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Course materials

Guide to Hybrid Work

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Marion Karppi

TURKU AMK





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Guide to Hybrid Work



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Introduction

After the period of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic, the hybrid way of working is gradually taking shape as the way of organizing the work of companies and organizations. Hence the ideas of what it enables and the pitfalls it may contain differ and a shared view is only starting to emerge (Eurofound 2023). In general, hybrid work refers to work independent from time and place, done according to each situation and purpose in the premises of the own or another organization, at home or in equivalent private premises, vehicle, or public spaces (Koroma et al. 2014; Nenonen et al. 2019; Vartiainen & Hyrkkänen 2010). Hybrid work requires that the employee carries the responsibility for the results, for developing their work and for learning new practices. In hybrid work, technologies support the work of teams and increase availability, communications, and cooperation. In work communities which utilize hybrid work, the members learn together and develop the fluency of the work.

In a work culture which supports hybrid work, trust and autonomy play a central part. When employees work physically far away from the rest of the organization or team, the manager might consider it necessary to supervise and monitor the work and productivity in an increasingly visible manner. However, research shows that the productivity of those who work elsewhere than in the premises of their own organization is not inferior to that of others (Eurofound 2020a). On the contrary, the opportunity to select the physical location of doing the work seems to have a positive impact on the productivity of work, if the employees are committed, the work practices have been jointly agreed on and appropriate tools and a suitable work environment have been reserved for doing the work (Bergeaud & Cette 2021; Nenonen et al. 2019).

Developing a successful model for hybrid work starts with versatile understanding and knowledge of the work and the context of work. A functioning model for hybrid work requires tailoring it to suit the work and mode of operation of each company. It requires shared conversation and agreement at the level of the organization, teams, and individuals. In reviewing the issue, three perspectives should be considered. First, from the perspective of the requirements and the operational environment of the work, a joint structure should be created for how to best organize the work, which rules guide it, which requirements the work sets for the time and place, where and when different tasks are best completed and also how flexible the work is (Vartiainen & Vanharanta 2023). Second, the questions required by good cooperation on trust, equality and good interaction should be raised.

The third perspective concerns the individual, the actor. It is important to ensure that in hybrid work, the employee can be motivated and inspired by their work, experience competence and autonomy and feel that they belong in the work community (Deci & Ryan 2000; Grzegorzczak et al. 2021).

A guide to designing hybrid work

The purpose of this guide is to support companies and organisations in conceptualizing the entity related to hybrid work and offer tools to tailor organization-specific solutions, operating models and agreements concerning hybrid work. Section A of the guide discusses the requirements for organizing hybrid work by the work and its operational environment and how companies can meet these requirements. Section B of the guide examines the themes centrally related to the hybrid way of working: working time and its use and workspaces (physical and digital) as well as managing multi-locational work. In Section C, the focus is on the individual perspective: which are the opportunities valued by individuals and the pitfalls they might face in hybrid work.

The guide is built in such a manner that on each theme, first the information based on the latest studies is presented. Then we introduce the rules and legislation which guide the operations. Then follows practical guidelines which companies may reflect on and apply in their solutions for the hybrid way of working. In addition, examples on solutions implemented in companies are described.



SECTION A:
Hybrid work –
A way of working

Requirements set by the work and the operational environment



1

The foundation of planning hybrid work is laid upon versatile understanding of the work and its operational environment. From the perspective of planning the work, work management and promoting well-being at work, maintaining the balance between the job demands and resources is vital (Bakker et al. 2003, Bakker & Demerouti 2017; Tummers & Bakker 2021). The job demands are physical, mental, social and organizational factors which require the employee to make an effort and thus spend the employee's resources. As for the job resources, they help with confronting and meeting requirements and, at the same time, cover employees' psychological basic needs, increase experiences on capability and spark the interest to develop in the work. Different solutions related to work and its operational environment have an impact on that both the work and the employees have resources which increase productivity and at the same time, the well-being of the company and the employee.

This chapter examines structuring the requirements of work and its operational environment as the basis for the joint planning of the hybrid way of working. Work is a complex activity system, whose multiple parts should be fluently fitted together to create a functional and effective entity (Engeström 1987; Virkkunen et al. 1999). The purpose of this chapter is to guide organizations to start the designing of the hybrid way of working by discussing the work and the operational environment of the work.

1.1 Rules

The hybrid way of working is possible for everyone. When examining the framework in which work is done and how rules support and limit it, the limits set by the legislation, such as the European working time directive (EWTD) [Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time](#) or cooperation procedures, must be known. In this guide, in addition to legislation, we highlight the issues which should be agreed on from the perspectives of the fluency of the work, collaboration and well-being at work.

1.2 Guidelines

All planning of work starts with understanding the object and aim of the work. It is important that those structuring hybrid work perceive their own duties as a part of a larger entity and in the discussion adopt an attitude which develops “our work” instead of “my work”. Multiple approaches can be utilized to help with this examination. In the following, we present one, which is based on e.g., the way of categorizing work and duties by Bisello and Fernández-Macías (2020) (Table 1. Tool for structuring the requirements of the work). In it, work is examined from the perspectives of the contents of the work, the ways of doing the work and the related tools. The categorization is simplified but helps with the joint discussion at the workplace on how different jobs and duties can adjust to the hybrid way of working.

In examining the **contents of the work**, we contemplate to what extent the three sub-areas i.e., physical tasks, intellectual tasks and social tasks are emphasized in the team’s or individual’s work. This examination supports the joint structuring of the requirements of hybrid work, because with it, the participants in the discussion can not only perceive the nature of the organization’s basic tasks, but also the differences between the tasks of the organization’s different departments or teams. The solutions of hybrid work are different, if it is a question of work involving a lot of social interaction e.g., in customer interface or duties which require the processing of information.

In addition to the contents of the work, the way the work is organized plays a central part, i.e., **how the work is done**. In terms of working methods, the planning of hybrid work at workplaces may entail discussion on e.g., how independent the work is (autonomy), which forms of teamwork does the work contain and how much the job of each employee entails routine tasks or tasks which require creative thinking. This reflection helps with perceiving how self-managed the work can be, how much cooperation is required in the duties and how predictable the encountered tasks may be.

Third, we examine the **tools** which are used in the production and service processes. In terms of tools, we differentiate physical tools such as different machines, digital equipment and tools. Digital devices refer to any level of tools i.e., from computers to advanced robots and the applications used through them. From the perspective of hybrid work, this discussion on tools focuses on which tools are required for fluent cooperation and how the employees can use them e.g., for versatile communications required by hybrid work. **Digital tools are discussed as an entity of their own in chapter 2.**

Table 1.

