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SUNDAY WORLD-HERALD SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2009

Your Line ONLINE

This week's unscientific poll: Do you decorate your work area with personal items?

Just about anyone who has ever worked in a group setting has had a co-worker with so many trinkets and figurines, you could barely find the phone. Not to mention the cubicle walls covered with concert posters or children's artwork.

Judging from this week's poll results, that's not what Midlands employees want in their personal work spaces. Only a couple of people said they have so many decorations that people can barely see their desks.

By far, most respondents (about 60 percent) said they decorate their desks with just a few special things.

Another 10 percent said they do decorate, but not as much as when they were younger. And then there were the "just business" folks (about 27 percent) who said they don't want even a family photo at their desks.

They're not really typical, says Ann Kelleher, president and owner of Integrity Staffing in Omaha.

"Many employees like to personalize their work space with family photos, sports awards and other personal items," Kelleher says. "It boosts morale and gives them a sense of belonging."

But how much is too much?

"Employees can take their cue from the general appearance of the work environment when determining how many personal items to display," she says. "Is the workplace generously appointed or is it a sparse environment?"

In choosing what to display, Kelleher says, employees should consider the atmosphere of the company and whether customers or the public visit the offices.

"Family photos, tasteful wall hangings and small decorative items work well," she says. "Stay away from distractions such as an item too large for the space, a risqué photograph or a heavily scented candle."

-Jan DeKnock