



THE PARENT POWER PLAY

# Acing Your Post-Leave Meetings

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# Introduction

YOU HAD A BABY AND NOW YOU'RE HEADING BACK TO WORK! WOOHOO YOU DID IT! THE HARD PART IS OVER!

Just kidding - it's all hard. 😊 Hopefully your parental leave afforded you time to bond with your baby and family. It was most likely not restful, and now you're back at work, most likely questioning what to do next. But fear not, working parents: Josie is here to help.

So pour yourself a cup of that delicious coffee and read on for some tips on how to approach your manager and your team as you prepare to return to the office. Below you'll find a few important reminders, suggested first meeting agendas, and email templates that you can CTRL+C // CTRL+V!

# Read First



## IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR RE-ENGAGING WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES.

While there are no magic words to say, here are a few important reminders as you engage with colleagues:

- **Acknowledge the work that was done by your colleagues and team in your absence.** Covering for a team member who is out of the office can be a big undertaking, on top of one's other responsibilities. Recognizing this effort will score points with everyone.
- **Read the room:** while you are living deeply in this new transition, not everyone will want to be in the trenches with you. It's ok that some people just aren't baby people. Be measured about what you share, especially in the beginning. The ones who will ride with you while you scroll through 46 of the same baby picture will find you.
- **Be patient.** The wheels have kept on turning while you were OOO so it may take some time to untangle things. Give managers and colleagues some grace - just as you prepared to shift things to them, they will need time to shift them back.
- **Have a plan.** Even if you're back full time, consider a ramp back roadmap, which signals to your team that you're being thoughtful about the transition and grateful for how they've stepped up in your absence (see above!) - while also allowing you time to get re-acclimated with your work before you fully take it all back.
- **Share only what you're comfortable sharing.** This transition is hard, full stop. It's ok to not be ok - and if you have the kind of relationship with your manager or team where you're able to share some of what you're feeling, then go for it. If you'd rather keep it to yourself, that's cool too. Remember, there is no need to over explain anything, especially when it comes to how you're handling the emotional and mental transition.
- **Don't be afraid to infuse a little humor.** Let your personality shine through! You're probably slightly delirious anyway. 😊 But in all seriousness, be yourself - because that's the best you can do, and remember: you're the person they want.

# Suggested Agenda for Your First Manager 1:1



THAT FIRST MANAGER MEETING AFTER LEAVE CAN BE NERVE-WRACKING.

Remember, it's completely normal to feel a mix of emotions during this time of transition. While your manager may have an agenda in mind, don't forget that this meeting should be an opportunity for you to ask questions and communicate your needs as you settle back into your role. To help you make the most of this important conversation, here's a suggested agenda:

## 1. Catch up and connect:

- a. Start by simply asking how your manager is doing and sharing a bit about your own experiences. We're human beings after all, and an element of just asking how someone is doing goes a long way in setting the right tone.
- b. Acknowledge and express gratitude for the support provided during your leave, reinforcing the human connection that makes working relationships thrive.

## 2. Ask questions and seek clarity:

- a. Prepare a list of questions in advance to ensure you cover all your concerns. A great starting point is inquiring about key developments you may have missed during your leave and their current status.
- b. Time-box the return responsibilities convo. Ask about your manager's priorities for you in the next 30 days, focusing on short-term goals to avoid feeling overwhelmed. This isn't the time to talk about your 3-year career plan (unless you want to - go for it, go-getter!)

## 3. Align expectations and discuss needs:

- a. Gain a clear understanding of your tasks, deadlines, and their relative importance. This will help you hit the ground running and prioritize effectively.
- b. Remember to address any scheduling needs, such as picking up your child or designated offline hours, to ensure your manager is aware and can support you in this time of transition.

**While this agenda offers a solid foundation for your first meeting back, be flexible and open to your manager's input as well. Remember, the ultimate goal is to establish a shared vision for your return, fostering a successful and fulfilling reintegration into your professional life.**



# Email Templates for First Outreach

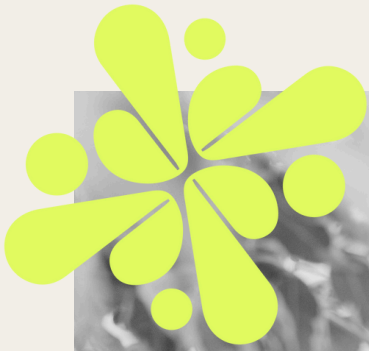
## PREPARING TO RETURN

Subject: Hey Hi Hello 🍷- I'm Returning to Work Next Week!

Hi [MANAGERS NAME],

I am planning to return to work next week on [DATE]. I'll be sure to set up a meeting to catch up once I'm back. Thank you for all that you have done in my absence, and I'm looking forward to it!

Talk soon,  
[YOUR NAME]



## REQUESTING A MEETING WITH YOUR MANAGER

Subject: Catching Up

Hi [MANAGERS NAME],

I hope this email finds you well!

Today is my first official day back from parental leave and I'm happy to be getting back into the swing of things. Thanks for your support through all of this!

I've spent some time today going through documents and outlining my plan to reassume responsibilities. Are you available to catch up this week or next for 30 minutes? It would be great to chat about any important updates and discuss the transition.

Kind regards,  
[YOUR NAME]



## REQUESTING A MEETING WITH A COLLEAGUE

Subject: My Gratitude!

Hi [COLLEAGUE NAME],

First and foremost - thank you. I know that you've had a lot on your plate in my absence and I really appreciate all that you have done.

I'm back at work as of today, and really looking forward to catching up. I'm excited to pick things up and would love to spend some time going over what I missed while I was out. I'm meeting with [MANAGERS NAME] today/tomorrow, but hoping you may have some time to meet with me this week? I am available until 5pm and can be flexible on timing that works for you.

Cheers,  
[YOUR NAME]



THANK YOU TO THE TEAM

Subject: Teamwork 🧡 Dreamwork

Hi team,

I just wanted to express my sincere gratitude for all that you have done to help while I was on parental leave. I am so grateful for the time with my family. I don't know if it's just the exhaustion talking but you all have really made my return to work so much smoother this week. I'm excited to be jumping back in. Your understanding, support, and patience have been greatly appreciated!

Best,  
[YOUR NAME]

PS - if anyone wants to be bored to tears with baby pics, you know where to find me!



HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

# Get in touch with team Josie:



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