Not Another Hybrid Work Debate

Unlock the secret powers of team autonomy and flexibility, transforming ordinary work environments into extraordinary realms of productivity.

Skedda

Let your teams decide

To drive hybrid success and retain talent, real heroes never work alone.

The Hybrid Work Debate is Over

Last year, hybrid work became the battle ground between employers who wanted their employees back in the office and employees who wanted to keep workplace flexibility. As such, the number of organizations offering hybrid work increased. According to The Flex Index, 62% of U.S. companies now allow some degree of remote work, up from 51% at the start of 2023.

Heading into 2024, hybrid work is the norm for most companies. Just 6 out of 158 U.S. CEOs said they will prioritize bringing workers back to the office full-time in 2024, according to The Conference Board. What's more, hybrid work research shows that there is a positive return on investment (ROI) for organizations implementing hybrid work:

- 75% of the Fortune 100 operate on a hybrid work schedule (Buildremote).
- 97 of Fortune's 100 Best Companies To Work For 2024 provide hybrid work options (Fortune).
- 63% of high-revenue growth companies are more likely to embrace hybrid work, while 69% of companies with negative or no growth do not offer hybrid options (Accenture).
- From 2020 to 2022, companies with full flexibility led their peers by 16% in revenue growth (Flex Index).

Organizations that prioritize hybrid work will drive higher economic return and be better prepared for the future of work. However, there's still a lot of information out there on how to navigate the complexities of hybrid work successfully. This report aims to reduce the noise and bring you exactly what you need to create an effective hybrid work strategy.

Team-level agreements are most successful

46% of employees say they're more engaged when their work team decides on the hybrid work policy together (Gallup). Team-level agreements also yield a 13% boost in joy over top-down mandates; and employees who enjoy their work are 49% less likely to say they would consider taking a new job compared to those who don't enjoy their work (BCG). Team-driven hybrid work models not only improve employee engagement—the increased satisfaction it brings also cuts attrition risk in half.

CASE STUDY

Allstate boosts engagement with hybrid

Allstate embraced a flexible work strategy that allowed managers and their teams to determine their own work arrangements. Hybrid and remote employees can choose when they'd like to use the office, and teams can decide how hybrid works best for them. This has made getting to work more accessible and equitable for all employees. Allstate's employee engagement score increased from 80.5% to 83.5%.

HOT TIP

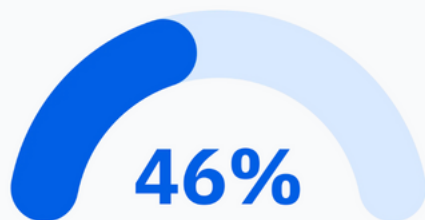## Boost productivity with team-driven hybrid schedules

Team-driven agreements increase employee joy and engagement as team members may be ones employees will socialize and collaborate with most in the office. It's in every company's best interest to give their teams the autonomy to structure their own hybrid schedules to better attract and retain top talent and improve productivity.

> " **The biggest thing that you can do is listen to your own teams. You have to pair the broader data with talking to your own organization and teams about what's working for them.** "

Brian Elliott
CEO and Co-founder of Future Forum

46% of employees say they're more
engaged when their work team **decides
the policy together.**

46%

Gallup

Give employees flexibility based on types of work and individual needs

78% of employees and 91% of managers report in-person work as being most effective for interaction, affiliation, and development (BCG). Employees want to be in the office to socialize, network, and collaborate with team members in the office. Ensuring that teams are in at the same time to make that happen is what makes the office commute worth it.

In the same study, 63% of employees and 67% of managers say remote working is most effective for focus work. While workers believe the office is best for training, social events, and collaboration, most want to have a quiet area for more "heads down" work. For many, completing individual work does not require them to be in the office.

Sources
BCG

HOT TIP
How Flexibility Wins

Autonomy and freedom to change work locations can improve the workplace experience, increasing productivity and the bottom line. What's more, job seekers highly value having autonomy over where and how they work. Companies offering flexible work will come out on top.

"**Companies that prioritize flexibility are driving economic return and, in turn, inspiring others to adopt flexible work practices to remain competitive.**"

Rob Sadow
CEO and Co-founder of Scoop / Flex Index

89%

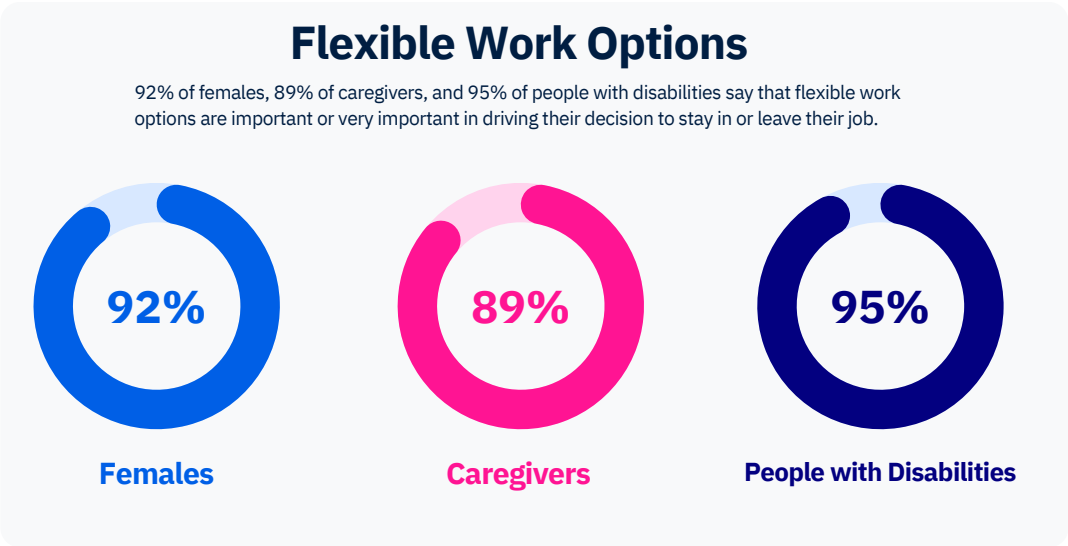89% of organizations with successful hybrid programs offer remote work 1-2 days per week

