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CORPORATE RELOCATION & EXPANSION

The do's, don'ts and dollar signs of buying furniture

Furnishing your new or expanding office? It won't be easy. And it will take time. We asked a couple of relocation specialists to share with us what they believe are the most important steps a business can take in the furniture selection process.

For **Christine Mosholder**, a partner at **Fort Point Project Management**, the key steps to keep in mind are:

- Invest time in developing your furniture criteria. How do your employees work, collaborate, integrate technology and communicate?
- Remember, form follows function. Refer back to the key criteria when people are attracted to an aesthetic displayed in a glossy brochure.
- Always "kick the tires." Visit spaces with the furniture installed, test the task chairs over an extended period of time, talk to people who have the furniture to confirm comfort, quality, and ease of reconfiguration.
- Research the dealer companies representing the desired furniture lines. Look for service, storage and installation capabilities.
- Investigate alternative furniture sources, including used, refurbished and donation opportunities.

And **Ken Patrick**, president of Boston-based **Environments at Work**, offers the following advice:

- Bring the furniture dealer in early as they can add value during the design process and ensure a realistic furniture budget.
- Know how the product ages. Try to visit customer sites that are more than six months old.

- Make sure a certified professional does the installation.
- Know what services you are paying for – request that design, project management, delivery and installation are unbundled.
- Go with your gut and choose to work with people you trust and like.

And how much can you expect to spend to furnish your office? We asked our professionals for some ballpark figures for essential items. Here they are...

Filing cabinet = \$330

Whiteboard= \$80

Office chair \$460

Conference table = \$750

Telephone = \$550

Flat screen = \$2,750

Task lamp = \$115

Bookshelf = \$225