Covid-19

Returning to the Office Occupier Workshop Output Pack

➤ *New Ways of Working*

➤ *Social Distancing*

➤ *Facilities Management*

30 June 2020

We are stronger when we move together

Henigan
consulting group

Contents

Introduction

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01. Introduction

Following our initial workshop exploring the general principles of returning to the office, we facilitated a further six sessions covering three key topic areas:

- New ways of working

- Social distancing

- Facilities management

We've been clear throughout this process that we are not experts in this. As time continues to pass, we are learning more every day about how to deal with the short and long-term implications of this pandemic. That learning is in no small part due to the input of our workshop participants. They have brought with them their experience from a broad range of organisations and sectors. The collective experience and intelligence of our contributors has given everyone plenty of food for thought, and hopefully some practical tips to help in the coming weeks and months.

Crucially, we've learned something about ourselves too. In turn that learning has reminded us of the value and importance in continuing to contribute to #workplacesthatwork.

The common theme across all of our workshops has been the importance of engagement with staff throughout. Fundamentally, we are experiencing change. We are all experiencing it differently, but we hope that the empathy and support we have seen over recent months will continue to have a positive influence in our workplaces as we return to them.

If you would like to continue the conversation on any of the topics covered in our sessions please feel free to get in touch with one of us.

Thanks for being part of this journey!

Steve, Dan and Gillian

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01. Introduction

Participants

Representatives from 28 organisations participated in individual briefing sessions and facilitated workshops to discuss key issues, share steps and measures they had or will be taking and agree on practical next steps. With thanks to the following organisations for their involvement:

- Arm
- AVEVA
- BACB
- British Council
- Chevron
- Closed Loop Medicine
- Coventry University London
- Discovery Inc
- Frontier Economics
- Kantar
- Low Carbon Contracts Company

- Millennium Capital Partners LLP
- Natwest Group
- Ninety One
- Nuffield Foundation
- Pan Macmillan
- Roche
- Smart Pension
- The Francis Crick Institute
- Willis Towers Watson
- XLN Telecom/ Business Services

New Ways of Working

Tuesday 2nd June & Thursday 9th June

Social Distancing
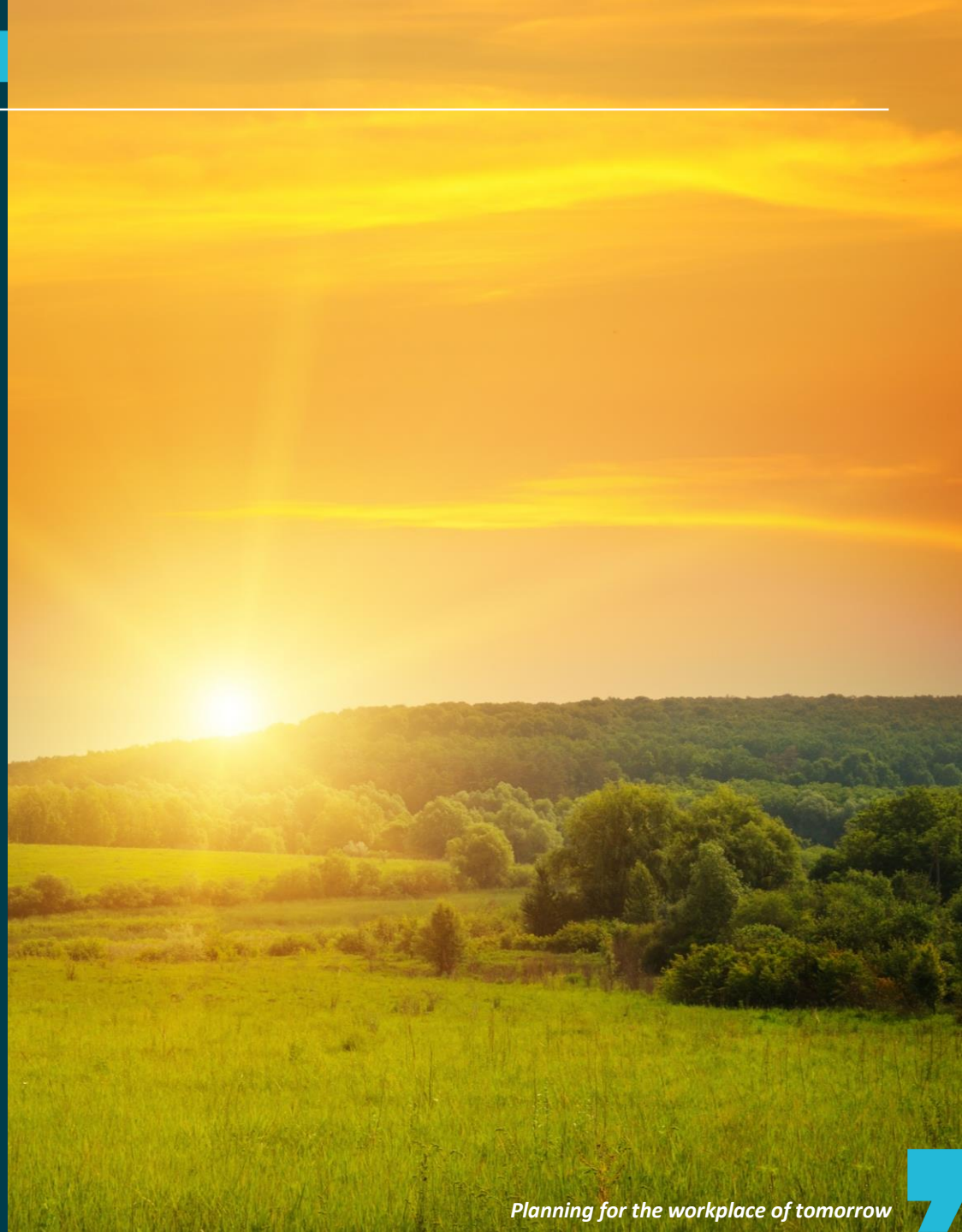
Thursday 11th June & Tuesday 16th June