CBRE

Flexible work leads to better talent

In 2023, flexible workplaces hired talent twice as fast as those requiring full-time office attendance (Flex Index). According to a study in the National Bureau of Economic Research, at least one work-from-home day reduced average attrition rates by 33%. Work schedule flexibility improves talent acquisition and retention.

Just take a look at SurveyMonkey, which introduced flexible work in 2021 after 84% of employees said in an internal survey that they wanted to work from home at least two to three days a week. The results were positive: 84% of workers said choosing where they work improved their work experience, and voluntary turnover at the company declined by 62%.

Sources

The Flex Index
NBER
SurveyMonkey

Sources

BCG

Flexible Work Options

92% of females, 89% of caregivers, and 95% of people with disabilities say that flexible work options are important or very important in driving their decision to stay in or leave their job.

92%

89%

95%

Females

Caregivers

People with Disabilities

> **"Our 'choice model' has worked well for us. It allows workers to integrate all things in their life in a better way than they had when they were commuting for long periods of time or balancing lots of different responsibilities at home."**

Becky Cantieri
Chief People Officer at SurveyMonkey

In the same study by Nick Bloom and colleagues, they found that the reduction in average attrition rates was larger for non-managers, women, those with longer commutes, and employees with fewer than three years of tenure (NBER).

According to BCG, 92% of females, 89% of caregivers, and 95% of people with disabilities say that "flexible work options are important or very important in driving their decision to stay in or leave their job." Underrepresented groups especially value flexibility as highly important and are showing it in the way they choose their next roles. Allstate saw a 23% increase in job applications since adopting a flexible work strategy, including a 33% increase in diverse applicants.

HOT TIP
How to attract and support a diverse workforce

Most workers want some form of flexibility to balance other expectations and responsibilities in their lives. This is especially true for employees for whom commuting is more challenging, like caretakers and people with disabilities. Organizations that want to attract a diverse workforce will benefit from giving employees work schedule flexibility.

> "The reality is human beings who are women or femme presenting, who have a racial minority identity, or who experience chronic or mental illness have a different experience and different needs."

Bethany Nicole Smith
Workplace Experience Specialist

Chapter Insights
Get past the predictions with tips you can implement right away in your department.

HR INSIGHT

To implement a successful hybrid work strategy, HR leaders need to be deliberate in how they tackle change management and policy-setting so they don't backtrack months down the road. Maintain continuous and transparent communication, seek feedback, and ensure you're listening to all sides.

IT INSIGHT

Use diverse communication tools to help deliver specific messages. Consider video conferencing tools for real-time team meetings, Loom for recording video messages, and chat platforms like Slack or Google Chat for general updates. Implement a space management solution to make coordinating in-office days easier.

FACILITIES INSIGHT

Redesigning offices with diverse spaces boosts productivity, creativity, and collaboration, meeting employees' main in-person needs. That may look like creating more open spaces for employees to socialize and collaborate, and a variety of spaces to move around.
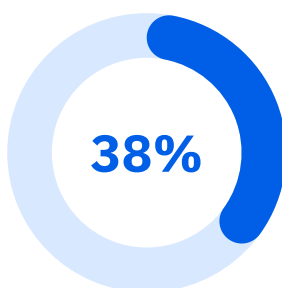
Office neighborhoods on the rise

Just your friendly neighborhood hybrid hero here.
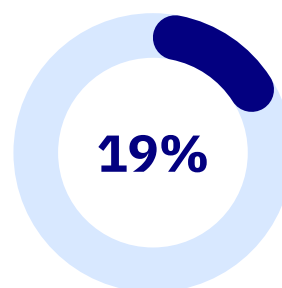
Ensure office design supports productivity

38% of hybrid workers say the office is most productive for meeting new people, placing it as the top reason for workers being in the office. Additionally, 30% say it's best for team meetings and 28% prefer it for collaborating. By contrast, only 19% say the office is most productive for working independently, putting it at the lowest ranking for all provided reasons to be in the office (Owl Labs).

