



It's easy to focus on the exciting phases of an office redesign, such as picking out the furniture. But part of the creative process involves finding solutions to why an office needs new furniture, new workspace configurations or architectural updates in the first place. After reviewing Project Thought-starters Part 1 to evaluate your current office, take the following questions into consideration to think about the determining factors for your redesign.

Here are some of the key considerations that will help make sure every job's done right, on time and on budget.

PART 2: DETERMINING FACTORS FOR YOUR REDESIGN

1. How is the culture of your company currently reflected in your space plan?

The modern workspace has evolved from private offices to open, collaborative environments. But how open is too open? That's for each individual company to decide. Some companies want to create environments that encourage collaboration, increase access to natural light and reduce their footprints. For others, those drastic changes could create unnecessary noise and distractions, negatively affecting productivity. It's all about carefully considering corporate identity and organizational goals, and how it's communicated through office design.

2. Are employees grouped according to job function?

Whether the current office space is separated by department, or growth has forced placement of employees in any available open space, it's important to consider workflow when creating a new workspace. Build in time to analyze how employees work — and with whom. Employee focus groups and surveying a typical workday are great ways to understand how departments collaborate with each other.

3. How do employees move about the space?

Employees are no longer using common areas to get

from Point A to Point B. As collaboration becomes more prevalent in the workplace, think about how these areas can be used to encourage employees to leave their desks for a change in perspective or for impromptu interaction with colleagues. Something as simple as rethinking a hallway can be the start of a dynamic collaborative space.

4. Do you need to meet the differing needs of a multi-generational workforce?

Each generation brings its own style and preferences to work, creating a challenge for space planning. Older generations grew up in an era when everyone got their own private office (or, at the very least, a private cubicle), but usually enjoy collaborative workspaces. It's important to review current facilities and determine how it supports the different generations you employ.

5. Would you like to incorporate your brand identity more prominently into the office design?

Office space is becoming a new tool for communicating corporate brand and culture messages — not to mention attracting top talent and customers. Whether it's subtle or bolder, branding should be an intricate part of your office design. Think about what you want to convey to your employees and customers, and how that can be expressed in the work environment.