



## **COVID Killed the Traditional Workplace. What Should Companies Do Now? (Excerpt)**

08 Mar 2021 by Dina Gerdeman

When the pandemic recedes, executives can't expect office life to be as it was. But they can create a new work world that will keep employees happy and productive, say Harvard Business School faculty members.

A year ago, COVID-19 forced many companies to send employees home—often with a laptop and a prayer.

Now, with COVID cases subsiding and vaccinations rising, the prospect of returning to old office routines appears more possible. But will employees want to flock back to buildings even when it's safe again? Should companies do away with Zoom and return the workplace to its pre-COVID ways?

The answer, in a word: No.

At least that's not the future of work envisioned by several members of the Harvard Business School faculty—all of whom had to pivot last March to teaching and researching at a distance from the Boston campus. They say the workplace as we used to know it, quite frankly, is dead. Not only is remote work considered table stakes to employees, but the pandemic has challenged conventional thinking about work in other ways, too—perhaps permanently.


So how can business leaders create a new work world that will keep employees both happy and productive post-COVID? Here we share advice given by two of the HBS faculty members, to help leaders prepare for the "next normal."

### **Julia Austin: Prioritize face time at the office**

Managers will have to accommodate changes to work patterns in the post-COVID era. As much as some employees will crave the return of in-person social connections in the office, they have become accustomed to the flexibility that comes with virtual work—from less time to commute to more time with family and pets. I suspect many will enjoy occasional visits to the office for real-time connections with colleagues, but will prefer to maintain their at-home work lifestyle.

I suggest managers put some structure in place to ensure that time in the office is optimized for face time. For example, make a team schedule, so the days in the office are most meaningful and focused on connections, both scheduled and serendipitous. The advent of Zoom fatigue has forced many teams to adjust their meeting mania to mitigate hours in front of a screen. I've seen teams reduce standing one-hour meetings to 45 or even 30 minutes, and their meetings have become far more efficient.





However, they have lost time for those casual conversations that come before and after a meeting or from just walking in the hallway or bumping into folks you might otherwise never know at work when you're grabbing coffee. Post-COVID, I encourage leaders to foster the same efficiency with meeting schedules when back in offices, but also to create time blocks, either online or in person, for the random connections that are critical for developing team culture.

Online, this could mean hosting virtual office hours where a manager's "Zoom door" is open for anyone to pop in. In the office, this could be setting expectations that folks who are on site are not just there for in-person meetings. Ensure there are times for people to just sit together and work or to have more casual connections at hackathons or demo hours, so teams can show their work in process.

*Julia Austin (@austinfish) is an executive fellow at the Rock Center for Entrepreneurship and a former senior lecturer.*

**Amy C. Edmondson: Be honest about the company's needs**

Too many are asking whether we will go back to normal. To me, the problematic word is "back." There is no going back to pre-COVID times. There is only forward—to a new and uncertain future that is currently presenting us with an opportunity for thoughtful design.

COVID-19 introduced dramatic changes in how we worked, most notably in forcing many people to work remotely. Of course, that brought benefits and it brought challenges. We are social creatures who need to be together some of the time to feel connected and to generate new ideas and solutions. The question going forward is not whether remote work will continue, but rather, when does remote work make sense?

Conceptually, it's simple. Working from home works best for relatively independent tasks, when knowledge is codified and can be easily shared from a distance. Being together matters when tasks are interdependent, require sharing tacit knowledge in fluid ways, and coordination needs are not scripted or predictable. An honest assessment of the kind of work your employees do should yield a prescription for the degree to which you are dependent on proximity for quality.

Designing future work arrangements needs to be based on what the work requires from us, not on our preferences or the length of our commute. For some companies, the work is conducive to a mix of home days and office days. But a hybrid approach will not work if it's left to individual choice to come in when people feel like it; it must be structured, so that people are together in predictable ways for the parts of the work that present the most interdependence. So conceptual simplicity gives rise to operational complexity to sort out the mechanisms for deciding and designing these new arrangements in a way that give us joy and productivity alike.

To get started, organizational leaders need to commit to telling the truth about what the company needs, while engaging people in the hard work of creating solutions together.

*Amy C. Edmondson (@AmyCEdmondson) is the Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management and author of [The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth](#).*

*To view the entire article, go to <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/covid-killed-the-traditional-workplace-what-should-companies-do-now>.*



## Tip of the Month

This month we focus our Tip on carrying out Direct Purchasing, our new purchasing model for members that affects our process with about half our vendors and contracts. It's an exciting innovation designed to make life better and easier for our members! Orders are expedited, and invoicing and payment are directly between the member and vendor, allowing for better tracking of expenditures and income, respectively.

If you are a member organization, you will have to have an organizational email address to use as your common login to the new Bluebook. If you haven't already secured that and had it registered for use with CES, please contact [gary@ces.org](mailto:gary@ces.org).

Later in the Newsletter, there are explicit instructions for how to use the Direct Purchasing process. Our thanks to all who have provided support as we built, tested, and implemented the new Bluebook and Direct Purchasing!

Does your organization need assistance beyond registration? Paul Benoit (CES Regions 1-5; [paul@ces.org](mailto:paul@ces.org)) and Jim Barentine (CES Regions 4, 6-8; [jim@ces.org](mailto:jim@ces.org)) are available to assist.

