



# Return-to-Office Toolkit

# Contents

02	Introduction
03	Guiding principles
04	Workplace: our super power
06	Carve out a space for your team
08	Getting your messaging right
10	Sharing critical information
14	Communication is a two-way street
16	Creating your plan and calendar
17	Measure the impact of your communications

# Introduction

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Facebook, like many other organizations around the world, largely transitioned our global workforce to working from home. We did not expect to be working from home for more than a year, and are amazed by how our teams have been able to shift their lives and maintain connection in the face of unprecedented challenges. Still, for many of us, working from home hasn't been easy. As many countries move toward successfully suppressing COVID-19, we're excited to begin transitioning our employees back into the office and rebuilding our vibrant in-person culture.

Your organization is likely developing a return-to-office plan too, or at least considering a partial return to office. If you're involved in this project, you know exactly how complex it can be. To help support you, we've put together this toolkit. It includes:

- An overview of Facebook's return-to-office approach
- A guide to using Workplace for your return-to-office communications
- A customizable health and safety poster kit
- A communication plan template



# Guiding principles

With over 60,000 employees in 36 countries, Facebook's return-to-office planning is a massive undertaking that presented an array of complex challenges. To help guide decision making and ensure we continue to align with Facebook's core values, the return-to-office team put together a set of five guiding principles:

- **Be mindful of community resources:** Facebook strives to be mindful of community resources to ensure those with more pressing needs have access to essential resources.
- **Prioritize employee health and safety:** The health and safety of our employees is of the utmost importance.
- **Data, not dates:** We closely monitor health data recommended by WHO, CDC, leading academic institutions and governments to assess when a return to office is safe.
- **Meet or exceed government standards:** We always meet or exceed local and national regulations and standards.
- **Consider scalability:** Return to office must be scalable and include repeatable processes.





# Workplace: our super power

Workplace plays a major role in Facebook's return-to-office planning. It enables the team to collaborate and keep stakeholders informed throughout the planning process. And Workplace continues to be the primary tool Facebook uses to communicate upcoming office openings, share critical health and safety information and gather feedback from employees.

The return-to-office team created a secret Workplace group, where members can keep each other up to date on every aspect of the project. File sharing makes it easy to gather feedback from everyone, with members quickly annotating files to share input directly in Workplace. And having a connected chat group makes it easy to touch base throughout the day using instant message or audio and video calls.





To share updates with employees, the team relies on Facebook's robust group infrastructure.

We use site-specific FYI groups, Manager groups, and global People@ groups, to share clear and distinct return-to-office information with specific subsets of employees based on region, role, and local COVID data and regulations. By reaching employees with information that's most relevant to them, the team is able to reduce confusion and curb misinformation spread.

Return to office is an important topic. Getting feedback from employees and engaging openly with their questions and concerns is a top priority. We make a point to actively respond and interact with employee comments on Workplace posts, and even run regular Live video Q&A sessions with leadership to address employee questions in real time.

But that's just the beginning. Read on to find step-by-step guidance to help you implement your own return-to-office communication strategy using Workplace. You'll also find tips and templates being used by the Facebook team in our own return-to-office planning and implementation.



# Carve out a space for your team

Planning your return-to-office communications is a big endeavor that will require support from various functions across your organization. The first step is to assemble the right team for the job and to create a secure central space where you can collaborate and keep each other informed.



