

Executive Summary of

# Principles to Guide the Return to Work, Play, and Spectate



The summary gives you insight into this amazing work that will quickly become your blueprint for return.



The collaborative work of **more than 90** well-known experts in sports & entertainment industry



**More than 30** charts to make information easy to understand



**More than 40** sets of key questions in the form of checklists to guide your organization's return

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## Executive Summary of *Principles to Guide the Return to Work, Play, and Spectate*

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It was the intent of IIFX and the over 90 industry professionals who put this together, to share their collective expertise for the betterment of the industry. The value of this guide has been estimated at over \$300, but it could prove to be a priceless asset. This summary provides a list the prestigious professionals who collaborated on the guide along with examples of the type of content you will receive if you choose to subscribe to IIFX and receive access.

Take a look at the following pages to get familiar with the type of content that is contained in the full guide.

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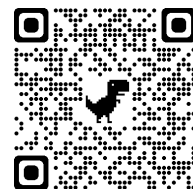
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Should you decide you would like training or assistance in using this guide with your organization, IIFX is only an email away. We would be happy to discuss your needs further. We have an extensive network of thought leaders, skilled practitioners, and solution providers around the world. Contact IIFX at [info@iifx.org](mailto:info@iifx.org) and we will find a way to help!



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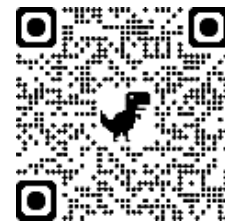
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#### **Principles to Return to Work, Play, and Spectate**

##### *Preparing for Full Capacity Sport and Entertainment Venue Operations*

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*This publication is informed and made possible by the contributions of thought leaders, technical experts, subject matter experts, scholars, medical experts, and practitioners who are associated with, work with, or advise people and organizations within the sports and entertainment industry.*

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## RETURN TO WORK, PLAY, AND SPECTATE TASK FORCE

### Executive Summary of Introduction

Formed in April 2020 at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Return to Work, Play, and Spectate Task Force** recognized early the risks posed and opportunities available to the sports and entertainment industry. Task force members included a cross-section of thought leaders, technical experts, medical experts, technologists, futurists, lawyers, insurance experts, and representatives. This publication of principles is the first of many products from the RTWPS Task Force.



Figure 1 -The Great Wait was Defined During Phase 1 of the Return to Work, Play, and Spectate Task Force  
Credit: Toffler Associates

### Mission

Through leveraging the knowledge and experience of thought leaders in the sports, entertainment, and safety and security industries, identify key learnings, questions, and decisions that are made during the “Great Wait” to safely return to work, play and spectate. All of these will help to make informed and innovative recommendations to guide these industries forward.

### Task Force Professionals

Each member of the Task Force listed beginning on the next page brings insights to collectively cross-pollinate a set of overall issues, concerns, and strategies. These Return to Work, Play, and Spectate strategies provide a foundation and a framework to address the pandemic's impact on venues and events and



recommend strategies to help stadia, arenas, theaters, greenfield sites, and other sports and entertainment venues.

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## Who is This Publication For?

This publication is designed for people who **operate sports and entertainment venues, produce and manage sports and entertainment events, and the executives, managers, supervisors, and staff who create conditions for an outstanding fan and spectator experience**. This report is designed to help the audience understand the process, protocols and procedures that they should consider as they prepare to open up to full capacity or risk economic viability.

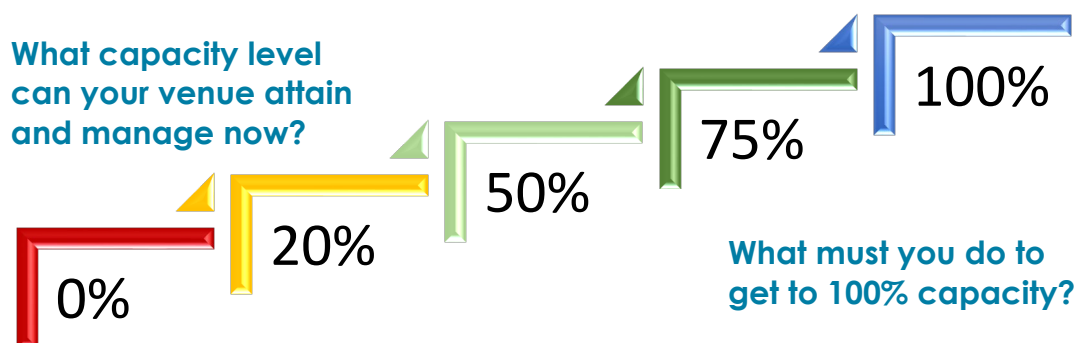


Figure 2 - What Capacity Level are You Ready for Today?