Facilities Management

Tuesday 16th June & Thursday 18th June

Executive Summary

02

02. Executive Summary

Throughout the workshops we have consistently returned to our decision framework to articulate the push and pull between behaviours, emotions, and the physical changes we have made to the workplace.

Behavioural

In the UK, the Government guidelines have driven huge changes in the way we behave. As the guidance continues to evolve, so too do our behaviours. Interestingly, what we are seeing is that there is a level of risk adversity that was less prevalent beforehand, despite what the Government call 'mitigation measures'. Crucially, this is not just about what the guidance says, but also how compliant people are with them, and the manner in which they are followed.

Physical

Throughout the workshops we have heard about a range of physical changes that we can make to the workplace to make it safer. Measures range from introducing social distancing, to enhanced cleaning regimens, and reducing the number of touchpoints by enhancing technology and 'smart buildings'. Each organisation has to make its own decisions about the level of reasonableness in regards to the changes it will make, though some will also be led to an extent by their landlord or building manager.

Emotional

Arguably the biggest factor in our push/pull model is whether the behaviours and guidelines, teamed with the physical changes we make, actually make people feel safe. Throughout these workshops we've heard about increased levels of anxiety. Organisations need to provide a sufficiently attractive proposition in terms of the return to the office to make people emotionally ready to come back.

Summary

One of the biggest take-aways for us from these workshops has been the determination of our participants to put their people first. There has long been debate in our industry about the role of people-led design, and it feels that what we are seeing now is a revolution in our thinking about what the office is for, and that's people.

In many ways the pandemic has been devastating, not least the loss of life that has resulted, and the huge damage to our economy. But, there is a light at the end of the tunnel, and that light is an opportunity to create workplace experiences, both physical and digital, that really work for each of us individually and collectively. It won't be easy, but together we are stronger, and as one of our participants said, "it's a great time to be in the industry… who wants it boring anyway?"
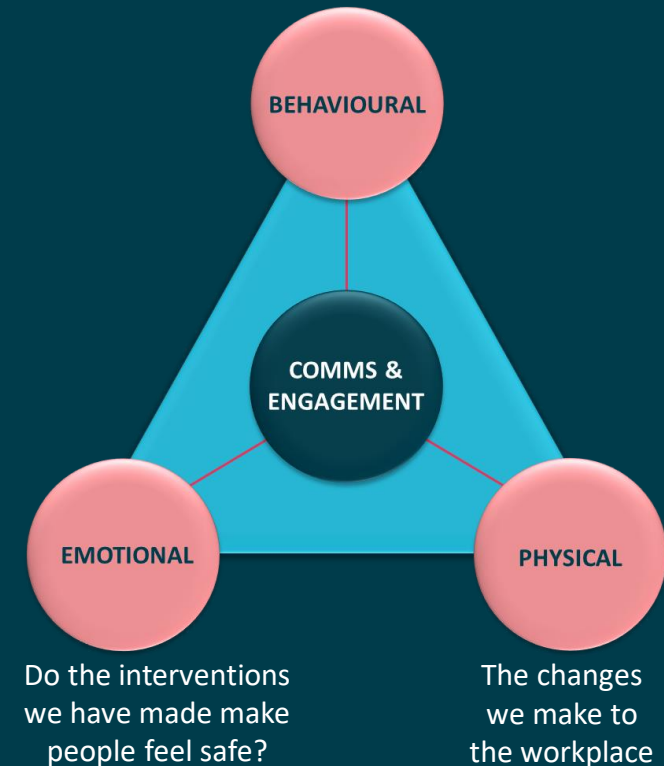

How people follow the guidelines

Do the interventions we have made make people feel safe?

The changes we make to the workplace

Figure 1: *HCG Returning to the Office Decision Framework*

02. Executive Summary

Top Tips

Here are just a few of our favourite tips and tricks from our workshop participants...