## Building a cross-functional team

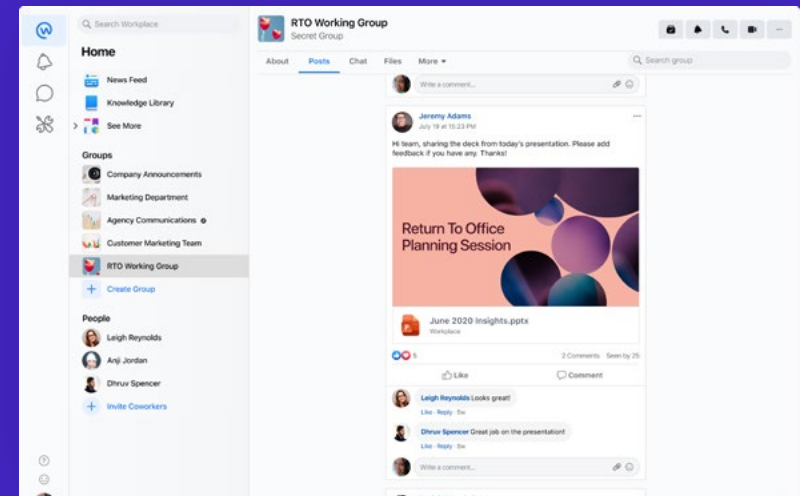
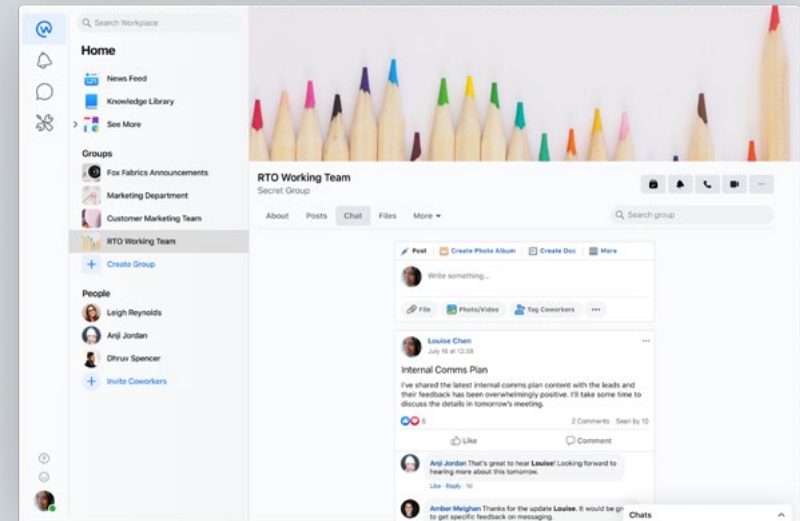
Every organization's team will look different, but Facebook's return-to-office communications team is composed of representatives from the People and Internal Communications teams working closely with facilities, company leaders, HR, and more.

Get a core team of people who will be responsible for creating and reviewing communications together. Then add any other stakeholders who will be involved, like executives who will be sharing communications drafted by the comms team using **Draft For**, or anyone involved in **Live video** events such as Q&As and Town Halls.

## Collaborating in Workplace

Once you have the right team in place, you can create a **secret Workplace group** that the team will use to communicate, share and store files, and gather feedback. Setting the group privacy to secret means that only people who have been added to the group will be able to see that it exists, communicate with other members and see posts.

Create your first post in the group, outlining timelines, project goals, roles and responsibilities, and add any files or links that your team will need to refer to regularly. Then, **pin the post** to the top of the group so that it's always easy for team members to find. Every file shared in your group will be stored in the Files tab, so nothing gets lost. Your team group can also have a connected chat that you can use to communicate throughout the day. Learn more about using Workplace to manage projects in [this guide](#).





