

HR: Return strategy

“Return-to-work” implies a going back to where we were. Is there a “going-back” or are we simply moving toward a whole new reality?

In conversation with human resource leaders across the U.S., Boyden's Steve Nilsen explores cross-sector return-to-work strategies.

Nilsen: Is there a “going-back”? **Webb:** Our approach from the outset has been that “return-to-work” is about moving forward. The tools that are available now make remote work more productive than ever. The implementation of remote collaboration tools has given us the opportunity to look at ways that we can be even more efficient in the future.

Nilsen: What are the biggest changes you have implemented to continue operating? In your return-to-work plan, what will remain as a COVID-19 legacy? **Webb:** Since we maintained constant operations of our manufacturing facility, we implemented a number of immediate protocols. For months now, we do daily temperature checks on everyone and we have restricted visitor access to the facility to the greatest extent possible. Our Aesthetics Division sells directly to Medical Aesthetics practices. Most of those practices closed for a period of time, but are now opening back up implementing a variety of safety measures to open and stay open safely. In an effort to remain customer-focused, we have adjusted how we serve client operations that are closed, reopening, and operating at various levels of capacity.

Nilsen: What metrics are you tracking to help guide your organization's return-to-work? Are you implementing new related internal metrics? **Webb:** It's really been our customers' reality that has guided our decision-making process. As they resume operations, we make sure our teams are available to support them. Our goal is to help their businesses rebound as quickly and as fully as possible.

Nilsen: In what new ways are you using technology in your return-to-work strategy? **Webb:** Like everyone else, we are using virtual meeting tools to stay connected. Many of our leaders were running regular conference calls with decentralized teams. They have been mostly replaced with video calls and the visual aspect has helped people feel more connected in some ways than before.

Nilsen: What do you anticipate will be the greatest obstacle in the return-to-work phase? **Webb:** It's obvious that the coming months will continue to be unpredictable. The most important thing we can do is to stay flexible and adapt to the external changes as they come. We are always working to anticipate a range of potential scenarios.

Nilsen: What is your greatest learning from this so far, and what advice would you offer as we continue to navigate these uncharted waters? **Webb:** I think it's been more about reinforcing the things we already know – putting good practices under a spotlight. Communication and transparency are critical. Showing care and compassion for our people has been a priority and it is absolutely critical. There's no script for what we're going through, and each family is facing their own unique challenges. It is tough on everyone, but it has also been a great opportunity to develop our people, to build resiliency.

In conversation with:



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CROWN LABORATORIES

States of operation:

- HQ in Johnson City, TN
- Division office in Dallas.

Operations outside U.S.:

An office in Ballyclare, Northern Ireland, and a sales team throughout the UK.

Number of employees:

Approx. 400 employees across the U.S. and U.K.

by Steve Nilsen
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