



How Can Transportation Help You Bring Employees Back to the Office



The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the traditional flow of work like nothing we had ever seen. Offices that were full of workers from Monday through Friday suddenly sat empty, with those workers relocated to home offices in the name of social distancing.

As the pandemic gradually wanes, companies who aim to reopen office spaces are encountering a number of hurdles that stand in the way of placing employees beyond all of those unoccupied desks.

All this while more companies, like Tesla ([per this CNN article](#)) are beginning to mandate that their staffers return to home base.

According to Fortune, there are many reasons for employees being **hesitant to return** to the office. Some of those issues include lingering concerns about health and safety and, per this CNN report, giving up the **freedom of working from home.**

In this paper, however, we'll focus on the matter of transportation and the role it plays in traditional office work. For both companies who have traditionally offered transportation and for those who are thinking of doing so for the first time, helping employees make the trip to and from the office each day can pave the road for a return to the pre-pandemic work model.

Commuting is the Biggest Hurdle

While other factors like those mentioned above do play a role in the reluctance of many to return to the office, it is the commute that presents the biggest obstacle. Simply put, people don't like to commute.

Before the pandemic, it was seen as a necessary evil. Now that millions of workers have experienced life without that commute, however, plenty of those same workers are wondering just how "necessary" the commute really is. Can't they just continue to work from home as they've been doing for two years and counting?

The reasons for despising the commute are many, including:

- **Cost.** Given rising costs across the board, including gas prices and vehicle prices, commuting to and from work now costs the average employee more than ever before, as stated in this report from the NY Times.
- **Time lost.** An employee facing a commute that takes 45 minutes in each direction loses an hour and a half every single day sitting in traffic. For the busy individual who wants to be productive both personally and professionally, it's hard to sacrifice that much time five days a week.
- **Stress and frustration.** Beyond the practical implications of spending money and losing time while commuting, there is the additional mental strain of battling traffic day after day.
- **Health concerns.** If an employee is faced with using public transportation as their only viable option to get to and from the office, they may also have health fears about sharing a small, crowded space with so many other people.

It's plain to see that employers face an uphill battle, as noted in this Fortune piece, when aiming to bring workers back to the office.

With that said, all hope is not lost. Despite strong reservations about the realities of a commute, many workers do speak favorably of some aspects of in-person employment. Specifically, the ability to socialize with coworkers and clients, along with the benefits of face-to-face collaboration, have been missed since the pandemic began.

Employers Are Facing Significant Harms



Just as employees have their reasons for not wanting to return to the office, employers have powerful motivations to get those employees back into the pre-pandemic work environment. For many organizations, every day that passes without employees working in the office is another missed opportunity to get back on track.

The cost of keeping employees in a remote setting varies from business to business. For many, there is the sunk cost of empty office space to consider, and the matter of determining how to manage office leases moving forward based on how many employees will come back. Leasing too much office space month after month can be a big drain on the bottom line.

It's not only hard costs like office leases that need to be considered. There is also the matter of decreased productivity due to the realities of working remotely. When working at home, employees deal with distractions that simply aren't present in an office setting – and they may be likely to get less done as a result.



Organizations that rely heavily on collaboration between employees are likely to suffer while in a remote setting, as well. Even with the many digital tools available today for remote collaboration, there is still nothing like sitting directly across the table from another person to work through a project. It's easier to get on the same page and drive projects forward while working together in person, but that can only happen if a large percentage of the team agrees to come back to the office.

So, the friction here is obvious: employers would love to get as many employees back into the office as possible, but those employees are reluctant to agree for a variety of reasons. It will take a compromise for these sides to come together and find a plan that satisfies everyone involved.

Let's take a closer look at what that could look like in the next section.

Finding Common Ground



For employers to get most of their employees back into the office, it will be necessary to address the hurdles that have prevented that from happening so far. While that could mean improving health and safety protocols in the office or offering other perks, we are going to focus here on the matter of the commute.

The business cannot do anything about the distance traveled between the office and the homes of its employees. However, it can offer options for how that distance can be covered in a way that reduces what the employee must sacrifice. The two biggest issues presented by commuting – cost and time lost – can be mitigated with the right perks.

