

International Facility Management Association

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newsletter



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Headquarters 🌐 *Campuses* 🌐 *Office Environments*

DREAMING of the Perfect Move

All companies have experienced, and in fact, often expect the *nightmare* of a facility move. Only the naïve could dream of the *perfect* move. Or those who have experienced one!

"CEOs across America only dream that their company could move so smoothly. For our people, and our customers, it was simply a non-event. The entire process far exceeded our expectations."

Senior Project Director for relocation of 3200 people from 14 buildings in 4 cities

How would you describe the *perfect* move? Seamless? No stress? On schedule? No productivity loss? Unnoticed by your customers or clients? A non-event? Smooth?

The truth is that the first mistake most companies make is in failing to define the required results of their relocation project. Since no one defines the criteria by which success will be determined, there are no guiding principles for decision makers to follow when they are confronted with critical choices.

If you want the perfect move, then define it. Lay out the issues of concern, the challenges to avoid, and the objectives that are most important. Once the project objectives are defined, specific tactical goals must be set by the managing teams to insure that the objectives are met.

The second mistake most often made is to choose someone inside the company, who already has a full plate, to be the one to plan and manage all the details of the relocation. The quantity of details that will need to be addressed is unimaginable to someone who does not have the experience

in managing corporate relocations. When was the last time the person managed such an endeavor, if at all? How can he/she know what to expect?

So, who plans and manages a corporate move? It takes a Team!

There are many disciplines whose expertise will be vital to the success of your project. It will take a team of people to cover all the issues and develop an integrated implementation plan. These best people are seldom upper management types, but are outstanding in their specialty and able to work together with others of different expertise.

The leader of this team must have the experience and proven track record to handle your project. He or she must also be a great team player, not a little Caesar, and have a strong ability to facilitate group planning and team implementation. The person must be even-tempered under pressure, able to lead when things are not going as planned, and should be known for accepting others, treating them with respect.



Details, Details, Details

When referring to corporate moves, the phrase “the devil is in the details” has been heard leaving the lips of many a new move manager. What one does not know can hurt them or the company, and most often will!

So what are the details? You will have to seek them out! The implication here is that you must allow time for the discovery and planning processes. Do not wait until the last minute when there is no time to identify the issues that must be addressed.

There are four key areas where you must focus your attention in the hunt for details. You are not just moving stuff from one place to another. You are moving the **Company**, the **Business**, the **People**, and then finally the **Company Stuff**. The last one is the least important!

The **Company** issues include all the permits, licenses, certifications, insurances, governmental agency connections, etc. that allow your company to be in business. The **Business** issues include every detail of your relationships with all your customers, suppliers, and vendors. The **People** issues relate to your most valuable and expensive asset, those who enable you to do your business.

Next, **set a realistic schedule** that ensures enough time to accomplish all the tasks that need to be accomplished properly for your move to go smoothly. Do not compress your schedule and force your vendors and

suppliers to accomplish their tasks in time frames that leave you shortchanged.

Finally, be sure to **budget wisely and objectively**. Most of the time, companies have set arbitrary budgets before knowing the size of the task at hand. They may have asked vendors for budget figures, but since the details have not been defined those budget figures are little value once the project has begun. Vendors know quickly if you know what you are doing, and if they believe you are not aware, they will bid low to beat the competition knowing that the scope will have to change once work is begun.

There is a very long list of expenses you will encounter, most of which are not solely related to moving stuff. They may include additional real estate related items, a long list of soft costs, and additional capital costs. So a word to the wise: budget high!

The *perfect* move is clearly attainable. All you have to do is prepare properly. If you need to, get a coach—someone who knows the questions to ask and who can advise you. Better yet, hire that coach to handle all the details, so you and your people can sleep at night, dreaming of the *perfect* move. ●●●

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