



OFFICE DESIGN IDEAS AND INSPIRATION: CORE BRAND

FALL 2012

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate brand image extends to your work space and the environment your customers experience when they meet you there. The BHGRE Office Prototype project is a design guide that provides examples and inspiration on decorating your office in a branded fashion. Like a hotel or restaurant brand, your physical space can adopt common design elements that create an overarching identity from office to office.

Some design ideas will be easy to execute – a paint chip can be taken into any paint store and be replicated. Other design ideas may be harder – a manufacturer may decide to discontinue a certain lamp shown. While everything in this guide is resourced, this is not intended to be a catalog. You may need to find comparable items based on what is available at the moment. However, the guide will arm you with enough information that you can make décor decisions with confidence.

Your office needs to be functional and support the professional needs of your team. However, infusing the space with on-brand colors, art, and other design elements will provide a lift to staff and customers alike, and create a memorable tie-in to broader marketing programs.

Vocabulary

The project began with a vocabulary. We identified the words that personified the feeling and attributes of homes sold or listed under the core BHGRE brand. The word cloud at right became the litmus test for the design decisions shown in this guide.

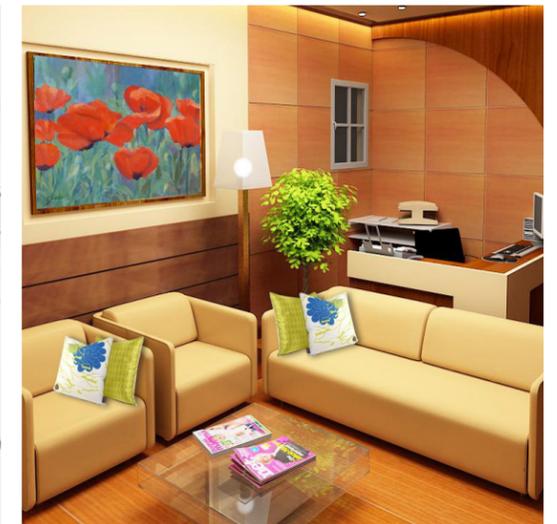
NURTURING
RELAXED PERSONAL RESTFUL
INVITING
SENSE OF CONTINUITY
WARM CASUAL FAMILIAR
CALMING

INSPIRATIONAL PHOTOS

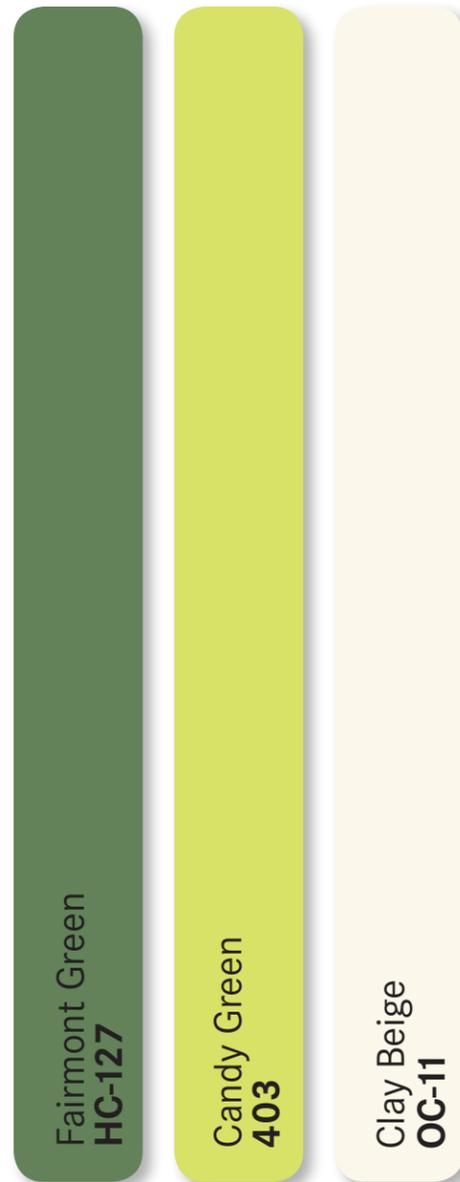
Residential



Office Translation



WALL COLORS



Color has the ability to transform an office space from cold to inviting just like in a home. Make a ho-hum space one that calls to mind ease and comfort. This color palette was specifically selected to evoke the brand, and be the perfect foundation for the accent colors introduced later. They can be confidently used in any combination. Color will enhance your clients' experience and your colleagues' attitude. Avoid white walls as they institutionalize the room and create an impersonal space.

