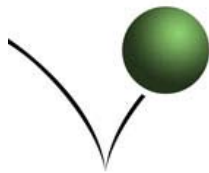


Your Office Fit Out Guide



How to manage your Office Fit Out and ensure you “bounce back” from the challenge.



Visual Impression is the focal point to your corporate Identity - Moving or refurbishing your office is a great opportunity to affect positive change and improvement in business performance and increase moral.

Your Office Refurbishment is probably one of the largest company expenses you can undertake, so where to start the process? – it's a pretty daunting prospect, especially as Refurbishment is a highly visible process to working colleagues so it's vital your project runs smoothly, on time and on budget.

Have you heard the phrase "Eat the Elephant?" – manage your refurbishment process in "bite size" chunks and break down each element – this will help your project to run smoothly from concept to completion.

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Workplace Appraisal – Space Change Considerations

The starting point for any office fit out is to undertake a detailed analysis of both your current and future business objectives and office space planning requirements.

Your chosen Office Interiors Company will be able to help with all of the following areas, and giving careful consideration to the following points will really help when the time comes to sit down and examine the brief of your project.

Expansion or Contraction



Your Office Fit Out will allow you to look at your space with a fresh approach and reorganise your space to achieve it's maximum potential.

Office Space Planning can help decide the most appropriate and cost effective solutions to meet your specific requirements. It deals with the fundamentals such as how much office space is available, how many people need to work in the space, what sort of work they will be doing – as well as the practical issues of your meeting rooms, break out, reception, storage, kitchen requirements etc.

Sadly in the current financial climate there can be a need to re evaluate your Workspace, empty seats do little to enhance staff moral so make the most of your space and re-plan to achieve a positive working environment.

Facilities Upgrade



Consider your existing layout and facilities, how can you bring improvement to the area?

Do you need a showcase area for potential customers? Would a break out area be beneficial for your staff and aid motivation and efficient working, it's surprising how a change of scenery can help inspire a happy productive work team.

Visual Impression – The Focal point to your Corporate Identity.



Effective Corporate Branding can be easily incorporated into your office fit out scheme, at the outset it helps to consider image enhancement through areas such as adding your logo to Glazed Partitions, Reception areas or even sculptured into new flooring areas – all can look really effective and your customers and staff will see the “wow factor” in your forward thinking business approach.

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Needs and Wants? - Think Inside the Box to include Workplace Design and Aesthetics

Good workplace design is not just about creating a professional looking environment, it must also boost employee motivation and performance through efficient, effective and clever use of space.

We recommend considering the following key points when designing and planning your working environment:



We strongly feel it is important to interpret your requirements clearly and that means ensuring your chosen Interior Fit Out Company has a clear remit ensuring you get the right balance between your available budget and your ideal office space.

Flexible working space is now being embraced by many companies and looking at your work flow can help with decisions such as “Hot Desking” which can provide improved space utilisation.

Now for the fun bit☺ – to establish “look and feel” why not have a brainstorming session with fellow work colleagues and come up with some creative ideas.

Work with your chosen Interior Fit Out Company to provide Concept Drawings - these can be pretty economical to produce and enable you to get a real feel for how your new office may shape up – the next step from this can be to have Mood Boards which include Fabric samples so you can touch and feel some of the materials for your new office.

Spending time planning your new office is paramount – how flexible a solution do you need? – do you need easy reconfiguration? – is visual or sound privacy important? – all these key questions can have a dramatic effect on your business productivity.



Office Space Planning

By carefully thinking through work processes and activity you can maximise the space available to you.

By working with an experienced Office Fit Out Company you can take advantage of the many years of their experience in working through accommodation standards such as the amount of square footage someone needs to work comfortably, together with Legal Compliance in areas such as The Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare and Equality Acts.

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Budget Setting - Savings



Your Office Fit Out is likely to be one of the highest single financial outlays.

Work out your maximum spend, a reputable Office Fit Out Company will work with you to look at where you can make savings in your chosen design, very often this can be done with very little change to the overall visual impact of your project.

Be Budget Change aware:-

It is well worth drawing up a check list of hidden costs, some of the following areas often catch people by surprise but need to be considered, so if applicable, you should include them within your budget.

- Dilapidations

If you are moving premises you will need to correspond with your landlord to assess your contractual obligations for handover of the premises, this can involve Dilapidation work to return existing premises back to the same condition in which you undertook your lease.

