

BACK TO WORK

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

AS THE NATION ATTEMPTS TO BOUNCE BACK FROM THE PANDEMIC, INDIA INC IS CAUTIOUSLY TREADING THE NEW NORMAL PATH AND GETTING BACK TO A REWIRED OFFICE WITH SAFETY GUARDS ON. HERE'S HOW FIRMS ACE THE GAME



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environments that are as safe as possible. "About 55 percent of Indian employees believe that their employer has created a physically safe and healthy workplace environment," the survey says.

"With strict adherence to safety and security measures, organisations have started resuming their operations. Some of the employees engaged in customer-facing roles are required to be physically present and they have started operating from the workplace on a rotational basis. Firms are using a staggered approach to ensure the safety of employees," informs S J Raj, senior vice president, HR Operations, Newgen Software. With social distancing becoming the norm, there are drastic changes in office interiors too. "We are at the cusp of innovation and are gearing up to create future-ready workplaces. Office ergonomics have changed. With the furniture and layout modified to accommodate social distancing," shares Raj. Adding to it, Suchita Oswal Jain, VC & Joint MD of Vardhman Textiles Ltd, says, "The teams are taken through several protocols that need to be followed. There is clear and precise communication up across factory floors and offices. Sanitization and thermal checks are now a part of the employee's life and each one has taken on the responsibility to help manage and control the situation for self and others. The situation is constantly monitored and

there are health and hygiene classes, yoga classes along with motivational conversations, and open communication to ensure inclusiveness."

TECH SHIFT

It is not that every organisation is asking its employees to be back in the office. The work-from-home scenario has

THE pandemic has changed the way people are hired, on-boarded, trained, assessed, and promoted. Post a lull, the focus is now on hiring, re-skilling, and up-skilling. Neha Bagaria, founder and CEO, of an online career platform for women, says, a world of opportunities have opened up not just in Tier 1 cities, but also in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. "Industries such as IT,

FOCUS ON HIRING

Manufacturing, BFSI, Education, and FMCG are looking to recruit in various roles such as Software Developers, Cloud Engineers, Project Managers, Operations Managers, Risk Analysts, and Sales Managers, and so on, for full-time as well as work-from-home role." "Hiring has picked up speed, especially in the IT sector. There is a surge in demand for data scientists, IT project managers, and data analysts," adds Raj.

Along with technical skills, soft skills have become paramount in the new normal workplace. The firms emphasize more on a candidate's learning ability and people who can adapt to the changing requirements, have an edge. According to Shireen Ardeshir, an education advisor, and career mentor, key skills to excel in 2021 includes, creativity - art and design thinking skills; digital technologies - software and app development; digital marketing; research, and computer knowledge from a base level to advanced coding, graphics, and animation.

SKILLS TO SUCCEED

Workplace Rewired

garnered positive results and many are planning to continue with it. "There are workplace collaboration and communication

platforms that offer an all-in-one suite with access to email, calendar, to-do's, voice notes, video conferencing, and are

enabling seamless communication across teams," says Bhavin Turakhia, a serial entrepreneur on how technology is enabling WFH. "Now that our awareness of 'shared hygiene' has increased, we will transition more quickly towards the voice and machine vision interfaces and contactless logging in and logging off. Technology

will help limit physical contact people have with surfaces and each other, thereby reducing the risk of contracting the virus," he adds.

As experts suggest, taking the employees into confidence that their health and well-being are adequately taken care of is the way forward for organisations, as people resume work.

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With the nation unlocking after the pandemic, its back-to-work mode for India Inc. Workplaces are limping back to normalcy and employees in critical roles, who need to be present at work, slowly returning to the office. However, the workplace will never be the same again, say industry experts.

The corporate world is reinventing to match up with the new normal. There are fundamental changes in the way work is done with a focus on the protection and safety of employees. Technology plays a crucial role in getting the work done. Enhancing employee engagement, collaboration, and connectivity for seamless productivity happen through tech tools.

SAFETY RULES

There are safety guidelines issued by health authorities including disinfecting office spaces, cleaning up cabins, desks, and other surfaces, sanitizing floors, canteen, and washrooms, at regular intervals, to name a few, as a preventive measure against the pandemic. According to a global survey by Kronos Incorporated, organisational safety is paramount during the Covid-19 pandemic, and transparent communication plays a critical role. In workplaces around the world, expectations from the workforce are high for employers to create