



How the Post-Pandemic Workplace Can Contribute to Employee Well-Being





A great deal has been written lately about the importance of employers paying close attention to the well-being of their workforce as organizations plan their returns to the workplace. The pandemic has taken a toll on all of us in countless ways. Whether it was social isolation, Zoom fatigue, remote learning or contracting the virus, we've all been living through a level of intensity and anxiousness over the past sixteen months and it will take some time for us to recover.

In a recent article in *The Nation* entitled *The Tiredness Virus*, Byung-Chul Han writes "...the virus doesn't only make COVID sufferers tired. It is now making even healthy people tired." Han delves into a number of factors contributing to the deep tiredness throughout society. Sitting in solitude and the loss of social interactions with our colleagues is tiring. We get energy from our face-to-face encounters and that has been a rarity throughout the past sixteen months.

In addition, rather than being in an in-person meeting where your focus is on the others in the room, their body language and facial expressions, we've been making do through Zoom and other video-conferencing platforms. While that's allowed us all to keep things moving, to the individual, it means they are staring at a monitor and looking at themselves being on display. They are likely to pick up on what they perceive to be their own personal flaws. Be it wrinkles or crow's feet or bags under your eyes, feeling you're on display adds to the widespread tiredness we're feeling.

Understanding that across each organization's team, there is likely going to be a wide array of emotions as you bring your people back to the workplace. For some, they'll embrace it right out of the gates. For others, it will present a return to the normal juggling of work and personal lives. And for others, there could be a general uneasiness as they come out of their forced hibernation into a forced return to what prior to the pandemic would have been considered their normal routines and rituals.





Recognizing the deep tiredness of your employees is a critical step in planning out how you'll bring your people back into the workplace. Many organizations are grappling with how they can rekindle their distinct cultures that help them attract and retain top talent. Organizations are looking to reignite collaboration and innovation to fuel future growth and competitiveness. And organizations are seeking ways to make the workplace a place where their employees want to be in order for them to feel and experience a return to normalcy and to help overcome the ongoing challenges of a hybrid environment.

The Conforming Workplace is one way organization's leadership and facilities managers can contribute to those goals. The Conforming Workplace recognizes the workplace will be different following the pandemic. The role of the workplace will aim to foster collaboration and camaraderie. Creating a Conforming Workplace for your return to office, will help remove some of the space-induced friction by providing your employees an adaptable environment that will suit their needs.



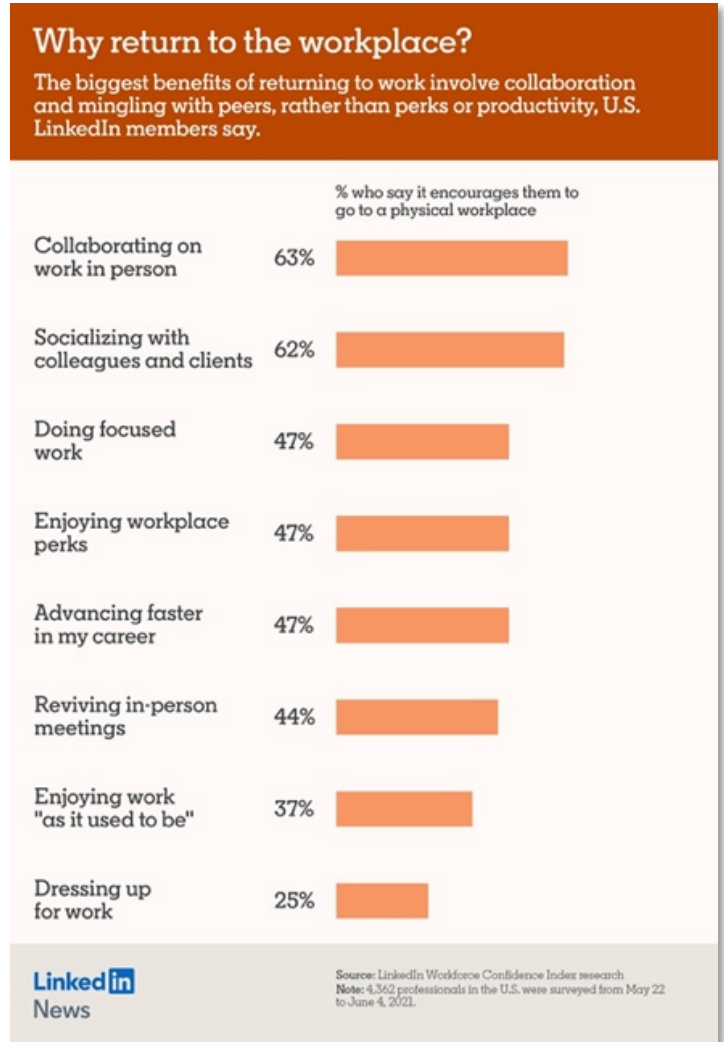
A recent study conducted by LinkedIn on the top benefits employees were looking forward to in their return to the workplace ranked collaborating with co-workers and socializing with colleagues and clients at the top of the list. The Conforming Workplace is one way organization's leadership and facilities managers can contribute to those goals. The Conforming Workplace recognizes the workplace will be different following the pandemic. The role of the workplace will aim to foster collaboration and camaraderie. And by creating a Conforming Workplace for your return to office, will help remove some of the space-induced friction by providing your employees an adaptable environment that will suit their needs.



By removing some of the friction employees may encounter, whether it is accomplished through acoustical solutions to control noise coming from collaborative space, or by making it easy for employees to make an impromptu collaborative space through architectural products, or by bringing in some touches of home into your workplace to create respite spaces or Mother's Rooms, are a few ways the workspace can make a positive impact on employee well-being. Other things to consider include creating Outdoor meeting spaces and social spaces for employees to naturally reconnect with each other.

The Conforming Workplace can contribute to enhancing your employees' well-being and Help you make your workplace a place where you employees want to be. It will help accelerate the repair and rebuilding of your culture and help create a sense of togetherness we've all been missing over this past year.

The science of ergonomics has influenced furniture design for decades. Ergonomics aims to improve the fit between the furniture and the people who use it. Ergonomics stems from post-World War II engineers and psychologists to help improve performance by focusing on the body mechanics of work.





By applying the concepts of ergonomics to the workplace at large in The Conforming Workplace, we create a space that fits not just the bodies but the purpose and use of the body of employees within the workplace at any given time. By recognizing the numbers of people and the way the space is used will vary widely from day-to-day and week-to-week, The Conforming Workplace creates a pliable space that can adapt and support to enhance the workplace experience.



For the users—your employees, partners and clients—they are looking for a workplace that will enhance togetherness with their co-workers, provide them with space they can escape and restore their energy levels, a space that is furnished with products that will ergonomically support their work, create equity for a more diverse and inclusive workforce and workplace, and provide them the latitude to move about freely.

And by providing them with this type of environment and experience, the workplace can become a sought-after destination, a place where social interactions can return to being normal and become a renewed source of positive energy for your team, your culture and your business.

To find out more about how The Conforming Workplace can help you prepare your return to work, please contact Dan Tramelli at 314.686.6976 or dtramelli@ciselect.com.