

Preparing to return to the office



Here are tips on how to encourage staff to return to the office, inspired by Behavioural Science research

How to prepare

Have a plan and communicate clearly



Be mindful of email volumes; ensure each touchpoint has a purpose

Be clear on the 'why'



Help people understand the value and importance of coming into the office

Seek input and buy-in

Understand preferences and potential barriers; explain the rationale behind policies or decisions



Use 'nudges' to gently shift behaviour



Apply the [EAST framework](#) to enhance effectiveness of return to office initiatives

Have a Plan B

Use 'if -- then' plans to prepare for different scenarios (i.e. new COVID restrictions or policy changes)



Nudge ideas

Make it Easy



- Give simple, clear comms
- Set defaults (e.g. days, frequency of being in the office)
- Identify and reduce small frictions

Make it Attractive



- Consider small incentives
- Make 'in-person' days salient
- Highlight the benefits of the office

Make it Social



- Make senior manager attendance in the office visible
- Book social events on office days
- Use social norms messaging to encourage others to follow suit

Make it Timely



- Connect returning to the office to milestones (e.g. end of year events, the start of a new month or year)
- Give people notice

Preparing to return to the office

Here are tips on how to encourage staff to be COVID-safe in the office, inspired by Behavioural Science research



How to encourage COVID-safe behaviours in the office

Subtle changes to the physical environment

Improve ventilation

This is one of the most effective things you can do to help mitigate risk

Reduce bottlenecks and bunching

For example, spread entry and exit times to reduce congestion, or give people reminder cues in areas where behaviours might be automatic (like when waiting for their coffee)

Rearrange furniture

For example, remove excess work stations or furniture that encourages people to cluster together



Subtle changes to the social environment

Ensure managers are good role models

Engage with managers to obtain buy-in and provide simple training to ensure consistency across managers and teams

Empower people to speak up

Encourage people to speak up if they see non-compliance, and set up feedback loops so staff can report how safe they feel in the office



What you can do next

- **Share** this with other organisations who could benefit from it
- **Reach out** if you have any questions, at alex.gyani@bi.team