- Think about running returner inductions so people know what to expect in the office. Even better, just do it once and make a video for people to watch at a convenient time!

- Don't forget that as you have people coming back into the office you'll need a proportionate number of fire marshals and first aiders.

- Think about setting aside an 'isolation room' for anyone who develops symptoms during the working day.

- Explore options for automating systems that currently include touchpoints, such as access control systems and lifts. Your building may even warrant a 'life operator' to limit touchpoints.

- Consider relaxing dress-codes in the office so that people can easily dress appropriately for the temperature, reducing the need for air conditioning systems to be on over the summer.

- Could you introduce a tea trolley for those essential morning refreshments, reducing the need for everyone to gather in small kitchens and tea points?

- Think about introducing a 'virtual kitchen' on your preferred communication platform so people can 'drop-in' and have an informal chat with someone they might not otherwise speak to.

New Ways of Working

03

The workplace of the future will become a focal point for collaborative activities

03. New Ways of Working

Despite the name, new ways of working is not a new concept. They may be new in the context of an individual organisation, but the notion of Agile Working, Activity Based Working, or Smart Working (insert your own term here) has been in use for many years.

Covid-19 may have accelerated the conversation around new ways of working for some organisations; preconceived ideas around the viability of remote working have suddenly been challenged.

What is the office for?

The office is about the user experience. This pandemic seems to have shifted conventional thinking about what the office is for. There is a view that the mix of spaces in the office could change; we may see an increase in space for collaboration, serendipitous encounters, socialising, on-boarding, and professional development or training.

Discussions in the workshop highlighted that people will probably want the same variety of space, though initially on the return we may not see the same demand. More people will likely be remote working even in the long-term. But when teams come in to the office, they want to come in together and this may drive an increase in adaptable spaces that can be co-created. In this scenario, there was a sense that there is still a need

for individual and focus spaces in the office; it is unlikely that people will be able to schedule their day to consistent of *only* collaborative activities when they are in the office.

Engaging workplace experiences

Research undertaken by HCG has highlighted the importance of two key enablers to an engaging workplace experience; choice and congruence. You can read more about this research here.

Participants in the workshop felt that choice was particularly important going forward, and that choice should extend to whether people work in the office or work remotely.
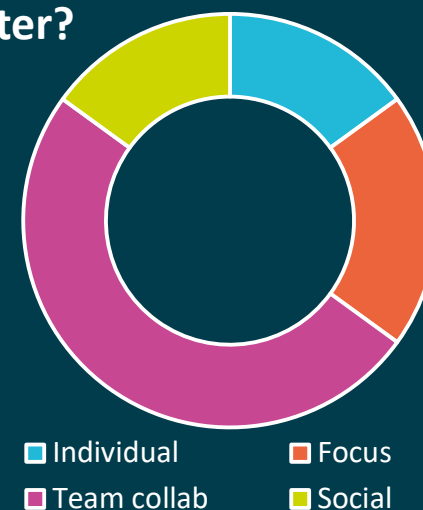
Before

- Individual
- Focus
- Team collab
- Social

After?

- Individual
- Focus
- Team collab
- Social
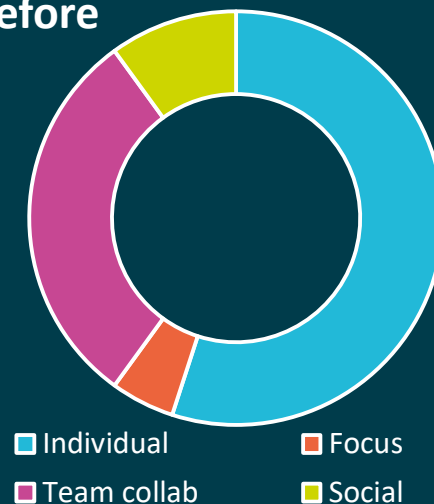
Figure 2: *Potential change in future office space types*

03. New Ways of Working

Organisational design strategy

In the workshop we explored the Star model. The framework has five categories. The first is strategy which determines the basic direction, mission, objectives and values. The second is structure which determines the location of decision-making power. Departments or teams may be formed by function (Thomson Reuters), product (Bacardi), workflow processes (GSK), markets (Amazon) and customers (Lego). The third is processes which have to do with the flow of information. The fourth is rewards and reward systems, health and wellbeing packages, which influence the motivation of people to perform and meet organisational goals. The fifth category is made up of policies relating to people, human resource policies recruiting, training and development (attract, retain and motivate).

In the past, change has come about through gradual change and evolution. With evolutionary change being 20 to 30% change over 2 to 3 years and revolutionary change being 50% plus change over 5 to 10 years.

However, a lot of organisations have now found themselves on the precipice of revolutionary change. Preconceived ideas about the viability of remote working have suddenly been challenged and how organisations adapt to this new way of working could well determine the future.