Tool for structuring the requirements of the work (modified from Bisello & Fernández-Macias 2020).

Examining the contents of the work		
<p>Physical tasks</p> <p>How much does the work entail e.g., physical force (e.g., for lifting and moving), moving and transferring to another location or tasks which require fine motor skills?</p>	<p>Intellectual duties</p> <p>How much does the work entail e.g., problem-solving, logical reasoning, critical and evaluative processing of data, producing new information and tasks which require creativity?</p>	<p>Social tasks, in which the main duty is based on interaction</p> <p>How much does the job entail e.g., customer service, sales work, teaching and guidance duties,</p>
Examining the ways of working		
<p>Autonomy</p> <p>How much can the employee affect their working time, order of the duties, working methods and work pace?</p>	<p>Teamwork</p> <p>How much of the work is done in collaboration with the team members and how much does everyone have to synchronize</p>	<p>Routines</p> <p>How much does the job entail routine tasks, established practices and processes, and how much does</p>
Discussion on tools		
<p>Physical tools, devices, and machines</p> <p>Which of the abovementioned tools are used and required in the work? What is the need to move them from one location to the next?</p>	<p>Digital devices and applications</p> <p>Which digital devices and applications are needed in multi-locational work?</p>	<p>Competence</p> <p>What competence does the work require and what is the employee's/ employees' experience on the adequacy of their competence?</p>

1.3 Tips

Through the link, you can get more detailed information on hybrid work produced by the Eurofound 2023. For example, Chapter 4 of this report deals with the implications of hybrid work at different levels, including the individual, team, organisational and societal levels. Also, the expected hindrances and challenges that should be addressed and the benefits and opportunities of hybrid work that should be taken into account when designing hybrid work systems are presented. [Hybrid work in Europe: Concept and practice](#)

A multifaceted presentation of hybrid work by Lynda Gratton, a professor at London Business School: [Optimizing Productivity in a Time of Hybrid Work](#)

A podcast focusing on different aspects of hybrid work by Harvard Business School, Tsedal Neeley, professor at Harvard Business School, who has been studying remote work and global teams for years: [Building Successful Hybrid Teams \(Back to Work, Better\) | HBR IdeaCast - YouTube](#)

Tools in hybrid work

The way the team collaborates can be considered one of the special characteristics of hybrid work: some of the participants may be physically present and some virtually through digital platforms. The prerequisite for successful work is that regardless of the location, everyone has a working network connection, the required tools, and the competences to use them. Besides the functioning tools and network connections, it is important to agree on the working methods and stick to them. Among others, Grzegorzczuk et al. (2021) state that there are two cornerstones in the functionality of digital tools: finding the suitable tools for the task at hand and establishing clear guidelines on the working methods.

The tasks define what kind of physical and digital tools are required in each job. In addition, it is useful to define what kind of digital platforms and software are required in the organization, in particular **from the perspective of synchronic co-working**. It is also important to ensure the user's competence because competence forms the basis for fluent and controlled work and is highly related to employees' well-being at work. (Bisello & Fernández-Macías 2020; Eurofound 2023, Grzegorzczuk et al. 2021; Eurofound survey 2020.)

2.1 Rules

- Joint practices on the grounds for obtaining both physical and digital tools according to the requirements of the tasks have been agreed on.
- Clear purposes and expectations have been agreed on for each tool.
- Practices have been agreed on using the tools and the working methods, in terms of e.g., hybrid meeting arrangements.
- Consider the tools and applications intended for both synchronic and asynchronous working and interaction.
- It has been agreed on how a functioning network connection is ensured e.g., at the home office or on a business trip.
- Meeting the requirements related to information security is ensured regardless of the physical location of doing the work. The basic instruction is to act according to the employer's guidelines (get to know the [guidelines on information security](#)).

2.2 Guidelines

The manager ensures that:

- the facilities and required tools are appropriate from the perspective of hybrid work: the network connection works properly regardless the location, the necessary physical and digital tools, functioning facilities, and equipment suitable for hybrid meetings (video, audio).
- the employee has the tools required for performing the duties also at their home office and **the requirements concerning information security have been considered** (get to know the guidelines on information security).
- both instructions and support are available for the tools and software.
- the purpose of and the agreed way of working with the tools are clear for everyone.
- to ensure competence, training is available for using the tools and software.
- the onboarding process of new employees is clear and adequate.

The employee ensures that

- the home office has an appropriate and working network connection.
- you have been familiarized with using the tools and software. If necessary, ask for more instructions or training to complement your competence.
- you follow the employer's instruction on information security (get to know the guidelines on information security).
- to ensure the fluency of hybrid work from the perspective of your own well-being, you have all necessary tools and software at your disposal, e.g., to experience a sense of belonging in hybrid meetings (e.g., video link/connection in meetings).
- you act according to joint, agreed practices in hybrid meetings, e.g., keep your camera on, adhere to the principles of turns in taking the floor, listen and be heard, participate in co-working in the selected manner. Get to know the rules of hybrid meetings.

Together

- Have a joint discussion on what kind of tools are required, how the competence to use them is ensured and how the fluency of the working principles is ensured together.

2.3 Tips

- Advice for onboarding in a hybrid world:
[Onboarding in the Age of Hybrid - The Future of Hiring Quick Hit Series - YouTube](#) and [Advice for onboarding in a hybrid world - YouTube](#)
- How To Develop A Hybrid Employee Onboarding Program: 5 Tips And Strategies: [A Hybrid Employee Onboarding Program](#)

2.4 Information security in hybrid work

In information security issues, adhere to the guidelines of your employer. The employer is ultimately responsible for information security issues. It is the employer's responsibility to provide e.g., solutions related to secure devices, information networks and software, and provide adequate guidance on using them. The company should have clear rules and instructions on issues related to information security. If you are an entrepreneur, you can ensure the suitability of information security by purchasing the information security services from an expert.

The issues related to information security take shape according to the requirements which occur in the work. In particular, processing personal data requires being extra careful. More specific instructions see, e.g. [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679](#).

