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How to Build a Hybrid Workplace Model

A Practical eBook for
Organizational Leaders



The Hybrid Office is here! Learn how to make the transition easy for everyone

"It's easy to say that the future of work is hybrid and flexible but what does that mean, actually? For me, a hybrid and flexible workplace model means that most, if not all companies will adopt a different approach to work. One, that allows their employees to work from wherever they are the most productive, for half of their time.

The rest of the time will be used for more collaborative work, in collaborative office spaces, where the culture of the company is enforced and the sense of belonging is established. This is hybrid and flexible working!"

Miro Miroslavov, CEO, OfficeRnD



2021 OfficeRnD Ltd.

OfficeRnD is a management platform for hybrid and flexible workspaces. It helps them automate administrative tasks, make data-driven decisions, and provide a modern, tech-enabled experience to customers and employees.

If you'd like to learn more, check out our website and drop us a line!

www.officernd.com

We regularly share industry insights and practical tips about hybrid and flexible workplaces. Be sure not to miss our latest updates by checking them out here:

www.officernd.com/blog

Feel free to share these insights with anyone you think might find them useful! Of course, we would appreciate you giving us appropriate credit and including a link.

Got questions or feedback? Drop us a line at marketing@officernd.com

Executive summary



We've been talking about the move to a hybrid workforce model for a while now, but now it is actually becoming a reality with millions of workers around the world slowly looking to return to the office.

Organizations have started to allow employees back into the office. Moreover, there is an expectation from workers that they will be given the choice of how and where they work, as well as flexibility around when they come into the office.

But the hybrid work era requires more than just creating flexible work policies. It requires a whole new hybrid workplace model that can support those new ways of working. A model that goes beyond the supply of a simple space but instead offers a new kind of work experience both for employees and employers.

This white paper discusses the ways in which organizations can plan for a return to the office that will allow employees the agility, flexibility and choice they are looking for.

You will learn more about the common pitfalls, challenges and benefits of creating a hybrid workplace model.

Finally, this white paper will give you actionable insights into how technology can become an enabler when it comes to making the return to the office easy for everyone (employees as well as Operations, HR teams, etc).

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Welcome to the hybrid workplace era! What does that mean for your organization?

Organizations around the world are slowly letting their employees return to the office and looking at ways workplaces can adapt to ensure this return is safe, and sustainable.

Adapting to the new post-COVID-19 reality is not only about disinfection procedures and wearing masks, it is about offering the flexibility that people are after.

As we all know, the days of the traditional Monday to Friday, nine to five work week into the office are gone. Instead, people want to come and go to the office as they please: some might choose to work remotely from home or from a third party location full time, some might decide to plan ahead and come into the office every Tuesday and Thursday, while some will want to come in on-demand whenever they have a meeting for example or simply when they feel like it.

A July 2021 global survey conducted by the World Economic Forum across 29 countries showed that a majority of employees want flexible working to become the norm

A staggering 64% saying they were more productive with a flexible work schedule

On average, employees would like to work from home 2.5x days per week and the other 2.5x days from the office or another third party location

Almost a third (30%) said they would consider looking for another job if they were forced to go back to the office full time



There is an evident need - if not requirement - for flexibility and new ways of working. Hybrid work policies need to be put in place, but organizations must not forget that to make a hybrid work model possible, the office workspace needs to adapt too.

Hybrid, flexible workspaces: attracting people back into the office

While many companies are looking to slowly bring their workforce back into the office – whether in a hybrid or full time capacity – many workers still need to be convinced that a return to the office can be safe, and meet their new needs.

On the one hand organizations need to build trust around a safe return to the office, by providing an environment that is COVIDSafe and hygienic with some contactless facilities for example. And on the other they need to create a renewed interest in travelling to a physical space to do work away from home, and showcase that the office is more than just a 'place' to work but can add extra value.

Indeed, most people can do their day to day tasks from home or from a third party location so why bother going to the office if it's not offering something more than home?

