



Creative Space Planning

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Introduction

When reviewing your office options, it is essential to plan ahead and identify your "real" needs well in advance. This is also an opportunity to look at how you are currently using (or wasting) space.

In this climate of spiraling rentals, it is financially imperative to maximise the use of every square foot of your office space. However at the same time staff are a valuable commodity and your office design should provide an attractive working environment in order to retain & attract staff.

KEY FACTORS to consider in your early stages of premises review:

The Facts on Areas

NET : The actual usable or carpetable area, including the columns up to the curtain wall.

LETTABLE / GROSS : The Net area plus a proportion (or All) of the common areas (Lift lobbies, Corridor, toilets etc).

EFFICIENCY : The efficiency of the actual Net area to the quoted Lettable, this can range from below 70% to over 90%.



Consider Your Options

STAYING : Can you make better use of your existing premises, or even give up some space.

MOVING : How much space will you need and what is your "Wish List" for new office premises.

SPLITTING : Which departments must remain in the central location and which can move.

Gather Your Data:



The Basics:

EXISTING NET AREA – No doubt you know the lettable area you currently occupy, but do you know your existing net area?

HEADCOUNTS – Current and Future broken down into different space standards and identify who needs a private office.

SUPPORT FACILITIES – Reception (manned or unmanned), Meeting rooms, breakout/ pantry, IT room, central filing/storage, copier/ printer areas, Etc.

OPERATIONAL CHANGES – New Corporate policies; options for outsourcing administrative functions.

Take a Close Look at How you are Currently Using your Space:

- **FILING METHODS** – Could your filing methods be streamlined, more filing archived and stored off-site? Review Corporate policy on secure and Fire rated filing.
- **WORKSTATIONS** – Could the workspaces be more ergonomically designed and sizes reduced? Are staff filling their stations with filing and redundant equipment?
- **PANTRIES** – Is a large breakout/ eating area really necessary? Consider replacing water bottle type dispensers to water filter systems.
- **MEETING/ TRAINING RMS** – Could sizes be reduced? For larger irregular meetings consider renting out off-site facilities. Avoid room dividers unless really needed.

Consider Alternative Ways of Working:

- Hotdesking
- Telecommuting
- Benching

Incorporating any new system will require careful review of the Pros and Cons.



Your 'Wish List' for New Premises:

- **FLOOR AREA** – Size and preferred configuration.
- **BACKBONE** – the basics (ceiling system; light boxes; emergency lighting; raised floor or floor trunking) plus the extras. (24hr HVAC; backup/ emergency power supply)
- **SUPPORT FACILITIES** – Lift lobbies; toilets (incl. Disabled and/ or Exec), service lifts.
- **ADD ONS** – Entrance doors (provided or by tenant), carpet tile.

Remember to keep your "wishes" realistic.

Are you Comparing Apples with Oranges?

- **FLOOR AREA** – Use a professional to check the Net floor area.
- **CONFIGURATION** – How does the layout suit your particular needs?
- **BASE BUILDING** - What is provided by the Landlord?
- **FITTED SPACE** – Does the current layout & design really fit your needs and corporate image?



Build For The Future

Flexible Design:

KEEP IT MODULAR – Minimise space standards and avoid unnecessary “curves”.

OPENPLAN – Only put in full height partitions where corporate policy requires it. Avoid the rabbit warren syndrome.

MINIMISE BUILTINS – Avoid the temptation to build out expensive front areas with marble floors & feature ceilings. Use loose cabinets instead of built-ins.

ASSUME YOU MAY EXPAND – In the planning stage consider future expansion and position “Fixed” areas such as IT rooms, wet pantries, accordingly.

Take Into Consideration:

- Space efficiency is not taken to extremes.
- Avoid beautifully designed workstations that are not ‘user-friendly’
- Your staff’s “Home from Home” environment, allow some personalization.
- Balance staff needs/ wants with practicalities.

The Final Word:

- IDENTIFY YOUR AREAS & OPTIONS
- INVOLVE OTHERS (INTERNAL & EXTERNAL PARTIES) EARLY ON
- DEFINE YOUR WISH LIST
- COMPARE APPLES TO APPLES
- PLAN & BUILD FOR FUTURE CHANGE

Remember “You can never change the future by the past”



Speak with Poelmann Chan Group:

Poelmann Chan Group is a specialist with over 20 years experience in office design and in depth knowledge of Hong Kong's office landscape. We can offer companies a wide range of services whether they are looking to renovate or relocate.

PCG has assisted many companies with determining their office needs and short listing office premises.

For further information please contact:

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