



Tackling a Move

We can all agree that one of life's major stressors is moving. It's expensive and disrupts your routine, requiring planning, packing, and unpacking. And while it's bad enough moving into a new house, it might be worse when you're moving your business into a new space. Now you've got employees to consider, plus you have the stress of keeping your business in operation during the move itself.

Last year, we made the decision to move Get A Grip to a larger building, and as the months progressed, we remembered just how much work goes into planning a move, much less making it! While we're thrilled to be in our new space, there was a collective sense of relief when we unpacked our last box.

As with any major project, proper planning and organization were vital to keeping the move a relatively smooth process. Here are some tips to help make your office move go as smoothly as possible:

Decide who's in charge. Whether or not you're hiring someone to coordinate your move or keeping it in-house, you might consider designating an employee to be in charge. They should be organized and be able to making quick decisions. Our move was coordinated by me and our President, Ryan. We made a checklist and a (realistic!) timeline, and were the point of contact for vendors, suppliers, and employees.

Create a budget. It's easy for costs to get away from any project, including a move. We had to consider hiring a company to pack up and physically transport our office equipment, files, products, etc. We had to factor in renovating the new space, buying new equipment and furniture, setting up infrastructure like telephones and internet, and moving our large sign. We also factored in lost employee productivity during the transition. Remember to review the budget periodically during the process to ensure everything stays within a reasonable margin of error.

Consider hiring professional movers. We wanted to make this move as easy and stress-free as possible on everyone, so we hired a professional moving company. That way, we didn't have to do the heavy lifting.

Communicate with staff. Our staff knew that we were moving locations as soon as we decided (more than a year ago). We announced the new address as soon as the ink on the contract was dry. In the months leading up to the move, we asked them for ideas for the new space, and kept them updated on any inevitable changes to the timeline.

Work with an office planner. We hired a company to help us design the interior of the new space for maximum efficiency. They gave us some great ideas and helped us find the new furniture and equipment we needed for the expansion, which will accommodate more products and material.

Announce to the world. We created lots of marketing materials to tell the world we were in a new location—an email newsletter, flyers, and more, along with updating our social media accounts and websites. Updating those materials takes time, and involves many different people and companies, so make sure to include this important step in your timeline.

Plan the next step for your old space. Do you need to tell your landlord you're vacating on a schedule in accordance with your lease? Or, if you're the owner of your old building, what happens to the now vacant property? In our case, the commercial realtors who helped us find our new space also helped find renters for the old building.

Whether you're a Fortune 500 company or a smaller start-up, a successful office relocation relies on sticking to your budget and continual communicating with everyone involved in the process. Be realistic in your planning, and keep in mind that setbacks are a part of the process. Just sayin'.

Sharon Dillard is the award-winning CEO and Co-founder of Get A Grip Resurfacing, a national franchise kitchen and bathroom resurfacing company based in Albuquerque.