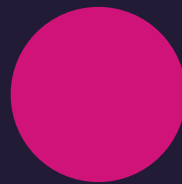




TITUS



**L&D insights**

# Navigating the age of **Hybrid Work**



**Hybrid working is all about balance. The rapid shift to remote working which many of us experienced in 2020 was an opportunity to re-evaluate what we missed (and definitely didn't miss) about daily office work.**

It also brought into focus the challenges that come with working from home full-time, as well as the benefits.

For organisations setting out or continuing on the path of hybrid working, these lessons are valuable in helping to strike the right balance, optimising how we divide our time, activities and resources between in-person and remote work.

We've looked at four areas where balance is essential, and how the hybrid model can help businesses get the best of both worlds.



# Finding the right balance between home & office work



**The balance between remote and office-based work is at the centre of the hybrid working model.** Much of the advice and guidance we've seen on this topic focuses on how organisations can figure out the right formula for flexible working. Our view is that as far as possible, employees should be able to influence their own schedule according to what helps them be most productive.

It's important to remember though, that for many employees, an entirely flexible schedule isn't realistic - their job may require them to be on-site much of the time, or conversely, their location might mean that the majority of their work is done remotely.

Employers, therefore, need to be more creative to ensure these employees are treated equally - whether that's providing cover to allow on-site workers a break from the office every couple of weeks, or access to co-working space for remote team members who need to get out of the house once in a while.







## Expert insight

“I’m keen to move back towards more in-person collaboration – I don’t think there’s a substitute for that – but I’m also glad we’re able to retain some of the flexibility and agility that comes with remote working, giving our whole team more ownership of their schedules.”

**Seb Francis**, *Co-founder & Director, Titus*

“The majority of our employees still want to be on campus some of the time yet many would also enjoy the flexibility of working from home a couple days a week, spending time in another city for part of the year, or even moving there permanently. Google’s future workplace will have room for all of these possibilities.”

**Sundar Pichai**, *CEO, Google & Alphabet*



### 3 Tech Tips

- ✓ Give staff access to courses on wellbeing, work-life balance or stress management.
- ✓ Use online quizzes to gather feedback from employees on how the hybrid model is working for them.
- ✓ Integrate your LMS with MIS or HR systems to give a more holistic picture of how employees are doing.

# Benefit from great collaboration whilst improving productivity

**Remote workers often cite increased focus as a major benefit of working away from the office**, with the lack of distractions caused by phone calls, background noise or ad-hoc meetings improving their ability to concentrate, particularly on complex or involved tasks.

On the other hand, many office workers value the immediate connections and interactions which come with having everyone under the same roof, allowing for quicker decision making and deeper collaboration.

A hybrid model offers the opportunity to improve each environment - with more conscious planning of in-person time leading to less disruption for office workers while making the sessions themselves more valuable.

Similarly, a communications policy that encourages informal catch-ups with remote workers, but advises against unscheduled interruptions helps to maintain the right balance between productivity and inclusion.

**almost  
60%**  
of employees  
rate themselves as  
more productive  
working from  
home

## — Expert insight

“Make time to connect – find the balance between allowing yourself and your team the space to focus on core work, while still building in regular check-ins to make sure everyone is coping well and feels supported.”



**Marcus Green** *Moodle Developer, Titus*

“The key for organisations to thrive through hybrid working will be to think about how to be amazingly productive at home and amazingly collaborative when we are together face to face. It’s time to build spaces and ways of working based on the different types of interaction you need to have great working relationships and achieve outstanding results.”



**Karen Bharaj**, *Director, Peopleist*

### **3** Tech Tips

- ✓ Encourage remote staff to block out time for breaks.
- ✓ Keep meetings/messages to office hours where possible.
- ✓ Provide flexible scheduling options for meetings.

# Give equal priority to **Management & Leadership**



**With a reduction in face-to-face time, those in management and leadership roles face a new set of challenges in how they connect with employees.**

Many of the technological solutions available focus on quantitative, rather than qualitative metrics, and it can be easy to slip into the “management by numbers” habit, focusing on tasks and productivity alone.

While these are important, it’s vital for leaders to keep inspiring and motivating from the top, in order to sustain the company culture, keep the workforce informed about strategy and direction, and ensure that all employees feel recognised, supported and appreciated.

Organisations need to ensure that leadership is prioritised within the hybrid model, creating space and time for regular catch-ups and briefings, whether in-person or virtually. Visibility is key, to avoid a scenario in which in-office staff have a higher perception of support than their colleagues working remotely.

**A Harvard study suggests that remote staff put in almost a full extra hour of work per day**



## — Expert insight



“A big part of my role is motivating and mentoring the team, and learning to do that remotely can be challenging – you miss the aspect of non-verbal communication. You need to make a conscious effort to be tuned into your team’s welfare.”

**Luke Tillotson** *Head of Sales, Titus*

“I think we have to be nuanced in making sure we listen to different groups and how we respond going forward. I think wellbeing is one area we need to make sure we stay really tuned into.”

**Jane Hanson**, *Chief People Officer, Nationwide Building Society*

### **3** Tech Tips

- ✓ Regular welfare checks – look for changes in your data.
- ✓ Compare how different ratios of remote/office time affect employees in different roles.
- ✓ Use tools like Intelliboard to add more reporting options to your LMS.





# Striking the right balance of formality to foster relationships

While tools such as Zoom or Teams do a good job of replacing the functional aspect of face-to-face meetings, they don't allow for much non-verbal communication. Tone can be difficult to judge online, and as a result video conferences tend towards a higher level of formality.

Equally, in-person meetings can be too informal. We've all been guilty of calling a meeting at short notice without a defined agenda and sometimes without much thought as to how many of the invitees really need to be involved.

Adopting a hybrid working model challenges us to confront these issues. Online meetings can be improved by adding some time at the beginning or end for social interaction and giving participants access to virtual breakout rooms post-discussion to collaborate on the issues discussed.

Face-to-face meetings are less common in a hybrid workplace, so to make the most of the opportunity, we need to think carefully about their purpose and structure.

## — Expert insight

“Plan ahead – schedule the most appropriate tasks for your in-office or remote time respectively. I prefer holding one-to-one customer calls from the home office, for example, whereas I get more value from attending team meetings at our HQ.”



**Jessica Crow**, *Customer Success Manager, Titus*

“We’ll want to consider what the ideal office layout for the future will be. Perhaps it’s less fixed desks and more casual meeting areas, and we need to consider colleague wellbeing, too.”

**Stuart Kennedy**, *Director of People, British Airways*

### **3** Tech Tips

- ✓ Avoid having remote staff “dial in” to group meetings – one webcam per person works best.
- ✓ Use asynchronous tools like Slack, IM or email to avoid unnecessary disruption.
- ✓ Set ground rules around expected response times.

# Thanks for reading

We've covered all the points in this ebook in more detail on our blog.

Head over to [www.tituslearning.com](https://www.tituslearning.com) to learn more.

If you'd like to learn more about how online learning can engage, support and inspire employees in today's hybrid workplace, we'd be happy to help. Contact one of our team today.

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