WORKPLACE REINTEGRATION

FOR SAFE AND HIGH PERFORMANCE

B|W|B|R

RESEARCH INFORMED.
PHASED APPROACH.
BRAND ALIGNED.

The workplace is an embodiment of performance — personal, organizational, and spatial. It's the link between the three that enhances how companies serve their stakeholders through innovation and service.
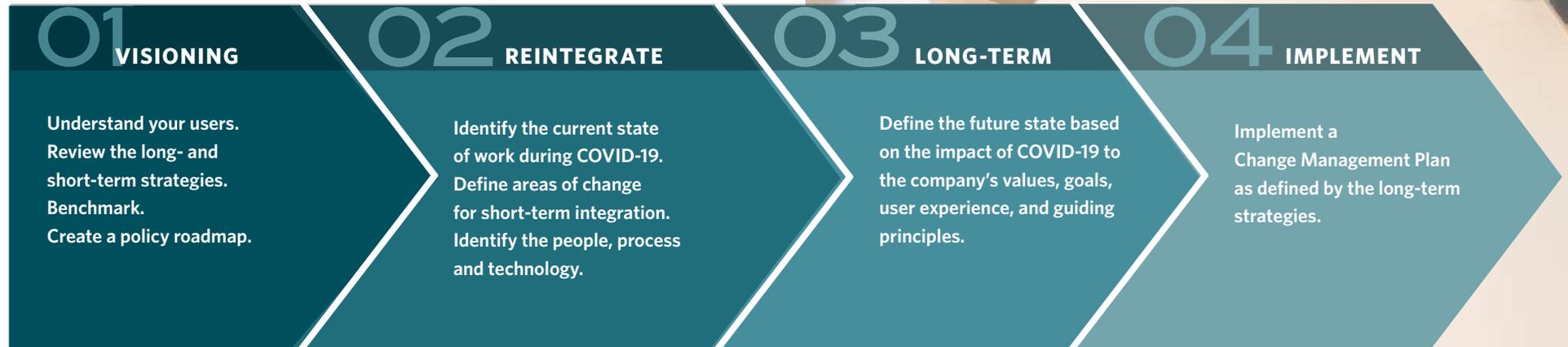
The pandemic brought on by COVID-19 has challenged our definitions of performance like nothing before. And how we return from this current state will test us even more— both as individuals and as organizations.

As designers, we leverage what we know about the current situation and use it to inform the future. Even at a time when what we're learning continues to evolve, our knowledge of human behavior and performance is guiding approaches for organizations to reoccupy spaces safely and effectively.

The road back to high performance will feature twists and turns. The following pages outline a road map with short- and long-term strategies that can help organizations manage the journey successfully.

THE ROAD MAP

01 VISIONING

Understand your users.
Review the long- and short-term strategies.
Benchmark.
Create a policy roadmap.

02 REINTEGRATE

Identify the current state of work during COVID-19.
Define areas of change for short-term integration.
Identify the people, process and technology.

03 LONG-TERM

Define the future state based on the impact of COVID-19 to the company's values, goals, user experience, and guiding principles.

04 IMPLEMENT

Implement a Change Management Plan as defined by the long-term strategies.

"Human-Centered Safety® puts the person at the center...organizations when they think about resiliency, it is about putting people first."

