



What
happens
NEXT?

PREPARING
TO GO BACK
TO YOUR
WORKPLACE

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At the moment it feels like we are
all living in limbo, does it not?

Confined to our houses and gardens if we are lucky enough. Our homes have turned into offices, kindergartens, schools... probably very exclusive bars too! All under one roof.

It is an uncertain time to say the least. And we do not even really have an end in sight.

But while we wait on officials to make a call on how long this lockdown will last, we should really be taking some time now to make a plan for our businesses, and the eventual return to the workplace.

We know that the people who planned for the event of a lockdown found the whole process of sending staff to work from home a lot less stressful.

Those who left it until the last minute? Well, they struggled, and have definitely wasted time

and suffered a bigger loss in productivity than they needed to.

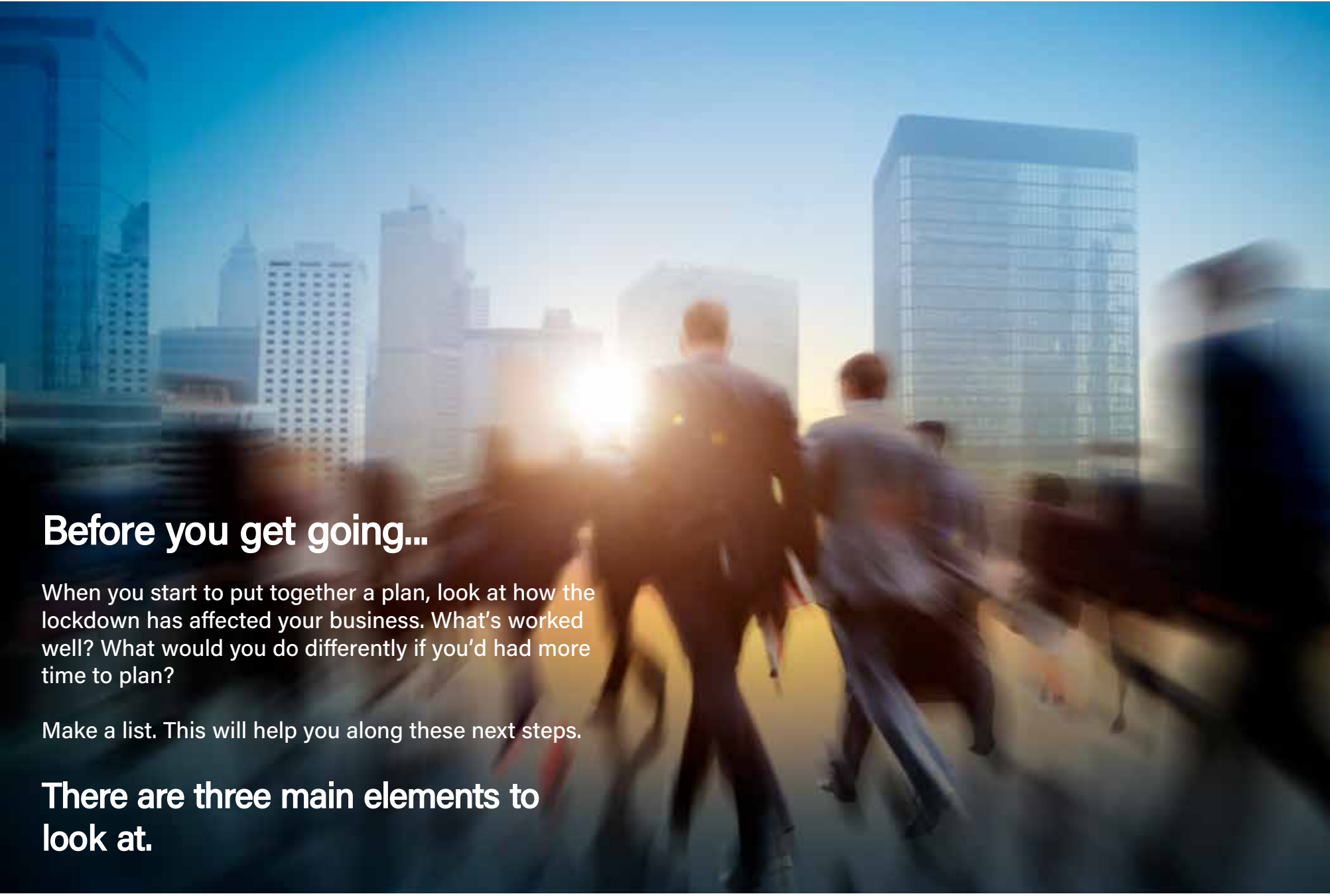
So while we were unsure as to whether a lockdown would happen, we know for sure that we will be returning to our workplaces at some point. The only question is... when?