## Methodology

**Organizations, and guidance provided by various state and local public health agencies.** The questions and considerations herein are also informed by sports and entertainment industry thought leaders, practitioners, and subject matter experts; they reflect the consensus of the RTWPS Task Force members.

## Principles, Questions, and Considerations

The principles, questions, and considerations in this document are rooted in the most current medical knowledge about COVID-19, preventative measures, and public health guidance available as of the date of publication. The medical-related questions and guidance are derived from discussions with **health experts, and guidelines issued by the World Health Organization (WHO), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Occupational Safety Health Administration (OSHA), medical schools, health care organizations, and guidance provided by various state and local public health agencies.**

## Partnerships

Partnerships are an important part of resilience, including preparing for and responding to a business disruption, such as COVID-19. Partners may include your supply chain for goods and services, staff and employees, government agencies, unions, health care system, utilities, and risk/insurance providers, to name but a few. The adage, “**you are only as strong as the weakest link in the chain**” well summarizes your dependency on your partners and the many interdependencies that exist to help your enterprise achieve its business goals. Some key learnings from the pandemic era and the “Great Wait” include:

- ☐ Events may require additional support from private medical services to ensure public safety staffed.
- ☐ The return to work, play, and spectate starts with the digital journey in the homes of talent, staff, and fans therefore events may need support from other entities to carry the message of what to expect.
- ☐ Events are now the social experiment that can unlock new behaviors and activities that are (un)acceptable in the Novel Normal. Leveraging organizations that can track and measure this is vital for the industry's future.

Many lessons have been learned to date, with more to come. These learnings throughout this publication form the basic principles, considerations, and questions that sports and entertainment organizations should ask as they prepare their venues, staff, and fans for reopening.

## People

People are the core of the sports and entertainment industry. The industry exists for the fans. Staff and fans must be confident that their health, safety, and security are the top priorities for executives and managers at sports and entertainment venues before they return. Some key learnings from the pandemic era and the “Great Wait” include:

- ☐ New skillsets and personnel will be needed, possibly at a greater number than before, to safely deliver on the event experience.
- ☐ Organizations who invest in both training and education for their workforces will create a competitive advantage for bringing stakeholders back to venues.



- ☐ Alignment among talent, staff, and spectators is achieved through transparency and agility in the RTWPS strategy.

## Policy

Policy is a set of rules or guidelines for organizations and staff to guide decision making, actions, and to achieve compliance with health, safety, security, and service goals. Policies in place before the COVID-19 pandemic have been affected by guidance from international, federal, state, and local governments and health agencies. Some key learnings from the pandemic era and the “Great Wait” include:

- ☐ Creating alignment among talent, staff, and spectators is achieved through transparency and agility in the RTWPS strategy.
- ☐ Venues need to work hand-in-hand with local and state institutions to understand the new, varying requirements that exist to hold and plan an event.
- ☐ All activities and associated standard operating procedures within venues must be reevaluated to accommodate the new environment.

## Platforms

Technology affects how people communicate, learn, think, interact, and experience life. It can be a force multiplier, extending your organization's reach, helping your staff provide high-quality service while enhancing health, safety, security, and service for fans. Technology can create memory-making experiences. Some key learnings from the pandemic era and the “Great Wait” include:

- ☐ “Snake oil” salespeople exist, so it is important to fully understand technology requirements.
- ☐ Technology must be adaptive and responsive to the needs of the environment and stakeholders.
- ☐ Technology without communication to set stakeholder expectations is a waste of time and money.



## A Note About this Guide

**Nothing in this guide is prescriptive.** These principles, questions, and considerations can be used in whole or in part to help organizations think systematically, review their plans, reassure staff and fans, reset their operations and revenue models, and ready themselves to return to operations.

health professionals and experts. The Task Force intends to continue its efforts to identify opportunities for improvement and advance the innovation of new solutions as new information is presented.

At the time of publication, anyone above the age of 16 is eligible to be vaccinated. The fall sports and entertainment season will be completely different than a year ago, with more people attending more live events.

