

Response to
COVID-19

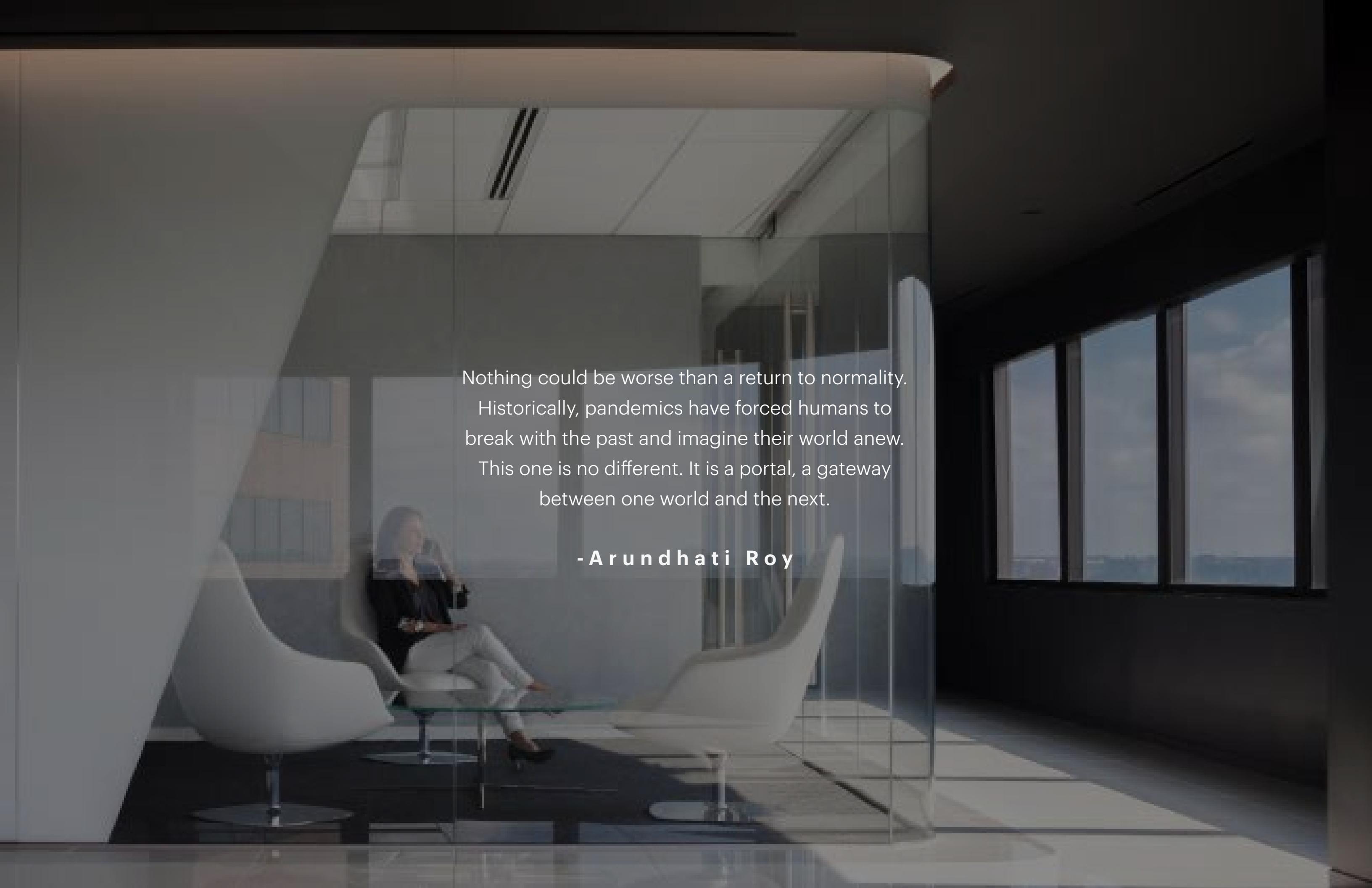
Work Place Agility

Returning To Work Places After COVID-19

Fall 2020

HKS



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a black top and light-colored trousers, is seated in a white, modern, curved chair. She is holding a phone to her ear. The setting is a modern office lounge with large windows in the background, showing a cityscape. The room is dimly lit, with light coming from the windows. The text is overlaid on the image.

Nothing could be worse than a return to normality.
Historically, pandemics have forced humans to
break with the past and imagine their world anew.
This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway
between one world and the next.

-Arundhati Roy

Introduction

This too shall pass.

As organizations consider a return to work places, it is important to understand this is a transient moment. While things remain uncertain, we need to manage our desire for immediate solutions with a focus toward treating our resources and assets with care. **We need to continue to remain flexible.**

This document sets out to frame an approach that embraces systems thinking and **focuses on the well-being** of talent as the top priority for the work place. With this in mind, we can manage this re-entry to our work places with **new behavior, policies and protocols** to mitigate the specific risks of the contagion while we truly seek to understand what will help make our organizations more resilient in the future.

We can create solutions for the current constraints that optimize impact and minimize investment while building a data set to optimize at a more distant future.

When the science is unclear use the **Precautionary Principle***. HKS considers this a beneficial framework for decision making, and uses the Precautionary Principle as one way to determine the applicability of concepts and design guidance.

In it's simplest form, the Precautionary Principle is about caution practiced in the context of uncertainty. If we think of what the global pandemic has made clear is the level of uncertainty. In order to be People First, we need to anticipate harm before it occurs, treat our resources and assets with care.

We can think differently and intentionally about the role of our work places in the future and plan for true optimization of this important asset.

*To learn more about the Precautionary Principle, see the below links.

1) www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1240435

2) www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/mission/principles/principle-7





Helping Clients Navigate Change

As Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to impact work places globally, it is important to observe industry forecasts and trends that will ultimately shape your recovery strategy as offices begin to plan for the return of employees. This document outlines our opinions for first steps companies should take in response so that they can prioritize employees safety and well-being, while thinking and gaining knowledge to inform future stages. HKS is committed to supporting its industry partners along this uncharted path.

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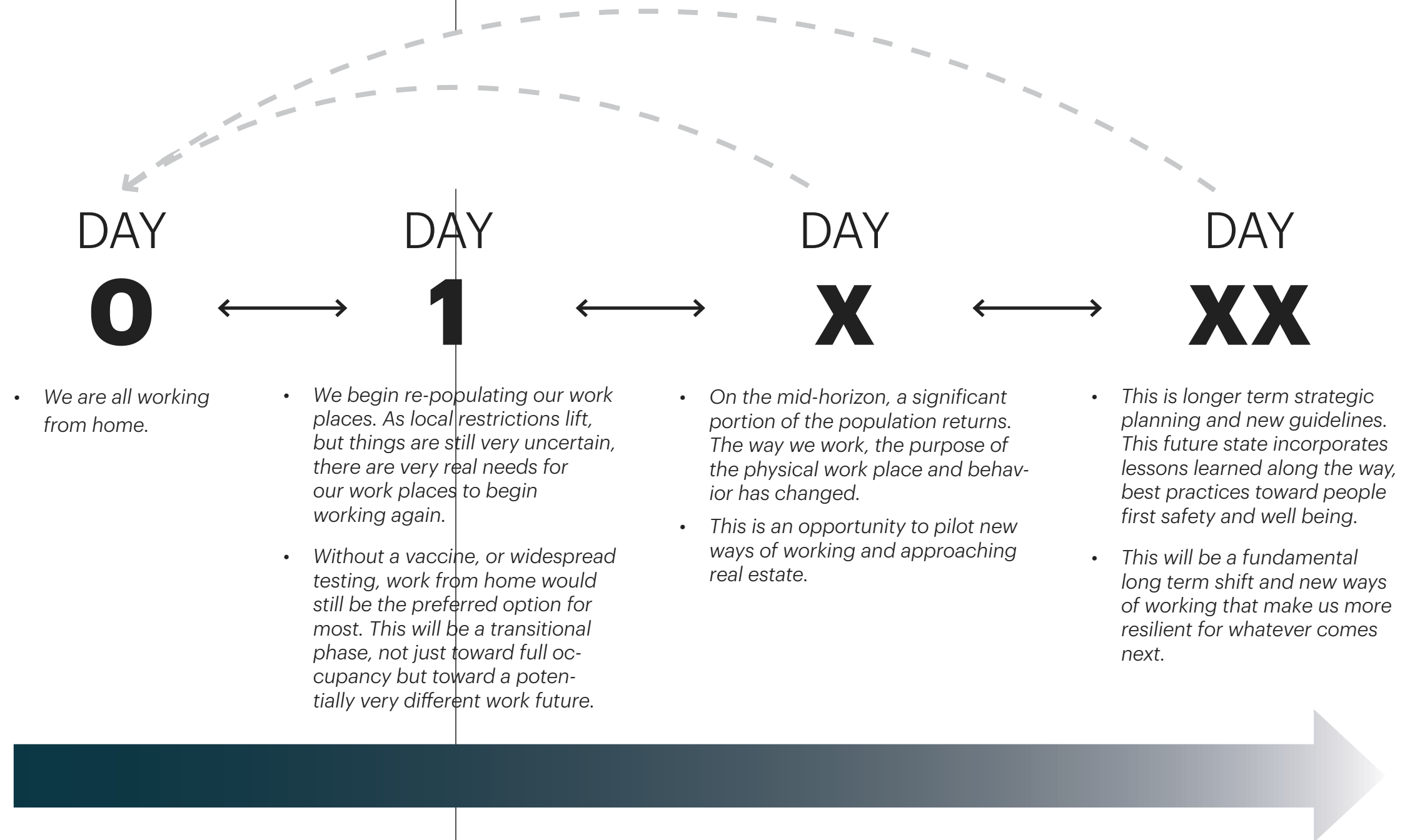
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Implementation Timeline

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a **single** step.

- Lao Tzu

The current, global pandemic has stopped us in our tracks and demanded that we slow the pace of our once hectic lives. We are feeling overwhelmed and uncertain how to proceed now and in the future. All at once it feels as though we have lots of information and not enough information to figure out how to move forward.



