

It's time to
Rethink
your workplace



How to meet the new
needs of your business in
a post-pandemic world



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What does it *feel like* to work here?

As we emerge into a post-pandemic world, leaders will be challenged with balancing the new needs of their businesses, clients, and employees. The most critical action organizations can take to meet this challenge is to define clear objectives and procedures for a new model of working.

Many employees have demonstrated that excellent work can be accomplished remotely. Leaders who attempt to refute this new reality could pay a heavy price. Any missteps in an organization's return to work policies could lead to a significant drop in morale, leadership credibility, and overall employee engagement. The costliest impact will be an increase in staff turnover – at precisely the time many organizations are poised for rapid growth.

It's time to rethink the workplace.





Rethink Where

Traditional Office • Fully Remote • Hybrid

Where people accomplish their work has undergone significant transformation in the last 18 months. As we look toward a post-pandemic world, employees have proven it is possible to work successfully outside of an office setting, and therefore expect that flexibility to continue.

Do you plan to bring people back into the office full-time? Are you going to allow all or some of your employees to work remotely full-time? Many employers are finding traction in offering a hybrid environment of dedicated time in the office and flexibility to work remotely.

Take Action

Consider how the location of your employees' work impacts both your business needs and your employees' preferences. Then determine which positions do, or do not qualify for remote work.

Develop a policy on remote vs in-person work that is clear, justifiable, and proactively shared with all employees. Leave room for the policy to shift as time passes or business needs change, and make sure your team knows this policy may be an ongoing conversation.

47%

of employees say they would likely leave their job if it didn't offer a hybrid work model once the pandemic ends

90%

of Millennial and Gen Z employees do not want to return to the office full-time, according to a recent study

74%

of employers plan to shift at least some employees to full-time remote work

Rethink *When*

Traditional 9-5s vs Fully Flexible Schedules

Throughout the pandemic, many organizations have been flexible and supportive of their employees' individual scheduling needs. Moving forward, what are the expectations for staff schedules? Does everyone need to be available during traditional business hours? Or are flexible and individualized schedules an option - so long as there is a high degree of customer responsiveness, accountability, and task accomplishment? An Ernst & Young survey reveals 90% of employees want flexibility in when and where they work post-pandemic, and one in three American workers would not want to work for an employer that required them to be onsite full time.

Take Action

Lay out clear guidelines on how work schedules are determined. Consider ways you can keep flexibility in your approach, such as setting "core" hours (i.e. 10am-2pm) where team members are all expected to be available but they can work their remaining assigned hours when it is most convenient to them. Once determined, your policy should be as uniform and clear as possible across all teams to avoid a sense of unfairness. Where different expectations are required, be prepared to share why.



Rethink *How*

Executing Remote Work Safely & Successfully

- 1 Measurable Outcomes
- 2 Safe & Secure Environment
- 3 Equipment & Support
- 4 Rightful Termination

1

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

How do you measure performance outcomes in a flexible work environment? Tracking performance based on if an employee is at their desk from 9-5 may no longer fit into your approach. Employees need clarity on how they are assessed against measurable goals - whether they are in the office or not. Be specific on your expectations regarding responsiveness to internal and external stakeholders, accountability and collaboration, and project progress. Setting clear standards early will go a long way in preserving healthy communication and feedback over time.

Take Action

Meet with each of your direct reports to clarify performance outcomes and day to day expectations. Regardless of your metrics, managers should be as specific as possible about what work needs to be done, and by when.

3

EQUIPMENT & SUPPORT

Do your employees have the right equipment at home to effectively complete their work? Consider items such as an office chair, data plan, or printer setup. Keep in mind that employees working remotely might need more admin or tech support than in-office staff.

Take Action

Determine a policy to support those who are lacking the equipment needed to fulfil their role. Are individuals expected to use their personal belongings, or can your organization provide them with the materials needed? Do you have enough support staff available? Make sure employees know how to access all the resources available to them.

2

SAFE & SECURE ENVIRONMENT

What elements are required for a safe working environment, whether that's in or out of the office? Consider if employees have proper locks on their office or exterior doors, a secure network connection, or the ability to ensure the security of package deliveries or outgoing company-related mail. Similarly, if client confidentiality is important, how will that be guaranteed when staff are remote working? How will the company help protect client data, screen views, or information shared during confidential calls?

Take Action

Determine which elements are most important and how you can both support and enforce creating a safe and secure work environment at home and at the office. Educate your employees on the importance and how-to's of tech safety, such as VPNs, secure logins, and locking their computer whenever they leave their desk.

4

RIGHTFUL TERMINATION

How will you handle individuals who do not want to or do not feel safe returning to an office environment? If the employee has demonstrated an ability to perform their responsibilities remotely, what would the justification be for termination?

Take Action

Senior leaders should set a uniform policy for how they will respond to employees who insist on a way of working that is incongruent with how the organization intends to move forward. Every manager needs guidelines on how to handle these situations so that employees are treated equitably across the enterprise.

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