

Creating a Green Working Environment

“Going green” in the workplace does not just involve recycling paper or putting computers on sleep mode to conserve electricity; the movement also concerns the overall working environment. In fact, creating a green working atmosphere increases the overall health condition of the office and has been shown to reduce costs and heighten employee productivity.

According to the U.S. Green Building Council, an organization that promotes renewable energy and environmental construction, green construction is expected to grow to 20 to 25 percent of all building construction by 2013 in the United States.

By working in a green building, you are not only making a positive impact on the environment, you are benefiting your employees as well. With increased sunlight in an office setting as opposed to unnatural lighting, workers can be less depressed and able to refocus more quickly and easily. This is partially due to the high vitamin D levels sunlight can provide.

The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, the state development agency for renewable energy, also found that controlling indoor

temperature, improving indoor air quality and increasing sunlight in office settings was correlated with increased productivity by 7.1 percent annually.

Want to increase the productivity of your workforce? Try these earth-friendly tips:

- Avoid using noxious plastics, paints and adhesives while

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- Situate work stations near windows so most, if not all, employees have at least some exposure to natural light.
 - Increase air flow throughout the office and make sure you are providing good ventilation for your employees. This will also help to prevent the spread of illnesses through the office.
 - Use nontoxic cleaning products in the bathrooms and on work surfaces.
- doing design and construction.
- Place indoor gardens and/or lots of natural foliage around the office. This will also increase air quality.
 - Use window blinds that capture and reflect light into office spaces.
 - Place mirrors or heliostats on the roof that follow the path of the sun and reflect it into the building.