Systems Approach

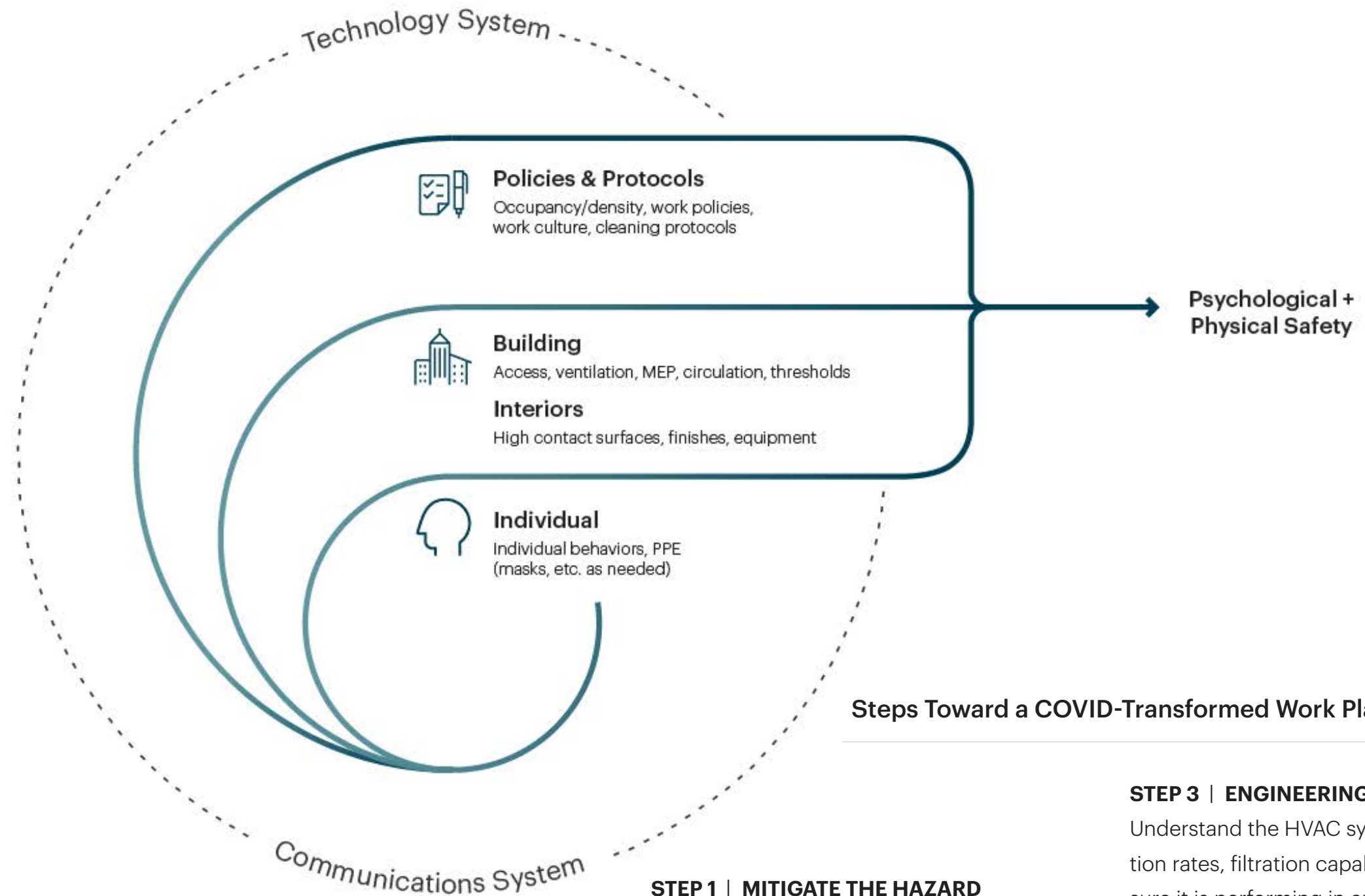
The essence of Systems Thinking is to focus on the whole, the parts are secondary. As we consider a response to the current contagion, the various parts are essential but the interrelationship between the parts as they work together is critical to meet the challenge before us.

The individual, the organization, the building/space, policies, protocols supported by Technology and Communication are the keys to a responsive and ultimately transformed work place.

(3) <https://innovationmanagement.se/imtool-articles/why-a-systems-approach-to-innovation-is-critical/>

(4) <https://hbr.org/2020/04/what-makes-an-office-building-healthy>

(5) <https://www.hksinc.com/how-we-think/research/reboot-readiness-a-primer-on-how-to-design-for-contagions/>



Steps Toward a COVID-Transformed Work Place

STEP 1 | MITIGATE THE HAZARD

Those who can, stay at home. Communicate the importance of individual responsibility, and all the steps being taken to support safety and health.

STEP 2 | ALTERNATIVES

Identify multiple ways people can produce from place other than the pre-contagion primary work environment. Minimize the need for all to be in the office in order to function.

STEP 3 | ENGINEERING CONTROLS

Understand the HVAC system, the ventilation rates, filtration capabilities, etc. to ensure it is performing in an optimal way.

STEP 4 | BUILDING CONTROLS

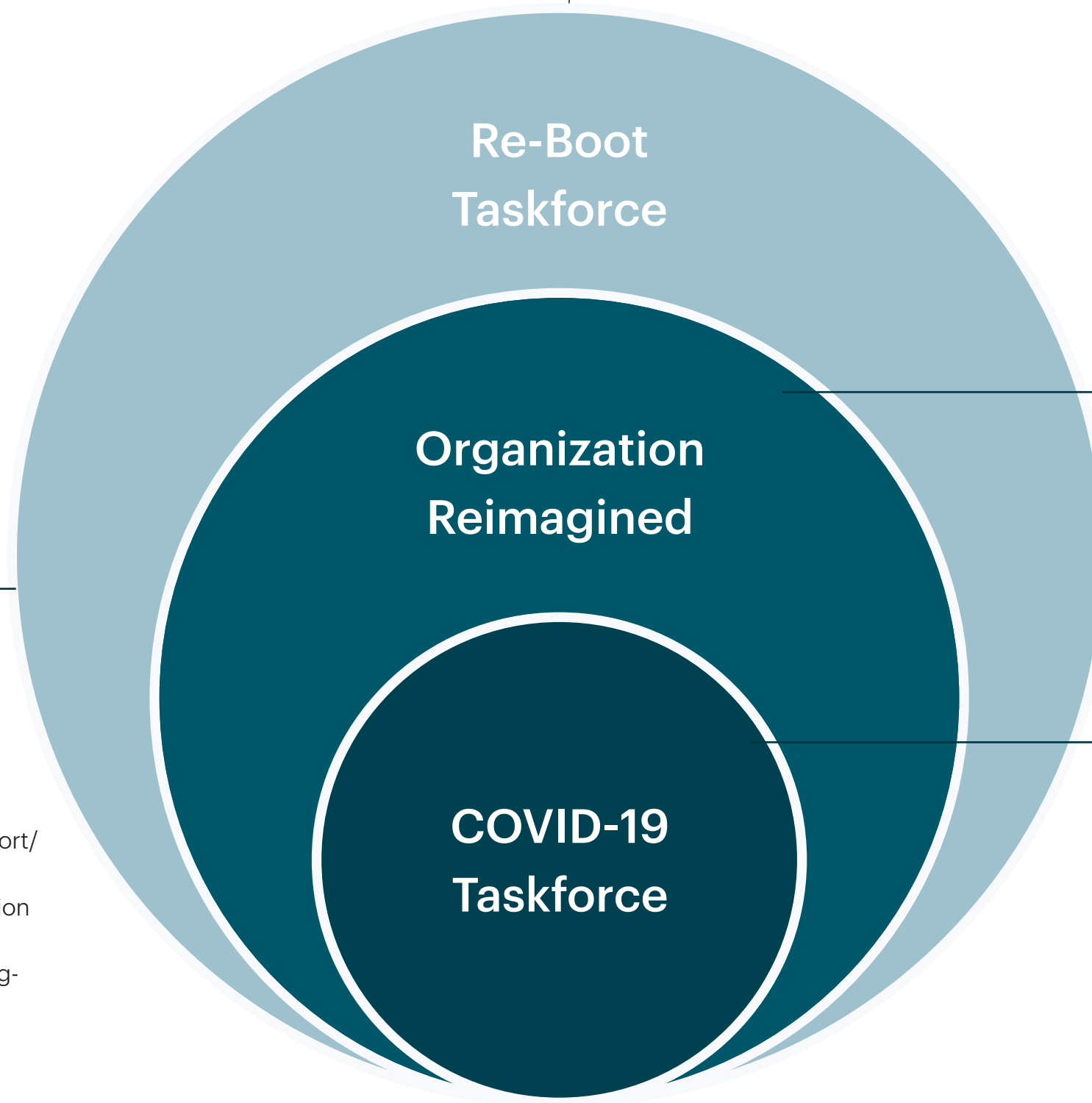
Managing high contact surfaces, building/space access and flow, cleaning protocols, scheduling and tracking.

STEP 5 | PPE

Provide masks/gloves/hand sanitizers as a final level of precaution.

Assemble the Team

With representation from key stakeholders within the organization, these teams can collaborate and intersect to maintain the organizations business continuity, plan for tomorrow and strategize for the future.



Re-Boot Taskforce

Office Re-Entry Strategy Team

- Fully informed team that provides support/ leadership at the local and office level
- Responsible for disseminating information to their constituents
- Plan for both short-term (Day 1) and long-term (Day XX) planning by location an user group

Organization Reimagined

Transformation Think Tank

Flexible and Evolving Team with Enterprise, Sector, Geography Leaders

- Cross-functional idea generation, areas to explore, research, design implications in a COVID-transformed world
- Internal & externally focused on Day X and Day XX
- Organized for agile transformation

COVID-19 Taskforce

Pandemic Business Continuity Team Enterprise & Sector Leaders

- Responsible for firmwide COVID-19 response, direction, support, & resourcing
- Focuses on Day 0 (crisis response) to Day 1
- Provides investment/policy/communications recommendations to the ExCom and Board for decision-making and approval
- Will eventually shift from crisis response to ongoing business continuity

People First Considerations

Given the current conditions, business will be conducted in a remote environment.

Continue to encourage remote working and evaluate on an ongoing basis.



Consider creating a dedicated, internal resource page to keep the organization informed in real time and provide access to policy, protocols and instructions.

