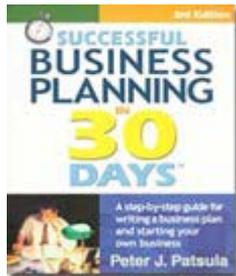


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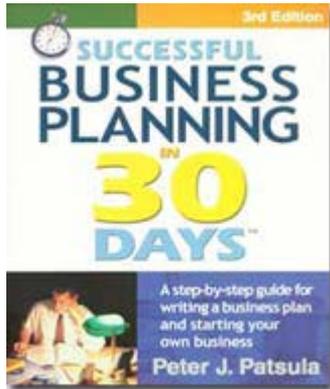


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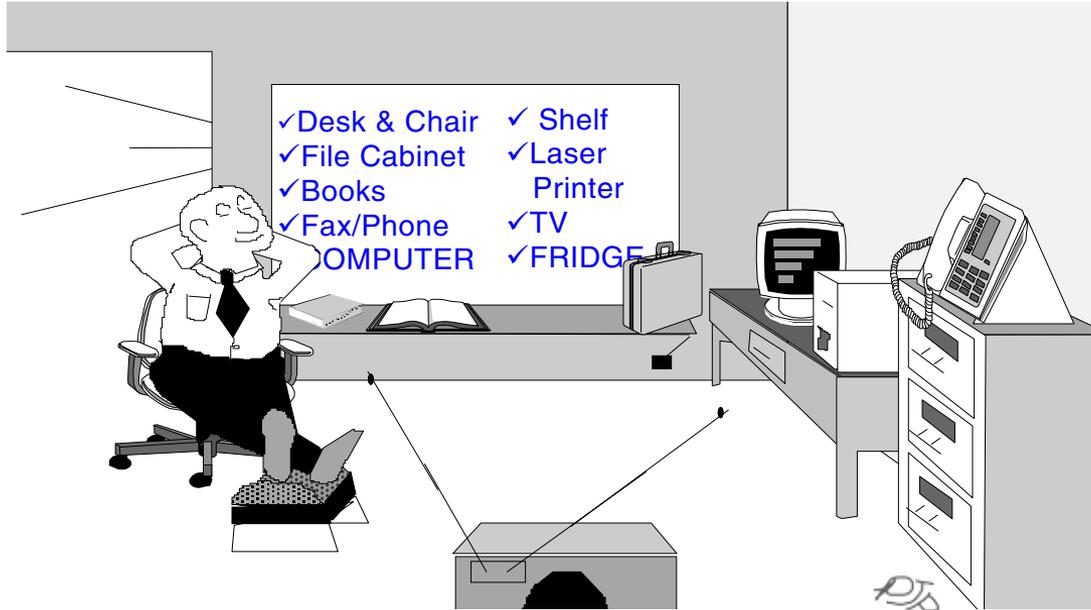
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*“I hope you haven’t made yourself too
COMFORTABLE in there dear?”*

Smallbusinessstown.com

SETTING-UP A HOME OFFICE

REGARDLESS of what type of business you are planning to start, it is important to set-up a home office. A spare bedroom, heated basement storeroom, or even a room in an attic will do.

However, if you have the luxury of a large study with a great view, make sure you have heavy curtains to draw shut, to block out distracting sounds and sights such as chirping birds and snow-capped mountains that you are sure to listen to or stare at more than work.

It is also important to keep in mind, when choosing a room for a home office, that privacy and security are essential. Select a place where you won't be easily disturbed and can leave without fear of having your work shuffled through, lost or stolen.

CHOOSING SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT FOR YOUR HOME OFFICE

WHETHER you're outfitting a home office or an outside office, it's important to have furniture that looks and feels like it belongs. If your chair is uncomfortable and your desk is the wrong height or has broken drawers, not only will you look and feel unprofessional, but your efficiency will suffer.

In general, be conservative, economical and practical, but don't be too cheap. Desks fashioned from two-by-fours and milk crates, though more in line with your budget, will portray a struggling and possibly inept business owner to clients or

Your office is your second home. Make it liveable and lovable. Make it so you never want to leave it.
SUPERTIP

potential investors who happen to one day visit your office. Investing perhaps in antique furniture and artwork or prints can give your office the appearance of an old, moneyed foundation, and make others

more eager to share in your prestige. This may be important for those hoping to build a consulting business.

NOTE With many corporations down-sizing and getting rid of surplus office furniture, office furniture auction sales can be gold mines for budget minded entrepreneurs.