## RTWPS Guiding Principles

During Phase 1, the Return to Work, Play, and Spectate Task Force identified **four core areas** as an organizing construct and as a means of identifying key principles that drive the sports and entertainment industry. While they appear to be distinct, none are mutually exclusive nor are the questions posed and associated considerations collectively exhaustive. The goal is to help C-Suite executives, managers, supervisors, and staff ask hard questions to determine whether their structure, plans, policies, processes, and people are ready to restart operations, much less full capacity operations.

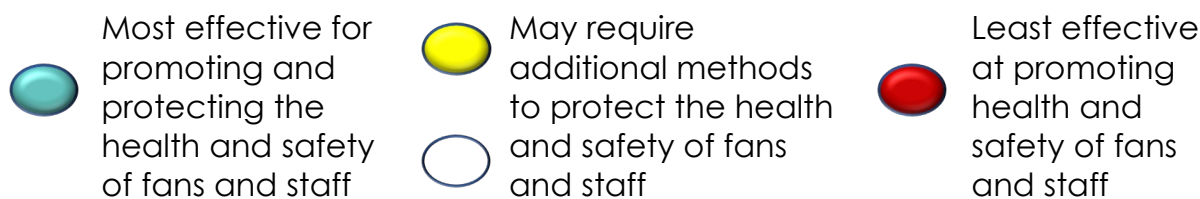
The primary role of executives is to ensure their staff are organized, trained, equipped, and have the resources they need to ensure the health, safety, and security of staff and fans. While the industry exists for the entertainment of fans and spectators, the size and scale of every event and its unique spectacle requires thoughtful preparation, well-trained people, sensible and executable policies, technology platforms that serve as force multipliers and deliver an exceptional experience, and partnerships with key stakeholders that can help create memory-making events.

## Core Principles

This document is organized around **Partnerships, People, Policy, and Platforms**. The RTWPS Task Force determined these areas are cross-cutting across every plan and operation at sports and entertainment venues and events.

The information below is not prescriptive. It is designed to help planners consider how to do their due diligence as they prepare for reopening.

Sample of content in full guide. There are multiple sections using this color coding methodology to help guide your organization.



## Vaccines (Vaccine Update Video)

**Note:** Vaccine hesitancy v. Vaccine Enthusiasm continues to evolve. The number of those who are hesitant to receive the vaccine ("wait and see") has fallen while Vaccine Enthusiasm has grown to 61% of adults in the United States.

**Note:** On 17 April 2021, Pfizer's CEO announced that booster vaccinations are necessary each year to sustain vaccinated immunity. *Moderna has indicated an annual booster vaccination may be necessary*

**Note:** Incentivizing staff to be vaccinated and encouraging fans to do so can speed the way to full capacity operations.

	CoronaVac (Sinovac) China	AstraZeneca UK	Pfizer USA/Germany	Moderna USA	Johnson & Johnson USA	Sputnik V Russia	Sinopharm China
Preventing Symptomatic COVID	<b>56.50%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>73%</b>
Preventing Serious Illness & Death	<b>84%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Vaccine	Two Doses Inactivated COVID Virus	Two Dose Viral Vector (weakened cold virus)	Two Shot mRNA	Two Shot mRNA	Single Shot Viral Vector	Two Dose Viral Vector	Two Doses Inactivated COVID Virus

Figure 3 - Vaccine Effectiveness Comparison - April 2021

## CHECKLIST SAMPLES

The following few pages provide examples of the more than 40 checklists in the full guide. These pages have summaries of key learnings in the side bars, and checkboxes of questions to guide each organization through the many items that must be considered in any return to work, play, and spectate.

## Partnerships

Great endeavors begin with strong partnerships. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the value of having well-established partnerships with key stakeholders. It has also exposed gaps within business operations where new partnerships are needed with non-traditional stakeholders like Public Health. Partnerships are arrangements between parties who agree to cooperate to advance mutual interests. They can help address issues related to current operations and they can be of great assistance when contingencies arise.

