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REWRITING THE RULEBOOK FOR WORKLIFE

After 15-plus months of making remote work—well, work—it seems the corporate world is at a crossroads. While [major financial institutions](#) revert back to in-person requirements, PJ SOLOMON is proudly taking a different approach.

After a year of working from home, it's clear that the pandemic has changed us all professionally and personally. As a leader, I'd be remiss to not celebrate and congratulate us for all of the self-realizations, actualizations and work we put in. Ultimately, it was that self-evolution that sparked the opportunity for us to recalibrate and look inward to see how we could do things not just differently but do things smarter.

When looking at PJ SOLOMON's hybrid work model from a 30,000-foot view, you'll see three ways we achieve that: junior banker mentorship and development, senior banker flexibility and collaboration and a firm-wide preservation of culture and connections.

After taking an in-depth look at our staff, a more flexible and intentional work environment just seemed like a no-brainer. While we request that junior bankers and VPs be in the office on a regular basis to gain a more hands-on work experience and connect with colleagues, MDs, Directors and Group Heads will have a more hybrid-focused return-to-office rollout. Instead of using the office as a place to make calls and answer emails, our goal is to have our senior bankers really use their time in the office to coach, collaborate and connect with staff. Ultimately, we'd like to give more flexibility to our senior employees to do business where they want, without having the burden of wasted commutes to add any more stress to what is an inherently stressful job. For junior bankers, we want to get rid of the idea of "face time." Once they are done collaborating in the office, they can finish the rest of their work wherever they like. Over the past year, we've made significant investments in technology to help create seamless workflows—inside the office and at home. At the end of the day, our goal is to increase efficiency and quality of life.

We've also worked hard to create mentorship touchpoints. Without having a formalized Monday through Friday office culture, we understand that networking and getting to know colleagues in other depart-

ments is inherently more difficult. For new employees, we've established "Class Cohorts" to help them get to know one another as well as move together through onboarding and development programs. For me, it was also important to establish relationships through smaller group lunches between myself and analysts/associates, while also hosting separate quarterly MD coffee or lunch meetings, weekly office meetings and various offsites.

While our rollout of our new return-to-office model is currently underway, we also have our ear to the ground. Our agility as a firm will help us adapt to changing environments and find immediate solutions to anything that isn't working. We want to flip the script on how banking has institutionally been done. M&A deals are at all-time-highs and if we made it through the volume of the first half of 2021 working from home so successfully, I think we've earned the chance to rewrite the rulebook a bit.

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