

Kitchen In A Cubicle

by: S. Hunter Smith

The law office is filled every day with busy people tapping away on their keyboards as they research cases, make phone calls and meet with clients all while putting information into their computers. The activity, to an untrained eye or ear, would seem chaotic. Jill has been with this law firm for only a few weeks and has become numb to the noise and confusion surrounding her centrally located office cubicle.

Of course her workspace was not a very private place to work. All of the walls around her were short enough to allow most of the people in the company to look over the top of them. While some people might want more privacy, Jill decided to accept the scenario. She decided to give everyone a reason to peek into her cubicle and she didn't waste any time before putting her plan into action.

Jill spent nearly seventy hours a week in the office and her commute to and from work required another fourteen hours per week. Her passion for cooking at home, in her beautiful modern kitchen, was reduced to throwing something from the freezer into the microwave if she had the energy to eat at home. Most of her meals came from take-out menus that were passed around the office three times a day. She tired of that process after her first week and began to investigate a new plan.

On one of her few days off, she went shopping for gadgets that she brought to the office later that same day. Before long, she had remodeled her cubicle and was ready to leave. After writing out a list, Jill left the office.

Everything seemed normal around the office until shortly before lunchtime. Unusual sounds and smells were emanating from Jill's cubicle. A crowd began to gather and soon Jill was surrounded by curious faces looking down into her workspace. There she was speaking on the headset phone with a client and tapping notes into her computer with one hand. Her other hand was busy tending to the small countertop oven and the Panini maker that was next to it. As soon as she finished her call, she hit the blend button on a mixer that sat next to the chopping board. Before long, Jill had a healthy warm sandwich, freshly baked cookies, and a chopped vegetable salad for lunch. Her entire cubicle was turned into a law office workspace and kitchen all



in one!

The office smelled like a five star restaurant and everyone she worked with became very jealous of her ability to cook in her cubicle.

Within a week the team of lawyers held a meeting to discuss what to do about Jill and her unusual work station. They determined it was becoming distracting to other workers. She knew the meeting was about her and that was beginning to make her very nervous. When the conference room doors finally opened, the team of attorneys called everyone into an office wide meeting.

"I am disappointed with the activity taking place in this office recently" stated the namesake of the company and lead attorney. He continued, "One person has become a distraction to all the others around this entire office. Jill, you have begun to cook meals in your cubicle and clearly that has drawn the attention of everyone here. We have discussed this matter and have come to a decision. Jill, would you please step up here with me?" her boss asked.

She nervously stepped to the front of the room as she anticipated hearing bad news.

"Jill, as I have stated, you have become a distraction to the workers in this office. Your ability to disturb our normally well orchestrated lunchtime and dinnertime routines during our long hours is inexcusable. While most of us have to order out or eat microwave meals, you have been creating gourmet dishes in your cubicle while staff members stand around watching you and smell the delicious meals you create. It has become a distraction to everyone."

Jill lowered her head as she prepared to hear that her kitchen had to be dismantled or worse yet, that she would have to pack up and leave the office altogether.

Her boss continued, "We have decided to put a stop to your cooking delicious meals for yourself in your cubicle. We believe it is unsafe and insanitary. We also believe it is unfair to your fellow staff members. We understand you have a passion for cooking and we do not want to discourage your interest. Therefore, instead of asking you to leave and encouraging you to pursue another career, we would like to present you with another option. We have invited a client of ours to come here today. He is a commercial kitchen designer who will work closely with Jill to create fully operational kitchen and dining area in the adjacent vacant office area through that door right there. We have determined that everyone might benefit from freshly prepared meals by Jill rather than the microwave and take-out meals we eat now. We hope it will result in time and money saved by everyone and maybe some health benefits as well. Jill, will you accept our proposal?"

Jill was stunned when she heard the offer. She immediately accepted the proposal and everyone in the office cheered. The kitchen opened in only six weeks and began serving breakfast, lunches and dinners. Not long after that, the doors were open to other workers throughout the building Jill's Diner Cubicle was a great success.