

WORKPLACE



Considerations and Conversations for Returning to Work

Navigating the return to the workplace is complex. Every organization and building is unique and their solutions should be too. This guide considers the return to work as phased, with new challenges presented at each step. Below, Bialosky shares big picture considerations for organizations in return-to-work strategies and conversations.

PHASE 1

NEAR TERM

Safety concerns will keep initial office occupancy levels low.

- Consider limited occupancy (e.g. essential workers, employees unable to perform their job remotely, etc.).
- Health checks and social distancing may slow building entry in large buildings.

Develop policies and protocols that are informed and dynamic.

- Reliable access to sanitation supplies and PPE is critical.
- Determine WHY an employee will be in the office and HOW they behave when in the office.

Evaluate (and possibly retrofit) your workplace.

- Evaluate how your organization has functioned remotely. Don't rush back for the sake of normalcy.
- Weigh the desire to return to work with required logistics.

Multi-tenant buildings require coordination.

- Discuss shared protocols between Landlord and Tenants.
- Inquire about relevant building improvements (HVAC, etc).
- Building systems may require flushing, restarting, and testing.

PHASE 2

MID TERM

Organizations may introduce a greater portion of the workforce with partial work from home.

- Organizations with productivity challenges will accelerate to this phase. Phase 1 & 2 may even be combined.

Physical workplace retrofits will be necessary due to social distancing and safety protocols. Considerations include:

- Strategize workstation utilization and/or reconfiguration.
- Evaluate circulation paths and intersections.
- Reduce occupancy in collaboration space and cafe areas. Consider food & beverage policies.
- Consider methods for touch-free restrooms and sanitation stations.
- Increase visibility of cleaning
- Continued protocols and policies for behaviors in the workplace
- Improved Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) and Ventilation
- Utilize technology and occupancy sensor data.

PHASE 3

LONG TERM

Learn from the remote work experiment.

- Polls overwhelmingly report an interest in remote working at least a fraction of the week. Consider supporting policies and measures. Discuss challenges.

Consider long-term impacts to your workplace.

- Re-evaluate WHY you come to the office and develop new planning paradigms and spaces.
- Shift towards a more adaptable workplace. Position your organization to respond to (negative and positive) future conditions, such as the next epidemic or organizational growth.

Heightened focus on wellness

- Look to established guidelines such as the International WELL Building Institute and fitwel.

Human Connection

- Ultimately, humans are social beings and crave face-to-face interactions. Consider how your workplace can encourage and support this in new ways.

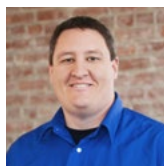
Questions on adapting your workplace?

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Resources: www.bialosky.com/news-ideas



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