



Returning to the New Reality

Considerations for post COVID-19 workforce management

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Steps back to a new reality

As we start to consider the easing of lockdown and a return to options for working flexibly, not just remotely, there are a number of elements to plan:



Priority groups

Who are a priority for returning to work on-site?



Scheduling

How do we group teams to be in the same physical space?



Health & wellbeing

Continued provision of additional health and well-being measures, both on-site and virtually



Effective working

Designing how mixed teams will work e.g. team meetings combining face to face with virtual, to ensure consistent interactions



Employee engagement

Continued engagement through communications at all levels and across office based and virtual teams



Technology

Management of technology and networks to cope with combination of in-house and remote access, ensuring remote workers are not disadvantaged



Policy

Redesign and alignment of HR and employment policies to the new working practices



Facilities & workplace

Redesign of office space to serve remote and face to face simultaneously



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Priority groups

Organisations should plan for continued social distancing in some measure for the rest of 2020. This brings with it a consideration of phasing employees back into the physical office...or not



Immediate

- Unable to carry out role away from the workplace e.g.
 - Lack essential technology/equipment
- Role is centred around a physical location or geography
- Nature of role is highly sensitive and requires controlled environment e.g. defence and intelligence, restructuring

Second wave

- Developed immunity to the virus (if consistent with current Government guidelines)
- Ability to work effectively is impaired, including by home surroundings (use people analytics, including pulse surveys, to establish hypotheses)
- Team workers, where there is an indication that team efficiency has been impaired by remote working
- Individuals indicating that their productivity would be greater in the office

Longer term

- Knowledge workers, where enabling technology is in place
- Parents and carers, where schools have not yet reopened
- *Should you encourage these colleagues to continue remote working?*

Remain remote

- Anyone with a shielding responsibility e.g.
 - above 70
 - has or has had cancer / respiratory illness
- Anyone currently testing positive for the virus, in known contact with a carrier, or showing symptoms
- Anyone recently returned from a high risk destination

Government guidelines

Health & wellbeing of employees

Reputational risk

Operational effectiveness

Financial performance



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Creating a Safe Space to Speak



Not all remote working needs are obvious



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Scheduling

Establish how many employees and teams can work together while respecting social distancing rules in the office

Ask team leads to split their teams into smaller 'units' in a way that makes sense for ways of working

Stagger arrival, departure and lunch times

Require teams to establish hand-over protocols, particularly where home working is likely to be less effective

Assign different core attendance days to different teams

Prepare to flex your strategy if another lockdown is imposed



Health & wellbeing

Physical wellbeing

- Ensure hand sanitisers, thermometers and personal protective equipment are readily available and guidance on use is displayed in key locations
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles
- Consider making wearing masks at work (the office, client locations, commute and/or elsewhere) mandatory
- Dedicate and equip an isolation space in the office for people with sudden symptoms
- Carry out temperature checks – in the lobby by the management company or the lift lobby by the firm; use infra-red gates or temperature guns – always following Government guidelines
- Require staff and visitors to complete a declaration form on entering the building
- Establish a database of all staff health, quarantine declaration status, location data and analytics (complying with GDPR)

Emotional wellbeing

- Don't forget about staff who remain largely remote workers!
- Keep a regular drumbeat of communications going, without returning to rely on face to face meetings
- Take regular pulse checks to ensure all employees feel their mental health is strong, and identify and address common issues/trends
- Encourage line managers to consider the various working patterns and styles of the people they manage



Effective working

Give all meetings the optionality of remote joining i.e. Teams/Zoom/WebEx etc.

Performance: measure outcomes and output rather than input

Consider overall workforce shape, capabilities and sourcing options available

Restrict meetings to core hours i.e. 10am-4pm, to allow for different working patterns and shifted commutes

Review work processes to cater for new working schedules, including handover protocols