When we asked our participants about revolutionary change, process was seen as most

important. We heard that this rapid change to a more remote, distributed or dispersed model has meant that processes have had to change, and that people who might previously have 'protected' old processes are finding they can no longer block change.

Even companies, like oil and gas companies, that have been typically risk adverse, have positioned themselves to be more proactive. Taglines such as 'winning in any environment' requires anticipation of change and proactivity. No matter what market conditions or operating environments they face, they have an agile mindset that enables them to be change-capable, adapt and flex. Breaking down barriers that previously required 100% perfection, accepting 70% and moving forward.

Trust and Technology have been seen as barriers in the past. Technology has played a huge part in the ability to work remotely and with the exception of bandwidth issues has been a key enabler, with technology leading the charge. We're seeing a revolution now with companies reconsidering the notion of 100% presenteeism towards a more empathetic organisational design.

There is an opportunity to embrace positive change, look at what works, what doesn't and what we need to create across the five categories. Take the time to make positive changes and not default to how things were before Covid-19.

Figure 3: *Galbraith's Star Model TM Framework for organisation design, the foundation on which an organisation faces its design choices.*

Which of the aspect(s) of the star model need evolutionary and revolutionary change?

Figure 4: Results of workshop poll: star model

03. New Ways of Working

Distributed working

Centralised headquarters (HQ's) may give way to distributed sites both insourced and outsourced.

There are several alternative distributed estate models through 'hub and spoke' to a combination of co-work and pay per use that are worth exploring.
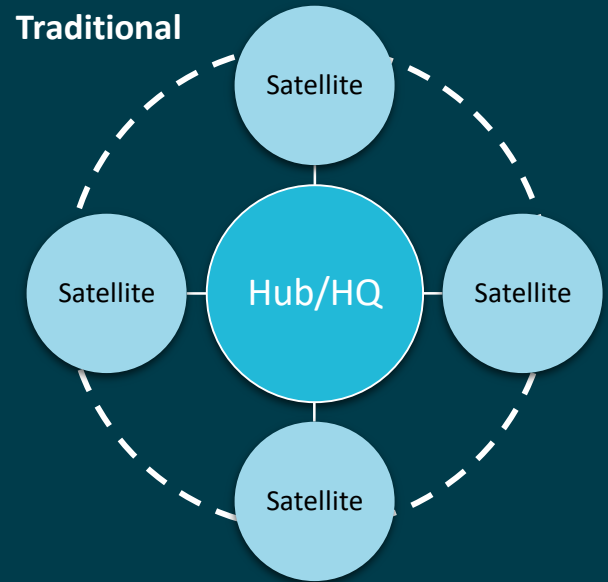
Outsourced hub & spoke models became more popular with the rise of co-working, and they can be supplemented by pay per use sites or spaces which will be especially useful in the short-term, or partner locations (e.g. universities) which will become more relevant in the long-term. 'Outsourcing' and introducing remote work provides organisations with the flexibility to accommodate capacity fluctuation and the opportunity to reduce estate cost. However, the impact on brand, community, talent and wellbeing should be taken into consideration when making short or long-term decisions. Outsourced models will provide limited control over culture and brand presence as well as site access. Also, outsourced models, whilst having benefits in terms of opportunities for networking and cross-organisation contact, may significantly impact collaboration, innovation, professional development and onboarding.

Equality of experience

As the workplace becomes more distributed the equality of experience is going to become more of a challenge.

Nearly everyone is working remotely from home. We are in crisis mode and surviving. There has been a levelling of experience. Everyone is joining meetings using Zoom, Teams, etc. We are all engaging in the same way. The challenge will come when we've got some people in the office and others joining remotely.
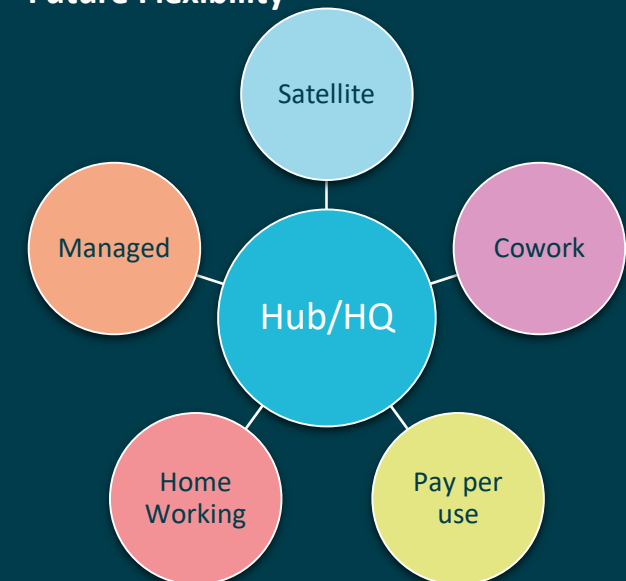

Figure 5: Potential components of a distributed working model

Social Distancing

04

Maintaining a safe distance in the workplace is a bug challenge for most organisations

04. Social Distancing

On the day of our first Social Distancing workshop, the UK government announced its review into the 2 metre distance. We know that other counties have adopted a range of different distances. Crucially, discussion in the workshop focussed not just on distance, but also duration; there is evidence to support the idea that the shorter the time period in close proximity to someone else, the lower the risk.