What does that mean?

- All internal meetings & collaboration will continue to be virtual.
- All Client and Prospect engagement will continue to be virtual (wherever possible).
- No business travel (unless necessary & approved).
- Leaders may not schedule or encourage on-site presence or face-to-face meetings.

Can you work out of the offices?

- Yes, if you have need to physically be in the office, you may.
- This is a **personal decision** - not a team or leader decision.
- Adhering to state and municipal guidelines and implementing CDC-recommended health and safety protocols.
- Every office has a different timeline and may have unique guidelines for occupancy limitations.

Is there a possibility this could change?

- Actively monitoring the situation and will remain flexible to external forces or changes that may arise.
- Primary concerns are the health and well-being of our people and serving our clients.



Individual Decision Tree

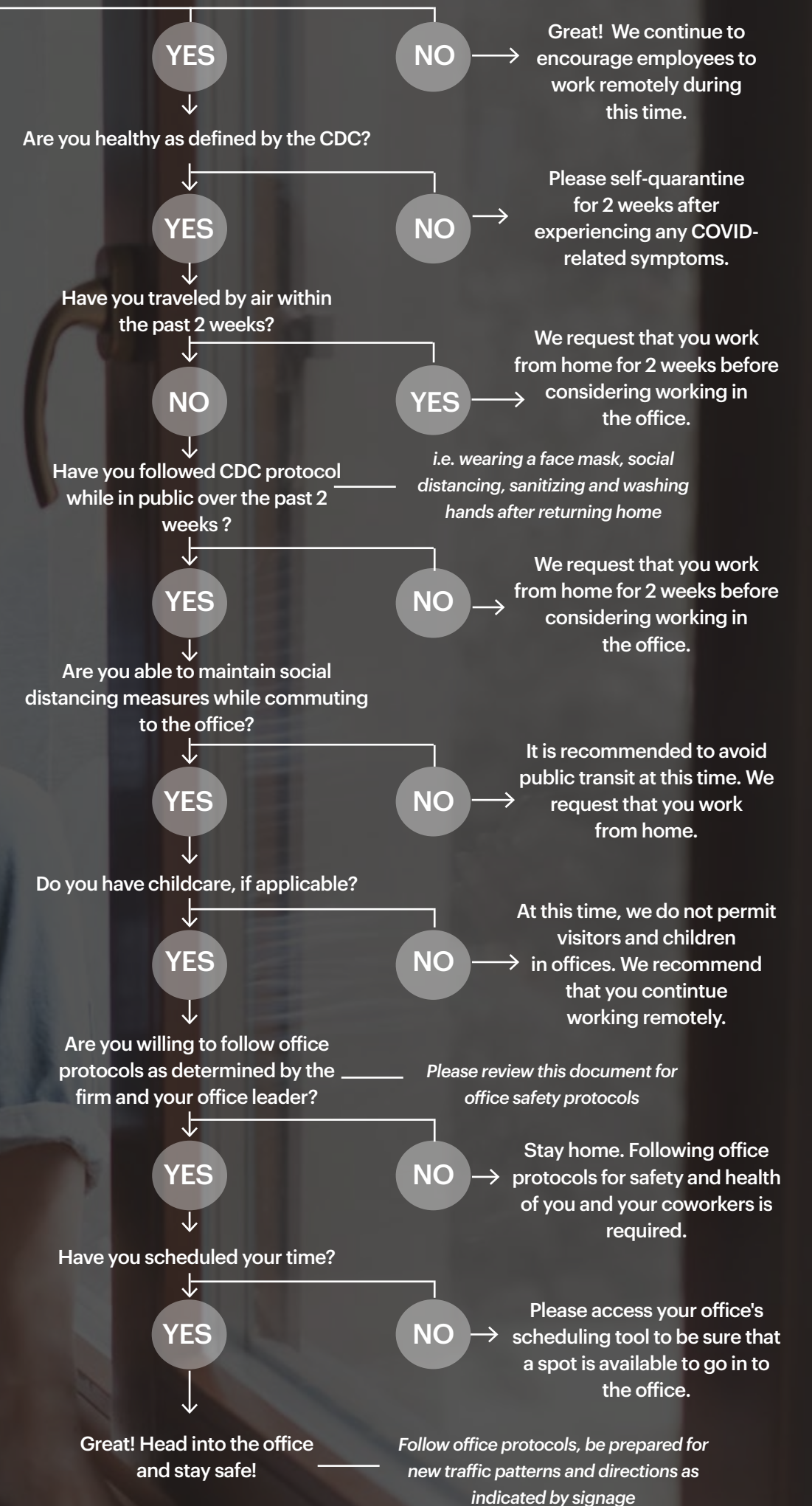
(6) <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/here-s-how-coronavirus-has-changed-the-world-of-work-covid19-adam-grant/>

A key foundation of the transformational opportunity in front of us is trust. Trust in managing people that are not physically present. Trust in the individual to not only manage their own schedule, but accept a higher degree of individual responsibility for the safety and welfare of those around them.

As you consider returning to work places, communicating trust and individual responsibility will be key.



Do You Need To Work From The Office?



Understanding the Experience: The Journey Back to Work

(7) <https://www.hksinc.com/how-we-think/research/reboot-readiness-a-primer-on-how-to-design-for-contagions/>

As you begin to imagine Day 1, that journey for an individual does not start at the door to the workplace. Once an individual has decided they do, in fact, need to return to the work place, they will encounter multiple, significant thresholds where they will increase their risk of exposure. Clearly defined, meaningful Pre-Requisites to returning to work places should be established for a location. Putting Well Being first means understanding this journey and understanding how to support the talent through this journey.

How will your talent get from home to the office?

Consideration: If there are transit benefits in place, work with the provider to shift the allocation or use. If there is parking nearby, reach out to the garage to see if temporary space and/or reduced daily rates can be offered to employees journey and understanding how to support the talent through this journey.

How is your building handling access?

Consideration: Landlords are already thinking through how to safely get people back into their buildings. If they have not already communicated their plans, reach out and engage them in a dialogue about the following:

- How they plan to allow people into the building
- Whether they are offering screening at the entry points
- Whether cleaning protocols align with CDC recommendations already or if they have increased this



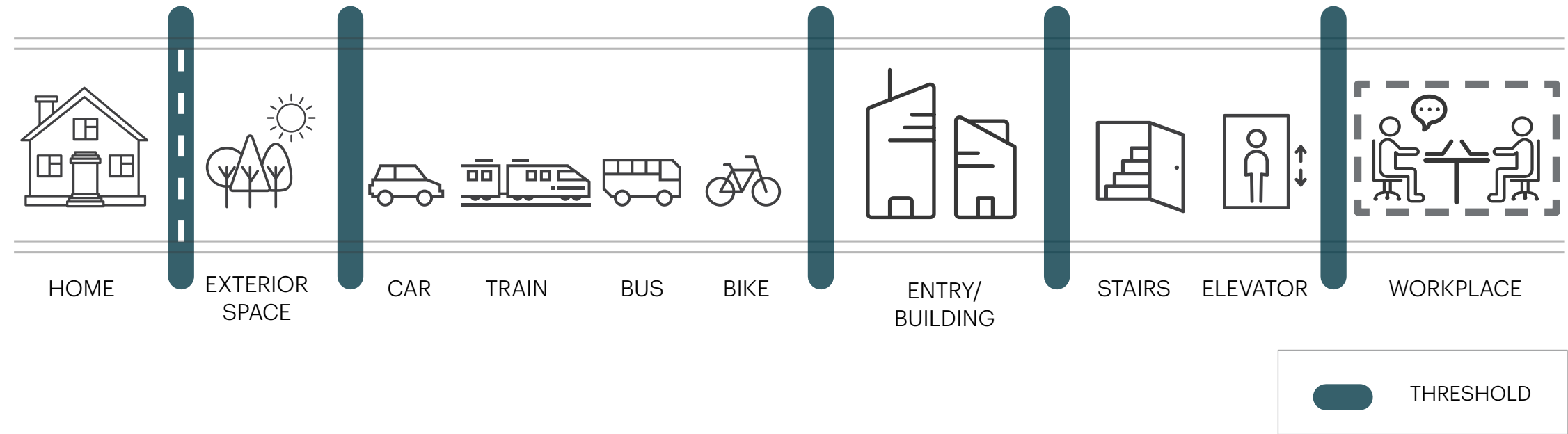
- Whether or not they can offer additional cleaning to meet your own organizations needs and at what cost

How is your building handling the circulation of the people within?

Consideration: Many multi tenant buildings rely on elevators as a primary means of moving tenants through the facility. With Social distancing still being observed on Day 1, this presents a variety of challenges. If they have not already communicated their plans, reach out and engage them in a dialogue about the following:

- If possible are they considering dedicated elevators with badge access?
- Are they implementing rules about the capacity of an elevator that serves multiple tenants?
- Are they increasing cleaning or sanitation of the high touch surface or have they retrofitted touchless solutions?
- Are they opening stairwells if possible to offer tenants the option to take the stairs? IF so, will they be limiting this access to single direction to maintain social distancing if stairwells are not more than 6' in width?

Understanding the Risk Profile



The more you know about where and how exposure occurs, you understand the cyclical nature of the individual journey to and from the office.

