

Media Coverage

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How to create an employee friendly, and productive workplace as workspaces are partially opening after a year of work from home.

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This time last year, little did we know that we would be getting out of office, only to be working from home for an indefinite period. The pandemic has now shifted everything online and created a virtual world for us to live in.

As humans, we are blessed with an innate ability to adapt to our constantly evolving and changing surroundings and so, when this time last year, we went into lockdown with work from home becoming part of our professional culture, human resources teams were quick enough to turn the in-person office experience into a virtual one. From time-to-time, we had virtual happy hours, game-nights, open mics, and much more over videoconferencing with participation right from the comforts of our houses. But now, fast forward to 2021, with quite a few workspaces having opened, operating with 50% or less staff, it has become important to regain that momentum and office environment back so that the office culture we left behind in 2020, can be brought back. Here are a few things, HRO's can do to keep the momentum high.

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Putting safety first: It has always been opined that our surroundings affect our productivity levels. As a human resource officer of said company, it is their responsibility to keep the office environment suitable and non-toxic. With the pandemic still looming over us, it is imperative that employees are given the assurance that the work-premises are well-sanitized, hygienic, with social-distancing norms are in place. This being one of the biggest mental blocks in anybody's mind today, needs to be addressed tactfully, so that once in office, employees are not worried about their safety and are in fact fully assured about their safety. Keeping employees first: It is imperative to ensure that as a company, you give primary importance to your employee's safety. And offer them support as and when needed in these unprecedented times. Be it covering up work commitments for personal reasons, or support needed for professional growth and development, keeping the employees informed that they are valued and matter to the firm, is of importance. Timely financial transactions: It is an organization's responsibility to ensure that despite a dip in economy, their employees have job security and job satisfaction. It is necessary to confirm on time salary disbursement, regular motivation sessions, several rewards and recognitions and Regular employee connect activations to keep the workplace thriving. Work-place culture: Productive and efficient employees are the heart and soul of a well-run business. The overall well-being of an employee, his environment at work, his mental health, his surroundings, play a significant role in his output. Efficiency starts with a carefully aligned company culture. A transparent, healthy mindset and open communication set-up works best for employees to feel welcome in. In today's world, ensuring clear communication is key and should be promoted along with encouraging employees to do their best with motivational strategies and rewards. Work-Life Balance: Operating under the new normal, as we call it, a company needs to constantly find new ways of ensuring that their employees who got used to a certain way of life in the last year, need not feel completely lost while embracing the return-to-office life. The company should promote work-life balance, giving an employee the flexibility and freedom to live life to the fullest. Build an empathetic environment: As an HRO, be there for the employees. Eventually, it is all about give and take. If an employee is returning to work amidst the pandemic, as a firm and HRO, there should be an empathising calm that they are welcomed with, so that they do not feel lost and subjected to pressure.

Have a collaborative approach: Engage with employees, by engaging them, for them. Re-build a collaborative culture, where employees feel like they are part of the decision-making process, keep them informed, promote transparency across hierarchies and most importantly, continue to help them be aware.

Promote a co-existing professional and personal environment: It is healthy to let employees take their down-time in the middle of a workday when they wish to leave their professional bubble behind and discuss their lives beyond work with their colleagues over a break from time to time. This helps employees feel less stressed and more pumped to return to work.

As we embrace the new normal, while getting back to our pre-covid lives, it is only a matter of time for employees to get used to this change. As mentioned before, a human's innate ability to adapt to their constantly evolving and trying times has never deterred them from emerging stronger and in sync with changing times. However, it is indeed only a matter of time, that normalcy will prevail, and we will be able to embrace our pre-covid professional lives to the fullest.