

COVID-19: Back to better

Creating a return to work strategy and supporting organisations to adapt to new ways of working and better outcomes

As we assess the impact of the pandemic, leaders are looking to the future and making plans to get their people back to full capacity and prepare for a 'new normal' and even better. This next phase is critical - do it well and you can positively influence the long-term performance of your organisation.

Grant Thornton have experts who can help you create a return to work strategy that takes into account all areas of your operation and puts your people at the heart of the planning. Bringing in extra capacity to help you plan and execute your strategy will pay dividends. We can help you plan and execute a return to work strategy that is specific to your organisation, to support and challenge the many critical decisions that need to be made in order to make your return a success – not just in the short-term but for the many months ahead as we continue to navigate the many unknowns.

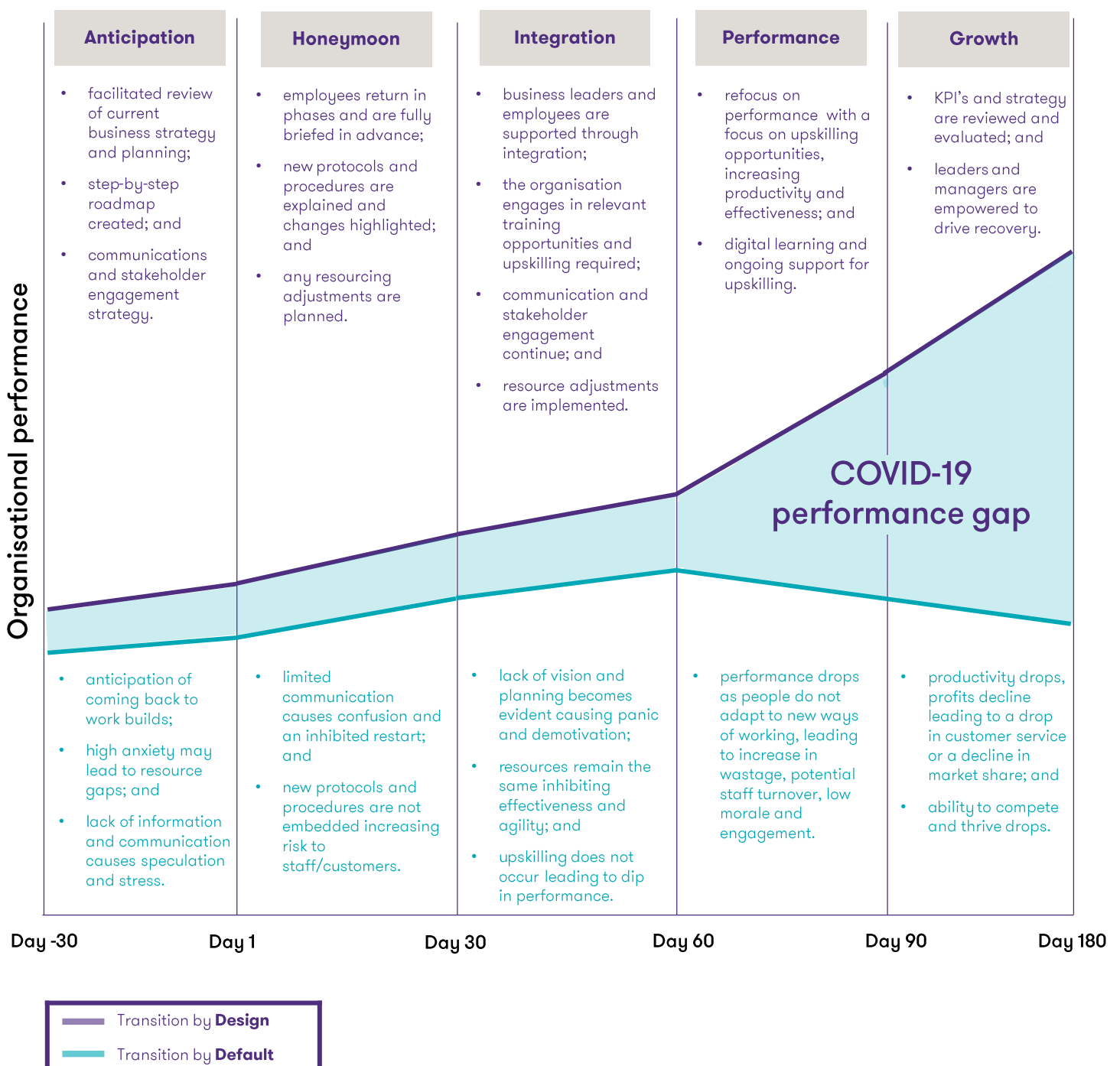


Potential impact on performance

Performance is impacted by change. When people get distracted by what’s changing around them, when they are unclear, confused or feel insecure, they lose focus - and this has a negative impact on performance. Experience has taught us that unless people are clear on what’s changing and why, how the change impacts both them personally and their team, they will spend more time distracted and not be as productive. With the negative impact that COVID-19 has already had, organisations have to get back to capacity and performance as soon as possible.