Here are some possibilities:

Employee transportation. Perhaps the most appealing option from the perspective of your employees will be a structured transportation system they can access to get to and from the office. Depending on the size of the organization, this could work in a few different ways:

- **As one option, it could be a direct,** point-to-point transportation service that picks up the employee at their home and takes them straight to the office.
- **Other possibilities include dedicated routes** where employees can access the transportation at given stops, or shuttles that pick up employees at big hubs (like train stations). The benefit of this approach is not only the money that the employee will save over driving to the office but also the time that can be regained while in transit. Without having to do the driving, employees may choose to spend the time productively, getting a start on the workday using mobile devices or simply by reading a book.



- **Reimbursements.** A direct way to counter the cost of commuting is to offer reimbursement to employees who agree to come back to the office. This could take many different forms, including paying for public transit passes, reimbursing gas purchases, etc. While this doesn't do anything about the time it takes to commute, it does at least account for the cost of getting back to life in the office.
- **Create a carpool system.** Carpooling is a great way to save money on the commute but it can be hard for individual employees to set up this kind of system on their own. As an employer, you can take the initiative to set up a carpooling program that will make it easy for employees who live in similar areas to ride together to work. Though potentially challenging to organize, this program helps employees cut down on their commute costs, and could also make the trip more enjoyable (and even productive) by having other coworkers in the car to pass the time.

Simply telling employees that they need to come back to the office and not offering any solutions to help them do so doesn't bode well for morale or retention. Instead, employers can work together with their teams to find transportation options that make the commute more affordable and enjoyable while staying within budget limitations.

Furthermore, offering desirable commuting alternatives is an effective way to retain talent and maintain employee morale – especially when competitors do not provide similar options.

Employee Transportation in the Real World



It's easy enough to understand the concept of why employees would be compelled to use a transportation system - but how does this play out in the real world? Does it really serve the purposes of both employers and employees as it seems that it should? Let's look at a couple of examples to demonstrate the usefulness of this approach.

While the pandemic has certainly created a unique situation where employers need to offer reasons for employees to come back and work in person, the value of transportation options like company shuttles has been known for years. Microsoft, a major employer in the greater Seattle area, **has long used shuttles** (per Capitol Hill Seattle) to bring workers to its large campus from throughout the region.

Rather than battling the tricky Seattle traffic to get across the bridges to the city of Redmond where Microsoft is headquartered, employees can use the shuttle system to make the trip easily. This has no doubt been an employee perk that has helped Microsoft secure and retain tech talent in a city that features plenty of competition for such workers.

Another huge tech company, Google, focused on bringing back their **Bay Area shuttle service** (per MercuryNews.com) as soon as it was safe to do so after the pandemic put a pause on that service. Reopening offices and getting workers back on campus on at least a part-time basis came along with starting up the shuttle service once again. This is seen as an essential employee perk and getting the office back up and running wasn't going to happen effectively without kickstarting the shuttle service, as well.

Ask Yourself These Questions

As you think about creating a transportation system that will serve your employees well and motivate them to get back to the office, use the questions below to make sure you aren't overlooking any key points.

- Will your new system allow your employees to save money over a traditional commute?
- Does the transportation you want to provide allow your employees to make more of their time spent in transit?
- How many employees will be able to take advantage of the service?
- Is this solution within your available budget for the project?
- Can you manage this system with minimal overhead?

Turn to DPV for a Comprehensive Solution



Trying to solve this big problem alone is more than most organizations can handle in-house. Fortunately, turning to DPV Transportation makes it easy to create a solution that is customized to the specific needs of the business and its employees. Working with DPV allows a business to craft a transportation plan that is professional, reliable, and budget-friendly.

There are several commuting options that DPV can help facilitate:

- Point-to-point: from the employee's door to the office
- Dedicated routes where employees can jump on and off
- Organized shuttle transportation from the big public transportation hubs.
(e.g: employees get to those hubs on their own, likely via public transportation, and then catch a shuttle that will take them directly to their work)