Several participants suggested that even if the government guidance changes, they will not change the interventions made in the office in the short-term. This was seen as being a way to make people feel safer in the office. Our experience with clients who have re-opened offices in Asia suggests a note of caution – where regulations in the office are more stringent than those in society generally there can be resistance to 'tow the company line'.

Return to the office

One participant described this first phase of the return to the office as the 'test and learn' phase. With only small numbers of people returning this is an opportunity to test things in relative safety.

There was an interesting divergence in these workshops from our earlier sessions about returning to the office; there has been a shift in thinking around *when*, with most of our participants suggesting a return would start from September at the earliest, and for many there would be no return

this year. For many the delay is a consequence of travel and commuting rather than the ability to re-open the office sooner.

What activities will happen in the office?

Our previous workshops explored the idea of what is the office for, and why are people returning. In this session, we explored these ideas further and identified an interesting rift between perception and reality. Many people have expressed an interest in returning to the office for social interaction and collaboration, only to find that many organisations are saying these activities will not be encouraged in the office in the short-term. The interest in returning has rapidly diminished when people realise they are not returning to 'normal'.

This also poses an interesting challenge for the industry in the short-term; we spoke in our last workshop about introducing new ways of working and encouraging collaboration and social activity in the office. While that might be the long-term aspiration, in the short-term these are the activities that are likely to be restricted. How we get from the short-term to the aspirational future requires more thought, but one thing is for certain it is another instance of change that needs careful planning and management.
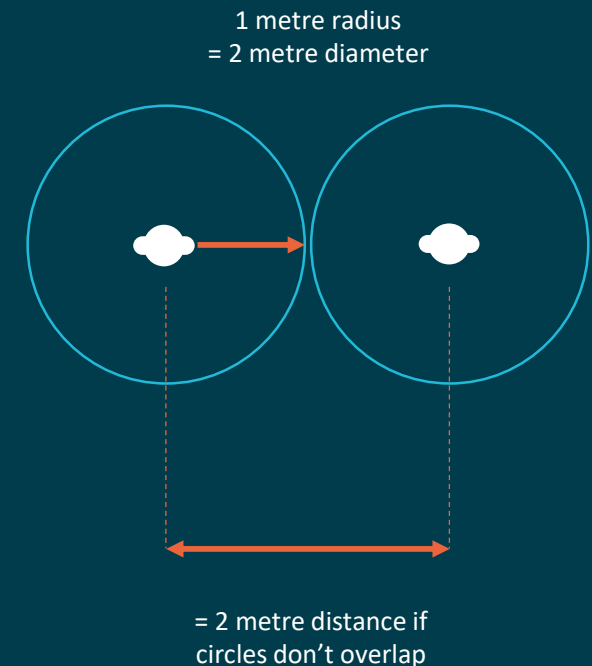
1 metre radius
= 2 metre diameter

= 2 metre distance if
circles don't overlap

Figure 6: How to measure social distancing

04. Social Distancing

Following the science

Global companies are taking a conservative position across their portfolio and putting consistent rules on social distancing in place. The outcome of this is that the rules inside the office can in certain locations be stricter than the streets, shops, etc. This is both causing confusion and in some cases resulting in people not complying with the rules. If global companies adhere to the specific guidelines as different governments are moving at different paces, you maybe revisiting the social distance planning on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Science says that the nearer you are the greater the risk of catching the virus, so 2m is definitely safer. Whilst some companies are following strict Government guidelines and as guidelines change will modify their social distancing plans, for many given the length of time people are sitting at their desk, priority for health and safety and to give emotional reassurance to people will be maintaining 2m for the foreseeable future. Given also that occupancy levels and return to the office is on a voluntary basis it is likely that with 2m distancing supply and demand will be met for the foreseeable future.

In the workshop we reflected on our collective experiences of visiting supermarkets and other places that have introduced social distancing measures. It was felt that many people find it difficult to maintain a 2m distance, and there was some concern that reducing it would exacerbate that problem.

Developing risk assessments

The workplace that employees are returning to is different from the one they left. Employers must ensure employees' return to work meets all legal and health and safety requirements. Continuous engagement is key; some employees may develop concerns about travelling and social distancing and may need adjustments and/or ongoing support/ adjustments.

ASSESS - Assessment is key to ensure successful planning and implementation of physical and psychological measures.

PLAN(S) - Ensure that a comprehensive plan(s) can be put in place to address physical and emotive challenges in the immediate term whilst also developing a strategy which considers the immediate term, medium and longer term physical and psychological measures that are required.

