

# GETTING BACK TO THE OFFICE

*A Holistic Approach to Workplace and Operational Management*

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT | WORKPLACE | WORKFORCE | PROJECT MANAGEMENT | LEASE AND TRANSACTION MANAGEMENT



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# Space is only one component of many that contributes to the workplace

An operational response to COVID-19 must address internal and external factors and the impact on:



PEOPLE



BUILDINGS



WORKSPACE



PROGRAMS, PROCESSES,  
AND PROTOCOLS

AND MUST SPEAK TO THREE  
CONSTITUENCIES:

1. **Employees**
2. **Leadership and Business Owners**
3. **Clients**

These elements are **interconnected, interdependent, and inseparable**



Focus on the **near-term challenges**, but do not lose sight of **long-term opportunities**



Take the first steps toward creating a **trust-based ecosystem**



**Build in resiliency** to respond to the next crisis

# Mapping out the Process

Every organization is unique and there is no magic process. The themes described here represent the building blocks of a successful workplace and operational management plan. The questions of when to start the process and when to reopen will also vary from organization to organization and geography to geography. **There is no definitive marker for these tipping points.**

*Today*



*Back to the office*





# Identify and Mobilize Your Response Team

Every aspect of your organization has been impacted. Assemble your team to address the implications applicable to your organization and your business model, including:



## PEOPLE

- Human Resources
- Health insurance/Benefits
- Wellness
- Employee communications
- Union collective bargaining agreements, if applicable
- Organizational structures of teams, groups, divisions
- Staffing projections
- Labor and privacy law implications
- C-Suite coordination



## WORKSPACE

- Open and closed primary work areas
- Common areas
- Specialty spaces
- Amenities
- Restrooms
- Support spaces
- Reception



## BUILDINGS

- Real estate obligations
- Building entry
- Horizontal and vertical distribution
- BMS and Air quality systems
- Elevators
- Parking and bike rooms
- Amenities and common areas



## PROGRAMS, PROCESSES, AND PROTOCOLS

- Remote work
- Service contracts
- IT
- Training
- Business continuity
- Security
- Fire and life safety
- Food service
- Meetings, events, public gatherings
- Long term organizational strategy

Capital outlays

Legal liability

Risk management



# Research

Research and take inventory of your organization, but don't stop there. Understanding what you can't control is as important as knowing what you can. Research your clients, peers, competitors, and contractors, and other external influences, including local, state, and federal guidance. The following are some considerations you may need to address:



## PEOPLE

- When to first open the workspace
- How to phase back
- Practicality of staggered work days/ work hours
- Who stays remote
- Who should come back first
- Commuting hurdles
- Child and eldercare challenges
- Compromised employees and family members
- Fear of returning to the workspace
- On-site contractors
- Employee morale
- Maintain employee connection during phased return
- Technology effectiveness in all work scenarios
- Equipment, supplies, and capabilities required by employees who can stay remote



## WORKSPACE

- Floorplan analysis
- Density of the workspace
- Seat and headcount tracking
- Conference room seating analysis
- Clean desk policy
- Foot traffic flow
- Seating arrangements for shift staffing
- Identification of high, medium and low risk areas
- Distancing in high traffic and directional flow areas
- Sanitizing high touch areas
- Shared workspaces
- Washroom procedures
- Food preparation and eating areas
- Mailroom
- Gyms, lounges, libraries and other amenity spaces
- Shared office equipment
- Monitoring the workspace
- Signage



## BUILDINGS

- Cleaning procedures
- Distancing during ingress and egress
- Arrival and departure procedures and safety processes
- Revolving doors
- Common spaces - hallways, doors
- Elevators - riding and queuing
- Stairwells
- Amenity spaces
- Parking garages
- Security and visitor control
- Fire and Life Safety
- Health and medical measures and screening
- Air Quality/Ventilation Systems
- Location specific commuting issues



## PROGRAMS, PROCESSES, AND PROTOCOLS

- Remote work policy
- Technology and communications
- Space usage protocols
- Work scheduling cycles
- Meetings and Events
- Travel
- Visitors
- Contractors
- Fire and Life Safety
- Assigned vs unassigned workspaces
- Viability of a paperless workspace
- Vacation policy
- Food and beverage service
- PPE policy and acquisition times
- Health monitoring app
- Mental health support/remote help
- Response, process and procedures for positive test results
- Contact tracing process
- Who and what space to isolate after a positive test



## Gain Insight into the Mindset of your Employees and Leadership

Your employees are your most important assets and many are unsure about the future. How your plan addresses their concerns can build years of loyalty or damage your existing culture.