Bookshelves

Bookshelves should be within easy reach of your desk and large enough to store as many books as you need. Make

sure the items you use most frequently are closest to reduce repetitious or prolonged one-sided movements.

Business Stationary

No office is complete without business stationary including: letterhead, envelopes of assorted sizes, shipping labels, company address labels, business forms (purchase orders, invoices etc.), notebooks, and good quality paper (preferably white cream or gray – avoid dark colors).

Calculator

Entrepreneurs continually crunch numbers. An easy-to-read, easy-to-use calculator or adding machine is necessary.

Chair

Correct sitting posture is important for good health. Slumping forward or backward in an ill-fitted chair compresses your spine and forces your body to work unnecessarily.

Your chair should be fully adjustable, comfortable, and easy on the back. It should also swivel (so you can spin around when bored), and it should have rollers that don't squeak.

*If your desk is
your castle, then
your chair is
your throne.*
POWERPOINT

More specifically, its height should be easily adjustable (between 14 and 20 inches) so it's not too low that you can't reach your desk or not too high that it pulls your feet off the floor. The backrest should fit into the small of your back (following the curve of your spine), allowing

you to divert pressure from the critical lower back area and keep your shoulders straight. The seat itself should be lightly padded to cushion and distribute your weight. Armrests help support and take strain off your shoulders and neck.

Computers & Other Electronic Equipment

Don't buy a typewriter, unless you're dead broke or plan to live deep in the woods in a cabin with no electricity. Modernize. Computerize. Place the center of your computer at about chin level. The ideal eye-to-screen distance varies from 14 to 20 inches (see Guidebook #24, "Buying Computer Hardware," for detailed help on un-

derstanding and buying computer equipment).

Desk or Table

Although a beautiful oak desk once owned by Paul Getty, Howard Hughes, or Henry Ford might be good for the old entrepreneurial ego, it is by no means necessary. Any desk or table will do, as long as it's sturdy, big, and won't give you slivers. As well, it might be wise to have an extra storage, handling or mailing table. This extra table should fit in well both functionally and visually with your other work surfaces.

NOTE Work surfaces should be low enough or high enough that your arms

Filing cabinets are meant to be used, not to gather dust in the corner of your office. Buy one that opens so smoothly and quietly, its like slicing butter.

bend between 70 and 90 degrees at the elbow.

Filing Cabinet

Filing cabinets can be used to store customer inquiries, customer orders, advertising records, business expenses, business correspondence, insurance records, ideas of any kind, and any other forms, cut-outs, or pieces of paper that happen to cross your desk and need organizing.

Filing cabinets are also meant to be used, not to gather dust in the corner of your office. Buy one that opens so smoothly and quietly, its like slicing butter. Choose a size that can be easily accessed and place it

As regards intellectual work, it remains a fact, indeed, that great decisions in the realms of thought and momentous discoveries and solutions of problems are only possible to an individual, working in solitude.
SIGMUND FREUD

close enough to your desk that you don't have to get out of your chair. If possible, choose a model that offers some degree of fire protection and can be securely locked.

NOTE Think about buying a fireproof safe or filing cabinet to store important documents. *Sentry* brand name products have a good reputation in this area.

Filing Folders & Dividers

A filing cabinet is no good without dividers and folders. File folders should have a one third cut, large and sturdy tabs, and be of enough variety and color to make files easy to locate.

NOTE If organized properly, a filing cabinet

becomes an extension of your own personal business planner.

Lighting, Heating & Airflow

Dim lights may encourage creativity, but bright lights encourage productivity. Nevertheless, some types of bright lighting, can be detrimental to your performance.

Direct light from a window in front of you can almost imperceptibly reflect from your desk and into your eyes causing strain. To avoid this problem, make sure direct light sources come from the back or side. To further reduce glare use low-level or overhead lights giving special consideration to their effect on your computer's screen.

In regards to airflow, it is generally un-

derstood that the brain needs good quality oxygen to keep in tiptop functioning order. Make sure your office has a fresh air supply. As well, avoid directing too much heat or air conditioning towards you. This can not only be distracting but over a long period of time can cause muscles on one side of your body to contract, pulling vertebrae out of proper alignment and irritating the nerves that contribute to headaches and other discomforts.

In general, adjust your workstation to fit your body, not your body to fit the workstation.

SUPERTIP

Multi-function Peripheral

For under a \$1,000, these all-in-one super office helpers, can handle most of your printing, faxing, photocopying and scanning needs in addition to saving you money and desk space compared to buying separate individual machines (see

Guidebook #26, "Getting Printed," for more info on these wonderful inventions).

