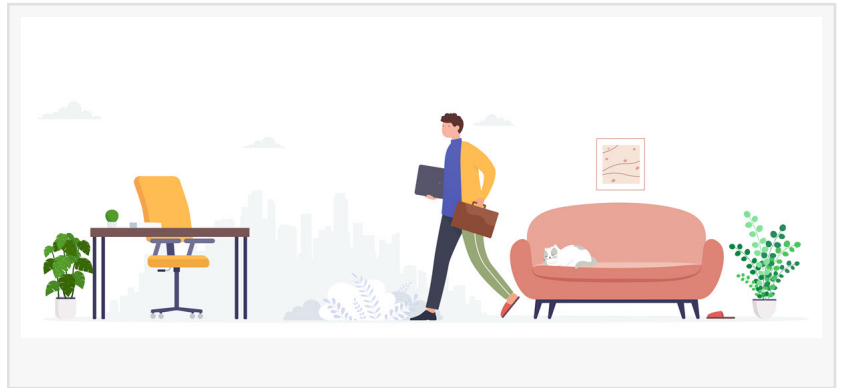


Company Bosses Say it's Time to Return to the Office

In this report, we look at how company managers can get the best results when bringing employees back to the office.

AUSTIN, TEXAS, UNITED STATES,
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EINPresswire.com/ -- Is It Time For The Hammer To Come Down On Work From Home (WFH) Policies And Mandate That Employees Return To The [Office?](#)



Is it time to call it quits on one of the greatest experiments in employee management?

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Formaspace

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Here are some prominent businesses that have sought to bring employees back – with many encountering varying degrees of pushback from workers who want to keep their existing WFH policies in place.

· Amazon

As Amazon called on its office employees to return to the physical office, over 30,000 remote workers organized themselves on a Slack channel dedicated to Remote Advocacy. In May 2023, labor organizers estimated that 1,000 of these employees walked off the job to protest the company’s mandatory return-to-the-office rules.

· Apple

Apple was one of the first to allow working from home during the pandemic, as well as one of the first to ask employees to return to the office – for at least three days a week – starting in September 2022. The memo from CEO Tim Cook was met with protest by an employee group

called Apple Together that demanded managers be given the option to allow “location flexible work.”

This spring, Apple recalibrated its message, recasting its policy as a “pilot program,” which requires its employees to return to the office on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays starting May 23, 2023.

- Disney

Returning Disney CEO Robert Iger announced a 4-day-a-week return to the office in a January 2023 email. Starting March 1, Disney employees working from home were expected to return to the office Monday through Thursday.

- Farmer’s Group

The insurance giant, Farmer’s Group, abruptly changed its work-from-home policies when incoming CEO Raul Vargas announced that Farmer’s employees would need to work in-office three days a week. There was considerable dissent, particularly among workers who had moved away from the office during the pandemic.

- Google

Google announced its plans to transition from WFH to a hybrid work model back in April 2022. In the new policy, workers would be asked to come into the office three days a week. A year later, the company appears to be policing this policy more aggressively, according to a CNBC report that notes that Google is now tracking in-office attendance as part of its employee performance reviews.

- JPMorgan

JPMorgan, the largest US bank, has requested that all senior bank leaders return to in-office work 5 days a week, saying in a memo to staff that “our leaders play a critical role in reinforcing our culture and running our businesses.” Lower-level staff will still be allowed to work three days in the office and two days offsite.



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- Tesla

Elon Musk was characteristically blunt in his communications to Tesla office workers that remote work was ending in a series of June 2022 memos sent to employees:

Subject: Remote work is no longer acceptable (sic)

Anyone who wishes to do remote work must be in the office for a minimum (and I mean *minimum*) of 40 hours per week or depart Tesla. This is less than we ask of factory workers.

This was followed up with:

The more senior you are, the more visible must be your presence. That is why I lived in the factory so much – so that those on the line could see me working alongside them. If I had not done that, Tesla would long ago have gone bankrupt.

- Salesforce

In a big contrast to Tesla's return-to-office mandate, Salesforce is dangling a carrot to workers, offering a \$10 donation to the local charity of their choice for each day they come into the office.

- Zoom

When the San Jose-based teleconferencing company Zoom announced this month that they were asking its employees to return to the office at least two days a week, news organizations around the world delighted in the idea that if Zoom – of all companies – is asking employees to return to the office as part of what it calls a “structured hybrid approach” then work from home is most definitely over. Yes, we can appreciate the irony. But the policy only applies to employees living within a 50-mile radius of the office, and it's only 2 days a week.

Of course, companies are not all in lock-step in mandating that employees return to work in the office. Some companies are going in the opposite direction, e.g. doubling down on remote work policies.

- The Counter Example: Yelp

Like other pure tech companies, including Airbnb and Slack, Yelp is going in the other direction – it's been closing or shrinking its major office locations, including those in New York, Chicago, Phoenix, and Washington DC, in favor of expanding the use of remote work. (It will maintain offices in San Francisco, Toronto, and London.) In the view of Yelp co-founder and CEO Jeremy Stoppelman, the majority of its nearly 5,000 workers prefer remote work. He feels that pushing them into hybrid office work schedules is the “worst of both worlds.”

There Are Some Disadvantages Of Working From Home That (Just About) Everyone Can Agree On

Do company managers asking for employees to return to in-office have a point?

It depends, of course, but it appears that even die-hard work-from-home employees can agree that WFH has some serious disadvantages. Here are two examples:

- Teleconferencing Fatigue

Teleconferencing fatigue, also commonly called Zoom Fatigue, is a common phenomenon where work-from-home employees can get overwhelmed by trying to concentrate on back-to-back virtual meetings, including one-on-one meetings with the manager, cross-team meetings with colleagues, sub-group project meetings, and virtual social gatherings designed to replace in-person beer and pizza parties.

Researchers at WebEx found that remote workers can experience significant virtual meeting fatigue, reporting that “81% of knowledge professionals and executives (who) experience physical ailments at the end of each day with video meetings.”

Online meetings may also not be as productive as they seem, according to a study published in Nature by researchers at Microsoft, who found that information workers who over-relied on email and messaging systems were less able to focus and convey complex information concepts compared to face-to-face interactions.

- Working Longer Hours From Home

Many work-from-home employees believe that, despite skepticism by their managers, they are working harder and putting in longer hours at home compared to when they worked in the office.

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Julia Solodovnikova

Formaspace

+1 800-251-1505

[email us here](#)

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