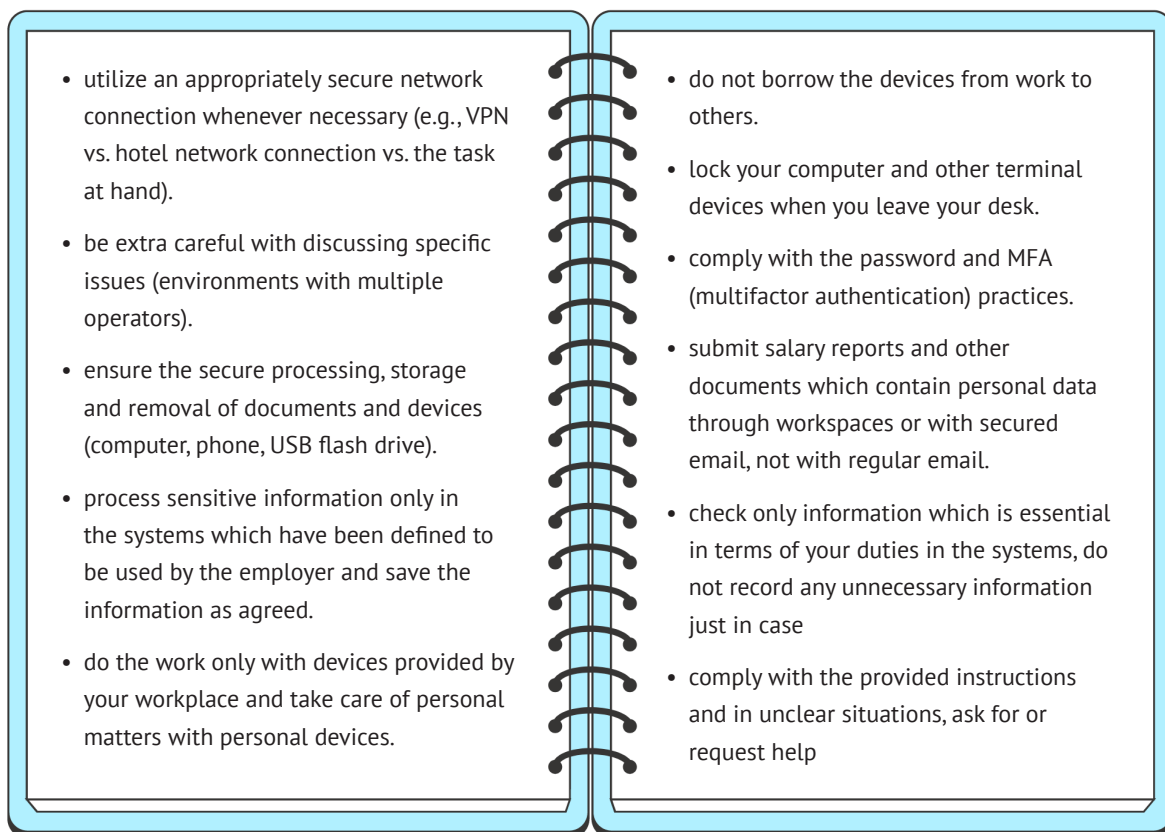


Figure 1.

10 everyday tips on information security

Leadership and trust in hybrid work



3

Fluent hybrid work requires a shared framework within which teams and individuals can work and craft their work. When the work does not take place in one location only and “under the supervision” of the manager, management practices have also been renewed. The most important thing probably is that the goals and result expectations of the work have been clearly agreed on with the employee and their achievement is monitored in an organized manner as has been jointly agreed on.

The requirements of successful hybrid work also include openness and trust. Trust is a multidimensional issue. In organizations, trust includes both social and institutional trust. The first is trust in employees, colleagues, managers and directors. Institutional trust is targeted at the organization and is built on experiences on the organization’s capabilities, functioning communications and working structures and processes. For example, fair and equal practices in human resource management increase trust. (Blomqvist 2023; Searle & Al-Sharif 2021.)

In workplaces, consistent and ethical operations, shared and participatory decision-making processes and clear and open communications promote trust. The manager’s precise and understandable communications and appreciating and caring about the employees are the cornerstones of trust (Blomqvist 2023). Because in many workplaces the work is mainly done in teams, it is important that trust prevails in them. In other words, the team members trust each other and their team leader. Trust in a team promotes commitment to the team’s goals and activities and thus also the goal-orientation of the work. If trust in the team is scarce, the output of each member is directed at their own goals (De Jong et al. 16).

3.1 Rules

To achieve a functioning model for hybrid work, the framework for the work shall be clear and understandable. The agreement on the hybrid way of working should include the following things:

- the length of the hybrid work arrangement (for the time being or fixed-time).
- working hours and amount of work, incl. definitions on the length of the working time and working days.
- to whom, when and how the work is reported.
- the agreements on acquiring, maintaining, and obtaining technical support for the tools needed for the work, reimbursement of the expenses and ensuring information security.
- where the work can be done (e.g., at home, in the client's premises, in the secondary residence).
- which communication channels are used for different issues.
- who is notified of absences and how.

The Non-discrimination Act obligates the employer to evaluate the fulfilment of equality and develop the working conditions and operational methods from the perspective of equality. Read more at the EU-level: [Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation](#). Note the national guidelines in different countries, for example in Finland [Non-discrimination Act 1325/2014 - FINLEX®](#)

The Cooperation Act guides workplaces to conduct an organizational culture, in which the employer and staff work in the spirit of collaboration by respecting each other's duties and rights and at the same time, considering each other's benefits. In addition, the purpose of the Act is that the company's operations and work community are continuously developed and that the result-orientation of the operations and well-being at work are improved. Read more: [Co-operation Act 1333/2021 - FINLEX®](#)

3.2 Guidelines

Manager

- Together with the employee, agree on the goals and result expectations of the work and the methods of monitoring them.
- Together with the employee, define the framework for hybrid work (see the rules). When the staff is familiar with the goals and result expectations for the work and the framework for the working methods, use of time and reporting, it is easier for them to plan their own tasks and working pace.
- Be equal and fair. Ensure that consistent rules for hybrid work are complied with throughout the entire organization.
- Have an open discussion on the organization culture, rules and models of operation. This way you can perceive employees' wishes and see to that the team has a shared understanding of the rules, whether they concern the use of working time (see the section Working time) or meeting practices (see rules for Hybrid meetings).

Employee


- Participate in defining the framework for the work and craft your work within the limits of the joint framework. Planning the use of time and the methods of doing the work supports well-being at work.
- Set small goals. Divide the objectives and result expectations set for your work into smaller intermediate objectives, in which case it is easier for you to plan your use of time and monitor your progress in your duties.
- Monitor the progress of your work and completing the goals. If you feel that achieving a certain goal is difficult e.g., by the agreed deadline, don't hesitate to contact your supervisor. In hybrid work, open discussion is important both in terms of the fluency of the work and well-being.
- Report on the agreed issues as agreed. Tell about your progress, both successes and difficulties.