Accent Walls are just that. They are punctuation marks that add a bit of drama and definition to the office space. Learn how to decorate using a hip blast of color. Use bold colors like Fairmont Green or Candy Green on one large wall, or on small walls and halls that you and your clients move through. Remember to use the color again in accessories like pillows, throws and lamp bases and their shades.

Paint Finish selection is another important detail. Experiment with a satin finishes on main walls instead of traditional matte. The sheen of satin adds life to a static object and on the practical side, it is easier to maintain. Set an upbeat mood by playing matte finishes against shiny in small spaces.

Moldings & Trim are a great detail (if you are lucky enough to have moldings and/or a wainscot). Paint them with a semi-gloss finish that sets them off like icing on a cake. If the walls above or below have color, pick white or a neutral to balance the color. If not, let your trim provide a line of color to an otherwise neutral room.

FURNISHINGS



Upholstery

You want the upholstery in common areas to be inviting and comfortable so that clients can linger over listings or colleagues can meet informally, but not be so deep or soft that they can't move easily in or out of them. In chairs offer something a bit firmer. Consider wear and tear before choosing upholstery fabric. In general, the sofa fabric needs to be the toughest in a commercial setting. A solid, textured fabric will give you a lot of flexibility to change the office's look with pillows and accessories over time.

The sofas represented here are all in a transitional frame style and a neutral fabric; the advantage to this is you can create a variety of looks depending on how you layer on pillows and throws. Most of the sofas have one or two seat cushions for a tailored, clean look.

In this section we offer a variety of styles perfect for a commercial setting that consider both comfort and manageability.

FURNISHINGS



Chairs

Occasional chairs offer your staff the flexibility to rearrange and adapt to your needs. Small chairs also give you an opportunity to make a bold statement in a small piece of furniture by playing with fabric pattern and color. A wooden arm or chair leg painted in an eye-popping Candy Green or glossy Clay Beige also adds individual style that sets your office apart. The chairs shown here are examples of great frames for your office seating.

Coffee & End Tables

A good-sized coffee table will add substance to your office and act as a work surface for impromptu gatherings or projects. Look for tables with drawers or shelves, as these will help store items that are seldom used. Function is key in an office space. Don't be afraid of thinking outside the box when choosing a table — a pallet on wheels, base drum and other oddities have all been successfully used as coffee tables. End tables next to a sofa should be large enough to hold a lamp and a beverage with room for the occasional bit of paper work. Remember not to overlook an accessory if there's room, but don't clutter the surface with too many odds and ends that sidetrack from your space's main purpose (and collect dust!). A small table next to accent chairs is essential.



STORAGE



TIPS:

Let's be practical – this is your office and you have stuff that you and your staff need to function. Clever storage is where the marriage of style and productivity walk hand and hand.

Many furniture companies make beautiful desk and file cabinets. Handsome small chests and cabinets can be fitted with boxes and baskets, too, and they are easy to adapt to your work needs. A buffet, china hutch, armoire, or bookcase cabinet can hold office essentials. Don't be afraid to mix finishes: just remember to keep them to no more than three. Found some funky item that is distressed? Use it as is or give it a coat of brightly colored accent paint and create a focal point within your office for your eyes as well as your office necessities.

FINISHES



Finishes

Like in a good recipe, there are a number of small ingredients that lift the dish from ordinary to extraordinary, a variety of finishes in a room do something similar. Whether it's a metal frame on art work, combined with a statement – colored painted chest or the satin patina of hardwood flooring – all of these small elements make any room memorable.

