



rhino
INTERIORS GROUP



THE ULTIMATE OFFICE MOVE

Guide and Checklist



Contents

05

Introduction

- The Evolution of the Office
- Changing Spaces
- The Arrival of Agile
- Office Relocation is An Opportunity
- Translating Values into Physical Space
- The Workforce & the Workplace
- Employee Voice
- Communicating Change

14

Why Do Businesses Choose to Move?

- Growth
- Working Methods
- Desk Occupancy
- Expiring Lease
- Location
- Attracting Talent
- Finances
- Workforce Wellbeing

18

The Office Move Guide

- Initial Planning & Preparation
- Selecting Your New Office
- Designing the Optimal Office
- The Small Print
- Moving In
- Post-occupancy Evaluation

28

The Office Move Checklist

31

Moving Made Easy



rhino
INTERIORS GROUP



The Office Move - Introduction

Businesses are constantly changing. Whether it's our policies, workforce, projects or goals – no company clings on to fruitless processes or inflexible ways of working. We're always adapting and changing our methods to find the most successful strategy.

Much like the way we work, where we work is also a crucial component of success. An office space sets the tone for the productivity and motivation of our employees and forms vital first impressions of our business culture. For example, to accommodate a collaborative, buzzing workforce – we'd expect an open-plan office with co-working spaces to encourage teamwork. But, a studious or focused-based team conjures a different image to mind. We'd expect a workspace with extra private-working areas to enable periods of focus and break-out areas to recharge. And every business is different. No two are exactly alike in their methods or their workforce, so how can you be sure that your office space is maximising your potential? More so, if you're already considering an office move, how can you transform your new space into the optimal working environment?

This e-book will examine all the components of a successful office move and everything you should consider before, during, and after. We'll grab insights from experts in the workspace sector, touch upon important themes and research in office design, and highlight the most important processes in an office move. Additionally, we've incorporated an office move checklist to guide you towards the essential framework of a successful relocation.

An office move is a momentous opportunity to rethink your workplace and rejuvenate your environment. To begin, let's consider how the office has transformed over time and how these changes reflect the workplace of the future.

A man with a beard and a checkered shirt is sitting at a desk in an office, looking at a computer monitor. The desk has several other monitors, a laptop, and some papers. In the background, another person is standing near a desk. The entire image has a pinkish-red tint.

“61% of employees value an aesthetically pleasing and comfortable workspace”

Source: Clutch // Leading Market Research Company

The Evolution of the Office



Companies have been examining the relationship between workplace design and business productivity since the office's inception.

In 1856, a UK government report described the optimal office layout:

“For the intellectual work, separate rooms are necessary so that a person who works with his head may not be interrupted; but for the more mechanical work, the working in concert of a number of clerks in the same room under superintendence is the proper mode of meeting it.”

Here, the emphasis is placed on workers' daily tasks and headcount efficiency as a measure of ideal office space - a concept that has changed over time.

Since then, the introduction of large commercial buildings made way for spacious areas that mixed both private offices and open-plan design, and, in 1939 Frank Lloyd Wright designed the first major open-plan office for The Johnson Wax company.

Its spacious, airy rooms offered a level playing field for workers but reduced personal privacy. This is why early concepts of the 'Herman Miller' office cubicle in the 1960s were, surprisingly, regarded as liberating for the higher levels of personal privacy they provide - despite their modern day connotations as dreary and stifling cubes of doom. Subsequently, office design has shifted between many different concepts.



Changing Spaces

In contemporary businesses, workplace design has transformed in response to a combination of employee demand for better spaces and employer requirements for greater efficiency. Companies now recognise that, if they want to attract and retain a talented workforce, they must provide an appealing office environment with the right facilities for their employees. It's also increasingly understood that an improved workplace environment fosters greater productivity and employee happiness.

In a study that surveyed 1,003 knowledge-based workers, Clutch, a market research company, found that 61% of employees valued an aesthetically pleasing and comfortable workspace. The research also showed that working environments with physical qualities that made inhabitants feel good contributed to a faster working pace and higher quality of work.

