# Return-to-Office Playbook Executive Briefing

### Summary

Use this research to create a flexible return-to-office policy that balances employee and organizational needs.

### Our Recommendation

* Gather and assess organizational and employee data to identify valid reasons for returning employees to the office.
* Create and roll out a flexible RTO policy that balances organizational and employee needs.
* Support employees through the challenges of returning to the office by identifying supports that are feasible for the organization to offer.

### Client Challenge

* Many organizations are mandating that employees return to the office despite the popularity of remote and hybrid work.
* Employees do see the benefits of working from the office some of the time but are facing challenges with returning to the office (e.g. long commutes).
* Organizations that mandate RTO often fail to do their due diligence with identifying and communicating a rationale for RTO, leading to employee backlash and numerous negative consequences for the organization (e.g. decreased engagement).
* In addition, RTO mandates are often a one-size-fits-all approach that lacks flexibility and fails to consider unique employee needs and challenges, leading to rising frustration among employees.

### Critical Insight

* Despite the popularity of work-from-home among employees, organizations and employees recognize there are benefits to occasionally working from the office. The key to implementing a successful RTO policy is understanding organizational and employee needs and rolling out a policy that is intentionally flexible.

A diagram of a process

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### Get to Action

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| 1. Assess organizational and employee needs | 1. Review key players’ responsibilities in the RTO process. 2. Examine strategic documents to determine how RTO supports the organization’s strategic direction. 3. Gather existing data to identify insights about RTO. 4. Conduct focus groups with leaders to identify the rationale for RTO. 5. Launch a survey to gather the employee perspective on RTO. 6. Categorize the insights gathered to identify reasons for RTO, misconceptions, etc.   **Deliverables:**   * *Return-to-Office Workbook* * *Metrics and Analytics Selection Guide* * *HR Metrics Library* * *Return-to-Office Sample Survey Questions List* |
| 2. Create the RTO policy | 1. Create a planning committee. 2. Assess logistics of the organization’s office space. 3. Identify supports and incentives that are feasible to offer employees returning to the office. 4. Identify employee exemptions to include in the RTO policy. 5. Formulate the guiding principles for the RTO policy. 6. Draft the RTO policy and present it to executives for approval.   **Deliverables:**   * *Return-to-Office Workbook* * *Return-to-Office Policy Template* |
| 3. Roll out the RTO policy | * Create an action plan to roll out the RTO policy. * Create a plan to communicate the RTO policy. * Share the RTO policy with people leaders and employees. * Equip people leaders with tools to help them implement the RTO policy within their teams. * Align the RTO policy with existing HR programs. * Devise an approach for evaluating the RTO policy.   **Deliverables:**   * *Project Roadmap Tool* * *Return-to-Office Workbook* * *Standard Internal Communications Plan* * *Return-to-Office Manager FAQ Template* * *Return-to-Office Employee FAQ Template* |

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