



Transforming the Workplace with Hybrid Models

How to keep your employees connected and thriving in the era of hybrid work.

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Planning for the new, evolving workplace

Change happened fast in 2020. Organizations adapted quickly to remote work, going into a tactical mode by “doing it light” — implementing the technology needed to ensure business continuity. By shifting rapidly to a work-from-home model, businesses enabled their employees to maintain productivity and deliver results from anywhere.

Today, organizations face a workplace that has changed forever. To plan for a sustainable, long-term future, leaders now must shift to a strategic “doing it right” mode. This next phase, however, will require transformational change.

In this new world, employees don’t just want flexibility; they expect it. The majority of workers (83%) prefer a hybrid model.¹ For employers, this model brings together the best of both worlds — the remote, distributed workplace and the corporate office — to empower a dynamic, agile and connected workforce.



According to Gartner,
“94% of organizations are allowing employees more flexibility as to where and when they work.”

Source: Gartner, “How Organizations Are Supporting a Hybrid Workforce.” <https://www.gartner.com/en/human-resources/trends/how-organizations-are-supporting-a-hybrid-workforce>

¹Accenture, “Future of Work Study 2021,” April 2021. <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/consulting/future-work>

There's no playbook for hybrid work. Organizations that want to make the leap to a hybrid workplace in a thoughtful way will need to both create a well-considered plan and remain open to experimentation.

To make the shift from tactical to strategic implementation, you need to have a connected and engaged culture, as well as the right processes and technology to support your people. Designing the hybrid model takes reimagining the future workplace.




What does the hybrid workforce mean for your organization going forward? What are your barriers to transformation? How will you ensure that your digital workplace is thriving? These are just some of the questions that leaders will need to answer.

One thing is certain: You'll need to innovate to transform your business. There's no going back to the way you did things before. And this leap will be as much a human challenge as a solutions challenge.

Culture and technology: The two intertwining pillars of the hybrid workplace

The premise behind a hybrid workplace is to create outcomes that don't depend on location. It's about empowering employees to create, collaborate and innovate from wherever they do their best work. What this may look like in your business depends on factors such as business needs, team requirements and individual employees' circumstances.

Hybrid models include:

 Flexible workweek Employees work some days at the office and other days remotely. This may also include a synchronous arrangement so teams can work on-site on the same days.	 Distributed teams Some employees are located at the office or colocated at other sites, and others are entirely remote. Collaboration is digital by default to ensure remote workers are fully included, but opportunities remain for in-person connection.	 Ad hoc Employees have the freedom to move autonomously and asynchronously between on- and off-site work. They come to the office for activities such as onboarding and important meetings.
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Hybrid workforce success factors

Regardless of the model you select, the new evolution of the digital environment means balancing employees' flexibility with the need for unified teams. When the workplace is no longer a "place" and lacks shared experiences, organizational norms can quickly deteriorate.

Two key organizational pillars — culture (people and processes) and technology (tools and solutions) — need to intertwine and become stronger than ever to ensure that employees remain connected to the business and to each other.



The success of the transformed workspace will depend on the following factors:



Creating a collaborative, digital workspace

Organizational and cultural behavior influences how people collaborate. So do the tools that you provide. To enhance collaboration across multiple work environments, your digital workspace needs to combine a great employee experience with intuitive, seamless tools.



Fostering an engaged and connected culture

Maintaining human-to-human connection is both critical and challenging in a virtual environment. To keep employees connected to the business and to their co-workers, train managers to keep their teams engaged in a hybrid environment using such vehicles as virtual communities, internal blogs and portals, personalized home pages, and online forums.



Leveraging intelligent collaboration tools

Effective collaboration takes more than simply embracing a digital-first experience. Intelligent, secure collaboration tools optimized to support the way individuals work can boost productivity, streamline workflows and enhance collaboration — whether your people are working from home, at the office or anywhere in between.



Implementing a unified, cloud-based collaboration ecosystem

During the “do it light” phase, many organizations put together a patchwork of applications, services and other solutions by necessity. The hybrid landscape calls for a unified ecosystem that integrates all the tools and provides consistent access and experience from anywhere. Cloud-based apps not only provide easy access for employees but also accelerate deployment and simplify management for IT.

Top three things that remote workers say employers can do strengthen company culture:

- Offer resources to support remote work.
- Update policies to reflect how work has changed.
- Increase communication from leaders.

