



USGBC-LI member offers tips for creating a green office

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Whether you are seeking LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification or you just want to provide a greener space for your employees to thrive in, here are a few of the many steps you can take to ensure that the planet (and your employees) will be a little better off.

Design your space with offices away from the window-line to bring natural light into the entire space. Add vision panels to the offices to get a "window feel." To take full advantage of the light, use workstations that are 42" in height or lower so that everyone can enjoy the view. Install occupancy sensors to control lighting in conference rooms, offices, restrooms and any space that isn't constantly occupied.

Use rapidly renewable materials. Bamboo flooring offers a striking and refreshing contrast to commercial carpeting. Amazingly, bamboo trees can grow as much as 60 feet per year. Other rapidly renewable materials include wool, agrifiber, linoleum, wheatboard, strawboard and cork.

Not quite ready for major changes? - These five simple changes can make a big difference too.

- * Switch to a filtered water system and do away with plastic water bottles.
- * Offer an incentive (maybe a gas card) to employees who carpool or use mass transit
- * Use environmentally friendly cleaning solutions
- * If possible, open a window. In most cases, outdoor air quality beats indoor air by a long shot.
- * Get rid of paper plates and cups. Food tastes better on the real thing anyway.

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