Commercial Movers Meeting Kit

Commercial movers face safety challenges on the job. Whether moving a business across town or a family across the country, movers must focus on proper ergonomics, material handling, and proper housekeeping.

TAKE THE STRESS OUT OF MOVING: Moving can be stressful, and commercial moves can include even more moving pieces. Whether you're upsizing or downsizing, chances are your most important concern is keeping business running smoothly before, during, and after a move.

TIPS TO RELIEVE THE STRESS

- **Take Inventory Before the Move:** The easiest way to prevent becoming overwhelmed with a move is to narrow down the number of objects you have to move in the first place. From storage units to desk drawers, cleaning and decluttering as much as possible before the move can save untold amounts of time and energy.

Evaluate Possessions and Needs: Does your team need new furniture? Donate your current furniture to a non-profit association or your local Goodwill donation center and purchase and assemble new furniture at the new location. Plus, the less heavy objects your movers have to transfer, the lower your costs will be.

Donate Extras and Unnecessary Items: Sift through your current inventory and donate or trash anything that doesn't need to be taken along in the move.

Shred Old or Unused Files: Most businesses utilize digital technology over paper records these days, and if you're holding on to paper copies that can easily be uploaded to an online storage system, you're simply wasting space. Invest in a digital scanner to upload files that need to be kept, and shred the originals, as well as documents that are no longer needed.

- **Sort Items by Room and Category:** Once you've decluttered and removed unnecessary items, sorting objects by room and category for packing allows you to organize your items for a move. Don't forget to label each box with a description of the contents inside as well as the room or area of the new location they'll need to be taken to.

Use Color Coded Stickers or Labels: If you're really into organizing, consider creating a color-coded systems for movers or anyone else who may need to know where various items should be delivered and unpacked. Whether you sort by room or category will depend on the size of your company and your new location, If you have a small office, sorting by category type can be beneficial, but for larger offices, sorting by room can certainly help keep items in order. An example of a color-coding system for a commercial move can look like so:

- Files / Record Room: Blue
- Office Supplies: Green
- Decor: Yellow
- Kitchen Items: Red

Create an Inventory Sheet: Creating a list of items that are moving from one location to another is the best way to keep track of what needs to be moved, and whether or not anything has been misplaced. Before the move, make a list of every item that will need to be moved. Before leaving your current location, run through your checklist to ensure each item is in route or has been packed.

BEST COMMERCIAL MOVERS' SAFETY PRACTICES

Select the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Choose sturdy work boots to protect your feet from crushing injuries. The boots should have a non-slip sole and a slight heel to assist climbing onto step stools, ladders, and vehicles.

- Wear long sleeve shirts and pants to protect your skin.
- Use gloves to protect your hands from cuts and scrapes when lifting and carrying large items.

Gather Tools and Supplies That Help Make the Job Easier and Safer

- Bring plenty of boxes, papers, packing blankets, utility knives, and tape supplies.
- Have enough hand trucks and dollies for everyone to use.
- Consider furniture sliders and straps to move items and ease loads out of tight areas.
- Use straps to secure loads during movement and once they are packed in the truck.

Packing Boxes Should Be Sized According to the Weight of the Contents

- Put heavy items in small boxes and lighter items in larger boxes.
- Inside each box, layer the heaviest items on the bottom and gradually lighten up toward the top.
- Don’t overfill boxes; they may be unstable for carrying or accidentally open during movement.
- Keep boxes of the size and weight that one person can safely lift and carry.

Observe Proper Housekeeping Protocol

- Keep debris off of the floor.
- Cardboard, paper, and plastic and bubble wraps can be very slippery, so don’t store them on the floor or try to walk over them.
- Don’t block exits, aisles, or hallways with packed boxes and items.
- Broken glass should be cleaned up with plastic or cardboard scoops and placed in rigid containers labeled, “broken glass.”

Use Proper Lifting Techniques

- Squat down and use your legs when lifting a heavy object,

not your back.
- Always take your time and focus on the item you are lifting.
- When team lifting, communicate when and how the lift will be performed and the path you are going to take together.
- Wear appropriate safety gear, including work gloves, steel toed boots, and back harnesses as appropriate.
- Avoid tripping and falling by clearing the walking pathway before performing the lift.
- Use a dolly or cart for heavy objects you cannot lift safely on your own.

FINAL WORD

A commercial mover’s job is not an easy one. However, practicing good teamwork, hazard awareness, and good body mechanics will “move” you in the right direction.