

## Home Office — Designing for the Senses

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### Sight: Seeing Business Take Off

***The magic of color.*** Use company colors to best advantage. Reinforce your brand image with the colors you have selected. Whether it is an accent wall, or a blow up of your logo on the wall, or maybe even using your logo on your office chair, all are valued ways to reinforce your brand image and remind you of your focus. (This is similar to selecting a screen saver of your logo or website.)

***Color psychology sells!*** Consider the psychology of color in your selection. In brief, red quickens the heartbeat, and you will eat more, spend more and lose track of time all in the presence of red. Orange is the great social equalizer, and represents affordability (i.e. Home Depot). Yellow spurs memory (legal pads), can indicate caution, is generally considered sunny and cheerful, and works effectively in spaces with little or no natural light. It offers the illusion of sunshine. Blue promotes trust and a general sense of calm. Green indicates growth and renewal and is the “color of money”. Purple often represents royalty and, depending on the time of year religion; it also is a favorite hue of creative types and alleviates insomnia (i.e. promotes daydreaming). Brown is usually viewed as conservative and dependable (United Parcel Service). White indicates independence and wealth (afford to keep it clean!). Black can be very upscale and chic, but also indicate a hands off (look don't touch) and is best used sparingly.

***Light is energy, do you have enough?*** Of the types of light, natural or artificial (incandescent, fluorescent, halogen), natural is preferred and optimal from two directions. Torchiere lights, (up lights designed to be placed in corners) usually halogen based, with dimmers are cost effective and best when placed in dark corners, where the light will be reflected off the ceiling and illuminate the room.

***Know the basics of art.*** It is important to consider imagery that enhances the work environment and, if clients visit, appropriate to the company image. (i.e. if a travel agency, then images of exotic destinations, if a financial planner, then images of Wall Street, graphs of stock trends, images of companies on the exchange.

***Is your office in balance?*** You'll need a mix of square, hard edged shapes and soft rounded curves. For example if a rectangular desk is used, consider a round conference table.

***Understand your office composition.*** How it is all placed makes a difference; is there a visual cohesion? Is a unity evident in the furnishings by the finishes used and is the arrangement functional and effective?

### Sound: Hearing the Sounds of Productivity

***Banish noise.*** It is difficult, if not impossible, to work successfully with noise distractions, whether it is the lawn mower, dog barking, kids playing, or an over cranked stereo.

**White noise is essential.** Determine your favorite background sounds music (style?), talk radio, TV, trickling water, or just quiet. Incorporate a radio or stereo system into the design, or perhaps a water feature, such as a tabletop fountain.

### **Taste: Feasting on the Fruits of Your Labor**

**Quench your thirst.** Even if just at a water cooler. The idea of clean, clear fresh water in a glass (no paper cups folks!) can quench and provide a mood lift. Adding a mini refrigerator if there is room can alleviate those trips to the kitchen, and be great for any visiting vendors or associates deserving a quick break. Keep it well stocked with favorite beverages. In cooler climates, a coffee maker can be a real convenience and its own wakeup therapy!

**Keep the munchies at bay.** Use a colorful glass bowl for sweet treats or even a tray of fruit for a quick bite. It also adds invitation to have something to offer clients or customers.

### **Touch: Feeling Your Goals Within Reach**

**Make it touchable.** Add tactile elements to please your sense of touch - leather, wood, stone, cashmere, wool, chenille, rattan, wicker, sisal.

**Mix it up.** Juxtapose hard slick surfaces with softer elements. Don't forget visual texture, such as patterns and plants. Layer and combine for greatest effect.

### **Smell: Scents of Success**

**Aroma therapy** is big business these days, find out what triggers your creativity and lifts your energy, experiment with a variety of scents, (lavender, pine, citrus, sandalwood etc.) It doesn't have to be overwhelming or flowery to be effective. Sometimes adding a citrus plant or herb in a decorative pot is enough to infuse your office with energy and invitation.

**Keep it fresh!** Avoid negative scents like mustiness, old gym shoes, day old Chinese takeout, and such. Always maintain a neutral or fresh scent. Scent can even be used as a signature for your business. If you are in a home baking business, nothing beats the heavenly smell of fresh baked cookies; often used to sell houses!

**Once you have addressed the senses properly in your office environment you'll find success soon follows.**

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