Listen to your employees via surveys, virtual town halls, anonymous e-mail accounts and other mechanisms.

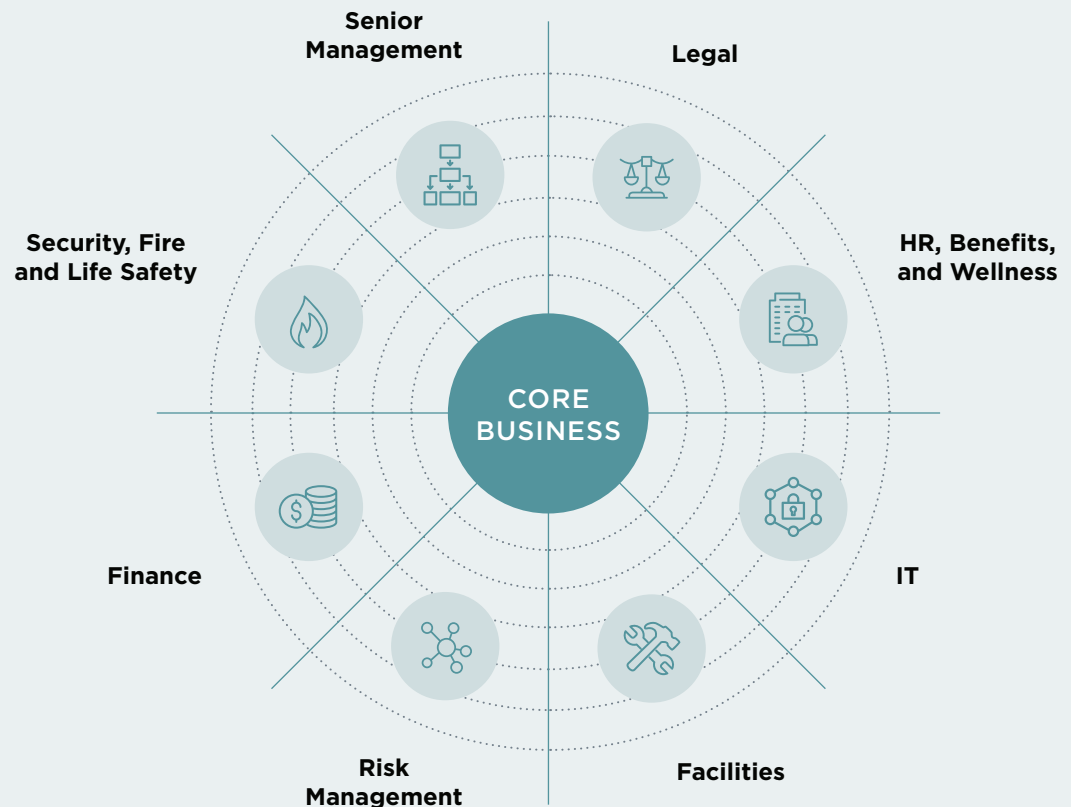
### ASK THEM QUESTIONS ABOUT:

1. What aspects of the office are most important to them?
2. What are their cares and concerns today?
3. What about their remote work set-up works? What doesn't work?
4. Do they have everything they need to be productive?
5. How would they rate your organization's communications during this crisis?
6. What do they want to see in the workspace to make them feel safe?
7. How is their work life balance?
8. What are their thoughts about returning to the workspace?



## Stakeholder Focus Groups

Every element of your organization has been impacted and many stakeholders should have input into a successful plan. Conversations with a cross section of stakeholders will help inform your path forward, answer pressing questions, and safeguard against missed considerations. Virtual focus groups may include feedback from:



*In addition to serving as a foundation of a workplace and operational management plan, information gathered now can also form the basis of a more robust remote work and business continuity plan for the future and, potentially, the next crisis.*



# Create a Plan

## Client, Landlord, Contractor Coordination

Your workplace doesn't stop at your front door. Your plan must incorporate coordination with your business partners:

### CLIENTS

- Are clients' return to the office plans impacting how you deliver services?
- Do you have frequent client visits that have been and will be impacted?
- Are your employees often at client offices and sites?
- Can you continue to visit clients virtually for an indefinite period?
- In your return planning, are adjacencies to clients impacted?
- How do you best support client needs with varied timelines and phasing of workspace returns?

