Ε Enlighted

5 Imperatives
for a Safe Return to Work

An executive guide to employee
wellbeing in a post-COVID workplace

Safely returning employees to the workplace in a new normal

The pandemic is causing organizations to rethink workspaces as they consider the task of office re-entry. The new normal includes employee safety first, hybrid home/in-office models, and revised office configurations.

But the path to safer work models presents organizational, communications, technology and logistics challenges. To be successful, executives need to marshal a multi-functional team, employ special procedures and launch new employee engagement technologies to minimize risk when bringing staff back to the office.

1 Employee Health First

2 Timely Communications

3 Hybrid Workspaces

4 The Right Technologies

5 Partner for Flexibility

1 Employee Health First

Top of mind with senior executives is the safety and wellbeing of their employees. Navigating uncharted territory around pandemic threats, however, presents challenges around how to best protect their employees while taking prudent actions to create workable re-entry plans. Finding ways to put employee safety first is the path to gain worker confidence and ensure a healthy work environment. There are definitive actions that leaders can take to ensure a healthy work environment:
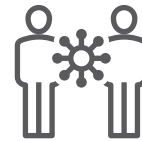
Hybrid working models
Grant employees the option to combine work-from-home and office work, ensuring continuous access to a safe working environment.

Health checks
Deploy technology and procedures to determine health prior to building entry.

Contact tracing
Gather data and stand ready to execute contact tracing to safeguard employees.

Capacity limits
Use automated systems to enforce social distancing by limiting capacity in buildings, floors, and zones.

Mental health support
Provide personnel and tools for employees to locate assistance and provide feedback.

Low-touch environments
Implement technologies to eliminate the need to touch high-risk office surfaces.
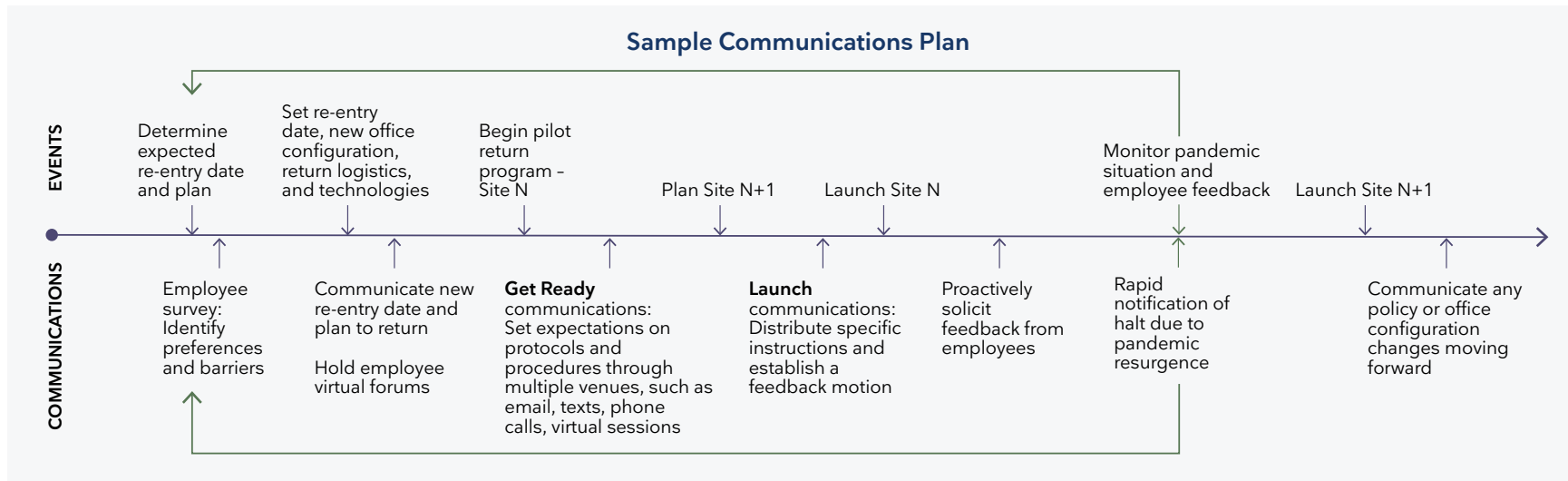
71%
of executives say that ensuring employee safety is #1 issue

– BDO Pulse Survey, Fall 2020

80%
of workers would return to work if safety measures were in place

– Bain/Dynata Return to Work Survey, June 2020

81%
of CFOs will change workplace safety measures and requirements when transitioning back to on-site work

– PWC, COVID-19 CFO Survey, June 2020

2 Timely Communications

Employees want and need a regular cadence of communications to assure them there is a viable plan, based on their safety and in consideration of their workspace preferences. Combined with the right technology, a good communications strategy enables organizations to give employees accurate, locally relevant information on evolving policies and guidelines. Employees can then make informed decisions about how and where they work, essential for increasing trust and confidence in the return to work.

