

The best office

A recent in-flight business magazine has named international law firm Clifford Chance's London building as 'Office of the month'. Why was it chosen?

1 Describe the building where you work to your partner. Use some of the words and expressions in the box below.

big / medium-sized / small	light / dark	lobby	reception	canteen	restaurant
tall / low	modern / old	gym	showers	car park	meeting rooms

2 Complete the Fact Box on the company Clifford Chance by scanning the article.

Clifford Chance: Fact Box			
Founded:	London, 1999	Offices worldwide:	
New London office opened:		Employees, London:	
London location:	Canary Wharf	Employees, worldwide:	

Office of the month

What does a building say about a company's corporate culture? In August 2003, Clifford Chance moved to a purpose-built 32-story skyscraper in Canary Wharf, London. This brought over 2,000 employees, previously working at different locations across London, together under one roof. Clifford Chance is the largest fully integrated global law firm in the world, with 28 offices in 19 countries. It has over 6,500 employees worldwide. The London building has just been named 'Office of the month' in a recent in-flight magazine.

The state-of-the-art building has a swimming pool and a gym. The gym employs fitness trainers. Employees can do an aerobics workout in one of the studios. The building contains a travel agent, a medical centre and a restaurant. The offices are open all day and night, which means that staff can use the facilities whenever they like. You can have breakfast before starting work, or have dinner before heading off to the

city. Not only that, but clients can pop in for a shower and a meal whenever they are in London, offering opportunities for networking. The introduction of a few large-screen televisions will be more popular than ever during the forthcoming World Cup. Last year, special monitors in the lobby showed three films, made in India, Ireland and Germany. These were the winning entries in a competition run by the company and the University of the Arts, London.

The firm believes its employees are extremely hard-working and wants to reward them by providing a motivating place to work. It considers 'commitment' and 'quality' among its corporate values. Clifford Chance, which provides advice on international and local law to corporate clients and financial institutions, describes itself as 'the world's leading international law firm'. Does it have the best working environment in London?

3 Read the whole article. What facilities does Clifford Chance have?

4 Complete the following word formation tables. Use some of the words to create sentences about your own company.

Adjective	Verb	Noun
a) integrated		
b)		reward
c) financial		
d)		fitness

Adjective	Verb	Noun
e)		commitment
f) motivating		
g)		advice
h)		competition

5 How could your workplace be improved? Brainstorm some ideas with a partner and then select the best one. Prepare to present your idea to the class. Your presentation should include the estimated costs and benefits of the improvement.