

## Setting Up Your Home Office

by Jackie Tiani

Whether you work in your home or business office, a functional office is essential for productivity and peak performance. There are many factors beyond the location and size of your office that affect productivity. Invest the time in planning ahead to make the right purchases and avoid having to rearrange and overhaul later.

Here are some tips for setting up a functional office in your home:

- Insurance - check your homeowner's insurance and your business insurance policy to make sure that your insurance will cover the furniture and equipment in your home office. Some company insurance policies cover equipment used in telecommuting.
- Electrical Wiring - make sure your office is wired adequately to handle all of your electrical equipment. Your outlets should have three-pronged grounded receptacles. Overloading outlets can cause a hazard.
- Ergonomics - make sure the design process centers around you, ensuring your comfort and safety.
- Lighting levels - Make sure there is adequate lighting that does not reflect into your computer monitor. Proper lighting reduces eyestrain and headaches and is crucial for positive work performance.
- Mail station - Establish an area with a recycling basket, letter opener, stamps, envelopes, stapler and shredder so that you can open mail and getting rid of clutter before taking it to your desk.
- Noise - Locate your office away from household traffic if possible, making sure there are minimal distractions. Televisions, radios and dogs can be as distracting as outside noise.
- Office Layout - diagram your office space and spend time thinking about where everything will go. Consider traffic flow, location of electrical outlets, the direction doors open, and line of vision. Position your files within reach of your desk area to keep piles and clutter to a minimum. Make sure there will be room to open drawers and ample access to copy machines, printers, etc.
- Phone lines - consider investing in secondary telephone lines for answering systems, fax machines and computers. Separate phone lines provide a more professional image and simplify tax records.
- Shredder - invest in a good quality shredder that cross-cuts paper rather than cutting strips. Anything with your name, address, credit card, phone or Social Security numbers should be shredded.
- Temperature - make sure your heating, air conditioning and ventilation will allow you to maintain a comfortable temperature to allow workers and equipment to function at their peak.