

Analysis of Site Selection.

5 STEPS TO HELP GUIDE YOU ALONG TO A SUCCESSFUL AND STRESS FREE OPENING.

Did you know that building your new office will most likely be the single largest investment you will make for your practice? Taking the proper steps can make a big difference between success and possible failure.

Most of us have a limit on how much we can invest or borrow to fund this project, so it is very important that this process goes smoothly to minimize any costly delays or overages.

To do this, I suggest that you follow this simple “5 step” process that will help guide you along to a successful and stress free opening. Take the time prior to committing to the project to get organized and avoid as many obstacles as possible.

STEP 1: Determine the Needs of the Practice

Think about what your practice will need in order for it to flourish now, as well as in the future. Also look at both patient areas (testing rooms, exam rooms, optical, etc.) and non-patient areas (offices, conference and lounge areas, etc.) to make sure all of your needs are met.

Certain industry specialists are familiar with this process and can help guide you. In fact, Eye Designs, a leading design and display firm, offers a very detailed “Planning Survey” on their website to help you cover all of your bases.

STEP 2: How Much Space Will I Need

It is important to determine the correct amount of space for your new office. Not only should it meet your current needs, but it should include some room for future growth. It’s also important that you factor in space for circulation aside from the actual room sizes when calculating office size. Finally, be sure you check the usable “net square footage” that you are committing to compared to what the landlord is actually giving you. In many cases you will actually be billed for common area spaces as well as your own space.

STEP 3: Who Do You Want To Be

Certain practices choose to have a more clinical image, while others want to maximize the retail experience for their patients, so knowing who you want to be is important in selecting a site. If you desire a strong retail presence that has strong “walk-by” or “drive-by” traffic then a strip mall may be best suited for you. If you want a more conventional clinical office, consider locating in a free standing building or a medical building, which may better suit your needs.



Example of displays & design by industry specialist the Eye Designs Group.

STEP 4: Site Selection

Before you sign on the dotted line be sure you’ve done your due diligence on the prospective location. Search local records for area demographic information to make sure you are targeting your desired patient profile and they have access to your practice. Other things to consider; who are the large employers in the area, as well as are there significant residential and commercial developments planned for the future. Finally, don’t forget to scout out the local competition to ensure the area is not over saturated with ECPs.

STEP 5: Building Your Team

One of the most important elements of a successful new office is having a strong team to help you build your new office. A strong team will usually consist of an industry design specialist, who knows your business in both the retail and clinical areas. Also, a local architect who is familiar with the local codes can help expedite the process. A “recommended” and “proven” quality contractor is key to keep you on time and on budget. Your accountant, banker and real estate attorney are important to make sure you are receiving the most competitive and manageable deal. Finally, don’t forget to discuss your new building with your vendors and peers. Your vendors can share detailed product information, which may effect the design and use of space. Meanwhile, always seek advice from your peers who have taken this journey, since they can share their own experiences to help you avoid any pitfalls that they had.

In closing, take the proper steps to plan your new office to help you avoid costly time delays and cost overruns. Specifically, follow this “5 step” program and your path to a new office will be manageable and organized, which will help you deliver a better patient and customer experience.

For more information contact the author:

Richard Winig
President / Senior Designer
Eye Designs LLC
www.eyedesigns.com
800.346.8890



Richard has over 25 years experience designing successful optical environments and has been a featured speaker at many industry events.