- Recycling

If you are using the opportunity to upgrade to new equipment then you may have redundant equipment such as IT, Telecoms, Furniture. Working with a reputable Office Interiors Company can help ensure that these are disposed of in line with current waste regulations and that any sensitive IT waste is disposed of in a secure way.

- Temporary Facilities/Storage

It is well worth evaluating the business impact your Interior Office refurbishment will have on the day to day running of your business .

Today most facilities can be replicated and provided on a temporary basis to accommodate Offices, Classrooms, Toilet, Shower Room areas and Storage Areas.

- Contingency Costs

Include Contingencies for your contingencies! - it is usual and sensible to allow for this within your budget, a reputable Interior Refurbishment company will work honestly and openly with you to set this at a realistic level.

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Feasibility – Visualise, Examine



Establishing the suitability of your chosen location or property is an important phase of your project.

If you are re-planning your existing office space, it is well worth obtaining a project brief and feasibility evaluation to ascertain your present and future requirements.

If you think that you have outgrown your existing premises and you are planning to re-locate, a reputable Office Fit Out Company will work with you to provide a feasibility report which will evaluate some of the following key elements.

- Number of existing employees to ascertain accommodation of Workstations
- Company Growth rate to incorporate into Space Planning and Design
- Room by Room calculations for present and future space requirements.

This is the ideal time to examine your Heating and Ventilation, Lighting and Air Conditioning requirements.

If you are already part of an existing serviced office building then there is perhaps going to be very little change but as part of the study it can always be assessed to ensure that you are getting your fair share of cool air ventilation.

Going Green



There are a few very easy steps you can take to help incorporate a “Green” environment into your existing or new offices and there are more products than ever before to help make your workspace more environmentally friendly.

The importance of natural light can be easily overlooked. Try creating a more open environment and consider glazed partitions which provide a great feeling of light and space.

Consider “Green” furniture. There is much wider range of sustainable economically priced furniture available, check with your selected Interior Partner regarding certification and environmentally friendly products.



Good ventilation is critical in your office working environment and plenty of fresh air and awareness of potential pollutants can really enhance your employee's welfare at work.

At the planning stage of your Interior Refurbishment is a good place to consider some of the following areas:-

- Is the current Air Conditional system future proof and will it accommodate any office expansion.
- Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are substances that can be harmful to health, consider using only low VOC paints and materials contained in furniture and carpets.
- Many leading manufacturers now offer ranges of carpet tiles to help Allergy sufferers.

Waste Control – A reputable Office Interiors company will ensure that waste generated from your Office Refurbishment is disposed of in line with current waste regulations.

Talk through your ideas to see how your business sustainability policy can be incorporated within your required Interior Design scheme.

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Engage – Chose your Champions



Project Responsibility – define the project team members - the best way for your project to remain on track is to have a single Project Co-ordinator.

Your Project Co-ordinator should know your business inside out and be organised with strong communication skills.

Key Personnel structure plans can aid this process which is clearly defined to detail personnel who are to be involved in your project decision making. The Project Structure Plan could include all or some of the following as part of the overall Project Board.

- Managing Director
- Finance Director
- Office Management
- Marketing Departments
- Human Resources

A strong support structure encompassing some or all of the above can ensure that the right people are involved at the right time and they will all have valuable input to help your project run smoothly and ensure minimal stress and disruption to the business.



Selecting your Office Interiors Partner

Look for an experienced Office Interiors Solutions provider who can provide a “concept to completion” service. This single source solution really does save you time in managing multiple trade contractors and will enable you to form a close Team relationship throughout the course of your project.

Using the key listing below can help you determine if your Interior Office Solutions provider has the best level of expertise for your project:-