Wood

Keep the major wood pieces of furniture and/or flooring a warm mid-tone stain to create an inviting, casual atmosphere that doesn't overwhelm the space. Look for wood species like walnut, hickory and oak. But stay away from oak in a golden finish as this color fights with almost every other color.

Painted

A pop of color on case pieces gives a room attitude. If you choose white, you can have a few items painted in a satin finish. Want to make a big statement? Paint one piece a knockout color that contrasts enough to be noticed yet complements your overall color palette like this great piece in the upper right corner.

Metals

The flash that metal brings to a room is undeniable. Using metal for a small accent table, frames on your artwork, drawer pulls and handles – even trash baskets – enliven a space like jewelry. Go for metals like satin nickel, brushed chrome, brass or copper.

FABRICS

Wall Colors

HC-127

403

OC-11

2110-10

630

2060-60

2168-20

339

811

Accent Colors

TIPS:

Upholstered chair fabrics are an opportunity to add personality to the space. The fabric on your chairs can be a bit bolder, patterned and more expressive. Don't be afraid of a patterns — oversized scale is on trend. The floral motif shown at right, for example, has a repeat of 18 inches! Floral motifs and geometrics are classic patterns to consider. The color palette selected for the fabrics should complement the room by repeating a color used as an accent elsewhere in the room. Avoid a totally monochromatic look (pale green walls, pale green upholstery, pale green art). And consider the texture of the fabric. Nubby, slubbed or linen-like fabrics add visual interest — great fabrics include cotton, denim and indoor/outdoor fabrics.

UPHOLSTERY



TIPS:

In their functional sense, window treatments affect the amount of light that a room receives. You can also use them to soften or hide the shape of a commercial window. Look for solid straight panels that are a tone darker than the walls or a softer shade of an accent color. Good fabric selections are washable cotton twill, sailcloth or textured raw silk. Drapes can be swagged to partially hide or soften an entrance to a storage space or office kitchen. Just hang them high — drapes that hang floor to ceiling add height to the room.

DRAPERY



TIPS:

Pillows are a great way to brighten up and add color impact to your space. Look for fun patterns like ikats or geometrics and w bold colors. This is also a chance to add a bit of lux: embellishments like beads, fancy needlework and appliqués up the glam and fun. On a practical note, keep pillows to a minimum — no one wants to have to throw pillows on the floor to find a seat. One per chair and three per sofa is a good rule of thumb.

HERE ARE SOME INSPIRING FABRICS:



Anchoring Solid

FLOORING

Sisal Rug



Area Rug



Warm-tone Hardwood



Bold Rug Layered over Hardwood

TIPS:

Many offices have raw concrete or worn wall to wall carpets, when the ideal flooring would be beautiful hardwood. If you are starting from scratch, go for a wide plank hardwood or laminate in a warm mid-tone range. The satin sheen of wood will give the commercial space the warm residential look that Better Homes and Gardens magazine is synonymous with. Sisal matting run wall-to-wall is a more relaxed option for some regions of the country. And if your only option is a builder's beige Berber, all is not lost because rugs can be layered over them. By placing area rugs over the your primary flooring, you create zones that help define spaces and add style. An area rug under a coffee table creates an island of sociability; one in a reception area says, "step up – I am here to help." Area rugs let you add an additional range of color, texture and pattern. Choose area rugs that complement your upholstery's color palette.

ACCESSORIES

LIGHTING



TIPS:

In many office settings, lighting is cold, harsh and unflattering. To overcome the bluish tint of florescent bulbs, punctuate your office with the warm glow of lamps. There are two types of lamps to consider: those that provide ambient lighting like table and floor lamps, or task lighting like desk lamps. Table and floor lamps are essential in creating an inviting, casual feeling. Look for ceramic or glass bases in complementary colors. You can't go wrong with lamp shades in simple shapes made with white paper. Or if your lamp base is plain, consider a shade with a pattern that complements the other patterns in the room. Whenever possible put them on dimmers to regulate the amount of light you need. It also saves energy. Task lighting needs to be efficient but can be decorative in finishes like satin nickel, brushed chrome or white.