Together

- Maintain a respectful and equal atmosphere. A good working atmosphere enables the open sharing of thoughts and experiences, also on other issues besides work and supports a confidential relationship in the work community. In particular, take the new employees into account.
- Have an open and continuous discussion on the benefits of the hybrid way of working, successes, difficulties and dilemmas. This helps with developing the practices of hybrid work and builds a joint view of e.g., the fluency of the implementation of hybrid work. At the same time, the ideas and things learned from hybrid work will also be shared.
- Find ways to promote the team spirit. Belonging in a team is a feeling most people miss. If you notice that someone is left in the background, you can e.g., in a meeting ask specifically the opinion of this person or involve them in another way in the discussion.
- Take care of a good work atmosphere. In the work community, everyone is responsible for maintaining a good atmosphere. By sticking to the jointly agreed issues and framework you will come a long way.

3.3 Tips

- You can find a chapter “Building Trust While Hybrid” on this video by Tsedal Neeley, professor at Harvard Business School Harvard Business Review: [Building Successful Hybrid Teams \(Back to Work, Better\) | HBR IdeaCast - YouTube](#)
- [How Do We ACTUALLY Build Trust In Our Teams? - YouTube](#) (Simon Sinek)
- [Want Hybrid Work to Succeed? Trust, Don't Track, Employees](#) (Harvard Business School)
- [Building Trust Remotely](#) - YouTube (Simon Sinek)
- Rules for hybrid meetings as an example on jointly agreed, tangible rules



SECTION B:
**Locations and
working time
in hybrid work**

Locations for doing hybrid work

Hybrid work includes working in different locations, e.g., at the office, in the premises of another company, at home, in a café, at the summer cottage or in different coworking spaces. The more there are locations where the work is done and the further they are located from each other, the more demanding the management of the work becomes (Eurofound 2023). With the help of digital tools and applications, people communicate and collaborate from different physical locations to accomplish shared goals. These different tools and applications create shared platforms for collaborating and they are called virtual workspaces.

In workplaces, it is important to consider and plan the flow of work thus that working in different locations is fluent. It is equally important to avoid unnecessary disruptions in the work caused by changing the place of work. The employee should also, in each location, have access to uncomplicated digital tools and software and the related competence. This requires e.g., a discussion on what kind of tasks should be done in different locations and how to choose a location which suits the quality of the work. For example, which tasks can be completed during a train journey, which tasks should be completed at home and when it is best to carry out the work in the employer's premises (Bisello & Fernández-Macías 2020; Grzegorzczuk et al. 2021; Korunka 2021).

4.1 Physical workspace

In hybrid work, employees work in multiple physical locations, such as at the premises of the own organization or the customer, at home, in different vehicles or almost anywhere according to whatever is needed.

In hybrid work, the degree of complexity of planning the use of employer's offices increases, as there may be periods of time when everyone works physically at the office and require free office tables with similar equipment at the same time, and then there are times when most of the premises are empty. Different booking systems and foreseeing the use of premises required by the work tasks are a prerequisite for the success of the hybrid way of working, which not only touches upon the staff responsible for the premises but also each employee.

In hybrid work, the role of the office as a learning environment is emphasized. At the office, physical presence plays an important part in terms of both socially anchoring oneself and creating a culture of learning. It is known that in particular for new employees, observing the activities around them and the work of their colleagues is important from the perspective of learning and familiarization. (Fayard et al. 2021.)

As it is the employer's responsibility to take care of their employees' safety and health at work [The European Framework Directive on Safety and Health at Work, Directive 89/391 EEC](#) the solutions concerning hybrid work and the ergonomics in the workspaces are an important issue which concerns the employer. Good ergonomics refers to the design and arrangement of objects, spaces and tasks in a way which optimizes comfort, efficiency and safety for individuals (Launis & Lehterä 2011). Ergonomics also refers to developing working methods as suitable for human beings. Also in hybrid work, the functionality of different locations and good ergonomic solutions are examined and promoted. Attention should be paid to the physical ergonomics of the home office in particular when the work is mainly done at home.

In addition to taking care of ergonomics, it is important to jointly discuss and agree on using the locations for hybrid work: for example, which principles determine when the employee stays at home to do the work, when they come physically to the workplace, which are the locations used for the work and which solutions are intended to take care of the safety of one's work and how the problems of multi-location work are reported. From the wider perspective, the issues to be discussed and agreed on may include, e.g., the joint need of the company and employees to consider ecological reasons and for this reason reduce travelling, or the employer's need to cut back costs on premises and a better ability to integrate the use of its premises with the needs of its employees. (Bisello & Fernández-Macías 2020; Grzegorzczuk et al. 2021).

4.1.1 Rules and regulations concerning physical workspaces

Both EU directives, such as the Health and Safety at Work Directives 89/391 (Framework), 89/654 (Workplaces), 89/655 (Work Equipment), 89/656 (Personal Protective Equipment), and 90/270 (Display Screen Equipment), and the legislations at the national level (e.g., in Finland The Occupational Safety and Health Act 23.8.2002/738) cover the requirements concerning physical workspaces from the perspective of occupational safety and secure the occupational health and safety of the users of the premises. Both employers and employees should go through its contents when planning the hybrid way of working and multi-location work.

According to regulations,

- fluent hybrid work requires trust and agreement on e.g., when remote work is possible, the issues related to working time and monitoring the results of the work, practices concerning absences due to sickness, information security issues and possible division of the costs of remote work.
- the structures of the workspace and the equipment and tools to be used must be selected, sized and placed by considering the nature of the work and the employee's requirements in an ergonomically appropriate manner. Read more about the topic in [the online service of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland](#) and get to know the requirements set forth in the sections of the [Occupational Safety and Health Act](#).

Rules and practices agreed on in the organisation

- In hybrid work, for example the following issues concerning the physical location and time should be agreed on:
 - Minimum and maximum periods of time which people can work remotely or at the office, including specific definitions on where the remote workplace can be geographically located (nationally and internationally) (Gregorczyk et al. 2021, 11).
 - A joint agreement on how much the employees should be physically at the office (e.g., 40 percent of the working time) and whether this applies on a weekly basis or on average within a longer period.
 - Jointly agree on where else the work can be physically done in addition to the premises of the workplace, such as at home, other locations, abroad.
- For fluent and undisturbed use of the own premises of the workplace, clear rules should be made for booking premises or on the conduct in the quiet premises. .
- Organization policy on the procurement and use of tools for hybrid work. This is discussed in more detail in the chapter Tools in hybrid work.