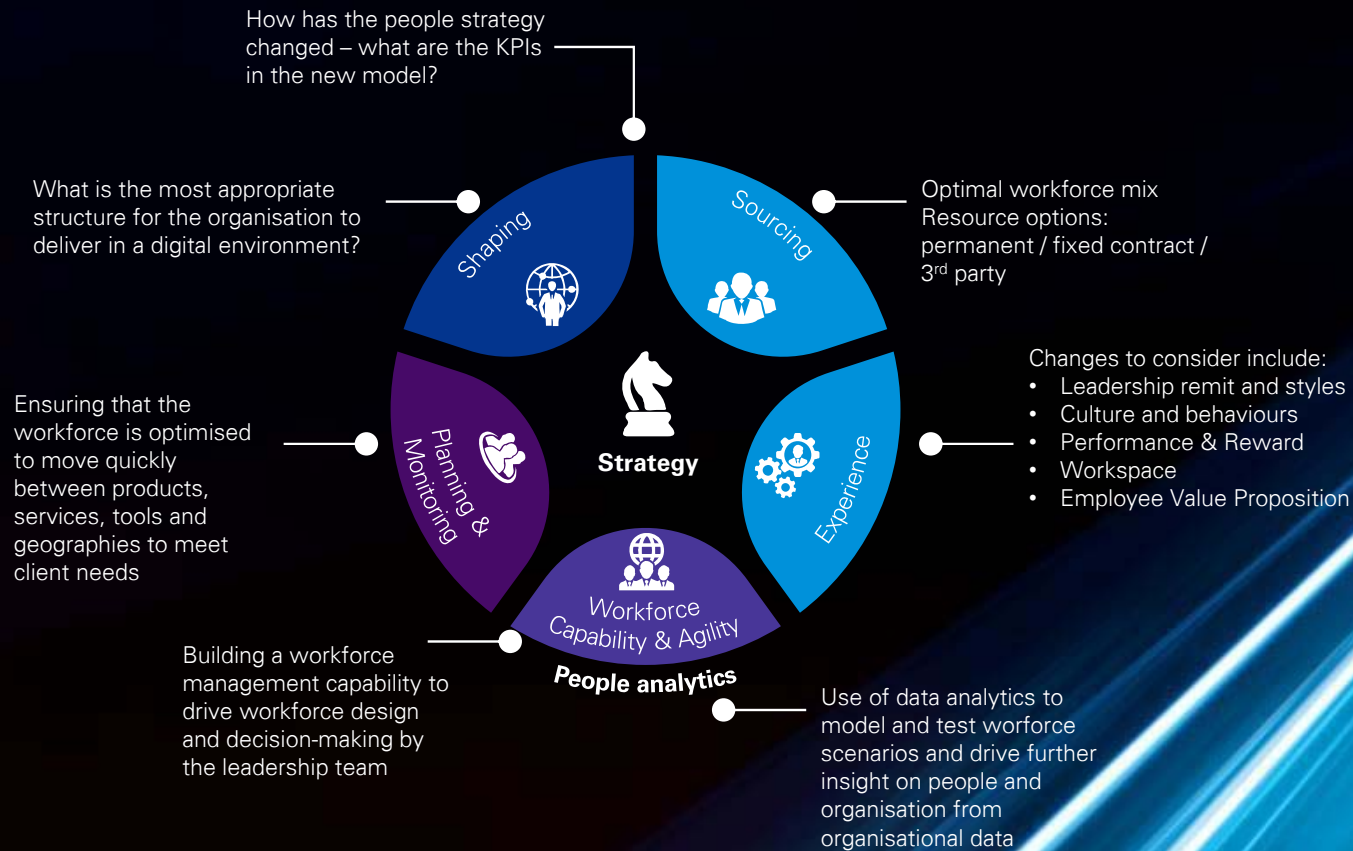
Make working from home a real alternative, with ambitious targets

Don't assume that being in the office will increase workers' productivity. Use real-time analytics to identify teams where this is not the case



Workforce management

Organisations also need to consider the longer term strategic approach to managing the workforce, to ensure they capitalise on investment and improvements made over the last 3 months in flexible working options.



