

# Making Your Office Into a Second Home

Star Hughes

**R**oughly 37% of every typical workday is spent...working. According to a 2013 study, the average American worker logged about 1,700 hours of work each year. And the International Labour Organization says that “Americans work 137 more hours per year than Japanese workers, 260 more hours per year than British workers, and 499 more hours per year than French workers.”

However the statistics are broken down, one thing is clear: We spend a whole lot of time at work. While there may not be anything you can do about the number of hours you spend in the office, there is something that you can do to make it a more positive and productive environment. You can make your office more like a home. And don't be surprised if by doing so, you end up more motivated than ever, and happier too.

Having a home-like office environment has made all of the difference in the world to me personally. Here are four ways to make your office feel a little more like your home away from home:

## 1. Invest in a Comfortable, Ergonomically Correct Chair

Studies have shown conclusively that physical comfort plays a huge role

in productivity. Sitting in a chair that is too hard or too soft is bad for your work production, and bad for your health. Slumping over a keyboard for 8 hours a day is a surefire way to promote injury and bad posture. Do yourself a favor, and invest in an ergonomically correct chair. If you need another reason to invest, it has been suggested that sitting properly helps clear the mind to promote better work output. It will pay for itself! Click here for alternatives to traditional office chairs – and click here for particularly comfy office chairs.

## 2. Splurge on Good Lighting

Studies have also shown that those who have greater access to natural light during the workday are less likely to feel sleepy during the day. Some scientists believe that this is due to the fact that artificial light (read: fluorescent) disrupts our natural circadian rhythms.

It only makes sense that the more awake you feel, the more productive you'll be, making your days pass faster, or at the very least keeping you from falling asleep at your desk. If you don't have access to natural light from a window, you might consider investing in a sunlight desk lamp, which can be found in a wide range of prices through a variety of retailers (including Amazon and eBay).



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## 3. Get Inspired With Color

For years experts have hypothesized that color has the ability to stimulate or subdue our thoughts. For psychologist Angela Write, who created the Color Affects System, color can mean the difference between a ho-hum workday and a WOW workday. Specifically, Wright proposes that blue stimulates the mind, yellow inspires creativity, red affects your body and green creates a calming balance. The more highly saturated or bright the color, the greater the stimulation. The less intense the color, the more likely they are to soothe.



## 4. Bring Pieces of Home into Your Office

Since you're going to be spending 1/3 of your days (at least!) in an office, why not decorate your designated space with items that inspire you or make you smile? It's amazing what a few photos, mementos, or other decorative items (did someone say rug?) can do to even the blandest of cubicles. By bringing in a few of your favorite things, you'll create – if not a little home for yourself – at least a little haven.

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