When surveyed employees had access to a space that they found agreeable, they felt more positive and focused.

The Arrival of Agile

Agile working has grown beyond its origins as a project management style, and in recent years, businesses have translated the concept into their workplace designs. An office environment is understood, now more than ever, to be an aspect of work life that affects wellbeing and productivity. Concepts such as 'agile workspaces' encourage greater productivity through flexible working environments that promote adaption to change.

Contemporary workplace design has shifted in a direction that's less focused on maximising worker numbers – towards an understanding that employee productivity, motivation, and engagement can be affected by working environment.

With this in mind, how are the concepts of office design relevant to an office move?

Office Relocation Is an Opportunity

Put simply, an office move is an opportunity to introduce the principles of successful workspace design and discover new ways of working.

Your office space is your welcome mat – it's the first impression of your business for prospective employees, clients, or partners, and it's where your staff will spend most of their working week. If staff are in an environment that hinders their productivity and engagement, then your business – and the culture you want to encourage – can suffer.

In their 2017 report 'How office moves and consolidations can create cultural change', the British Council for Offices (BCO) highlighted the effects of working conditions on office workers:

“Today's workplace must provide a variety and choice of work setting that supports concentration, collaboration, and communication. Employees should be given autonomy and be allowed to choose where and how to work. Encouraging social interaction will promote improved communication and, possibly, achieve more with less direction.”

When businesses optimise their work environment in response to employee needs, they encourage greater productivity, communication, autonomy, and engagement. In turn, your office becomes more than a place where staff just physically clock in and out – instead, it's a central hub of your business culture and community.

In consideration of this, businesses about to embark on an office move should consider their vision for a new office.

Organisations should strive to create an environment that's optimised for their teams' daily tasks and embodies company culture.

Translating Values into Physical Space

Organisations should strive to create an environment that's optimised for their teams' daily tasks and embodies company culture.

If a business has an open-plan office with multiple breakout areas for socialising, it's likely the workforce has a collaborative working culture. Similarly, a company that has additional amenities for its staff like a canteen or gym may be highly focused on employee wellbeing.

Of course, not every organisation has the resources or budget to create an office space that puts Google's headquarters to shame, but smart office design can help you get the most out of your new space and tap into employee productivity as an added benefit of an office move.

Did you know, Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, was a contributing designer of the

Pixar Animation Studio HQ building, built in 2000.

When planning the building, Jobs demanded that:

"The office design should promote encounters and unplanned collaborations among colleagues."

He recognised that greater chances for employee interactions could spark organic problem solving, ideas, and relationships between staff.

This notion promoted a cohesive company culture and enabled employees to mix outside of their siloed departments - encouraging greater collaboration and exemplifying how workspace design can translate company values into a physical space.

It's clear that an office move is an opportunity to redesign and optimise your working environment, but how can the decision to relocate affect your employees?



The Workforce and The Workplace

The decision to move office is rarely taken lightly. No matter how many preventative steps a business takes to make the process as smooth as possible, it's undeniably a disruptive procedure.

Many employees will need to reassess their commutes, reshuffle their working routines, and say goodbye to habits they may have formed while working in their old office environment. What's more, you'll need to move into your new location without disrupting important business processes or your employees' productivity.

In a culture of fast-paced industry changes, job-hopping, and uncertainty, it's no surprise that the task of an office move can be unnerving for both corporate and employees.

However, the choice to relocate is not always a cause for panic. In fact, an office move can serve as an instigator for positive change. Not only are you providing your workforce with new facilities – but you'll also have a golden opportunity to consult your employees about their working conditions and optimise the new workspace in response to their feedback.

Ultimately, your employees will be the largest benefactors of a new working environment, so it's important to actively inform and enthuse staff about the move.

When staff can actively engage in workplace design and remain informed about the office move, they experience higher morale and a more positive perspective on moving.

