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Week of **October 27, 2009**

## A Moving Experience

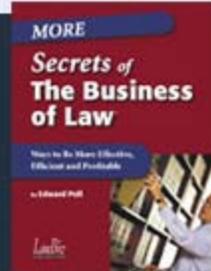
Sooner or later almost every law firm, large or small, faces the necessity of making an office move. Regardless of the size of the practice, an office move is a complicated and difficult project and requires considerable thought, preplanning and coordination. I recently did a podcast interview with Dr. Bill Saleebey on the finer points of moving furniture, boxes of files, computers and all the contents of a typical law office... while not losing billable hours. Here are some reminders that can be useful

1) **Prepare a list** of the specific reasons why your firm wants to move. Add to that list the features that you're looking for in the new space. Survey the lawyers and the staff to learn about very precise wants and needs: number of electrical outlets in each person's space, location of data and telephone cables, proximity of copiers and fax machines to work areas. This list becomes a tool to share with brokers and leasing agents to define the space you want.

2) **Negotiate the space** with three factors locked firmly in mind: what you can afford, which features are most critical to you, and what you're obligating yourself to before you sign the lease. Remember that virtually everything can be negotiated before you sign the papers.

3) **Establish an accurate move date** by determining exactly when the new space is available, when improvements will be completed (be sure to allow for overruns and changes), and when such utilities as the phones and the computer network are actually connected. Usually, the larger the firm, the more extensive the list - and the greater the chances for delay. Allow time for them in your planning.

4) **Schedule inspections** of the new space prior to the actual move date. You should make as many inspection visits as seem necessary, including representatives of your landlord, utilities, computer



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network installer, and office equipment and service suppliers.

5) **Work with your mover and office staff** to schedule an off-hours moving time after all mechanical and technical equipment is installed. Develop a plan to color-code and tag all files, furniture and equipment that will be moved, and go over floorplan diagrams with your mover beforehand. Involve everyone in the firm, beginning with an all-hands visit to the new space before the actual move and including the appointment of move coordinators

If you keep these considerations in mind, the result will be a facility that makes your legal practice more efficient and effective for staff and clients - which, after all, is the whole point.

## Personal Commentary

### Ed on the Road Again...



Best wishes,

Ed Poll

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