38%

of hybrid workers say the office is most productive for **meeting new people.**

19%

of hybrid workers say the office is most productive for **working independently.**

HOT TIP
Use the office for connection, remote for focus
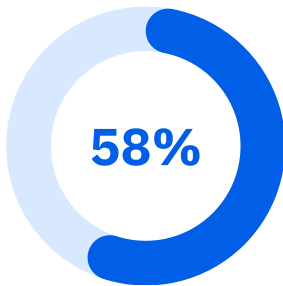
Employees want to be in the office to interact with colleagues and build stronger relationships—and remote when they need to focus. No matter their roles or responsibilities, all employees view the office as a place where they form human connections that are easier to do in-person. Organizations that have office spaces like cafés and lounges for mingling and socializing will help support that.

> **"Offices should be designed to support human connections, collaboration, and creativity. It's important to provide unstructured time for casual interactions and chats in the office that don't happen when working remotely. These moments are what helps employee engagement and builds a sense of belonging."**
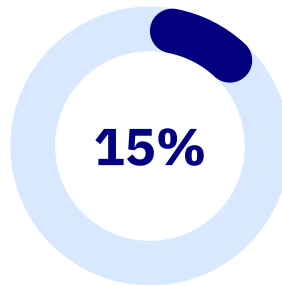
Maja Paleka
Co-founder and Director at Juggle Strategies

Sources
CBRE

58%

of employees go to the office for
connection.

15%

of employees go to the office for
focus work.

CASE STUDY

EPIT fosters community and connection with redesigned workspace and social events

Workers and permanent residents of Educational Partnership & Innovation Trust (EPIT) said they missed seeing human faces in the office and still wanted to work in person with their colleagues.

The organization solved this problem by designing their workspace to be a community—one where people have a place to lounge, eat, and chat with others. EPIT also hosts monthly community morning tea and physical events like 'lunch and learn' sessions and 'movie and pizza' nights in the office to help people connect.

By having various groups come in, they're much more aware of who they're working with, and these connections have expanded their impact overall.

> **"The beauty of hybrid work here is it puts 'human' back into the construct of work."**

Jane Treadwell-Hoye
Executive Director at EPIT

Collaborative spaces are on the rise

In 2023, offices designed for activity-based working were most common and had the highest utilization rates (CBRE). These are spaces that promote hot desking and office neighborhoods with functions that directly support the work performed in that space (e.g., copy rooms, labs, and server closets) and a variety of meeting spaces. Collaborative spaces are on the rise while demand for individual workstations is decreasing. This is a result of employees wanting to be in the office for relationship-building.

For instance, Neiman Marcus Group decreased its office footprint by nearly 80% and focused on smaller, more intentional spaces for the times when employees come together. Its new offices are made up of 70% collaborative spaces and 30% individual spaces, and have a non-hierarchical structure to support equity.

HOT TIP
Shift to more collaborative spaces

At a time when organizations are increasingly downsizing their real estate footprint, the shift to more collaborative spaces in hybrid work can actually help adapt to the change and meet business goals. Collaborative spaces also better meet the needs of employees who come to the office to work on projects with their teams or hold important meetings in-person.

“Hybrid work has helped us solve some serious space challenges as we grow, and also helped us to recruit and retain.”
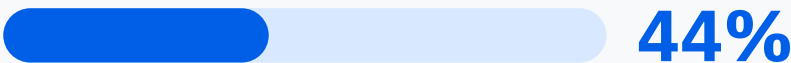
Tracie Sponenberg
CPO of The Granite Group

Adapting Office Environments

The Rise of Collaborative Workspaces

Increased **collaboration** spaces

44%

Decreased **private** spaces

19%

Office spaces that support various work styles will shine

86% of younger workers said they would be willing to come into the office more often for amenity-rich neighborhoods that provided their ideal mix of experiences (Gensler). While more traditional workspaces like individual desks for focus work will still exist, hybrid work is driving a need for workspaces that promote connectivity and culture for employees who are not always in the office.

Gensler surveyed 14,000 office workers across nine countries and ten industries about the 16 different types of spaces beyond the individual desk and enclosed conference room. Four categories of spaces essential for office workers started to emerge — spaces for individual work, creative group work, reflecting and restoring, and connecting and recharging. Most (90%) office workers have easy access to at least one of these spaces, yet only 47% have access to all four spaces.

HOT TIP
Enhancing productivity with office neighborhoods

While there is an increasing level of choice within the workspace, there often aren't enough options for the variety of tasks that need to be done. Providing a range of options allows individuals to leverage their surroundings in ways that best suit their work style.

Creating office neighborhoods is one way to do that, as specific neighborhoods can be dedicated to particular departments, job functions, project needs, or equipment requirements.

