

6 tips to get the office ready for your staff's return

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Nearly 18 months after we left the office, businesses should not simply try to pick up where they left off and hope people return to the workplace environment as it was before.



Source: Kindel Media from [Pexels](#)

There are no precedents to follow in the aftermath of a global pandemic. We at Giant Leap have devised a list of six 'must do' actions that corporations, large and small, should consider when attracting new employees and welcoming back old staff, in light of unfamiliar working reality.

1. Have a clear idea of who needs to be present in the office

Do you really need an in-office presence to order supplies or make cold calls? Smart businesses have learned that productivity is not a function of location; many job functions are location independent. Identifying groups that can re-enter the workplace in phased stages is critical, based on the impact of location on the job function.

2. Begin to make the workplace 'work ready'

In keeping with the primary goal of promoting a seamless transition back into the workplace, what needs must you address? Dedicated spaces for phone conversations? Expanded access to Wi-Fi? White Boards and erasable markers? A primed, well-prepared workplace evokes the feeling of homecoming as an alternative to yet another upheaval in the normal routine of life.



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3. Creatively repurpose underutilised space

The key to repurposing space is to ensure that it still benefits your company in its new incarnation. For example, the addition of a coffee bar, ping-pong, day care or fitness room may seem like the perfect choice for repurposing empty space. It's easy, inexpensive employee-centered fix.

4. Consider a workplace in the absence of assigned offices and/or dedicated seating

The traditional office model of mazes of assigned workspaces has run its course and will be discarded in favour of a looser, more utilitarian work environment.

For anyone over the age of 40, this will likely be the most disruptive change they will encounter, while for those younger than 30, this will be welcomed as an engaging, community oriented working environment. Strategies designed to allay anxieties, and promote acceptance, will require corporate investment and in-house promotion to accelerate acceptance and usage and promote well-being.



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5. Create on-demand workplace services

In the absence of a full time onsite workforce, you no longer need a fully stocked canteen to feed employees that have opted for remote work settings. The same principle applies to workstations, conference rooms and lounging areas and parking garages. The focus should be on adjusting workplace solutions for employees from an 'on-site' suite of services to 'on-demand' services.

6. Make employee well-being a top priority

Employee well-being is a vital element for companies that want to attract and maintain top talent. A new generation of millennials entering the workforce seek companies that offer the right environment and values. These workers need a workplace environment that is energising, engaging, and connected to the broader corporate community. Well-being is a theme that cuts across multiple aspects (safety, health, morale) of the workplace.

Well-being is of paramount interest to executives today. The benefits of any post-pandemic workplace strategy must equally apply to all employees, regardless of income, education, or location.

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