The workspace of tomorrow needs to provide a safe, flexible environment but also offer employees a unique, personalized work experience.



What does that mean for your organization?

The ultimate goal of the hybrid approach is to provide the most favorable mix of working remotely and working from the office, while positively impacting business performance, company culture, and employees' wellbeing.

It also means providing a modular, flexible physical environment that can adapt to the number of employees on-site at each point in time, and equipped with tools and services that allow both on-site and remote staff to collaborate seamlessly.

Finally, a hybrid workspace needs to be built in a way that will not add extra red tape for support functions such as HR and Operations teams.

It is important to empower those support functions in the same way as employees are empowered.

Ultimately, the return to the office and the creation of a hybrid work model will only be successful if it is made easy for EVERYONE, and if the transition is seamless.

This is why it is paramount for organizations looking to create hybrid work policies to ask themselves the right questions today, create an organization-wide mindset around what workspace means, and use the right technology to drive and support a change in a sustainable way.

Benefits of a hybrid workspace model

There are many benefits of building a hybrid workspace model, some of which we've highlighted above. But in case you were still not convinced, here are a few more that might prompt you to seriously consider the value of rethinking your workspace model.

Lowered costs

Unutilized office space has become a major issue for companies today. With hybrid work becoming the norm and more employees moving away from the traditional 5-day work week in the office, a lot of space ends up being vacant.

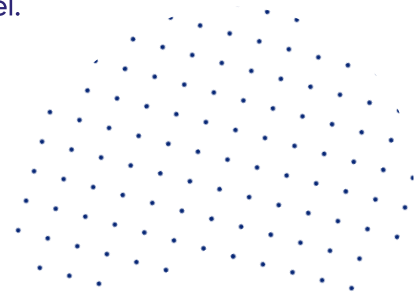
This is a waste of space, and most importantly a waste of money that could be spent elsewhere in the business.

By adopting a hybrid workspace model, organizations have the opportunity to use fewer desks without changing their headcount, and if needed even downsize their office space to suit their new needs.

For example, instead of paying for 1000 desks, a company can cut this in half and ask employees to come on a rotation basis.

But rent isn't the only area where cost cuts can be made.

Once a company can efficiently plan how many employees will be in the office at any given point in time, they can plan around occupancy levels and also cut down on office supplies and other business expenses.



Adaptability = productivity

Employees's needs have changed.

In a remote work world people don't come to the office for the same reasons they used to. What's driving people back to a physical corporate office is the ability to get access to types of spaces, services and amenities they don't get at home.

A hybrid workspace means organizations can adapt the office space to those particular needs by providing a variety of different areas such as common spaces for breakout sessions, quiet zones for focus, adaptable meeting rooms, creative spaces for brainstorming, and more.

It is also about offering people adaptable spaces that can be quickly repurposed for activity-based work.

The adaptability of the hybrid workspace means it is designed for people, and is here to empower everyone to do their best work at each point in time.

Wellbeing a priority

In a hybrid workplace environment, employees have more freedom to choose when, where and how they do their job.

This flexibility allows employees to have a better work-life balance, feel happier and less stressed.

Going back to a physical office space - even if it's just a few days a month - gives people the opportunity to feel part of a community, and get their dose of social interaction.

This is much needed as many employees working from home report feelings of isolation.