## Calendar of Events

- May 4 Direct Purchase Q&A Meeting for Members, 9:00
- May 4 Direct Purchase Q&A Meeting for Vendors, 1:00
- May 5 Cinco de Mayo
- May 5/6/12/13/19/20 NM League of Zoning Officials
- May 6 National Nurses Day
- May 7 NM Association of Chiefs of Police Meeting
- May 8 Victory in Europe Day
- May 9 Mother's Day
- May 15 Armed Forces Day
- May 15 Police Officer's Memorial Day
- May 17 US Tax Day 2021
- May 31 Memorial Day

May 2021						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					



# Procurement News

## 1) Contract Expirations

### **RFP 16-034- GSA (Re-Bid: 2021-31 See Ongoing Solicitations Below)**

Exerplay

### **RFP 17-019 Temp. Employment Services (Re-Bid: 2021-28 See New Contract Awards Below)**

itsQuest, Inc. 22nd Century Technologies, Inc. Noor Associates, Inc. The Hire Firm

### **RFP 17-021: School Safety Audits (Re-Bid: 2021-30 See New Contract Awards Below)**

Playsafe, LLC Acme Environmental DC Environmental School Specialty  
Imperium Risk Youth RiskPrevention SafePlans, LLC

### **RFP 17-030: JOC Consulting Services (Re-Bid: 2021-33 See Ongoing Solicitations Below)**

The Gordian Group

### **RFP 17-032A&B Flooring (Re-Bid: 2021-32 See Ongoing Solicitations Below)**

Southwest Carpet & Floors, Inc. Ray's Flooring Norcon of New Mexico, LLC  
Combs Electrical & Mechanical Business Environments Stout Hardwood Flooring  
Arbos Hardwood Flooring

### **RFP 17-033: Student Management Systems (Re-Bid: 2021-27 See Ongoing Solicitations Below)**

Edupoint, Tyler Technologies Lumen Touch,LLC PowerSchool Group  
Seas Education Imagine Learning Pearson (Now Savvas) Edgenuity

## 2) Contract Extensions

### **RFP 17-020 Turf Management (Contract extended for 2 years)**

Organic Technology International

### **RFP 17-026: Portable Storage Containers- Expires 3-13-22 (Contract extended for 1 year)**

Maloy Mobile Storage Inc.

### **RFP 17-028: Moving & Storage Services- Expires 4-10-22 (Contract extended for 1 year)**

Moving Solutions Innovative Moving Solutions Rockefeller's Cleaning & Restoration

## 3) New Contract Awards

**RFP 2021-21**  
**Copiers, Printers, MDFs Products & Related**  
**Services + Managed Printing Services**

Infojini, Inc.  
Innive Inc  
Nube Group  
NuneX Enterprises LLC  
Professional Document Systems, Inc.  
Real Time Solutions  
Softdocs, Inc.



<b>RFP 2021-25</b> <b>Janitorial Products, Equipment &amp; Consulting/Training, Materials and Related</b>	Brady Industries Fleming Chemical Company Laun-Dry Supply Company Quality Janitorial - North LLC Quality Janitorial LLC Sandia Paper Shamrock's Discount Janitor Supply Southwestern Mill Distributors Inc. Spectrum Paper Co., Inc. Starr Janitorial
<b>RFP 2021-27</b> <b>Student Management &amp; Special Education Curriculum</b>	Edupoint Educational Systems LLC Innive Inc. PowerSchool Group LLC Tyler Technologies, Inc.
<b>RFP 2021-28</b> <b>Temporary Employment and Recruitment Services</b>	22nd Century Technologies, Inc. itsQuest, Inc. Maxim Healthcare Staffing Services, Inc. Precision Human Resources Solutions, Inc. RADgov, Inc.

#### 4) Ongoing Solicitations

RFP #	RFP Description	Release	Pre-prop	Due	Evaluations
RFP 021.5C (AEPA) Pending AEPA committee approval.	<i>E-Rate Consulting Services</i>	1/18/21	TBD	2/24/21	
RFP 2021-30	<i>School Safety Audit, Inspection, Consulting and Training Services</i>	3/15/21	3/17/21	04/05/21	04/6-15/21
RFP 2021-31	<i>Physical Education, Athletic, Recreation, Health and Training Supplies</i>	3/15/21	3/17/21	04/05/21	04/6-15/21
RFP 2021-32	<i>Flooring Systems and Related</i>	3/15/21	3/17/21	04/05/21	04/6-15/21
RFP 2021-33	<i>JOC Program Consulting Services</i>	3/16/21	3/17/21	04/05/21	04/6-15/21







Did you know there about two dozen different courses currently on the [www.cestap.org](http://www.cestap.org) website, as recorded webinars, for access by faculty needing assistance in any one of many areas of student exceptionalities? Learn now how to best intervene! Study at your leisure! Share/discuss/review the included information with your colleagues!

For additional assistance from CES' TAP, please contact:

Loretta Garcia

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**TAP Hotline: (505) 985-8454**

The advertisement for NMREAP (New Mexico Recruitment and Employment Assistance Program) features a background image of a classroom with rows of desks and chairs. A teal-colored banner is overlaid on the image, containing the text 'Jobs Await!' in a large, white, serif font. Below this, in a smaller white font, is the text 'Teaching, administrative, and educationally related service positions in New Mexico'. At the bottom of the banner is the NMREAP logo, which consists of the letters 'NMREAP' in a bold, sans-serif font, with 'NM' in blue and 'REAP' in red, all set against a white background that also includes a stylized outline of the state of New Mexico.

**CES Mailing: PO Box 81045, Albuquerque, NM  
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**HEY YOU**

**NEW MEXICO IS**

**NOW HIRING**

**NMREAP**





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