



Balancing the dynamic and the traditional

As businesses and organisations consider the best strategy for enticing their employees back into the workplace, new challenges are being faced when it comes to balancing the much-needed dynamic working practices with a traditional office space.

As a predominant focus for most is likely to be on how to adapt to the flexible working demands of the workforce, the suitability of the office space itself can be easily overlooked whilst trying to establish a 'back to office' policy that meets the needs of both the business and its staff.

How do we know this? In the last six months, our own business has facilitated a gradual increase as our workforce returns to ACS House, whilst supporting our clients on their own journey to create an enticing environment for staff members to return to the workplace. Although we have seen a positive impact to the culture and productivity during this time, we have continued to learn a lot about the more dynamic working world and I'm afraid we have some bad news...



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The traditional office does not work in the new world!

Despite the fact we have generally been operating at around 30% of our office capacity, we have discovered new challenges that we anticipate many of our clients and other businesses will also face when returning to the workplace:

- Video Call Distractions: a traditional open plan office can be problematic for both parties when on video calls. The background noise, visual distractions and colleagues coming up for a quick chat whilst on a meeting takes your focus away from your session, whilst also doing the same to your contact on the other end.
- Meeting Room Dilemma: a space traditionally reserved for internal meetings, these are quickly becoming the go-to areas for one-on-one video calls, ultimately taking away from the intended use of the room. Furthermore, the large-scale meetings which are now becoming a hybrid of virtual and on site need the right technology to ensure everyone is equally present in the session.
- The Hidden Problem: Infrastructure: whilst creating a great space is important in ensuring staff can operate efficiently, it's essential to consider how underlying infrastructure can impact your operation with the increased focus on high-bandwidth activity. With a recommendation of 5mbps per employee, a traditional fibre broadband or low-speed leased line may not serve a small business in the same manner it did pre-COVID. Furthermore, existing wireless systems may be pushed beyond capability when trying to meet the demands of Teams meetings scattered across the workplace.

As a provider uniquely placed to understand the workplace challenges across our Technology and Interiors teams, we've seen how challenging the return to the office can be for businesses of all shapes and sizes. The next 12 months will undoubtedly uncover new models and working

standards that impact all organisations, regardless of industry or business size. There will also be need to businesses leaders to walk the fine line of enforcing a return to the workplace in hopes of reinforcing business culture whilst allowing greater levels of flexibility to staff and acknowledging the productivity of staff who have performed remotely in the previous 18 months.

With great change on the horizon and yet more adjustment for employees to take on, it's paramount that the transition between home and office is seamless. Should working life in the office present difficulty over the remote working we have become accustomed too, the challenge becomes greater.

In our experience we really do believe the challenges we have faced will be shared by majority of businesses across the country, but we also understand that budget, time and space are also going to be real inhibitors in making the necessary modifications to an existing environment. You can trust ACS to support local businesses in tackling these challenges before they present problems.

Visit get.acs365.co.uk/talk-with-connor to book a meeting or simply download your 'Virtual Meeting Ready' Checklist.

Contact ACS on 01604 704000 or email info@acs365.co.uk or visit www.acs365.co.uk

