

How to make hybrid work a success

Making the most of hybrid working for your business



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A new dawn of working

The fourth industrial revolution shifts up a gear

More than any other decade in recent history, people will remember the 2020s for transforming the way we work and our attitudes to it.

Notable themes include trials of a four-day work week, growth of the gig economy, quiet quitting, and rejection of hustle culture. But the biggest theme of all right now is hybrid working.

Hybrid working provides a wealth of benefits for employers and employees alike. But, with any shift in ways of working, there's a period of adjustment. And when it comes to the future of hybrid, there are conflicting opinions.

Is hybrid working here to stay, and if so, what do companies need to do to get the most from it?





The hybrid working debate

The future of hybrid working



Anyone working through the pandemic will be familiar with the phrase 'new normal'. We read it in the news, we heard it in company announcements, we saw it discussed on TV – it was the [most used phrase in 2021](#), according to Google.

When it comes to hybrid working, new normal was a promise of the familiarity of seeing our colleagues in person again with the work/life balance and financial benefits of working from home.

Some organisations decided against giving their employees this flexibility, favouring the old normal – Elon Musk controversially ordered all Tesla and X staff back to the office full-time post pandemic. Goldman Sachs' CEO, David Solomon, referred to working from home as an aberration and ordered his employees back five days a week, too.

However, staff are not back in full force. Only [65% of Goldman Sachs staff](#) are in the office on any given day and mandates often result in employee pushback. [One in four US workers](#) have refused to comply with a mandated return to office and are willing to accept terminating their employment as a result.

For the most part, companies are open to hybrid working and agree that it's here to stay. [56% of workers](#) have some kind of hybrid working arrangement in place and office attendance is generally [30% below pre-pandemic](#) levels. Now hybrid's the norm, businesses need to make sure they're getting the most from it. Unlike totally remote or office-based businesses, a hybrid model is more complex and takes time to perfect.

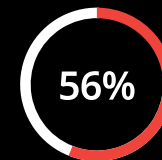
This guide addresses the key challenges businesses face and discusses how businesses can reap the benefits of hybrid working at scale.



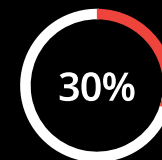
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Key challenges

What's holding back hybrid?

Drawing the roadmap

Having a detailed plan for how to make hybrid work, work, is a challenge. Every business is different and it's still a new way of working at this scale.

It's important to acknowledge that it takes years to settle into an operating model that works for your business and employees, so you won't have all the answers straight away. Instead, involve your employees, keep conversations open, and test and learn until you find a way of working that fits your business and employee needs.





Key challenges

Cybersecurity

The main concerns around cybersecurity and hybrid working are remote connectivity, home networks, and public networks. Employee knowledge is a concern, too. New ways of working allow more opportunity for cyberattacks, so employees have become the first line of defense, particularly against threats like phishing.

Remote connectivity

Employees need to access company data via the cloud, VPNs, or remote desktops. So, they need a secure solution that allows them to connect seamlessly to any device or platform, from anywhere. Not only does this provide a better user experience, it helps to prevent cybercriminals accessing private information.

Home networks and personal devices

Security measures like firewalls guard office networks, but they don't extend to your employees' less secure home networks. That's why edge security has grown in importance in recent years, which protects networks beyond office locations. If employees also use personal, unpatched devices with weak passwords and poor virus security to carry out their work, this is a huge threat to business cybersecurity.

Public network usage

If your employees want a change of scenery and work from Starbucks, for example, this could be risky for your business. If they access company servers over public networks with limited security, lack of encryption, no authentication, and untrusted access points, they're susceptible to man-in-the-middle attacks and eavesdropping of network traffic.





Key challenges

Scalability

There are a few ways scaling a business is more complex when accommodating hybrid working. Ensuring your employees can access the same resources and have the equipment they need, whether they're in the office or working remotely, is a challenge. This is one that many have overcome for existing staff, but it's an ongoing logistical consideration as you onboard new employees.

Having the IT capacity to handle demand is something your IT department or IT provider will need to review regularly, as well. Office capacity is also a consideration – you need attendance data, a headcount growth forecast, and an understanding of if you're using your space efficiently before you'll know if you need more space and how soon.

Managers need to scale their managerial skills to ensure they're effective at supporting a team that isn't always in the same place. That takes dedication, communication, and a collaborative mindset.