Employee Voice

In recent years, businesses who undergo office moves have steadily begun embracing employees as active contributors to a relocation, instead of passive participants. In a study by the British Council of Offices entitled 'What Workers Want', which analysed 1132 responses of a YouGov survey, the BCO found that:

"The increasing engagement of corporates with staff prior an office move highlights the growing importance of staff preferences in property decisions. Understanding these preferences provides insight into what occupiers want from their office space and how landlords/developers can fulfil these preferences."

The BCO emphasises how the benefits of consulting employees about their wants and needs has risen to prominence. When staff can actively engage in workplace

design and remain informed about the office move, they experience higher morale and a more positive perspective on moving. If businesses approach the idea of relocation with greater consideration for their staff, the outcome is more likely to be successful.

Communicating Change

It's also important to recognise that employees require support before, during, and after the move to a new workspace. Effectively managing change is an integral facet of the relocation process – as the 'people' aspect of a move is equally as important, if not more so, than the physical upheaval of your working environment. Your office is your business's shell, and your employees bring it to life – so neglecting to incorporate employee opinion can lead to lower utilisation of the space and a disengaged workforce.

This is a crucial aspect of office relocation that office design company, Knoll, has

studied in more detail. In its workplace research report 'Managing Workplace Change', Knoll discussed a case study of an insurance company that experienced lower than average employee utilisation of its new office after relocating. Only 39% of their employees approved of their new workspace, and changes to seating positions, such as shared desk space instead of personal desks, contributed to high levels of dissatisfaction.

However, after implementing a workplace change management programme that communicated the benefits of an office move and reshuffling of seating, office utilisation rates raised to 51%. Information about the benefits of change was shared through face to face "town hall" style meetings and short videos. This is an important example of how an effective office relocation requires thoughtful planning, the involvement of your workforce, and an in-depth analysis of what your new environment will need to truly positively impact your employee's working lives.



Why do businesses choose to move?



There are a number of reasons why a business might choose to move premises.

It may be as simple as an expiring lease, or a growing workforce may propel you to seek pastures new. Alternatively, you may be looking to become more economical, be planning to downsize, or you're in the process of restructuring your business.

You can use this section to identify any underlying factors that may be incentivising your office move alongside obvious reasons. It's important to pinpoint the purpose behind your move as, more often than not, a multitude of factors contribute towards the decision.

Growth

Growth is one of the most exciting reasons a business chooses to relocate. As your company steadily gains momentum, you may want a physical

environment to match. This is because business growth usually heralds a higher headcount and increasing employee expectations – so your current workspace may no longer be suitable. Additionally, many businesses want to upgrade their physical office building and facilities to mimic the development of their business.

An office move is an opportunity to rework your company's workspace. If the last time you questioned whether your office setup was working for your business was, well, when you moved in, then reviewing your office location, space, and setup will only stand to benefit your business – especially if you're growing. Additionally, after moving office, new furniture or a new fit out can complete the refurbishment process, giving you the office environment to match your growing organisation.

Working Methods

Businesses are rapidly adopting innovative working methods to increase productivity and employee satisfaction. Agile working has steadily risen to prominence in recent years, and office workers now want greater autonomy and flexibility over the ways they work. Consequently, many businesses want to adopt an agile workspace to match employee working methods.

In an agile working thought-piece, Grant Clarke, Rhino's Senior Projects Director, concisely defines the agile workspace:

“It's a design which creates casual collisions and breaks down barriers between departments by increasing mobility within the office.”

A workforce can't effectively collaborate if they have no areas in which to do so. Rhino uses the philosophy of four zones: focus, collaboration, social, and learning/meeting, and we recognise that for your employees to fully reach their potential, they need adequate spaces to accommodate their needs. An office space is not just desk space, it should be an innovative environment for your employees to both work and live.

Although a well planned and executed office fit out can effectively transform even a dilapidated office into an innovative space, you may want to relocate because your current physical space can't accommodate an agile workspace. For example, you may not have room for additional break-out areas or private working spaces.

“An office move is the perfect opportunity to try and improve employee engagement.”

