

## Six tips for leaders transitioning their people back to company offices

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With the recent easing of restrictions and the removal of the 'work from home' directive, employers are considering how to welcome back more employees into their office spaces.

While some leaders are excited at the opportunity of gathering their teams and bringing life back to their offices, many employees are keen to maintain their work-life balance with more of a hybrid work model.

So what are leaders to do in these times of transition? Here are some tips for leaders who are tasked with the role of transitioning their people back into the 'office':

1. **Show empathy** – this is not a 'return to work' transition, it's a 'return to the company office'. Take the time to acknowledge the amazing efforts of your people and all the challenges they have faced as they balanced their personal lives and work responsibilities in a period of uncertainty.
2. **Give your people a voice and be transparent** – be sure to engage your people in the journey and ask them what they want, how they think it could work and test policies before rolling them out. Open up channels of communication across all levels of your organisation. Ensure that your people are given the opportunity to contribute ideas and provide feedback.
3. **Learn from others** – the challenges we are facing are not new for many of our international counterparts, so do some research and see how firms abroad have addressed the new issues that Covid has brought into their workplaces.
4. **Make wellbeing a priority** – be sure to place your people at the centre of your business strategy and attend to all their needs. Provide benefits or access to programs which support their wellbeing. Ask them what services they would value and find practical ways to support them to live a well-balanced lifestyle. Don't forget to regularly ask - *are you ok?*
5. **Inspire your people** – Make the return to the office transition a memorable experience. Take the opportunity to engage your leaders and refocus your people on the organisation's vision, strategy and goals. Listen to their feedback and provide opportunities for your people to work together and make a difference. Whether it's a company or community initiative, don't be afraid to start something new and allow it to inject fresh energy into your workplace.
6. **Review your employee communication channels** – with a more dispersed workforce, are your communication channels as effective as they were pre-pandemic? Are your people engaged with your vision and clear about your organisational goals? Perhaps you need to introduce new channels or forums to ensure that all your people are well informed and connected with your strategic direction. Be sure to have a good mix between face to face connection and online methods.

In closing, regardless of whether your people are physically located in your company office or working from their homes, they need to feel a strong connection to your purpose, strategy and values. When your people feel engaged, they will feel valued for their contribution and empowered to make a difference. Not only will this create a positive workplace culture for your organisation, it will also enable you to build a sustainable competitive advantage over the long term.

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*Commcentric is running a promotion for Sydney companies transitioning their employees back into the company office. Book in for a [Commcentric Bootcamp](#) in March 2022 and access your discount.*