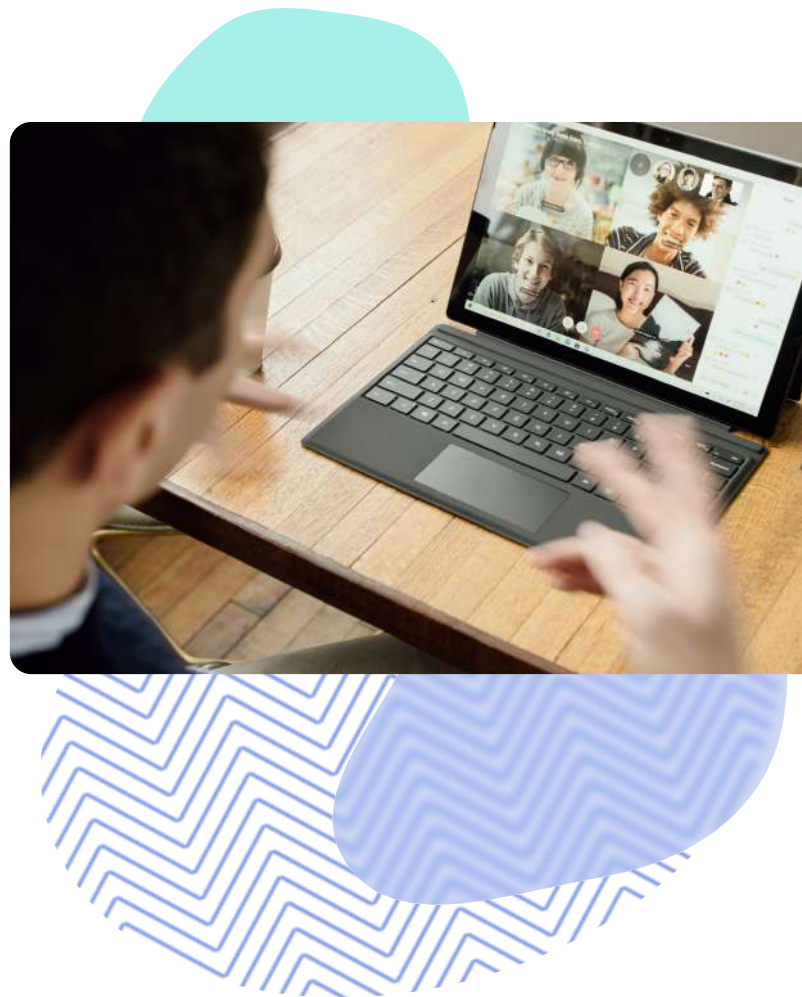
The physical workspace people work from needs to be at the service of employees' wellbeing. The idea is to empower employees by giving them many options to choose from based on their needs, whether those be professional or personal.

Fostering creativity and company culture

Many employees are keen to return to the office in some capacity because a workspace offers much more than just "space".

Many have realized by now that working remotely, while it has many advantages, can greatly impact a company's culture and teams' creativity.

The hybrid workspaces of tomorrow have the potential to become the core driver of company culture and be a catalyst for people to exchange ideas.



Building a long-term model that works for ALL: addressing the hybrid workplace challenges

For the hybrid work model to be sustainable it needs to be a win-win for ALL.

This means making it easy and seamless for employees, but also providing Operations and HR teams the tools needed to easily and efficiently manage hybrid workforces and flex workspaces.

Here are a few common challenges faced by organizations entering the flex workspace journey.



Who's coming when?

Whether your hybrid work policy is setting specific days on which employees need to be in the office, or offers employees complete freedom on how many days and when they can come in, the challenge remains: how to adequately plan for and manage staff rotation and safety measures when every day is different?

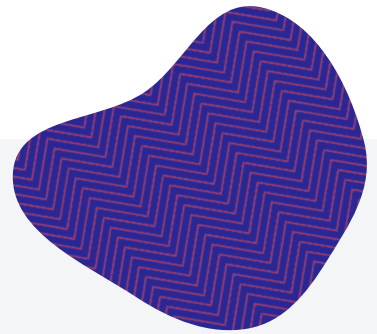
Having fewer desks and asking employees to come to the office on shifts comes with a whole new set of tasks and responsibilities for companies.

HR and Operations teams need to know how many and which employees are coming each day, what they all need based on their job, which safety and hygienic measures need to be taken accordingly, and more.

On their end, employees need to be able to know when they can come in, which desks or meeting rooms they can book, who else will be in the office on the day they want to come in, and so on.

And then there's the question of visits. Can clients and partners come in? When? And who can handle their visit safely on that day?

