Safe back to work!

Contents

Introduction & background

Regardless of the economic situation, a top priority for any organization is to secure a safe workplace for all co-workers. This includes physical as well as behavioral aspects of the workplace environment. In times of change, organizations also need to address 'the new normal' in order to prepare for the future.

The purpose of this document is to map what measures to take in order to adjust to the new normal when returning back to work after COVID-19.

Possible workplace risk areas

- Domestic and international traveling.

- Personal interactions and face-to-face meetings (internal and external).

- Landscape seating and large open areas.

- A large number of external visitors and meetings.

- Reception desks and single entrances.

- Big community areas.

- Crowded meetings and conference rooms.

- A large amount of meetings, gathering a larger number of participants.

- Co-workers using public transport to get to work.

Management team priorities while preparing for a safe way back to work

Questions for management:

Can we reopen in a responsible way?

Will it give more value to business and people to reopen the office?

What are the possible negative consequences of reopening the office?

How do we go back to work in a safe way?

How do we prioritize and implement workplace safety initiatives with with speed and impact?

What do we prioritize when/ if the situation changes while also ensuring a great co-worker experience?

How can we ensure that co-workers feel safe returning to work?

How do we smoothly implement changes to the workplace, while securing co-worker engagement?

How can we prevent workplace changes disrupting productivity and autonomy?

How can we adapt new routines and safety measures for long-term changes to the workplace?

Areas of interventions

1. Separation of space and time

- Remodelling and retooling the workspace.
- Improved air filtration and ventilation.
- More touch-free handles.
- Visual social-distancing/sanitization cues.
- Canteen tables properly spaced.
- Staggered shifts and lunch times.

2. Hygiene and cleaning

- Hygiene zones with checkpoints.
- Highly visible workspace cleaning equipment.
- Markups of hotspot surfaces.
- Offer voluntary testing?

3. Personal health measures

- Checklists and self-assassment reminders including the co-worker, his/her family and family contacts.

4. Policies and behaviors

- Behavioral policies.
- Sick protocols.
- Work from home appliance.
- Clean working kits.
- All meetings digital to ensure accessibility.

5. Co-worker communication and training

- Printed posters in the office.
- Mandatory e-learnings before returning to the office.

1. Separation of space and time

1. Decide how to structure the landscape and seating with a minimum distance of 2 meters between each work station.

2. Decide on lunch and break schedules to avoid unnecessary crowds.

3. Mark up of social areas such as reception and kitchen to ensure physical distance.

4. Update kitchen routines.

5. Evaluate the need for improved ventilation and filtration.

6. Identify and mark up sanitation stations.

7. Ensure space between kitchen tables and lounge areas.

8. Identify additional costs related to workspace safety compliance.

9. Plan the workforce working hours into shifts.

10. Decide whether reception should be open or not.

11. Evaluate if need for close down areas/facilities (ex table tennis).

Actions for management:

1. Are all premises large enough to to make social distancing possible?

2. Be prepared to approve increasing costs of premises due to needed investments such as ventilation and/or office landscape remodelling.

3. Ensure that your management team is also following protocol and is working according to shifts – walk the talk!

2. Hygiene and cleaning

1. Hygiene zones with checkpoints.

2. Intensified cleaning of workspace.

3. Mark up surfaces and areas identified as hotspots.

4. Visualize cleaning schedules.

5. Implement office hours to ensure cleaning can be done safely.

Actions for management:

1. Plexiglass shields in receptions, Y/N?

2. Decide whether to offer voluntary testing of co-workers recovered from sickness.

3. Personal health measures

1. Distribute and visualize checklists and reminders of self-assessments.

2. If needed, update e-learning to account for regional deviations.

Actions for management:

1. Decide how to handle co-workers that can't get to work without public transport

Co-worker actions:

1. Are you healthy and symptom-free?

2. Is your family healthy?

3. Do you belong to a risk group?

4. Do you act in accordance to government guidelines in your spare time?

5. Are you able to get to work without public transport?

4. Policies and behaviors

1. Ensure that all managers are confident in sending sick employees home immediately.

2. Ensure that there is management consensus on safe work from a culture and ambition perspective.

3. Distribute clean working kits.

4. Ensure that all co-workers have the right equipment for productivity and good health when working away from the office.

Actions for management:

1. Decide if the return to work will be on voluntary basis or not.

2. Secure communication of check-lists and behavioral policy updates.

3. Decide wheter all meetings will continue to be digitally available to ensure accessibility.

5. Co-worker communication and training

1. Distribute print and digital material throughout the workplace, for example in restrooms, receptions and kitchens.

2. Follow up on completed e-learnings before returning to office.

Actions for management:

1. Continue to communicate and inform co-workers about the situation.

For co-worker:

1. Completion of e-learnings before returning to office.

Stay safe.

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