

# Fact sheet: The benefits of in-person work



After being abruptly thrust into a remote work mode, employees have developed new lifestyles. To entice them back to the office, the benefits of in-person work must be emphasized.

Wanting to help organizations adapt to hybrid modes, the Chamber held a co-creation workshop on November 25, 2021. More than 60 participants from different professional backgrounds worked together to create a Reference Guide containing three Fact Sheets that outlined ways of getting back to the office successfully.

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## **DEFINING CLEAR HYBRID MODE WORK POLICIES**



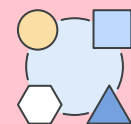
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## **ESTABLISHING INTERNAL TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION**



3

## **REDESIGNING PHYSICAL SPACES TO INCLUDE VALUE-ADDED ELEMENTS**



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### 1. DEFINING CLEAR HYBRID MODE WORK POLICIES

**Clearly define the operating environment, expectations and the amount of flexibility for employees**

Define a “teletiquette”: codes or rules of civility to follow while teleworking.

Involve employees in creating “codes of conduct” and recognize their participation.

Establish the behaviours expected of team members.

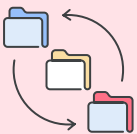
Work out preferred times for communications such as calls and emails.

Develop a culture of solidarity and social support.

Define the terms of teleworking: hours, location, conditions, etc.

Highlight aspects of office-based working by linking them to specific tasks, interactions and expectations about the nature of the work.

Reiterate your organization’s standards for reimbursing expenses and issuing loans of equipment (e.g. computers, headsets).



**Provide a “toolkit” that answers managers’ questions, which could include:**

Best hybrid management practices: managers must become coaches who manage results rather than schedules.

Policies for performance reviews, feedback, follow-ups and meetings.

All of the organization’s policies, directives and guidelines.

Information about how much flexibility managers have in making decisions about employees. Focusing on the managers’ responsiveness is a way of boosting attraction and retention.

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### 2. ESTABLISHING INTERNAL TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Set up a **Return-to-the-Office Committee** of managers and employees to discuss things like the back-to-the-office plan, work policies, and tactics for facilitating and recognizing the benefits of in-person work. The Committee could also:

Discuss the return plan and work policies to facilitate and recognize the benefits of in-person work.

Appoint employee representatives from the different operational bases.

Review and make recommendations based on organizational goals and current realities.

Operate in agile mode (step by step and accepting priority changes) so as to adapt as the health situation changes.

Make sure the process is transparent (e.g. by making all exchanges public) and accept ad hoc input from employees.

Set up confidential communication mechanisms (e.g. for unvaccinated people).



#### Put together a back-to-the office and communicate it to employees

Put together an internal communications plan (**download our free template**).

Send clear and consistent messages on a regular basis across multiple platforms.

Rely on managers (at all levels) to communicate the plan and create buy-in for change.

Diversify communication channels and formats so as to collect questions and comments.

Gather feedback from employees using mechanisms set up for this purpose or by having informal conversations.

Communicate any changes to the back-to-the-office promptly to avoid confusion.

Tweak the internal communications plan as needed.

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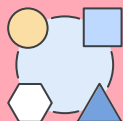
### 3. REVIEWING THE USE OF PHYSICAL LOCATIONS TO INCORPORATE VALUE-ADDED ACTIVITIES THAT WILL MAKE EMPLOYEES WANT TO COME BACK TO THE OFFICE

Increase employee engagement by incorporating activities such as:

**Work-related activities:** training events, mentoring, strategic meetings, creation of new products and services, outside speakers, use of specific equipment (e.g. 3D printer, photo studio, virtual reality headset), important discussions on things like evaluations, feedback, remuneration.

**Non-work-related activities:** happy hour, team lunches, physical activities (e.g. lunchtime yoga), training and knowledge development (not directly related to work), involvement in community projects, video game championships, etc.

Activities resulting from new habits acquired during the pandemic (e.g. lunchtime walks).



Design spaces to be welcoming and responsive to employees' needs:

Provide ergonomic or technological equipment (e.g. sit-stand desks, second computer monitors, ergonomic chairs, footrests, desk bikes, interactive boards).

Ventilate the work area and dedicate some common spaces for different uses (e.g. collaborative space, relaxation space, creative space, game accessories, game room, bike storage, showers).

Create a bold and innovative office experience, for the long term. The office of the future comprises different experiential zones that meet the employees' needs (e.g. one-on-one meetings, group meetings, coffee corner, quiet area, relaxation area, training area/small amphitheatre, modular area).



Access useful resources to help you plan ways to get your workers back safely and efficiently.

[Access the toolbox](#)