

EMPLOYEE SERIES

Transitioning Back into the Workplace

Many Australians have experienced various changes to their work arrangements over the past two years due to Coronavirus restrictions. A recent easing of restrictions is leading businesses to request staff who were working remotely to return to the physical workplace. While some people may be looking forward to returning to their workplace, for others this may raise various concerns particularly for people who have become accustomed to their remote working arrangements.

These tips will help you to manage with the transition back into the physical workplace.



Identify any concerns about the transition and plan ahead

Identify any concerns you are having about the transition back to the physical workplace or new routine and explore possible solutions to ease concerns. This may include concerns about the commuting to work, using public transport whilst social distancing, or others it may be concerns about sharing workplace equipment such as communal kitchens and cutlery, bathrooms, meeting rooms, desk and computers.



Acknowledge your feelings

Identify how you are feeling or any worries you might be having about the transition to the physical workplace. If you feel overwhelmed take a few slow, deep breaths to help you calm down. The anxiety of transitioning to new routine will generally be temporary, and is likely to reduce over time.



Prioritise self-care by maintaining positive habits to assist your resilience

For some people working remotely gave them new opportunities for self-care. Without the commute and finding additional spare time, there may have been new opportunities to engage in new hobbies and activities before and after work, sleep in longer, or for parents more time with their children. Even if you're likely to be shorter on time, don't abandon these self-care activities. Explore possible solutions of how you can continue these habits as part of your new routine. Engaging in helpful coping strategies can assist with maintaining your resilience.



Reconnect with colleagues

If you would like to book an appointment and /or speak with one of our Counsellors, it's as easy as calling 1300 66 77 00 or visit our website www.accesswellbeingservices.com.au



Whilst for some people there may have been unexpected bonuses to working remotely there may have also been some losses from the remote working arrangements. For many this meant missing out on connecting with colleagues face to face, whether it was a quick work question, a friendly chat, enjoying a morning coffee run, or a social catchup at the end of a week. Look for the positives of being back in the workplace or make the most of the opportunities to connect with your team and enjoy the little things that have been absent whilst working remotely. Give yourself the time to have that one-on-one conversation with a colleague or visit your regular café, just like you used to. These actions can help with reestablishing connections to your team, provide normality back into your routine or may give you something to look forward to.

Speak up

Discuss the adjustment with your employer about how you're coping or any concerns with the transition and explore opportunities for reasonable adjustments to help you work more effectively in the physical workplace.

Reach out for help

It's ok to ask for help. If you're feeling overwhelmed by the transition seek professional support. Contact Access Wellbeing Services to schedule a face to face, telephone or video counselling appointment using your allocation of EAP sessions, or alternatively, you can access mental health support from:

- Lifeline on 131114 (24/7)
- Beyond Blue on 13/00 22 436 (24/7)

References

Website: www.thinkmentalhealthwa.com.au/supporting-my-mental-health/managing-uncertain-times

Website: www.beyondblue.org.au

Website: www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

Website: www.bu.edu/wellness/first-steps-to-facing-your-return-to-work-anxiety

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