- Pete Smith, FAIA, BWBR President and CEO
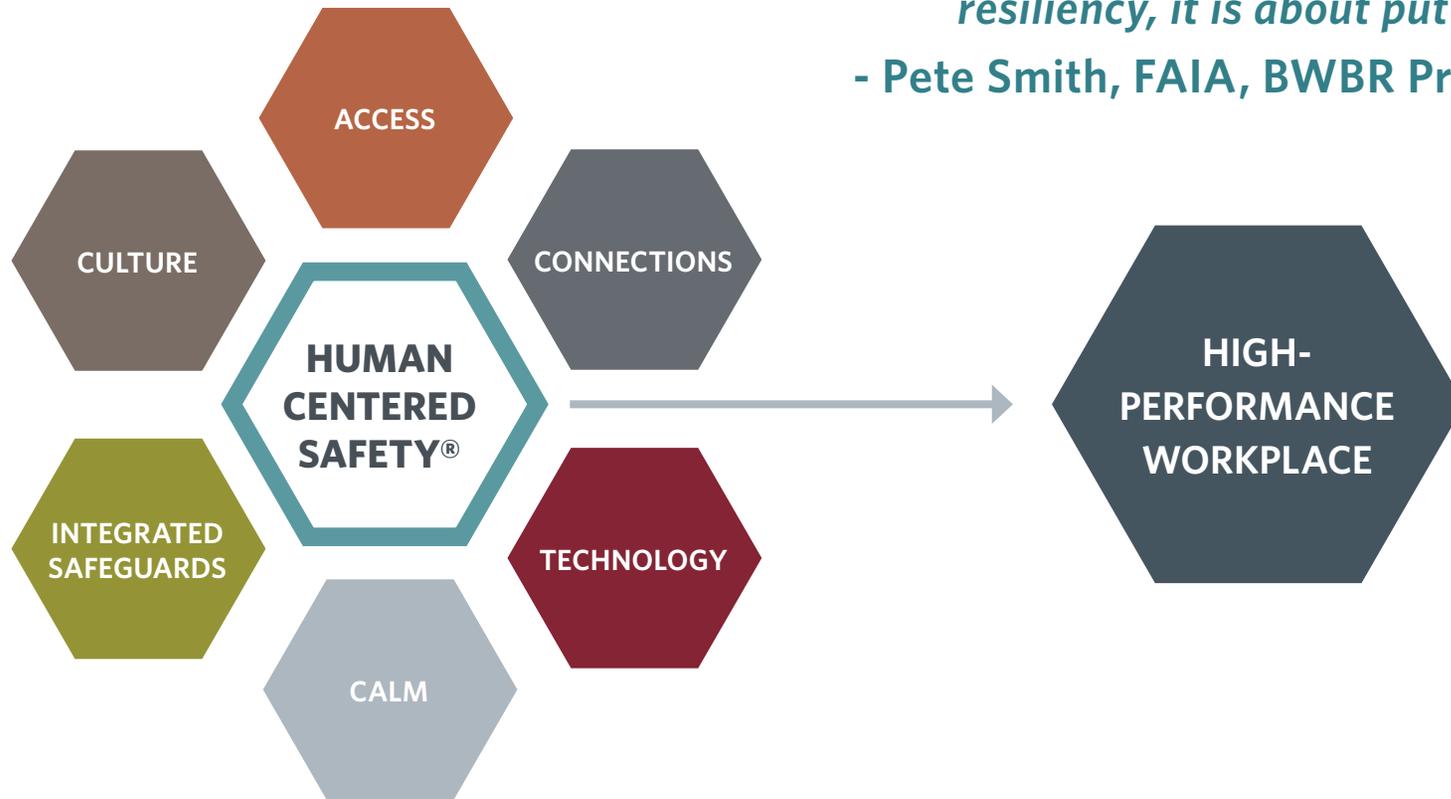
A HUMAN-CENTERED APPROACH

Safety is more than just physical. It's personal. It's emotional.

For organizations to regain the momentum they had before this massive disruption, they need to have the trust and confidence of their workforce that where they work is safe and supportive. That will take more than barriers and physical distancing protocols.

Helping people find hope and trust in a dynamic environment is at the heart of BWBR's Human-Centered Safety® design strategy. Born of work in mental health care and secure environments, *the evidence-based strategy looks at design through a comprehensive and holistic view, promoting safety and security with elegantly integrated elements that allow people to seamlessly feel part of the environment rather than controlled by it.*