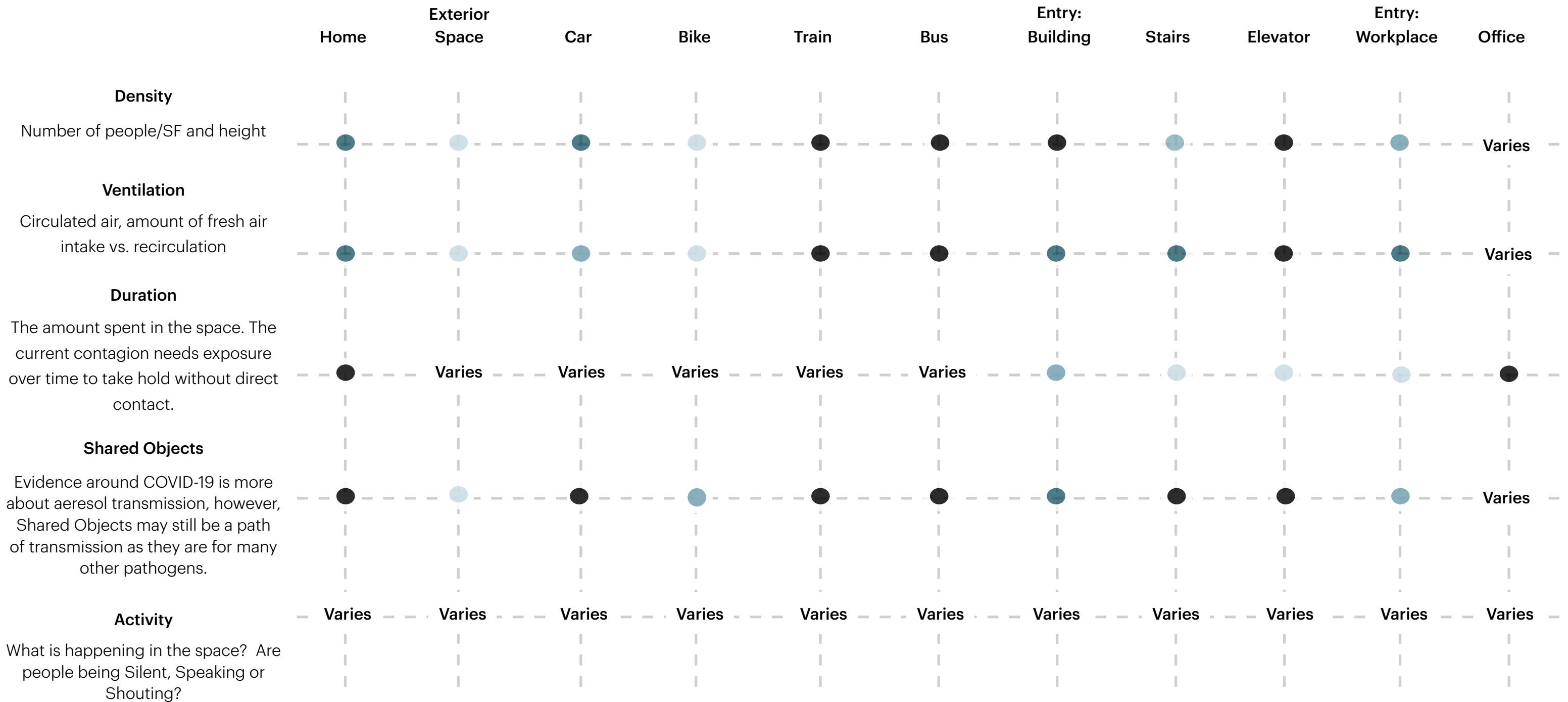
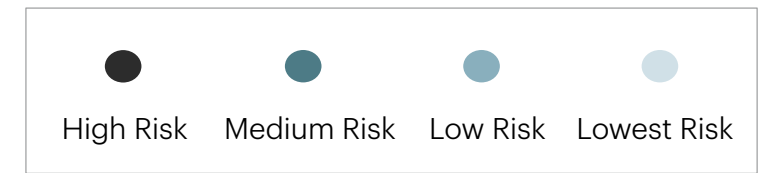
As you move between spaces be aware of the changes in the risk profile

There are **(6) key factors** to consider in any location to better understand the risks and solve for them:



Understanding the Individual Risk Profile

Understanding Where and How Exposure Occurs

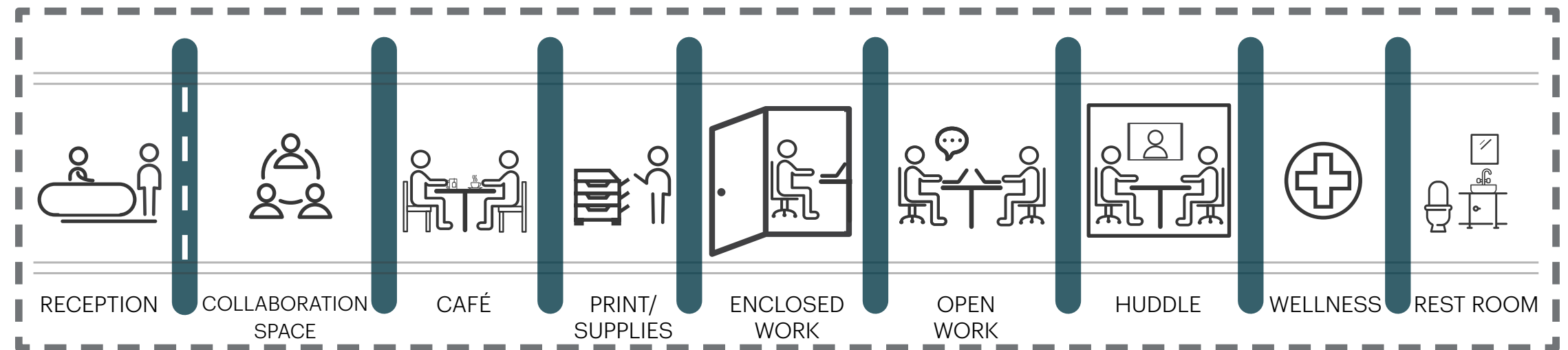


Thresholds: Understanding the Journey Within the Work Place

In Day 1, a proportional response to shared space is about design thinking more than design solutions. The goal is **Optimal Design @ Minimal Cost**.

HKS will support clients by helping to determine where thresholds are needed. We will identify design solutions, establishing thresholds between space types, and supporting with responsive policy, protocol, behavior and to a great extent signage to support social distancing.

Understanding the Individual Journey Within a Work Place to Mitigate Risk and Keep Our Talent Safe & Healthy



1. Voluntary – For many the work place was never closed. People returning to a work place in Day 1, pending your approach, are likely doing so voluntarily. With this comes the expectation that new behavior is required with new policy and protocols.

2. Social distancing is a transient state to deal with the current contagion. Making permanent changes or purchasing temporary products to reinforce this practice is reactionary and may not align with long term re-imagining efforts.

3. Signage is key to helping identify the thresholds, outline expected behavior and communicate new policy and protocols. This is an important nudge toward the desired behaviors.

4. The pandemic has forced us to slow down and carefully consider the real need vs. the fleeting desire. Encouraging this **Mindfulness Practice** in the work place will build a solid foundation for long term change and evolution.

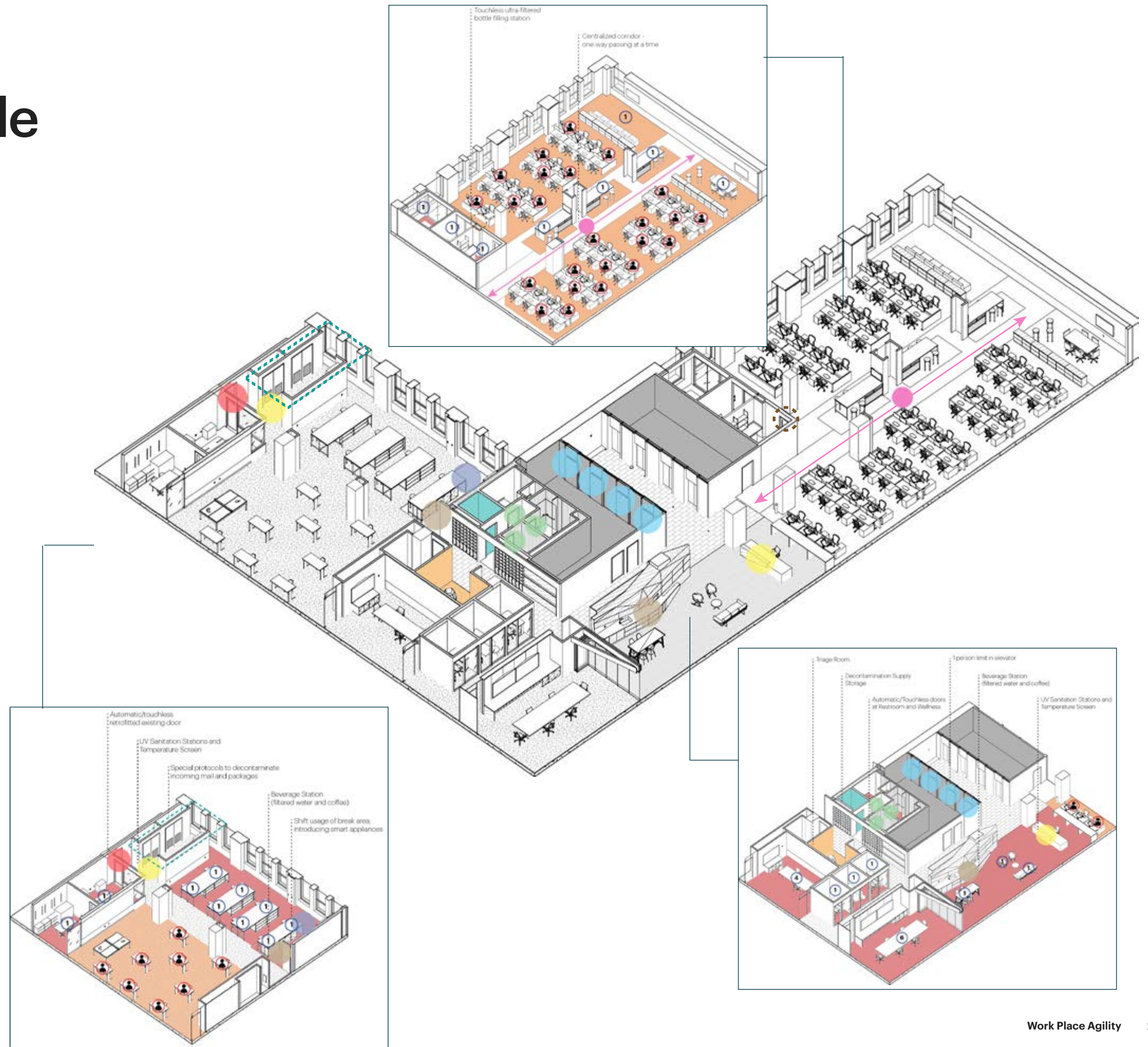
Thresholds Example

HKS Chicago

Living Lab

IMPLEMENT WITHOUT CHANGING CURRENT FLOOR PLAN

- - Explore retro-fit of existing door to automatic/ touchless; apply Sharklet or similar material
- - UV Sanitation Stations (for hands, badge and phone) upon arrival and leaving the floor
- - Temperature screen before entering the office
- - 1 person limit in elevator
- - Other interventions subject to base building protocol
- - Automatic/ Touchless at Restroom and Wellness
- Touchless ultra-filtered bottle filling station (existing)
- - Beverage Station (filtered water and coffee)
- - Shift usage of Break Area
- - Introduce smart appliances
- - Centralized corridor - one-way passing at a time (only 8' wide)
- 1 - Revised flex occupancy
- - Occupied Workstations
- - Triage Room
- - Decontamination Supply Storage
- - Threshold for transition upon arrival at the office (temperature check, sanitation items, PPE and/or cleaning supplies pick-up)



Research Day 1 - Day XX

As you begin to change the way your teams work, we can offer research services to help assess and validate your approach effectiveness.

