

HOW TO...

...help people return to work

Transitioning back to work following parental leave, time off for caring, sickness or several years out of the workplace can be daunting. Having a returner plan, toolkits and advice can support this process for the returner and the team around them.

WHEN TO USE THIS



To help anyone returning after any type of extended leave in getting back to work, feeling like they are contributing and therefore valued. This will retain staff, improve corporate image, attract new talent and drive the business.

WATCH OUTS



- Avoid people on breaks missing out on opportunities by sending job opportunities to personal email addresses
- Right to request flexible working – define process for application and consultation on whether role can be done flexibly
- Communicate with the team as they may be uncertain of their role when someone returns
- Don't assume returner will want to reduce hours/days, not travel or not pursue promotion
- No one size fits all - allow flexibility to change plan once back

THINGS YOU CAN DO



- Email just key company information to those on a break so they know what matters while off
- Encourage flexible times and format for KIT and SPLIT days to help parents stay in touch
- Induction on everything from culture to reporting lines. Ensure log ins work
- Internal 'Welcome Back' email to share what the person will be working on and working hours
- Offer flexible working, perhaps reduced hours to ease transition (helpful if care arrangements are being trialled)
- Coaching with someone who has "returned" for practical advice and navigating emotional journey before, during and after returning
- Monthly meet-up for returners and prospective returners, to share ideas and experiences
- Appoint champions with experience of returning - as a returner or manager - to speak internally and be a go-to-person

LONGER TERM IDEAS



- Support careers as a long game - invest in returners' growth, with training, coaching etc
- Give option to tag accrued holiday on the end of leave or take off a day each week to help transition to full time working e.g. every Friday
- Flexibility through technology - shared calendars, documents and chat to enable work from home as planned or when duty calls
- Keep making the return process better, survey employees and respond to any issues