4 categories of spaces essential for office workers

Individual Work

Creative Group Work

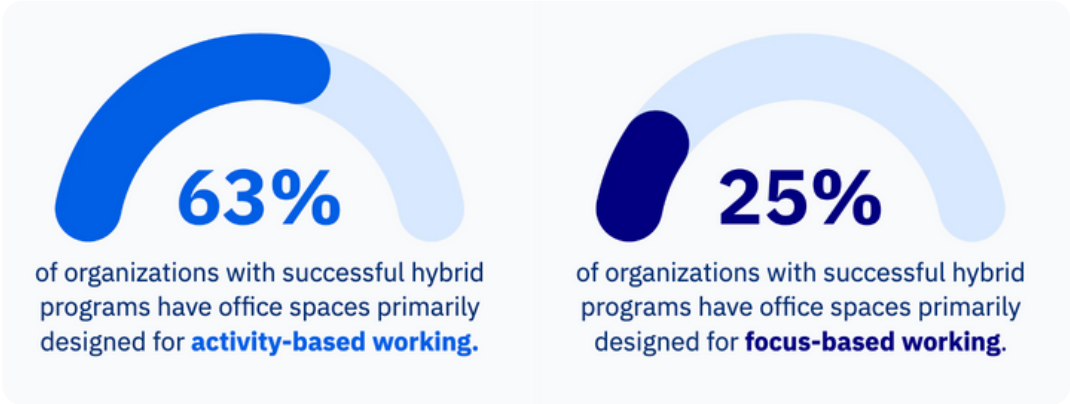**Reflecting & Restoring**

Connecting & Recharging

"**Think about the array of spaces and amenities that are at our fingertips. Those amenities, outside the office or between buildings, are just as important as the spaces inside the workspace.**

Together, it creates an ecospace for people to use not only the interior spaces but the entire neighborhood as well."

Janet Pogue McLaurin
Global Director of Workplace Research at Gensler

63%
of organizations with successful hybrid programs have office spaces primarily designed for **activity-based working.**

25%
of organizations with successful hybrid programs have office spaces primarily designed for **focus-based working.**

Chapter Insights

Get past the predictions with tips you can implement right away in your department.

HR INSIGHT

Many employees prefer office work for social interactions, like spontaneous conversations, which are less feasible remotely. HR leaders can also get a pulse of what employees want and need by collecting qualitative data. HR and Facilities should collaborate to design workspaces that facilitate these interactions.

IT INSIGHT

IT leaders need to consider refitting conference rooms with the right tech tools to include all attendees regardless of location. This may mean leveraging a conference room scheduler to coordinate hybrid meetings, installing display tech so all attendees can see each other, and providing quality connectivity solutions for stable calls and meetings.

FACILITIES INSIGHT

Facilities leaders can leverage space management software with insights and analytics to make informed decisions on how to optimize their office layout. For instance, they can reduce the number of individual desks if they see that most are not being used on a regular basis. New workspace designs should be flexible, collaborative, sustainable, and inclusive.

Zoom, Loom, or get a room?

Sharpen your tech weapons to bridge the physical gap.

Tech bridges the physical gap

Now that teams are more distributed than ever, the right tech stack is crucial to helping teams seamlessly transition between physical and virtual workspaces. 83% of employees said that good technology was an important factor in their work—only behind pay equity, a supportive manager, and health benefits (Owl Labs).

The importance of good technology to support hybrid work is prevalent in all aspects of an employee's workday. According to Unisys, nearly half (49%) of employees lose between one to five hours of productivity per week dealing with tech issues; 23% lose six hours or more.
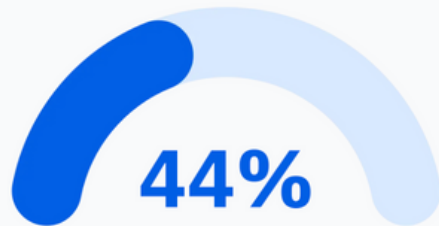
Sources

Owl Labs
Unisys

HOT TIP

Improve connectivity with tech upgrades and troubleshooting training

With technology being the main way to connect distributed teams, losing time throughout the workday because of tech issues is significant and should be resolved. Upgrading your organization's tech stack and providing training for troubleshooting tech issues are good areas to start.

"**Digital tools and technology play a crucial role in connecting distributed organizations and enabling productivity. Slack, Teams, Miro, Mural, Figma—they all end up being really important in how teams actually collaborate asynchronously and synchronously.**"

Brian Elliot
Co-founder of Future Forum

44%

44% of organizations with successful hybrid programs include both **change management** and **technology investments** in their hybrid work program.

CBRE

The right tech stack incorporates both synchronous and async workflows

Synchronous
WORKING TOGETHER

Examples of synchronous work:

- In-person meeting
- Video conferences (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet)
- Virtual whiteboarding (e.g., Miro, Mural)
- Phone call
- Chatting in person
- One-on-one meetings
- Instant messaging (e.g., Slack, Google Chat)
- Live virtual chat

Asynchronous
WORKING APART

Examples of asynchronous work:

- Pre-recorded video (e.g., Loom)
- Data repositories for employees to access at any time
- Messages that are not time-sensitive (e.g., emails, letters)
- Share-file collaborations
- Project management tools
- Preparing for meetings (e.g., review slides, gather questions)
- Deep, focused work (e.g., researching, writing)

Use synchronous tech for time-sensitive matters

The greatest strength of synchronous work is immediacy, or for work requiring immediate reciprocal interactions and responses. Being able to exchange information in real time and see facial expressions are essential for effective collaboration.

58% of respondents state that seeing who else is in the meeting helped them better interact with their co-workers, according to Canon. This also creates deeper interactions and helps build better relationships in remote settings.

Sources

Canon

Use synchronous tech for time-sensitive matters (continued)

What's more, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly popular for documenting meeting proceedings and creating detailed meeting notes. Using AI tools for these tasks free attendees up to fully focus on the discussions at hand and allows for easy recording and distribution of information.

HOT TIP
Empower remote collaboration

Organizations are increasingly using tech to be more efficient and productive. Collaboration tools like whiteboards allow remote participants to demonstrate their ideas in real time for everyone to see. Chat features while on a video conference encourage more participation by allowing for non-disruptive questions and comments.