As designers and thinkers at HKS, this period has provided us with an unexpected opportunity. Because our homes are now being used for work, school, exercise, virtual socialization and all of life's other flavors, we need to learn now how to best use these spaces.

Importantly, these lessons need to inform not only how we can adapt in the near term, but how we create future design strategies. Because we expect to see an ebb and flow of COVID-19 cases over the next year or more, these ideas are intrinsically long-term.

When we first were advised to work from home, many saw this as a small hurdle in time before returning to office normalcy. Naturally, stopgap measures ensued like propping up laptop monitors and using couches for office chairs.

But we know now that this is a kind of new normal, so investment in our home workspaces needs to be made in

conjunction with strategic planning for how it will flex with a redefined office workplace in the future.

Our scrambled lives are starting to cautiously be released in phases, and the walls of our homes are breaking apart into a version of the world we once knew. This may come in fits and starts as we move towards Day XX, but we will again ride up a crowded elevator without masks or fear, see our teammate across the office and go to shake their hand.

When that day comes, wouldn't it be nice to look back on this time and know that we learned something valuable?

So how do we take advantage of all the potential benefits of working outside the office while mitigating the risks?

Other Helpful Links:

(8) <https://www.nber.org/papers/w26948.pdf>

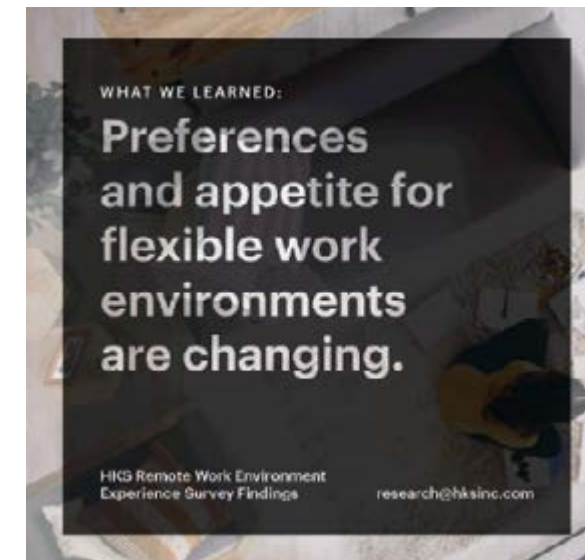
(9) https://www.forbes.com/sites/sarahhansen/2020/04/13/work-from-home-policies-wont-end-after-coronavirus-is-defeated-experts-say/?utm_campaign=forbes&utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_term=Gordie/#7868d2757cae

What We Learned From Our Remote Work Research

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Learn about more of our remote work findings and how they might help you at

(10) <https://www.hksinc.com/how-we-think/research/from-temporary-to-transformative-work-from-home-insights/>



Day X Examples

People First

DAY X DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The office as a safe platform for collaboration and social capital

Cloud print as primary platform for individual work

Digital equity in the office and the remote environment

DAY X DESIGN STRATEGIES

Teams in the office work in neighborhoods. Team based scheduling through shifts in a dedicated team pod.

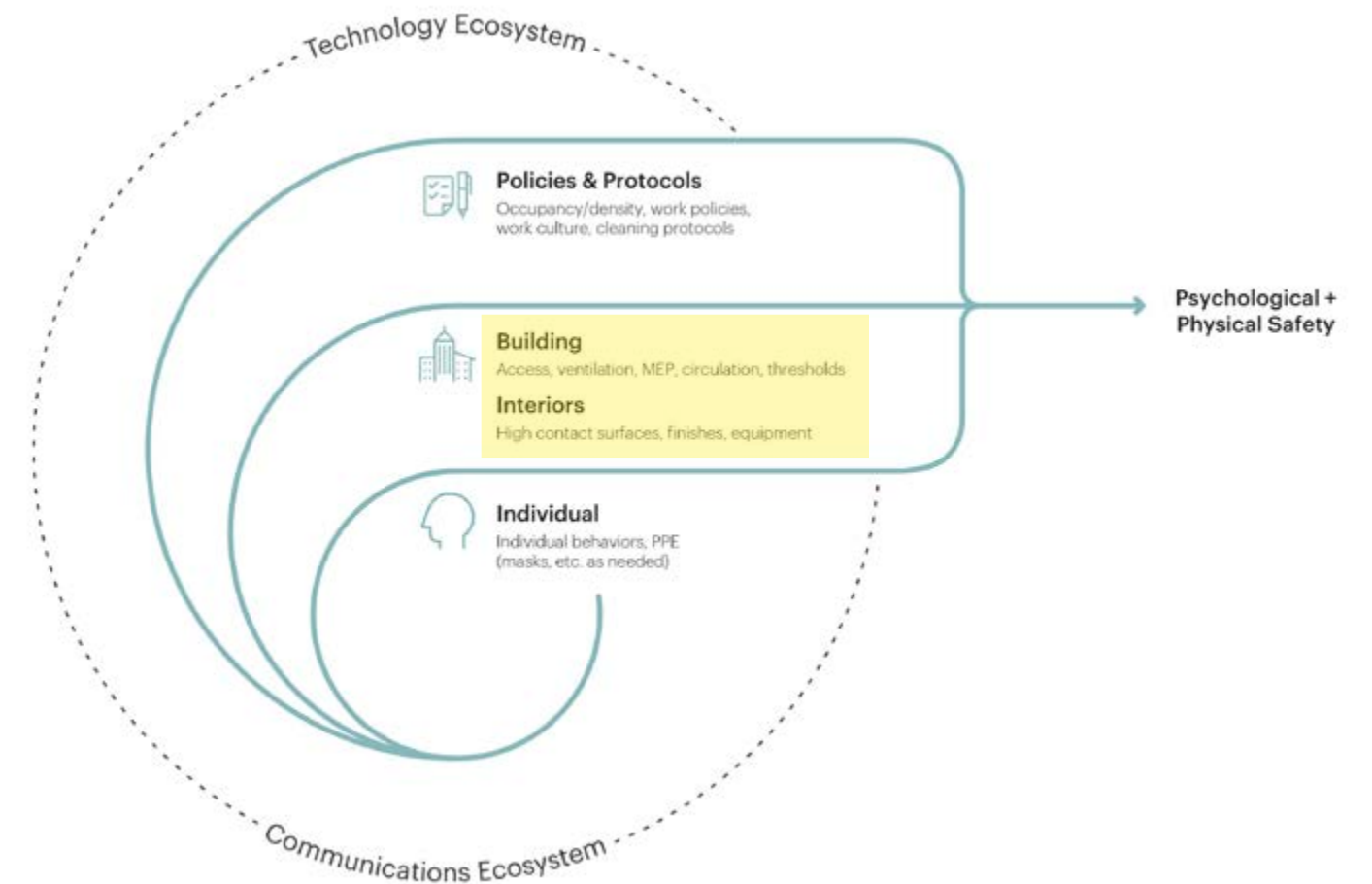
Mobile infrastructure and seamless technology for consistent process in both work and remote environment.

Anchored stations in the office by function and individual work style.

Team meetings happen inside the Thunderdome, and not in enclosed conference spaces.

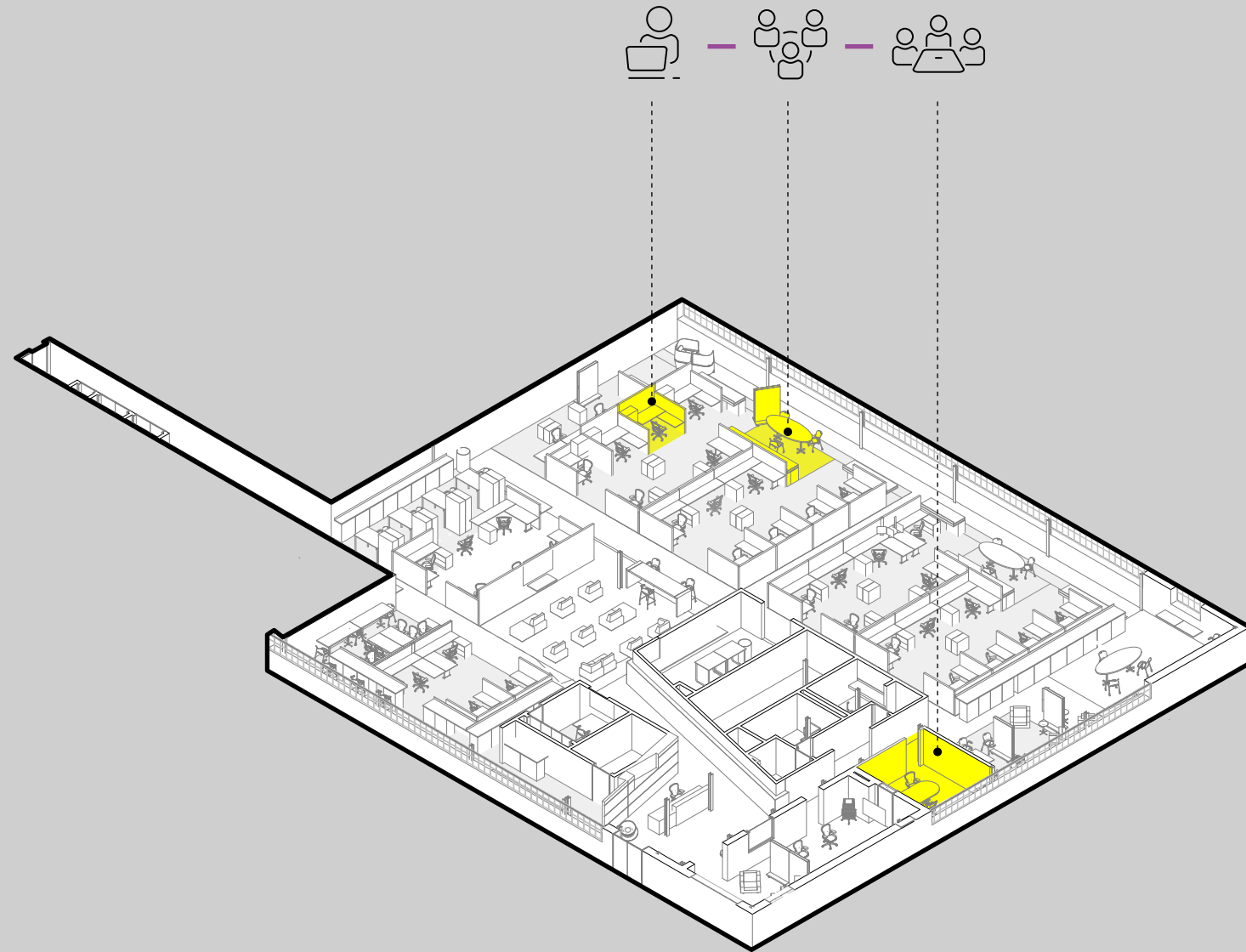
Outsource of meetings outdoors, when possible, mask-free with proper social distancing.