Without a proper technology platform in place this can become a logistical nightmare and defeat the mere purpose of making coming back to the office worth it.



Complexity of managing flexible and adaptable spaces

With hybrid workspaces' ability to basically shift and transform based on needs, another set of challenges comes in.

You need to handle desks and meeting rooms bookings. This includes ensuring that the right number of people are in each space, planning for days where many meetings are happening and others when people in the office don't need meeting rooms at all but rather creative spaces for brainstorm.

With this also comes the management of office supplies and resources, and key amenities such as parking spots.

Investing in a dedicated hybrid workplace software is without any doubt the most convenient option for companies and an affordable way to enable easy desk booking, meeting room reservation, visitors management, and more.

Building a workspace for all

Building a workspace that is a good fit for everyone's needs is a great ambition, but it can practically become very challenging when everyone needs something slightly different to do their best work and feel comfortable and safe.

It may also raise questions that have never been raised before at an HR or operational level that need to be talked through.

A flexible workspace needs to be built with everyone's interest at heart, and this is why it has to be a concerted effort. Everyone should have a say.

Again, technology can be a great enabler and offer everyone a chance to power a hybrid work model that works for them.



Technology burnout

For HR, Operations, IT teams and other support functions, a return to the office and changes made to the physical working space mean extra things to think about and manage.

Already, we've seen companies invest in a multitude of technologies - software and apps - designed to help solve very specific problems.

From collaboration tools and employee roster management software to meeting room booking apps, companies are crumbling under the weight of more and more tech tools, most of which don't integrate well with each other and end up creating more burden than efficiency.

The tech burnout is real and organizations are accumulating new apps and software by the day.

As companies prepare their return to the office, it is important they look at consolidating their technology stack and invest in an all-in-one hybrid workspace solution that can remove the burden - and cost - of having to handle multiple pieces of technology that don't talk to each other.



The 5x questions checklist for an effective hybrid workplace model

01

What do people want?



As mentioned above, a successful hybrid work strategy and hybrid workspace model can only work if it is designed for the people.

Before making any significant decisions or investments, it is important to understand the pain points of everyone involved in the decision-making process (Operations, HR, Finance, IT, etc), and ask employees what would work best for them too.

You want to build a model and invest in tools that will make things easy for everyone, and address the most common challenges raised by your teams.

02

What does the ultimate personalized employee experience look like?

Have you thought about how you could deliver a personalized employee experience? How will your new workspace's functionalities and services support this experience? How simple do you want the experience to be?

The easier decisions can be made by employees and your team, the more pleasant the experience and the more trust there is.

Those are essential questions to ask so you can both create a flex workspace that is fit for purpose, and invest in the technology platform that will support this experience.

03 How will your workspace represent your company's values and culture?

It is important to ask yourself how the experience you provide your employees with can fully embody and communicate your company's values and culture.

After all, those are key drivers to bringing employees back to the office and showing them the value of spending time in the workplace.

Look at how the space itself, but also the technologies offered to employees and the business processes around the workspace can convey and foster those values and culture.

04 What does operational excellence look like for your organization?

Operational excellence speaks to the ability to manage your space(s) cost-effectively based on the number of people you need at each location.

It is about getting the right information to the right people so they can make the right decisions.

Having strong operating technology in place can allow you to do that efficiently and lower the cost of operations while increasing your space's utilisation and profitability.



05

How can technology help with empowerment and enablement?



Technology is key to driving efficiency, supporting a truly personalized experience for your employees and your team, and overall making the return to the office easy and seamless for everyone.

Technology can amplify that brand and experience that the physical spaces on their own can't do.

It can also allow you to think about additional services that your employees might need in the future, and that you can deliver through apps for example. Technology is a fantastic driver of change and can allow your company to evolve and scale alongside your employees' changing needs and your organizations' changing business priorities.

The right solution can be a key differentiator for companies looking to build the hybrid workspace model of tomorrow while continuing to drive performance amid uncertain and evolving external conditions.