### BUILDINGS

- Are landlord policies consistent with your plan requirements in building common areas and amenity spaces?
- How will the landlord and tenant divide roles and responsibilities for access, cleaning, and other considerations?
- How will landlord legal liability concerns affect your operations?
- Can parking garages and lots support an increase in usage?
- Can bike rooms re-open immediately (or be created or expanded) to facilitate cycling as an option instead of mass transit for employees?
- What are the landlord's plans for capital upgrades?
- Who is responsible for building modifications?
- Will landlords be providing any PPE?
- Is the landlord/ property manager communicating frequently enough and with the necessary information?
- How should policies differ for urban and suburban buildings?
- How can landlords be a partner in this process?

### CONTRACTORS

- What contractors are necessary to keep your workspace and building operational?
- If you have contract workers in your workspace, how are you integrating them into the plan?
- Are there gaps in contractor employers plans that could put your employees at risk?
- How are you managing contract services such as food service, plant care, deliveries?



## Draft a Comprehensive Plan

Address people, workspace, buildings, and programs, processes, and protocols:



### THRESHOLD FOR RETURN

- Employee sentiment
- Testing
- Tracking
- Contact Tracing
- Availability and procurement of necessary supplies, equipment and PPE
- Office equipment
- Who returns, when do they return, and how do they return



### MOVEMENT AND ACTIVITY

- Physical distance planning for the workspace - density, wayfinding, restrictions on common area usage
- Assigned vs unassigned seating
- Sensors
- Controlling the environment - minimizing trips in and out of the workspace for food, etc.
- Shift seating
- Getting to and from work
- Getting around the building

- Procedures if an employee tests positive
- Cleaning and sanitizing
- Ongoing remote work policy
- Business travel and vacations
- Changes in business operations in and out of the office
- Modified staff roles - reassignment to manage processes
- Meetings and events



### POLICY AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Response to those who can't return to the workspace - childcare, eldercare, immunocompromised, etc.
- Employee morale and productivity
- What is/is not open - food service, tech bar, etc.
- Clean desk policy
- Hoteling stations
- Employee check-ins
- Workflow technology enablement

- Coordination impacts
- Timeline, cost, responsibilities, communication
- Approvals
- Monitoring
- Reporting



### PROJECT MANAGEMENT







## Develop a Communication Strategy and Change Management Plan

Communications and change management are more critical now than ever with remote employees and scattered constituencies. Everyone is seeking guidance from leadership. With information delivered virtually, **messaging must be clear and consistent.**



### COMMUNICATE

#### Develop communication protocols, channels, frequency, and communication responsibilities

- Who will be communicating the messages?
- How far in advance are employees told they are returning?
- Is communication tiered based on return?
- How do employees communicate if they have concerns?
- How can leadership teams help support the plan framework?
- How can an employee network support the plan framework?
- Not all information is communicated to all employees
- Who will receive which messages?
- Communication continues in the workspace - visual aids to reinforce messaging
- On which platforms will the messages be conveyed?