Office Spindle

An office spindle is a piece of wood or metal, with a long sharp pointed spear, usually about 8 inches long, embedded into it. It is used to spear small pieces of paper that need handling, and most importantly bills (this makes you feel good). Several spindles lined up together can also be used to organize filled and un-filled orders, tax information, ideas, and even things to do.

Office Supplies

No office is complete without pens, pencils, erasers, markers, crayons, colored pencils, rulers, calculators, paper clips both

large and small, staples, glue, scotch tape, masking tape, and heavy duty duct tape.

Postage Stamps

How many times have you been too lazy to send a letter because you didn't have any postage handy? Don't give yourself an excuse. You may even want to consider buying a postage scale so you don't have to stand in line to get heavier items weighed.

*Next to the dog,
the wastebasket
is man's best
friend.*
ANON

Rolodex

If you can't justify the expense of a computer, perhaps all you need to keep track of clients or customers, is a Rolodex. A Rolodex consists of small 5 by 7 inch index cards mounted on rings. Often, a small Rolodex can be more convenient and faster than a computer system.

Rubber Stamps

There is something deeply satisfying about slamming your own personalized rubber stamp on any kind of form or business correspondence. Stamps can state your company name, address or logo; help organize paperwork that has been processed; or any one of the following business related functions such as *void, sold, paid, over due, or discount.*

Telephone

Position your telephone near enough so you can work and hold it at the same time. However, use a shoulder-rest attachment, headphone system, or speaker attachment so you don't have to tilt your head to brace the phone between your shoulder and cheek. This

No office is complete without a carefully placed generously sized receptacle to store careless mistakes, bad ideas and to help file unwanted mail.

forces pressure on the muscles and nerves of the neck and spine (see Guideook #24, "Opening Communication Channels," for more info on telephones, answering machines, answering services and other communication equipment).

Wall Calendar

A three-month plastic calendar – one that can be written and erased with water based markers – makes an excellent appointment and deadline scheduler.

Waste Paper Basket

No office is complete without a carefully placed generously sized receptacle to store careless mistakes, bad ideas and to help file unwanted mail. Preferably this receptacle should be placed in the

corner of a room, so the walls can be used as a rebound boards, and just out of reach so that crumpled paper shots are somewhat of a challenge. This way, if your ideas aren't flowing very well, you can still give yourself the satisfaction of sinking an eight-foot hook shot.



Office Equipment & Supplies Checklist

- Bookshelves*
- Business Stationary*
- Calculator*
- Chair*
- Computers & Other Electronic Equipment*
- Desk or Table*
- Filing Cabinet*
- Filing Folders & Dividers*
- Lighting, Heating & Airflow*
- Multi-function Peripheral*
- Office Spindle*
- Office Supplies*
- Postage Stamps*
- Rolodex*
- Rubber Stamps*
- Telephone*
- Wall Calendar*
- Waste Paper Basket*

CHOOSING THE ULTIMATE WRITING TOOL

ALL GOOD IDEAS sooner or later are transferred to paper. Cave men used charcoal, clay and even the blood of animals. Modern man uses pencils, pens, and brightly colored felts. Choosing your ultimate writing tool should be fun, personal and above all else functional.

Advantages of Pencils

Pencils are cheap. They can write on rough surfaces, better than pens but not as good as felts. They can erase and be used upside down. They can be sharpened with a kitchen knife. They can be used to stab crooks in the hand. And if you want, you

The best office is the back seat of an automobile.

J. PAUL GETTY

can even get elegant mechanical pencils that look like elegant pens.

Advantages of Pens

Pens are permanent. You can't sign a check with a pencil. They are brighter on paper. You can stick a pen in your mouth and not get lead poisoning. And they don't smudge after drying like pencils or water felts can.

Advantages of Felts

Felts can be used in many ways to make thin and thick lines. They are by far the most expressive writing tool of all the three. People who draw pictures love markers and felts for their variety. However, they are expensive, tend to dry up when you need them most, and have a nasty habit of staining clothes.

Your Final Decision

Each writing tool has its own purpose, get plenty of both. However, the one you should carry around in your pocket everywhere you go depends upon your needs and the image you want to present. Creative graphics people should own felts, formal business people pens, and design people pencils.

Author's Choice

Half-sized 0.5 mm mechanical pencil with a built in *Staedtler Mars Plastic* eraser. You never need to waste time sharpening nor hunting for an eraser, and the whole combo is small enough to fit easily in a jacket pocket.

*I believe in God,
family, and
McDonald's and
in the office, that
order is re-
versed.*

RAY A KROC
*Founder of
McDonald's*

