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Mistakes to Avoid When Redesigning Your Office

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Your real estate office should encourage productivity among agents and staff as well as reflect your brand. So, if you're a broker-owner considering an office expansion or redesign to achieve those objectives, it will take careful planning and the right people to help. Adam Felson, the director of officemorph, a San Francisco-based project management firm that oversees commercial real estate improvements, office build-outs, and office redesigns, has put together a report, "[13 Mistakes to Avoid When Building Out Your Next Office: A Practical Guide For Office Managers and Executives](#)," to help ensure a smooth construction process and avoid common pitfalls.

Here are three mistakes from Felson's list that broker may find particularly useful.

Not Collecting Enough Input

Your staff and agents need to feel comfortable in your workspace. After all, an office redesign should result in your team feeling more engaged and inspired. It should also reflect your brand and make it easier for you to recruit new agents. Survey your agents and staff, Felson says, conduct detailed interviews with managers, team leaders, and other brokerage leadership to understand space requirements. Then hold a design charrette—a brainstorming session to develop goals and initial design concepts together.

Bidding Out the Project

Going out for bids is a common way to get the best pricing available from contractors, but Felson wants you to rethink this approach. Seeking competitive bids can easily add four to six weeks to your project, so if time is of the essence for you, this might not be the best plan of action, he says. You may end up selecting the contractor who comes back with the lowest price, however, they might not fully understand the scope of the work you are seeking. Felson encourages bringing on a contractor earlier, during the design phase of the project. Then, the contractor can help you and your team craft an office space that's economical and they will fully understand your needs and how you want the space constructed. "In reality, an early partnership with your construction team will usually lead to smarter, more cost-effective designs with fewer surprises for your budget and schedule," Felson says.

Giving Everyone Just One Workspace

Many of your agents probably ask, "Why even come to the office?" They can likely accomplish much of their job from their laptops and smartphones. But some agents need an office environment for higher productivity, fewer distractions, and to feel part of a team. Your office redesign should foster productivity and be inviting to both agents and clients. Consider including a lounge area in your new concept where people can come together, collaborate, and work. Some brokerages have opted for a coffee bar feel. You could create a living room atmosphere with couches, pillows, coffee tables and end tables that reflect your focus on homes. This will also provide a comfortable space where agents can meet with clients or bring their laptops to work for a couple hours, he says. This space could double as a conference room. Creating "phone booths" are a great way to add small private rooms where individual agents can work privately and make phone calls without out being disrupted. You could also consider small workstations where agents can store some belongings or work on their computers in an area you consider the "home base."

[Read all 13 of Felson's tips.](#)

Source: "[13 Mistakes to Avoid When Building Out Your Next Office: A Practical Guide For Office Managers and Executives](#)," 2018, officemorph