



## 5 Lessons for Managing the “New Normal”

As stay-at-home orders are lifted across the country, business owners and employers are given the opportunity to welcome back a percentage of their employees. Before bringing the workforce back, employers must rethink and rework the goals of their organization, while strictly following government guidelines.

### How CFS Can help:

The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented obstacles to businesses across every industry. Here at Creative Financial Staffing (CFS), along with our Technology Division (CFS Technology), we have focused on providing our clients with talented Accounting, Finance & IT professionals to help solve these ongoing challenges.

To better serve our clients and candidates we have strengthened internal communication across our 30+ offices, leveraged new technology and implemented new on-boarding procedures. As we all continue to navigate this challenging business climate, CFS is here to offer support, guidance, and resources.

*"The Covid pandemic continues to produce stress, trauma and uncertainty. The virus has impacted everyone and has been devastating to so many. Despite those challenges, our employees and many individuals across the country have continued to work. I am very thankful that Creative Financial Staffing had the technology for our employees to immediately be able to work from home. Many of our clients were also able to have their employees work remotely. The ability to adapt has been critical for many companies to be able to continue their business operations. Like many companies, CFS has been taking the steps to make sure our employees are as safe as possible. We are also accommodating our employees who are still reluctant to return to the office or have reasons they can't return, such as virtual learning situations for their children. We appreciate the opportunity to work with our clients and candidates during this new normal."*

*-Gary Irwin, President and COO at Creative Financial Staffing*





## Lesson 1: How to Address Fears About Returning to the Workplace

Preparing to head back into the office can be nerve-racking for your employees while a global pandemic is still looming. Employers must be fully transparent with their employees and take things one step at a time. See below for tips on how to get started:

- Make it known that the employees' well-being is your top priority
- Share accurate and timely information; maintain open lines of communication
- Take swift action to develop and implement recommended public health measures
- Train leaders and managers on how to best support their employees/teams
- Offer flexibility/remote options if possible

## Lesson 2: Helping Employees Return

With the implementation of new safety and health protocols, employers must take precautions when sending employees back to work. While the organization's productivity is important, the employee's safety is the number one concern. Employers must follow government guidelines to help identify risk levels in the workplace and implement any control measures as deemed necessary. This could include any of the following:

- Ensuring all workstations are a minimum distance of 6ft apart
- Utilizing phases when bringing employees back to the office
- Running a shift schedule; ensuring there is enough time between shifts to properly disinfect the space
- Enforcing a part-time WFH schedule to reduce the number of people in the office at any one time



## Lesson 3: Rehiring Furloughed Employees

Furloughing employees helped many businesses temporarily cut costs. It also allowed businesses to retain current talent, which was heavily needed as business needs picked up again. When rehiring a furloughed employee, it's crucial that the employer goes over any changes which may have been implemented during the employees absence (i.e. new safety procedures, responsibilities, hours, etc). This may also include:

- A return-to-work plan; create a clear plan for your returning employee
- Reset work expectations; jobs may have been consolidated/reworked during the employees absence
- Training on new technology

## Lesson 4: Remote Work is Here to Stay

Due to COVID-19, more and more job applicants are looking for remote work options. As businesses reopen, employers must rework their business structure to stay competitive and current. Below are just a few of the pros and cons that remote work offers:

### PROS

- A wider pool of top talent
- Increased workforce diversity
- Positive environmental impact (less travel as well as a major move towards digital technology)
- Less time spent commuting; increased productivity, performance, and satisfaction
- Improved employee retention

### CONS

- Management mistrust; lack of communication
- It's not for everyone; isolation
- Increased concern surrounding mental health
- Lack of relationships amongst coworkers
- Increased distractions
- Security issues

## Lesson 5: Best Practices for Onboarding and Training New Hires

- Digitize the recruitment process
- Conduct video interviews rather than face-to-face (Zoom, Teams, Google Hangouts, etc.)
- Engage with new hires before the start date
  - i.e. Introductory video call, welcome email, team greeting, welcome gift
- Ensure new hires have the hardware, software and office supplies they need
- Show new hires any essential communication tools, online meeting platforms, and file-sharing applications that your company uses
- Set specific goals and expectations
- Over-communicate and answer any questions
  - i.e. Utilize video/phone/email, set a schedule to check in, etc.







## Safe Work Practices by the CDC: What employers and employees can do to make the office a safer environment

- Stay informed and adhere to the guidance from federal, state, and local health agencies
- All employers should implement good hygiene and infection control practices
- Promote frequent and thorough handwashing; post handwashing signs in restrooms, kitchens, etc.
- Advise all sick employees, or anyone experiencing symptoms, to stay home
- Establish policies such as flexible hours (staggered shifts), phases, and telecommuting options to reduce the total number of employees in the office at once
- Provide cleaning and disinfection products; disinfect all surfaces and equipment regularly
- Enforce social distancing protocols
- Provide a face mask and encourage all employees to wear
- Minimize contact among employees, clients, and customers by replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual meetings and continue to offer telework options
- Close all common areas where employees cannot social distance
- Install physical barriers between cubicles
- Discontinue nonessential travel to locations with ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks
- Present employees with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19 risk factors and protective behaviors (i.e. hand washing, cough etiquette, care of PPE, etc.)
- Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies

Source: [OSHA. \(2020\) Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)