"**The technology broadly available to us is going to evolve so much. The ability to record conversation, distill conversation, turn that into action items, and spread that out to a team—that's going to become really important in hybrid environments.**"
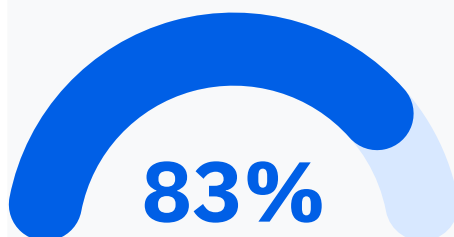
Rob Sadow
CEO and Co-founder of Scoop / The Flex Index

Sources
Statista

83%

By planning some days in the office intentionally, 83% of companies say collaboration on new projects is as good or better than before the pandemic when everyone was on-site full-time.

Use asynchronous tech for non-urgent matters

61% of employees in remote-ready jobs perform their tasks independently and then bring their work to the team for collaboration, according to Gallup. Asynchronous work frees teams from time constraints, which is ideal for global teams in different time zones and flexible work schedules. Employees can provide information and respond to non-urgent matters at times that don't disrupt their focus.

In 2021, SurveyMonkey established "Focus Fridays," removing any internal recurring meetings except for external or business-critical meetings. The amount of time employees spent in meetings on Fridays decreased by 50%. Average productivity for sales representatives increased by 66%.

> **"While having a global team is a huge asset, it also means we have to be really intentional with how we spend our time together – and take advantage of the overlapping windows of time with things that cannot get done asynchronously."**
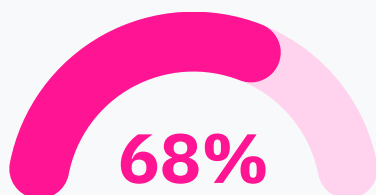
Maria Casella
VP of People & Operations at Skedda

68%

68% of people say they don't have enough uninterrupted focus time during the workday due to the volume of constant communications.

Chapter Insights

Get past the predictions with tips you can implement right away in your department.

HR INSIGHT
Managers must adapt to the challenges of remote and in-person collaboration. Leveraging tech tools to coordinate and align hybrid teams, build virtual relationships, and manage outcomes instead of physical presence become essential skills for managers.

IT INSIGHT
Reassessing and updating your current tech stack where needed will be important to ensuring the success of hybrid work. Implement tech tools that support sync and async work so employees can communicate and collaborate using the best methods for their teams.

FACILITIES INSIGHT
Paying attention to how the physical space affects the implementation of technology can ensure that the office is ready for new equipment. This can look like installing the correct number of electric outlets and establishing adequate wall space for video displays.

Chapter 4
Beware proximity bias
(train your managers)

Beware proximity bias (train your managers)

All heroes need training: hybrid work requires better managers.

Meet initially in-person

Given the benefits of remote work, there are still some aspects of work that are better done in person. This is usually the case when relationship-building is the main goal.

Experts report time and again that onboarding is the hardest part for a remote or hybrid workforce. It's more challenging to share company culture with new employees in a remote setting. Microsoft found that employees who met with their managers in person within the first 90 days were more likely to:

- seek feedback,
- feel included and trusted by their team,
- feel supported when discussing tough issues with their manager,
- build strong relationships with colleagues, and
- get effective coaching and feedback.

HOT TIP

In-person onboarding builds trust and accelerates new hire productivity

Meeting initially in-person can help teach new hires where and how they fit into the organization. This in turn helps new hires become more comfortable discussing tough issues and having productive conflicts—all essential to collaboration and innovation.

New hires who build trust with their managers and teammates can more quickly become productive contributors and collaborators within the team and the company.
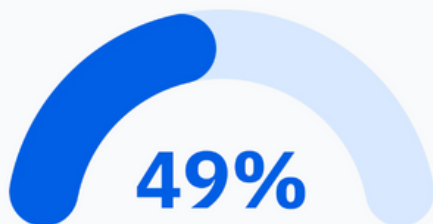
Chapter 4
Beware proximity bias
(train your managers)

" "In a hybrid environment, especially if you are coming in and out of an office and you find someone you want exposure to or want to expand your network with, use the time in the office to actually meet up and have that kind of in-person connection at first, and only after that move into a virtual mentorship relationship."

Sacha Connor
Founder/CEO of Virtual Work Insider

49%

Managers and executives spend close to half their time (49%) on work they believe is done most effectively in person, such as **onboarding** new hires and **giving feedback.**

BCG

Meeting initially in person is also recommended for mentorships. The trust and relationship building required for mentoring is also more effective in person. Only when both parties have formed a strong foundation of trust can mentoring in remote settings work.

HOT TIP
Set clear expectations for in-office time

Managers should establish clear expectations for in-person office time, particularly for young employees who need development and mentoring. In-person training helps new hires understand their tasks and priorities easier, as they can receive close guidance and immediate feedback.

" "Why return to the office? For the genuine experiences that build trust —period. Once you've built trust in-person, it becomes a lot easier to work on difficult problems when you're working remotely."

