

Consumer Tip Sheet – Office Moving

Planning and Arranging the Relocation of an Office

There are many factors companies should consider when moving their offices. We hope this tip sheet helps you out with your planning. Discuss with your mover your particular game plan for a smooth move.

Develop a General Plan

- Notify and inform staff affected by move.
- Establish procedure outlining steps required to execute move.
- Establish time schedule for each stage. (see move check list for assistance)
- Distribute notice of move to immediate staff affected.
- Execute move.

Specific Details to Follow

1. Bolster the employee morale and eliminate grapevine rumours and future criticism of rearrangement by fully informing staff of new floor plan and layout.
2. Discuss with mover all details of the final floor plan and layout to develop economies in time and effectiveness.
3. Number and tag all furniture and equipment to be moved to a new location, relating a colour code label and floor plan placement (each number may also indicate the sequence of removal from old premises). The mover may also do this. Isolate "DO NOT MOVE" and "STORAGE" items.
4. Make sure floor plan layout clearly indicates distances between key pieces of furniture for rapid placement and positioning.
5. Produce a list of all pieces (inventory) to be moved identifying area, department, floor number and employee name. Integrate all new furniture into this list.
6. Telephone layout plan indicating position, type of instrument, extension number, hold buttons and intercom system.
7. Plan photocopier move with supplier of equipment.
8. Electrical work - prepare copy of existing layout with instructions for electrician to remove desk wires, wall clocks, intercom systems and water coolers, etc., that are to be moved.
9. Carpenters - instructions for removal of fixed accessories from present premises (i.e., suggestion boxes, mirrors, bulletin boards, fans, shelving). Check elevator capacity at both new and old locations in preparation for dismantling of equipment that is oversize.
10. Clean up - furniture, floors, etc., after installation.

Time schedule

Outside working hours are preferred in order to prevent disruption of jobs; establish day; estimate starting time; estimate working time and estimate the completion time of each of the following steps:

1. New furniture should be installed in place before moving in any existing furniture
2. Elevator time required
3. Final installation with telephone, photocopier, electricians and carpenters

Communication

- Information regarding all changes in locations, telephone numbers and locals, fax numbers, post office box numbers and e-mail should be published for use of other employees, outside workers and customers well in advance of change to new system to prevent dislocation of service.
- Mail Department - both incoming and outgoing and switchboard should be briefed.
- Lobby directory changes

Executing the Move

1. One week prior to the move do a general housecleaning, discarding all obsolete material according to a plan.
2. Develop instructions of how to pack, explaining that the maximum load per box is 60 pounds:
 - Liquids that may spill or items that may be broken;
 - Files that can be compressed in drawers and cabinets or alternatively removed from drawers and packed in cartons;
 - Files and drawers that can be locked to prevent opening in transit;
 - Fragile items that should be packed separately in box identified with code number of individual's desk (e.g., plants, pen sets, desk trays, etc.);
 - Distribute tags to employees for their furniture and identify who is responsible for tagging (to be supervised by department head for assurance that each piece is tagged (See Figure 1 – Colour Codes);
 - Designate one person in each department to be at the old location and another at the new location, each with a copy of the plan for moving by sequence; the person in new location will have a crew for positioning of furniture; follow plan to the letter.
3. Inform staff affected by move –
 - What the general plan is;
 - Show new building before move;
 - Disseminate information on parking facilities, transit locations, etc.;
 - Brochure explaining office and department layouts;
 - Post floor plans in strategic location.
4. Making the move in stages is not desirable as breakup requires duplication of services in both old and new locations.
5. Order the new company stationery well in advance of the actual move.
6. Hold an open house - to maintain employee morale and company prestige; invite personalities and dignitaries, your key customers, in addition to employees and their families with local residents, to view the new premises.

Figure 1 – Colour Codes

ONE METHOD which has proven successful for designating the *new location* of office furniture and equipment is as follows:

Each floor would be given a colour, each employee a number.

EMPLOYEE	ROOM NUMBER	NEW FLOOR NO.	COLOUR

FLOOR	ROOM	PIECES

Customer Check List

There are questions and problems that you will definitely have. Here is a check list that you can keep track of what needs to be done and, in many cases, will eliminate many of the questions and solve a great majority of their problems so that when moving day arrives, you will be well organized and prepared, making the move a lot easier. See appendix for the check list.

Additional Services

Sometimes even the most carefully thought-out endeavour will go amiss and some rearranging will be necessary. Any extra work that was not covered and agreed to in the original action plan should be discussed with your mover in order to find out what additional charges may occur. This will depend on the amount of extra work required and if extra men or supplies will be needed. The sooner you are able to advise the mover, the better. Of course, some work may not be known until the actual relocation has begun.

If Something Goes Wrong

Office moving is very complicated and getting more so every day. New types of furniture (modular, partitions, etc.) and sophisticated office equipment (large photocopy machines, collating machines, computers, etc.) as well as advanced design in facilities and buildings will always be a challenge to the mover, who must constantly increase knowledge and experience to meet these challenges.