Discuss:

Who decides how much employees work remotely and how much at the office? The team together? The employee? The manager?

According to the survey of NCC (2022), **42%** thought that the team should decide together and **25%** thought that the employee should decide. Only **14%** thought that the manager should make the decision and **7%** thought that the executive management should decide.

4.1.2 Guidelines

Manager

- Make sure that the practices concerning the selection of the location of doing the work are agreed on together, justified and clear to the employee.
- Promote the practices related to booking and using the premises at your workplace.
- Ensure that the requirements for the premises and tools set forth by the law (e.g. [Occupational Safety and Health Act 23.8.2002/738](#)) are met. Ensure that the safety and well-being factors are fulfilled also in the remote workspace.
- Promote the employees' competence in taking care of using the premises in a manner which promotes good ergonomics and well-being.
- For example in Finland, check out [Occupational Safety And Health Act](#): Section 5, Application of the Act to work done in the employee's or other person's home; Section 8, Employers' general duty to exercise care; Section 10, Analysis and assessment of hazards at work; Section 24, Workstation ergonomics, work postures and work motions and Section 26, Work with display screen equipment.

Employee

- Plan your work week and consider in which locations you can best manage your work and the different tasks. Which tasks can be best completed from home, which e.g., in customers' premises, which at the office and which tasks can be completed e.g., on the train or in a café?
- Plan your work week route so that it involves as few interruptions and disruptions to the work as possible.

- In the planning, consider the rules and framework agreed on in your organization on multi-location work.
- Support your well-being by dividing your work between different locations according to your needs, remember to take breaks and work in varying positions during the working day. Sometimes moving to another location can offer a good break, especially if you can commute using physical activity, meanwhile having a detaching break.
- Recognize what motivates you and think how and where you can best accomplish things.
- Discuss the development needs you have noticed in terms of the home office and other workspaces with your manager.

Together

- Discuss and agree on joint practices in selecting and using the premises. In addition, have regular discussions on how the agreed practices work and if necessary, amend them.
- In flexible work, also agree on the location of doing the work thus that the framework is clear to everyone.

4.1.3 Tips

- What is Activity Based Working. [Activity Based Working - YouTube](#)
- The pandemic and hybrid working have changed the very idea of the office. This is not only changing the design and purpose of offices, but the look of cities too: [How are offices changing? - YouTube](#)
- Basics of activity-based offices: [Understanding an activity based office Design - YouTube](#)
- Encounters, sharing and diversity in activity-based workplaces. The opportunities of coworking spaces in selecting an appropriate room for working based on the objectives of the task.

4.2 Virtual workspaces

A virtual workspace refers to a workspace created by digital communication and collaboration tools (Hyrkkänen & Vartiainen 2019; Vartiainen & Hyrkkänen 2010). In hybrid work, communicating and collaborating with the own team or with e.g., customers can take place nearly from any location.

In virtual collaboration, the work can be synchronous or asynchronous. When you are working asynchronously, you are working on your own without the expectation of immediately responding to others. For example, you send a pitch to your manager via Slack for final approval before presenting it to a larger audience. Your manager responds with the approval the following morning. In synchronous collaboration, you are present at the same time and work together e.g., in a space created through Teams or Zoom. Synchronous communication is immediate, and it features the kind of back-and-forth exchange that can only happen in the moment.

In a virtual workspace, it is not only about the quality of the transmitted audio, video or documents. It is essential to understand and consciously master the social structure of the virtual space (Hyrkkänen & Vartiainen 2019). This includes three different aspects:

1. The need for privacy
2. The need of belonging
3. Restricting constant availability

In hybrid work, you must carefully consider in which situations the digitally transmitted collaboration produces even better results compared to other forms of collaboration. The prerequisites for effective digital collaboration need to be reflected in order to achieve fluent and productive outcomes.

4.2.1 Laws and rules concerning virtual workspaces

- Data protection and information security in general.
- When working in digital environments, you should familiarize yourself with the company rules which guide the communications about the company image and brand, confidentiality practices, using different channels and workspaces in other locations besides the main place of work etc.
- The rules on virtual spaces and digital communications which promote the sense of belonging. It is important to agree on them jointly.

- The rules concerning availability limit the work in a necessary way. Being constantly available puts a strain on employees. In terms of recovery, it is important to be able to detach oneself from the work.

4.2.2 Guidelines

Manager

- Ensure that the employees are familiar with the rules concerning the digital ways of working and obtain limits and protection for their work and working methods from them. Ensure that the team's internal practices concerning the virtual way of working have been agreed on with the employees and they are complied with.
- Ensure that there is training available for using the tools and software thus that fluent collaboration in digital environments is ensured.
- Ensure that the information security guidelines are up to date.

Employee

- Familiarize yourself with rules which guide working in digital spaces e.g., on the following issues:
 - how the company characteristics are communicated in digital channels, how the backgrounds or presentation slides etc. included in the company brand are used
 - which are the confidentiality practices in digital spaces.
 - rules which concern e.g., meeting conduct in the company's internal or external meetings.
- Decide which ones you participate in and be present in them. Digital channels of communication enable following multiple different messages and discussions simultaneously. However, the brain is not able to process the large overflow of

information accumulating from different channels and focusing is difficult. Hence it is important to prioritize one's duties, focus on each task at hand and reject all extra factors which disturb the concentration.

- Ensure that you can recover from your work enough and refresh your brain by detaching yourself enough from the work-related digital communications every day.

Together

- In teams, discuss the good practices and development needs which have emerged from working in digital spaces.
- Develop rules for digital communication and collaboration together to promote participation and the feeling of being heard.
- In digital spaces, moving from a space to another is only a click away. Develop practices (transition rituals) which leave the brain time to recover and time to adapt when moving from a task and space to another.
- Agree on the framework for being available through digital tools together.

4.2.3 Tips

- Control unnecessary brain strain! This manual offers concrete solutions for better flowing and more efficient work: [Better flowing cognitive work through cognitive ergonomics](#)
- The elements for a good hybrid meeting [How to Have a Hybrid Meeting That Works for Everyone](#)
- What kind of transition rituals can we utilize during the day?
- Check out an example of the rules for a hybrid meeting on the next page.