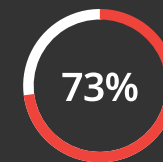
Culture impact

A global Gartner study found that just 25% of remote or hybrid knowledge workers feel connected to their company's culture. It's easy to say that company culture is now diluted because everyone isn't in the same place, but culture goes beyond proximity. A big part of culture is having a bond with team members, but office mandates have driven connectedness down. Employees with more flexibility over their schedules and location are more likely to be highly connected to their colleagues (53%) than employees with far less flexibility (18%).

But employees are motivated to go to the office to see each other. Employees in a Microsoft study said that they would go to the office more frequently if they knew their direct team members would be there (73%). So, office time can contribute positively to culture, but it shouldn't be the only thing you rely on to build your company culture. Hybrid working is a great opportunity to reset culture and rebuild it in a new way that works for every workstyle. It's a chance to be more inclusive and bring teams together wherever they are.



of remote or hybrid knowledge workers feel connected to their company's culture



said that they would go to the office more frequently if they knew their direct team members would be there

How connected are you to your colleagues?

53%
of people with radical flexibility feel connected

18%
of people with limited flexibility feel connected



Making hybrid work

How to make hybrid work a success in your business

1. Assess your situation

Audit your business to understand which areas require the most attention. For example:

- Your technology stack
- How your employees feel about ways of working and company culture
- Onboarding and recruiting processes
- Productivity and management metrics
- Space and resources





Making hybrid work

2. Invest in scalable technology

Streamline your technology stack so it's fit for purpose, scalable, and flexible. You want to combine powerful tools to support employee productivity and connectivity with robust cybersecurity to ensure your data is safe no matter where your employees do their best work. That way, you'll easily scale as you grow.

Seamless employee experiences

There are lots of ways to deliver seamless employee experiences to provide continuity. One way to do this is with a [remote desktop](#). If you rely mainly on desktop computers, e.g., if you need a lot of processing power that laptops in your budget wouldn't be able to match, or if your employees can use their own devices to work from home, a remote desktop is a great option.

A remote desktop allows you to connect to your computer via any device, anywhere in the world. You can use all the software and access all the files you'd normally be able to, but the processing power is controlled in the cloud. So, it doesn't matter if your remote device doesn't have much processing power, or your connection has low bandwidth. This can keep hardware costs down and helps to optimise license usage.

If your workforce uses mobiles, too, consider how you can optimise their mobile experience with services like [mobile device support](#).





Making hybrid work

Collaboration tools

Think about how you want your teams to communicate and collaborate. Consider if your systems are joined-up to avoid colleagues feeling overwhelmed, too. For example, if you're using [Slack](#), [Zoom](#), and [Microsoft 365](#), you might want to use [Teams](#) for calls and instant messaging to reduce how much software you're using. You also want to consider other ways to collaborate to support the types of work you're doing.

For example, use project management software to increase visibility of project progress. Similarly, creatives that like to draw ideas on whiteboards will benefit from visual collaboration tools like [Miro](#).

Cybersecurity, IT management, and awareness training

Ensure you've got the best possible cybersecurity measures in place for workers when they're in the office and working remotely. You'll need to optimise your security to cover all eventualities, as well as having clear guidelines and training so employees know what they can and can't do, and what to do when things go wrong.

An easy way to support employees with their IT is through [remote support](#) or [remote access](#). Using these tools, you can roll out software and manage devices from one central point to make maintenance easier. You can also provide helpdesk IT support by fixing issues remotely wherever your employees are.

This can also help with network computer updates and maintenance, or [thin clients](#), to look after your servers.





Making hybrid work

3. Determine key use cases and scenarios

Decide how you're going to tackle what work gets done in-person, and what work gets done remotely. This may vary by team, as each has specific needs. It may even vary by employee depending on their preferences and what helps them to be most productive. You'll need to find a way of working that produces results, builds bonds amongst colleagues, and works within the hybrid model.

4. Get buy-in from all stakeholders

Change management is difficult and takes time, which is why it's important to keep the conversations open and bring all stakeholders on the journey with you. That way, you'll get to an agreement sooner. Even if that agreement is to test and learn or pilot something with a test group of employees – it's better to take action than suffer inertia.

5. Review

As hybrid working is still in its infancy, it's important to review your progress regularly to:

- See if teams have what they need to do their jobs effectively
- Measure performance against KPIs
- Identify risks you need to manage





Conclusion

New ways of working take time to bed in

Making hybrid work for your business and employees won't happen overnight. Just like optimising office work took years of refining and technological advancements, so will hybrid work. As people strive for more work/life balance and freedom around how and where they work, there's no looking back, so focus on what you can do to make hybrid a success to keep your employees happy and productive.

For support on your hybrid working journey [get in touch](#) with AnyDesk. We're happy to offer advice on remote support, remote desktop advice, and mobile device solutions.