What we've learned about human interactions with their environment is helping us to see the workplace differently — a space where a person's emotional and physical wellness is integral to their feelings of safety and security, and a place where people's anxieties are recognized along with their desire to belong.
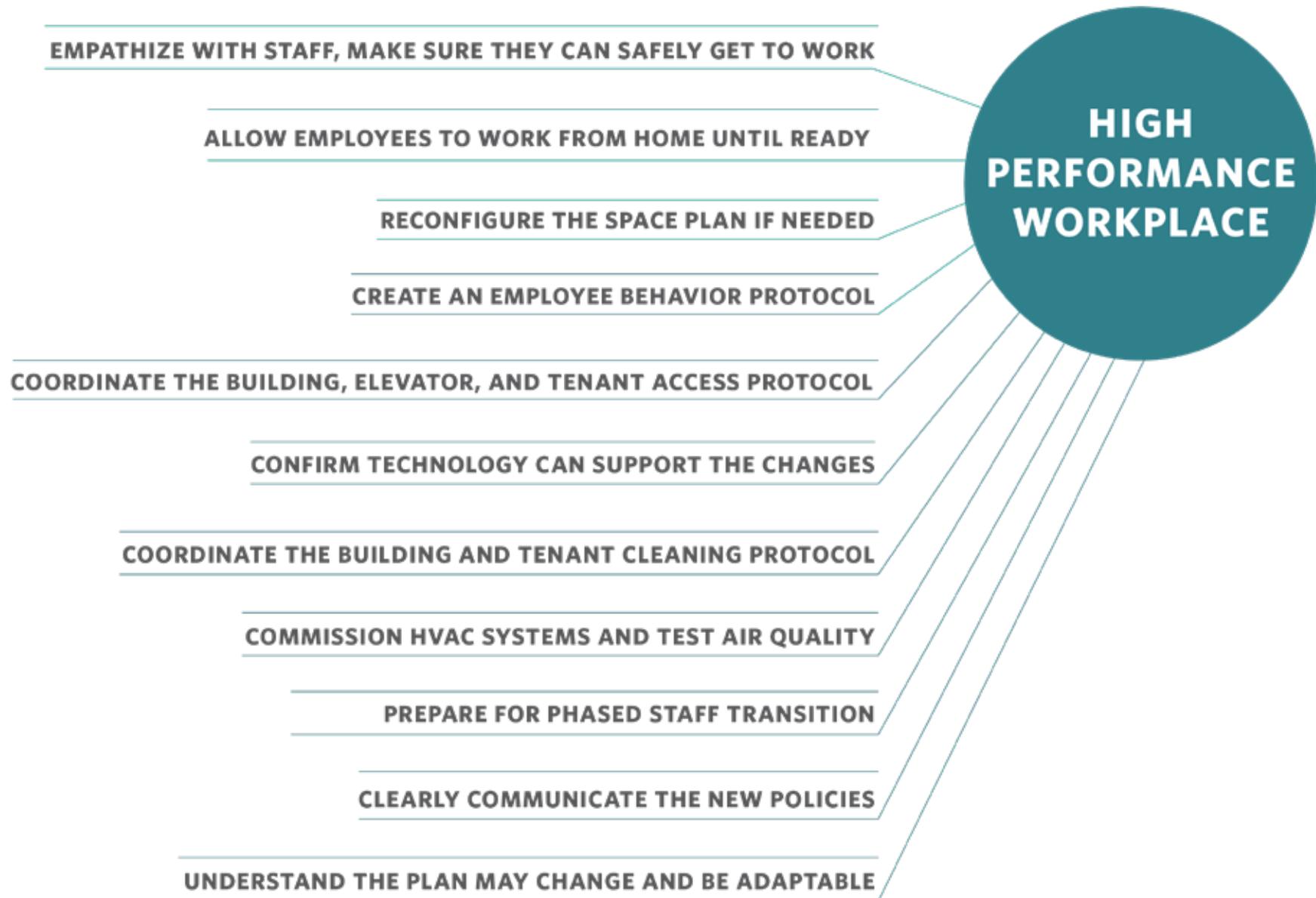
01 VISIONING

MAPPING THE PARADIGM SHIFT

Each client defines success in a unique way, applying those definitions to their projects and their spaces. Post COVID-19 will be no different.

The first step to a successful short- and long-term re-occupancy of the workplace is to understand the users and their desired situations, which could include remote work, infection protocols, mental health needs, and personal social distancing and safety requirements. People's needs are magnified by the different ways they come to work, access the building, move throughout the building, and choose where, when, and how they work.

Visioning helps organizations see the whole person in their workforce, benchmarking to learn what others are doing while looking at national guidelines. With this insight, they can create a policy guide for operations that empathizes with the user and transparently communicates the policies.

FRAMEWORK FOR REINTEGRATING BACK TO WORK

EMPATHIZE WITH STAFF, MAKE SURE THEY CAN SAFELY GET TO WORK

ALLOW EMPLOYEES TO WORK FROM HOME UNTIL READY

RECONFIGURE THE SPACE PLAN IF NEEDED

CREATE AN EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR PROTOCOL

COORDINATE THE BUILDING, ELEVATOR, AND TENANT ACCESS PROTOCOL

CONFIRM TECHNOLOGY CAN SUPPORT THE CHANGES

COORDINATE THE BUILDING AND TENANT CLEANING PROTOCOL

COMMISSION HVAC SYSTEMS AND TEST AIR QUALITY

PREPARE FOR PHASED STAFF TRANSITION

CLEARLY COMMUNICATE THE NEW POLICIES

UNDERSTAND THE PLAN MAY CHANGE AND BE ADAPTABLE

HIGH PERFORMANCE WORKPLACE

O1 **VISIONING**

O2 REINTEGRATE

A PHASED APPROACH, HEALTHY AND SAFE

Some measures are operational and can be implemented immediately. Others require greater time and financial investment. The value of such measures will depend on the unique work culture, safety tolerances, resources, and perceived value for each organization.

