

Wheaton College

Helpful Hints for Space Planning and Office Furniture Purchases

Step 1 - Space Planning

Planning your office layout is just as important as planning your workstation. Consider how your office will be used and the storage and equipment you will need. Before meeting with a furniture company representative consider the following:

Scope

- Will any renovation be required that would involve Physical Plant?
- Will new carpet be installed?
- Will painting be required?
- How long will you require to pack your office?
- Where will your office equipment/files be stored prior to installation?
- Will Building Services be involved in the removal of old furniture (disposal, storage)?
- Where will you work in the interim?
- Plan your renovation/installation timetable carefully. Typically, it takes 1-2 days to pack. Once the office is empty, painting and carpet installation can be completed, possibly over a weekend, to minimize disruption. Installation of furniture will follow. Allow time for unpacking or organizing your new workspace.

Layout

- What type of furniture is best for your type of work?
- Will you need to move your furniture in the future?
- How much work surface space is needed? Do you work mostly on a computer, or process paperwork?
- How do you interact with other people in your space? Do others pull up to the desk, or is a separate meeting space needed?
- If you are sharing a space do you want space division?
- Here is a link to some helpful information regarding ergonomics:
 - http://www.wheatoncollege.edu/IT_S/doc/ERGONOMICS.doc

Storage

- What are your current and future storage requirements?
- What types of things do you store?
- What items should be easily accessible?
- Do you prefer lateral or vertical filing cabinets?
- Do you need bookcases?
- Do you need storage cabinets?

Technology

- What are your technology requirements?
- Know where your power/data outlets are located.
- You will need to consider the final placement of your technology equipment on your desk.

- It should not be placed near heating or air conditioning equipments, windows, or an electrical source that could interfere with your equipment (large electrical equipment, power panels, circuit breakers, etc.)
- Your monitor should be placed in an area on your desk which will not be in direct sunlight (either behind or in front of it). This could cause your monitor to overheat or the glare to interfere with screen visibility.
- Use only speakers made specifically for your computer system; if not, they, too, could damage your monitor and, in some cases, erase the data on your computer.
- Do you want grommets in the desk top surface for computer/phone wires?
- Do you want a key board tray?
- Where will your printer, fax, scanner, etc. be located?
- Is there enough power to accommodate your electrical needs?
- Please contact LIS Technology Support if you have any questions regarding the layout of your office as they will be happy to assist you.

Budget

- What is your budget for office furniture? Sharing your budget, or a ballpark range, can be helpful to the furniture representative.
- As year end approaches, furniture should be ordered at least eight weeks prior to June 30th to insure delivery prior to the fiscal year end. The cost of furniture installed after June 30th will be applied to the following year's fiscal budget.

Things to Keep In Mind

- Please be aware of space and building restrictions-heating units, doors, windows, moldings, columns, pipes, floors that aren't level, etc. All of these can impact the design and installation process. Please also keep in mind that in older buildings it's not uncommon to come across problems during installation that could not have been determined beforehand. In these situations the furniture representative and installers will work with you to come up with a solution.
- Do you have a project completion date in mind? Office furniture is custom made; it's not sitting in a warehouse ready for delivery. It will take at least 4-6 weeks from the time the order is placed for the vendor to receive your custom furniture in their warehouse. Once they receive the order, you will be contacted to set up an installation date that is convenient for you.

Step 2 - Meeting with a Furniture Representative

Based on the purchasing policy, the cost of the project will determine how many written quotes you will need. Contact each vendor and request a meeting with a furniture representative. Please share budget and anticipated project completion date with the representative. During your meeting the furniture representative will:

- Discuss the use of the space with you;
- Measure the space;
- Make layout suggestions based on intended use; and
- Provide you with furniture brochures and finish options.

Step 3 - Drawings and Quotes

After the initial meeting the furniture representative will provide you with drawings. Ask your representative for an approximate time frame for receipt of drawings. Typically, you will receive drawings within one week.

If you have questions about the drawings, please be sure to ask the furniture representative. Drawings are not always perfect the first time and often undergo several revisions. Check the measurements. Once you receive the drawings, it's a good idea to measure the space yourself. A great way to visualize the layout is to tape off your layout with masking tape. If you need assistance with this please ask the representative or contact Business Services at x3438, we are happy to help.

Please direct any questions or concerns about the layout, finishes, quote, etc. to the representative. The representatives do their best to interpret what the end users are looking for but ultimately it is up to you to make decisions about what you want. If you don't ask questions or share concerns the representative will think you are satisfied with all of the information he/she has provided.

Once you have decided on the final layout, furniture and finishes, a final quote will be provided to you.

A Purchase Order is required for your purchase. Please allow enough time to obtain signatures on your Purchase Order Request Form, as well as one to two days for Business Services to process the Purchase Order in Banner.

Step 4 - Ordering Process

Based on the purchasing policy, a signed Purchase Order Request Form, the written quote from the selected vendor, and the Verbal or Written Quote Record Form will be submitted to Business Services.

Business Services will process the purchase order through the Banner System and will fax the purchase order to the vendor. A copy will be sent interoffice mail to the requesting department.

Again, please plan on at least 4-6 weeks for your furniture to be delivered to the vendor's warehouse and approximately five days for the furniture to be installed in your office.

Step 5 - Installation

The vendor will contact you directly to schedule furniture installation.

Keep in mind that there are things that can go wrong during installation that are beyond anyone's control (specification errors, manufacturer errors, installers can make errors and damage can occur during shipping). If any of these circumstances occur, the furniture vendor will work to correct the problems as soon as possible.

At the time of installation, the installers will check to make sure doors, drawers, locks, lights, etc. are working properly, but sometimes adjustments will be necessary after settling has occurred. Please notify the furniture representative as soon as possible so repairs can be made.