Sample Communications Plan

EVENTS

- Determine expected re-entry date and plan
- Set re-entry date, new office configuration, return logistics, and technologies
- Begin pilot return program – Site N
- Plan Site N+1
- Launch Site N
- Monitor pandemic situation and employee feedback
- Launch Site N+1

COMMUNICATIONS

- Employee survey: Identify preferences and barriers
- Communicate new re-entry date and plan to return
- Hold employee virtual forums
- **Get Ready** communications: Set expectations on protocols and procedures through multiple venues, such as email, texts, phone calls, virtual sessions
- **Launch** communications: Distribute specific instructions and establish a feedback motion
- Proactively solicit feedback from employees
- Rapid notification of halt due to pandemic resurgence
- Communicate any policy or office configuration changes moving forward

Communications best practices

- Be proactive, transparent, and consistent.
- Provide mechanisms for employees to voice their concerns and address them honestly.
- Communicate frequently — a lack of company voice could lead to misinterpretations.

> " For employees to trust the re-entry process, we have to listen carefully and communicate frequently, while applying the right technologies to keep them safe. "
>
> **STEFAN SCHWAB**
> Chief Executive Officer
> Enlighted

3 Hybrid Workspaces

72%
of employees
want flexible workplace policies

The pandemic has resulted in massive abandonment of physical facilities in favor of working from home, IT investments in home technologies, and a fundamental shift in working models. Beyond the pandemic, hybrid work environments will be the norm and will be required to retain the best talent.
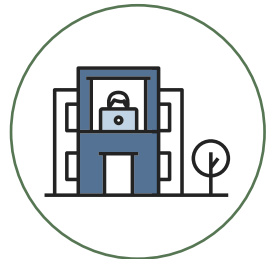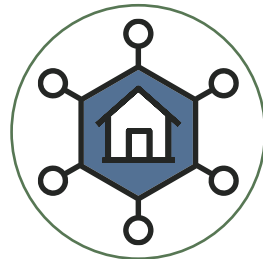
Hybrid working models

New hybrid models to combine home and office work require enabling technologies to work.

Collaborative and activity-based workspaces

In lieu of dedicated desks, the new normal workplace should accommodate spaces designed for collaboration and work-based activities.

Hub-and-spoke office configurations

Create smaller satellite office locations that correlate to home-based employee concentrations.
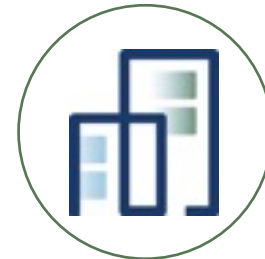
Streamlined real-estate portfolios

With hybrid models, the need for dedicated space will diminish, and CRE executives will evaluate their portfolio based on space utilization.

> " We asked our employees how they wanted to work moving forward. They liked the productivity of working from home, but they also wanted the human touch of being in the office. "
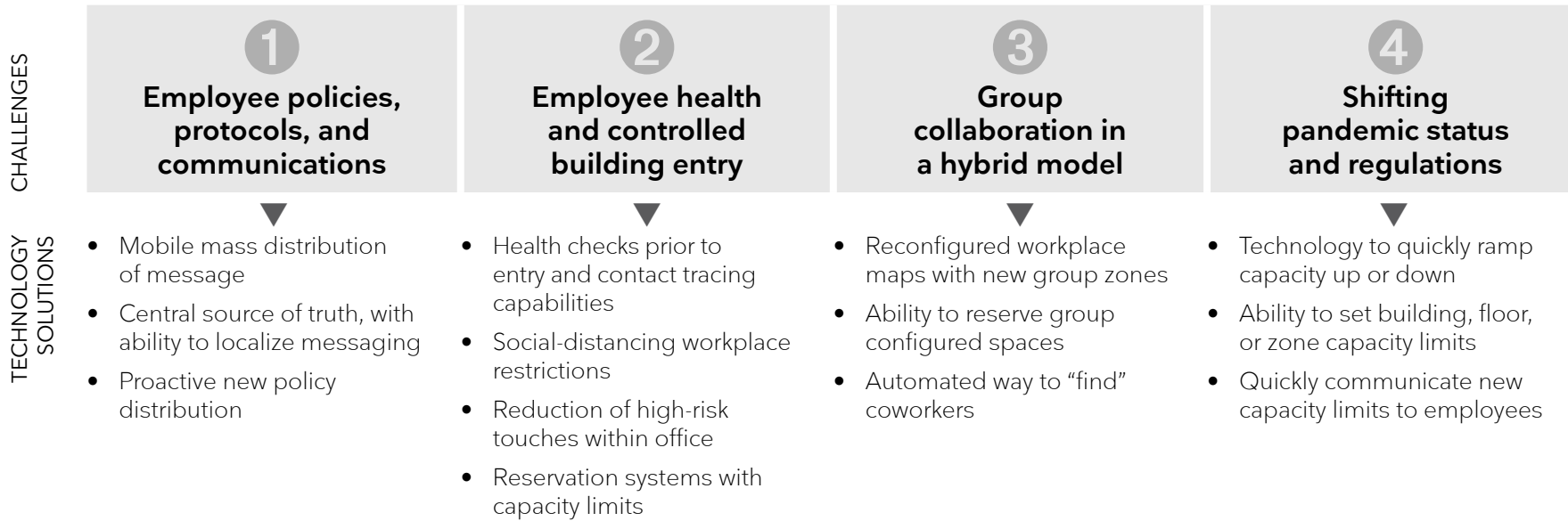
ROLAND BUSCH
Deputy CEO and Member of the Managing Board of Siemens AG