From mitigating the spread of a coronavirus to alleviating the anxieties employees could feel coming back to an environment with others, looking at the phases through the lens of health, wellness, and function can help organizations prioritize steps. Learning from behavioral health, the Human-Centered Safety® strategy breaks down options by the elements that impact how employees work and interact.

More importantly, seeing options though the eyes of employees enables organizations to keep the human in the center of their safety protocols.

With rapidly evolving knowledge around COVID-19, the AIA Re-Occupancy Assessment tool provides a comprehensive guide for organizations re-opening their offices. Any possible strategies should also follow current CDC guidelines.

ACCESS

DEDICATE LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM TO A SPECIFIC TEAM (WITH PROPER DISTANCING)

PROVIDE TOUCHLESS TRASH/RECYCLING CONTAINERS

CONVERT SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM INTO SINGLE OCCUPANCY WORKSPACE

ADD HEALTH SCREENING CHECKPOINT AT ENTRY

LIMIT VISITOR ACCESS; PROVIDE MEETING SPACE NEAR ENTRY

DESIGNATED DELIVERY DROP OF/PICK UP AREA WITH SANITIZING STATION

REMOVE FURNITURE TO MAINTAIN PROPER PHYSICAL DISTANCE

Building Access

Consider policies regarding any people, supplies, or materials coming into the facility:

- Conduct daily health screenings from home or at entry checkpoint. Ask health and travel questions and/or conduct temperature checks.
- Limit access to one entry for visitors/customers. Consider providing a separate entry for staff only.
- Provide method for contract tracing through badging or sign-in/out system in case of outbreak or health issue.
- Pre-register/schedule visitors to reduce potential congestion at security check-ins.
- Have materials and deliveries dropped off in a location or dock that limits face-to-face interaction and allows package disinfection prior to entering the workspace.
- Analyze elevator strategies to limit number of people in cabs and waiting in elevator lobbies. Dedicate elevators to certain floors.

Workplace Zoning

Minimize casual staff collisions by limiting movement of a group to a floor, zone or neighborhood.

- Make sure each group has access to support spaces such as printers, restrooms, break spaces, wellness, and huddle and meeting spaces.
- Designate entrances for each building zone where possible.

CONNECTIONS

MAINTAIN 6' DISTANCE BETWEEN EMPLOYEE WORKSTATIONS

ADD CLIP-ON DIVIDER SCREENS AT SIT-TO STAND DESKS

6' WIDE MINIMUM AISLE WITH ONE-WAY TRAFFIC OR 10' WIDE MINIMUM WITH TWO-WAY TRAFFIC
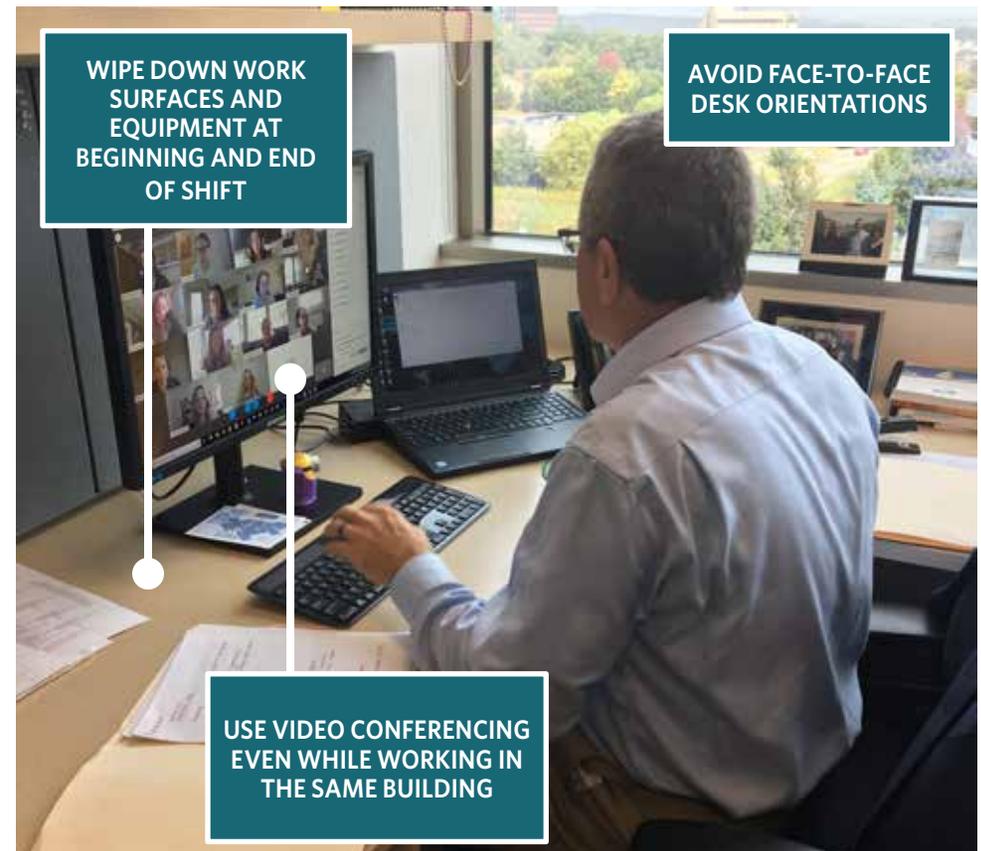
Physical Distancing Strategies

