Managers:
How to Support Employees Returning to Work

Summary: Here are tips and strategies managers should be aware of to help re-establish social connections with employees returning to the workplace and reorient their job tasks with the support of their colleagues.

Goal: Re-establish relationship with the employee and reorient their tasks in phases

☐ **Keep in touch:** Be sure to keep your employee connected with check-ins, and let them know what is going on at work without going into day-to-day challenges

☐ **Primary Contact:** If an employee is reluctant to keep in touch, consider asking someone with a good relationship with the employee to stay in touch instead

☐ **Meet-up:** Meet with your employee before or during their return to work date to discuss what their greatest concerns are and how to support them

☐ **Needs:** Learn about what your employee needs and the support they want for a safe and successful return to work

☐ **Fears or concerns:** Help lower their fear or concerns by putting an action plan in place to address it should it come up at work

☐ **Empathy:** Lead by example by practicing empathy within your teams

☐ **Training:** Provide additional information or training to teams to help them understand why and how to support their colleague

☐ **Retraining:** Provide any necessary training for the returning employee (ie. new technology, reassigned tasks)

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- [ ] **Privacy:** Discuss with your employee what they wish to share with fellow colleagues, especially about the changes in work that will affect them as they return to work

- [ ] **Respect:** Be sure to respect their wishes about what information can be shared with their colleagues

- [ ] **Return-to-Work Plan:** Be informed of your employee's return to work plan and discuss with their case manager how best to support them

- [ ] **Task shifts:** Identify and recognize the shifts in responsibilities that have occurred within teams to support returning colleague

- [ ] **Reshift in Tasks:** Reprioritize tasks if the employee is overwhelmed after returning to work; focus on tasks that energize them

- [ ] **Timeline:** Provide a timeline for how long these task changes will last and provide information on changes in schedule, work duties, and types of accommodations to team members

- [ ] **Regular Check-ins:** Set up a time to follow up regularly and provide additional support as needed

- [ ] **Clarify expectations:** Work with the employee to establish clear expectations around work tasks, deadlines, and acceptable levels of quality

- [ ] **Reviews:** Help employees develop their measurements for success and proactively adjust as needed

- [ ] **List of Resources:** Be informed on what programs your organization provides to help guide employees to the right support