

**Are your employees able  
to enjoy the office again?**



**BARCO**





**Employees are, finally, returning to the office after pandemic restrictions are evolving to a new normal. For some, it's been so long that they re-enter the corporate world with different expectations. Others, meanwhile, have remained in offices running a skeleton staff, glad to have more people around them. All will see the office space – once filled again – with fresh eyes.**

The saying goes that you only get one chance to make a first impression. Yet, post-pandemic, employers have been gifted a second chance. It's crucial that returning employees like what they see and being able to 'enjoy the office' will make or break the employee experience.

The [latest Harvard Business Review](#) (HBR) commented that the global pandemic has created, "new challenges and opportunities in almost every industry, and as the economy reopens competition will be intense. Winners will be those who... collaborate to identify multiple solutions, prototype, iterate and bring new ideas to market. Those behaviors will only happen when people come together in the new, modern workplace."

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As we re-enter the workplace, technology will enable the next generation of office experiences. Our expectations and realities have changed, recognizing some of the benefits of remote working, while also understanding the need for human connection and corporate-level IT systems. The HBR, for example, finds that more than [50% of US companies plan to pilot new spaces](#) as part of their return to the office this year, such as repurposing a café into a high-energy social and collaboration space:

“The solution is to integrate physical spaces and technology with three key concepts in mind: equity, engagement, and ease... To be fully engaged, people need clear sightlines to one another and to the content. Designing for employee engagement in digital-to-physical space means thinking like a movie director – lights, camera, audio, content.”<sup>1</sup>

The employee experience in the physical workplace environment therefore requires fresh and engaging communication, technology, and office design (what we [call techoring](#)). [PwC's report on returning to a post-covid workforce](#) similarly recommends that employers act quickly and decisively to adopt new strategies, tools, technologies and ways of collaborating and communicating for the future.



1. Keane and Heiser, '4 Strategies for Building a Hybrid Workplace that Works', Harvard Business Review, July 2021

# Understanding the EX factor

First, let's clarify what 'employee experience' or EX is. Rather than a loose concept, it is in fact a whole HR discipline. Employee experience is [defined by SearchHRSsoftware](#) as: "a worker's perceptions about his or her journey through all the touchpoints at a particular company... The company's physical workspace, culture and technology are all important components of the employee experience, which is often abbreviated as EX."

This is subtly but distinctly different from 'employee engagement' which has dominated the HR space for much of the 21st century. [Gallup explains it this way](#):

- **Employee experience** is the journey an employee takes with a company
- **Employee engagement** is an ongoing part of the employee experience

Employee engagement comes mostly from relationships at work: [70% of the variance in employee engagement is due to the line manager](#) alone. Employee experience, meanwhile, has many more touchpoints, says Gallup, including "technology use and the physical work environment."

This is an increasingly important distinction in the post-pandemic era. The anticipated changes in long-term working practices place an urgency on businesses to revamp their employee experience strategies to remain relevant and effective. Regarding the office, says an [iOffice and Verdantix research report on employee experience](#), firms should "call upon high-value technology solutions." Such tools should "anchor a seamless technology experience for employees, and can pave the way for other capabilities, such as digital wayfinding."

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# Show, don't tell

How to curate the employee experience when returning to the office will therefore be a key success factor across multiple industries. In an always connected, tactical digital age, seeing is believing. Speaking to [Business Insider](#), Edwina Johnson, COO of Alloy, put it succinctly: "You need to almost over-invest in the office to make it attractive."

This isn't just about looks and aesthetics; it's about communication and added value. Employees, to borrow a phrase from [McKinsey & Company](#), need the right tools, capabilities, and infrastructure to have a tangible impact through their work. That calls for design software, communication apps, deep data analytics, and visual, tactile technologies that drive productivity. Compare that again to working from home, balancing a small-screened laptop on one knee and an unhappy toddler on the other. The added value that businesses can truly allow them to Enjoy the Office once again.

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Edwina Johnson, COO of Alloy







The added value that businesses can offer their employees can truly allow them to Enjoy the Office once again.

At Barco, we precisely translate this for the workspace by providing 'ABLE' solutions. This concentrates on your four key spaces, Auditorium, Boardroom, corporate Lobby and Experience center. By placing [video walls](#) or projectors in these four key spaces, organizations ensure that employees remain informed without cluttering their desktops with data and information. This is a chance for employers to remind employees how much simpler, engaging and enthusing (and high-tech) corporate environments can be.

Large video walls can techorate, [enhancing the visual brand and cultural identity](#) (especially in the Lobby space). They can also present information, slide decks, video or documents, to enhance collaboration (in the Auditorium, Boardroom, and Experience center). Video walls in the office allow the company to keep staff up to speed with information and important messaging. They can also be unique, artistic, bespoke installations that wow your employees on their return to work and every day thereafter. As we've seen through the research findings of PwC, McKinsey, Gallup, MIT and beyond, organization's that ensure the returning employee experience is to 'enjoy the office' will be at a clear advantage.

**To learn more, view our Barco large video wall portfolio.**

## From the visualization experts

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