IMPLEMENTATION - The implementation process should consider how quickly action needs to be taken, by whom, what resources are required and how long such measures need to be in place.

REVIEW - Guidance and occupancy requirements will continue to evolve as we move back to the workplace. Learnings from our own and others experiences enable refinement in our processes and measures which are captured when reviewing the building and occupant needs.

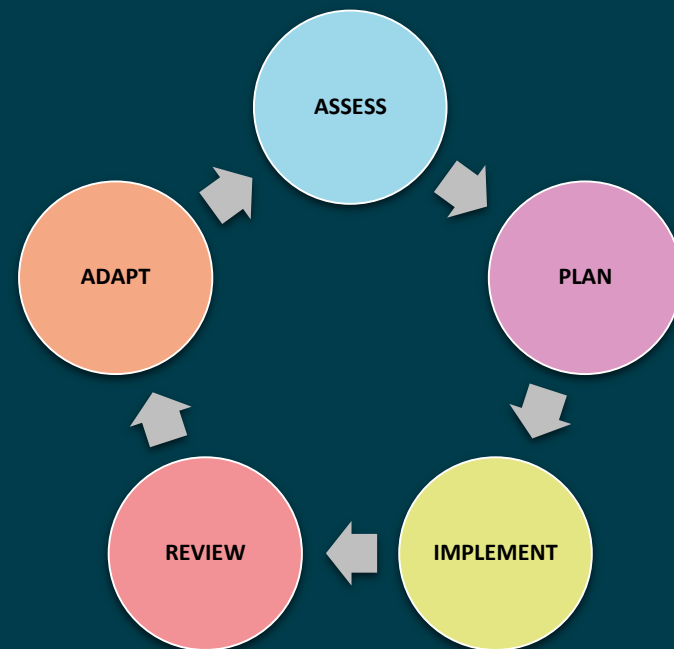**ADAPT –** Refine the process and communicate changes.

Figure 7: Process for developing risk assessments

04. Social Distancing

Journey through the office

Our participants represent a variety of different occupancy models; some are in owned or leased buildings where they are the sole tenant and take responsibility for reception and building services, while others occupy space in shared buildings and are necessarily being led by their building manager or landlord on some elements of their planning.

When we reflected on the different work settings available in the office, there was a recognition of the fact that spaces previously used for collaboration may not be sufficiently large to maintain social distancing and still be useful for their intended function…

Spaces such as huddles may only accommodate one person in the short-term. It was felt that if fitted with an AV screen, these settings may prove useful for video calls which our participants felt would be as much a part of our daily life on the return to the office as they are now.

While some organisations are considering using non-workstation settings as spaces for individual work in the short-term, the group discussed the fact that this might be counter to the reason people are coming back. If people only have a table and a non-ergonomic chair, what is the incentive for them to return to the office?

Nudge theory

The group were introduced to some of the key elements of nudge theory, and discussed how these might be used in creating signage that gets better outcomes and compliance as a result of behavioural science.

Language is important, and we discussed the idea that there is a subtle but important difference between pre-assigned desks and non-assigned desks, especially in the context of the Government guidance.
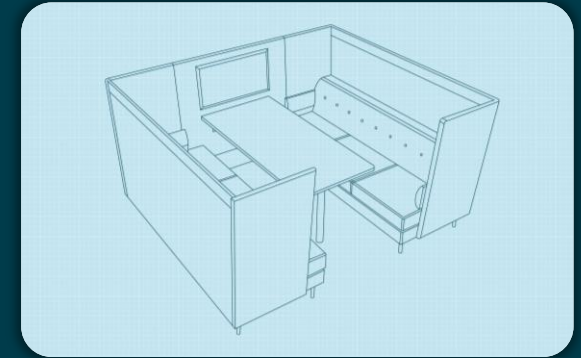

Figure 8: Example breakout workspace

Figure 9: Behavioural science in signage

Facilities Management

05

05. Facilities Management

Our final workshop explored three themes within the realm of facilities management. We'd said throughout this process that we are not experts in this, but that was especially true in this session! On that basis we invited three subject matter experts to join us and share their insights. We are incredibly grateful to our experts:

- **Michelle Lappin**, Facilities Manager at the Francis Crick Institute

- **Dean Kennett**, Managing Director at Fooditude

- **Andrew Parkin**, Partner and Global Head of Acoustics at Cundall

Cleaning

The Francis Crick Institute is a world leading biomedical research facility based in central London. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic their building has remained open, and they even setup a testing centre using the car park of the neighbouring British Library and their own labs. You can read more about the test centre here.

Michelle talked about the enormous task of keeping the building going throughout, and the swathe of extra cleaning they have undertaken to ensure everyone working in the building is safe. The team were fortunate to benefit from training from a Professor of Infectious Diseases from UCLH as they introduced a new 'amber clean' regimen borrowed from the healthcare sector.