Jackie Dube
CPO of The Predictive Index

85%

85% of respondents said the most important factor in an employee's working life is a **supportive manager.**

Owl Labs

Chapter 4
Beware proximity bias
(train your managers)

Beware of proximity bias

More than half of employees (60%) are concerned that working remotely will mean they have less of a say at work and miss out on opportunities (Owl Labs). There seems to be some truth to that story.

In 2023, remote workers were promoted 31% less frequently than people who worked some time in an office (Live Data Technologies). This is most likely due to people's unconscious bias of favoring people and things that are physically close, a phenomenon termed proximity bias, or distance bias.

HOT TIP

Shift focus from presence to performance

Instead of focusing on work location perceptions, organizations should revamp their performance management to focus on employees meeting their goals and objectives. That may mean training managers on new ways of measuring productivity, such as prioritizing outcomes and not how often employees are in the office.

CASE STUDY

Neiman Marcus' 'work-from-anywhere' approach

When Neiman Marcus implemented its 'work-from-anywhere' strategy, the company also adopted what it called the 'results-only work environment.'

Instead of focusing on who is in the office, the company shifted its priorities to focus on the output and saw dramatic results within six months—a 34% percentage point increase in Employee Net Promoter Score, a 50% reduction in attrition, and a 31% improvement in its time to hire.

"**We end up rewarding people based on the visual aspects of hustle culture—as opposed to outcomes. How do we actually make sure that our reward systems are based on the delivery of outcomes—not on presenteeism?**"
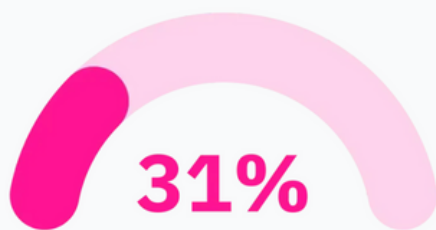
Brian Elliott
Co-founder of Future Forum

Chapter 4
Beware proximity bias
(train your managers)

31%

In 2023, remote workers were promoted 31% less frequently than people who worked some time in an office.

Live Data Technologies

Proximity bias can also play out in ways where remote employees are accidentally left out. This can happen with watercooler moments in the office or conversations over lunch. Training managers to be conscious of proximity bias is key to making sure that distributed teams are managed fairly.

HOT TIP

Battle proximity bias!

To combat proximity bias, managers need to ensure that the processes and systems are equitable while leading globally distributed teams. That requires intentional training on how to lead in a hybrid environment and putting programs in place that are inclusive of remote and onsite employees.

CASE STUDY

How The Predictive Index balances remote and onsite employee engagement

At the Predictive Index, Chief People Officer Jackie Dube ensures equity between remote and onsite employees by intentionally planning programs that level the participation field. There is always a remote option and an in-person option.

For example, during their fitness and nutrition week, they hosted both a remote cooking class and an in-person hike. They also have a practice of being on Zoom during meetings regardless of whether participants are onsite or not so that those who are remote can easily observe facial expressions.

"**You start to look at the data over time. Are you promoting people faster who are right near your conversation spaces or Hub locations? It takes time to make sure that the system is fair, and you have to reinforce those principles because you can slip back into old ways of working.**"

Dena Upton
Head of People at Dandy

Chapter 4
Beware proximity bias
(train your managers)

Sources

Johns Hopkins University
Accenture
ZipRecruiter

Provide face time with leaders

By 2030, Gen Z will account for roughly 30% of the workforce (Johns Hopkins University). They are also among the biggest supporters of hybrid work. 74% of Gen Z workers prefer to interact with colleagues face-to-face (Accenture) and 44% of 2023 graduates prefer hybrid work (ZipRecruiter).

Gen Z employees want flexibility, but they also want face time with senior leaders and colleagues to learn from. Many of them missed out on critical moments to build interpersonal skills because of the pandemic and are looking for mentors to help bridge the skills gap.

" **"Mentoring is something that's very much better done in person. And the fact that it's hard to mentor also will make it harder to recruit. If you look at 20- to 29-year-olds, they have a very strong preference for having at least two, three days a week on site."**

Nick Bloom
Stanford Economics Professor & WFH Research Co-founder

83% of Gen Z said a workplace mentor is crucial for their career, but only about half of workers reported having one.

Adobe Report

Providing more face time with leaders can also help mitigate rising disengagement problems in the workplace, especially from younger workers. According to Gallup, Millennials and Gen Z employees have seen the greatest decline in:

- feeling cared about by someone at work,
- having opportunities to learn and grow,
- feeling connected to the mission of the organization,
- having progress discussions with managers,
- being given opportunities to develop, and
- feeling that their opinions count.

Younger employees are feeling significantly more disengaged from work and detached from their managers. Seeing their leaders as human beings they can connect with will help younger workers align themselves with the organization's purpose, values, goals, and culture.

Chapter 4
Beware proximity bias
(train your managers)

"**Hybrid work is like money**—it makes you more of who you are. If your organization already has high trust and employees are ready to adapt to challenges, then they can figure out flexible work.

But if you're already a low trust organization and people aren't coming to work with their engaged whole self, that's going to continue in flexible work. It's the idea of: if you get more money, you're going to do similar things with it."