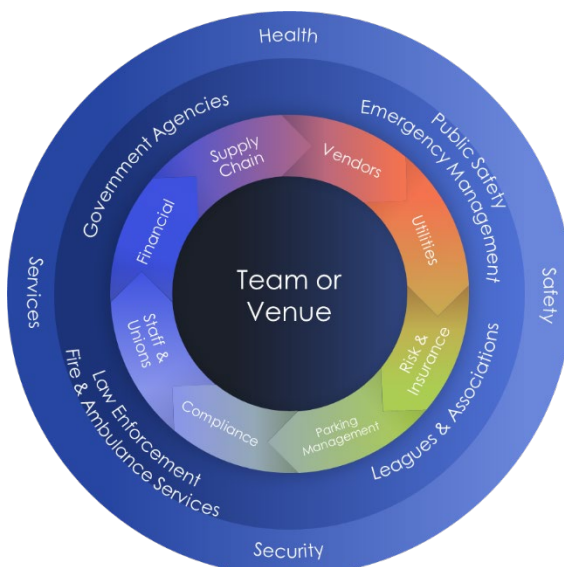


Figure 4 - What is Your Ecosystem? Internal and External Partnerships Have Interdependencies

Partnerships are an important part of resilience, including preparing for and responding to a business disruption, such as COVID-19. Partners may include your:

- ☐ Supply Chain for Goods and Services
- ☐ Staff and Employees
- ☐ Government agencies
- ☐ Unions
- ☐ Medical Services
- ☐ Utilities
- ☐ Human Resources
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Risk and Insurance Providers

## PARTNERSHIPS

*Partnerships are arrangements between parties who agree to cooperate to advance mutual interests. Nurturing partnerships between internal and external key stakeholders helps the sports and entertainment industry build resilience in critical health, safety, security, and service functions.*

### Learnings

Some key learnings from the pandemic era and the "Great Wait" include:

- ☐ RTWPS events may require the additional support from private medical services to ensure public safety staffed.
- ☐ RTWPS starts with the digital journey in the homes of talent and staff, therefore events may need support from other entities to carry the message of what to expect.
- ☐ Events are now the social experiment that can unlock the new behaviors and activities that are (un)acceptable in the Novel Normal and leveraging organizations that can track and measure that is vital for the industry's future.

The adage, ***“you are only as strong as the weakest link in the chain”*** well summarizes your dependency on your partners and the many interdependencies they have on one another to help your enterprise achieve its business goals.

## People

### Sample checklist from the People section

## Executives

*C-Suite must routinely demonstrate to the talent, fans, staff, vendors, and community their commitment to health, safety, security, and service.*

- ☐ How are you protecting fans and staff when they are in your venue and throughout their journey?
- ☐ How are you communicating the importance of preventative measures to staff, fans, and the local community?
- ☐ How are you incentivizing vaccination and testing for your staff, fans, and community?
- ☐ How are you encouraging good health practices?

Sample checklist from the People section  
(continued)

- ☐ How are you supporting managers, supervisors, and staff as they apply and enforce policies and protocols?

## PEOPLE

*People are the core of the sports and entertainment industry. The industry exists for the fans. Staff and fans must be confident that their health, safety, and security are the top priorities before they return.*

## NOTES

[illegible]



- ## PEOPLE

## Talent

## NOTES

- [illegible]

*Staff must be confident that venue and event executive management care about their health, safety, and security and that they demonstrate it through action.*

- 11

## Platforms

Sample checklist from the Platforms section.

### Enhancing the Fan Experience

- ☐ How are you soliciting information from fans about their expectations when they return to sports and entertainment venues?
- ☐ What technology trends will address gaps in Fan Experience?
- ☐ Which technologies “excite the senses” and create a more personal, sensory, a visceral experience for fans?
- ☐ Have you considered contactless /touchless services for ticketing, parking, food and beverage service, and merchandise?
- ☐ How will you provide self-service options to fans?
- ☐ How can you make fans feel in control of their experience and create a lasting impact that endures beyond the event?
- ☐ How will you use technology to boost stadium attendance in the coming year?

Informative facts like these graphs below are included throughout the full guide.

#### 57% of Fans Want to Schedule Food and Beverage Service Before the Event

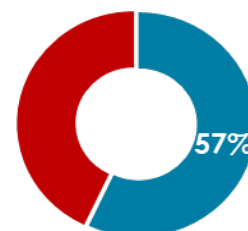


Figure 5 - Fans Who Want to Schedule Food and Beverage Service Before the Event  
Source: Oracle. (2021, April 6). Back in the Arena

#### 50% of Fans Plan Their Game Itinerary Before the Event

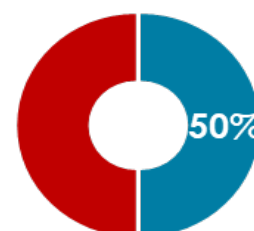


Figure 6 - Fans Who Plan Their Game Itinerary Before the Event  
Source: Oracle. (2021, April 6). Back in the Arena

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