

## Office Makeover Ideas

(adapted from *Finding Joy In Your Job*, © 2007 by Pat Healey)

Give your work space a makeover, and I guarantee it will give your attitude a big boost. Having a beautiful, harmonious, well-organized, efficient work space is a huge component of finding more joy in your job. If you don't consider yourself a visual person and you're clueless about how to fix up your space, that's a perfect opportunity to get to know a colleague who is inclined in that direction. She'll probably be flattered you asked her advice. Plan a shopping trip some day after work and bond over potted ferns and picture frames. Here are some ideas:

- Ask if you can paint the walls or perhaps some of the furniture. For example, ugly old metal file cabinets can be hauled outside and spray painted quite nicely. If it's allowed, have the whole team come in some Saturday and have a painting party. Cheerful wall colors go a long way toward creating a happy place to spend your days.
- Clear out the clutter and all those secret spots where you stash stuff to do later. Throw out items you no longer need, like newspapers from three months ago. Reacquaint yourself with the bottom of your inbox. Catch up on your filing. Make room for new energy.
- Get organized. See if your boss will spring for whatever you need to contain the chaos: file crates, more shelves, stacking file trays, hanging baskets, cable wranglers, whatever you can think of to help restore order. Don't forget to add some color. These days there are stores in every mall that specialize in storage devices, and all that cool stuff comes in every color of the rainbow.
- Set up your space for efficiency. Put things you use all the time within arm's reach; things you don't need can be put away in cupboards out of sight. Is your phone in the optimal position for you? How about your computer? If not, ask your tech person to help you adjust things for your best use.
- If you have a real office with enough room, consider making it a friendly place to hold informal meetings or work with another colleague. Do you have a visitor chair? Is it actually something someone would want to sit in for more than five minutes?

- How's your lighting? You need good task lighting, but maybe you don't need 10,000 watts of fluorescent lights beaming down on you all day. Too much glare is a source of stress all by itself. Several table lamps lend a welcoming glow to a space.
- Bring things from home that express your personality. Family photos of course, but don't forget a picture of Dingo the Dachshund, snapshots from a great vacation, images of your prized roses—whatever symbolizes to you some of the reasons you are motivated to come to work. How about bringing a bowling trophy or a blue ribbon from the county fair? Don't be afraid to let people know who you are outside of work.
- Invite the outside in. Plants are one of the best ways to liven up an office and they help cleanse the air by emitting oxygen during the day. There are plenty of varieties that will grow in windowless rooms, just ask a knowledgeable plant person. Bring some fresh flowers from your garden, or how about some shells from your last trip to the beach or feathers from your bird watching jaunts? We all need to be reminded of our connection to the real world beyond our business lives, and this is a great way to do it.
- Decorate your space with things that remind you of the real reasons you come to work (beyond paying your bills). Maybe it's a motivational poster, a favorite quote you had framed, an encouraging card from a good friend, an embroidered statement of your personal mission. Only you know what will inspire you and help remind you of your larger reasons for being at work.