Elizabeth Knox
Founder of Match PACE

HOT TIP
Build a culture for younger workers

Leaders who want to attract, engage, and retain young workers need to create a culture that builds trust, connection, and growth. That means setting an example for being on-site and being available for employees to ask questions and learn from. Organizations that are intentional about providing training programs for both skills and hybrid working will be more prepared for the future workforce.

Chapter Insights

Get past the predictions with tips you can implement right away in your department.

HR INSIGHT

Structure intentional onboarding and mentorship programs that include a series of training sessions, milestone check-ins, and regular evaluations to gauge progress. In-person programs are more effective for introducing new workers to the organization and building strong foundational relationships.

IT INSIGHT

Integrating technology into daily work (such as meeting setups and desk booking) enhances productivity, collaboration, and the overall hybrid workplace experience. IT leaders should also collaborate with HR to deploy easily-adoptable tech tools along with appropriate training for smoother implementation.

FACILITIES INSIGHT

Redesign office spaces to focus on training and events for employees who are more remote, and to design flexible workspaces that create more opportunities to interact with each other. Office spaces that support community-building and promote connectivity and culture will be essential.

Don't get burned by hot desking

Choose your battles: fighting for your seat shouldn't be one of them.

The solution to "more people than desks"

In 2023, offices designed for activity-based work were most common and had the highest utilization rates (CBRE). These are spaces where desks are shared and employees are empowered to organize where and how they want to work. There are many benefits for both employers and employees to embrace hot desking or desk hoteling.

Hot desking helps save space and cut costs while supporting employees with just enough workstations for the day they're in the office. Cisco says it saved roughly $500 million since implementing hybrid work and cutting half its real estate footprint. Allstate cut its real estate spending in half after embracing flexible work.

> "**Now that the company has outgrown the office space, we need to continuously use a hot desking system for all of our employees.**"

Kerrie McSorley
Office Manager/Payroll Officer at Audinate

30%

Space-sharing, which can be in the form of hot desking or office hoteling, has increased by 30% globally since 2021.

CBRE

Hot desking also allows employees to have a seat when working from different office locations and collaborate with people based on what works best for the projects they're working on. By implementing and optimizing flexible workspaces, organizations can also reduce their carbon footprint and move toward meeting sustainability goals.

CASE STUDY

Autovista Group's Hangout Model maximizes office space and cuts costs

Autovista Group utilizes a Hangout model for their small office space, which only has six spaces and three meeting rooms. The company doesn't expect these workspaces to be full everyday, so they have a policy where they only open the workplace when enough employees come in for the day.

The company is able to save energy and reduce personnel costs by maximizing the use of their office space.

HOT TIP

Implement hot desking with smart design and policy

Reusing the traditional office layout isn't going to cut it anymore. To successfully implement hot desking, organizations need to consider their office design, tech infrastructure, policies, and overall employee sentiment. That includes planning out their office layout for efficiency, creating clear hot desking policies, and providing essential amenities to support hybrid work.

"**We try to be as green as possible. If only one person comes in and one of us has to be here for that one booking—that is not really efficient environmentally. With efficient hot desking, we can reduce our employee's carbon footprint by decreasing unnecessary travel. We can also manage our workspace's energy consumption by opening the office based on employee demand.**"

Vita Minas
Vendor Development Manager at Autovista Group

28%

Efficient hot desking among hybrid workers can reduce carbon footprint by 28%

PNAS

Invest in hot desking or desk hoteling software

"More people than desks." That's a common problem organizations face as employees are called back to downsized offices. Centralized desk hoteling software enables employees to reserve desks in advance so they know they have a designated workspace when they arrive at the office. This ensures employees have a place to work and can help avoid conflicts or overcrowding.

According to Owl Labs, 33% of hybrid employees report that knowing when the people they want to see will be in the office is a motivator for them to go in. Hot desking software lets employees know who will be in the office ahead of time so they can plan their in-office days more efficiently.

> **HOT TIP**
> ### Drive adoption with strategic planning
> Ensuring your hot desking software is fully embraced and adopted by employees requires careful planning. Organizations should first gather employee needs and secure buy-in from key stakeholders. Providing ample time for communication and training is also key to ensuring adoption.

According to Gartner, these are the top 3 technologies corporate real estate leaders are adopting this year

Workplace Mobile Apps

Sensors for Space Utilization Measurement

Seat Reservation Systems

Sources

Gartner

Chapter Insights

Get past the predictions with tips you can implement right away in your department.

HR INSIGHT

Help employees transition to hot desking by being clear and communicative in the change management process. Getting employee buy-in through transparency, feedback, and training is important, as it helps ensure that the changes do not feel imposed.

IT INSIGHT

Invest in desk booking software that allows employees to reserve seats in advance, check for real-time availability, and choose workspace preferences. Ensure the tech infrastructure is up to date. That means having fast and reliable Wi-Fi and implementing security measures to protect sensitive data stored in the software.

FACILITIES INSIGHT

Optimal hot desking enhances space use and productivity. Ensure success by assessing and planning office layouts for efficiency, collaboration, and individual work. That means having well-planned layouts, sufficient desks, tech setups, and amenities like power sources and ergonomic furniture for effective work.