Mask free single occupancy rooms along the perimeter where windows can be opened (this strategy needs further investigation).

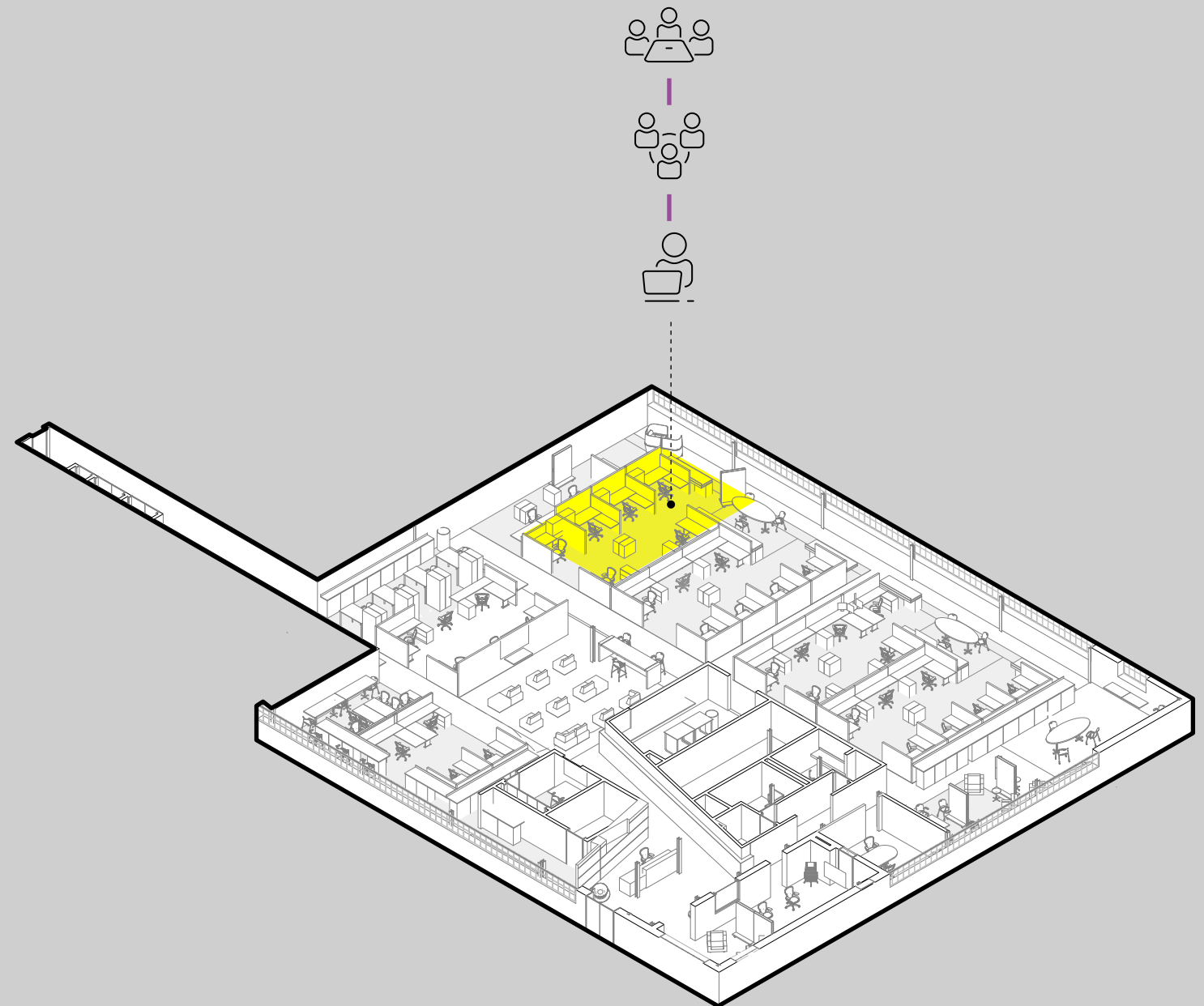


Day 1 Examples

People First



ACTIVITY-BASED WORKPLACE



TEAM-BASED WORKPLACE

+

DAY X DESIGN STRATEGIES

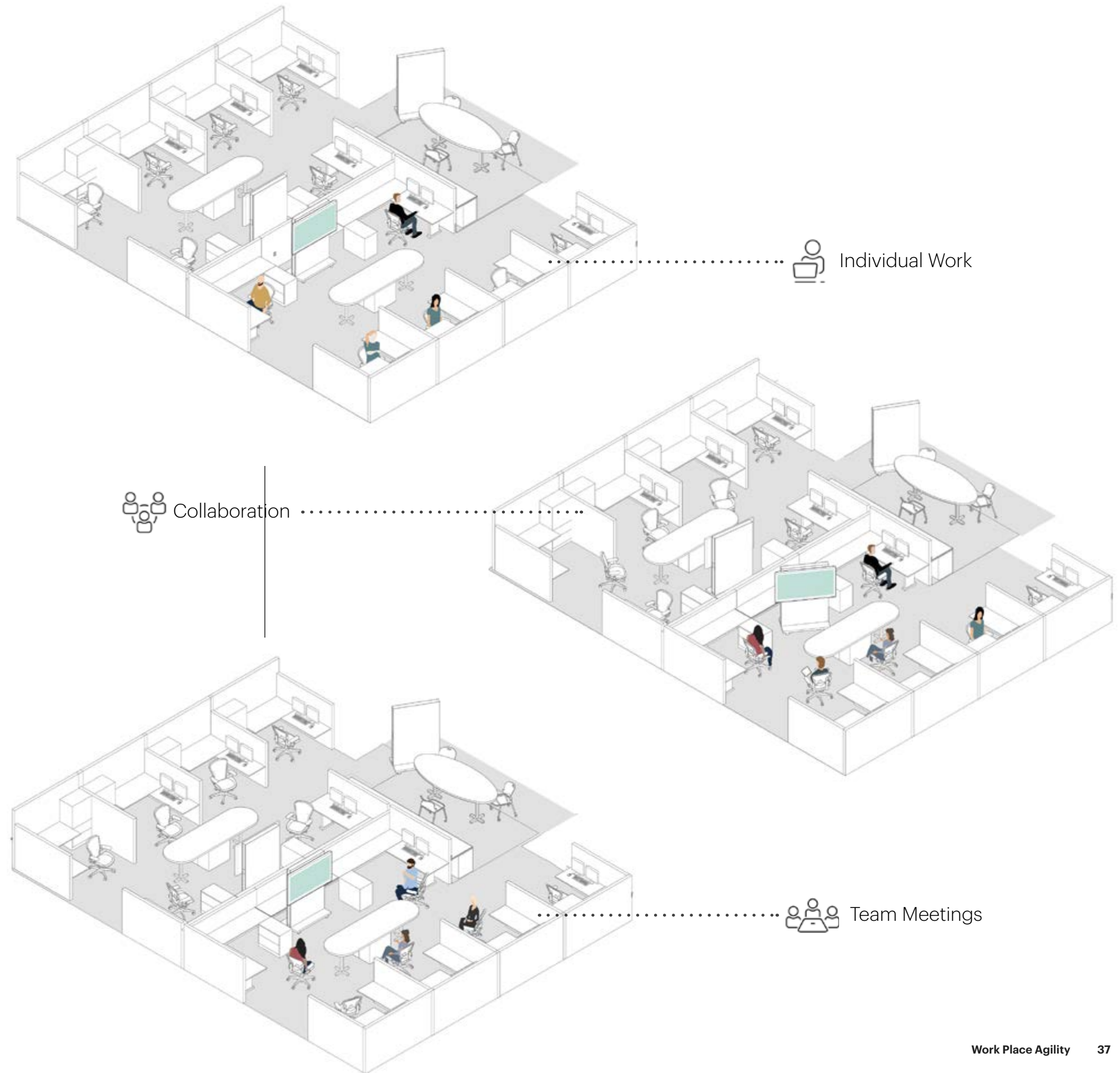
- Teams in the office work in neighborhoods. Team based scheduling through shifts in a dedicated team pod
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Some teams are formed based on **project type**, while others are based on **activity type**.

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Behavioral Patterns in the workplace are not only related to activities and functional aspects of workplaces, but also environmental and **user characteristics**.

