

Eight tips for a more cost-efficient and productive workspace

Some actions cut costs directly. Others streamline your workflows or make your workspaces more efficient. Here are some tips that can help.



1 Review your workflows

Sketch out a process map of your most time- or resource-intensive workflows. Use the map(s) to identify areas of overlap, timesinks, and areas that need attention. Now refine and improve them with your team. When finalized, your workflows will be more efficient and everyone's role in the process will be clearly defined.

2 Assess your workspace

Make an inventory of your office equipment and furniture. How often is each piece used? Who uses it? Once you've captured this data you can make adjustments to your workspace to maximize efficiency and productivity. Sell, trade-in, or recycle unnecessary equipment and furniture.

3 Get comfortable

Casual Friday has become casual workday. The point is, comfortable attire makes you more productive. Why should your workspace be any different? Arrange your cubical or office for productive comfort. Keep it presentable and professional, but make it comfortable too.

4 Go digital

Turns out the paperless office didn't happen overnight—but we're getting there. Convert your legacy file cabinets filled with paper into digital archives. With the right scanning equipment the job can be done quickly and efficiently. You'll be surprised how much precious office space is wasted on file cabinets.

5 Consolidate your hardware

In the long run personal printers are a more expensive strategy than a shared device. Likewise, a multifunction printer provides a better value than a separate printer, scanner, and fax machine. Consolidate to increase cost-efficiency and reduce energy consumption, space, and supplies inventory.

6 Illuminate your workspace

Use natural lighting whenever and wherever possible. Indirect or shaded natural light is free. It's generally easier on the eyes and studies show it increases productivity and employee satisfaction.

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7 Get organized

An uncluttered desktop isn't always a guarantee of efficiency. If it takes more than a moment or two to find what you're looking for, you're losing productivity. The time it takes to get organized in the morning can be recouped through increased productivity by the afternoon. Plus, you'll feel more in control and effective when you're not spending your time turning your workspace upside down in search of that document you had just a few minutes ago. Give it a try and see for yourself.

8 Check your posture

Your workspace should be designed to provide proper ergonomic support to avoid injury and enhance your productivity. Good ergonomics reduce health care costs and time lost due to sick days. The Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) has guidelines for computer workstations:

- Top of monitor level with operator's eyes
- Head and neck aligned with body
- Elbows supported and close to body
- Lower back support
- Wrists and hands in-line with forearms
- Feet flat on the floor

To review them visit www.osha.gov and search on "computer workstations".



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