

Refocusing at Work After COVID-19

In many places, local quarantine and stay-at-home orders are being lifted. Companies are making plans to resume operations. You may be excited, or even a little apprehensive, about returning to your workplace. Your workday may not look the same as it did before, and there will likely be new procedures to follow. Returning to work will be an adjustment. Here are some ideas that can help make this next adjustment a bit easier.

Familiarize yourself with your company's new procedures and make a plan.

Your work schedule or duties may not look the same when you return to work. Many companies will be making accommodations to continue to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Understanding what is expected of you will help you to meet those expectations.

Create a checklist to make sure you have all the supplies you need.

Take time to gather any work equipment that you need to bring back to the office. Be sure to include things you might need to protect yourself, such as cleaning supplies to help sanitize your workspace, or protective wear, like gloves and a mask. Since you may be moving between work and working from home for a while, organizing a work bag for yourself could keep you from forgetting something important.

Allow yourself extra time.

It may take some adjustments to your routine to get out the door on time to make it into work. When you do return to your workplace, allow yourself extra time for your commute. Keep in mind any new procedures for drop-off at your childcare provider and any additional time you may need for that.

Take it one step and one day at a time.

Don't try to take on too much at once and become overwhelmed. Staying organized and focusing on one task at a time will help you get back into the swing of working at work. Remember it will take

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time to adjust to the new normal in your workplace. Don't try to rush yourself or others. Everyone will adjust to being back in the workplace differently. It is important to find what works for you.

Practice meditation or mindfulness exercises.

The skills and techniques you learn from the practice of mindfulness or meditation can help you relax, reduce stress, and improve your focus. These techniques can bring you back to the present moment and help you calm a chaotic mind. Taking a few minutes in the day to reset yourself may be just what you need to get through a particularly difficult task.

Contact your employee assistance program (EAP) if you need help adjusting.

Be sure to take care of your health as you return to work, including mental health. This is a stressful time and transitioning back to the workplace can add extra stress. Your EAP is available to help you process these emotions and refocus. Additionally, your EAP can assist with locating various resources that may be helpful at this time, including childcare and mental health providers.