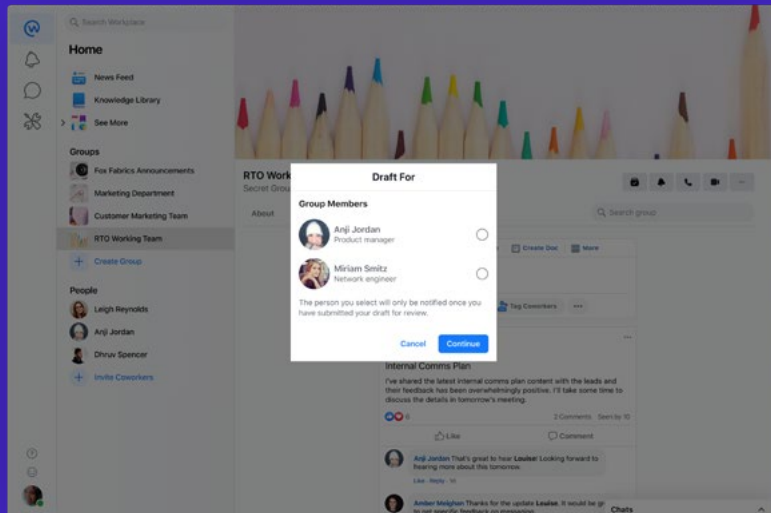
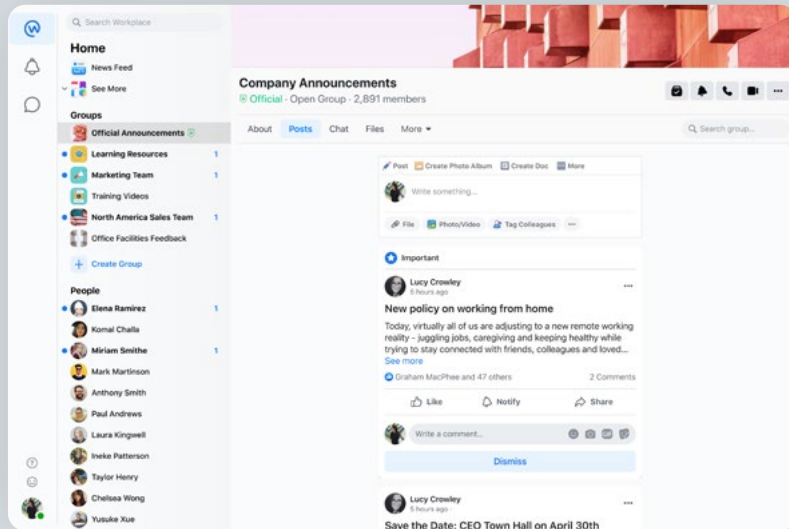
# Getting your messaging right

It's incredibly important that you communicate your plans and policies thoughtfully to build trust and help keep people safe and informed. To develop your messaging, start by drafting the key points in an easy to understand way. Cover the basics of your return-to-office plan—the *what, when, who and how*. But be sure to anchor your messaging on the *why*. Outline the importance of returning to work in-person and offer a compelling vision for the future that can motivate and inspire your employees.

Getting your language right can be tricky, especially when you have multiple people sharing information on behalf of the organization. A language guide will be useful for you and the rest of your team to ensure you're staying consistent with agreed upon guidelines for communication. Here are a few helpful tips from the Facebook team:

- **Be clear and direct.** Communicate in a simple and easy to understand way and avoid acronyms and inaccessible terminology.
- **Be empathetic.** The pandemic has been hard for all of us, but it's been more difficult for some than for others. Make sure you acknowledge the resilience and adaptability people have shown in the face of these challenges.
- **Prepare for the unexpected.** Ensure the language you use leaves room for changes in plans.





- **Aim to be consistent whenever possible.** There will be some customization for office location and audience, but when possible, the guidance you provide and the way you write it should be consistent.
- **Try to keep posts short.** Point people to your Knowledge Library for more detailed information
- **Share the most important information up front.** If you have to share a lengthy post, make sure you include a summary at the top with bullet points that outline the main takeaways.
- **Pin the latest post to the top of your group.** Add a date to your headline so it's clear what guidance is most recent.
- **Visuals will catch the eye.** Add infographics, images and videos to your post when possible.
- **For critical updates, use Mark as Important.** It allows you to send email and Workplace notifications to group members and pin the post to the top of their News Feed.
- **Use Draft For to share posts from leadership.** Draft For allows communication teams with permission to draft posts on behalf of executives, who can then review, make changes and publish the post when they're ready. It can help ensure that executive posts align with your return-to-office communication guidelines, and that executives can actively engage with your community, even during their busiest times.

# Sharing critical information

Make sure you have channels set up to share updates and helpful resources with employees. This kind of information-sharing happens in Workplace through features like **Groups**, **Knowledge Library** and **Safety Center**. When used together, your team can centralize all return-to-office content in Workplace, spanning announcements, policies, health and safety measures, safety alerts and more.

