



Planning Your Move Piece By Piece

1. Assess your needs

First you need to be clear about the purpose of your office relocation – for example - lease break, lease expiry, planned growth or contraction - in order to define your needs and map out the appropriate office move plan. There are some important decisions that must be agreed upon as the starting point of the moving process and which will form the basis of the subsequent planning process. These can include the details of the existing lease and notice period and your current obligations and liabilities.

2. Outline your requirements

A clear understanding at the outset of your basic strategic and operational requirements will make the whole moving office process go more smoothly – and save time. Don't worry too much about the technical specifics (as these form part of the advice given by the external property move professionals). However, you must have an overall idea and consensus from all decision makers about the key drivers of the office move including:

- Where you want to move to
- How much space you need
- What date you need to be in by
- What key features you need your new office to have
- What your planned business objectives (including growth plan) that the move needs to satisfy
- Type and length of lease you want

3. Build a project team

An office move is a major undertaking and a collaborative effort is vital for a successful outcome. Putting together the right project team is critical and should include people who will help facilitate all aspects of the move. It will need to comprise both internal and external members from key firms and operations.

A Project Leader must be put in charge of the relocation process as soon as the decision to move office has been made. This person must have sufficient time to devote to the office move project and should:

- have the trust of senior management;
- have the authority to act on behalf of the company;
- be senior enough to be able to make decisions;
- be a good organiser of people and processes;
- have experience of setting and working within budgets;
- be a good communicator.

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4. Start early

There is much to do and organise when moving, so the earlier you start the greater the chance of achieving the hitch-free move your business expects. Once the Office Move Project Leader has been appointed work should begin immediately.

Start by reviewing your options at least nine to 18 months prior to your lease expiration - whether or not you are considering renewing, renegotiation or relocation. It is vital that you allow enough lead-time to increase the amount of leverage you have and competition between the various options. If one well, this can result in substantial savings for your business. Refer to the Moving Office Timetable.

5. Create a realistic budget

Creating a realistic office relocation budget is a critical planning tool that will help you assess your costs and manage them throughout the process. Moving Office has created a working budget template ATTACHED.

6. Hiring the right professionals

The whole moving office process can be complex and time-consuming. After people costs property costs are the next biggest expenditure for most businesses. The decisions you make will have an impact on your business's profitability. Working with the right professional team is the single biggest must-do for any company thinking of moving office. They will guide you through the process, save you money in the long run and also make sure you don't make any critical mistakes.

7. Seek legal advice

Your Property Solicitor will negotiate the detail of the lease documentation to minimise your exposure to potential liabilities, and subsequently, to advise you on the implications of the detailed terms in the final documents to ensure you are aware of your ongoing responsibilities, CMR have a list of approved solicitors in your area.

8. Focus on communication

Internally, change can be unsettling for staff. While the office move is in progress, your business has to continue to operate and focus on its existing workload and commitments. However, moving office is a great opportunity to affect positive change, improve business performance, and increase morale and momentum.

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Externally, there are many moving parts to an office relocation and you need to ensure that everyone involved in the project is regularly updated, especially if there are any changes to procedures. If you keep the lines of communication open to all interested parties - internal and external - your office move will have a much greater chance of success.

9. Remember - It's a process

The prospect of moving office may seem like a daunting process, but as with any operation, it can be broken down into a series of simple tasks and checks. The intelligent use of your project planning documents, spread sheets and checklists will not only help you plan the office move, but also act as your road map to carry out the many tasks involved with the project. Don't try and reinvent the wheel when you can use tried and tested moving office tools and guides.

10. Take time to spring clean

Take advantage of moving office by clearing out all your old files and purging your storage areas of unneeded or unused items. It is also worth considering scanning any documents which you no longer need in hard copy – but make sure you remember to dispose of unwanted files securely.

Secure storage or archiving of documentation is a flexible, safe and cost-effective solution to free up valuable and more costly office space. It can be accessed at any time by arrangement and provides excellent off-site backup for damage limitation in case of fire or other disaster.

Upgrading - moving office is an opportunity to update to modern, efficient and space-saving equipment.

Reviewing your existing suppliers - moving office can provide a trigger for renewing/switching supplier contracts on favourable terms.

Raising customer awareness - moving office is a great opportunity to communicate positive messages to your customers and maximise the brand and image of your business.

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