**Start planning for that
eventuality now and
ensure it is as smooth
a process as possible.**

"Why do we need a plan?" I hear you ask. "Can not everyone just, you know, come back to the office?"

Well, not really. There is a little more to think about than that.

It is not a mammoth task. You just need to know what to consider and you can make your plan.



Before you get going...

When you start to put together a plan, look at how the lockdown has affected your business. What's worked well? What would you do differently if you'd had more time to plan?

Make a list. This will help you along these next steps.

There are three main elements to look at.



First, look
at your
people

It is likely that there will be a phased end to the lockdown. That might mean that not all of your people will come back to your workplace at the same time.


You may have people working for you that are at higher risk (or live with someone who is high risk), so they may have to stay home longer.

You may also have had to lose some of your team due to the impact on your business.

Basically, things are not going to click straight back to the “old normal”. And honestly, they may never be the same again for many of us.

You have probably found that having your people work remotely has not been so bad. Perhaps before this you did not think it was possible to have remote workers? Will this help you to become more flexible with the way you work, and expect your team to work?

In the case of a phased return to your workplace, look at how well your team has coped over the last few weeks. Those who have thrived should perhaps be among the last to return.



Those who have struggled (and are not in a risk category) should be first back.

Would you consider making working from home a regular option for your team?

A photograph of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard in a bright, modern office environment. A coffee cup is visible on the desk next to the laptop. The image has a soft, warm light filter. A dark green hexagonal graphic is overlaid on the bottom right, containing the text.

**Then look
at your
equipment**

While everyone has been working from home, they have needed devices to work on, and a setup that allows them to access your network, files, applications, etc.

How has the at home setup worked for you?

If you planned ahead of time for a lockdown, you have probably had an almost seamless switch to home working. At least as far as your IT is concerned, anyway.

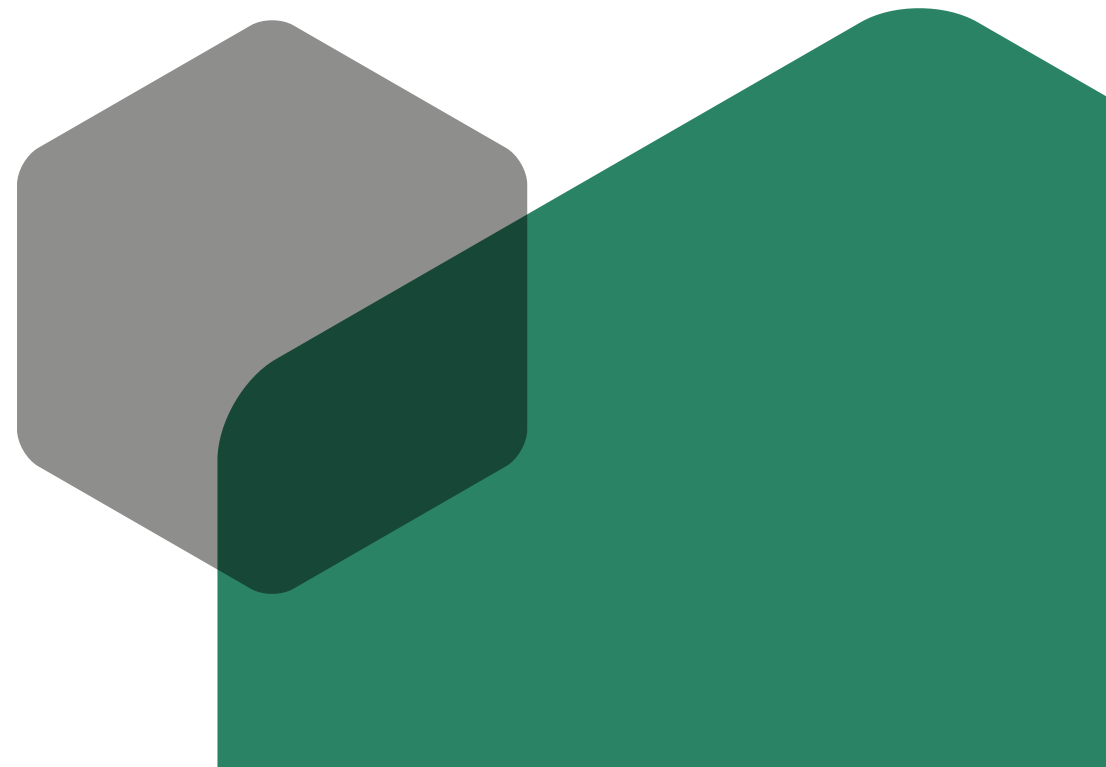
If you did not, what are the changes that you would make once the restrictions are loosened? What changes would you need to make to allow working from home feasible for any of your team on a regular basis?

