

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

and going back to normal. You have to be mindful of your customers and clients' needs and desires to create the safest and most agreeable experience for all.

Amy Vetter • Jul. 05, 2021



Many firms are returning to in-person work, but it's not so simple as flipping a switch and going back to normal. You have to be mindful of your customers and clients' needs and desires to create the safest and most agreeable experience for all.

When the CDC released their [guidelines](#) for fully vaccinated people at the end of May, it felt like the end of a long chapter of changing regulations and imperfect

information about whether offices should be open. Now, it seems, we are in a place

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

won't be the case. Do your people actually want to be in the office for 40 hours? Would they prefer to wear masks regardless of what the guidelines say? Will some of them decide not to get the vaccine? These are the kinds of questions you need to consider before welcoming everyone back. I've discussed [reopening](#) before, but now the question isn't whether to reopen; it's when and how best to do it. While the answers to that will be different for every firm, there are some best practices you can adopt in order to find the individual solution that suits your business and people.

Gauge employee comfort and interest

Mandating a date for a full return to work may seem like the surest way to rip off the band-aid of pandemic-era regulations, but it's neither advisable nor what most workers want to have happen. In a situation like the one we're in, you're much better served to dip a toe or two in the water before diving in. Even better is to ask your team members if they are prepared to return, to what degree they want to, and what rules they want to have in place before doing so.

The easiest and best way to understand where they're at is, of course, to ask them. Creating a survey (you can find a sample [here](#)) will allow you to assess where your team is at in terms of enthusiasm to and identify what people are worried about. Some may want mask rules within the office, while others will not want to be in the office if they have to wear a mask. You probably won't be able to make a policy that is everyone's ideal set of rules, but you're much better off knowing where people stand before trying to devise a plan.

Rely on hybridity

If there's one thing we've learned over the past year-and-a-half, it's that we can get our work done remotely. It may not be optimal, it may involve a Zoom faux pas or two, but if circumstances dictate, we don't *need* to be in the office to fulfill our roles.

With that knowledge, you can lean on the fact that not everyone has to be in the

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

together. It doesn't have to be all or nothing.

The same goes for clients. Many will be happy to never set foot in your office again, whether for safety or simple convenience, and that's totally fine. Zoom meetings are here to stay, and you should utilize them even if your entire team is in the office.

Change course if you have to

Nobody is saying you have to get reopening 100-percent right at the first time of asking. If you adopt a certain policy and find its making employees uneasy, you can and should alter your plans. We're all doing this for the first time, so it's impossible to foresee every potential sticking point. Over the past year, you've probably changed strategies more times than you can count. Don't be afraid to keep doing so until you find one that fits.

=====

Amy Vetter is an accomplished entrepreneur, business executive, national speaker, CPA and yoga practitioner. She's a third-generation woman entrepreneur who has launched and sold multiple businesses including owning and operating her own yoga studios, accounting practice and other business ventures.

Firm Management

CPA Practice Advisor is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors.

© 2024 Firmworks, LLC. All rights reserved

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us