

Reopening Offices and Restoring Profitability

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About 2,500 years ago, Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem, destroyed its Temple, and exiled its citizens to Babylonia. Around 60 years later, Persia's King Cyrus conquered Babylon and allowed the expatriates to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their Temple. Restoration of the Temple was a spiritual renewal after a devastating exile. A modern-day renewal of spirits will occur as Covid-19 exiles return to their offices and rebuild their practices.

The reopening of businesses will require massive efforts by governments, businesses, and citizenry. There will be complications to overcome, including a weakened economy, shortages of some supplies, and possible resurgence of the virus. To help you overcome these challenges, following are some tips and resources for reopening law offices and restoring profitability of practices.

Building. Consider improvements to buildings like automatic doors, doorless restrooms, improved air filtration, voice activated elevators, and widened hallways

Communicating. Communicate plans to clients, lawyers, and staff. Let these stakeholders know that their safety and well-being is a top priority.

Complying. Adopt guidelines for safe practices and update them to comply with evolving regulations. Appoint a "Safety Ambassador" and use sensors to remind employees about social distancing and good hygiene.

Marketing. Maintain marketing activities like conducting online seminars, emailing alerts, publishing articles, and updating websites. Host special events like virtual lunches or virtual coffee dates.

Planning. Start the recovery process by planning for office reopening. The plan should be a comprehensive document that covers financial, operational, and technology matters.

Remoting. Consider continuing to work remotely until testing is more widespread. Use technologies that facilitate remote working, including cloud computing, video conferencing, and project management software. Continue to replace face-to-face gatherings with virtual meetings. Download apps to manage work schedules and employee productivity.

Remodeling. Accommodate social distancing in reception areas, workspaces, and conferences rooms. Move chairs six feet apart, install plexiglass partitions on workstations, and limit use of shared spaces. Post signs to direct one-way traffic in hallways.

Reopening. Follow the guidance of public officials and health organizations when selecting a date to reopen. Use staggered opening dates with rotating schedules to reduce the number of people in the office at any given time. After reopening, allow remote working to continue for at risk individuals and those with heightened anxiety or caring for children.

Well-being. Adopt procedures like scanning temperatures on entering the office, installing hand sanitizing stations near entrances, and encouraging mask usage. Limit the number of people in common areas like break rooms, conference rooms, and restrooms. Purchase supplies like Covid-19 test kits (when available), disposable desk pads, hand sanitizers, infrared thermometers, and surface disinfectants.

Resources. Read Covid-19 articles about [cash flow](#), [client relations](#), [crisis management](#), [disease control](#), [litigation surge](#), [marketing techniques](#), [office layout](#), [operating procedures](#), [planning for re-opening](#), and [remote working](#). Study practice management books about [Crisis Management](#), [Financial Planning](#), [Legal Technology](#), [Office Organization](#), [Internet Marketing](#), and [Well-Being](#). Review sample policy statements

about [returning to work](#), [telecommuting](#), and [workplace safety](#). Visit recovery websites created by the [Federal Task Force](#), [state governments](#), and organizations like the [ABA](#), [CDC](#), [SBA](#), and [state bar associations](#).

Conclusion. The Coronavirus situation may adversely impact your firm's operations and the ability of clients to pay their bills. To succeed in this challenging environment, adopt a plan that promotes a spirit of cooperation, collaboration, and flexibility among clients, lawyers, and staff. Review the resources mentioned in this article to help your firm optimize profits and maintain well-being.

About the Author

Michael L. Goldblatt has authored numerous books and articles about marketing for lawyers.