

## Pay Rethink and “Two Tiered” Workplaces, Part 2

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Part 2, reviews three articles in the Wall Street Journal: The New Workplace, (August 2021). The articles, “*The Biggest Mistakes Bosses Will Make With Workers Returning After Covid-19*”<sup>1</sup>, “*Employee Benefits in a Hybrid Office*”<sup>2</sup>, and “*Here Comes The Two-Tier Workplace*”<sup>3</sup>, are reviewed below.

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[Part 1](#), a review of the Wall Street Journal article, “It’s Time to Rethink Pay” (June 2021) is also posted as part of the Resilient Realism series authored by LINKCO.

These three WSJ articles on compensation and hybrid work models, reinforce the critical questions LINKCO is hearing daily from business leaders: How do we lead in the new hybrid workplace reality and not lose our greatest talent? Should compensation and benefits change for remote workers, hybrid workers, in situ workers? How do we re-envision our companies based on the many positive insights we gained about remote work and about our employees/co-workers during COVID?

In “*The Biggest Mistakes Bosses Will Make With Workers Returning After Covid-19*”,<sup>1</sup> the advice makes sense and is worth considering. Don’t patronize your employees and do assume they can self-manage their time. These are two of the insights/complaints we most often hear from stellar talent wishing to make a change: their employers/supervisors have not or cannot accept that employees can self-manage their time to the best advantage of the employer, meeting and often exceeding expectations. This is most pertinent for our clients grappling with return to office policies. These issues are being discussed and workable solutions embraced by our clients regardless of employee work location.

Here are some of the questions employers and supervisors are (or should be) asking themselves and their teams:

1. How can we avoid our own biases and create guidelines for in office versus remote work focusing on the work product desired and the collaboration critical for the company, teams, divisions etc.?
2. How do we adequately employ technology, post Covid to avoid “video burn out”? What technology guidelines, protocols should we have in place to foster best practices for combined office and remote meetings?
3. How do we avoid the “presence is performance” bias and track metrics and foster evaluation based on the actual work produced?
4. How do we bridge the normative work-place formalism in favor of some of the “human” vulnerabilities and work/life realities we shared with our co-workers and employees during Covid?
5. How do we properly consider and include mental health and resilient leadership modeling in the workplace discussion?
6. Are we willing to make (public) mistakes/fail? Let employees/co-workers know you do not have all the answers to the “new work reality”.

In “Employee Benefits in a Hybrid Office”<sup>2</sup>, and “Here Comes The Two-Tier Workplace”<sup>3</sup> we engage in a robust discussion of changing benefits to address the new hybrid work reality. In situ office perks like catered meals and day-care may be replaced or downsized to address new employee preferences like child-care closer to home. Resources and benefits that encouraged remaining in the office are shifting to benefitting the remote/hybrid teams in new ways focusing on output and not hours.

One of the results of this thinking is flexible time off that is trust based and approved by managers. 77% of my clients who are implementing this type of policy are reporting positive results. 81% of employees surveyed, appreciate the collaborative, and trust derived approach to their performance and deliverables output.

Some of the challenges faced by organizations committed to hybrid and remote options for employees is the “face-time” factor. When employers/managers are predominantly in the office, those employees who do work from the office tend to be favored for promotions and choice projects. This is when objectivity and performance metrics are obscured by presence in the location where the “boss” works. Agile and resilient leaders who understand that they must themselves be retrained to evaluate their employees differently is the golden ticket, but sometimes elusive. Change is difficult.

Links to the WSJ articles discussed above:

- 1) [https://www.wsj.com/articles/bosses-mistakes-return-work-11628795898?st=b363fu9b2u547gm&reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](https://www.wsj.com/articles/bosses-mistakes-return-work-11628795898?st=b363fu9b2u547gm&reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)
- 2) [https://www.wsj.com/articles/employee-benefits-hybrid-workplace-11628796247?mod=searchresults\\_pos3&page=1](https://www.wsj.com/articles/employee-benefits-hybrid-workplace-11628796247?mod=searchresults_pos3&page=1)
- 3) [https://www.wsj.com/articles/hybrid-workplace-promotions-11628796072?mod=searchresults\\_pos1&page=1](https://www.wsj.com/articles/hybrid-workplace-promotions-11628796072?mod=searchresults_pos1&page=1)

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