- Maintain 6' distance between employee workstations as well as between workstations and employees circulating.
- Designate one-way circulation for aisles, or two-way circulation with a 10' minimum width, using visual cues such as signs or tape on the floor.
- Consider 6' wide clearances around support areas, with visual cues such as signs and floor markings.
- Stagger and occupy every other desk/workstation to maintain minimum distance.
- Consider converting small conference rooms to single occupancy workspace.
- Designate "up" stair and "down" stair if have access to more than one stair. Consider touch points.
- Eliminate use of microwaves or space them with 6' waiting zones marked on the floor. Wipe down after each use.
- Dedicate larger conference/training rooms to specific groups or teams of 10 maximum (depending on room size); remove seating to maintain 6' distance between people. Consider leaving doors open to allow better air circulation. Limit time in enclosed spaces with more than one occupant.

- Eliminate shared lockers or separate lockers into smaller groups; stagger access times and sanitize shared lockers between users.
- Relocate or remove furniture for increased distance in lobbies, public areas, break rooms, conference rooms.
- Reduce or eliminate face-to-face desk orientations.
- Use clip-on divider screens at sit-to-stand desks to extend barrier height when standing.
- Where physical distancing cannot be maintained, add plexiglass to reception desks.

6' distances are based on federal recommendations and may be subject to change.
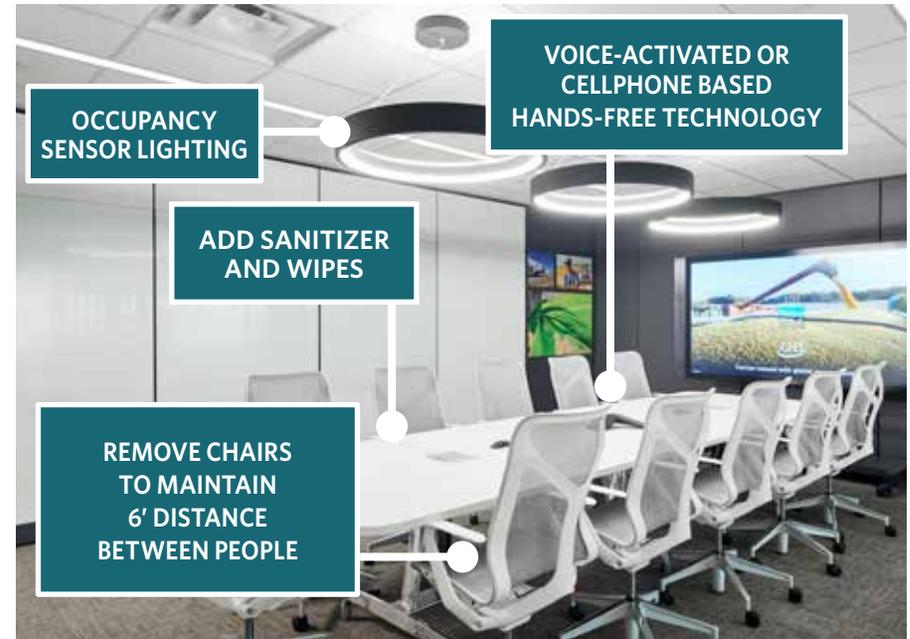

WIPE DOWN WORK SURFACES AND EQUIPMENT AT BEGINNING AND END OF SHIFT

AVOID FACE-TO-FACE DESK ORIENTATIONS

USE VIDEO CONFERENCING EVEN WHILE WORKING IN THE SAME BUILDING

TECHNOLOGY

Touch-Free Technology

- App-based room reservation systems.
- App-based control of conference room technology, unlocking or opening doors, air and temperature controls.
- Motion sensors for lights, sit-stand desks, power-operated doors, faucets, bottle fillers, restrooms (sinks, toilets, soap and paper towel dispensers).
- Voice-activated elevator controls when possible.
- Cloud printing/card access print-on-demand to avoid co-mingling at printers.