Change when executed well, can also have a positive impact. If approached with thoughtful planning and meaningful engagement, this can be a chance for organisations to ‘build back better’. At Grant Thornton we have plotted the impact on performance over a seventh month timeline, starting with 30 days before the anticipated back to work date, right up to six months afterwards. It is critically important to minimise the disruptive impact of COVID-19 by splitting this period into five key stages with targeted interventions at each stage to maintain and even improve performance.

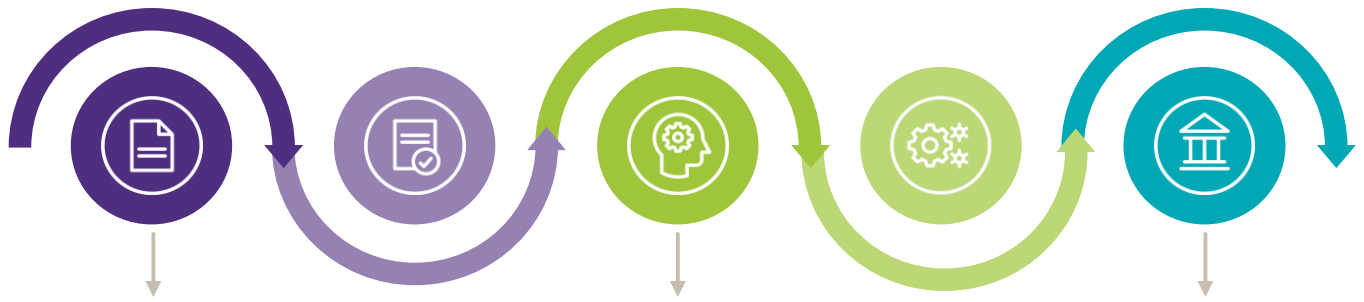
Enhancing performance and driving growth in the COVID-19 environment



Getting it right in the anticipation phase – three critical steps

The performance of any organisation depends on the success of its workforce and the capacity they have to adjust, adapt, and respond positively to the many changes this pandemic has brought.

One of the most important phases in getting your people back to work is that initial anticipation phase and how you plan and communicate the activities within this phase from a minimum of 30 days before their anticipated back to work date. From our own experience and working with clients, we have split this into three critical steps with preparation and detailed planning right from the start. It is very much an iterative process, with continual review and improvements as more and more of the staff, teams and locations return to work.



Step 1 Preparation

3-4 weeks prior to reopening

Focus: Plan for re-opening & identify requirements by location

- establish/confirm project team – work through ‘Reopening Workplaces Toolkit’;
- employee survey – identify modes of travel, distance to travel, employee work preferences, etc., to inform planning;
- operational planning considerations – what functions can remain remote/automated;
- social distancing planning;
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)/signage/hygiene materials; and
- stakeholder identification and communications development.

Step 2 Execution

1-2 weeks prior to reopening

Focus: Ensure employees and clients understand new ways of working

- assess which functions, work and roles need to return to the workplace;
- develop and finalise online/virtual training;
- develop and finalise COVID-19 symptom questionnaire (Government requirement);
- identify essential workers and ‘social distancing marshals’ by service/location;
- confirm ongoing processes and tools;
- confirm completion of all activities in the ‘Reopening Workplaces Toolkit’; and
- engage and communicate with all stakeholders (ongoing).

Step 3 Reopening & Management

0 days to reopening and open

Focus: Continuously review & improve processes

Reopening:

- identify and manage employee/client access by location; and
- marshalling of locations to ensure adherence to guidelines.

Ongoing:

- ensure adherence to the ‘stay safe at work’ protocols;
- review and improve processes;
- ongoing monitoring of space/locations; and
- engage and communicate with all stakeholders (ongoing).

Practical tools to help you succeed:

Step 1 Preparation

3-4 weeks prior to reopening

- 'Reopening Workplaces Toolkit' – practical toolkit of activities required to ensure adherence to government protocols;
- sample employee survey questions and analytics to inform planning;
- signage examples; and
- sample key communications.

Step 2 Execution

1-2 weeks prior to reopening

- online COVID-19 questionnaire/form;
- online COVID-19 induction/training content;
- Process Maps and Responsibility Matrices (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed (RACI)); and
- sample key messages/communications.

Step 3 Reopening & Management

0 days to reopening and open

- online desk booking app - ability to pre book desks by locations;
- online return to workplace process automation; and
- COVID-19 Health Tracker – capture and track employee symptoms/confirmed cases.

The practical tools will be unique to each organisation, and our team of experts will work collaboratively with you to design the toolkit that you need to safely get your people back to work, taking into account your circumstances and needs.

Next steps and contact information

At Grant Thornton, we would be happy to discuss with you the key elements of returning to work support for your organisation. Please contact a member of our team to discuss further.



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