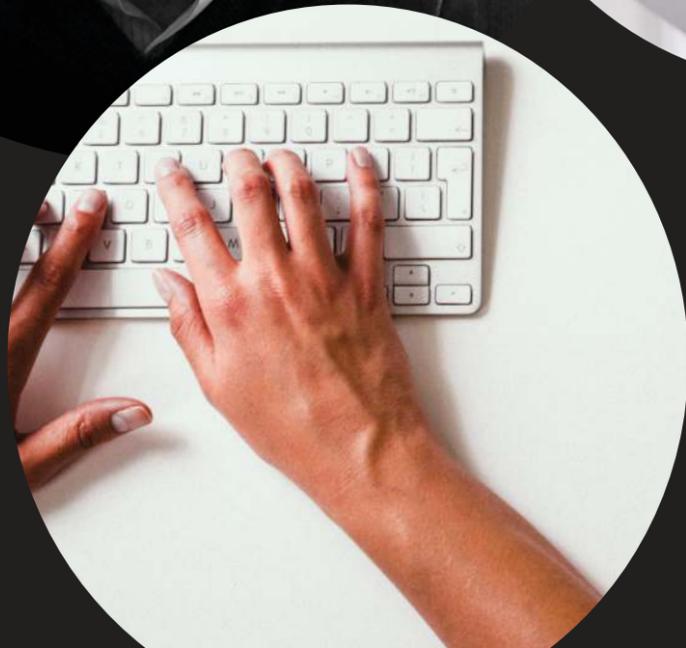


TRANSFORMING SPACES



Adam Felson of officemorph
Discusses the Ins and Outs of
Renovating Your Office Space

Every business owner or office manager has had to grapple with some kind of office renovation. And, generally speaking, the process of revamping your office isn't quite as fun as *Trading Spaces* and other reality TV programs might make it out to be. Whether it be moving to the suite down the hall, rearranging a few desks, or creating an entirely new space within an existing office layout, there's a plethora of logistics to consider when approaching an office build-out. And these logistics can quickly pile up, transforming a seemingly simple office renovation into an overwhelming time vacuum for everyone involved.

Enter officemorph, a San Francisco-based project management firm that promises to orchestrate the office build-out process from "soup to nuts" for both office tenants and landlords. The company's principal, Adam Felson, recently published a guidebook entitled "13 Mistakes to Avoid When Building Out Your Next Office," a cautionary tale to all those who assumed that an office renovation would be an effortless endeavor.

"It's a guidebook geared toward growing companies embarking on office space buildout," Felson said. "It's for office managers, business owners, and C-suite team members who have never done this before. Ultimately we want to educate those who are about to go on this time-consuming journey."

Felson went on to emphasize how these buildouts are not just an investment of time, but also of money. And critical mistakes can be costly, especially if first-time renovators don't outsource the management process, thinking that they can handle it themselves.

"I often struggle to explain what it is that I do," Felson remarked. "Because people just aren't aware of it. We're an advocate for businesses and companies in this process."

And officemorph has carved out a niche for itself within the industry as well, unique because of its background in both the landlord and tenant side of the process, as most if its competition only has experience in tenant representative work. In this way, officemorph understands both sides, and can work as a partner to landlords as well.

"We're a three-person team. Most of our competition is either a one-person team, or a much larger operation," Felson continued. "For a one-person team, one project takes up all of their time. As a three-person company we can offer more depth than this and take on more projects, while still being more personal than a larger company."

So what, then, should you watch out for during your office renovation? Well as it turns out, 90 percent of firms like officemorph's job is just following up. It's keeping track of everything that's going on, and managing all the moving parts, tasks, and to-dos that come with a renovation. Officemorph in particular uses a cloud-based tool to keep track of everything, which is both interactive and can be set up to remind

everyone of when something is due. This is a vastly more efficient project management solution than Post-It notes, according to Felson.

All of this is to ensure a steady flow of shared information, so as to avoid incurring unnecessary expenses. Felson even claims that the most costly of his "13 Mistakes" is No. 10: Seeing Change Orders Too Late.

"Often projects are running at hyper speed, and then at the end the project's contractor reconciles the numbers and realizes they need a change order done by tomorrow," Felson warned. "They've known about it for weeks, but such an oversight can burn through your entire contingency."

To avoid this, Felson recommends always asking questions in weekly meetings. Don't just wait for subcontractors, but rather know what to expect. Otherwise folks can get pretty angry, and expenses can pile up.

"Always keep in mind how big the stakes are, and how much time this will take. Get your ducks in a row early. Everyone wants to get started right away, but part of the value we provide is getting the whole team on board and on the same page from day one. Then we get into actual execution. There's nothing worse than having a full set of drawings, only to have a contractor turn around and tell you something very contrary to your assumptions," Felson said.

Of course, officemorph has keen insight into the future of office design and renovation as well. Currently there's a newfound demand for seating choice within an office layout, as people want to be able to move around within the space according to their individual needs. Therefore offices are creating both quiet workspaces and more open workspaces, which employees can move between during the day depending on what they need to accomplish. Also, because an entire staff often isn't in every day, offices have started employ "hotel spaces" that employees take turns using depending on their work schedule.

And technology is only pushing the modern office space further. Automation is becoming huge, and tech is now a necessity for any office's success.

"In order for a companies to retain and recruit, the work space has to be a place that people want to come to and be a part of," said Felson. "Nothing can replace a face-to-face interaction, and the office is the best venue for that."

Naturally, to continue making offices a place where people want to come and work, technology will have to continue evolving and making spaces attractive. And firms like officemorph are on call to do just that.

For more information and a free download of the guidebook, please visit www.officemorph.com