Building Systems

- Consider smart building technologies and dynamic HVAC air filtration strategies:
  - Increased ventilation and air changes
  - Negative pressurization
  - Filtration (in system and portable)
  - UV germicidal irradiation and ultraviolet C (during non-occupied hours)
  - Humidification targets
  - Energy recovery system bypass
- Provide cloud-based access control.
- Sterilize equipment and incoming supplies/packages (space requirements/health concerns).

OCCUPANCY SENSOR LIGHTING

VOICE-ACTIVATED OR CELLPHONE BASED HANDS-FREE TECHNOLOGY

ADD SANITIZER AND WIPES

REMOVE CHAIRS TO MAINTAIN 6' DISTANCE BETWEEN PEOPLE

WELLBEING

Operational

- Build a culture around holistic health.
- To mitigate stress among staff, communicate all health and safety precautions being taken, explain how and why policies are being implemented, and be transparent about any concerns or outbreaks that emerge.
- To mitigate stress and anxiety among staff, remove points of congestion in the office where someone might panic.
- Revisit policies around sick time, child/family care, and work from home (e.g., empower and encourage people to stay at home/work from home if not feeling well).

Physical

- Replace existing fabric or plush furniture with easy-to-clean products (vinyl, plastic, faux leather, and other non-porous surfaces).
- Provide living plant walls or biophilia to improve air quality and increase employee comfort.
- Encourage outdoor meeting, break and workspaces.
- Encourage taking the stairs.

Refer to the IWBI WELL Building for additional welbeing strategies.

O2 REINTEGRATE

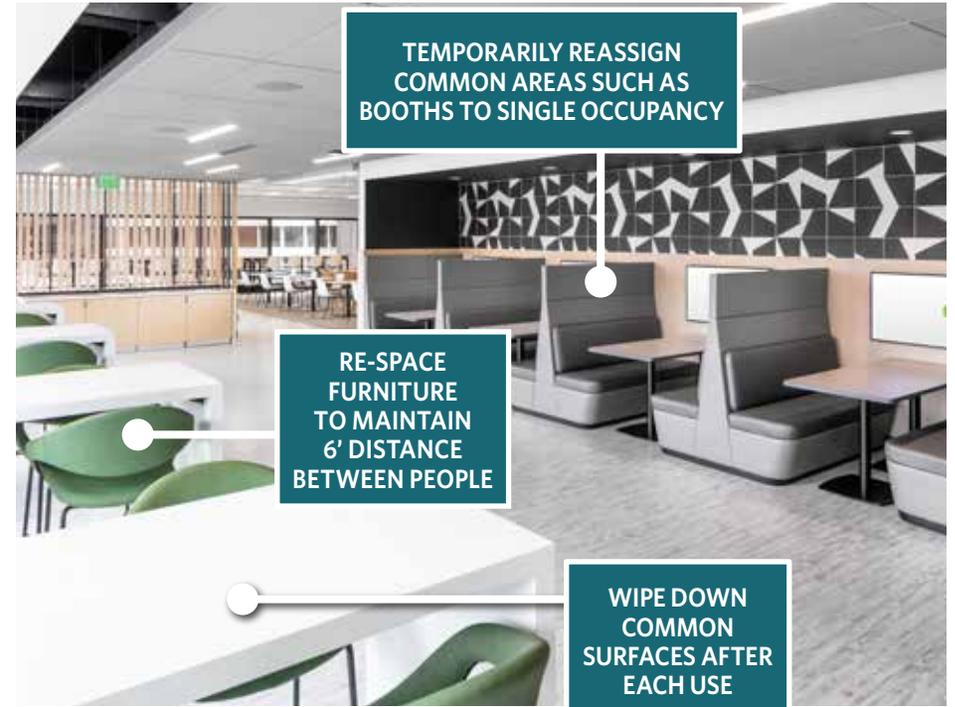# INTEGRATING SAFEGUARDS

Staffing

- Phase staff returning to the workplace, prioritizing jobs that benefit most from being in the facility.
- Use video conferencing even between staff working in the same building.
- Stagger work start times to reduce congestion.
- Stagger break times with cleaning between groups.
- Limit lunch/snacks to non-refrigerated items that can be stored at an individual's desk or locker.
- Limit amount of time in office (e.g., groups assigned to "in-office shifts" on certain days of the week).