DESK ACCESSORIES



TIPS:

Every desk has its share of small items that need to be organized and stored. Corral things like pens and paper clips in coordinating desktop accessories. Efficient, stylish ones can be found in most big box office supply stores or on web sights like the Containerstore.com. For more upscale items look to Pottery Barn or Restoration Hardware. Go for consistency – buy enough for all the desks in your office.

ACCESSORIES

FLORAL



Chinese Evergreen



Brassaia



Birds Nest Fern

CONTAINER IDEAS



TIPS:

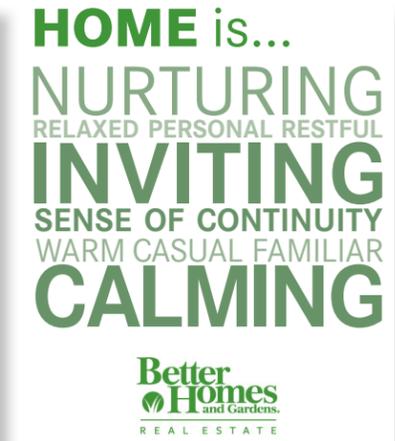
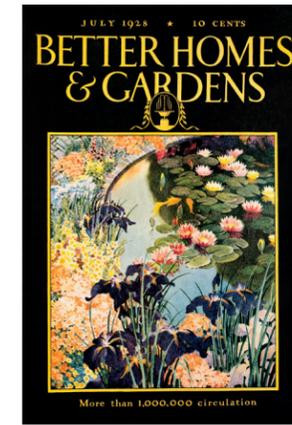
Living plants brings joy into any space; they bring beauty into our lives and soften the harsher elements of our everyday routines. The positive effects of plants are evident. Health-wise just looking at a plant can help lower blood pressure, ease stress and generally makes us feel better. Plants appeal to everyone's senses. Physiologically, if your customers see well-cared for plants in your office, they assume that they will be nurtured and cared for, too.

If LOCATION is true in real estate, it is equally true in plant selection. Take stock of your placement options when looking

for plants to complement your office décor. Will the space be cool and drafty or in full sun? Will all light be artificial? Is the air particularly dry? Most offices have very low – levels of natural light and dry conditions which will impact the variety you choose. Consider size, level of upkeep, and location when making your purchase. Most garden centers have a knowledgeable person on staff that can help you choose the right plant for your office setting and conditions.

NEVER, NEVER introduce plastic floral arrangements into your workspace: they give an aura of neglect.

OFFICE BRANDING: INTERIOR



TIPS:

Artwork is a personal experience and we're not here to tell you what to hang on the walls in your office. However, your wall space is another place to extend the Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate brand. Distinctive posters stop the eye and capture the imagination. We are adding additional posters to the Greenhouse site that make your clients and employees conscious of how unique the Better Homes and Gardens environment is. Share your office values with a "PAIGE" poster. Or you can order vintage BHG cover posters to reinforce the brand through the Greenhouse. Or create groupings of current magazine covers (they fit perfectly in ready-to-use 11" x 14" matted frames) hung on a wall or propped on a shelf. Those covers are a tangible, familiar extension of our brand name. If custom framing is not an option, craft and hobby stores carry read-to-use frames in contemporary styles that fit standard poster sizes. Let the frames match for a unifying look. Or, create clings from the word cloud introduced at the beginning of this presentation on a prominent interior wall to set the tone for your office.

OFFICE BRANDING: EXTERIOR



TIPS:

You may be lucky enough to have your own front door immediately under a prominent sign proclaiming your DBA. Others may be far removed from their building's exterior sign. Your contact with the community should be a sequence of touchpoints via a range of visuals that are easily identifiable. In addition to outside signage, your DBA lockup makes a perfect cling to glass doors. By repeating your name on the name to the front door to your office – in addition to building signage – you make it easier for customers to find you. You can also personalize your welcome mat with the brand or your DBA from providers like www.cocomatsnmore.com. See sources for more information.