A new generation of hybrid workspace management solutions to make the transition easy

As we've highlighted in this report, hybrid workspaces are so much more than just 'office spaces', they have the potential to shape what the future of work will look like for the next decade.

Choosing the right hybrid workspace management platform can truly make or break a successful return to the office, which is why organizations need to choose wisely!

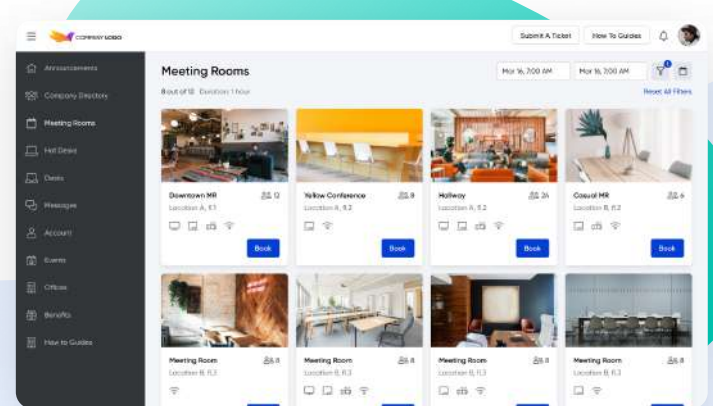
Here are a few of the key features you want to consider when evaluating hybrid workspace management solutions.

Desk booking

You want to allow your employees to easily find and book desks for office days, and ideally you want to be able to define which desks are assigned and which are shared.

In terms of accessibility, being able to book available desks both on desktop or mobile devices is a plus.

Desk analytics capabilities are also important to help you make informed decisions and adapt your workplace as needed.

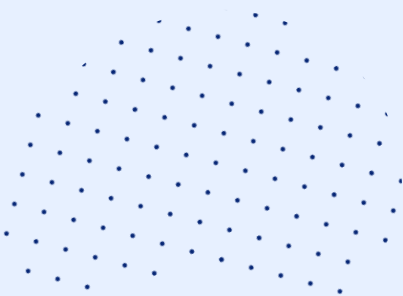


Meeting room booking

Similarly to desk booking, choose a solution that makes it easy for your teams to find and book the right meeting space from any device.

Information about the room capacity and amenities also needs to be made available so it's easy for employees to find a space that fits their specific needs.

Smart room scheduling features can also take care of notifications and free the room if it's not used.



Visual floor plan

Giving all of your employees a live floor plan of the office with desk and room availability can help them familiarize themselves with the new workspace, and also make the best use of it based on their needs.

A solution that offers this visual floor plan functionality can:

- Show a visual display of available desks
- Define which desks are available for bookings and which are not
- Allow workspace staff to easily add/remove desks or change their availability

Space and resource management

Beyond the simple booking of desks and meeting rooms, some advanced space management functionalities can allow you to:

- Manage your inventory of desks, rooms, parking spots, etc
- Create and manage various spaces
- Manage custom spaces and resources
- Manage multiple office locations with ease

Visitor management

Welcoming guests with an elegant visitor management system can help keep your workplace safe and save your team time.

Helpful functionalities include:

- Collection of visitor information on entry with a tablet app
- Contactless check in and check out
- Notification when guests or clients arrive for a meeting

Mobile and web engagement apps

A solution that offers various mobile and web apps is important if you want to make things as easy as possible for people. Again, it's all about giving your employees and team choice and convenience.

Workplace teams can use such apps to communicate company policies and benefits, create and manage events, manage discussion boards and streamline facility requests and tickets.

Integrations with other apps

You want to avoid overloading your employees and support teams with even more technology red tape, and instead provide extra productivity, value, and time savings.

This is why it is important to choose a hybrid workplace management system that can fully integrate with the other apps your employees have access to, from collaboration and productivity tools to door access and other systems.

