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Focus on Project Management From Day One Proves Effective

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The success of any renovation or build-out project is attributed to the time and effort invested in the preparation. A knowledgeable project manager and the proper team are the

first and most critical considerations.

Their involvement early on will result in a smooth transition from phase-to-phase, as well as dollars and time spent wisely.

To assemble the right team, begin with a strong facilitator and leader with extensive facilities and project management experience. The owner's representation is embodied in this role.

Typically, internal personnel manage day-to-day operations and may not have time to handle a short-term workload increase or the experience required to plan a renovation project. It's often more cost effective to hire a project management company that can provide experienced and professional project managers on an as-needed basis without additional payroll and administrative costs.

Select key personnel from the owner's staff, user groups and support departments to liaise with IT, manufacturing, security and facilities. Clearly identifying project team roles and responsibilities, developing workable schedules, receiving frequent updates and conducting team meetings are crucial to the success of

the team. Other vital members of the team include the landlord and building manager. It is critical to build a strong working relationship at the onset to make certain the project is developed in harmony with the lease and general building rules and regulations.

Using the outline of parameters, solicit architectural services. Once on board, the architect will help better define the program and space needs.

Consider the utilization and optimization of existing structure and infrastructure to save time and money. Many existing interior systems such as casework, light fixtures, plumbing fixtures, furnishing and equipment can be retained for use in the renovated space. However, it is important to note that it is sometimes more expensive to do partial demolition and save specific portions of existing materials due to the labor for removal and reinstallation.

When soliciting engineering services, consider a firm that complements the architectural firm and has an established working relationship with them. Selecting the right design-build professionals is extremely important in setting the groundwork.

A competent project manager will represent your interest from the onset and effectively communicate and coordinate events with the design-build team.

With the addition of the general contractor and trades, the project manager's ability to review bids, estimate and schedule the work effectively will result in a successful project. The overall cost of the project can achieve a

high return on investment with the proper pre-planning and project implementation that a knowledgeable project manager and strong team can bring to the project.

Project Management

Carefully outlined parameters of the project are attained with a program for space needs. Establish standards for office types and size to include support space and growth projections over the term of the lease keeping in line with the business plan. Determine a date for operational occupancy and develop a schedule accordingly.

Identify available funding for the project as a baseline for your budget. Establishing a baseline budget is very important. Bear in mind that the initial budget may change slightly as the project progresses. It is important to revise the budget based on bid awards.

The company should also plan on enforcing a strict change order procedure and require a schedule of values, unit costs and cash flow reports as well as detailed reporting of applications of payment.

When selecting design and trade professionals, match their area of expertise to the type of project undertaken. Factors include the size of the project, past performance, availability to complete the project in the given time period and the ability to work with the entire team.

Any project involves the management of all aspects of the project to include the overall budget, master timeline, construction administration, cabling and security infrastructure installation and move coordination. ■

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