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A clean environment is a productive environment

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Inc.

In today's age of "business casual," it is clearly understood that it does not mean dressing poorly. Companies spend significant amounts of time and money defining exactly what is appropriate for employees to wear in their business environment. They recognize it reflects upon the image of the company and ultimately productivity. The same is true for the work space. The way a business is "dressed" directly impacts those within it and the quality of work produced.

Why do the Wall St. guys put on a \$2000 suit, a \$750 pair of shoes, have their hands manicured, their hair cut and faces cleanly shaven, to never see a client face-to-face that day? It's about feeling on top of your game, powerful, even special. This "dress for success" is the foundation of a professional image and is evident in all areas of productivity. Putting on clothes creates one feeling, while what a person sees around them 8 to 10 hours a day affects them at an-

other level.

Therefore, the office environment should be equally visually

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appealing and enticing. It should make people feel they are valuable professionals. The appearance of the office sends a message to both employees and guests. A fresh, clean, organized space, which is aesthetically pleasing, sends the message that a business is well dressed, on top of its game, poised and ready for action.

So what is the message your office is sending? How do you feel when you walk in the door? Is there a sense of pride? What do you see? Is there duct tape holding carpet seams together? Does the appearance of the office match the image the company is trying to create in the marketplace?

Carpet and paint are the foundations of the business's image. In the whole scheme of an office, they are the least expensive things to change, yet make the biggest impact. When the need arises, look for a company that specializes in managing the entire project. Most people immediately think of calling a general

contractor. However, in cases where walls are not moving and new electrical wiring is not be-

used to make carpet, including developing products which include anti-microbial or recycled

ing installed, a general contractor is unnecessary. Find a company that will manage all components of the project, so you don't have to. Removing existing flooring is a dirty business and takes coordinating the moving of furniture, the uninstallation and reinstallation computers, shifting of office files, and coverage of breakable fixtures. More importantly, it is also about down time. A true professional will get to know your business and times of peak productivity, so they can work around it. A company that provides project management of the multiple components within a project protects both the company's productivity and your sanity.

Once new carpet is installed, maintaining the environment is necessary. Like any fabric, if it is not properly cleaned, it will look drab and worn. Carpet fibers have improved in their design to release dirt and keep their color better than ever. Technology continues to improve the materials

materials, which helps improve air quality in the work environment.

A popular time companies consider changing their carpet and paint is at their lease renewal. Evaluating the cost of moving against improving the existing space leads to the discovery that new carpet and paint is typically a less expensive choice. Realistic budgets are necessary and a commercial real estate broker is invaluable, when working with a landlord to negotiate the deferral of some of the costs of improving the existing space. Landlords are often willing to help, because they want to keep their tenants happy and dress their buildings to attract potential tenants.

So when putting on your best suit, remember to dress your business as well to improve productivity, because it works.

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