READY-TO-USE TEMPLATE

Coming Back After Time Away

A practical plan for returning after leave or extended time away, with shared priorities and support.

20 minutes | Support after leave or extended time away

Use the supplied wording as it is, or change it together. The Word file and Notion template are editable. Keep only notes you need.

Invite the conversation

Keep this about practical work arrangements; personal disclosure is optional.

Welcome back. Could we take twenty minutes to cover what changed, what can wait, and what would help you settle back in? You do not need to explain private circumstances. We can use the appropriate support process for anything that needs specialist input.

0-5 min · Hear what would help

Let the person set a boundary around the conversation.

What would make today or this week easier? Is there a practical arrangement you want to discuss? What would you like colleagues to know, if anything? We will agree before sharing personal information.

Notes and changes for our situation

Coming Back After Time Away

WORKING AGENDA / CONTINUED

5-10 min · Give the useful context

Select changes that affect their work. Do not forward an entire inbox.

Decisions that affect your role:
Work that was completed or reassigned:
Current priorities and why:
People or processes that changed:
Where to find the current information:

10-15 min · Agree a realistic restart

Use relevant organizational processes for formal arrangements.

What should come first? What can wait, stop, or stay with someone else? What support or access is needed? Which expectations need to be confirmed through the appropriate manager or support team?

Notes and changes for our situation

Coming Back After Time Away

WORKING AGENDA / CONTINUED

15-20 min · Keep the agreement clear

Avoid recording sensitive history that is not needed for the work.

Immediate priority:
Work deferred or reassigned:
Support and owner:
What we agreed to communicate:
Next check-in:
Questions to take through the relevant support process:

At the next check-in

Revisit the arrangement instead of assuming it worked.

How has the first period back been? What did we underestimate? What needs adjusting in the work, pace, or support? What should I follow through on next?

The thinking behind it

Belonging is expressed in how we make room for someone's return. The environment can help them reconnect without making them prove their worth through immediate catch-up.

Read When Mattering Isn't Enough by Nic Payne

Keep the useful part

A shared record, not a transcript. Agree what belongs here and what should stay private.

Date / people / purpose

What we agreed

Next step / owner / support / date

What remains open

When we will return to it

What are we treating as urgent only because nobody chose what could wait?