

# How to Choose a Location for Your Business

Sinead Keane | Image: Jeremy Bruneel | Published: July 07, 2010



Choose the right environment for your business before signing on to your dream building.

with access to good transportation was key in deciding where to locate: “We were looking for a convenience factor to ensure employees can get to the office in the shortest amount of time.”

From considering transit to the size of your next cubicle, Vancouver experts share tips on how to find your dream office.

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Choosing where to establish your business is instrumental to the success, or indeed failure, of an organization. Before you begin shopping for space, here’s some advice gleaned from Tony Astles, executive vice-president of Bentall LP; Cissy Pau, principal consultant at Clear HR Consulting; and Kelly Kristof of Mantra Venture Group Ltd.

## Think of transport

“It’s about finding a balance between proximity to your customers and to your employees’ homes,” says Astles. Accessibility to rapid transit is a key feature in attracting new employees to a business and retaining those you already have. According to Kristof, whose company recently moved from a downtown location to Richmond, finding a property

## Know your audience

Whether you choose to locate in the business core or in an industrial park depends on the nature of your business. Pau suggests establishing your business where you will find the kind of employees you want to attract. Locating in a trendy studio in Yaletown is very different from situating in a business park in Surrey. It’s not only your employees that you must consider but also your clients. “We had one company that chose to relocate because downtown parking became too expensive for their clients,” says Pau.

## Allow space to expand

Look at the bigger picture and opt for a space that allows for future growth. Moving takes up precious time and resources, and the last thing you want is to have to move again to accommodate an expanding workforce. Astles advises choosing your new building carefully: “A larger floor plan means a more efficient company that occupies fewer floors in a building. This saves on duplication; you don’t need two coffee rooms, copy rooms, et cetera, and it offers a better flow of communication.”

## Do your homework

Before signing the dotted line on your dream building, determine what amenities are in both the building and the surrounding area, says Pau. “If child care is a priority for your employees, locate near a daycare centre; if your employees are into cycling, locate in a building that has showers and lockers. It’s about tying into the values of your business.” Astles advises companies seeking a new base to attempt to match their sustainability policy to that of the new premises: “Some buildings are more energy efficient than others, while other properties offer greater recycling facilities.”

## Choose your environment

Pau emphasizes the importance of the office environment, explaining that nobody is content to spend eight hours a day in a concrete jungle or a dark, box-like cubicle. “Make sure you are located in a place where people are inspired and motivated to go to work,” she advises. “For example, some people do not like working under fluorescent lights.” Choose a location with a workspace design that reflects your company’s culture and needs. If you want to promote good communication, choose an open-plan office; however, if your business calls for confidentiality, ensure the building is equipped with individual offices.

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