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# Working through the return

**HOW CHANGE MANAGEMENT CAN HELP!**



With an underlying concern about our health,  
we have moved, literally overnight, into a place  
where working from home is being considered  
the 'new norm'.





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# Change Management *is that maybe a little overkill?*

## **A big change is happening:**

- Everyone has been **working at home**
- Why? Because **gathering in large groups** is not safe
- And it's been **stressful** and **full of uncertainties**
- But now – everyone may be **going back to the office**
- Where they will likely **gather in larger groups** – you know – meetings, lunch, getting coffee
- Which will (*still*) be **stressful** and **full of uncertainties**

**So you bet – this is all about change management!**



# 3 Key Components

## JUST LIKE ANY WORKPLACE CHANGE

- 1 WHY:** the reasons this is happening
- 2 WHAT:** a compelling vision
- 3 HOW:** the path forward

These 3 components are at the core of every change management program.

# 3 Key Components

## MANAGING WORKPLACE CHANGE



**WHY**

### WHY IS THIS CHANGE HAPPENING?

External drivers – change in environment, COVID-19

Employee wellness and safety – more important than ever

The business needs to get going again – to be successful

Need to be flexible – what's next is not clear

New ways of working because of the pandemic

# 3 Key Components

## MANAGING WORKPLACE CHANGE



### WHAT

WHAT EXACTLY IS GOING TO CHANGE?

HOW WILL THIS IMPACT ME? THE COMPANY?

How we work, where we work, when we work, how we use the workplace  
Create a safe environment where employees are safe and can work effectively  
New cleaning protocols – and ways to communicate them  
Social distancing – workstation layout, circulation paths, seating changes  
Try to create a sense of normalcy



# 3 Key Components

## MANAGING WORKPLACE CHANGE



### HOW

#### HOW WILL I KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON?

What information will be provided – when, how, and from whom?

What is the schedule?

How can I provide feedback and give input?

How will my feedback be shared and used?

What decisions will I have an impact on?

What new training will be provided?

Will this continue to change?



# How do we engage employees to understand their concerns?

Illustrate/demonstrate how actions being taken will address both employee, management and organizational concerns and goal.

Together, these actions will give credibility/authenticity to organizational statements about 'we care about the wellness of our employees'.

# Communications

## BEFORE THE RETURN

### How to Communicate:

- Use online media – **email, social media** – for the day to day details
- Use **leadership webcasts** for regular updates and major announcements
- Don't be **too technical** – while this is a business issue, uncertainty and stress are very personal
- Be **consistent** – messaging and cadence

### What to Communicate

- **What** is going on now.
- **When** will we come back to work? And will we go back home again?
- **Who** is returning to the office and when?
- What will be **different** – what I see, where I sit, what I do, how I work?
- What is being done to make the **workplace safe** - cleaning/sanitation, social distancing? How will I know this is being done?
- **What do I need to do** that is different?
- How we are getting your **involvement and input**?

# Communications

## THE RETURN BEGINS

### How to Communicate:

- Be transparent
- Always **stage the messages** – not all the information is needed at the front door; some will be more relevant in individual and team spaces
- Use **multiple media** – posters, handouts (using gloves), video
- Use **video instead of large group meetings** or town halls

### What to Communicate

- **Welcome back!** We're glad you stayed safe and are here.
- **Who is working where:** in the office, remotely
- **Changes in work** schedules/patterns
- **Changes in the workspace** – individual, team, community
- **Employee safety:** what is being done, how it will be communicated, what your individual role is
- **Protocols:** definition, review, update
- **Feedback:** How you can share it
- How we will **continue to be provide updates** and information.

# Communications

## DAY 2: WE'RE WORKING

### How to Communicate:

- Be candid, honest and positive
- Be **consistent** – messaging and cadence – to reinforce sense of order, normalcy
- Be as **specific as possible**, i.e., relate social distancing to specific locations.
- Use **multiple media** – posters, handouts (using gloves), video, desk drops, etc.
- Focus on **individual physical safety, effectiveness, and changes to the workplace**
- Provide regularly **updated FAQ's** to leadership
- Share the **successes**, be honest about **challenges**
- Facilitate **team focused communication**

### What to Communicate

- **Current status** – cleaning, safety, distributed work program, working in the office
- **Upcoming changes** – workspace, distributed work, technology, etc.
- **Feedback:** reminders of the process, answers and outcomes from feedback received
- **Overall business successes** and effectiveness
- Protocol review and updates



