Steps To Take When Reopening Your Office During COVID-19

by Jamshid | Jul 1, 2020 | IT Blog

COVID-19 isn't over – hardly- but an increasing number of businesses in the US are planning to open up or allow employees to head back to the office – many for the first time in several months. As this all happens, there's likely to be new safely and security protocols, mandates and guidelines- all of which could have a big impact on how business is conducted going forward. That means big changes-again. Just as many have found their footing in a remote work world, some businesses are looking for the right balance between the pre-coronavirus days and what the workplace should look like going forward.

Here are the top 7 points you should keep in mind as you head back to the office. Not all are IT related, but helpful nonetheless.

1. **It's not the same as before** – One thing we all have learned is to expect the unexpected and accept the change. We all have to adapt to how we are working today and how to achieve our tasks and business goals with the limitation the pandemic has put upon us. We need to follow the government guidelines and do the best we can until COVID-19 is gone. And as we know it may take a while.
2. **Keep employees safe** – Stock plenty of personal protection equipment (masks, gloves, wipes), ensure that employees are physical distancing, and lock the main door to discourage outside visitors showing up unannounced. Clean surface areas such as: keyboards and mouse, printers, phones, scanners and any additional items that are used by more than one employee. If possible, put up plexiglass between cubicles. If appropriate, invest in a digital, touch free thermometer to take the temperature of staff and guests upon entrance.
3. **Start Slowly** – Plan and do things in phases. Let some of the employees come to the office and make sure the core service that you provide doesn't falter and no interruption is experienced. If employees prefer to work from home, that option should be exercised. You may need to consider a hybrid model of being in the office and working remotely – from the entire staff, down to individuals who may want to or need to split their times.
4. **Client "On-site" visits and accepting visitors** – To keep your employees and clients' safe, the visits can be arranged to be during "off hours" or when no one else is around. Alongside social distancing, implement the wearing of masks and gloves, as well as washing of hands and using hand sanitizer as a must.

5. **Do you have more office space than you need?** – With employees working from home, and some having been let go due to lack of work, you may find yourself in a situation in which you don't need as much space as you once did. Moving is an option, though it has its own added expenses such as packing and moving costs as well as cabling and phone number porting. You will also need to consider new services at the new location such as internet provider and telephones. Also, if you move into a smaller location, remember to factor in safely keeping employees apart. One resolution is the concept of renting a conference room. This has become a new craze and can be found popping up in most major cities. Simply select a date and time to rent said area, pay fee and hold meeting. This option is great for offices that are not in use full time.
6. **Using office computers –** Some employees take their office computers home and bring them back. Make sure that they are scanned with a reliable Anti-virus or updated definitions before connecting them to your network.
7. **Upgrading your office equipment** – At the start of the pandemic, there were issues that you might have encountered when "Working from home". Do you need to address them and upgrade any of your equipment or services, or terminate any of them? This is a good time to have a strategy meeting with your IT company and go over strengths and weaknesses of your network and its security. As well as modifying any contracts.

Although there are other challenges and there is no one-size fits all model to remedy all issues, we here at CEO Computers are knowledgeable and here to help. Call us at: 818-501-2281 or email us at: info@ceocomputers.com if you have any questions.

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