

A Guide for Directors
and Managers

MOVING OFFICES?

(free)

THE GUIDE TO SETTING UP YOUR PERFECT OFFICE.

ON BUDGET. ON TIME



www.verveworkspace.co.uk



Glasgow office - concentrating on projects in Scotland



Northampton - Head office

London

Various showrooms across London

“Most companies don’t move offices very often - so this guide will help avoid common mistakes. Our tips will help you make the most of your space and budget - all without breaking the bank. Brilliant.”



“We’ve been helping companies to set up their offices for many years, and so we thought it would be useful for us to put some of our experience into a handy guide. By following this guide, it will help you plan your office and not overlook the many small but vital considerations needed to make a great office. This will help you to get the best from the space, and will help you save money.

Whilst we are primarily business furniture specialists - we offer so much more. From interior design, to fit out (carpets, blinds, partitions ceilings) and practical guidance we cover nearly every area you will need to set up an office or business premises.

We will also explain the best ways to plan for the future, and how to incorporate your future needs into the design of your offices. I hope this guide is useful and whilst this isn’t a sales catalogue - so no prices are shown - we would of course love to help with any needs you have. Please see inside the rear cover for full details of what services we offer.

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Verve Workspace - established in 2004, and working across the whole of the UK. By genuinely offering friendly advice - without pushing the most expensive options on to our clients, we build long term relationships with our customers. This longer term view, and working hard to find solutions to meet your needs perfectly, ensures that we look at the bigger picture. That’s part of what makes us different.

Whenever you’re ready - give us call. We would love to work with you on your own project - from a single chair to a full refit. Give us a call now on 01604 217879 for free, friendly advice.



Office Furniture & Interior Specialists - from a single chair to a complete refit.
www.verveworkspace.co.uk



A selection of office furniture to buy online.
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Vee Interiors - Partitions, suspended ceilings, flooring, blinds.
www.veeinteriors.com



Office seating - all types - to buy online.
www.chairbox.com

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Wondering where to begin? Let's start with the initial time plan.....



The key is in the planning....

When companies sign up to a 5 year lease - it can fly by! Before you know, it you're coming up to renewal, and you don't have much time to decide if you're staying put - or moving onwards and upwards.

We're going to assume you've decided to move to new premises - and so you need to work out what is right. A lot of this can be down to the economy, your cashflow, your last year's trading - and of course - what your plans are for the future.



"Give yourself as much time as possible - most elements take much longer than you would imagine."

A general rule - to get you started.

There is a general rule - or at least one worth following if you want to save money, or have the best choice of options. And that is this: **Leave yourself plenty of time** - if you can. You should be thinking about the legal stuff around six months ahead, and planning the layout of the office ideally 3 months before the planned move. You'll also need to leave at least 3 months if you need to order BT telephone lines, or broadband.

SIX MONTHS AHEAD: You need to be talking to a property agent and looking around for buildings. Look for the recognised expert agent for your chosen area - ad boards help you choose. It will make all the difference in getting the right property. You should be involving your legal team - depending on the complexity of the lease (and they're rarely straightforward!) you would need plenty of time to thrash out the best deal.



"Try and get a lease overlap of at least a month. This will ensure you have time to set up the new offices, without disturbing your existing staff. This is vital if you want to minimise any negative impact on your business. You may be able to negotiate a couple of free months at least"

THREE MONTHS AHEAD: Ideally, you've found the perfect building (and phone lines are on order) - now you need to work out how to best use the space you've got. Get some floor plans together, and get some proper advice of how to use it! Remember - a good office furniture company can do this for free, and offer 3D drawings too.

ONE MONTH AHEAD: You should have your furniture on order and be arranging the removals. Don't forget the moving crates!

“Don’t forget to allow for future expansion - you don’t want to run out of space in six months time. Plan ahead now.”



Now for the fun bit....getting the new office designs right!

If you don’t have building floor plans available (ideally in CAD or .dwg format) from your property agent - **you’ll need to get some accurate floor plans drawn up.** You can pay an architect - but **a reputable office furniture and interiors company should do these for free.** And they will normally have a better range of desk shapes and knowledge of furniture and partition systems too. A lot of work goes into getting the space to work right for you - so you need to make sure your designer listens to what you need. And make sure you give them room to use their expertise and advise you on regulations.