# Tips and Best Practices

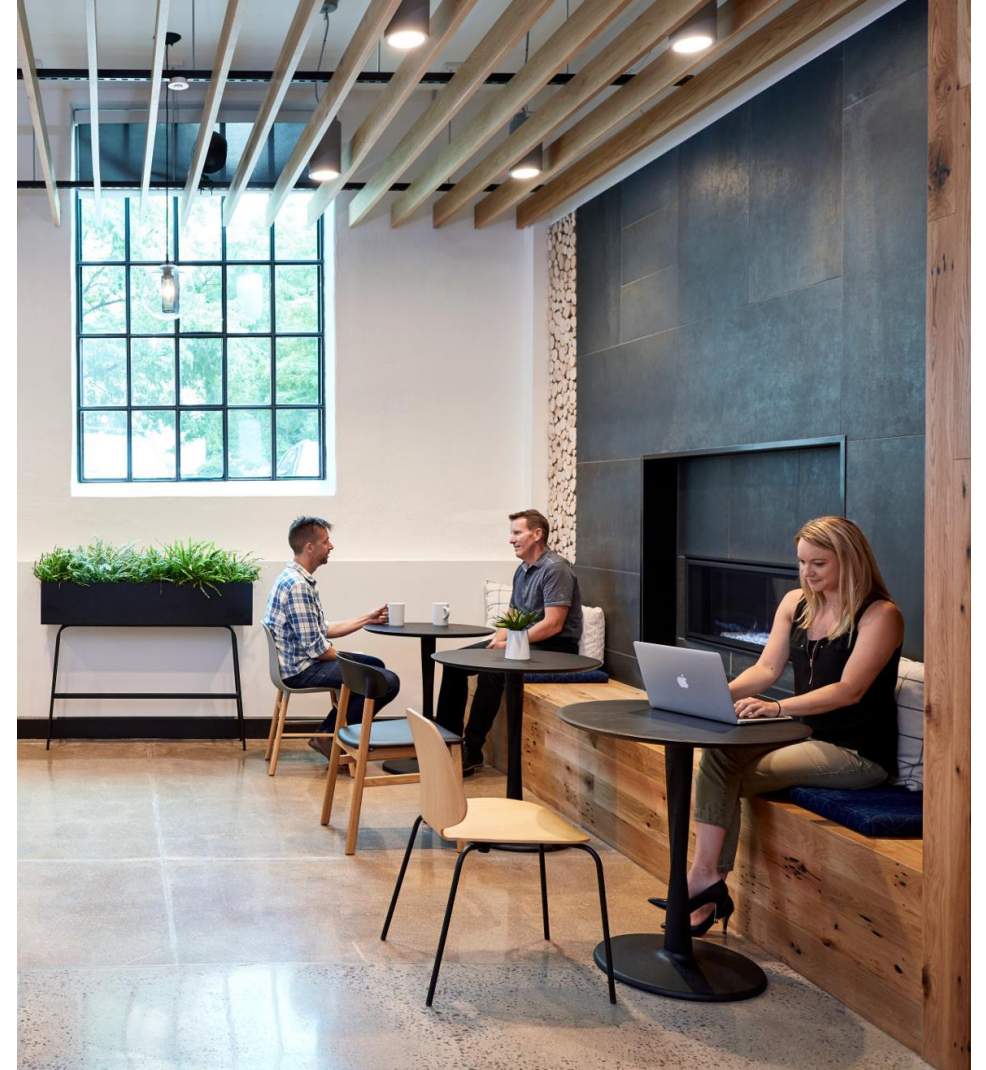
## COMMUNICATIONS

- Communicate, **communicate**, communicate
- Keep the message and details **consistent**
- Use language and **terms employees can understand** – this is a personal, human issue, not a technical problem
- Use **multiple methods of communication** – email isn't the only way to get the message across
- Create a **central source for all information**; update it on a regular cadence
- Create a **feedback mechanism** for employees – and then respond to feedback; show how it can make a difference.
- **Do what you say you're going to do.** If you say someone will get an answer, make sure they do.
- **Be authentic** – if there isn't an answer, admit it. Don't make something up
- **Proactively ask questions** – what's working, what's not working, are there new concerns, do employees still feel safe. This will build trust as well.

# Tips and Best Practices

## BUILDING TRUST

- Be **consistent with the sources you reference** - there are many 'articles in the public press that are not completely accurate and may be misleading;
- There will be **changing information**: information about COVID-19 changes almost daily; keep abreast of the changes and be candid with how changes may/may not impact your organization
- Remember to **celebrate achievements**: recognize employee and organizational successes; help make work positive.
- Always **be transparent**: if something bad happens, acknowledge it right away; never hide anything.
- Consistently **respond to feedback**, follow up on questions.



# Tips and Best Practices

## THINGS TO BE READY FOR

- **Incorrect information:** there are many articles and viewpoints in the popular press, some of which are not accurate. Be consistent in the resources you reference.
- **Uninformed leadership:** Create and update FAQs for leadership so they do not get stuck in the elevator without an answer.
- **Leaders with 'all the answers':** give leadership permission to say 'I don't know. But I know who does, and they will get back to you.' And then be sure someone gets back to the person with the question.
- **Things change:** COVID-19 is not predictable; be prepared to address new information.





# Tips and Best Practices

## UNDERSTANDING RESISTANCE

Do not ignore it – it will only get worse if you do!  
And respond based on these 3 levels

### LEVEL 1: I don't understand it

- Involves lack of clarity about specific information - facts, figures, and ideas
- Solution: Provide additional details

### LEVEL 2: I don't like it

- This is a more emotional response
- Solution: Respond on a human level – I understand your concern, and we are supporting you through this

### LEVEL 3: I don't like you

- Extremely emotional response
- Solution: Requires time and trust; demonstrate genuine concern and that you/ATT have their best interest at heart.
- No facts

Ric Maurer, Beyond the Wall of Resistance





# Tips and Best Practices

## USING HUMOR



# Tips and Best Practices

## Be Visual







# Questions?

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