



7 Things You Should Avoid In Your Office Design

This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:
[How the design of your office impacts patient experience](#)

While better lighting and relaxation resources can be great resources for improving the patient experience, not everything in your office will have the same effect. Here are a few things you should avoid including (or get rid of if you have them) if you want a better environment for your patients.

1. Avoid pharmaceutical ads if possible.

Dr. Al Turner of Portland, OR, recommends removing magazines and posters that have advertisements from pharmaceutical companies. "Generally, if I'm at a doctor's office, I'm not feeling well to begin with," he says. "Then to be attacked by ads makes me feel worse."

2. Avoid outdated magazines or resources.

New patients aren't the only ones you deal with, and returning patients may become bored or annoyed with outdated resources in your waiting room or doctor's office. Be sure that your magazine subscriptions and other reading materials, like pamphlets and brochures, are all up to date.

3. Avoid bold colors, especially (bright) yellows and reds.

Color can impact emotion, so color choice for your office design is important. While not a hard and fast rule, typically speaking blues, whites and soft tones, like light greens and greys, can promote trust and relaxation, while bright colors like bold yellows and reds may promote anxiety and aggression.

4. Avoid clutter.

Excess papers, files and other clutter and mess, even behind the receptionist desk, can cause anxiety in patients, both subtly and overtly. Tisha Morris, author of *Feng Shui Your Life*, believes that clutter can lead to negative emotional responses, noting, "Where there is clutter in your [space], there will be clutter in [you] — either physically, mentally or emotionally."

5. Avoid loud noises, especially from TV or music.

Soft noise, like the hum of a radio in the background or small talk on TV, can comfort patients, but if the music is loud or the TV is stuck on a noisy channel, it can do the opposite. Even if your patients don't mind the volume, keep in mind that loud noise can also impact your staff's stress levels too (and they have to listen to it all day long).

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6. Avoid cramped spaces.

Sometimes you will be stuck with the layout you're given, which may not be as roomy as you would like. But as much as possible, avoid clumping patients into a small area. In the waiting room, for example, give them at least two options of where they can sit, so that even when things are busy they have a choice.

7. Avoid displaying clocks prominently.

Even the most efficient clinics run behind, and no one wants to watch the time pass, especially if they're already feeling nervous. While you should display a clock somewhere in your waiting room, keep it relatively tucked away and avoid using them in the doctor's offices and patient rooms.