Before making a claim to your moving company, know exactly what the moving company is liable for and what they aren't. Refer to the inventory sheet and the tagging list created for the move as a reference to identify particular pieces of furniture. All claims should be substantiated by appropriate notations on the receipt for merchandise. Be aware that claims caused by the employee "reshuffling" of furniture after the move is completed are not the responsibility of the moving company.

Payment

Make sure that your company understands the payment plan and makes appropriate financial arrangements with the moving company before the move takes place and understand what will happen if there are additional services or a claim after the move.

Conclusion

Knowledge, planning, coordination and common sense will always be the best tools available to enable a satisfactory move. Communication with your chosen moving company is essential.

Tip Sheet – Commercial Move Check List

Commercial Move Check List

Any move requires a great deal of detail and planning.

Your first consideration should be a reputable realtor. Whether you lease or buy, a good realtor can give you a great deal of assistance in choosing your location. This should cover everything from customer, supplier, and employee convenience, right through to the delivery facilities. Legal contracts are also a very important part of any move. Have your lawyers check well beforehand all details and make sure that you have good and binding contracts with your mover and property lessor.

Once you have decided to move, you can save yourself a great deal of time, trouble and confusion by using this Check List before moving out of your old premises and into your new offices.

The most important points on this list that should be taken into careful consideration well in advance of your mover are:

- Mover;
- Location;
- Allocation of space;
- Office outfitter.

This list has been compiled with the cooperation of prominent real estate firms, movers and large corporations concerned with moving. You will note the “Target Date” and “Completion Date” columns at the left of the Check List. This will allow you to keep a running record of your progress to date. We do not recommend uniform target dates because every move varies so much with regard to size and complexity that it makes sense to have some flexibility within your own planning.

TARGET
DATE

COMPLETION
DATE

_____ _____ ALLOCATION OF SPACE - Consider the space available in relation to: private office requirements (their size and location), the number of people employed, the work flow between departments, plans for future expansion, location of cloakrooms and washrooms, fire regulations, etc.

_____ _____ BANK AND FINANCIAL SERVICES - Transfer accounts when required.

_____ _____ CARTONS - This is the mover's responsibility; however, make sure that you have plenty on hand as you will need more than you think. DO NOT OVERLOAD CARTONS (60 lbs. max.).

_____ _____ CHAIRS - This is the mover's responsibility.

_____ _____ CHANGE OF ADDRESS NOTICES - Print and prepare all mailings well ahead: "We are Moving" notices followed by "We Have Moved" are advisable. Notify the following and advise them when to start:

Bank and financial services; Clubs;
Credit accounts; Customers;
Credit cards;
Insurance companies; Lists from ledgers;
Newspapers and magazines; Post Office;
Prospects and other lists; Publishers;
Special Services; Subscriptions; Suppliers.

_____ _____ CLEANING - Arrange to have premises cleaned after you vacate, and to have the new location prepared for your arrival.

_____ _____ COLOUR CODE - Again, this is the responsibility of the mover. He will make recommendations to you.

_____ _____ COMMUNICATIONS - Make a thorough survey of your requirements for telephones, facsimiles, etc., including sufficient outlets. Locate these on all your plans and arrange for purchase and installation. Start on this early.

_____ _____ DATA PROCESSING - If you have equipment to be moved, make your mover aware of all of the details. Also make sure that your new location has all of the requirements regarding the temperature, humidity control, wiring and proper space necessary for data processing. Moves of this nature should be handled separately due to their complex nature.

_____ _____ ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES AND EQUIPMENT - Have qualified technicians disconnect and install this equipment.

_____ _____ ELECTRICAL POWER - Is the voltage adequate and in places where needed?

_____ _____ ELEVATORS - Make arrangements for continuous service at times when building authorities will permit moving. Be sure there are enough operators. Check union regulations. Plan with your mover. Check sizes and load capacities.

_____ EQUIPMENT FOR MOVING - This is the mover's responsibility.

_____ FILING - This is an extremely important section of the project, and requires continual liaison with the departments concerned. Familiarize yourself with all the available equipment by type and dimension. Take the advice of your office outfitter. This is a good opportunity to change from old fashioned, inadequate files to more modern and space-saving equipment. Arrange for culling of dead material from existing files. Determine location of files. Allow handling space for door-swing and drawer pull-out. Place orders in ample time to meet deadlines. Keep suppliers advised as to changes in delivery times, places and elevator arrangements.

_____ FLOOR COVERING - Here are several things to be considered: wood (plain or patterned), broadloom, linoleum, tile, terrazzo, etc. When making this choice, consider the following points: traffic, appearance, static electricity, maintenance, ease of alterations for wiring, telephone lines, etc. After making your decision, arrange for installation, ensuring that your contract dates are compatible with other work.

