



CORPORATE INTERIORS

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Business Opportunity Or Major Headache ?

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How Relocating Can Improve Business

Relocating a business, whether through choice or circumstances, provides a unique chance to review all elements of the workplace and make it operate more efficiently.

A well planned move can :-

- Facilitate business expansion plans + integrate new personnel and workgroups
- Boost competitiveness (reduced overheads and a more suitable location)
- Inspire changes to your entire operation: a total spring clean and streamlining.
- Increase efficiency - a happy workforce is a productive workforce !

Take a good look at some areas of the business that could be made more efficient :-

- ~ Day to day operational procedures
(interaction of workgroups / staff communications)
- ~ Most effective use of space
(office or open plan offices + shared support / staff areas)
- ~ Staffing levels and future requirements
(integration of existing workgroups + planned team additions)

Selecting Effective New Premises

Firstly, establish exactly what you should be looking for :-

- ~ Where do you want to be based ?
- ~ How much space do you require ?
- ~ What are you prepared to pay for new premises ?

Then, devise a methodical evaluation method to help your selection

- ~ Base your final decision on an objective comparison of all the relevant factors
- ~ Create a clear and concise operational brief to help communicate the agreed business objectives to ensure all staff understand your needs.
- ~ Consider using an experienced commercial interior designer or space planning consultant, to help you find and design the best workplace to match your needs and future growth (particularly if you plan to restructure your work processes at the same time !)

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Selecting Effective New Premises

A good operational brief will include :-

- An overview of current business size and details of key workgroups + inter dependency of existing operational personnel.
- A schedule of major business processes and future growth objectives
- Availability of resources (internally or external consultants - if required)
- A detailed examination of current considerations and planned future changes within the new workplace such as :-
 - ~ New business objectives
 - ~ Staffing levels
 - ~ Working practices
 - ~ Internal relationships
 - ~ Staff hierarchy
 - ~ Information Technology

Comparing Alternative Properties

To allow direct comparison between potential properties, try scoring each one under specific headings :-

■ Operational

- ~ Is the location right for the business ?
- ~ How well does it fit the overall requirement brief ?
- ~ Does the size provide sufficient flexibility ?

■ Quantitative

- ~ Calculate the total costs of each premises (rent, rates, insurance, services)
- ~ Consider the total relocation cost (fit out, new furnishings + moving costs)

■ Qualitative

- ~ How accessible is it ? (parking + public transport)
- ~ Will the new location have an impact on staff retention ?
- ~ Is there anything for staff to do at lunch times ?

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Key Staff Considerations

- **Communication is crucial to keeping staff involved ; -**
 - ~ Keep staff informed about the move to minimise stress.
 - ~ If rumours spread unchecked, it can create fear and affect company morale, motivation and productivity.
- **If the planned move is a geographical one, consider ; -**
 - ~ Could staff be expected to commute or would they need to relocate ?
 - ~ If they did relocate, what about their families ? (schools, jobs, cost of accommodation)
 - ~ If they didn't relocate, what about redundancy and recruitment costs to replace them ?

Arranging The Move

- **Assess whether you have sufficient high calibre internal resources to undertake the relocation and manage any potential staff problems.**
- **Don't assume that your experience in managing the business will see you through the relocation. Also, do you have the time ?**
- **Prepare a specific, detailed relocation plan ; -**
 - ~ Work back from the planned relocation date
 - ~ Identify key tasks and allocate the available resources
- **If any holes appear in the plan or it looks like certain individuals will be overloaded (remember they still have their regular jobs to do) consider ; -**
 - ~ Establishing a task force to properly resource the project
 - ~ Seconding other staff temporarily to manage elements of project
 - ~ Appointing specialist external consultants (do this early on to maximise their input)

Finally, remember you are still in business - don't let the move distract you and your team from the day-to-day responsibilities of maintaining sales revenue and earning a living !