- Dedicated Project Management as standard throughout the course of your project.
- Space, Interior Design and Feasibility Planning, can they help you put together your brief?
- Cad and Visuals provided as standard
- Wide range of Furniture options to suit all budgets
- M & E, Airconditioning, Heating and Ventilation
- Data and Power
- Compliant – do they have the experience to ensure you comply with current legislation such as:- Construction Design Management; Health and Safety; Planning Permissions and Building Control. Can they also undertake Main Contractor and CDM Co-Ordinator Roles? – without experience in this area if your project falls under CDM Regulations it is very likely this will be sub contracted to an outside supply source which will result in an additional costs.
- Experience of working in occupied space – this can be very different from Construction Companies who only have experience in working continually on open building sites.
- Can they offer a wide range of value for money options, a good Office Interiors Company will work with you to look at effective cost savings whilst considering the longer term view.
- Quality References from existing and previous clients – can they arrange for you to visit reference sites?
- Recognised Industry Accreditation
- Purchasing Power – do they have a sound selection criteria in place for suppliers and take advantage of special negotiated rates with buying groups. Do they perform any quality and performance assessments and have quality procedures and preferred supply policies in place to ensure continuity of materials supply during the course of your project.
- Financially sound – how long has the company been trading? – Is your selected Interiors Company well respected within the Industry with fair and prompt trading terms in place with its supply chain.



Communication is Key

It's paramount to keep Management and Staff up to speed with progress of your project.

A reputable Office Interiors Company will ensure you have a fully detailed Project Programme to work to and have a procedure in place for document control during notifiable changes.

Talk to relevant Department Heads regarding any relevant impact changes. Your Interior Solutions provider will work with you through every stage of your project to ensure challenges are thought through well ahead and planning procedures put in place to minimise disruption.

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Time is of the Essence



Prepare, Plan, Synchronise

Carry out any necessary Interior Project Surveys well in advance to give ample time to fit in with the overall project programme.

Utilise the Project Programme Plan as an effective working tool. Ensure your selected Interior Office Company is efficient in being able to forward this in your required media – i.e. Microsoft Project, Microsoft Xcel and by email and or hard copy.

Changes to Project Programmes can prove expensive in both time and budget overspend, so plan to ensure all your interior elements have been well thought and talked through.

The Project Plan should have a logical flow to ensure that specific tasks and areas have synchronised works taking into account any priority areas.

In order to keep the relevant people informed, you must have regular and complete access to all information about the project; customer needs, objectives, plan, constraints, changes/risks and progress.

Synchronise your Project Team – it is important to factor in both business and personal commitments during the project phase. This need to cater for such eventualities as:-

- Ensuring your Board Director is available for any important Document Sign off's
- Financial procedures are catered for to ensure terms can be adhered to and key decision makers are available for any agreed extra over costs.
- Consider your in house business logistics – will you need dedicated time from your IT Infra Structure Team.

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Compliance



Your duty to care.....

CDM (Construction Design Management) Regulations can be a very daunting area but a good Interior Solutions provider will help and guide you through this area and ensure that you are compliant. Ensuring your chosen provider has expertise in this area can save your valuable time as many of the required CDM procedures and document processes will be part of their normal policy.

CDM Made Easy.....

- Is your Project “Notifiable” or “Non-Notifiable” to the Health and Safety Executive?
- Should you appoint CDM Co-Ordinator and or Principle Contractor?
- Do you need a Health and Safety Plan?
- What about Risk Assessments, Method Statements, Coshh Information?
- Who compiles the Operations Manual?

Questions, Questions, Questions?????????

Who needs to know about the Regulations?

Anyone having construction or building work carried out has legal duties under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 (CDM 2007), unless they are a domestic client.

What will the Regulations do?

These Regulations will help you ensure that your construction project is safe to build, safe to use, safe to maintain and delivers you good value.

Good health and safety planning will also help ensure that your project is well managed and that unexpected costs and problems are minimised.

What do Companies need to do?

As a company, you have a big influence over how the work is done. Where potential health and safety risks are low, there is little you are required to do. Where they are higher, you need to do more.

CDM Regulations are not about creating unnecessary and unhelpful processes and paperwork. It is about choosing a competent Interiors team and helping them to work safely and efficiently and effectively with your Team. Give enough time and resource and you will get the building you want, when you want it and on budget.

As a company, you need to do the following.

All construction projects

1 Appoint the right people

— Your Interior Fit Out is more likely to run smoothly if you make sure the Office Interiors Company you engage are competent, have sufficient resources and are appointed early enough, so the work can be carried out safely.

2 Allow adequate time

— A rushed project is likely to be unsafe and of poor quality. You need to allow enough time for the design, planning and construction work to be undertaken properly.

— *If in doubt, talk to your appointed Interiors Partner to agree a mutually workable programme.*

3 Provide information to your team

— You need to pass on key information to your Interiors team if they are to design and construct something that is safe to build, safe to use and safe to maintain. They will need information about what you want, how you will use it, the site and existing structures or hazards, such as asbestos. This will help your team to plan, budget and work around problems.

