At Work
Employee Disengaged and Frustrated with Onsite or Virtual Work
Scenario 2

A) Employees who are required to return to the office tell you that they feel more engaged working virtually, and their level of engagement will decrease by returning to the office.

B) Employees who remain working virtually based on their work duties tell you they do not like virtual work and want the engagement of working in the presence of others.

Possible Responses:

A) Employees required to return to the office: “I understand the changes in working from home created a different level of engagement and motivation. I am glad you were able to find a way to be fully engaged in your work while telecommuting; now we need the same level of commitment in the office to help each other. If you were able to motivate yourself during the crisis working on your own, imagine what we can do together back in the office. We are returning to the office because we need to work together toward the department’s mission.”

B) Employees who remain working virtually but wanting the group interaction: “We can connect more often via Skype with informal meetings as a group to create that group interaction atmosphere.”

DO:

✓ Listen to ideas on how the employees can feel engaged from their perspective to return to the office.
✓ Understand the employee needs time to adjust back in the office environment. (See Coaching with Compassion)
✓ Work on ideas as a team on what can be done to create peer engagement.
✓ Acknowledge as a leader you are experiencing similar emotions and it is alright not to figure everything out by yourself. (See Gratitude Tool)
✓ Speak with peers who have managed staff that remained on base during the shutdown; seek recommendations. (See Model for Engaging the Hearts, Minds and Spirits of Others)
✓ Think about a previous leader who inspired you and you can contact to help respond to the complexity of this situation. He/she could advise you on the right course of action to lead from both heart and mind.

DON’T:

✗ Forget to treat each individual respectfully because everyone copes with her/his emotions differently. (See Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders)
✗ Rely on your own understanding about engagement and do remember to use resources, such as this toolkit. (See Coaching with Compassion)
✗ Underestimate the power of engagement. (See Power of Engagement)
Explore the following resources and reach out to your Division's Human Resources Business Partner if you need further support.

**Coaching with Compassion**: This tool will help the coach (manager) notice an employee's need, empathize, and act to enhance his/her well-being.

**Gratitude in a Time of Pandemic**: This tool will help develop gratitude and resilience in the face of COVID-19.

**Model for Engaging the Hearts, Minds and Spirits of Others**: This tool will help with ways to engage employees.

**Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders**: This tool will challenge your leadership style and give you five practices of exemplary behavior.

**Power of Engagement**: This article focuses on ensuring you are putting people first.

**Reflective Listening Tool**: This tool will help connect what the listener THINKS the speaker means with what the speaker ACTUALLY means.

**COVID-19 Sandia Resources**: This site contains Sandia's latest coronavirus information/FAQ and daily update messages.

**Questions?**

Visit us on the web at [hr.sandia.gov](http://hr.sandia.gov)
or contact [HR Solutions](mailto:HR_Solutions@sandia.gov) at 505-284-4700