

THE OFFICE FITOUT CHECKLIST

A comprehensive checklist to help you navigate the office fitout and refurbishment journey successfully.

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Planning for such an event, so that it is managed properly, is fundamental to ensuring it is a success. Use this comprehensive check list to help you develop a comprehensive project plan if moving or refurbishing is on the horizon.

Assess your current situation and consider your options

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- ☐ Appoint an internal project leader (make sure this person is a good communicator, brilliant organiser and skilled negotiator!)
- ☐ Agree the overall required outcomes of the project (is it to fit in X more people, to give a better image to clients, to reduce costs, to get a better working environment to attract the best staff and boost productivity, etc.)
- ☐ Set up an internal project team that includes facilities manager, office manager, finance, IT, operations, HR and marketing
- ☐ Involve staff in the discussions (identify the key influencers who could act as internal champions for change)
- ☐ Identify all the possible solutions (relocate, refurbish, redesign, consolidate etc.)
- ☐ Complete a detailed audit of your current office accommodation and storage, and also your actual usage or occupancy levels (a good office design company will be able to help with this - this may involve deploying occupancy sensors to accurately establish actual usage levels)
- ☐ Following your audit and considering your future plans establish what size of office you are actually needing
- ☐ Establish budget costs for the different options (you will probably need to engage with commercial property agents and office interiors companies for advice)
- ☐ Establish the dilapidations costs for your current building if you relocate
- ☐ Don't forget to consider the non-financial impacts - most options will involve some disruption but if you relocate there are other potential negatives e.g. loss of local staff, as well as potential positives e.g. access to a bigger or better talent pool.
- ☐ Decide whether relocation or redesign and refurbishment is the best option (don't forget that you could make space savings of up to 30% by adopting agile working)

Relocation

If you have decided to go the relocation route then use the following short checklist to assist you in this stage.

- ☐ Select a good commercial property agent, one you can trust. Confide in them and explain your situation, your requirements and your future plans, as fully as you can.
- ☐ Considering your desired outcomes for the project that were originally agreed - set criteria for selecting your new premises
- ☐ Create a shortlist of available properties that may be feasible
- ☐ Visit them to assess their suitability, consider the availability of parking , public transport and amenities such as coffee shops, cafes and restaurants
- ☐ Familiarise yourself with the terms of the lease, rent reviews, and the dilapidations clauses
- ☐ Engage with an office design specialist to develop some high-level design concepts for each viable option, as a minimum you should prepare some test-fit space plans to ensure that your required staff numbers can be accommodated.
- ☐ Ask for copies of any building surveys that may have already been conducted - in particular check for an asbestos survey. If necessary arrange for additional building surveys to be conducted
- ☐ Select your preferred building option and attempt to secure it.

Once heads of terms have been agreed then you need to act swiftly to complete the design process to keep the project moving forward.

Fitout or Refurbishment

Whether you have decided to go the relocation route or to stay in your current premises and refurbish you can use the following short checklist to assist you in the design and fitout/refurbishment process.

- ☐ Develop a detailed project brief including staff numbers in the various departments, the desired image that is to be projected to potential visitors, the atmosphere you want to create.
- ☐ Draw up a shortlist of potential office interior companies - bear in mind the capabilities that are going to be needed.
- ☐ Issue your design brief and initial specification to your short-listed office interior companies and invite their initial ideas and concepts.
- ☐ Research new office design concepts such as agile working and the latest furniture styles and options thoroughly - don't assume that the way you've always done it is the best solution.
- ☐ Investigate all technology options – telephones, computers, document solutions.
- ☐ Be aware of your responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to disability rights. Any facilities you provide must be accessible to all staff.
- ☐ Be aware of your responsibilities under The Construction Design and Management Regulations 2007 in relation to CDM and health & safety. For a guide outlining your legal duties and responsibilities visit the CITB website (<https://www.citb.co.uk/cdm-regulations/>)
- ☐ Finalise the right specification and quality for your requirements including partitioning, flooring, ceiling, lighting, etc - a visit to an interiors showroom where samples of all the options can be viewed would be invaluable. Spectrum Workplace have a 4000 sqft interiors showroom at their Havant premises.
- ☐ Consider how you are going to minimise disruption to your business. Often key team members are given the job of overseeing the project without realising just how much time is going to be needed and how much it will impact on their day-to-day role.

Selecting a partner

You've agreed on the best design solution and you need to agree on the best company to partner with to actually carry out the work.

Some points you may want to consider when assessing the different companies are:

- ☐ Have they carried out similar works before - can they provide case studies to back up their claim.
- ☐ Can they provide references from other clients that you can contact
- ☐ Check their credit rating
- ☐ Visit their premises - hopefully they have a showroom or display area that can be very helpful
- ☐ Check they have the necessary insurance cover
- ☐ Are they able to assist you in gaining all the necessary planning permissions, and obtaining building regulations and landlord approvals before the work commences. Please note that if you proceed without the necessary permissions and approvals then you may be required to reverse any work done at your expense.

Once work starts ensure you have regular project meetings with your designer and contractors

If you are relocating to new premises then don't forget to:-

- ☐ Draw up a detailed plan for moving staff, IT equipment and all other storage and filing.
- ☐ Get prices for removal companies
- ☐ Consider who is going to disconnect, move and reconnect all your IT equipment
- ☐ Communicate the move to clients, suppliers and any other parties

Move in and enjoy!