Don’t get too hung up on ‘per square foot’ analysis of what each person should have. Your best bet is to create a shopping list of what the office needs. If you’re starting with an open floor (a real blank canvas) - you’ve got a lot more opportunity to be creative and flexible with how you use

“Be creative - use awkward nooks around your office for impromptu workspace, also useful for enhanced privacy for small internal meetings”



“Get the designs right on paper first. It’s easier to play around on screen - than physically dragging furniture around later. And you’re less likely to over order furniture too”



the space. First start off with deciding how many staff you need to accommodate - and include any planned expansions. Then decide how many managers offices, meeting rooms, staff canteen or breakout areas you need. Don’t forget to account for storage rooms, and IT server rooms too. Are you archiving locally - or will that be offsite?

What space do I need?

There are lots of schools of thought - and it really depends on your business, and what staff need. If it’s a call centre, you will need less space per desk - but if it’s a solicitors office, then you will need more desk space. Here is a very rough guide:

10 person office with managers office, small meeting room, kitchenette.
1,500 - 2,000 sq ft.

30 person office with four managers offices, two meeting rooms, and a staff room/ kitchenette, and small reception.
5,000 - 6,000 sq ft.

100 person office with five managers offices, a mixture of large desks and standard desks, several meeting rooms, Comms room, training room, and larger reception area.
15,000 - 20,000 sq ft



“Don’t buy the biggest desks in funny shapes - you may need more space later. Reconfigurable is the key”

“It can take a few months to get a Broadband line installed - and more often than not, it’s the wholesaler which is going to be the weakest link in everything.”

Telecoms and Broadband.

In the age of the information superhighway - arguably, getting your broadband and internet right is the most important factor of many new offices. You may be using VOIP telephones - so you need reliable, fast broadband. Or perhaps you utilise cloud storage, or virtual backup storage? Either way - fast broadband is definitely the way to go.

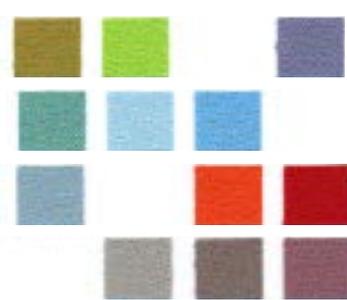
Have a conversation with your broadband supplier, and get this on order as soon as you are confident in the lease being finalised.

VOIP is well worth considering as an alternative to a traditional telephone system. A good VOIP system is often cheaper, has lower monthly costs - and allows you to set up telephone numbers geographically, or locally . You are not restricted either - when you move offices in future, you can take your numbers with you. It doesn’t matter where you’re moving to.

You can also integrate mobile phones, smartphones and more - so you can really utilise the latest technology. And now is the time to do it.



“Get lots of fabric samples, wall vinyl colour charts, carpet colour samples - a good interior supplier should happily supply these.”



Noise reduction & colours..

There are several factors that can make an office work well - and sometimes its something small. Noise reduction can be a huge factor in keeping staff happy, increasing productivity - and making space work efficiently.

Desktop divider screens, freestanding screens, and plants (fake or real) are all useful to reduce noise levels. In particularly noisy environments - such as call centres - noise can be a huge distraction. Using an expert furniture company who can design an office layout to account for noise reduction is important.

Choice of colours makes a huge impact on the ‘feel’ of your office, and you can incorporate colours in fabric screens, walls, and seating too. Of course you can use corporate colours to reinforce your brand as well - and brighten up the space too. A good furniture or interiors company can offer fabric samples, - and give sound advice on the use of colour too.



“Colour choices can affect mood, productivity, and wellbeing.”

“Carpet tiles are very practical - you can easily lift a stained tile, and replace with a new one if required.

Make sure you order a spare box of tiles”

Carpets and flooring...

You may be fortunate to have signed a lease on a newly refurbished building - and this may include all new carpets! However, if it's not - don't worry - you can really have some fun and add interest. And without breaking the bank either.

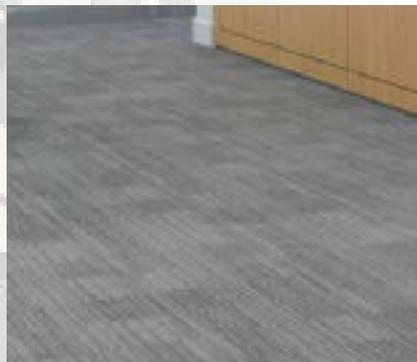
Flooring is a great way to designate areas of your offices - you can create corridors through open areas, work areas, or use carpet to identify departments or teams. You do of course need to bear in mind what areas are being used for - and make sure that your flooring choice is going to make sure you get your lifetime, and moneys worth.

