

MANAGING GROWTH



DOTRubik™
ASSOCIATES

Creating great space

MATCHING COMMERCIAL CHANGE TO A WORKPLACE STRATEGY

Staff appraisals are a valuable part of commercial life allowing employees and employers to get the best out of each other by providing a structured way to develop their relationship over time. For many businesses extending this sort of approach to their commercial property is a step too far and it's costing them dearly.



Oladotun Michael Olusola
Office Fit-Out Expert

Whether businesses are expanding, contracting, coming to a lease break or changing the way they work, understanding the type of space and the size of premises they require is essential if they want to avoid adding unnecessary zeroes to the bottom line.

It's easy to see just how quickly unused space can rack up costs for SME's given that in the Lagos island office market average rents are N28,000 per sqm, pushing up to N35,000 in V.I and then N45,000 in Lekki Phase 1.

DOTRubik Projects helped RwandAir assess its needs before it moved location from Marina to Victoria Island as part of a restructuring process. Staff numbers were to jump higher by 20% and following our appraisal the organisation moved into a new building that had the same floor space as their old one but successfully accommodated the 20% rise in headcount.

Without the appraisal these tenants would have committed to premises for at least five years that were a third larger, bringing unnecessary rental and occupational costs for the extra space.

Not all SMEs rent their premises and future owners need to align their strategic business goals with their commercial property strategy to avoid purchasing a bigger building than necessary. This will limit transactional costs, reduce the ongoing maintenance bills and so protect the business's cash flow and profits.

55%

Average time desks are unused in a working day

20%

Increase of staff. Numbers were set to jump by 20%

3-5 weeks

The time to carry out a workplace appraisal

28%

The average amount of space that can be saved after an appraisal has been carried out

Even where they already own the property, more efficient use of the existing space will open up options to generate an income from sub letting or selling some of the portfolio.

Without an effective appraisal of a SME's space requirements, it's impossible for executive boards to make informed decisions on improving the relationship between their company and the environment in which it works.

So just what does such an appraisal look like, how long does it take and what sort of benefits can it deliver?

In short there are three main aspects to a space appraisal. The first is to understand the utilization rate for each individual desk, meeting room and break-out space and most businesses are surprised to find that on average desks aren't used for 55% of the working day. This type of study identifies the size of the opportunity to work more efficiently and leads naturally into the next stage of the process.

The appraisal would then examine how a company works and whether its offices properly support its activities and outputs. A legal firm, for example, is likely to need meeting rooms for private discussions with clients, but a call centre has less need for privacy with the priority being on desk numbers. Key is understanding what people do and getting to know what space they need.

How well an office design supports a SME's requirements is the effectiveness rating and it's essential to find the right balance between effective and efficient space to minimise costs and maximise performance.

The final part of the appraisal is working through possible space planning solutions and agreeing what would work best in practice before implementing the changes and evaluating them once in place.

Without undertaking an appraisal SMEs don't have the information required to assess possible improvements and ensure their commercial space caters for their needs today and the changing demands they'll have in the future.

A full appraisal can take about three to five weeks with the timescale generally driven by the availability of management and staff to attend interviews and workshops. It's possible, therefore, to condense this timeframe.

When it comes to property management, knowledge gives executive teams the power to act and that very quickly translates into cost and efficiency savings. That's why property appraisals are just as important as staff appraisals when it comes to creating a well run and effective organisation. Isn't it time you found out how much you could save by better aligning your commercial space to your business needs?

A full appraisal would include:

- Utilisation studies to document of how often individual spaces are occupied during the working day.
- Workplace performance studies to understand employee perception of how well a company's office aligns to its business needs. Are there enough private meetings room? Could more desks be on the floor? Is there adequate storage space? Is IT deployed effectively?
- Structured interviews to gather information on business processes, activities and outputs to allow space to be aligned with practical requirements.
- Stakeholder workshops to test potential solutions and examine possible issues with suggested new layouts and designs.
- Scenario testing to work through new designs in detail.
- Post occupancy evaluations to ensure the new space is performing as it should and to identify further improvements.

We are looking forward to seeing you

If you would like to know more, please feel free to stop by: we look forward to it. Our doors are always open to you – all you need to do is book an appointment.

Your business is only as good as its people and they are only as good as the environment they're working in.

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Suite 205E, 2nd Floor, City Hall,
Catholic Mission Street,
Lagos, Nigeria.

+234 (01)291 6949

+234(0)818 317 9275

info@DOTRubikprojects.com

www.DOTRubikprojects.com