4 The Right Technologies

Desk 102
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Book This Desk

The right technology is crucial to managing the complexity of a safe return to work and the necessary implementation of flexible or hybrid working models. As companies navigate their safe return, leaders must consider how technology investments made now can continue to serve the business for the long term, by building a digital foundation for the future of work.

	① Employee policies, protocols, and communications	② Employee health and controlled building entry	③ Group collaboration in a hybrid model	④ Shifting pandemic status and regulations
CHALLENGES				
TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS	• Mobile mass distribution of message • Central source of truth, with ability to localize messaging • Proactive new policy distribution	• Health checks prior to entry and contact tracing capabilities • Social-distancing workplace restrictions • Reduction of high-risk touches within office • Reservation systems with capacity limits	• Reconfigured workplace maps with new group zones • Ability to reserve group configured spaces • Automated way to "find" coworkers	• Technology to quickly ramp capacity up or down • Ability to set building, floor, or zone capacity limits • Quickly communicate new capacity limits to employees

> " To address the rise of hybrid working, companies will need to transform how people work, where they work, and how work gets done. Technology will play a critical role in this transformation and become the foundation on which the modern workplace will be built. "

MARK MILLER
Workplace Technology Strategist
Cisco

5 Partner for Flexibility

Partner qualities to help manage market shifts

Employee enablement
Given the sensitivity of the pandemic situation, companies require the means to stay connected to their employees outside of email, with dynamic mobile capabilities.

Global reach – local control
For dispersed geographic portfolios, having a central approach with local administration can accommodate regional differences in office reopening.

Actionable insights
Having access to data for contact tracing and to gauge employees' office utilization can help drive refined capacity decisions.

Integration capabilities
Being able to integrate employee engagement, directory services and building systems can create a seamless re-entry experience.

Executives have been thrust to the forefront of corporate planning with a critical path need to rapidly implement new workplace configurations and technologies. Additionally, due to the unpredictable nature of the pandemic, a flexible approach must be applied to accommodate the ebb and flow of local infection rates and regulations.

Many companies find themselves fluctuating between the Phase 1 of crisis management and the Phase 2 of workplace re-entry and back again. It is crucial to choose experienced partners that can help navigate unexpected shifts, create a safe return to work process, and build the foundation to manage reconfigured workspaces in the long term.

Phase 1
Crisis Management

Phase 2
Workplace Re-entry

Phase 3
Business Continuity

Enlighted

Enlighted, a Siemens company, was established in 2012 and serves customers and their employees worldwide. With a consumer-grade app designed to improve employee safety, engagement and productivity, Enlighted provides the link between employee facilities utilization and corporate real estate insights.

220K
Employee users

95M
Square feet managed office space

1000+
Customer installations

60
Countries and counting

Enlighted Enterprise Solutions

Safe Return

Flexible Spaces

Concierge Services

Healthy Spaces

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
Consumer-grade Mobile App

SPACE MANAGEMENT
User & Space Administration

PORTFOLIO STRATEGY
Space Utilization Analysis

ENLIGHTED WORKPLACE INTELLIGENCE PLATFORM

Enlighted

Building Robotics, Inc.,
a Siemens Company

Turn Everyday Spaces into Extraordinary Places

Wherever space, people and work meet, Enlighted empowers organizations with the technology to transform real estate spaces into regenerative places that fuel positive impact for people, portfolio, and our planet.

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