#### Information for employees returning to work

- Shifts
- Protocols for being in the space
- Responsibilities
- Timing

#### Information for employees remaining remote

- Expectations
- Policies

#### Communication within Management

#### Communication to external parties

- Clients
- Contractors
- Buildings



### MANAGE CHANGE, ALLAY CONCERNS

#### New routines - workday, workspace

#### Technology

#### Training

#### Programs and processes

#### Health, family, and other considerations

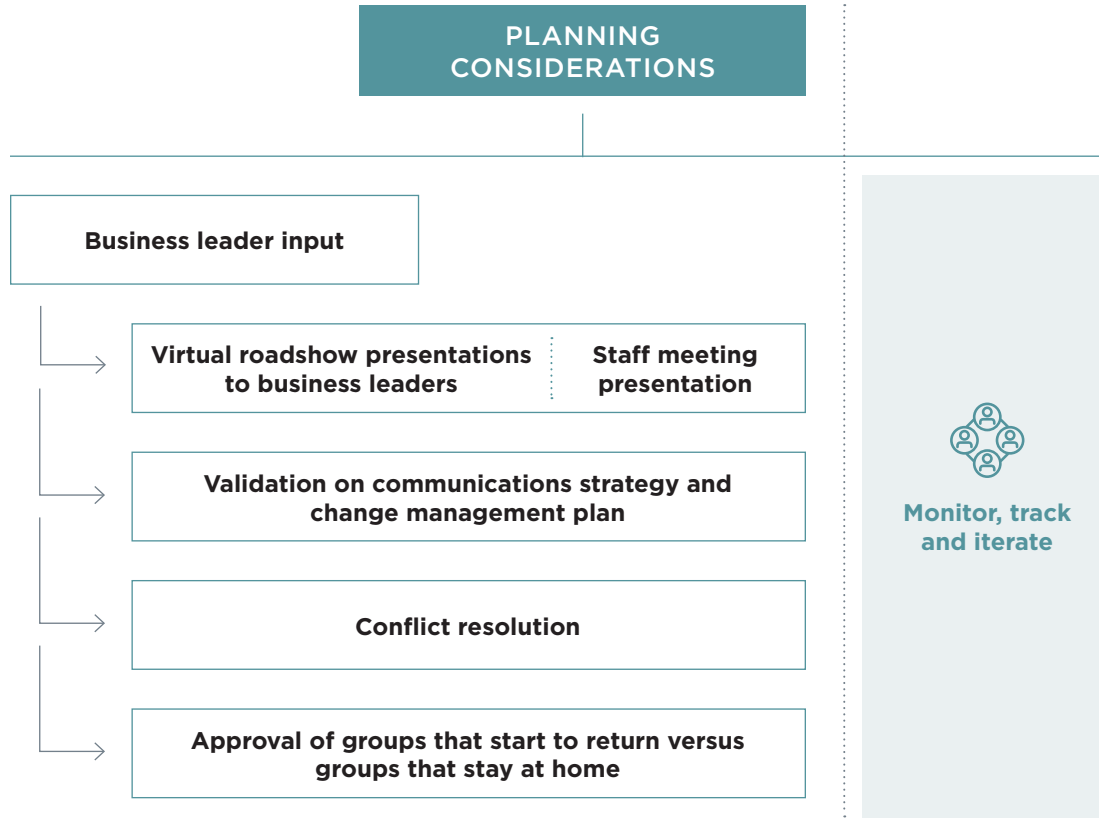
#### Wellness and mental health



## Create Approval and Reporting Framework

Establish clear governance and understand the approvals required prior to plan execution. When discussing business critical decisions such as recommended employee return pace, workplace policies, and work from home plans, leadership buy-in and approval is critical for success.

As part of this process, there should also be consideration given to other key stakeholder involvement and buy-in.



*The plan is a living document. Every day brings new data, guidance, and lessons. Incorporate, update, improve.*



# Implement and Roll-out

## Execute your Communications Plan

Careful consideration should be given to how, and what vehicles you use, to communicate to both employees and leadership.

### Commonly used mediums include:

- Leadership Email
- Email Blasts
- Website
- App
- Portal
- Virtual Roadshow and Staff Meeting Presentations
- Video Conference Call
- Town Hall
- Round Table

## Feedback, Plan Adjustment and Continuous Improvement

Feedback begins the moment you implement your plan:

- **Keep the response team mobilized**
- **Expect a significant ongoing time commitment to ensure a successful implementation**
- **There will be updates, tweaks, improvements, and pivots**
- **What you can't control - and perhaps what you can't even anticipate - will have an impact on your plan**
- **Start thinking about the long-term impacts on your organizational and operational strategy - people, workspace, buildings, programs, processes, and protocols**
- **Create and put foundational elements in place to improve the ability to react to unknown situations**



Wellness



Flexible people, not just flexible space



Functional Technology





# Implement and Roll-out

## Observe to Understand.



### PEOPLE

- Is the plan ameliorating employee concerns?
- Are employees productive?
- Do employees feel productive?



### WORKSPACE

- Is physical distancing being maintained?
- Are productive work flows enabled?
- Are touchless or low-touch improvements functioning as planned?
- Are installed physical separations adequate between individual work areas?



### BUILDINGS

- Is building policy consistent with the plan?
- Is physical distancing being maintained?
- Is cleaning rigor adequate?
- Are HVAC systems functioning as planned?



### PROGRAMS, PROCESSES, AND PROTOCOLS

- Are productivity metrics properly defined?
- Are productive work flows enabled?
- Is productivity being maintained?

Is the plan responsive to the impact of external factors?

# THE SAVILLS PLAN

*Every organization is unique. Savills helps businesses, institutions, and governments around the globe create and implement workplace and operational management plans – in periods of normalcy and times of crisis.*

Savills helps organizations find the right solutions that ensure employee success. Sharply skilled and fiercely dedicated, the firm's integrated teams of consultants and brokers are experts in better real estate. With services in tenant representation, workforce and incentives strategy, workplace strategy and occupant experience, project management, and capital markets, Savills has elevated the potential of workplaces around the corner, and around the world, for 160 years and counting.

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