## Keep people up to date in groups

Group posts are best for two-way communications that keep employees up to date on the latest news while encouraging feedback and engagement. Group membership allows you to be precise with audience targeting and messaging, so you can be sure you're reaching specific segments of your employee base with content that's most relevant to them. We recommend using the following groups for your return-to-office communications:

- **Company announcements:** Open and **default** group to share company-wide updates.
- **Regional and office-specific groups:** Can be open or closed, group membership is assigned through **People Sets**.
- **Leadership group:** Closed or secret group you can use to communicate directly with company leaders.
- **People manager group:** Closed or secret group you can use to provide managers with the information they need to keep their direct reports informed.





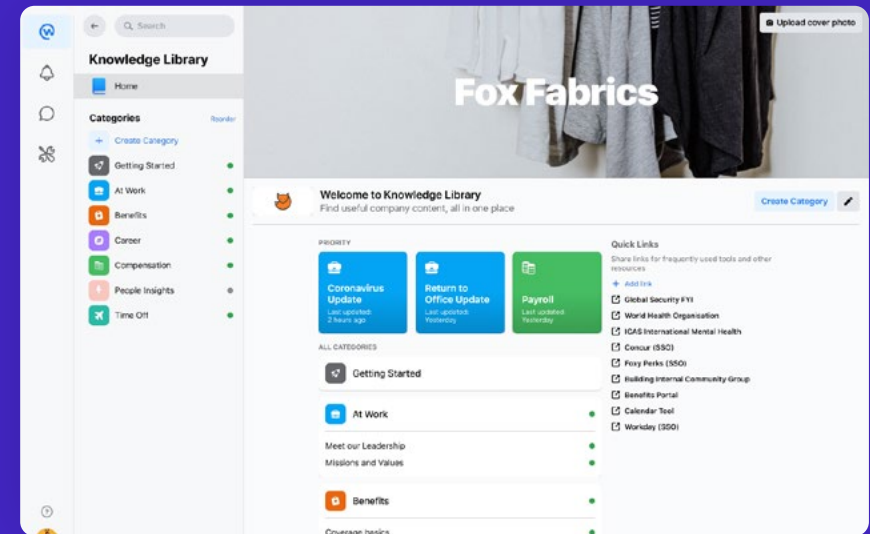
## Centralize static resources in Knowledge Library

Start building up a centralized repository for return-to-office resources in your Knowledge Library. If your return-to-office policies vary between office locations, plan to create unique Categories for each office, as well as Subcategories to dive deeper into specific topics, like:

- Health and safety measures
- Return-to-office stages
- Updated services like new policies for kitchen use and help desk support

Once your Categories and Subcategories are ready to publish, you'll be able to share them with people based on profile information, such as their location, department and role.

Learn more about Knowledge Library in [this guide](#).



## Share health and safety updates with Safety Center

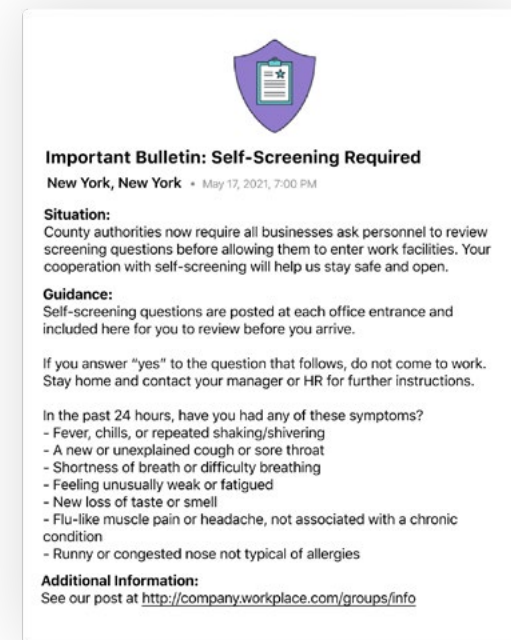
As you start bringing people back into the office, it's important to have the tools to reach everyone with information that keeps people safe and informed. With Workplace's Safety Center, you can send out a range of safety messages to any of your employees to make sure they are safe and to share critical information.