_____ FLOOR LAYOUTS - Prepare scale plans for all of the new premises. Have copies on hand for the movers, plus the many others who will need them. Clearly mark the location of each item by number. Have extra plans available at the entrance of each floor or area.

_____ FLOOR LOADING - Check if capable of new loads, particularly for safes and other heavy equipment.

_____ FURNITURE AND FINISHINGS - The decision must be made whether to purchase new furniture or use your existing equipment. If you decide on new furniture, be careful of non-standard colours and designs. If you select these, you will run into greatly increased costs and delays when you come to add to or replace equipment. Place furniture orders in ample time to meet deadlines. Keep your suppliers advised as to changes in delivery times, dates, places and elevator arrangements. Your office outfitter can be of great assistance here.

_____ IDENTIFICATION - It is the mover's responsibility to clearly mark exactly where each package should go, and who is responsible for it. Keep this on a master list.

_____ INSPECTION ON ARRIVAL - Check for damage, shortages and details for insurance, moving and other claims.

_____ KEYS - Collect all keys to old premises and turn them in. Issue keys for new premises in advance.

_____ LABELS - The mover or your employees should affix labels to the following, depending on service required: chairs, desks, filing cabinets, typewriters, and all other types of equipment you plan to move. Tag items not moving with visible "DO NOT MOVE" tags and "STORAGE" tags.

_____ LIGHTING - Ensure that lighting is sufficient by reviewing the location of workstations. Take into account special requirements for drafting, etc. Arrange for sufficient lines and outlets.

MEASUREMENTS - It is the responsibility of the mover to make sure that all articles have adequate passage through doors, stairways and elevators.

MOVERS - This is one of the most important parts of your move. Select a mover on the basis of experience and reputation, but make sure that they are capable and experienced in the type of move you are going to make. Ask for estimates as there are a wide range of services and costs available. Work closely with your mover; seek his advice; ask questions and do as he recommends. Go over this list with him. He will give you adequate advice on packing, cartons, identifying items, protection from damage, equipment to be provided, plus what cooperation will be required from you.

MOVING COMMITTEE - Establish a Moving Committee consisting of responsible people from each floor or division. Their major job is one of coordination within the firm and with the mover. To answer all questions from their division. To distribute code numbers. To issue instructions. To supply cartons, etc. To keep employees up-to-date on actual moving time.

OFFICE OUTFITTERS - Choose an experienced outfitter who has professional office planners and decorators on his staff. While beauty and design are important, it must be remembered that the primary purpose of an office is to produce decisions and paperwork.

PARKING - Ascertain the restrictions and advise your staff. The mover will make temporary arrangements with the police to facilitate moving in and out.

PARTITIONING - The location of partitions will depend on the allocation of space. Things to be considered are: built-ins and panels, bookshelves, storage shelves, wardrobes, etc.; wall finishes: fabrics, vinyls, wallpaper, paint. Arrangements should be made with the owner or contractor to ensure that the above installations are coordinated with any electrical work that is necessary.

PERISHABLE GOODS - These require special care. Be sure that freezers and other storage containers are dry before moving.

POLICE - Your mover can be of assistance here in making arrangements for officers to keep entrances and roadways clear during the major move times.

PREPARATIONS FOR MOVING - This is an area where your mover can be of a great deal of assistance to you with regards to desks, filing cabinets, packing.

PRINTING - Collect samples of all printed cards, forms, stationery, statements, price sheets, folders, and descriptive literature, etc. Reorder these well ahead with the necessary changes so that everything will be ready for the new location.

SECURITY - When required, particularly for financial institutions.

SERVICES - Arrange to have services cut off after you leave and ready before arrival in your new location. Check all details with suppliers: telephone, oil, Post Office, water, electricity, special services, gas, heat.

_____ _____ SIGNS - Prepare signs for new location. Also, have "Moved To" signs at the old address.

_____ _____ STAFF - Provide everyone with essential details of the move: time and date, address, reasons for moving, benefits of new location, parking facilities, timetable. Make sure that all the staff know exactly what their moving responsibilities are.

_____ _____ STATIONERY - A consideration here might be a rubber-stamped "NEW ADDRESS" on your letterheads until a couple of weeks after you move. This focuses more attention on your move than would a new letterhead. After this, new stationery is essential because overprinting old letterheads creates a poor image. Be sure that the new stationery is ready in good time.

_____ _____ STORAGE - Your new location should contain sufficient temporary and permanent storage space. Make sure that this is both adequate and suitable for your needs. Some movers may consider storing some office records, as well. While they are not as easily accessible, the rates are considerably lower.

_____ _____ SUPERVISION - Have at least one responsible member of each department on location during the move. Provide them with a floor plan and brief these people on what will be taking place.

_____ _____ TELEPHONES - Arrange the details well ahead. It is essential to have telephones at both places during the move.

_____ _____ VALUABLE PAPERS - Pay particular attention to your records, equipment, currency and irreplaceable items. List them before moving and check on arrival. In this case, a special move may be necessary.