



Members Respond to the Coronavirus Challenge

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What's the biggest work/COVID-19 challenge you're facing this week?

We are focused on helping our clients with what their Next Normal workplace will be. Will offices go away? (No) Will open offices go into the history books? (No) Will businesses need less office space? (quite possibly and definitely worth analyzing) Is Work from Anywhere here to stay? (Yes, with qualifications)

The available amount of information, advice, warnings, and plain old anecdotes is sometimes overwhelming. We have found significant success in developing data-driven strategies by utilizing HR and third-party surveys, analyzing utilization data, and check-ins with business stakeholders.

What's the current situation in your city relative to opening non-essential businesses?

Houston and Texas are in the middle of a phased reopening of businesses. The State of Texas has begun to loosen restrictions, the City of Houston is urging continued caution, and businesses and individuals are negotiating that landscape on their own. Developing effective policies and protocols, evaluating, and then reevaluating on the fly, and managing employee expectations are full-time efforts for our Return to Workplace teams.

How do you think COVID-19 will bring about permanent changes in corporate real estate and workplace strategy?

The Workplace--now more than ever--must be a compelling place. Employees have been empowered in how and where to get work done. Organizations that create human-centered workplaces, putting employees first, explicitly supporting a business' values and mission, and amplifying company culture, will thrive.

In this Next Normal, safety and security are givens not guiding principles. Technology-rich workplaces will robustly support both solo and group work that simply isn't possible at home. Work from Anywhere--home, neighborhood hubs, and third places--will augment this new workplace with virtual work a staple of the Next Normal. Solutions will be more flexible and changeable, offer almost infinite user choice, and be compelling in a way that supports resiliency and safety, but amplifies a human-centric ethos.

Office space requirements will look different and quite possibly be reduced over time. The office will look different with more effective settings for small group work, a variety of different solutions--and choices--for solo work, greater interest in safe and effective shared work areas,

and alternatives for large group gatherings. Landlords and building owners will accelerate the move to safe, clean, and compelling amenities to better augment tenant needs.