Just a 10% increase in engagement levels has been shown to increase profit by nearly £2k per employee.”

Desk Occupancy

The face of the modern workforce is changing. In our cost-conscious world of freelancers, consultants, part-timers, and flexible working policies, some businesses rarely have their entire workforce under one roof. Moreover, it can also be difficult to wrangle workforce numbers together and envision the correct amount of office space that's actually needed.

Most companies who haven't adopted more of an agile workspace approach typically have desk occupancy of less than 50% - if you are moving, this might mean the opportunity to reduce your real estate costs. If you are looking at serious growth, then you may be able to future-proof the space by thinking of how to create a space that is optimal for now and in the future. This shouldn't be a cause for concern, but businesses that are choosing to relocate might require a larger or smaller physical space to accommodate their workforce.

In a study conducted by the World Economic Forum (WEF), the changing

face of the workforce was identified as an opportunity for businesses, rather than a threat, and workplace design that matches new working methods and employee flexibility can encourage greater self-direction and autonomy in staff. Thus, relocation may be smart for businesses looking to optimise their workspace to encourage greater employee self-sufficiency.

Expiring Lease

One of the least complex reasons for an office move is an expiring lease or change of ownership. If you can no longer be housed in your current building or think your business is outgrowing it, you may decide not to renew your lease and instead relocate. If this is your core incentive for moving, it's important to consider what you want from your new space. Do you require more or less space in your new move? Are you looking to relocate in the same town or city, or to expand elsewhere? What aspects of your current office do your employees not like? As your office move is a blank slate, it's important to carefully consider what you want to gain from a relocation.

Location, Location, Location

Another incentive for your move could be location. Your business may have identified a need for better transport links, an easily accessible office, or the right environment for your workforce. You may have dreams of an open, airy office that's burrowed among green surroundings – or be pining for a city environment to match your fast-paced and ambitious workforce.

It's also important to consider that office location can affect your ability to attract and retain employees, which could be another incentive for an office move.

Additionally, location decisions can have a huge impact on costs and revenues. Businesses looking to become more economical may wish to move out of the 'big city' – but likewise, some may be looking to move into it. Where your office is situated can also affect your clients or partners, who may prefer to work with businesses that are in a more suitable location.

Attracting Talent

It's no secret that an office environment can be a make-or-break factor in a company's ability to attract, hire, and retain talented employees. In fact, research conducted by Hassell and Empirica, Does Workplace Design Affect Employee Attraction found that the attractiveness of a workspace and company culture is a core consideration for prospective employees, and the combination of an appealing workplace – whether due to location, facilities, technology, aesthetics, culture, or a mix – can even outweigh salary.

Rhino believes that, ultimately, maximising employee retention requires individual employee happiness. An engaging working environment will help motivate staff and be more appealing to new people too. Businesses can choose to move office because a poor office location or run-down office-block can hinder the ability to attract talented people.



Using workplace design to attract better talent and support existing employees is key.

Highly engaged employees are 87% less likely to leave.

Finances

An additional factor that can incentivise an office move is your finances. If it becomes more economical to relocate, or your business has experienced rapid growth, finances can define where you are able to move to and the extent you can refurbish or fit out your new workspace.

Preparation is key if you want to relocate without breaking your budget, so ensure your office relocation considers your budgetary constraints, in addition to the cost-of-living and commuting budgets of your employees.

Relocating might mean moving to a more expensive location, or it could mean the opposite. Alongside your key motivators to improve your workplace, you should have a clear vision of your budget before an office move.

Workplace Well-being

Lastly, you may be choosing to relocate your office to renew your employees' working conditions. In its 2015 report 'The Impact of Physical Environments on Employee Wellbeing', which discusses the future of offices, Public Health England (PHE) highlighted how the surroundings in which employees spend their working lives are an important source of job satisfaction. Not only can office design effect productivity and patterns of interactions among employees, but the physical space of an office can also have a detrimental effect on employee wellbeing.

