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Gail Perry • Aug. 13, 2021



In this month's magazine, we address some of the issues associated with the workplace disruption we all have experienced. Whether you changed your own work environment as a result of the pandemic, or you experienced changes in relationships with colleagues, clients, customers, and companies, the variations in how we do our jobs certainly impacted everyone.

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The workplace as a whole seems uncertain about how best to move forward. While many companies and organizations are requiring that their employees be vaccinated, which is setting off its own kind of stir, the accounting profession is mixed in its responses to the WFH phenomenon.

In the spring of 2020 (yes, 2020!), the CPA Firm Management Association (CPAFMA) released a booklet called *A Guide to Re-opening Your CPA Firm* (<https://tinyurl.com/wx5x7fkp>) which laid out suggestions for inspecting and cleaning offices, instituting health checks, and mitigating anxiety for those workers who were expected to return to work in early summer of 2020. While the release of that guide might have been a bit premature, at least it laid out some general procedures for those firms that wanted to prepare for getting back to the office.

Alternatively, this past spring, the Virginia Society of Certified Public Accountants (VSCPA) [conducted a survey \(https://tinyurl.com/4u8zsrjn\)](https://tinyurl.com/4u8zsrjn) of more than 600 of its members across the state, and found expectations that a hybrid of remote and on-site work will continue over at least the next year. More than a third of respondents expect to make remote work a permanent option, as long as the work can still be completed. Investing in new technologies for remote workers and improving workplace safety for those who want to return to the office are key indicators that a hybrid model may surface as the new normal.

Interestingly, a [pre-COVID-19 survey \(https://tinyurl.com/up53hsrw\)](https://tinyurl.com/up53hsrw) conducted by outsourcing firm Airtasker, found that remote employees work 1.4 more days per month than those based in an office. Food for thought for those employers who worry about productivity of remote workers.

Earlier this year, results from a [Gartner survey \(https://tinyurl.com/fv6rrj2w\)](https://tinyurl.com/fv6rrj2w) indicated that, "Service employees who traditionally did not have many work-from-

home opportunities, have become used to it and like it, and the majority (about 70%)

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