In high traffic areas - like receptions - it can be worth combining commercial vinyls which look great, with a higher grade of carpet tile. In canteens, or breakout areas - you can save money by using a non slip vinyl.

A cheap carpet tile can be a false economy - and will show wear far quicker than a higher grade. You don't have to go mad - but if you're on a longer lease particularly - it's well worth bearing in mind.



“In customer facing areas - like receptions - the right flooring tends to have to do the job of protecting the rest of the offices floors too.”



“Frameless, silicone jointed partition systems look the most clean and contemporary - and recent developments have brought the prices down enormously. Consider using manifestation film to create designs, or privacy.”

Choosing perfect partitions...

Once your space planner has designed the office layout that will work for your business - you would then need to consider the different types of internal wall partiton systems that you would like.

Whether you choose an aluminium frame system, or frameless glass partitions - they all look amazing. You do need to also consider **which will let the most natural light into the space**, what privacy you need, and of course - the level of noise reduction you need too?

“Aluminium frame system”



“Frameless Glass System”



“Double glazed with integral blinds”



Remember that if you're looking for noise reduction for privacy - the 'weak point' for noise travel tends to be over the void in a suspended ceiling. You can have sound deadening padding laid over the grid to really help reduce noise - and it's cost effective too.”

“The workplace has changed... smart phones and technology means we’re not chained to one desk anymore”

Hot desks...

The workplace has changed. The internet, and the availability of VOIP phones, and smart phones has enabled us to work anywhere. However the reality is that we all need to be in the office (probably more than we’d like to be!) sometimes.

Some job roles, such as surveyors or sales people may only need a day or two in the office - so why not share the space? Virtual shared servers, wifi, and clever storage allows for multiple users per desk - and each person can still have their own dedicated storage.

Use of more informal areas, such as breakout areas and booths can also work well - it’s possible to be far more creative with using space in multiple ways. **Be creative - and remember to embrace technology** to make the experience for your customers and staff seamless. Genius.



“Be creative - use awkward nooks around your office for impromptu workspace, also useful for enhanced privacy for small internal meetings”



“Every square foot of your premises costs money - up to £150 per square foot in some areas of the UK. So it’s vital you use it properly. Effective storage is a big part of the solution.”

Storage...

We’ve all heard about the ‘paperless office’ - but a clear desk policy tends to be the more desirable (and realistic) aim for companies.



It’s worth starting off with a ‘storage audit’ - which a good furniture company can normally carry out for you. This tells you what you’re actually using - and what you’re not. This helps to provide a linear metre storage amount - so you can make a direct comparison to what you need in the new offices.

This helps ‘weed out’ where staff are wasting entire cupboards, and often stockpiling stationery, or expensive toner cartridges. If you have the wrong type of storage space - then you will waste space and money. Which nobody wants.

A proposal for a new storage design should be able to be easily compared with your old capacity. You should consider ‘off site’ archiving - it will be cheaper per square foot than office space.



“Have a free storage audit carried out - see what you’re actually using. And what you can get from a new layout”

“The reception area is the first impression you give customers, staff and suppliers. Getting the message right is vital to getting your branding on site right.”

Creating a perfect reception area...

We’ve all been there. You walk into a company for the first time but it’s awful - and doesn’t look like it’s been loved (or even cleaned) for years. What is your first thought? Is this how they want to be viewed by others? And do you want to be there, and do business with them?

A great reception should be an advert for your reputation, your products and services. It’s the perfect opportunity to start telling visitors what you stand for - and what you are good at too.

You should be showing off customer testimonials, industry awards, new products - anything interesting. If you’re visiting a design agency - you would expect to see contemporary styling and colours. If you’re an engineering company, you would expect to find perhaps product samples - so visitors can touch and see your skills first hand.



“Make sure you have enough storage - or it will get untidy quickly’

A good reception design should consider traffic areas, privacy, security - and of course should look fantastic too. Because many reception areas are used for many purposes - **make sure you list all the things you need it to do.**

Each area should be well defined - so **visitors can immediately know where to go**, and where to sit. Your branding should be obvious - but not too much. You can incorporate subtle brand references with the use of colours and more. Ask your office design team how to make everything work well.



“Don’t make counters too high - you should be able to see your visitors when they arrive. It makes it all feel friendlier.”

