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Guide to Cutting Back on Office Paper and Maximising Recycling

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There will always be a need for paper in the office, be it faxing and printing important documents, envelopes, packaging, notebooks, post-it notes and so on. Also, as efficient as our computers are, there is something about the tangible nature of holding your information in your hands rather than reading from a computer screen that we just keep coming back to.

Nevertheless, the following guide will explore some top tips to minimise paper waste and deal with whatever canâ€™t be helped in an environmentally sound way.

It All Adds Up â€“ Email Signatures

Seemingly tiny changes can have a huge impact on your paper consumption. For example, take a look at your email signature. For legal reasons, many companies insist on a lengthy disclaimer at the end of all their employeesâ€™ email messages and this combined with employee details such as name, job position, telephone number, fax number and other details can lead to a short email message taking up multiple pages if printed out. Combine this with ink usage, and it soon becomes easy to see how it all adds up.

Think about shortening your companyâ€™s signatures where possible and laying them out in a more space efficient manner. These days it is the norm for email clients to use HTML layouts for signature display, allowing you to use tables to format your information in a more attractive and economical way.

To save even more space, itâ€™s also possible to provide a web link that when clicked on provides the recipient with comprehensive information on your companyâ€™s practises, and this will also drive more traffic to your company website.

The Paperless Fax

Once a staple of any office the, fax machine is becoming less and less prominent in the modern office. With the rise of email as the most popular written means of communication, it is hard to think of many reasons to keep on using the fax to send documents, however with its benefit of being able to send already printed material, it does still have a place as a method of communication.

Rather than using paper though, there are now other ways to receive faxes. Fax to email software is available that can provide you with an image of the fax that would otherwise have ended up on paper. Not only is this friendlier to the environment, but it will save you money â€“ both in the purchase of paper and the recycling of waste that would eventually follow. This form of faxing also makes it easier to store correspondence, saving you valuable office space and making things easier to retrieve details in a digital format.

Additional Paper Saving Ideas

As well as all the above tips, there are many other small steps to take that can make a big impact on reducing your officeâ€™s paper consumption.

For example, do you really need several copies of that large document printed? It would be preferable to print out one and pass it on when youâ€™ve finished with it. Or, substitute paper cups for

staff with glasses or cups â€“ while there might be a little extra time spent washing up, this will actually save you money over time. These are just a few ways to minimise paper waste and such measures will have a very real impact on the carbon footprint of your business.

Office Paper Recycling For What You Canâ€™t Do Without

No matter how good your waste reduction intentions are, there will always be a need for office paper recycling. Nevertheless, there are a number of ways to keep things running smoothly with your officeâ€™s recycling schemes and to keep the process as cost efficient plus eco-friendly as possible.

The key to having any successful recycling plan is to incentivising your staff by making the process both simple and rewarding. Getting your employees excited about the idea is essential and making sure that they understand the importance of their small tasks will help to keep them active and interested.

Itâ€™s a good idea to hold regular meetings to discuss recycling schemes with staff. You could offer rewards for efforts made by them and set targets to provide an element of competition that can be entertaining.

Also try to centralise your recycling receptacles so that waste paper is easy to dispose of. Preferably locate them somewhere near your main source of paper usage such as photocopiers, fax machines and printers.

In addition, if you make sure that you use the same type of paper for all your needs as much as is possible, then you wonâ€™t have to worry about sorting different materials into separate containers which will keep things as straight forward as possible.

Conclusion

While each office has different needs and uses for the materials they use, with a little consideration and forethought you can easily find a host of ways to help with your office paper recycling.

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