Operational

- Review cleaning and emergency protocols
- Encourage personal protection, such as wearing masks, frequent handwashing, and wiping down surfaces often.
- Consider providing each employee with a personal protective kit that may include items such as masks, sanitizer/hand wipes, and digital thermometer to monitor health at home.
- Replace filters and sanitize water coolers, coffee makers, and ice makers.
- If a building has been vacant or partially shut down:
  - Check auto-flush batteries in toilets (or conduct regular flushing).
  - Run faucets/showers to prevent dried-out taps.
  - Be mindful of seasonal transitions: adjust heating/cooling systems for changing humidity and temperatures.
- Consider periodic deep cleaning by a professional cleaning company.

Facilities and Supplies

- Provide sanitizer or wipes and trash bins where people may touch items such as door handles, elevator buttons, handrails, and equipment.
- Install hands-free trash/recycling receptacles, door foot pulls such as StepNPull or design doors to swing out (especially for high-use areas such as restrooms).
- Consider splash zones at sinks.

TEMPORARILY REASSIGN COMMON AREAS SUCH AS BOOTHS TO SINGLE OCCUPANCY

RE-SPACE FURNITURE TO MAINTAIN 6' DISTANCE BETWEEN PEOPLE

WIPE DOWN COMMON SURFACES AFTER EACH USE

CULTURE

Physical

- Incorporate space strategies as part of business continuity planning.
- Address staff's need for more "personal spaces."
- Consider strategies to increase square footage per person or reduce amount of people in office at a time.
- Design meeting space/work space to facilitate more virtual meetings.
- Divide a larger workplace into smaller 'studios' and/or create smaller satellite offices:
  - Smaller satellite offices can be close to where employees live, limiting their travel radius.
  - This could be a permanent change or developed as a contingency plan in case of another pandemic or emergency event.

03 LONG-TERM

STRATEGIZING FOR WORK BEYOND TODAY

COVID-19 did more than disrupt flow. It shifted our values, and it opened our eyes to options that previously were dismissed as inaccessible or unachievable.

User experience. Wellbeing. Connections. The goals that drive many of the short-term tactics are goals that live long past the immediate priorities of re-opening workspaces. Organizations wanting to reclaim the high-performance space that inspires innovative thinking and products need a longer-term strategy that is holistic as well as strategic.
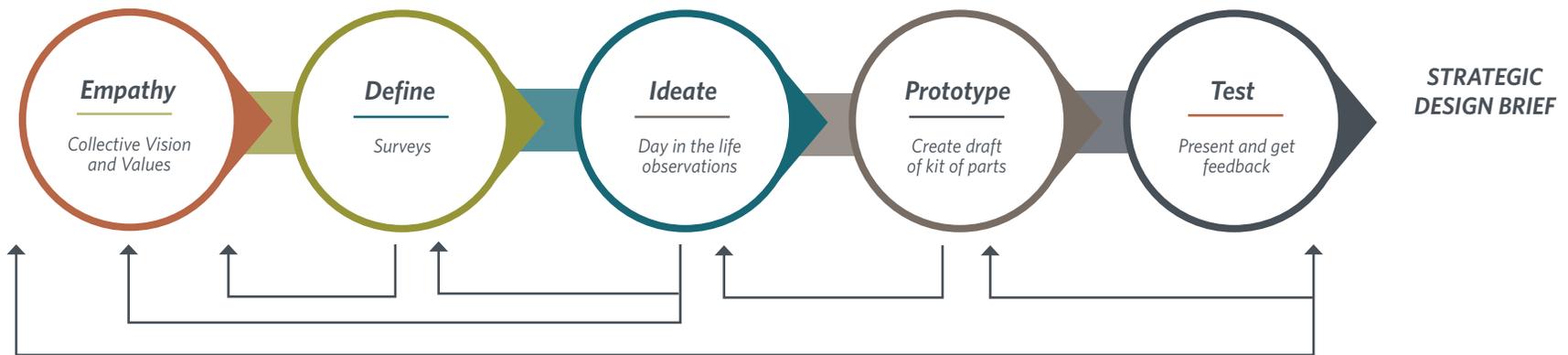
Identifying and prioritizing what is now valuable to an organization requires a deeper thought process than does prioritizing short-term tactics. Design thinking gives organizations the ability to efficiently manage the process to long-term strategies and produce stronger solutions. The outcome is a comprehensive Strategic Design Brief, influenced by new practices, leveraging best practices, and outlining future practices.