Employee engagement

Communications

- Provide regular updates on status and projections, where helpful
- Regularly remind colleagues of relevant policies, and immediately communicate material policy changes
- Use pulse surveys as a way to establish two-way communication, and ensure leadership comms demonstrate that the results are being acted on
- Create and maintain a set of up-to-date FAQs in an accessible location, and ensure helplines continue to run

Environment

- Ensure team leads keep bolstering a virtual team community independent of location – particularly given limits on physical gatherings
- Allow for flexibility of working hours, location, commute etc.
- Re-examine employee recognition initiatives, ensuring they are backed by meaningful rewards



Culture & behaviours

- Reinforce organisational values to combat misconduct at a time of negative psychological safety
- Ensure performance development doesn't fall by the wayside: encourage line managers and appraisees to continue holding open, honest career conversations
- Encourage innovation within teams as a way to drive innovation, even as individuals become more risk-averse

Leadership

- Leaders must be both operations managers and change advocates
- Provide your people leaders with the information they need to reassure and support their colleagues
- Be personal: cascade leadership discussions as appropriate, and relate your own experiences
- Remind your workforce of the things which remain constant, as a way to offset the turmoil that so much change can cause

The emotional response



Technology



Policy

- **Review all key organizational policies and communicate as needed**
- **Monitor behaviour and conduct against policy and take action as required**
- **Monitor and react to changing government policy**

Employee value proposition: reward, annual leave, working hours, etc.

