Return to Work from Parental Leave
3 Steps to Success

Alice Darbyshire

We're in this together - employee, manager, colleagues, family and friends.

A successful return to work is a **collaborative journey** that respects everyone. We feel heard, understood and valued - even when things don't go our way.

Returners and managers: here are 3 steps to co-create a smooth transition back to work after parental leave. Do Step 1 on your own then bring this with you to complete Steps 2 and 3 together.

1. CULTIVATE A COMPASSIONATE MINDSET

We all have a parenting story; whether you're a parent or not. What's yours? When we recognise our own story, we can choose how it affects our approach - the language we use, how we behave, our impact.

Thinking about your story, ask yourself:

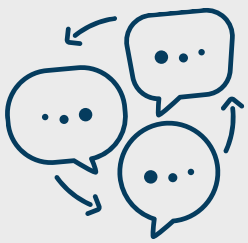
- ☐ What assumptions am I making?
- ☐ What blind spots and biases might I have?
- ☐ What emotions and feelings am I noticing?
- ☐ How would I behave if the other person was me?

2. LISTEN DEEPLY WITH EMPATHY

With so much noise around us, it's hard to know what we think. Take the time to listen to you AND them to know what truly matters.

- ✦ Sit alone and write down what you and your team need for success
  and then ...
- ✦ When you're talking together, put away all other distractions to focus fully
- ✦ Listen attentively to each other - without judgment, opinion or assumption
- ✦ Reflect back what you've heard, acknowledging what's going on for the other
- ✦ Ask questions to understand the other's experience and discover what truly matters

3. ENGAGE IN OPEN, HONEST CONVERSATIONS



Getting together to talk is the only answer. With a compassionate mindset, listening with empathy, make sure you cover these topics:

- ☐ **Key dates**: Keeping-in-touch days, social events, training, first day back
- ☐ **A business update**: What's changed? How does it impact us?
- ☐ **The role:** Discuss ambitions, opportunities, skills and strengths and how all this fits with the business and life now
- ☐ **Support**: Be clear about what you need to succeed - what, when, for how long

ALICE@ALICEDARBYSHIRE.COM | +44 (0)7789 555626 | WWW.ALICEDARBYSHIRE.COM