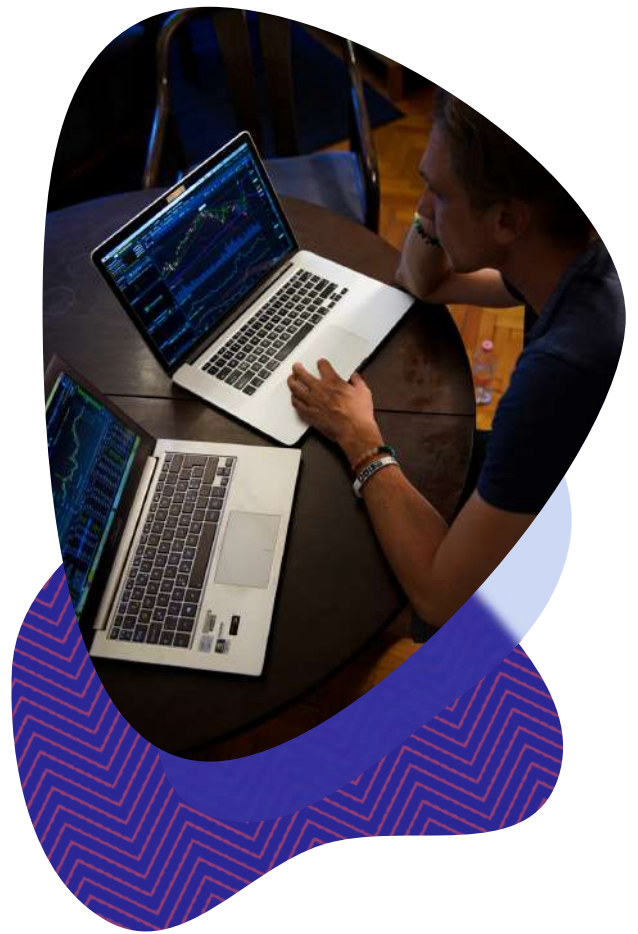
Ultimately, this will provide a great experience to employees and workplace teams.

Streamlined and secure login with single sign-on (SSO)

Cybersecurity is a major concern for organizations today, especially as more and more systems and data have been brought online as a result of the pandemic.

You need to choose a workplace management solution with embedded security at its core, and that allows your employees to use their enterprise credentials to log onto the platform so they don't have to create and remember new passwords.

Single sign-on is a great way to achieve secure access from an employee perspective, while reducing security risks as corporate accounts are managed centrally.



Workplace analytics

Workplace analytics can show you how your team uses the workplace, what's working well and what needs to change.

This can help workplace teams keep tabs on utilisation, capacity, desk booking trends, and more.

Custom dashboards can be created to dive deeper into the data.

Conclusion

Hybrid work will be the new normal at least for the next decade. We don't have a choice but to evolve the traditional office space if we want to build a hybrid model that works for all and is successful in the long term.

It is vital for all organizations around the world looking to set-up hybrid work policies to rethink their current workspace and equip both their employees and support functions - IT, HR, Operations - with technology tools that can make the transition easy and seamless.

Organizations should consider moving away from fixed, allocated workstations and instead use their real estate assets more efficiently. They should look at ways to offer employees set-ups, services and functionalities that match individual needs and allow for great flexibility and adaptability.

Finally, business leaders need to completely shift their perspective on the function of the office in a post-pandemic era so the workspace of tomorrow becomes more than just a 'place'.

Together, and with the help of a new-generation of hybrid workspace management technology, we can build a new office that is safer, smarter and personalized to everyone's new needs.



The Hybrid Office is here! Learn how to make the transition easy for everyone

Building the hybrid workspace of tomorrow with OfficeRnD

OfficeRnD Hybrid is a workplace management software that helps companies efficiently manage a hybrid workplace environment.

The software simplifies desk and room booking, visitor management, inventory management, and more. The platform comes with a suite of web and mobile apps that enhance employee engagement and help employers communicate benefits and perks.

We can help you enable and manage the hybrid work model in your workplace.

[Learn more](#) / [Book demo](#)