Source: Prudential, “Pulse of the American Worker Survey,” January 2021. <https://news.prudential.com/presskits/pulse-american-worker-survey-road-to-resiliency.htm>

Manage risk proactively

Many organizations have recently felt the pain of not having teams connected to their workplace and colleagues. As their work and personal lives were upended, employees adapted to make the best of their new normal. Although that worked as a temporary solution, a permanent hybrid workplace demands more thoughtful action.

Without a clear plan in place, the risk of having disconnected employees and fragmented teams will only grow as some staff return to the office and others remain remote. Leaders can proactively manage those risks by placing greater emphasis on individual, personalized experiences and a culture of connectivity that centers on networking, teamwork and a sense of belonging — no matter where people work.

Creating a thriving culture with happy, connected, productive employees

Now that employees can work from anywhere, they are discovering myriad new options. To prevail in the competition for talent, businesses need to win employees' loyalty by offering an exceptional workplace — and that requires a shift in culture.

Until recently, the office was the hub that reinforced corporate values. Everything from the physical environment and the dress code to the in-person interactions reflected the organization's culture. The hybrid model shatters those norms.

A transformed workplace sets up all employees for success no matter where they work and connect. But without the visual cues, energy and human contact of the physical campus, leaders have to be more intentional about promoting a culture of connected and engaged teams.

There are three key components to keeping employees happy and productive when the office can be anywhere:

1. The employee experience

How do you rewire the employee experience when work is an action and not a place? Your support systems need to adapt so they can bridge the gap between physical and virtual spaces.

This approach includes:

- Training managers how to better lead, motivate and engage distributed teams.
- Providing personalization through technology and tools so each individual's experience is relevant and meaningful.
- Ensuring all employees can easily connect to the people and technology resources they need.
- Humanizing the employee experience and placing a stronger emphasis on well-being and a sense of purpose.
- Democratizing the workplace so everyone has an equal opportunity to learn, grow and innovate.



42% of people currently working remotely say they would look for a new job if their current employer stops offering remote work options for the long term.

Source: Prudential, "Pulse of the American Worker Survey," January 2021. <https://news.prudential.com/presskits/pulse-american-worker-survey-road-to-resiliency.htm>

2. Flexibility with accountability

Employees want the choice to work when and where they can be the most productive. This flexibility is not a trade-off for accountability, but it does reset expectations. For consistent outcomes in the hybrid environment, you need to foster a sense of personal ownership among all employees.

Leaders can achieve this by:

- Setting clear expectations about personal accountability.
- Communicating not only the objectives, but also how the employees' work connects to those objectives.
- Providing the tools and resources that managers and employees need to maintain self-efficacy and solve problems.

3. Mindful communication

The hybrid workplace has eroded what remained of the boundaries between work and personal lives. The constant noise of digital interaction and the fight for their attention leads to overwhelmed, inefficient employees. The onus is on leaders to foster mindful communication that takes into account the unending demands employees face daily.

This is an opportunity to:

- Lean on integrated, streamlined and intelligent solutions to alleviate information overload.
- Help teams balance asynchronous and synchronous communication.
- Promote active dialogue to give employees a voice and encourage a consistent feedback loop.

A thriving culture in the workplace of the future is built on autonomy, trust and agility. This may feel like a giant lift for organizations that were designed around more rigid structures. Eliminate cultural constraints at the same time that you're breaking down physical barriers, and you'll cultivate a more satisfied and a higher-performing workforce.

Making the most of enterprise technology to thrive as a hybrid organization

In the digital workplace, technology and culture must tightly align so employees can collaborate across the organization, have reliable communication tools and maintain a sense of community among remote and on-site teams. Assess your current state, understand what you want to achieve through the digital workplace and devise a strategy that will help you prioritize your technology needs.

As the force behind workplace revolution, enterprise technology is instrumental to modernizing your processes. But this doesn't mean taking a "rip and replace" approach. Flexible solutions that can be deployed reliably even in legacy environments can meet your organization wherever you are on your journey to transformation.

67% of business leaders found that productivity stayed the same or increased since their workforce went remote beginning in 2020.

Source: Vanson Bourne global survey of 5,700 IT, HR and business decision makers, conducted in partnership with VMware and Dell, June-July 2020.



The following three technology factors can impact the success of your hybrid organization:

1. Smart collaboration

When remote work became widespread, teams converted almost instantly from mostly in-person to entirely virtual collaboration. You can't flip that switch in the hybrid world. Effective collaboration takes more than simply embracing a digital-first experience. To work smarter, employees need fast, intuitive and intelligent devices and apps.