Use Safety Center to send out self-screening messages to employees who will be coming into the office. These messages will help them monitor their symptoms and assess whether they should stay home. Here's how to send one:

- To use Safety Center you'll need to be a System Admin or a **Safety Operator**.
- Go to Safety Center and create a new Live Incident
- Name your incident Safe-Entry Screening and add location and any additional Safety Operators who will be assisting with communications.
- Create a new message and choose the Important Bulletin message style
- Add your content
- Add recipients using Workplace groups, profile location or a CSV file

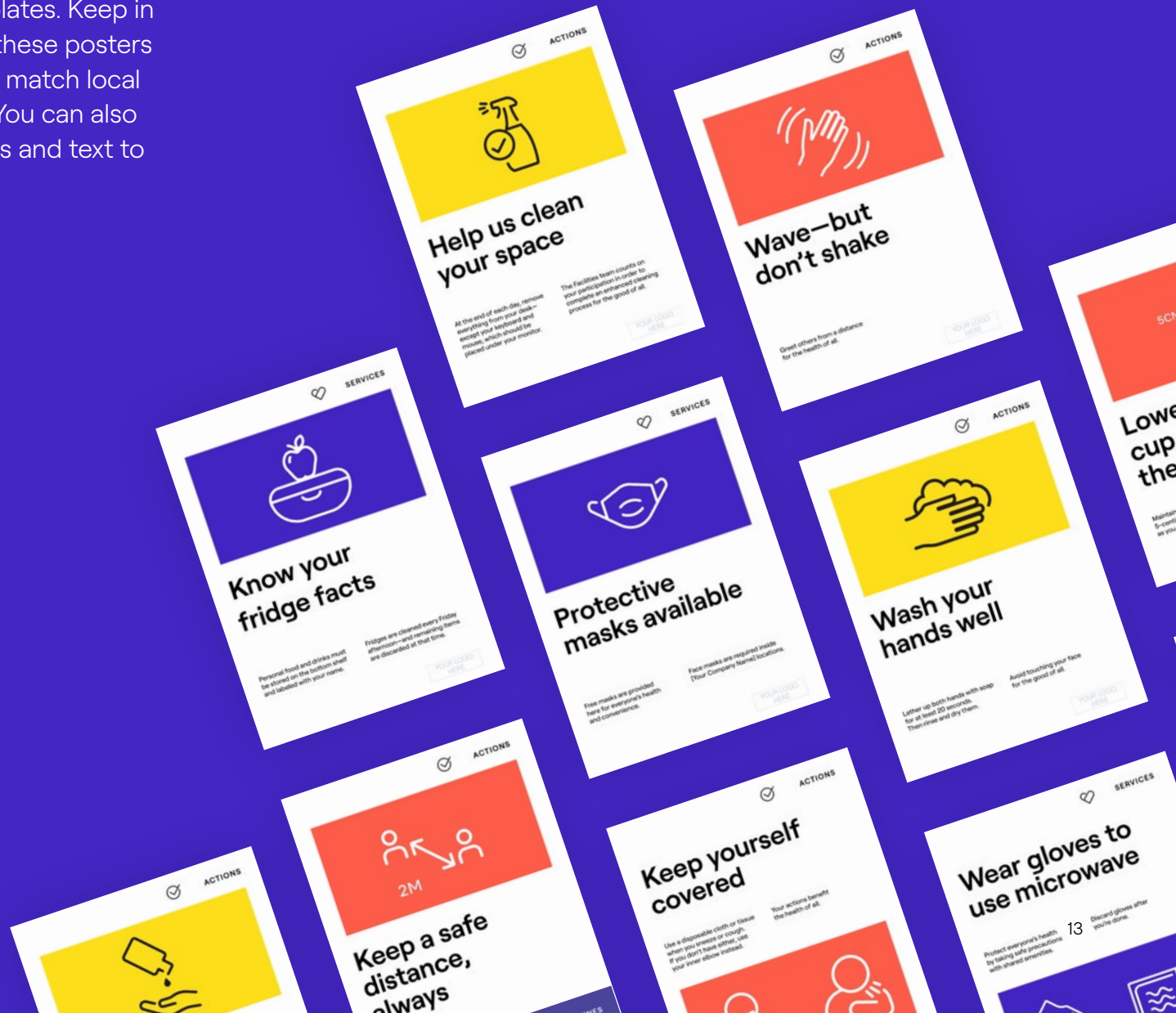
- Choose the right channels to deliver your message, like Workplace Chat message, email and Workplace notification, based on what employees are most likely to be referencing from home.
- You'll be able to re-send daily to the same recipients or to a different set of recipients. Review read rates in the message details page and adjust your channels to find the ones that work best for your people.