— *If in doubt, talk to your appointed Interiors Partner.*

4 Ensure you and your team communicate and co-operate

— Your project will only run efficiently if all those involved in the work communicate, co-operate and co-ordinate with each other.

— During the initial stages, it is particularly important that you, your designers and contractors talk early on about issues affecting buildability, usability and maintainability of the finished structure. You don't want people injured or unexpected costs because issues weren't properly considered when design changes could still easily be made.

5 Ensure suitable management arrangements are in place

— Construction projects can be complex and involve many different trades and occupations. Frequently they also involve high-risk activities. The work is more likely to be done safely and to time if those doing the work have suitable management arrangements in place.

— You need to make sure that suitable arrangements are in place throughout the whole project.

— The type and level of checks needed depends on the work being undertaken and the risks involved. You may need help for more complex and high-risk projects.

6 Ensure adequate welfare facilities on site

If in Doubt - ensure that your contractors have included to provide adequate welfare facilities for construction workers before project work commences.

7 Ensure workplaces are designed correctly

— If your project is for a new workplace or alterations to an existing workplace (e.g. a factory or office), they must meet the standards set out in the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.

If in Doubt - enquire with your Interiors Partner or anyone who is doing design work for you to confirm that these requirements have been complied with.

Notifiable construction projects

In addition, for notifiable construction work (work lasting longer than 30 days or involving 500 person days of work), you have to do the following.

8 Appoint a CDM co-ordinator

— Your appointed CDM co-ordinator is there to advise and assist CDM duties on notifiable jobs. If you are going to appoint someone from within your Company to take on this role it is good practice for them to have some relevant experience of the regulations and responsibility areas. They will be helping to.....

- help identify what information will be needed by designers and contractors;
- co-ordinate the arrangements for health and safety during the planning phase;
- ensure that HSE is notified of the project;
- tell you if the initial construction phase plan is suitable; and
- prepare a health and safety file for you (this contains useful information you need to enable future cleaning, maintenance and alterations to be carried out safely).

— You should appoint the CDM co-ordinator as soon as possible, but no later than the initial design/preparation stage.

— CDM 2007 does not require the CDM co-ordinator to supervise or monitor work on site.

If in Doubt - talk though this area with your Interiors Partner who should be able to guide you through this area and may be able to undertake this role for you.

9 Appoint a principal contractor

— A principal contractor is needed to plan, manage and co-ordinate work while construction work is being carried out on notifiable jobs.

— Principal contractors are usually the main or managing contractor for the work.

— You should appoint the principal contractor at the earliest opportunity. This is so they can be involved in discussions about buildability, usability and maintainability and so they can have time to plan the work properly.



10 Ensure a health and safety plan is in place

For Notifiable Projects The principal contractor has to produce a construction phase health and safety plan outlining the key arrangements to ensure that the work is carried out safely. You should not allow work to start on site until there is an adequate plan.

Frequently asked questions

Can I appoint myself to carry out other duties?

Yes, you can appoint yourself as a CDM co-ordinator and/or principal contractor, provided you have the necessary competence and resources to comply with the additional CDM duties.

As CDM Co-Ordinator do I have to supervise work on site?

No, CDM 2007 only requires you to check that suitable management arrangements are being followed. This does not mean going onto the construction site. For simple, low risk projects, this could include:

- checking there is adequate protection for the public and, where necessary, your own workforce;
- asking for confirmation that adequate welfare is provided;
- asking your Interiors team to explain their arrangements for managing work on site.

What happens if I don't comply with my CDM duties?

It is more likely that there will be a dangerous or fatal incident while your construction work is carried out if you do not ensure that CDM 2007 is followed. In addition, your finished structure may not be safe to use, safe to maintain and not deliver you good value for money.

If you don't appoint a CDM co-ordinator or principal contractor on a notifiable project, it will mean that you are legally liable if the things that they should have done aren't actually done.

Serious breaches of health and safety legislation on your construction project could result in construction work being stopped by HSE or your local authority and additional work may be needed to put things right. In the most serious circumstances, you could be prosecuted.

Always ensure you engage a reputable, experienced Interior Solutions Provider to Guide you through your obligations under the Construction Design Management Regulations.

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Work In Progress – Top Refurbishment Tips