“Try and have individual seating - like tub chairs or armchairs. People don’t like to sit next to strangers. They’ll prefer to stand instead”



“Get your branding out there - but don’t over do it! Keep it simple!”

“Consider visitors in wheelchairs, and if they can access the reception. Consider the current DDA requirements.”

Creating a perfect Main Office...

Arguably, the main office is the hub of a business. It needs to work effectively, and allow staff to be productive. **A well designed office space should give people a place to concentrate individually - and communicate and interact as a team.**

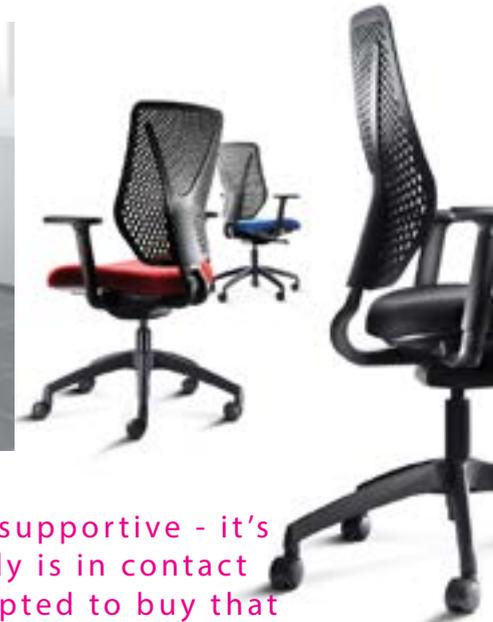
Noise reduction is a big part of a successful environment. Light is also a vital key to getting it right as well. Many office lights offer a yellow glow - which causes fatigue - it's well worth investing a few pounds in upgrading lights to 'daylight bulbs' which offer white light which is far more healthy. It's a cheap way to make a big impact on the environment.

Nowadays, IT equipment takes up less space - and so naturally desks have also got smaller too. Big corner desks are less common - and rectangular desks work really well in most applications. The office design should be something any good office furniture company does for free. This is to make sure each area of an office is given serious thought to how YOU need it to work. Every business is different - and you need a space designer who listens.

"Speak to staff about what they need - but remember that most people don't like changes. At least not initially."



"Make sure staff have the space and solutions they actually need. Accounts and HR departments need more lockable storage, administrators need surface space - whereas sales staff typically need more noise reduction."



"Choose office chairs that are supportive - it's the component that your body is in contact with all the time. Don't be tempted to buy that chair just because it looks good, or seems like a bargain. You should be able to get a smart, supportive chair for a sensible price - that will last"

Creating a perfect executive Office...

You've done well - and you're the boss. Now **you need to create an office that says successful, but not 'Ivory Tower'!** A lot of this will vary according to the industry you're in - and this should be part of an overall design strategy.

If you're in a creative industry - your office should say "We have ideas and imagination". If you're a financial company - it should say reliability, quality - often with a nod towards tradition.

In most executive offices, the environment needs to be used for a multitude of reasons - from hiring, to firing, and to closing an important business deal.

Many executive desks are designed to allow smaller meetings around a special meeting extension. You may also (space permitting) have a preference for soft seating meeting areas - sofas and a coffee table.

You can even carry a theme through - so customer contact areas such as reception, boardroom and the executive office all match perfectly - if that's what you like.

A good design team should help you to get the right balance of practicality, and quality - whilst getting your particular message right. A suite can be from a single desk - right through to a desk, storage, boardroom table and sofas.

You can really have some fun with your office though - glass tables, one off custom items - but always set yourself a budget you're happy with. A good furniture company should be able to get you what you want, at the price you need - but always be realistic too.



"Choose from real wood veneers, or MFC (wood look) to meet your budget. The veneer has a higher grade sheen - and with thicker tops, and solid wood edges it really looks fantastic."



“A great boardroom incorporates comfort, style, integrated up to date technology, and somewhere convenient for storing refreshments during longer meetings. ”

Creating a perfect Boardroom...

Boardrooms and meeting rooms are often where deals are made - and putting thought into the small details will make long meetings more comfortable.

For larger tables, a barrel shape can make seeing other attendees easier. Straight tables mean you have to lean forward to see who is talking. Choosing the correct base can make it easier to avoid bashing your legs.

Choose a matching credenza to hold glasses, equipment and refreshments. Why not choose a built in fridge to keep everything cold. You can also get matching glass display cabinets to show off any awards, or products to your customers.

Leave at least 1000mm around the table to give easy access. Don't try and put too large a table into a boardroom - always leave appropriate space.



