

New office?

Top 10 things to consider before you do anything!

1. Does your workplace inspire the people that work there?

Your workspace can have a major impact on your employees' motivation – projecting the vision and culture of your company. Does your office merely fulfil a need? A place where your employees just sit down to work? Or is it an inspiring environment that breathes a visionary culture of a forward looking business – encouraging staff to interact, innovate and fulfil their potential? Which impression would you wish to give potential and existing employees?

2. Do you really need to move?

Moving can be disruptive to your business even when managed professionally. With a workplace appraisal of your current space you may be able to find ways to improve your current environment without the need to move at all. If 20% of workstations sit empty, could hot-desking benefit your firm? Is that archive better stored off-site? Would a serviced office fill your temporary need more efficiently?

3. Getting the budget wrong

You don't move office everyday, so can you be sure you have thought of everything? There are plenty of things that you need to consider, preferably before that budget is signed off. By getting a good handle on all the costs and timescales involved at an early stage you can avoid any surprises in the future.

4. Trying to do everything yourself

You have a day job, the last thing you need is more headaches. Relocating or refurbishing an office without the correct partner can quickly eat up large chunks of your time. Chasing any number of suppliers is the last thing you want to do. Make sure you deal with a company that can provide a one-stop shop, one point of contact and takes responsibility for everything.

5. Choosing the wrong partner

Ask for references. Look at completed projects. Speak to previous clients. Make at least one meeting at their premises and take the time to meet the people you wouldn't normally see. Choosing the wrong firm to assist you with your office move can be a costly mistake. A little bit of investigation will quickly reveal how professional your chosen firm really is.

6. Internal communication

Change is difficult to manage in any organisation. By involving your staff from the outset they can buy into the process and really look forward to enjoying your investment in a better working environment. On the flipside too much consultation can slow decision making down and produce piecemeal results. When the right balance is struck your office move will be a very positive experience for the whole company.

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7. The Importance of furniture

Many construction orientated fit-out firms simply do not value office furniture as a major part of the office environment. With offices becoming more open plan, the main functional asset of your interior is your furniture. Throwing “tables and chairs” into your design simply does not understand the functional needs of your organisation. How flexible is the solution? Is it easily reconfigured? Does it need to be? Is visual or sound privacy important? Are the storage resources appropriate and to hand? Be sure that your office interior designers have an intimate knowledge of all the latest developments in office furniture.

8. Economise but don't compromise

In the US in 1997, employers reported a total of 626,000 lost workdays due to work-related musculoskeletal disorders. That constitutes the largest job-related illness and injury problem in the U.S. Clearly ergonomics is a very important factor in office design. For example, buying the cheapest chair not only sends out the wrong signals to your employees (their perceived value to the company), but it may be costing you money too... Spending a little more in key areas can have a dramatic effect on your productivity.

9. Employ a firm that can both design and build your project

Traditionally an Architect or Designer produces the specification and a builder tenders for the work. By using a firm that both designs and builds your project you can reduce costs and time by up to 40%. You will also have one point of contact at all times from A to Z and the responsibility for your project will always remain in the same place.

10. Image

The office is the visible framework for people, processes and the company's culture. It is a strategic resource and can exert a decisive influence on a company's results. How your office looks and functions is one of the most important tools you have at your disposal to create a favourable impression with your clients and, even more importantly, the people who work for you. Be sure your designer truly understands your company culture and your brand - and can project those values through your office solution

The Business Interiors Design Team