For example, PHE found that focus-based workers may require private spaces or quiet rooms to work productively, and a noisy work environment can become a stressor to some, negatively affecting their wellbeing. If a business doesn't have the space to equip their office with private areas or designated quiet zones, then an office move may be the solution.

The office move guide

Relocating doesn't need to be an overwhelming task. As with any large project, planning and preparation can go a long way to minimise disruption and ensure you're not blindsided by unexpected circumstances.

Additionally, an office move is both a logistical and a cultural shift in your business. The process doesn't just relocate your work premises – it moves your people too, so it's crucial to approach an office move with this in mind. We've created the following office move guide to simplify the process and outline the essential framework of a successful relocation from beginning to end.

Initial Planning and Preparation

An office move can be daunting. There are numerous factors to consider, plans to make, budgets to meet, and people to please. But most of these factors can be boiled down to the following areas for consideration.

Define the reason for your office move

First, you should define the reasons for your relocation. Create a mind map to weigh up primary and secondary reasons for your move. This can help create a clear vision for your relocation and pin-point areas that require crucial attention-to-detail.

Put simply, no business has the resources, time, or money to relocate their office premises for the fun of it! You need to clearly outline and communicate the benefits your business expects from an office move.

Identify what is challenging about your current workspace

Evaluating your current office is crucial to find the friction and problem-areas in your current space. Understanding the way design affects organisational behaviour and alters your employees' daily lives is important to avoid your new work environment recreating the same mistakes. This information can be useful later on in the office move process – for example when you're choosing your new real estate or when you relay information to your office design partner.

Discuss your office relocation with your team

As previously mentioned earlier in our e-book, it's important to involve your workforce in the relocation process. By communicating the thinking behind your office move, engaging employees in the process of moving, and listening to feedback from your staff, you can

give your employees a real stake in the move, instead of imposing it on them. Staff engagement is proven to positively contribute to employee buy-in and approval, so an office move should always be employee-centric.

Invite employees to make suggestions for your new office

Nobody knows your current office as well as the people who inhabit it. It's likely that each individual has noticed both positives and negatives about your current space. Gathering this information can be useful when deciding on and developing your new location. Alongside a workplace consultancy evaluation, employee opinion is a treasure trove of qualitative data to help you improve your next workspace. This stage is great for developing an initial understanding of your employee's wants and needs before onboarding an office design partner.



Getting it wrong just isn't an option...

'Two out of three office relocation project leaders either quit or are fired within six months of an office move!'



Build a knowledgeable office move team

An office move team should be comprised of individuals from across your business, for example, heads of departments from every division of your team. No matter how thoroughly you attempt to assess what your workforce needs from a corporate level, staff who have observed and worked together with your employees will be far more accurate contributors to an office move. Equally, department leaders can represent their individual teams and condense employee wants/needs into a singular narrative, which is especially useful for large organisations. A collective mind is more useful than an individual, so building an office move team is an important step that shouldn't be skipped.

Create a timeframe for your move

It's unlikely you'll have a specific date for your office move in the early stages of planning, but most businesses have a general idea that within a year or two (depending on the size of their organisation) they want to be in a new office space. This is a tick-worthy checkpoint for the planning phase of your

office move, as a timeframe can act as a goal for those involved. If it's difficult to predict the future, your business can set smaller time stamps to stay on track. For example, find a new office location or furnish your new office by 'X' date.

Selecting Your New Office

Preparation is key to a successful office move strategy. Once you've completed the preliminary steps of planning, it's likely you'll have an idea of what your business wants and needs from your prospective new office space. This puts you in a good position to begin searching for a new location – equipped with the knowledge you've collected from your research.

Plan a budget for your office move

The budget for your office move is subjective. It may seem painfully obvious but, like any large investment, an office move requires financial transparency and a clear vision of what you want to achieve. The discussion of a budget should include all your decision-level financial/senior team members and potential stakeholders

of your office move. At Rhino, one of the most common questions we receive when dealing with new clients is: "How much do I need to budget?" We can't advise on your choice of physical premises, but we've devised a handy office costs calculator to help you accurately determine how much an office fit out may cost.