“Choose your seating carefully - and bear in mind that they need to be moved around easily by people of all sizes.”

“If you hold long meetings - then make sure your chairs are up to the job. A poorly chosen chair will make you pay later on.”



“Remember to include power and data in your table - they can be fed from a floor box. Great for presentations, or where attendees need a laptop and power.”



GLASS TILES HIDING A CABLE TRAY



“Cantilever frame chairs give you bounce - four legs are hard on the back and the buttocks. Chairs with wheels are easier to move around.”



CABLE FLAPS

Boardroom Table Size Guide

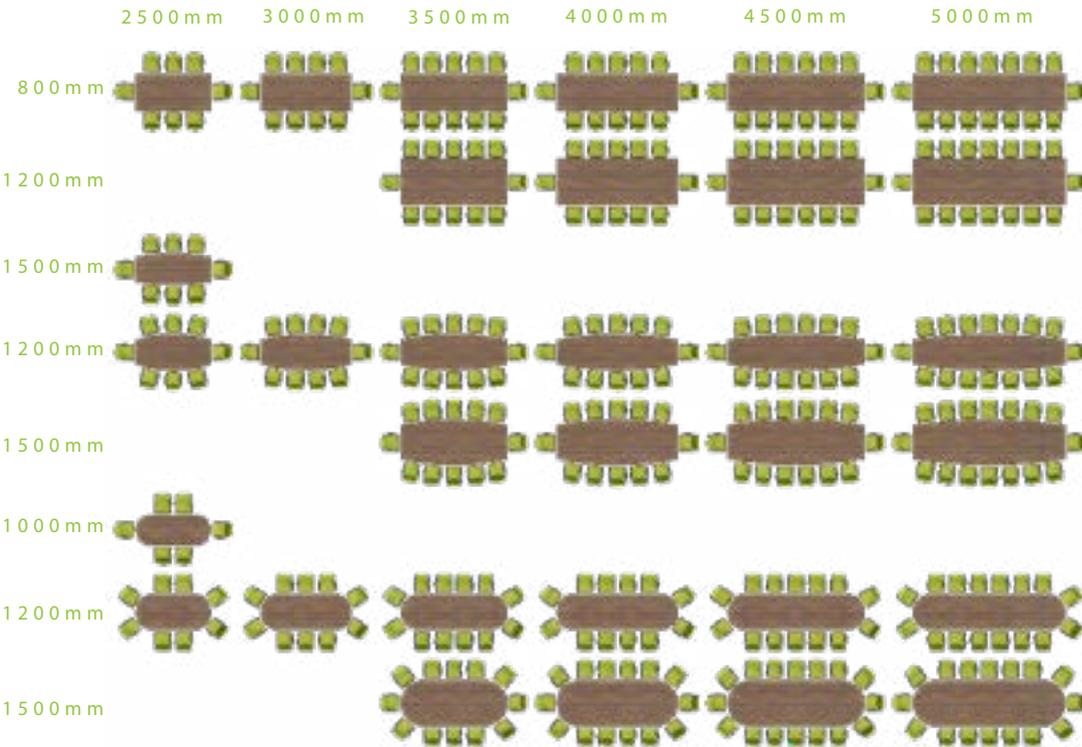


“A good breakout area should be multifunctional - a canteen, meeting space, an area to recharge, and a place to be quiet over a coffee.”

BREAKOUT AREAS...

In the the 1980's, **Gordon Gekko** said “Lunch is for wimps!”. But...things have changed, and it's now recognised that the ability to recharge, and eat a sandwich away from your desk is conducive to productivity and creativity. Even just a corner of the office, is useful - and remember in the spirit of making areas 'multi task' breakout areas are useful as extra meeting space.

Consider the way you work, and remember that **breakout areas are often the place that teams get together and bond**. A strong team is vital to a strong business - and a good staff room definitely helps. Make it comfortable - but not *too* comfortable...





“Using purpose made removal crates, will help protect your equipment, and keep things organised for the move. Hire is cheaper than buying cardboard boxes that you then have to pay to dispose of. Also - staff have to empty them - so less hoarding and procrastination about unpacking is possible”

Moving office itself...

You’ve done all the preparation - now it’s time to move staff, and their belongings. You want to minimise disruption to the business - so many companies do the actual move at the weekend.

Get staff to start packing up their own belongings into removal crates (you can hire them from a good furniture or removal company) and make sure they’re labelled with each persons name. Leave a skeleton staff, so you are still operational.

