

Around the office with CSL's Anthony Farina

The chief communications and brand officer talks about traveling for work, working from home and finding the right balance for hybrid office arrangements.

Words **PRWeek Staff**

Describe your current working situation.

As a global biotech leader, CSL develops and delivers medicines to patients in more than 100 countries daily. So, two-thirds of our 32,000 employees are on the front line daily, including working in R&D labs and manufacturing sites. For those of us who can, we have a hybrid work week. Personally, I travel a great deal in leading global communications and brand organization — for example, I've traveled from the U.S. East Coast to our HQ in Melbourne, Australia, six times over the last 13 months.

What do you enjoy most about working in different locations?

Diversity is the spice of life! Business travel constantly places me in a variety of locations. I become energized spending quality time with team members, other CSL colleagues and our patients at different locations around the world. I learn so much from them. One criticality I enjoy and is also important: exercise and wellness. No matter where I am working around the world, I start every day with a 5K run outside each morning. I am, admittedly, fanatical about that habit.

What is a habit you have when working from home?

Somewhere along the line the art of planning and strategic thinking seems to have eroded. Quiet time can be difficult to find when leading a global team of nearly 70 people and the company has operations in nearly 50 countries. So, I have developed a habit to strategically plan and think while working from home.

What is a habit when in the office?

CSL has locations around the world and I travel a great deal. Whether I'm in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, or Zurich, Switzerland, I ensure being "present" each moment with each in-person engagement with team members and other CSL leaders and colleagues.

What is your current policy on hiring remote workers?

CSL has a purpose-driven, values-based culture — a wonderful environment unlike anything I have experienced in my 35-year career. While we do hire people who can work remotely, they can experience CSL's in-person culture, too, through a variety of tactics, such as on-site time.



Anthony Farina, chief communications and brand officer, CSL. (Photo used with permission)

What is one thing about hybrid working culture you wish to continue?

People are empowered to strike the right work-life balance because we operate globally and there are often early morning or evening calls. And, of course, issues management does not work 9-to-5. Empowerment is critical for sustaining operations of a global communications function.

What is one thing you wish would change about hybrid work?

My leadership style includes being approachable and rather informal. I enjoy walking the building, random hallway conversations and casually stopping by people's desks for quick chats about work as well as personal check-ins. With hybrid work, engagement is more deliberate and less casual.

Do you prefer mandated days in the office or making coming in voluntary?

Finding the right balance in hybrid working is the key, but it should be coordinated to foster overall culture and team collaboration. With a hybrid work week, I encourage our team members to be in the office and work from home on the same days. This way, coordination helps with daily operations, cross-functional collaboration and overall team chemistry.