In addition to the more expected measures of hand sanitisers and PPE, Michelle and her team have had to manage a huge increase in the laundering of lab coats, the replacement of hand and hairdryers with paper towel dispensers, and a 15 minute clean of meeting rooms after every meeting! Anti-microbial treatment, or fogging, has also formed a key part of their cleaning strategy. It uses a mechanical process to kill pathogens and lasts 30 days, supplementing the daily deep cleans of all touchpoints.

The Crick has also introduced a rigorous testing process for all staff in the building, resulting in staff taking a Covid-19 swab test every 7 days. A clear result provides them a 7 day passport for entry into the building. A positive result for Covid-19 would see the rapid instigation of a range of cleaning interventions to prevent further spread in the building.

The week of our workshops, Michelle welcomed back hundreds of additional staff, bringing the building up to 50% occupancy, primarily made up of scientists who have been away from their labs for significant periods of time. Now begins a phase of monitoring behaviours and reinforcing the changes that have been made.
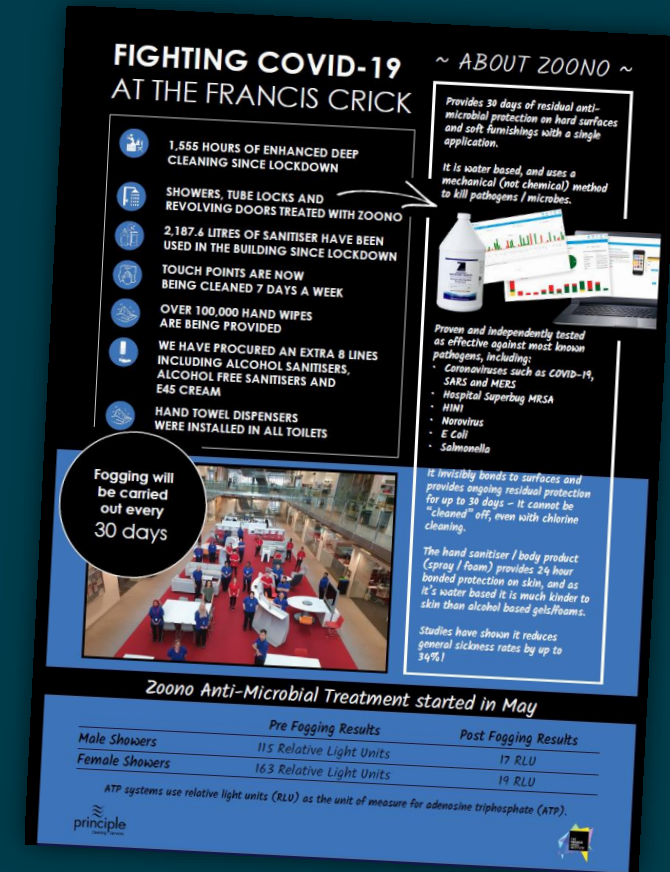

Figure 10: Crick Zoono poster

Michelle Lappin
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05. Facilities Management

Catering

As we've said before, the building that people will be returning to will be very different from the one that they left. The occupancy will also be very different. So before when there was 60 to 70% occupancy there was numerous coffee areas and social lounges and kitchens, including staff fridges - providing food and drink provision.

One new option that is being considered is an app for pre-ordering lunch. You get a push notification and then you can go and collect it. Packaged goods are considered a lower risk. The era of canapes and open buffets in staff canteens may be over for the time being.

Today
Consumers entering the workplace may feel poorer financially and psychologically. So from a food perspective companies might consider putting on weekly team lunches or brown bag lunches and look at how to use food for psychological benefits, such as baristas providing morning coffee you can talk to, grab and go, tea trolleys, etc. Such things should involve more social interaction BUT make sure it looks safe.

Tomorrow
People will be more confident but will still hold health and safety in high regard from cleaning, catering, etc. Business thrives on face to face interaction at least some of the time. 'Pop up' food offerings create a destination, excitement, re-establishes a sense of community,' breaking bread' thereby boosting morale and encouraging

collaboration.

The future
Keeping it social, make food worth talking about and socialising at a safe distance.

1. Keep the noise down.

Background noise can easily get in the way of conversations that are being had at 6 feet apart. If you usually play background music or a television in your canteen area, it's time to switch it off. If you've got the budget, it might be worth looking into placing sound barriers near busy corridors to prevent noise interference.

2. Lunchtime slot bookings.

Create a more steady and manageable flow of people using the canteen by establishing a booking system during peak lunchtime hours. Advanced bookings are an organised way to let colleagues eat together, avoiding the risk of not being able to find adjacent seating.

3. Use sneeze screens across dining tables.

Placing plastic divides between eating spaces may not be an obvious solution to keeping things social in the canteen, and might even resemble a prison visitation scene from a movie. However, this added precaution will give office staff the confidence to sit and talk to each other – in the knowledge there is a barrier protecting them from virus transmission.

