



THE OFFICE OF INSPIRATION

By Kimberly Lacy

From telecommuting to increased entrepreneurship, the fastest growing office space is no longer found within the downtown metro high-rise; it is now found in the American home. Whether it is working exclusively from one's domicile to a hybrid version of combining the onsite and telecommuting experience, the home office has increasingly become a mainstay in the blueprint of designing a livable functional space for most American households. The practical features associated with the utility of this space are often given the most weight during the design process. Yes, the home office must be structured so that it is a space that allows for effortless efficiency and organization. Obviously, the absence of these characteristics could compromise the chance of having a successful home-based work experience.

COLOR

A home office that is designed for productivity but lacks aesthetic appeal may limit inspiration. To encourage the creative juices to flow, try deviating from the traditional four walls of eggshell and include a splash of color. A vibrant accent wall decked out in a shade of coral (Sherwin Williams' color of the year) can provide a calming feel,

stimulate the senses, and also enhance mental awareness; or choose a delightful green reminiscent of spring in order to promote critical-thinking and creativity. If you are not keen on painting your space a delightful green hue add a plant such as a delicate orchid, which not only provides healthy air oxidants but also symbolizes strength, love, and beauty (www.orchids.com).

ARTWORK

In addition to color choice, selecting the right office décor is just as important. The wrong artwork or absence of artwork can turn what would be the optimal workspace into just another playroom for the kids. Avoid using artwork consistent with the theme throughout your home. Instead, try adorning your walls with art that has strong geometric patterns to create a statement piece. Mix parallel lines with fluid repeating patterns to create a blend of visual textures and depth that will encourage the wheels of inspiration to start turning.

ERGONOMICS

When choosing furniture for your home office, an ergonomic chair for your desk is essential. Given that you are working from home, it is likely that you will spend an ample amount of time in that chair. Ergonomic chairs are



indeed comfortable, but they often lack personality. To make the chair not only comfortable but also inviting for your daily routine, choose a nontraditional office chair such as a classic wingback chair; this will not only provide comfortability but also style. Then, add plush pillows and a throw to create a layered effect. When creating a layered look select designs that are unique to your personality. If you are an animal lover, cheetah and zebra prints add warmth without being too busy. If you love color, add a chevron or diamond pattern pillow drenched in a hue that pairs with your accent wall.

Just because you are working from home does not mean that you only need one chair for your office. Suppose you are meeting a client or interviewing potential employees for your growing business. Sure, meeting in a public place can have its advantages, but impressing a client with not only your professionalism but amazing attention to detail as they gaze upon your carefully designed home office space can be an

added bonus. Therefore choose guest seating that has classical lines with metallic undertones. This will add a regal, yet modern feel to your space without being too extravagant. You definitely do not want your client to feel as if you have set up shop in the formal dining room; you know, the room that is never used unless you have out-of-town guests.

LIGHTING

Lighting provides another opportunity to bring functionality and style into a space. In order to create a strong visual statement or to add drama to a space, choose a chandelier that provides an element of style and functionality and that is cohesive with the entire look of the space. Desks should be placed near windows so that the refreshing natural light promotes an invigorating sense of productivity. Stylish lamps should be used to complete specific tasks such as reading, filing, printing, and working on the computer.

ACCESSORIZING

A space that motivates and inspires

must contain accents of authenticity. Your home office should reflect the flair that is within you. So, instead of using the traditional square pencil holder, opt for using an antique teacup that can be found at your local thrift shop. In addition, use whimsical accent pieces such as a bird to store paper clips or staples. These alternatives are both economical and add character. Frame your favorite quote, passage from a book, scripture, or even lyrics from a song, and hang this on your wall. This will serve as a reminder of who you are outside of the office even if it is inside of your home!

“A million ideas can collide into your next great project when you are settled in a space that inspires.” ~ Jacqueline de Montravel, House & Home 2011.