For more information on using Safety Center for employee safety communications, [read this guide](#).



## Reinforce health and safety policies around the office

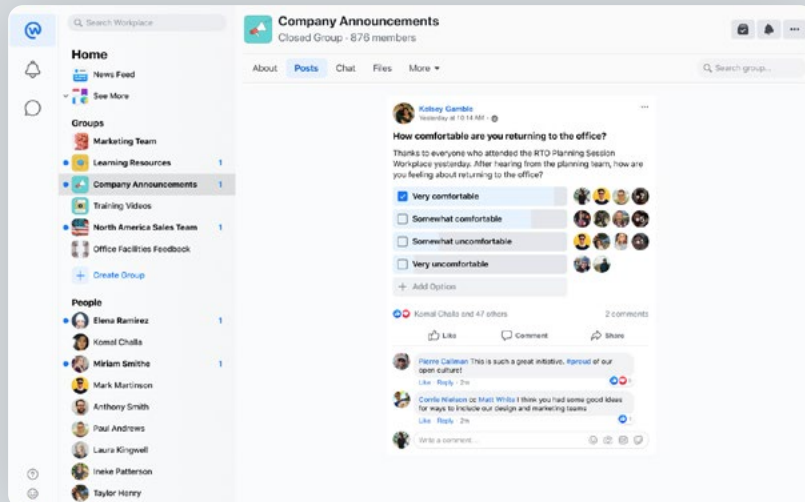
Use print signage to call attention to health and safety measures throughout the office. We took Facebook's posters and modified them so you can use them as templates. Keep in mind that the guidelines and policies outlined in these posters are specific to the United States. Modify these to match local government regulations and recommendations. You can also add your own branding and change colors, visuals and text to match your company guidelines.





# Communication is a two-way street

It's important to keep employees informed of your return-to-office plans, but it's also important to show them that you're listening and taking their concerns and perspectives seriously. Here are a few ways you can do this in Workplace:



## Engage employees with polls

**Polls** are a simple way to gather lightweight feedback and engage your employees. Use them to prepare topics for Live video events and to quickly get a gauge for how employees are feeling about your return-to-office plans.

## Send surveys out to employees

For more comprehensive insights from your employees, try sending a short survey through Workplace. Survey results are anonymous, so employees feel safe being honest with their responses, and setting a range of response types means you can get detailed feedback and measurable results.

Send a survey early on in your planning process to understand how people feel about working from the office. Survey results will help you assess your plans and work on your messaging so you can proactively address employee concerns.

As employees start to transition back into the office, surveys can also help you check in with them to see how they're feeling about the experience and make sure things are running smoothly. If you're bringing employees into the office in cohorts, try sending surveys to each cohort on a bi-weekly or monthly basis.

