



Lifelink Workwell

**Return to the office:
Supporting your workforce
before they struggle**





An Introduction:


As many organisations move towards a full-time return to the office, **many are met with resistance from employees**. The shift from remote or hybrid working back to a structured office environment can be a **major mental health challenge** – particularly in industries such as technology and finance, where autonomy and quieter working spaces are often preferred.


Workplace stress and anxiety is on the rise, leading to disengagement, burnout, increased absenteeism, and a reduction in productivity and presenteeism. *52% of employees indicated their preference for flexible / hybrid work schedules as a way of addressing their mental health struggles.**

Rigid return-to-office policies are driving a new wave of resignations as employees prioritise flexibility and wellbeing.

How to make this transition work for both employee and employer:

Working together we can help to manage the transition, which will take your employees on the journey with you:





Engagement: Involve employees in the conversation early. A sudden announcement can feel like an enforced decision rather than an inclusive transition.


Empowerment: Gather employee feedback through surveys, focus groups, or staff committees. Giving employees a voice fosters engagement and increases buy-in support.

Take time: Many employees will have built lifestyle changes around working from home or hybrid patterns such as pets or childcare. Give them time to plan and adjust for the change to help make the transition less stressful.

A staggered approach: An 'all in' approach may cause undue stress for many, leading to a negative office environment. Consider a staggered increase in office days over a period of time, enabling everyone to get used to their 'new normal.'

Promote the benefits: It's important to embed this change into your culture. Remind employees of the benefits of being in the office. Greater opportunities to share creativity, collaborate, and share success. A way to develop relationships, which can be particularly important for those who live alone or feel isolated.

Lead by example: Leaders must be visible. And don't be afraid to share some of the transition challenges you're facing too, discussing how you're overcoming those.





Prevention over cure: A smarter approach

This transition will be a struggle for many; and could lead to a decline in mental health. As a responsible employer, there are a number of measures you can put in place to support your teams and ensure you build a healthy, happy, thriving workforce:


Data driven insight: Assess your workplace wellbeing challenges to create a bespoke service solution.

Flexible, practical strategies: Using a consultancy led approach, work together to develop a workplace culture and environment where employees feel empowered and supported.

Proactive mental wellbeing support: Tailored webinars, group and 1:1 therapy support can help employees to navigate change, anxiety and stress.

24-7 self-help: Access to a wellbeing app allows employees to check in to a personalised programme of support whenever they need to.

Don't wait for the fallout of this transition to lead to stress, burnout and resignations. Speak to Lifelink Workwell about how we can support you to support your employees. With over 30 years' experience in mental health and wellbeing we can help you to create a happy, thriving workplace.





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