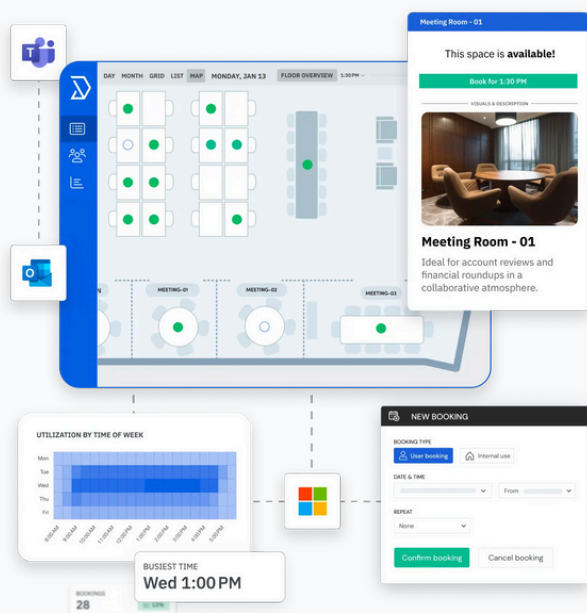# Choosing the right workplace management software platform

In the hybrid work era, **Skedda** stands out as the optimal workplace management software, tailor-made for HR, IT, and Facilities needs. Its seamless integration, robust security, and intuitive booking enhance operational efficiency and employee experience. Skedda transforms underutilized spaces into productive environments, driving ROI and aligning with modern work trends.

As a leader in space management, Skedda enables organizations to navigate the complexities of hybrid work, fostering success in the evolving business landscape.

"The usability of the platform was what really caught our eye first off. With SSO in place, it's a breeze to check out a desk at our different offices. Everything from the start has been easy to set up and the personalized messages about updates have been an extra special touch."

Zebulen Kaupish
Technology Administrator at Trio

Create a great hybrid workplace experience with Skedda

Give your people a simple tool to book their desks and rooms — next to the co-workers they miss seeing. Watch engagement and productivity soar!

Get Started Free

About the Research

The data and insights in this report comes from top voices, researchers, industry pioneers, and business leaders experienced in the world of flexible workplaces. Some of them have guest starred on our [Heroes of Hybrid Work podcast](#). Some of them are our customers who have undergone their hybrid work transformations. All data and research we cite here are taken from public sources.

In this study, we cut through the hybrid work noise and provide you exactly what you need to know to adopt and implement hybrid work successfully. From policy-setting to structuring hybrid work to leveraging tech tools, we break down the essentials so you can feel confident implementing hybrid work at your organization after reading this report.

Whether you're in the midst of fine-tuning your hybrid work strategy or starting from scratch, our goal is to give you practical takeaways that you can use immediately.

The ROI of hybrid work in 2024

Revenue

- **75% of the Fortune 100** operate on a hybrid work schedule ([Buildremote](#)).

- 63% of high-revenue growth companies are more likely to embrace hybrid work, while 70% of companies with **negative or no growth** do not offer hybrid options ([Accenture](#)).

- From 2020 to 2022, **companies with full flexibility led their peers by 16% in revenue growth**. And the trend wasn't confined to the tech world — non-tech companies with flexible policies still boasted a 13% growth advantage ([Flex Index](#)).

Productivity & Engagement

- **97** of Fortune's 100 Best Companies To Work For 2024 provide hybrid work options ([Fortune](#)).

- **86% of younger workers** said they would be willing to come into the office more often for amenity-rich neighborhoods that provided their ideal mix of experiences ([Gensler](#)).

- By planning some days in the office intentionally, **83% of companies** say collaboration on new projects is as good or better than before the pandemic when everyone was on-site full-time ([Statista](#)).

- After establishing "Focus Fridays," [SurveyMonkey](#) saw the **average productivity for sales representatives increase by 66%**.

- [Allstate](#)'s employee engagement score **increased from 80.5% to 83.5%** after the company embraced a flexible work strategy.

Cost Savings

- [Neiman Marcus Group](#) **decreased its office footprint by nearly 80%** and focused on smaller, more intentional spaces for the times when employees come together.

- [Cisco](#) says it **saved roughly $500 million** since implementing hybrid work and cutting half its real estate footprint.

- [Allstate](#) **cut its real estate spending in half** after embracing flexible work.

Talent Acquisition & Retention

- In 2023, **flexible workplaces hired talent twice as fast** as those requiring full-time office attendance ([Flex Index](#)).

- Team-decided hybrid models yield a 13% boost in joy over top-down mandates. Employees who enjoy their work are **49% less likely to say they would consider taking a new job** than employees who don't enjoy their work ([BCG](#)).

- Having at least one work-from-home day **reduced average attrition rates by 33%**. This reduction was larger for non-managers, women, those with longer commutes, and employees with fewer than three years of tenure ([NBER](#)).

- After implementing hybrid work and its 'work-from-anywhere' strategy, [Neiman Marcus](#) saw a 34% percentage point increase in Employee Net Promoter Score, a 50% reduction in attrition, and a 31% improvement in its time to hire.

- 84% of [SurveyMonkey](#) workers said choosing where they work improved their work experience, and **voluntary turnover at the company declined by 62%**.

- [Allstate](#) saw a **23% increase in job applications** since adopting a flexible work strategy, including a **33% increase in diverse applicants**.

Sustainability

- Efficient hot desking among hybrid workers can **reduce carbon footprint by 28%** ([PNAS](#)).