Rules for hybrid meeting

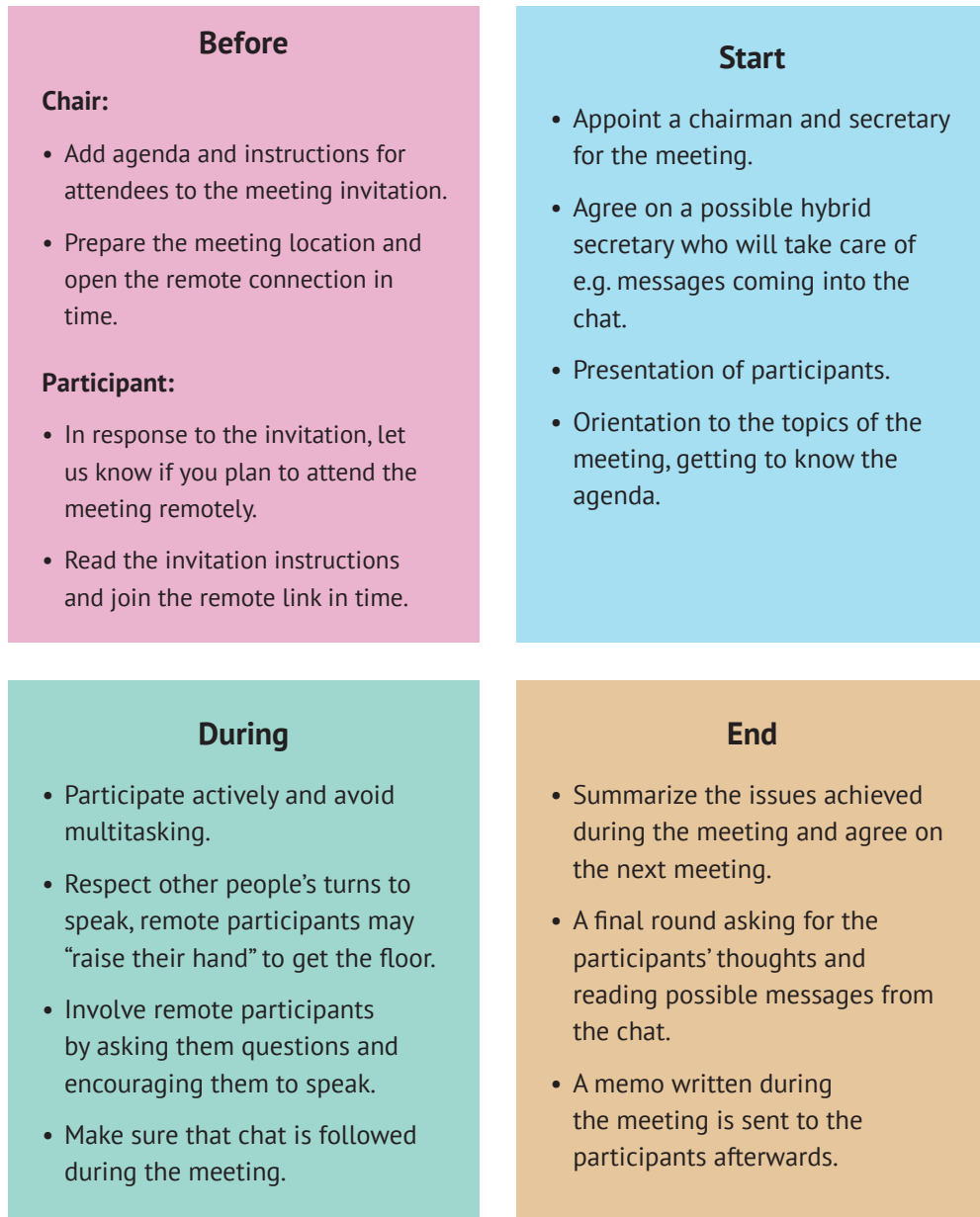


Figure 2. An example of the rules for a hybrid meeting.

Time in hybrid work

Time can be examined from multiple perspectives in hybrid work. How do laws and statutes direct the formation of the working time and the opportunities for its flexibility in the everyday life? What kind of shared time do the work and everyday life contain – is there time for reflection alongside the duties, which issues work and which need to be changed?

We can also examine what the balance between work and spare time appears like from the perspective of your own well-being. Clear jointly agreed practices and framework clarify the planning of the work and support the well-being of everyone.

5.1 Working time

There can be many kinds of working time. Therefore, it is important also in hybrid work to examine the use of time at least from three starting points: the time required to complete the tasks, the social time included in collaboration and the reflective time for contemplating how we succeeded in the work and how we want to develop doing the work. In a study on the new forms of work, it was found that employees experienced a shortage of reflective time, in particular, and considered it important that this kind of time would be arranged as a part of their work (Vanharanta et al. 2019).

In hybrid work, a special challenge in managing the working time is that it is possible to attend an event both virtually and physically. Moving to a physical meeting room and from one room to another takes time, whereas virtually transferring from a room to another takes only a couple of clicks. In planning the work, for example the schedule of the work week, these requirements caused by the different ways of working must be considered and the related rules must be agreed on.

5.1.1 Rules

In terms of hybrid work, which is not bound to time, it is important to know the contents of the European working time directive (EWTD) [EUR-Lex - 32003L0088 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#), [Working hours in EU: What are the minimum standards? - Your Europe \(europa.eu\)](#) and the national legislations. For example, in Finland, the new [Working Time Act \(872/2019\)](#), provides better tools for organisations to make agreements at company level, for instance regarding flexible working hours or the use of working time banks. In other words, the Finnish legislative framework had been updated to better meet the demands of ICT-based work.

As another example: In Spain, a new regulation on remote work ([Royal Decree-Law 28/2020](#)) grants remote workers the same rights as those who carry out their activities on the company's premises. In relation to working time, the law gives workers the right to adopt a flexible schedule in accordance with the terms established in a remote working agreement and clauses in collective bargaining agreements, respecting not only general regulations on work and rest time but also agreed hours of availability. (Eurofound, 2021.)

5.1.2 Guidelines

Manager

- In your organization, create an agreement on hybrid work, in which issues related to working time are clearly agreed on. If flexitime is applied in hybrid work, familiarize yourselves with the rules which guide agreeing on it.
- Agree on the times and situations which require physical presence at the primary place of work thus that it is as clear as possible for the employees to consider them when they plan the use of time during their work week.
- Discuss the use of working time with your team, working group and subordinates from the abovementioned three perspectives:
 - The time spent on tasks and the placement of the time from the perspectives of e.g., variation in the energy levels and the different activity rhythms of the team members. Contemplate how these differences could be considered in your work and how the time spent on the tasks could be structured thus that the employees' different circadian rhythms yield the best entity in terms of the work's progress.
 - In terms of social time, agree on the issues and times which require the synchronous presence of everyone in the same location. Discuss how the social time is conducted in digital communications: for example, how meetings are started and ended or how periods of working during digital meetings are conducted.
 - How is reflective time conducted in your organization: when can you take a breather, look back and collect experiences on what has been learnt and based on it, improve the joint performance. Which needs do the employees have in terms of this?