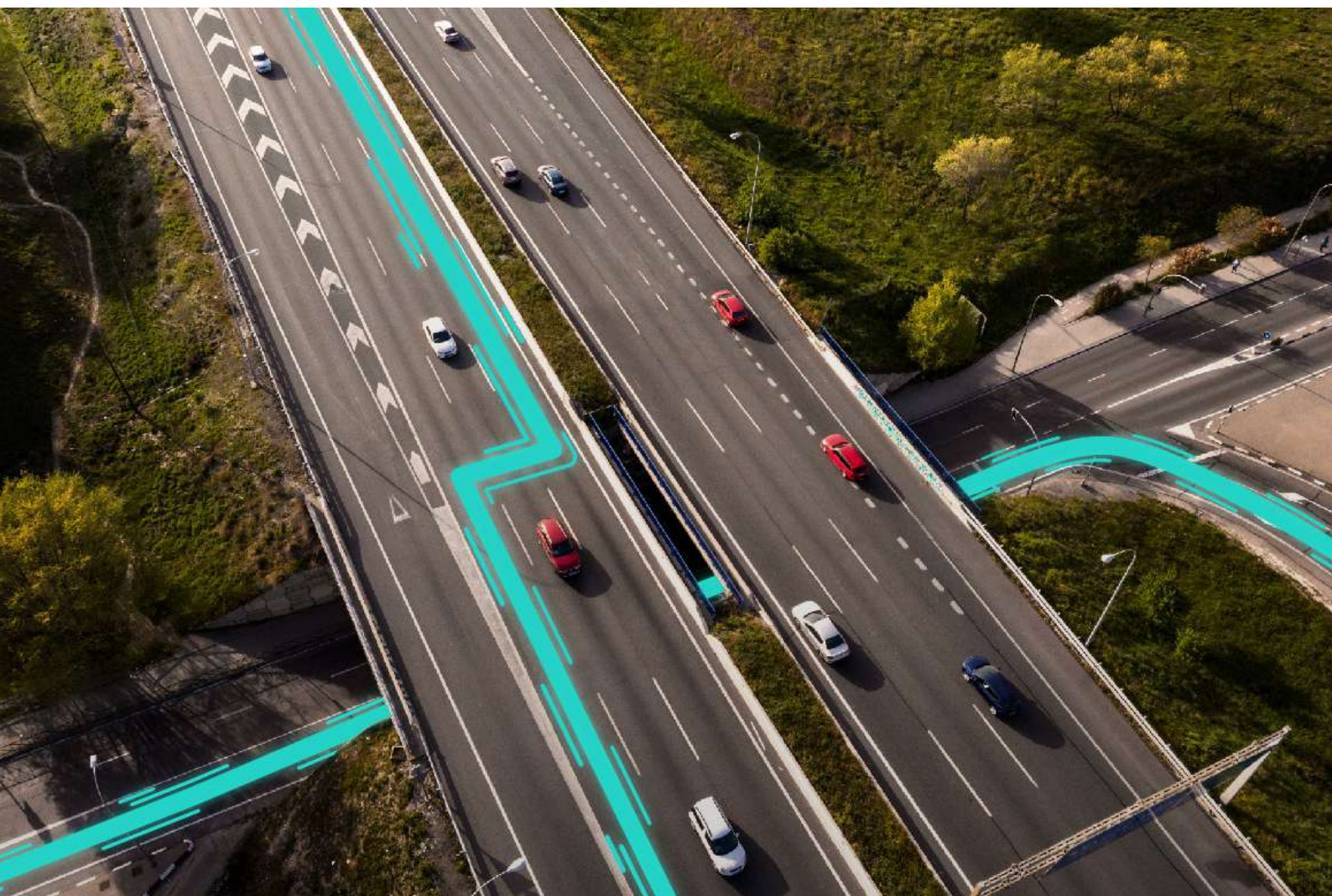
From the perspective of the employee, commuting each day with DPV will be an enjoyable, convenient solution that is a vast upgrade from driving their own vehicle or taking public transportation. Some of the many benefits employees will appreciate include:

- A predictable schedule that accurately defines the start and end times of their day
- Use of a live mobile tracking app to quickly see where the vehicle is along the route
- Productive commute time that can be used flexibly for various purposes
- Improved safety over traveling with large numbers of passengers on public transport
- A no-cost way to get to and from the office, without the inconvenience of finding or paying for parking

It's easy to see how the overall employee experience of working for your organization will be elevated when commuting on a DPV shuttle. And, as every business owner and manager understands, satisfied employees are vital to ongoing success.