Weigh up your potential locations

Location will be one of the most decisive factors in your office move, which is why it's best to tackle it early. Depending on the extremity of your relocation, it's a change that will affect your workforce not only in their working lives but in their personal lives too.

A study by the Australian Institute of Transport Research found adding time or distance to your staff's commute can affect employee personal household routines, mode of transport, and morale. Therefore, it's important to conduct a relocation consultation across your workforce to ensure your office move isn't too disruptive. You should consider extraneous factors too, such as traffic patterns in your prospective new location, public transport availability, the local labour market, your clients, local amenities, and the competition you may be moving closer towards.

Get the new location for an office right and your new office can provide a springboard for growth.

Get it wrong and you may have the best office that money can buy but no staff to fill it. Carefully considering the impact to your employees and consulting them along the way is key to lessening the risk.





“One of the most visible and powerful levers for change in an organisation is its physical workplace.”

The most mature organisations unite people, culture, technology and place to create a climate for change.”

Source: Green // Future Office - Next Generation Workspace

80% of office workers value natural light in their office space, while physical environment and employee performance are proven to be strongly related.

Select your new office space

With the information and knowledge that you've accumulated from the previous steps, and probably after a fair amount of window shopping, it's crunch time – selecting your brand-new office space!

Consider factors that may affect your workforce long term, such as the amount of natural light, temperature, the surrounding environment, and physical space by sq. ft. 80% of office workers value natural light in their office space, while physical environment and employee performance are proven to be strongly related.

Conduct a building assessment

No matter how much you love the new space you've selected, you should conduct preliminary assessments before confirming your choice. Relocating shouldn't come with unwelcome surprises when you move in – think faulty facilities or questionably creaky floorboards. Unplanned and extraneous building costs or refurbishments could impact your budget or alter the timeframe of your office move. An independent building assessment should be conducted before you close the deal to ensure there are no hidden problems lurking around the corner.

Appoint an office design and build partner

The sooner you appoint an office design partner, the better. You may find you want their guidance from the very start to gather important information about the design elements of your new premises. When choosing the right partner for you, it's best to weigh up your options and clearly communicate what you're looking for in a new office design and fit out. Is it a space optimised for the agility of your staff? Are you searching for an office design focused on collaboration? Or, are you looking to create a workspace that emphasises your company's unique culture? Whatever your aims, conduct your own research and don't be afraid to question your prospective partners to discover if they're able to deliver your requirements.

Once you've shortlisted potential candidates, ensure that your prospective design partners are reputable, financially stable, reliable, and can accommodate your needs.

Gather information about your new space

Now it's time to gather all the information you can about your new office space. This can help save time further down the line and could identify any issues that need to be ironed-out in your office move. For example, information about the security of your building, health and safety, or parking. It can be useful to store these details in a handy document you can refer to during the office move or so it can be revisited later on. Additionally, it can be useful to relay this information to your design partner in case it impacts your new office design.

Create an inventory of your furniture/assets

It will be useful to have an inventory of your current furniture and assets, especially when designing your new office space. With this information, you can decide which items you'll be bringing with you, and what needs to be disposed of. The exact details may change, but a rough understanding of your inventory is important for planning removal procedures or storage.

Designing the Optimal Office

To ensure your move is as successful and stress-free as possible, and that you get the most out of your new space, investing

in workplace consultancy to help you design the optimal use of space is a no-brainer.

Commence workplace consultancy in your current office

Carried out by your office design partner, workplace consultancy identifies which areas of your current office aren't reaching their full potential – so you can optimise your new space to best suit employees' working habits.

The process combines workplace psychology, office design, surveys, and observations to deep-dive into how your employees use their current environment and what they want and need from the office move. This usually includes a space occupancy study to identify over and under-used areas, staff online surveys, in-person workshops, and observations of typical day-to-day life at your office.

The consultancy process provides rich data about your office space, helping remove the guesswork from your new office design. Additionally, it can shed light on your day-to-day operations, where you're losing money on excess workspace, daily headcount, and the sustainability of your workspace.