Employee

- Contemplate on the progress of your work week and structure in advance when you complete independent tasks which require focus, when does your work require social interaction and synchronous co-working, and when you summarize the issues learnt during the day and week.
- Discuss with your colleagues and manager how and on which grounds you pace your work, and how this rhythm works in relation to the timings of the other team members.
- Perceive how your energy fluctuates – when are you at your best and when can you complete only the most routine tasks. Consider the energy fluctuations in pacing the work and breaks.

Together

- Contemplate on the progress of your work week and structure in advance when you complete independent tasks which require focus, when does your work require social interaction and synchronous co-working, and when you summarize the issues learnt during the day and week.
- Discuss with your colleagues and manager how and on which grounds you pace your work, and how this rhythm works in relation to the timings of the other team members.
- Perceive how your energy fluctuates – when are you at your best and when can you complete only the most routine tasks. Consider the energy fluctuations in pacing the work and breaks.

5.1.3 Tips

- These tips can be used both in professional and personal life: [How I Manage My Time - 10 Time Management Tips - YouTube](#)
- Learn how to manage your tasks effectively for school, work, social and life - so you know how to be productive with your time: [How to Prioritize Tasks Effectively: GET THINGS DONE - YouTube](#)

5.2 Social time and time for reflection in the work

Working time reserved for reflection refers to a time when you can stop to evaluate your own and your team's work. The time for reflection time provides room to have a dialogue with both the manager and the team on the ways of working, notice successes and evaluate what could be done differently and developed in the work. Creating time for reflection in the everyday life of the team provides the opportunity to evaluate experiences and develop their own and the community's activities (Vanharanta et al. 2019). The time spent on reflection is beneficial for the productivity and quality of the work, the staff's learning and creating a positive atmosphere at work.

Social working time refers to a time when the staff not only works together but also spends time together on a less informal basis, without any ordered, work-related goals or duties. Joint coffee breaks, post-meeting discussions or catching up in the morning are social time. These moments boost the good atmosphere and team spirit within the group and support employees to know each other better. It is important to be able to share thoughts, experiences on success and even work-related concerns at work without any pressure. On social time, we create confidential collaboration relationships within the organization and understanding about each other's ways of thinking and values. (Valtiolla.fi 2023; Vanharanta et al. 2019)

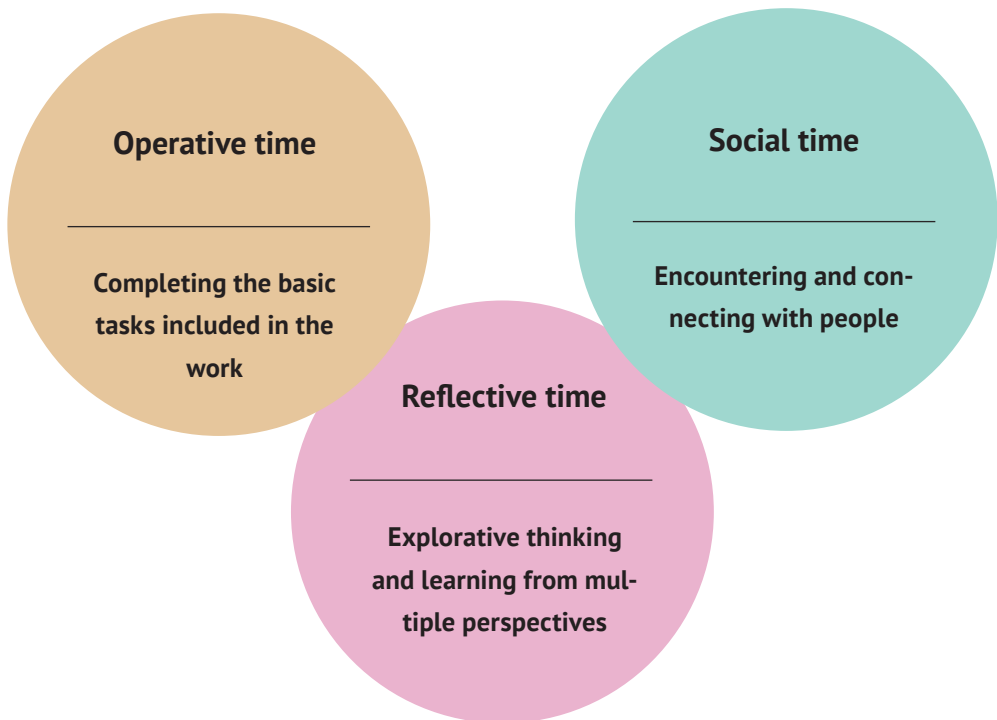


Figure 3.
Different forms of working time (adapted from Roininen 2019).

5.2.1 Guidelines

Manager

- In the schedule, plan time also for evaluation of the work and learning from it (reflection) and for more informal discussion on work and time spent together.
- Encourage the staff to reserve time for reflection on their work.
- With your own example, show that it is important to evaluate the success of the work together and find means to make the work even more flexible.
- Show that you also appreciate it when the staff members catch up with each other and share the successes and problems in their work informally with each other.

Employee

- Reserve time to evaluate and develop the outputs and results of your work and your ways of working. You can also evaluate together with your colleagues how you are succeeding and how your activities should be developed further.

- Be open to the opinions of others and general discussion. It is important that everyone feels that their thoughts, experiences and development suggestions are heard, appreciated and reacted to. This way your work develops and becomes more flexible and there will be less time-consuming hassle.
- Your opinion matters. Boldly present your own viewpoints and thoughts.

Together

- Study together how much of your working time is spent on the required duties, when there is time for reflection and more informal discussion on work. Plan and decide together how time for reflection and social time find their way into everyday life.
- Contemplate whether your organization needs rules to instil time for reflection and social time as a part of the everyday life. Each organization has its own targets and its staff has its own needs. Rework the existing practices or hold on to good modes of operation.
- Respect the equality of the organization and the staff. There are as many viewpoints and thoughts as the discussion has participants. When listening to someone else, you can expand your viewpoint and understanding of the issue.