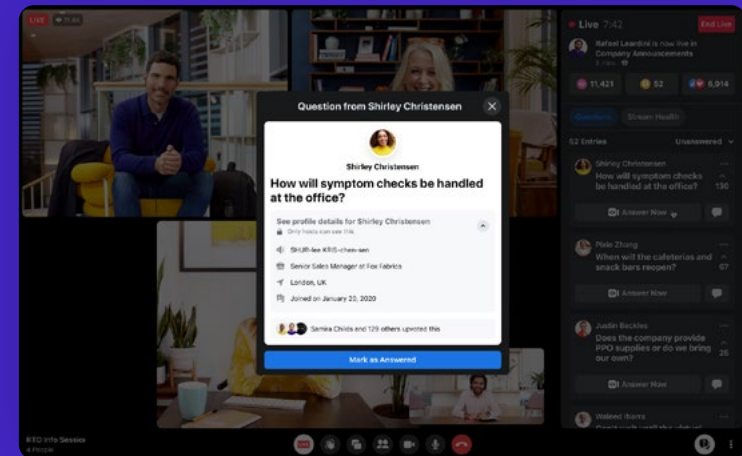
For more information on using Workplace Surveys, check out [this guide](#).

## Host Live Q&A sessions to respond to employee questions

Host Live video Q&A sessions with members of your planning team and leadership to address employee questions in an open and transparent forum. Employees can tune in and get their questions answered in real time, and if anyone misses the broadcast, they can always catch up later when the video is posted to the group. Here are a few tips for running a Q&A session in Workplace:

- Announce the upcoming Q&A session a week in advance in a company-wide or regional group, depending on your audience.
- 48 hours before the broadcast, share a poll in your group, asking people to add and vote on questions they'd like to have answered during the broadcast.
- Plan to have a moderator on hand during your live broadcast. They will be responsible for monitoring employee questions during Live Q&A and marking questions as answered.
- Your moderator will also be responsible for scheduling the Live video in advance using Live Producer. Go live to your group and be sure to toggle on Live Q&A to gather questions from employees in real time.

For a full walkthrough of the Live video feature, check out these [interactive demos](#). And for more guidance on running an internal event using Live video, download the [Live Town Hall Playbook](#).



# Creating your plan and calendar

Now that you know everything you can do with Workplace, it's time to solidify your communications and outline your plan.

Your internal communication plan should include:

- A summary of your return to office
- Goals and objectives
- Communication tactics and tools (like Live video, Safety Center, group posts and more)
- Metrics to measure engagement and assess success

Your plan should also include a content calendar or simple table or spreadsheet that outlines each of your communications including audience, channel, sender/poster, topic and date. To help you, we've created a sample communication plan that's included in this toolkit. Use it as-is or customize it in whatever way you like to match the needs of your organization.

Share your communication plan with collaborators and stakeholders by posting it in your project group and adding it to your pinned post, so it's always easy for group members to find. Storing all of this information in one place will give your collaborators and stakeholders a bird's eye view of all of the communications you have planned for your return to office.

The image shows a template for a communication plan from Workplace. It includes a table for planning campaigns and a Project Tracker calendar.

Campaign	Stakeholders	Goals	Target Audience	Key Messages	Channels	Frequency	Duration	Success Metrics	Seen by	Average % read	Comments	Reactions	Comment Sentiment
Global Communications													
Regional Communications 1													
Regional Communications 2													

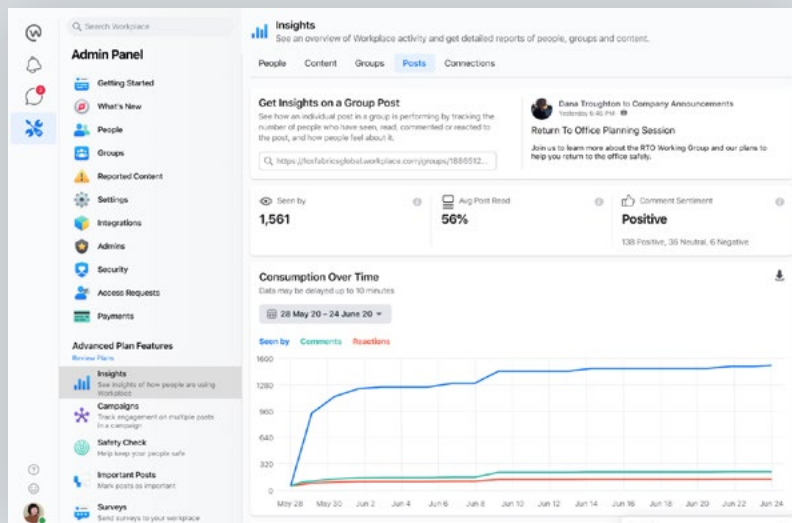
**Project Tracker**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Global Communications</b>												
Pre-RTD												
RTD												
Post-RTD												
<b>Regional Communications 1</b>												
Pre-RTD												
RTD												
Post-RTD												
<b>Regional Communications 2</b>												
Pre-RTD												
RTD												
Post-RTD												