Rethink the digital workspace to make it agnostic to location, device and time. Provide simple yet powerful endpoints that use machine learning to adapt to each user and make proactive recommendations for connecting people and conversations. And whether employees are collaborating in a conference room, via video meetings or both, ensure your technology promotes inclusion so everyone can participate equally.

2. Unified access

Employees want instant access to the right data and systems to help them make decisions fast and get their work done efficiently. They expect a consistent, seamless experience while working from a desk at your headquarters, from their backyard or from a co-working space.

With a unified approach, you can ensure reliable, anytime access to data, tools, and both legacy and cloud apps, regardless of what devices or locations your employees prefer. More than simply a boost to productivity, unified access creates equality in the hybrid workplace by providing the same resources to all employees.

3. Intrinsic security

Making collaboration and access secure is a high priority in an environment that lacks a well-defined perimeter. In a "do it light" mode, many organizations rushed to bolt on security so they could quickly protect their remote workplaces. Although this solved the urgent need, it won't serve your business well in the long term.

Security by design is critical to safeguarding your IT ecosystem and maintaining regulatory compliance. With intrinsic security features and capabilities such as remote device management, you can protect against ever-evolving threats and keep your hybrid business safe without disrupting work.

Cloud computing brings a tremendous advantage for executing on all three of these components in the dynamic workplace. Here are only some of the many benefits of cloud-native tools:



- Simplified management
- Remote management
- Untethered access to apps
- IT efficiency
- Multilayered security
- Fast deployment

The cloud helps you make the most of technology by giving employees fast, safe access while enabling you to scale efficiently and securely. Investing in cloud technologies accelerates the transformation of your hybrid workplace while making your business more resilient.





Keeping teams connected with solutions that work together seamlessly

Your hardware and software solutions should work together as smoothly as your teams do in a hybrid workplace, enabling productivity and collaboration for all. The Dell Latitude Chromebook brings the best of both worlds together as a laptop to empower and connect your teams in the new work paradigm.

The Dell Latitude 5400 and Dell Latitude 7410 Chromebook Enterprise combine the performance, reliability and premium components of Latitude with the robust cloud ecosystem from Chrome OS, and leverage security by design from both.

Together, hardware from Dell Technologies and software from Google work to:

- **Enable employee connectivity, productivity and flexibility.** Artificial intelligence enhancements help employees collaborate in a smarter way, and seamless access allows them to pick up where they left off and from any Chrome OS device.
- **Simplify IT management, accelerate deployment and lower costs.** With automated management and deployment, plus proactive maintenance, IT spends less time on individual user support.
- **Boost security and improve uptime and resilience.** Standardized, centrally managed, secure-by-design technology reduces complexity and risk.

Google Chrome Enterprise is a cloud-based solution designed for the workplace of the future. The partnership between Google and Dell Technologies for Chrome Enterprise devices gives organizations of all sizes the flexibility and agility to create a successful hybrid work model.

Dell Latitude Chromebook Enterprise devices offer:

- **Fast and reliable performance.** Booting up in seconds, the Dell Latitude Chromebook comes with the performance that demanding enterprise users expect. It can boost employee productivity with applications that run 8.2 times faster than its competitors, and web browsing that's four times faster. In addition, battery life lasts up to 17 hours for the Dell Latitude 5400 and up to 21 hours for the Latitude 7410.
- **Built-in, multilayered security.** Local data encryption, AI-driven threat detection, site isolation, controlled updates and other features provide comprehensive security coverage. With verified boot, Chrome OS checks for system tampering and automatically reverts to the previous OS if it detects malicious code like malware. And IT administrators can easily monitor and lock down devices.
- **Flexible options.** You can select and manage software that suits your business and your employees best, whether that's Google Drive Enterprise or Microsoft 365, and add a variety of productivity-boosting apps such as Workday and Salesforce.

Trusted hardware from Dell, Chrome's modern OS, and unified endpoint management through Dell Technologies Unified Workspace provide a holistic solution that simplifies IT while keeping your hybrid teams connected and productive.



Final thoughts: Taking the leap to the workplace of the future

Employee expectations and views of the workplace have changed. By moving to the “doing it right” phase, leaders can meet these expectations and build a thriving workplace of the future, which could eventually include exciting technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality.

Forward-thinking leaders are already envisioning such big possibilities, but the next step now is to create the foundation for workplace and employee connectivity. Emerging at the intersection of culture and technology and transcending geographic boundaries, this hybrid workplace will help employees solve problems and innovate in reimagined ways — from anywhere in the world.