But it's not only the employees who will love the DPV shuttle experience. The organization as a whole can enjoy some meaningful advantages, as well:

- End-to-end management of shuttle transportation operations. DPV is experienced in this space and will provide everything that is required for a reliable shuttling system, including the fleet, chauffeurs, maintenance, and more
- Less land space required for parking lots, and less traffic congestion as a result.
- For organizations that have a fleet, DPV can provide managed services to operate that fleet and manage it on a day-to-day basis
- High-tech features can be deployed to benefit organizational operations, such as live tracking the location of the shuttles, monitoring ridership levels, etc.



Environmental Benefits of Organized Shuttle Transportation: _____

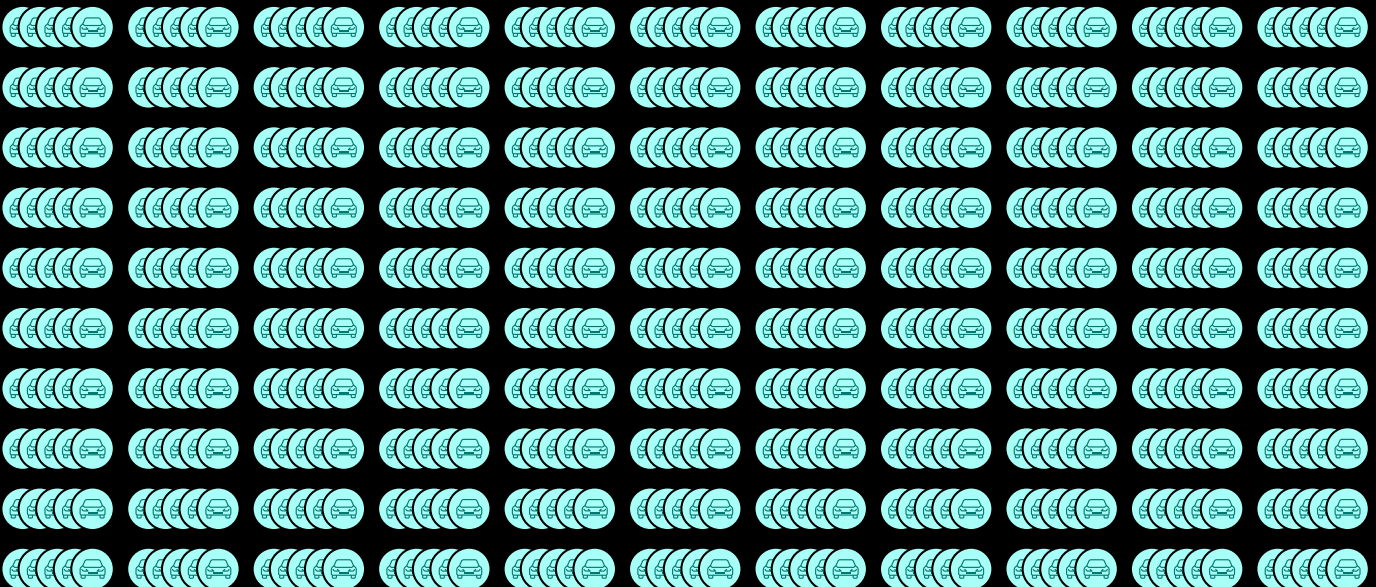
- Total Transportation Greenhouse Gases Emitted (as of 2018):
 - Passenger Car: 41%
 - Buses: 1%
- Public transit users take 30% more steps per day than those who rely on cars [\(source\)](#)
- Switching from a diesel to an electric bus would save nearly \$160,000 in fuel and \$185,000 in maintenance over the bus's lifetime [\(source\)](#)
- Buses produce 35% less grams of CO2 per passenger mile than buses [\(source\)](#)
- On average, one bus can replace on average of 55 car commuters on the road, reducing both traffic congestion and pollution

If you'd like to dive deeper into the sustainability aspect of ground transportation, we invite you to read our free report [How To Evaluate Alternative Fuel Fleets.](#)

10 Buses



550 Cars



We invite you to learn more.

The many challenges that are presented by making a transition back to the office will take time and effort to overcome. As it relates to the commute piece of the puzzle, DPV Transportation stands as a professional, affordable solution to meet employees halfway on this issue. The employees enjoy the cost and time savings they desire, while employers gain the benefits associated with in-person work.

Reach out to DPV Worldwide today to learn more.

To schedule a consultation with a shuttle bus consultant, please [click here](#).

Or you may contact us via the methods below:

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