What most closely represents your feelings about the health and safety of food for your staff after lockdown?

37%	12%	32%	19%
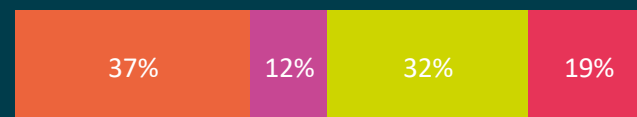
■ I will be nervous about the food we offer and expect staff to bring lunch from home

■ I will be cautious about offering prepared food unless we can show how it's being made

■ I will be comfortable with providing prepared food as long as we have information about where the food is made

■ I'm not worried at all

Figure 11: Results of workshop poll: H&S of food

Dean Kennett
Managing Director
Fooditude
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05. Facilities Management

Touchpoints

Covid-19 is an airborne virus'. It's all about the droplets, it spreads by mucus and saliva, it comes out of people's mouths and noses, it will hang around in the air and sooner or later it will settle. How long the virus will stick around depends on the surface it settles on. The logic of social distancing is that you are less likely to transmit it from one person to the next. Unless someone shouts, coughs, sings, sneezes and this is where the facial coverings add protection.

Whilst WELL is rigorous and a lengthy process as it also looks at occupation in use post practical completion, a lot of the elements that WELL talks about go a long way to responding to Covid-19 challenges.

During the workshop we explored the number of touchpoints on our way to the office. The polls opposite show the number of touchpoints our participants thought they encountered on the way to the office before and after Andrew talked about the possible touchpoints. You can see that many of us underestimated the number beforehand!

There are several practical things occupiers can consider, including keeping offices well ventilated, naturally if possible, but importantly not recirculating air. Maintaining good natural daylight helps to minimise the lifespan of airborne viruses. If possible, relative humidity should be controlled and kept within a range of 40-60%, outside of which viruses can thrive. For new buildings, use of smart technology can help reduce touchpoints, but this is expensive and difficult to retrofit.
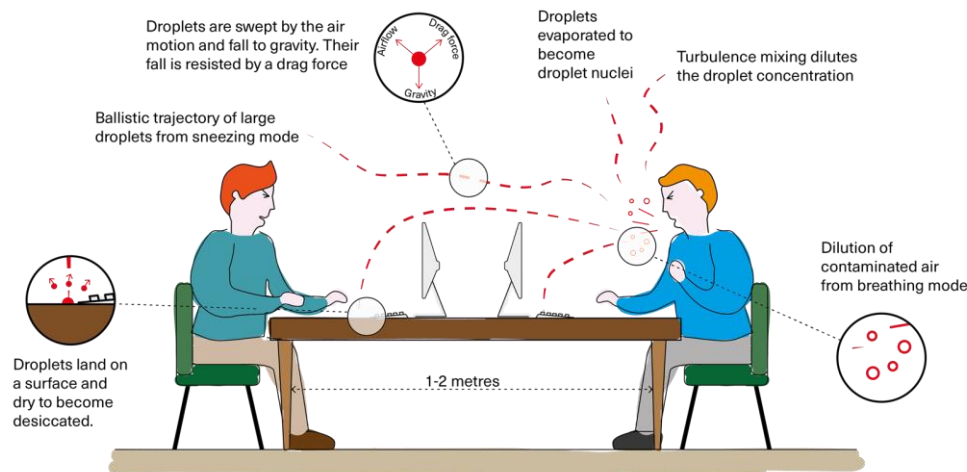
On your journey from the front door of your home to your desk, how many touchpoints are there?

11%	50%	32%	7%

■ Less than 5   ■ 6 to 10   ■ 11 to 15   ■ 16 or more
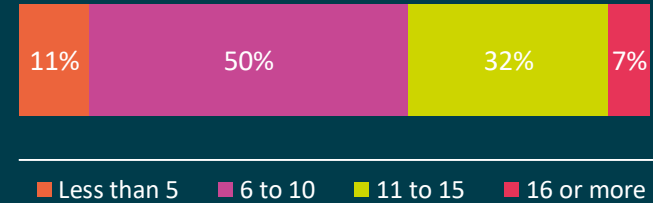
Now we have reviewed the possible touchpoints, how many do you think there are on your journey?

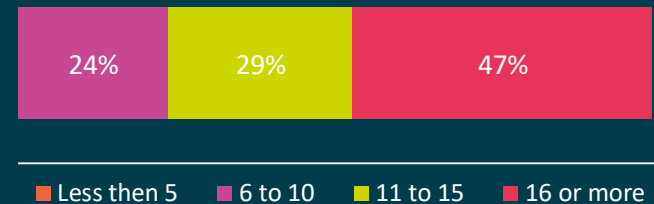| 24%	29%	47%

■ Less then 5   ■ 6 to 10   ■ 11 to 15   ■ 16 or more

Figure 12: Results of workshop poll: Touchpoints

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Thank you

Henigan
consulting group