

Making Your Office Your Happy Place



Many of us work in an office setting on a daily basis. Some of us have our own offices that we've designed or personalized, while others are somewhat at the mercy of their employers. Here are some ideas that deserve consideration in creating a pleasant, productive, and inviting environment.

Judicious selection and placement of photographs and art that you like or that has special meaning to you brightens your space and helps to personalize what can sometimes be a too sterile environment.

Similarly, you can use green plants to soften and enhance both the beauty and the actual physical environment of your office.

One of the key purchases or choices should be your desk chair. This is vitally important, both for your comfort and your health. Spend as much time as you need to choose wisely. Even explore the stand to work stations, which offer an interesting way to vary how you work at your desk. If your employer provides an uncomfortable chair or one with inadequate support, it could be important enough that you may need to provide your own chair.

Positioning of your keyboard and monitor are also crucial to your comfort and health. You can avoid carpal tunnel, etc., with good planning and research prior to purchasing your equipment. If you don't have control over the furniture and equipment, don't be afraid to customize them (within reason) for your health and comfort. Clear it with your boss first if you need to.

Lighting is also key. If you don't have the option to change it and typical fluorescents bother you or are too commercial feeling, you can leave them off and use task lighting. If you have the option you should look into new types of bulbs and color rendition to achieve the atmosphere that you prefer and to avoid eyestrain. These new bulbs will also last much longer than the old ones did.

Depending upon what you do and how much reference space you need, choose furniture that gives you space to organize and spread out papers, drawings, etc., within easy reach and with a good view of your primary work area or your computer monitor and keyboard.

Noise level is important and can be partially controlled with softer surfaces, carpet, window treatments, appropriate ceiling materials, etc. Use of ear buds with cell phones also allows you to have personal sound, news, etc., without disturbing others.

Once you're happy with your work space and environment, make sure to take regular breaks to walk around and stretch. Also make sure to drink water through the day. Be productive!

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