YOUR DESIGNER



Joseph Boehm

Senior Interior Designer

As Senior Interior Designer for Better Homes and Gardens magazine, Joseph Boehm designs interiors for special home-building projects and show houses. Besides his editorial duties, Joe also serves as the magazine's liaison to the design/home furnishings industry, and has been instrumental in curating the Better Homes and Gardens furniture collection. Joe's knowledge of trends has led him to an advisory capacity across Meredith Corporation divisions and to speaking engagements to select audiences across the nation. A native of New Orleans, Boehm lives in Des Moines, IA where the magazine's editorial and Meredith corporate headquarter offices are located. Well-traveled and well-schooled in art history and period furnishings, Joe brings unique inspiration to every project he touches.

SOURCES

SECTION • RESOURCES

Page 3, 9	PAINT SWATCHES — all Benjamin Moore Paint Colors: Fairmont Green, Candy Green, Clay Beige, Taupe, Martha’s Vineyard, Turquoise Haze, Pumpkin Cream, Lemon Grass, Old Glory (see page 9 for actual paint chip numbers)
Page 5	Top Left — Comfort Sofa, potterybarn.com; Top Right — Sutton Sand Sofa, potterybarn.com Bottom Left — Landon Sofa, potterybarn.com; Bottom Right — Marcel Sette, potterybarn.com
Page 6	Top Left — Marcel Chair, potterybarn.com; Top Middle — Gold Chair, mgbwhome.com Top Right — Baylor Arm Chair, potterybarn.com Bottom Left — Drum Table, worldmarket.com Bottom Middle — End Table, worldmarket.com; Bottom Right — Hyannis Vintage Coffee Table, arhaus.com.
Page 7	Top Left — Incognito Cabinet, crateandbarrel.com; Bottom Left — Birch Gloss White Cabinet, ikea.com Right — Patterson Cabinet, crateandbarrel.com
Page 8	Top Left — Walnut finish; Bottom Left — Golden/Handpainted Frame, pier1.com; Middle — Side Table, westelm.com Top Right — Dresser, jonathanadler.com; Bottom Right — Bistro Pull, restorationhardware.com
Page 9	UPHOLSTERY — Lynne’s Chair DRAPERY — Mineral Green, potterybarn.com; Blue Smoke, potterybarn.com; Cobblestone Avacado, calicocorners.com FABRICS — (left to right) King Textiles Leroux in Tangerine, Dwell Studio for Robert Allen Casablanca in Citrine, TBD, Sev7en 68228 Vanity in Jade, Impress Upholstery Fab 820000 Cambria in 113 Linen, Richloom Fabrics Promenade in Gemstone
Page 10	Top Left — Seascape Seagrass Rug, homedecorators.com; Top Right — Abby’s Garden Rug, capelrugs.com Bottom Left — Oak Laminate Floor, pergo.com
Page 11	LIGHTING — Top to Bottom — Jonsbo IIsbo Lamp, ikea.com; Slim Desk Lamp, crateandbarrel.com; Long Neck Ceramic Lamp, shadesoflight.com DESK ACCESSORIES — Top — Stockholm Letter Sorter, containerstore.com; Bottom Left — Desk Caddy, potterybarn.com; Bottom Right — Pencil Cup, containerstore.com
Page 13	Left & Middle — Black Frames, Walmart; Right — Wall Clings, Iowa Sign Company (515-868-8911 or info@iowasignco.com). Vendor has approved art on file. Four Right — Posters, order through the Greenhouse
Page 14	Left — Wall Clings (shown on glass), Iowa Sign Company (515-868-8911 or info@iowasignco.com). Vendor has approved art on file. Right — Custom Doormat, Cocomatsnmore.com. Vendor has approved art on file. Mats available in two sizes.