The removal company (Verve can help) will take all the crates and position them at the new desks - don’t forget to give them a plan with staff names on!

Planned properly and carefully , this should be a precise and smooth operation.



WARNING! BEWARE!

Okay, it’s nothing life threatening - but you would be surprised how many companies fall foul of this - and genuinely regret it later. We’re also aware that this can just sound like a ‘sales pitch’ - but there is real logic to this. And taking a long term view will save you money too.

We know how tempting a bargain can be. And to be fair - we all love a good bargain. However, furniture is one of those things that can be incredibly misleading. So much of what makes the difference between a £50 chair, and a £100 chair is what you just physically can’t see.

Component qualities actually do vary enormously. **Items may look similar - even identical. But if they’re significantly different in price - there is a reason.**

Many imports that hit the UK are made in large numbers to hit a price point. They tend to be lower quality, and in very limited shapes, sizes and colours. They may be a ‘one off’ order from a small factory - so it physically can’t be made identically in the future. Stationery companies, and many online retailers favour this type of product because it sells quickly and cheaply. And there are several good reasons that this should be a concern for you.

These are the continuity, product guarantee - and of course longevity. If you buy product from a UK factory (but always through a dealer, who does loads of the unseen hard work on your behalf) then if there is a problem during install, or later - it can be dealt with quickly. Spares can normally be supplied quickly - so minimising an issue. And a UK 5 year guarantee is actually worth something. If anything goes wrong - you’ll suddenly understand the importance. Especially a few years down the line.

Product range continuity is probably the key. A good furniture supplier should advise you if this range is going to be available in 6 months, 2 years - or 5 years? And if you want to add in the future (which you invariably will) you want it to match, or you’ll end up with a ‘hotch potch’ of sizes, colours that will look awful very quickly - and suddenly won’t seem like such a bargain.

You can still buy inexpensively - but you need to get honest, professional advice. It may not seem important now - but it will be later.

- FREE DESIGN AND SPACE PLANNING
- FRIENDLY ADVICE
- GREAT PRICES AND CHOICE
- NATIONWIDE COVERAGE

What now? We would really like to work with you on your project...

Well, hopefully you've found this free handbook useful? Obviously we can't put all our expertise in here - so we hope you can talk to us for more personalised advice and help. Most of the areas covered in this guide, are what we do for our customers every day.

We're not a 'pushy' sales type of company - we like to work at your pace. We give you honest, professional advice - which is not all about selling you furniture today. We take a long term approach - because we want to work with your company as you grow, and into the future.

We would value being able to talk to you - to discuss your project specifically. No matter how large or small, we can help you. We're totally independent of any furniture manufacturer - so can give you unbiased advice.

Give us a call, or drop us an email. We'll make your offices look great - and take much of the stress out of the whole process too.

I look forward to hearing from you.

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What our customers say about us....

We're very proud of our hard earned customer testimonials. Every company always claims to be the best, and take customer service further than anyone else - so who better for prospective customers to hear from than other companies who have actually used us before.

Here are a selection of our customer recommendations and testimonials:

"Since our initial order, we have used Verve again - and will continue to do so. We are very impressed with the whole service from start to finish"

MK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

"Extremely pleased with everything. The tables and chairs itself are brilliant and well made. But the overall customer service was even better, a helpful team who took care of what we needed and made sure we were happy the whole time. Very impressed, and hope to deal with them again."

CENTAUR & BARCLAY PROPERTY GROUP

"We value their friendly and efficient staff who work hard to offer the best possible service levels, from first point of contact to installation and after sales service."

REDFISH

"We just wanted to say thank you. The service was superb, and the only thing that I wasn't stressed about on Friday. We really appreciated your help."

TPN - The Payments Network

"I would like to thank you for guiding me with our office refurbishments. I did not know initially what I wanted, except that I did know that the office space needed a new fresh look."

"You were able to give me confidence, given the large range of furniture available, to make a purchase decision that has greatly enhanced our working environment enormously. Our staff and customers have really noticed the difference, which is what I wanted to achieve. Your attention to detail has been the making of the work."

A ABBOTT & SONS

THE GUIDE TO SETTING UP YOUR PERFECT OFFICE.

“If you’re moving office or business premises, then this FREE guide will help. Whether you are moving due to expansion, downsizing or at the end of a current lease - there are lots of ideas and pointers in this guide to help you save time and money.

Keep it handy !”