

# Optimizing Work for a Hybrid & Mobile Workforce



Remote work. Virtual work. Distributed work. Work from home. Work from anywhere. Work on the go. Whatever you call it, it's here to stay. The advent of wireless connectivity and cloud computing means work is no longer tethered to a desk, to a traditional office, or even to the time-honored nine to five. Enter hybrid work—the solution of choice for people who want to make the most out of working remotely while still enjoying the benefits of an in-office setting.

While this amount of flexibility unlocks new opportunities, it also comes with challenges. With employees no longer in the office at the same time, setting cultural norms and instilling a sense of community require new strategies. Organizations will need to help their teams adapt, while pursuing shared and equitable experiences for their workforce.

**60%**   
of office employees work  
in a hybrid manner.

Source: [Leesman study, July 2022](#)

## The Future of Work

**With hybrid workers valuing the autonomy and flexibility of working from anywhere, future workplaces will likely reflect the continuation of current trends:**

- Less formality
- Blending of inside and outside spaces
- Softening of hierarchies
- Blurring of what we think of as “office” and what doesn't feel like “office”

Source: [Leesman study, July 2022](#)

## Hybrid Work – The Pluses and Minuses

Hybrid work offers people its share of pitfalls, including increased risk of: disconnection, isolation, lack of structure, and stress. Additionally, without workers in the office, it can be tough for leaders to onboard new hires, establish cultural norms, communicate expectations, and instill a sense of community.

On the flip side, hybrid work offers employees a multitude of benefits, including:

- Autonomy
- Comfort
- Flexibility
- Inspiration
- Lower overhead costs
- Opportunities to focus with fewer distractions
- Reduced stress

Hybrid workers are empowered to seek out the places and processes that support them best. For some employees, productivity improves at home or in the neighborhood café compared to the office, because these spaces provide the right mix of structure and inspiration to fit their individual workstyle. And employers find that the trust that comes from allowing employees to make their own choices often goes a long way to attract and keep top talent.

### Work from Anywhere Ecosystem



Work is likely to be done in more than one location. It is an integrated ecosystem balancing three primary physical locations: office, home, and third places.

Source: Haworth white paper, "Work from Anywhere: Where Does the Best Work Happen?"

With many industries navigating a talent shortfall, forward-thinking organizations are getting serious about understanding the challenges and opportunities of hybrid work—and putting tools and processes in place to help their employees make the most of this new paradigm. Through the organizational culture lens, each customer will approach this challenge differently to create an effective workplace.

## Crafting High-Performing Teams

Whether your team is working in the same space, virtually, or in a hybrid of both, leaders should invest energy into three key areas:

1. Goals
2. Processes
3. Boundaries

A clear, shared goal brings the team together for better coordination and contributes to team identity and cohesion. Likewise, having well-defined processes in place—like overall standards of work, as well as other ways of doing that the team agrees on—can help teams expertly assess and adapt to shifting priorities, coordinate relationships for joint efforts, and efficiently leverage resources to achieve their goals. Finally, successful leaders navigate and negotiate their organization's organizational, functional, and geographical boundaries to their team's advantage. Boundaries can be roadblocks to team resources and activities, or they can protect them.

We envision a future where team members have access to both the right collaborative technology, and the right technology-enabled workspaces that fit a team's needs. When teams have goal clarity, a safe space (whether physical or virtual) to develop and function as a team, and expertly negotiated boundaries, they have the resources they need to perform well, wherever and however they do their work.

## Equitable Team Experiences

Providing employees with equitable collaborative experiences is more important than ever. Keeping all team members engaged, productive, and enabled to actively participate in collaborative efforts—even from a distance—is key. One way to do this is through high-impact, digital workstream collaborative technology.

In distributed teams, these technologies include:

- Cloud-based storage systems
- Digital whiteboards
- Personal devices
- Unified communications tools

In addition, employers should consider supplementing virtual experiences for hybrid workers with in-office experiences that build community and allow them to build on virtual connections.

What a team produces often reflects the way in which the members interact. Evaluating collaborative team platforms and experiences holistically, you can maximize value by:

- Ensuring the user experience provides advantages compared with current state
- Encouraging leaders to participate by using the platforms and attending events, and to advocate for these experiences
- Committing the necessary resources toward supporting these experiences—for instance, designating a point person for troubleshooting or having a vibe manager to plan in-office get-togethers

## Framework for Hybrid Meetings

We know that hybrid meetings work very well in shorter sessions where a lower level of collaboration is required. This applies to status updates, decision-making meetings, and problem-solving meetings.

Workshops, brainstorming sessions, informal social interactions, and team building exercises, on the other hand, are often highly experiential, longer in duration, and/or require a higher amount of collaboration—better lending themselves to in-person meetings.

That doesn't mean that some highly collaborative meetings should not be hybrid; they just require more planning to ensure everyone can participate in an easy, equitable manner to attain the goal of the meeting.

## Choice with a Service Mentality

Today's workers are used to having choices. Building the workspace as a service in order to provide value-added elements extends the use of space beyond traditional working hours. Consider drawing upon elements from hospitality, member clubs, educational spaces, and leisure spaces.

One way to support choice is to create a variety of unassigned workspaces that enhance the employee experience by:

- Offering variety in workspace types to meet individual preferences
- Enhancing community, connection, and collaboration through readily available tech and power options, with a comfortable amount of physical spacing between individuals
- Supporting well-being and peace of mind by ensuring spaces are thoroughly cleaned and offer each user sanitizing tools (e.g., spray, wipes, hand sanitizer)
- Providing spaces that support movement, so people can change posture, position, and location at will