Well considered workspaces are proven to improve productivity by up to

12%



Plan an optimal office design

With reliable data gathered from a workplace consultancy, your office design partner can begin designing your new office with optimisation in mind. For example, if staff surveys identified a lack of collaborative spaces despite demand, your new office space can incorporate these areas into the design. Similarly, if focus-based workers felt that your current open-plan office was a barrier towards productivity, your next office could include private working areas to satisfy this need.

A study of pre- and post-occupancy in workplace environments conducted by The Journal of Space Syntax found that evidence-based design is an accurate way of establishing user needs. The research paper highlights that

“ Integrating the character of an organisation in all its complexity into a spatial design and thus making sure a workspace fits the clients' work processes and culture... is one of the most important concepts of workplace design”.

You should make sure your chosen workplace design partner makes data-driven decisions, complemented by their aesthetic and environmental design expertise.

Incorporate brand image/identity

Brand identity stems from your company values and culture, as well as the key factors that motivate your workforce. Not only can increasing brand presence in your office improve employee morale, but it can also translate your values to important visitors of your premises, such as clients or partners. Thus, your new office space should aim to immediately communicate your brand identity, whether this is simply achieved by incorporating your business's logo and signature colours or through subtle design elements.

Create a clear vision for your new office

By now, your office design, fit out, and procedures for completing them should be set-in-stone. This is a good time to formally finalise the designs and plans and give your office design company the green light for refurbishing your new office space.

The Small Print

An office move can be one of the busiest periods for your business as you juggle relocation with your usual day-to-day processes. There's a lot to bear in mind and try to remember, so we've whittled the potentially exhaustive list down to a few fundamental points you should make sure to check off.



Handle the small print of your move

Ensure you've managed the legal, financial, and logistical aspects of your move. Whether you're completing this step within the business or seeking external advice, unexpected fees or legislation could significantly impact the budget or time frame of your move. This is a step that should be revisited throughout the process.

Set an office move date

This step may have come earlier in the process, but now your business is further along in the office move journey and you'll want to have a definitive move in date. Set a date and stick to it so you have a set-in-stone goal to work towards and can begin devising other important time frames, for example, transport for moving-in, storage, or office refurbishment processes.

Inform your staff

Organise your staff and be as transparent as possible about the processes of your office move. An informed workforce will be more accepting of an office move, and keeping employees in the loop can help ease any uncertainties. It can be useful to assign a member of staff to handle employee queries in this stage of the office relocation.

Notify your contacts, such as clients or partners

Your contacts, clients, and partners may already be aware of your office move. However, your address is changing and you may have new contact details such as postal address or landline telephone numbers. Take the time to inform your clients and partners face-to-face if you can, but also create an office relocation document to send out which includes your new contact details. You may also want to allocate a member of staff to handle queries from your clients or partners, ensuring no one is left in the dark.

Handle storage and disposal

Consider whether you'll need storage for your office furniture and equipment in the interim periods of your office move or if you need to dispose of any of your previous office furniture.

Plan for your technology (telecoms, internet, etc.)

Your business may be able to handle the transfer of its IT itself, or you may wish to source external experts to assess, plan, and detail the movement of your tech infrastructure from your old to new premises. Either way, don't underestimate how long it might take. You'll want to keep downtime to a minimum, so ensure this aspect of the move is very well-planned, whoever will be executing the transfer. Additionally, it's useful to equip staff with the technology to continue their work off-premises, such as portable laptops, in case there are delays moving in to your new workspace.

Moving In

Moving into your new premises doesn't need to be stressful. Consider it a chance to celebrate your achievements and introduce your employees into a new and improved working environment.

Fit out and furnish your workplace

Hand the baton over to your office design partner to fit out and furnish your new office. Once they're done, carry out initial inspections to ensure your standards have been met and everything is ready for your staff to move in. This is also a good time to move your technology, workplace equipment, and any existing furniture you want to bring.

