



Reopening the Workplace Checklist

Reopening businesses, easing lockdown restrictions and coordinating staff returns may not be as easy as it seems. Now is the time to prepare. Use this checklist to evaluate your plan components and help jumpstart your return.

PEOPLE

Create a taskforce, or point person

Consider appointing someone, or an entire team, to lead the efforts of assessing and optimizing the return to the workplace and to help communicate changes and updates to employees.

Communicate to staff about returning

Make sure they understand what precautions you have taken, and assure them they can return to the workplace safely.

Create a return schedule

Consider developing a profile that assesses each employee based on their need to physically be at the workplace, potential COVID-19 exposure, commute methods (do they take public transportation?), and other considerations (such as childcare, for example). Use the profile to build out your priority list for those who return to the workplace.

Keep ongoing work from home policies

This will help to ensure the workplace isn't overly crowded. It will also enable employees who are concerned about returning to "take it slow;" will help establish safe, socially distanced working; and will support employees with children.

Review and update your policies

Look at sick leave, vacation time, travel policies, etc., and determine if updates are needed based on COVID-19.

Encourage appropriate office safety

Practices include frequent hand washing, use of hand sanitizers, eliminating high-touch areas, and wiping down common spaces.

Tell employees to stay home

This may seem obvious, but it needs to be explained to your employees if they, or someone they live with feels sick or exhibits any known COVID-19 symptoms.

Encourage employees to "ease in"

Expect that your employees will need time to acclimate, as people may be stressed and tired when they return to the workplace. Working at home is very different than working in an establishment. Encourage frequent breaks, and expect that people will need to adjust.

Check with local health officials about health screening recommendations

You may want to consider a daily health screening procedure, such as temperature checks, but make sure you reach out to your legal representative for guidance before you deploy any new procedure.

Open up employee communications

Create a cadenced stream of communication with your employees and ensure they understand the channels available to them for questions, comments, or concerns.



Practicing social distancing will still be of utmost importance while reopening. Prepare to make changes to floor plans, break rooms, conference rooms, and signage to ensure employees abide by social distancing guidelines. Create a safe environment.

WORKPLACE

Thoroughly clean the workplace before reopening to employees

Make sure you communicate to your employees the steps you have taken to ensure their safety and the ongoing “clean workplace” measures that you’ve put in place.

Ensure tenants practice social distance

If you share your office space with other tenants, be certain that they understand and will comply with safe social distancing and clean workplace standards. If appropriate, also post any building management or local health official’s notices in visible locations throughout your establishment.

Ensure social distancing guidelines

In alignment with your WFH policy and “Return to the Workplace” schedule, be sure to establish proper working conditions for those employees who do come in. Affirm that your seating and workstations adhere to social distancing guidelines. Limit the use of conference rooms if the space doesn’t allow for proper social distancing.

Enable healthy behaviors

Make sure your establishment is well equipped with enough hand sanitizer, masks, gloves, etc. so your employees can be as comfortable as possible.

Develop traffic flow patterns

Just as many grocery stores have implemented during this crisis, consider setting up traffic flow patterns in your establishment. This will help to ensure employees don’t “accidentally” bump into others, and will enable proper social distancing.

Establish group meeting guidelines

This will be especially important if you will be meeting in any conference rooms or common areas. Make sure your employees understand social distancing guidelines. Consider labeling conference rooms and commons spaces with occupancy limits and seating arrangements that allow for social distancing.

Establish on-site visitor guidelines

Post on-site visitor guidelines to ensure your visitors understand and comply. Don’t forget to communicate the guidelines to your employees.

Post guideline reminders

Place posters throughout your workplace to remind your employees and visitors to be diligent with their social distancing and other healthy behaviors.

Communicate often with employees

Keeping your employees informed of measures you have already taken as well as ongoing precautions will be absolutely critical to everyone’s health and safety. Ask them to get involved and share their ideas for a health workplace.

Create a reclosure plan

Ensure you have a plan in place in the event an employee in shows symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19, or if officials close nonessential businesses again due to another wave in the global health crisis. Engage your Managed Services Provider to put remote working and systems security measures in place.



Workstations in your establishment may have been sitting idle while employees worked remotely. Contact a Managed Service Provider to assist with your employee in-office and at-home setups and to ensure that all of your systems are safe and secure.

TECHNOLOGY

Schedule an technology review

Your Managed Services Provider will play a key role in your return to the workplace. Schedule a meeting to review all technology and IT related concerns.

Evaluate new technology deployments

The tools your employees used to work remotely may or may not be required when you return. Create a list, including any new devices, and decide if they stay or go. Evaluate how the new tech was implemented, determine what worked and what fell short, and if you still need all of the licenses you purchased. Examples include new Office 365 licenses, Zoom, new laptops, etc.

Evaluate solution vendors

Identify any vendor that was not able to achieve their SLAs, and determine the cause. Pay particularly close attention to vendors who are critical to your business and evaluate how they performed during the global health crisis.

Audit ongoing WFH technology

For employees that will continue to work from home, determine if the tech they are using is appropriate, secure, and is sufficient to enable optimal productivity.

Run a workstation audit

An audit will help you determine if the workstations are properly patched with the latest OS and other critical updates. Reach out to your Managed Services Provider for help completing the audit.

Document employee's personal computers used to WFH

Develop an appropriate action plan to ensure the ongoing use of personal computers or devices complies with your company's security standards. Consider requiring your employees to change the passwords on any personal devices.

Log removed workplace property

Protect your business and intellectual property by ensuring any devices, technology, files, folders, contracts, customer lists, and documents, etc. are properly returned to the workplace. This list may include electronic files left on the employee's personal workstation or device.

Conduct a gap analysis

Document the technology gaps that were exposed during the crisis and create a plan on how to address them.

Review disaster recovery and business continuity plans

What can be improved? What worked well? Were you able to easily transition from your workplace to work at home? How was your business impacted during the shut down? Update plans accordingly.

Schedule regular BDR testing

Backup and disaster recovery testing (BDR) should be a routine part of your business. But given this recent crisis, regular backup and disaster recovery testing will be even more crucial moving forward. Don't be caught unprepared.



Re-establish comfort and confidence among your customers as the global health crisis restrictions begin to lift. Engage your team to play a critical role in helping customers overcome any lingering concerns and return to doing business with you.

CUSTOMERS

Maintain communication

Create a cadenced stream of communication with clear methods to reply or reach out. This will ensure customers understand the channels available to them should they have questions, comments, or concerns.

Survey your customers

Once things get back to a new normal, this is a good time to survey your customers to learn what worked and what didn't. Use the lessons learned during this crisis to update the planning and response process with your customers. Document this and prepare for a future crisis, as something like this may happen again.

Create signage for clear expectations

Pave the way for a good customer experience by setting clear expectations when customers enter your workplace. Creating signage to communicate expectations will give your customers a level of comfort knowing you are taking the necessary precautions to keep them and your employees safe. Include details such as business hours and how you will manage social distancing. Also, make sure your customers understand the precautions your staff is taking, including the wearing of masks, washing hands, wiping down and disinfecting common areas.



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