one was already in place in the old building so its popularity was already clear and the Purina colleagues put in a request for the pet area which was heeded. Staff was also involved in deciding on the meals to be served, how often and what kind of restaurant facilities they wanted.

The employees also chose the furniture, Wright adds. “When we procured the furniture, we didn’t

“There was a lot of discussion and communication with employees.”

exclude the staff members. We went out to tender and created a mock-up and the employees voted for what they liked. We highlighted everything about the workstations and chairs, and they commented on them. For instance, they said they would like the workstation to be a little bit higher or wider.”

This can be detrimental from a design point of view but Wright says: “At the end of the day, the people who work there must be happy so they were included in the decision-making process.”

Staff numbers and function considered

An important aspect of the design of the building was that the staff numbers and functions were considered in its design and space planning. Wright notes that the first step was