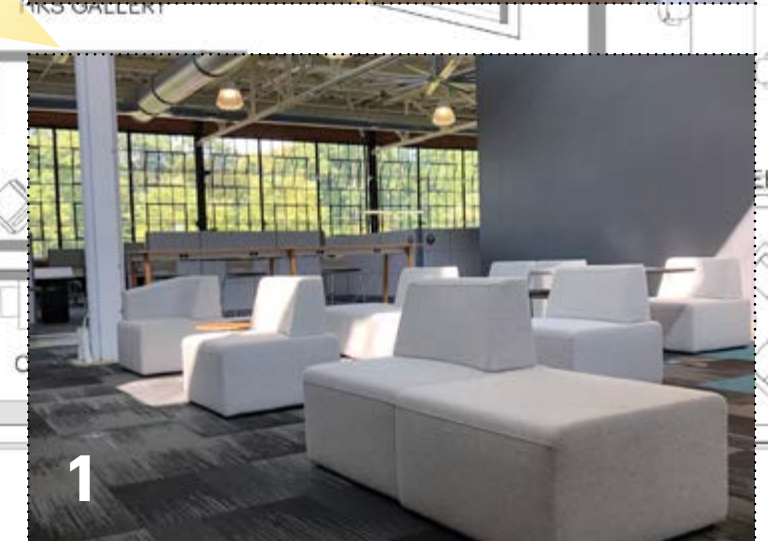
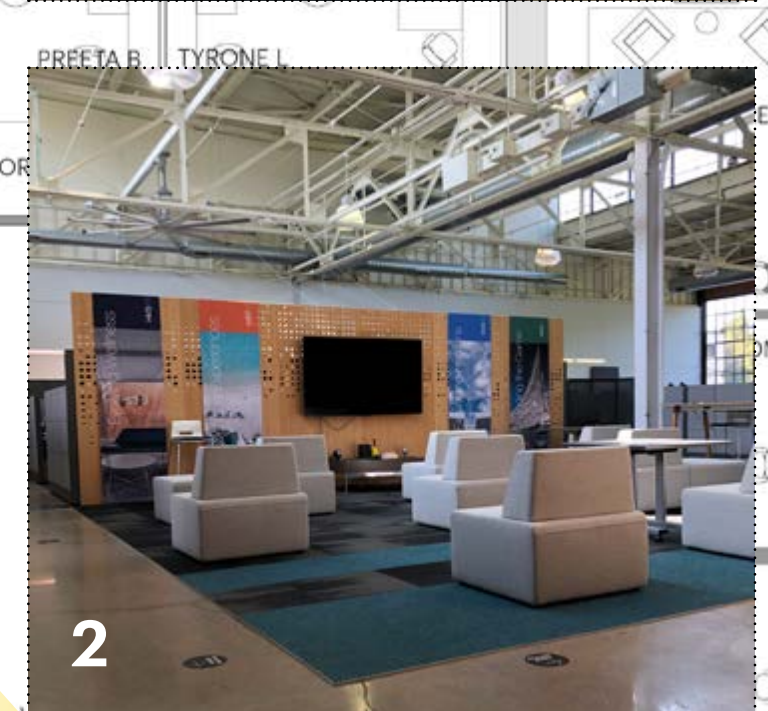
INTERIORS

CA / PA

Work Place Agility

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Day 1: HVAC Checklist

(11) <https://www.hksinc.com/how-we-think/>

Most Air-handling Units (AHUs) within existing buildings are often neglected in terms of basic maintenance. The key to better/improved air quality and comfort is to perform retro-commissioning on all building systems (there are often incentive programs available through local utilities that can offset cost).

Improved air quality for your population is a good move toward a People First mentality with or without a global pandemic.

Maintenance checklist and system additions that should be considered:

- Assess status of air filters and replace/upgrade.
- Verify operation of outside air dampers (check economizer operation and determine if more outside air can be brought in).
- Check status of environmental and system sensors and ensure they are reporting correctly.
- Test and re-balance air systems (make sure that ventilation rates achieve design values and that exhaust systems function properly ~ should be done every 5 years).
- Carbon Dioxide Sensors (these can be used to measure the quality of return air, if PPM is higher than 800 more outside air should be brought in to dilute and return air should be purged).
- Clean Cooling and Heating Coils.
- If ventilation cannot be improved, consider portable air purifiers with HEPA filter for localized control and treatment.
- If ceiling fans exist, reverse the flow direction to blow upward if possible.

Day X-XX: HVAC Maintenance & Considered Systems Additions

Indoor air quality (IAQ) is known to affect the health, comfort and well-being of the occupants. Poor IAQ has been linked to sick building syndrome reduced productivity and impaired learning in schools.

Changes to building operations, including the operation of HVAC systems can help reduce airborne exposures to viruses. Because small particles remain airborne for some period of time, the design and operation of HVAC systems that move air can affect disease transmission. Consider the following HVAC Operational Opportunities and Challenges when returning to work:

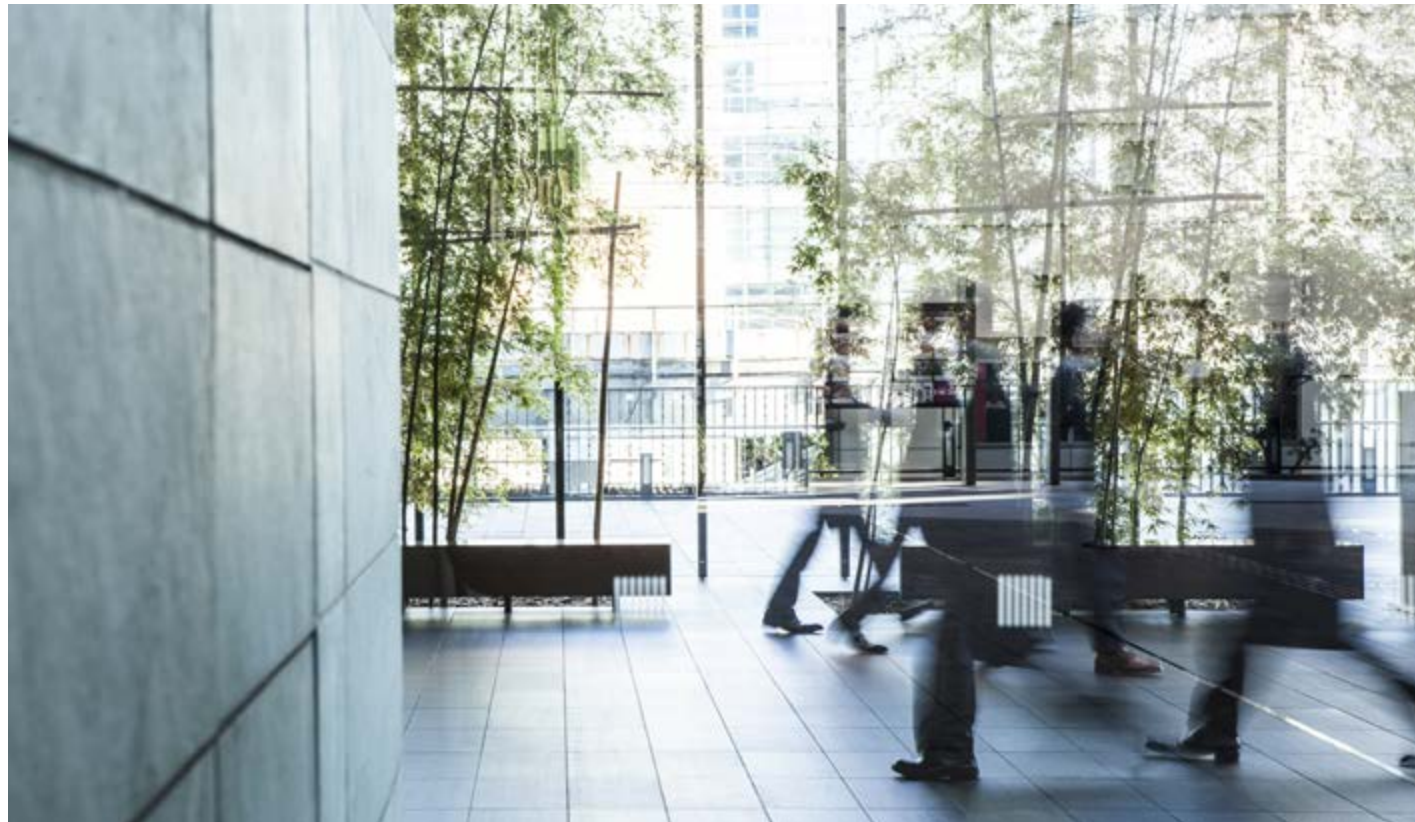
- Increase outdoor air ventilation while minimizing occupant density;
- Keep airside systems running longer (24/7 if possible) or at the very least increase the preconditioning period
- Avoid recirculation. Open minimum outdoor air dampers to 100% if possible, in mild weather seasons
- Upgrade air filtration to MERV-13 or the highest compatible with the existing filter rack while sealing edges of the filter to limit bypass.

- UVGI (ultraviolet germicidal irradiation) lights are commonly used in HVAC applications. However, in-stream tubes, as an additional intervention, can help to destroy contaminants at low velocities to encourage a higher effectiveness (higher dosage and kill rate).
- Higher relative humidity (40%-60% RH) is known to reduce infection rates (it provides an air transmission barrier, prevents propagation).
- Operable windows can be very effective in providing an increase in ventilation rates if the building can maintain external static pressure while continuing to serve other conditioned zones.



Commonly Asked Questions

Many of your team members will have similar questions regarding re-entry into the work place. Preparing answers to anticipated questions can ease stress and improve understanding. On the next page is a list of commonly asked questions from HKS' remote survey. We can help you answer similar questions based on your specific needs.



1. Most of my office uses mass transit and is concerned about the safety of returning to work. How is this being addressed?

2. My office is unique from other offices, how do we account for that in the re-boot of HKS offices?

3. I want to work from home out of safety, and fear that could be reflected negatively on my performance or contributions. Should I come into work anyway?

