

RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE? HOW TO EASE BACK IN

By Nick Deligiannis at [hays.com](https://www.hays.com)

COVID-19 restrictions saw a large percentage of the workforce quickly transition to working from home. In the months since, many people have come to appreciate the benefits of flexible working, including improved productivity, work-life balance and perceived safety.



These professionals have become so comfortable with working from home that, according to findings in our recently released Hays Barometer Report, over half of those who are currently working remotely feel anxious about returning to the workplace.

However, with restrictions lifting and many regions virtually eliminating COVID-19, employers are formalising plans for a safe return to the office as they look to regain some sense of 'normality'.

So, if your employer is starting to call staff back into the office, whether permanently or in a hybrid working arrangement, here are our tips for easing back into office working.

“

I may not have gone where I intended to go, but I think I have ended up where I needed to be.

- Douglas Adams

”

April's Book Recommendation

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Made Simple

by Seth J. Gillihan

This book takes the concept of mindfulness to the next level with its 10 strategies for improving individuals' mental health. Author Seth J. Gillihan, Ph.D., focuses on effective tools—like identifying negative thoughts—that allow individuals to find relief from their anxiety and depression. While each tool is thoroughly backed with research, the book serves as an easy-to-read manual full of small, simple steps that lead to success.

1. Assess your working style

Firstly, take some time to understand if the post-COVID-19 workplace will suit your working style. We're unlikely to see the same level of pre-pandemic face-to-face contact at work, with in-person meetings and conversations limited due to staggered start and finish times and continuing physical distancing measures. So, if you are someone who requires in-person interactions to perform at your best, adapt your working style now so that your motivation, energy and output still remain high in today's office environment.

2. Don't judge yourself

It's okay to feel anxious or uncertain about returning to the workplace. Or perhaps you have enjoyed the greater freedoms and work-life balance of remote working and feel sad about losing these benefits. Take note of your feelings, understand them and accept them. Once you accept how you are feeling right now, consider how you can move your mindset forward – and what changes you can implement to help prepare yourself mentally for your return to the workplace. For example, do you need to rebook children into before school care, plan your commute or find a new time for your daily walk? Or do you need to remind yourself that it's fine to feel uncomfortable with change at first and that learning to adapt to change at work can take time?

3. Consider a flexible transition

Most employers are offering a slow transition back to the workplace. There is an understanding that those employees who have enjoyed working from home need to shift their mindset back into office-based working, which can take time.

Many employers are also implementing a hybrid working model, where staff work some days in the office and others from home. For many employees, this offers the ideal transition as it provides the flexibility to balance office and home working, which allows you to slowly and steady reacclimate with the office.

4. Take care of your mental health

If you feel a high level of anxiety and stress at the thought of returning to the office, prioritise your mental health and wellbeing during this transition. Remember the foundations of good mental health and wellbeing at work: set a routine, switch off from work at the end of each day, sleep well, exercise, take regular breaks at work, spend some time by yourself and look out for the warning signs.

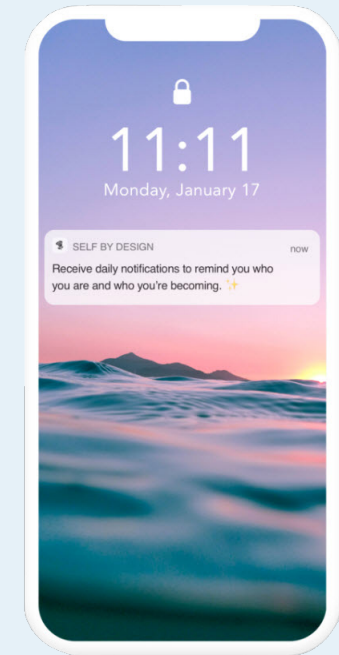
5. Restore office rituals

Take a moment to consider what you have missed about office life. Perhaps, for example, you've missed your favourite coffee shop, meeting a friend for lunch, casual conversations with colleagues or celebrating team successes after work. Re-establishing such elements of your former office life will help you feel comfortable back in the workplace and restore a sense of normality to your working week.

For more information or advice, contact eni online at: www.eniweb.com

Cognitive Health & Wellbeing with Self By Design

Integrated into the **NexGen EAP Mobile App**



Integrated into our **NexGen EAP** mobile app, **Self By Design** is a mindset app created to support you in becoming the best version of yourself. Rooted in neuroscience and psychology, this app was designed to keep you inspired and motivated to work towards your wellness goals with curated collections of inspirational quotes, affirmations, and the ability to create your own powerful visual reminders to keep you on track.