How will you manage the safekeeping and return of any company equipment during this process? Did you or your IT service provider keep a list of what was handed out?

Will your IT service provider need to spend a lot of time with you setting everything back up in the workplace?

Again, if you plan to keep some staff working from home permanently or regularly, do they have everything they need to make the switch? Do you need to purchase extra devices or licenses for applications?

This is the part of your plan where you will need to liaise with your IT service provider. What can they do to help the move back be as easy as possible for you?





CYBER SECURITY

**What about
your data?**

Access to your data has been moved across devices from your workplace, to homes, and now needs to come back to the workplace again. Has your data security been compromised in any way during this process?

Strictly speaking, if you have managed the switch well and your people have followed protocol, your data should be watertight. All the additional checks and measures should mean that your anti-virus software is up-to-date and the most recent versions of everything should be installed.

However, if you managed the move in a rush, perhaps you could have been a little more thorough?

Whatever the case, when people and devices start coming back to your workplace, it is a great opportunity to update everything, check the strength of passwords, and ensure all data is constantly backed up.

Making sure data is safe – and keeping it that way – must be a very high priority for all businesses these days.



**Now look
at cost
savings**



There is no doubt that times are going to be hard for a while. The economy has been impacted in a big way, and we are all going to have to tighten our belts in some way.

IT has never been something to under invest in. Because that will have a direct impact on how productive your team will be and how safe your data is.

If your business found that the move to working from home was actually quite easy, how can you use this to your advantage and save money in the process?

For example, if you plan to allow some of your people to work from home on a permanent or regular basis, what would that mean for your premises? Could you make savings by downsizing?

Are there any other things that you've found yourself less reliant on than usual? Maybe your future business meetings could be held online rather than face to face, saving travel time and cost?



The changes will differ from business to business. But there are probably some areas that you can now review to make some savings.

**The time
to take
action is
NOW**

Whether you can not wait to get back to your workplace, or you are secretly enjoying working from home, hopefully now you will see that a little planning can go a long way.

This is not something that should be left for a few weeks. Please do not put it off. The more work you do now on planning your technology and implementing it, the easier it will be for you and your team when the lockdown starts to ease.

*If you could use some
help planning and
implementing the
technical side of the
return to your workplace,
please get in touch.*

*We would love to help you
make it a smooth
transition, without
wasting any further time.*

INNOVATIVE

N e t w o r k S o l u t i o n s

980 Mary Crest Road, Unit A
Henderson, NV 89014

702-568-9006

info@innovativenow.com | www.InnovativeNow.com