

NEW OFFICE, CO-WORKING & OFFICE SHARING CHECKLIST

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There are some key questions you need to be able to answer before you even start office hunting. Many of these questions simply come down to 3 main categories: money, resources and long term business objectives.

Before you start office hunting ask yourself these simple questions:

- Are you looking to lease or buy?
- Do you have to wait until the end of the lease on your existing office?
- Do you need to sell your existing office before you can buy a new one?
- Do you want room to grow? If so, how much?
- Are you willing to share office space with another company?
- Do you want a furnished office space?
- What is your budget, do you have enough for the deposit required?
- What lease period are you looking for (if renting)
- Do you want/need weekend access?
- Once you have nailed down these basics you can move on to assessing what you really need and want from your office space.

LOCATION

What works for one business will not necessarily work for another. Take time to identify what are some of the key factors you want from your new office location.

- How easy will it be to meet clients?
- Does it have easy access links?
- Does it have parking?
- What would the commute be like for your KEY staff?
- Will your staff be able to access fresh hot food easily?
- Is it possible to get there by public transport?

ACCESSIBILITY

By law, all workplaces are required to facilitate workers with physical (and mental) disabilities but many business owners are not aware of these requirements. Here are some key basic considerations all employers should make:

- What are your current needs and requirements?
- Are there stairs? If so is there an alternative such as a lift or ramp?
- Are the doors at least 32 inches wide
- Do the doors require less than 5lbs of force to open?
- How easy are the plug sockets to reach?
- Is the office space already furnished? If so is the furniture accessible? Do they offer adjustable height desks, anti-trip hazard flooring, a range in types of seating etc?
- Are there accessible toilets?
- Is there disabled parking?
- Is there adequate space between desks in the office (at least 32 inches)?

In short, according to recent studies an accessible office results in better employee safety, retention, profitability and productivity.

RESOURCES

Identify what resources you need and/or want but make sure you consider both your current and expected future needs.

- Are you willing to share resources with another company?
- Do you require the use of printers, scanners or projectors? Do you intend to bring or purchase your own?
- Do you require parking?
- Do you intend to share internet access or have your own?
- Do you need storage such as lockers or under desk drawers?
- Are you looking for a furnished office?
- Are there tea and coffee making facilities?
- Do you need a staff kitchen?
- Do you require collaborative 'open' spaces?
- Do you need a private office or meeting spaces?
- Will there be existing IT equipment and infrastructure in place?
- Do you require specialised spaces? For example for large equipment

HIDDEN COSTS

Whether you are looking to move into a new stand-alone business, share office space or share an office building with another company(s) there are always potential hidden costs. So before you sign on the dotted line ask these following questions:

- Are utility costs shared? If so how is this determined?
- Will you have your own dedicated phone line? Is there a cost for this?
- Can you get multiple direct lines? Is there an associated cost?
- Does the office space have a receptionist? Is there an additional charge for this?
- Are there parking charges?
- Is there a building fee, landscaping fee or maintenance fee?
- Are there additional costs associated with tea and coffee making facilities, etc?
- Security charges (for example for CCTV or security guards)
- Building and office insurance, who is liable?

OFFICE LIFE

Finally, you need to ask yourself what type of office life you desire for you and your staff:

- What sort of atmosphere do you want?
- Would you like to collaborate with other companies in your building/office space?
- If you have room to grow, would you consider renting out these desks short term as an additional form of income?
- What level of security do you require, CCTV, access-controlled doors etc?
- What impression do you want to set for clients?

Once you have determined what you do and don't want you can start office hunting; safe in the knowledge that you know what is best for your business, your staff, for you and your budget.