Behaviour and conduct for joint physical and virtual working

Recruitment policies in light of new workforce management impact

Distancing policies if required

Physical conduct in office spaces

Travel and mobility

Security policies: both physical and digital

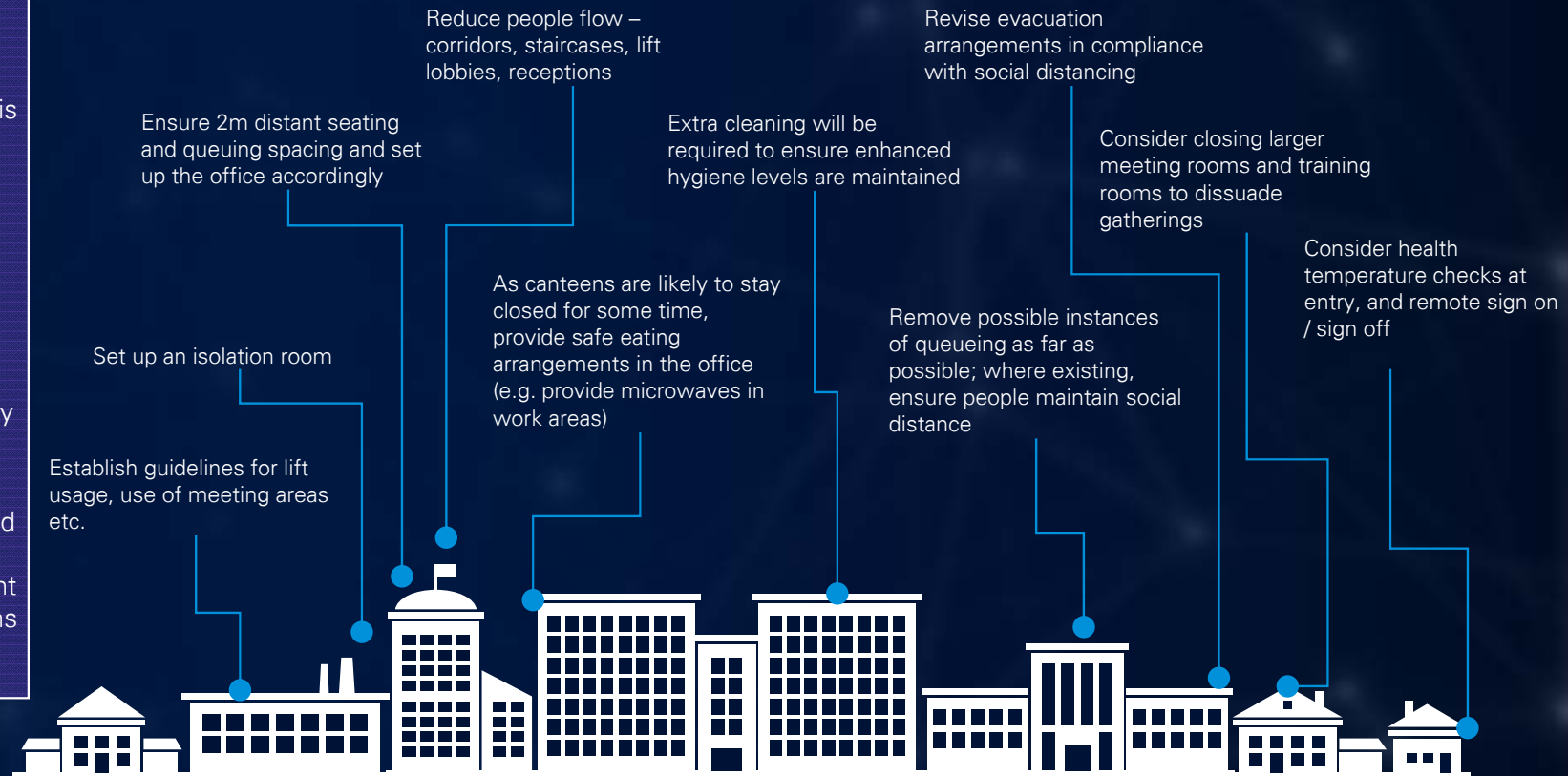
Facilities & workplace

The speed and success of moving to remote working is leading to a fundamental rethink of the need for physical office space.

Longer-term implications

- If your organisation has proven that remote working is a viable and sustainable option, consider long-term implications on workforce of the future requirements and support provided to staff working remotely
- Consider how travel, meetings and analogue trainings could be replaced by collaboration tools going forward
- Consider how this crisis could become an opportunity to reduce your property footprint and re-envision what it means to come to work

Immediate considerations



The workplace of the future

The global impact of COVID-19, and the remote working it necessitates, is set to change the workplace as we know it for good. Many firms who have moved to an 'extreme' remote working model will never look back.

Workplace models

Traditional



- Main Head Office (HO), satellite or regional offices, contact or operational centres
- Almost 100% desk-based
- Flexibility for some HO people to work from home, usually Fridays

Pop-up



- Estate allows for temporary or pop-up offices, e.g. WeWork, for key projects, overflow, etc.
- Other features as per traditional set-up

Mixed



- Desk ratios reduced for Head Office and some other locations to encourage more offsite / home working
- Limited defined population

Professional



- Much lower HO desk ratios
- Expectation that employees will spend significant time working elsewhere
- Broader population affected (but not contact centre)

Extreme



- Hyper virtualization
- HO is not for day-to-day working. It has a different purpose and is much smaller, and can therefore be more creative and high-tech
- Most people work remotely

100% working onsite

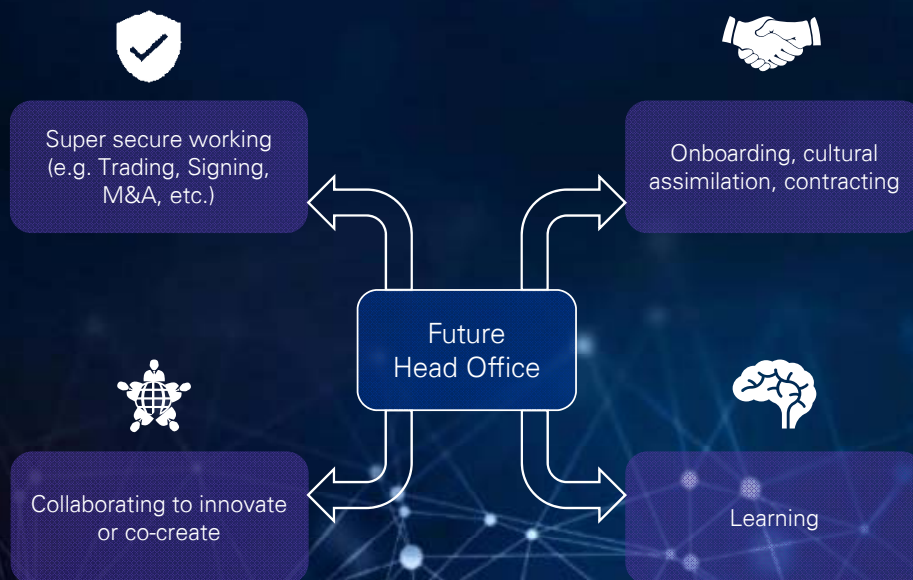
100% remote



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What is the role of the office in the 'extreme virtual' model?



In an extreme virtualised office setup, there is still a need for a central space.

This should be designed for four core purposes:

- Maintaining your culture
- Collaborating to innovate
- Learning together
- Executing key work securely

Wrapped Into Your Employer Brand

The need & opportunity
to create
brand advocates
is greater today than ever before,
both with your customers
and employees.



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