Introduce your staff to their new office

Depending on your resources, you could hold a short and simple celebratory event in your new space, give staff a walking tour, and explain in-depth the reasoning behind your design decisions.



Invite partners or clients

The departure of your business to pastures new is a great opportunity to network and re-connect with key clients.

Invite your partners or clients to view your new office and observe how you've made changes in your working environment for the better.

Not only does this leave a positive impression, but it's also a great way to round-off the office move process and celebrate your success.

Iron out the initial issues

Nothing is perfect, and if you've managed to relocate office without a single hitch along the way, then we salute you.

However, if you're one of the 99.99% of businesses who encounter blips in your new premises, it's wise to conduct an informal survey across your employees to iron out any initial issues. This may be less thorough than your post-occupancy surveys but can help you flag and address any concerns quickly.

Celebrate your office move with your staff and welcome them to their new environment.

The Post-occupancy Evaluation

Now you've moved in to your new office space, you'll want to assess how it's working for the people that inhabit it. Step forward, the post-occupancy evaluation. Ideally, your post-occupancy evaluation will be filled with gleaming feedback from your happy employees, however, there may still be pain-points in your office design for certain departments or chains of your workforce and valuable feedback from your employees that you're yet to uncover.

Listen to feedback from your workforce

If you've actively engaged them from the start of your office move and carefully explained your decision making, then employees are more likely to quickly take to your new office environment and approve of the new design. However, it's still important to ask your workforce whether there are any questions or concerns. Your employees will want to feel heard in the office move process, so staff consultations shouldn't stop after you move in. A post-occupancy evaluation can highlight any issues that need to be addressed.

Assess what's working and make changes

After you've received feedback on your new workspace, create a list of any problems you want to address. Your office design partner can follow up on this feedback and alter your office in response if it's needed. Not every issue that is flagged by your teams will require change, and you should approach your evaluations with the confidence that your office design will positively impact your new workspace over time. Take note of any changes that you do make at this stage, so they can be reversed at a later date if needed.

Regularly revisit your office design

Continually reflecting upon and assessing your office design will be really helpful to your business. Within a short timeframe, your business could change significantly in size, restructure staff, and change your working strategies. Although your new work environment should be designed with adaptability, flexibility, and agile working in mind, it's essential to regularly revisit your office design to ensure it's still enabling optimal engagement and productivity for your workforce.

The office move checklist

Initial Planning and Preparation

- Define the reason for your office move
- Identify what is challenging about your current workspace
- Discuss your office relocation with your team
- Invite employees to make suggestions for your new office
- Build a knowledgeable office move team
- Create a timeframe for your move

Selecting Your New Office

- Plan a budget for your office move
- Weigh up your potential locations
- Select your new office space
- Conduct a building assessment
- Appoint an office design and build partner
- Gather information about your new space
- Create an inventory of your furniture/assets

Designing the Optimal Office

- Commence workplace consultancy in your current office
- Have a great office design created incorporating brand image/identity
- Create a clear vision for your new office

The Small Print - Handle the small print of your move

- Set an office move date
- Inform your staff
- Notify your contacts, such as clients or partners
- Handle storage and disposal
- Plan for your technology (telecoms, internet, etc.)



Moving In

- Fit out and furnish your workplace
- Introduce your staff to your new office
- Invite partners or clients
- Iron out the initial issues

The Post-occupancy Evaluation

- Listen to feedback from your workforce
- Assess what's working and make changes
- Regularly revisit your office design





rhino
INTERIORS GROUP

Moving made easy

If you've decided it's time for an office move, then the previous steps can provide your business with the framework of a successful office move. In general, office design should be people-centric – and an office move is as much about moving your culture as it is your physical working environment.

Rhino specialises in making your office dreams a reality. We create dynamic and inspiring workspaces with key office design concepts such as agile working in mind.

If you're planning an office move, or are interested in learning more about our office consultancy, design, and fit out expertise, visit us here.

rhinooffice.co.uk



Making inspiring workspaces a reality.

rhinooffice.co.uk | 02476 675 999