



Hybrid Working : *Get Ready for the New Normal*



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Introduction



With the
outbreak
of the
pandemic,
the
nature of
employment
quickly
changed.

Most governments enacted a variety of strict contingency measures to combat the spread of the coronavirus, including lockdowns, stay-at-home orders, and social distancing measures. Hospitality-related industries, and particularly restaurants in several nations have been forced to shut down entirely. Regardless of success, the message was clear: everyone who could stay at home should. Almost every firm was obliged to implement a variety of work-from-home rules to maintain business survival. ¹

Most of the global workforce had no active experience with hybrid and remote work prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Remote work shifted from a model used by a few firms to a major and essential work model in 2020. Thus, it is an undisputed fact that the concept of a 'regular' working environment is becoming a thing of the past. Work from home and remote work have become normative. As companies and workers reflect on previous learnings and their future needs, the concept of a hybrid workplace is becoming increasingly important and appealing. ²

A hybrid workplace is a flexible workplace style that supports a distributed workforce that includes both in-office and remote workers. Twitter, JP Morgan, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft, and Dell are among the firms that have decided to give their employees permanent remote work alternatives. Google and Facebook, for example, have extended work-from-home possibilities for employees until the end of 2021. Employees have proven their ability to work productively and effectively, thanks in large part to the available tools and technology. Many others are looking forward to returning to the workplace.

1. Workforce principles for the Covid-19 pandemic stakeholder capitalism in a time of crisis. (2020, March). World Economic Forum.

2. Natesan, R. (2021, June). Hybrid working model: The new normal

Introduction

Section 1

Section 2

Section 3

Conclusion



The new normal has demonstrated to businesses, employees, and society that expanding flexible or remote working is not only feasible, but also advantageous when done correctly. Some employers will require all staff to return to the office, while others will enable everyone to work from home. The probable outcome of the pandemic-forced remote working experiment will be a hybrid model that will include the benefits of both.³



3. Voltage Control, (2021, May). A Hybrid Workplace: The Rise and Future

Introduction

Section 1

Section 2

Section 3

Conclusion



SECTION 1



An Overview of Hybrid Working

Hybrid working is a flexible work model that allows individuals to work from various places. Its meaning may be found in the word 'hybrid'. There are many types of hybrid work. Some firms may enable all its personnel to work part of the week on-site and another part remotely. Employees at other firms may work full-time remotely or full-time on-site. Others may allow a combination of the two. The model is the next step in the evolution of flexible and totally remote working, which was inspired by people's desire to spend more time at home and less at work. ⁴

The increasing tendency toward hybrid working is largely due to the Covid-19 outbreak, which forced many workers to work from office only one or two days a week. Consequently, employers and employees gained increased freedom, flexibility, improved performance, and even new kinds of collaboration. Hybrid working, however, is not a brand-new concept. This has been an increasing trend for the past decade, but it has recently accelerated. Many businesses that had previously dismissed remote working as a realistic alternative have been forced to reconsider due to the necessity for social distance. As a result, they have restructured their strategies to make it work. ⁵

According to a Microsoft study, over 70 percent of workers want flexible remote work choices to remain, while over 65 percent want more face-to-face interaction with their co-workers. Thus, 66 percent of business decision makers are considering redesigning physical facilities to better allow hybrid work settings. ⁶

4. Fowell, T. (2021, July). Hybrid work: what is hybrid work and why do employees want it?

5. Stewart, A. (2021, May). What is hybrid working?

6. Maydak, A. (2021, April). Changing work life: The hybrid work model is here to stay. Retrieved

Introduction

Section 1

Section 2

Section 3

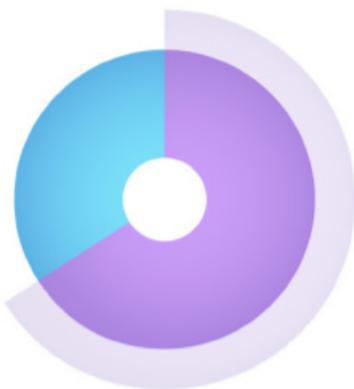
Conclusion



Figure 1 | Hybrid working is the new norm. Maydak, A. (2021, April). Changing work life: The hybrid work model is here to stay.

Hybrid work is inevitable

Business leaders are on the brink of major changes to accommodate what employees want: the best of both worlds.



66%

of leaders say their company is considering redesigning office space for hybrid work



73%

of employees want flexible remote work options to stay



67%

of employees want more in-person work or collaboration post-pandemic

The Work Trend Index survey was conducted by an independent research firm, Edelman Data x Intelligence, among 31,092 full-time employed or self-employed workers across 31 markets between January 12, 2021 and January 25, 2021.

Microsoft 2021 Work Trend Index

Introduction

Section 1

Section 2

Section 3

Conclusion



Conclusion

The corporate world is currently debating the future of employment and what it may look like in a post-pandemic world. Most businesses are unlikely to revert to full-time in-office employment. Even if companies decided to revert to a fully traditional work model, limitations on how many people can exist in the office will keep this from happening for a long time. Organizations may, however, bring all their team members back in-house in the future. The ability to work remotely or in a hybrid setting will be critical in recruiting future talent. Working remotely was previously a strange notion for most of us.

Hybrid has become the new normal, allowing employees to have the best of both worlds when it comes to connecting with coworkers and maintaining a work-life balance. Employers may benefit greatly from this new form of employment, provided they know how to use it properly. Stakeholders can save money on expenses, minimize workplace danger, and have a team of happier and more. Despite this, some company executives are reluctant to make the switch, while others tend to discredit the need for this working trend.

Employers will need to be fully prepared, as the new generation of gig workers, want to work from anywhere, thus investing in digital remote technologies seems to be a one-way path. Given the increasing demand for more flexible schedules and working conditions, hybrid model may be the only solution in the near future. Some still believe they can skip the work shift and return to their previous habits. The evidence, whereas, appears to point in a different direction. Firms that act now, invest in the proper cloud-based technology, and plan for a future of hybrid work will be the ones to survive in the years ahead.⁴⁰

40. Scott, R. (2021, June). Go hybrid or go broke: The future of hybrid work.



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