4. How do we ensure our building is safe?

5. Is HKS rushing the return to work with all this planning, shouldn't we wait?

6. I'm feeling pretty good but have itchy throat, do I come to work?

7. What if I start to feel ill while at work?

8. How will I know the office is completely safe? I do not want to compromise my family.

9. Will our admin assistant be the one to take everyone's temperature when they come in?

10. Will there be a maximum size of participants for meetings/conferences in the office?

11. What will be the lunch protocol if any? Do's and Don'ts?

12. I heard we will need to work in shifts, is this true?

13. We need to host design charrette, can we do that?

14. What is HKS doing for safety on project sites?

15. What about co-location safety?

16. I know there are no visitors, clients, vendors Day 1, but can I bring my children with me to the office?

17. I'm not comfortable sitting at a seat that someone else may have used, how will this be handled?

18. What happens with shared food? Friday studio breakfasts? Our weekly fruit delivery?

19. There are only public restrooms in our office, used by multiple tenants, how do I know they are safe?

20. What does "daily cleaning protocols for high touch areas" mean?

21. What is the triage room used for?

22. Do we need to scrub down deliveries? Mail?

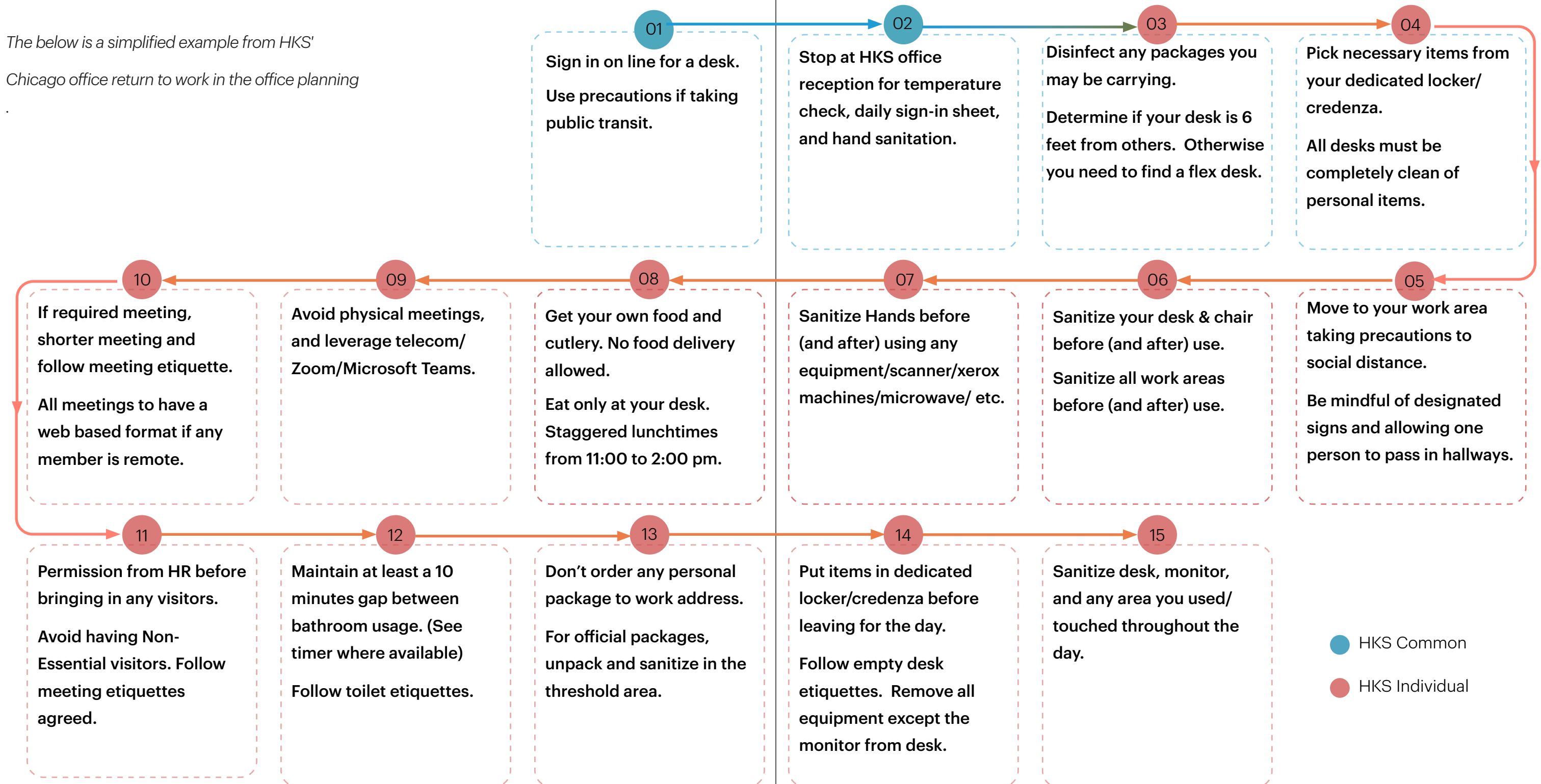
23. Should all employees wear masks at all times? Any visitors required to wear a mask?

People and Hygiene

A typical day

The below is a simplified example from HKS'

Chicago office return to work in the office planning



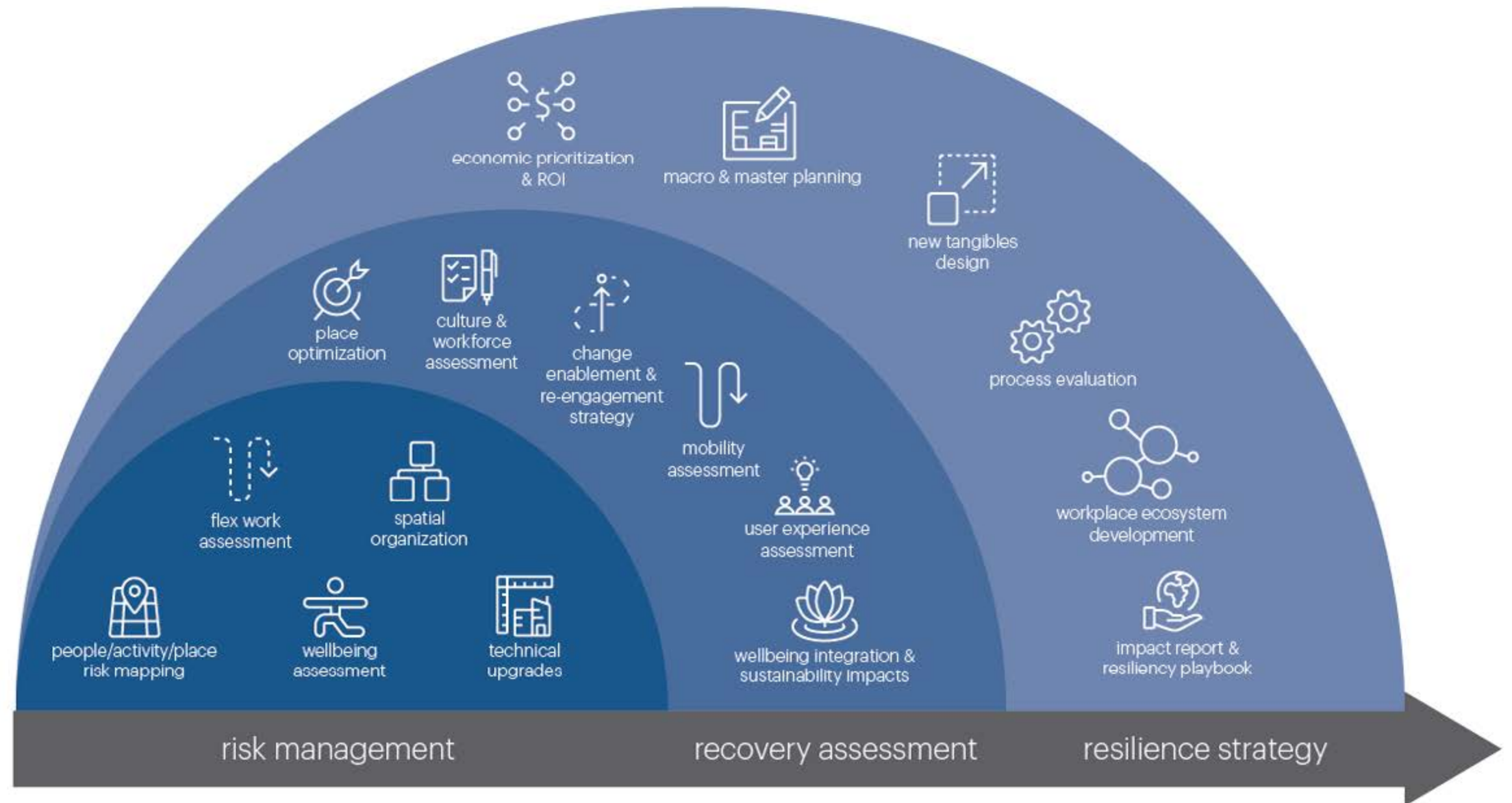
Reinvention in a Post-COVID World

Manage Risk
Spur Recovery
Build Resilience

(12) <https://www.hksinc.com/our-news/articles/how-design-thinking-can-help-manage-risk-spur-recovery-build-resilience-and-inspire-reinvention-in-a-post-covid-world/>

We understand it is hard to make decisions right now. There is not a single right answer. There are answers, and there is hard work to find the right ones for each set of circumstances.

HKS is already helping our clients take next steps and informing pivotal decisions for asset optimization to create long-term value. We are here to co-create outcomes inherent and unique to your organization.



Cited Sources

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- (2) <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/mission/principles/principle-7>
- (3) <https://innovationmanagement.se/imtool-articles/why-a-systems-approach-to-innovation-is-critical/>
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- (5) <https://www.hksinc.com/how-we-think/research/reboot-readiness-a-primer-on-how-to-design-for-contagions/>
- (6) <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/here-s-how-coronavirus-has-changed-the-world-of-work-covid19-adam-grant/>
- (7) <https://www.hksinc.com/how-we-think/research/reboot-readiness-a-primer-on-how-to-design-for-contagions/>
- (8) <https://www.nber.org/papers/w26948.pdf>
- (9) https://www.forbes.com/sites/sarahhansen/2020/04/13/work-from-home-policies-wont-end-after-coronavirus-is-defeated-experts-say/?utm_campaign=forbes&utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_term=Gord-ie/#7868d2757cae
- (10) [hks.onl/WFH](https://www.hks.com/insights/work-from-home)
- (11) <https://www.hksinc.com/how-we-think/>
- (12) <https://www.hksinc.com/our-news/articles/how-design-thinking-can-help-manage-risk-spur-recovery-build-resilience-and-inspire-reinvention-in-a-post-covid-world/>

Additional Resources

CDC Guidelines

<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html>

OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19.

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

WHO: Coronavirus - Getting Workplace Ready for COVID 19

<https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf>

International Building Code

<https://www.iccsafe.org/>

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