# Measure the impact of your communications

Track how your communications are performing throughout your return to office to optimize your messaging and ensure you're using the right channels to reach people.



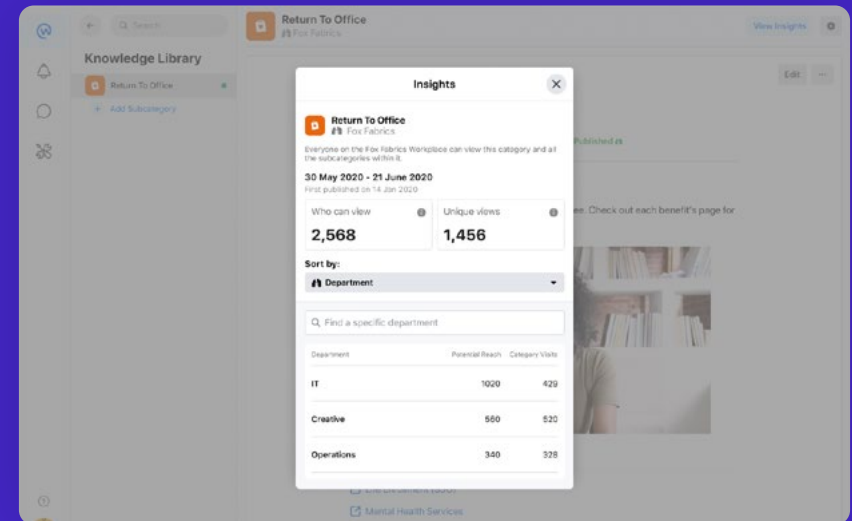
## Monitor engagement on Workplace posts

As you share return-to-office updates in company groups, keep an eye on engagement metrics to understand how employees are interacting with your content. You can do this in two ways:

1. Go to Post Insights to measure engagement on individual posts. You'll be able to track 'seen by' numbers, average percentage of post read and comment sentiment. You'll also be able to explore consumption over time and consumption across Workplace, with filters for location, role, manager and more. Learn more about Insights [here](#).
2. Use the Campaigns feature to measure engagement across a series of posts. Create a new campaign and add each of your return-to-office posts to it. You'll then be able to track these same metrics on all posts added to your campaign, as well as campaign sentiment over time. Try creating separate campaigns for posts made in each region to understand how employees are responding differently to your return-to-office plans based on location. Learn more about Campaigns [here](#).

## Measure engagement on Knowledge Library content

Your Knowledge Library, like everything else on Workplace, is designed to drive engagement. Employees can react, comment and share Subcategories they have access to, and admins can track unique visits to their content by clicking on the Insights icon on any Category or Subcategory page. Check your Knowledge Library insights to see how many people are viewing your return-to-office resources and dig deeper to explore unique visits sorted by department, manager, location and more.



Bringing your employees back into the office is a massive endeavor. It requires a lot of careful consideration and planning—and your internal communications around it are no different. The Facebook team has spent countless hours devising our own return-to-office communications, and we hope you can use some of our learnings to devise a comprehensive plan that keeps employees prepared, informed and safe.

For more Workplace learning materials, check out:

- [The Customer Resource Center](#)
- [The Workplace Academy](#)
- [The Help Center](#)

@workplace

from  
FACEBOOK