REDEFINING HIGH PERFORMANCE — BY DESIGN

The remarkable speed at with COVID-19 disrupted how organizations worked was only matched by the speed in which people adapted.

The immediacy of the crisis demanded reactionary responses. Moving into the "new normal" in which organizations find themselves requires a more deliberate and nuanced approach, driven both by newly discovered abilities and what is valued most about working together in a physically connected environment.

Design thinking is a process that helps organizations develop an understanding of the people for whom they are designing. Far from linear, the iterative approach helps organizations develop, ask, challenge, and answer the appropriate questions. From the answers come a Strategic Design Brief that is well researched, well informed, and well planned.

Empathy
Collective Vision and Values

Define
Surveys

Ideate
Day in the life observations

Prototype
Create draft of kit of parts

Test
Present and get feedback

STRATEGIC DESIGN BRIEF

WHY A STRATEGIC DESIGN BRIEF?

PLAN SPACE ACCORDINGLY
Design new concepts based on what users say they value and desire both for interior renovations and new construction.

ALIGN PERFORMANCE SUCCESSFULLY
Leverage building systems and standards, such as WELL and LEED, to elevate personal health with organizational health.

DEPLOY TECHNOLOGY EFFECTIVELY
Integrate smart technologies — for buildings, people, and organization — that align with needs and expectations.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF A HIGH PERFORMANCE WORKPLACE

CULTURE

Maintaining, aligning, and building core values during times of crisis leads to a more resilient organization able to react and reorganize during crises.

HUMAN-CENTERED SAFETY®

Feeling safe is at the heart of a person's confidence and trust in a space. From de-densification to infection control, air quality, access to healthy food, and office movement, policies, procedures, and elemental design influence both physical and mental responses to changes.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EDI)

Belonging comes from an organization that engages EDI and recognizes the full potential of each individual, where innovation thrives, and views, beliefs and values are integrated.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is both social and environmental, creating a framework for excellence encompassing elements from water, energy, resources, ecology, equitable communities, wellness, economy, and discovery.

FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE

There are three modes of work: concentrate, collaborate, and create/ideate. COVID-19 has given people the ability to know where they can work. Agility and flexibility give organizations an effective way to deploy the optimal space to accommodate that work.

INTEGRATED INNOVATION

Leveraging technology and smart building systems will help us connect, collaborate, control, and conserve to facilitate the user, mobility, facilities, and energy and waste management.

04 IMPLEMENT

MANAGING CHANGE THROUGH A MANAGEMENT PLAN

Companies often ease their team into change management. COVID-19 forced change.

The remarkable agility employees have shown moving to a distributed work environment is matched for many by a yearning to return to what they've known. Even as the crisis forced change, crises are temporary, making short-term change palatable.

Resistance to more permanent change is human. Regardless of whether processes stay the same or are completely different, any environmental change is personal as well as professional.

Successful change management is built on a strong foundation of trust supported by communication, education, and managed expectations.

Successful implementation of long-term strategies is realized through an effective change management program.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT - PLANNED AND MANAGED

Often the most innovative solutions are created during periods of uncertainty.

Bringing staff along with the changes that those innovative solutions spawn requires a carefully organized program to engage them early in the process, educate about the benefits, and communication frequently and authentically,

Effective change management plans include:

- Early testing of certain planned changes, such as prototypes or mock-ups. Testing affords staff the opportunity to experience the design first-hand and offer candid feedback, giving organizations the information to refine solutions.
- Pre- and post-occupancy surveys and interviews. Benchmarking employee experiences before and after implementation gives employees and organizations data on a broad scale in which to see change-effecting experiences.
- Champions from the middle out. Messengers matter for how messages are received by staff. Change agents below the leadership level often have a more personal relationship to staff, making communication about change more personal and appreciated. Other important members of the change management team are representatives from human resources, communications, and IT.
- Communications, often and in various forms. Progress updates keep staff engaged throughout implementation. They can excite as well as inform, utilizing plans, images, and timeline graphics in presentations, intranets, videos, and promotional displays.

Change management is more than just supporting successful transitions. An effective plan improves employee satisfaction and retention; enhances an organization's mission, values, and vision; and creates more innovative solutions.

Identify the Areas of Change

Review Barriers and Enablers of Change

Create a Clear Communication Strategy

Assign Change Advocates

B|W|B|R

CONTACT US

JENNIFER STUKENBERG
JSTUKENBERG@BWBR.COM
651.290.1920

KELLY HENSLER
KHENSLER@BWBR.COM
608.358.2127