5.2.2 Tips

- This video will provide you with a brief introduction to reflective practice: [Introduction to Reflective Practice - YouTube](#)
- Do you or does your team have time for reflection? [Reflective Practice - YouTube](#)
- Strong relationships can support more inclusive work environment, reads thoughts by Sarah Lechner: [Reflective and Responsive: How Team Members Can Contribute to a Hybrid Work Environment that is Healthy, Effective, and Inclusive – Coraggio Group](#)

5.3 Balance between work and other parts of life and recovery

At best, hybrid work increases the opportunities of employees in different situations in life to have an impact on the balance between work and other parts of life in a way which promotes coping with work and well-being (Työ2030). The opportunity to flexibly pace one's working time and select the location of work increases job satisfaction, engagement and working efficiency (ttl.fi 2021). With its flexibility, the hybrid way of working can promote the existing means to reconcile the requirements of work, spare time and the family. Many people also appreciate that they can decrease commuting to the workplace and hence carbon dioxide emissions, and utilize the time spent on commuting on recovery and meaningful activities. Hybrid work has several benefits, but from the perspective of well-being, we should also be able to identify the pitfalls of everyday life. For example, we know that the blurred lines between work and spare time and always being available are challenges which should be tackled with good planning. (Eurofound 2020; Grzegorzczuk et al. 2021; Korunka 2021.)

The hybrid way of working requires the abilities of self-direction and self-management. This also includes planning the use of time thus that the work stays within the framework and there is enough time for recovery and detaching oneself from the work. (Eklund et al. 2021.)

Detaching oneself from the work revitalizes the well-being of the brain. It is important also during the working day. In this case, the break does not have to be long. It can be just idle hanging around or anything which eases relaxation and detachment, such as social interaction, listening to music or moving a little. However, if you want to optimize the benefits of taking a break, moving is beneficial. It is known that physical activity activates all areas of the brain, so exercise is particularly valuable break food for the brain (Kokkonen 2019). It is also known that physical activity promotes creative thinking, coming up with new ideas and the impact is at its best right after the physical activity or already during it (Hansen 2020).

It is also important to pay attention to how you switch from a task to another or from work to spare time. When physically at the workplace, moving from a task to another may require e.g., walking from a meeting room to another and when moving to spare time, moving between the workplace and home. These provide the opportunity to draw breath, reset the brain and move from a task to another. When doing remote work at home, the transfers may be quick and only last as long as it takes to click on something. It is important to add breaks to these days as well and find ways to make the transfers such that the brain can keep up and the body is also revitalized. Different transition rituals after the working day, when changing to the spare time, are also important during remote working days (Boijer-Spoof & Heikinheimo 2021).

5.3.1 Rules

- Agree on a tangible basis when people should be available and when not. Talk about the practices of detaching from work and agree on the rules for communication on work-related issues during spare time, such as using instant messaging, email, and phones.

5.3.2 Guidelines

Manager

- Ensure that shared rules concerning availability and the right to detach from the work have been agreed on.
- Ensure that you have agreed on the practices thus that there is time reserved for transfers also between virtual meetings, which could mean e.g., 45-minute meetings instead of ones that last 60 minutes, or for example agreed breaks of at least 5 minutes between events.

Employee

- Plan the pacing of the working day and the physical location of doing the work according to the shared rules.
- Take breaks regardless of the location you are physically doing the work in. Vary your working positions and try to be active in terms of short recovery exercises when there would not otherwise be natural transfers or movement.
- Try to identify the stress factors in your work. Contemplate which of these are ones you can have an impact on and for which you require support from either the manager or the team.
- Ask for training if you feel like you need more competence to support your work and well-being.

Together

- Agree together how the boundaries between working time and spare time are respected.
- Discuss the means of recovery and transition rituals each of you uses and share good practices with each other.

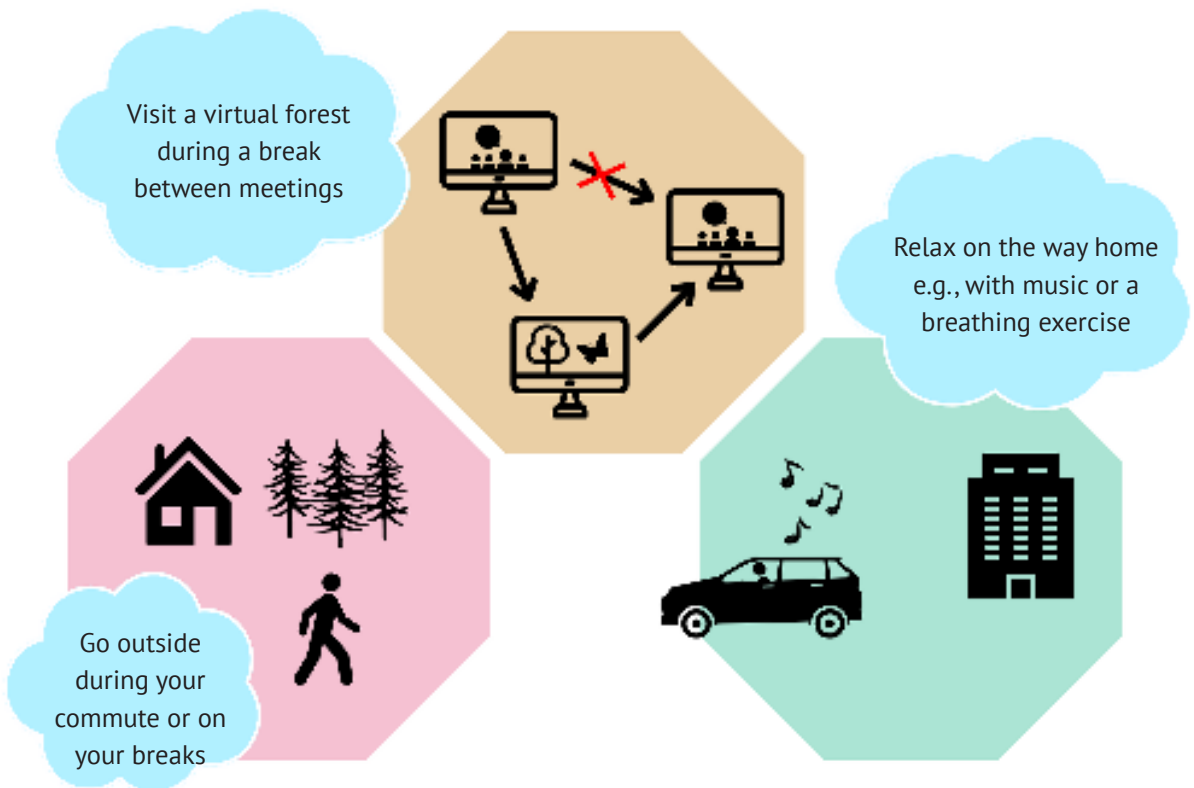


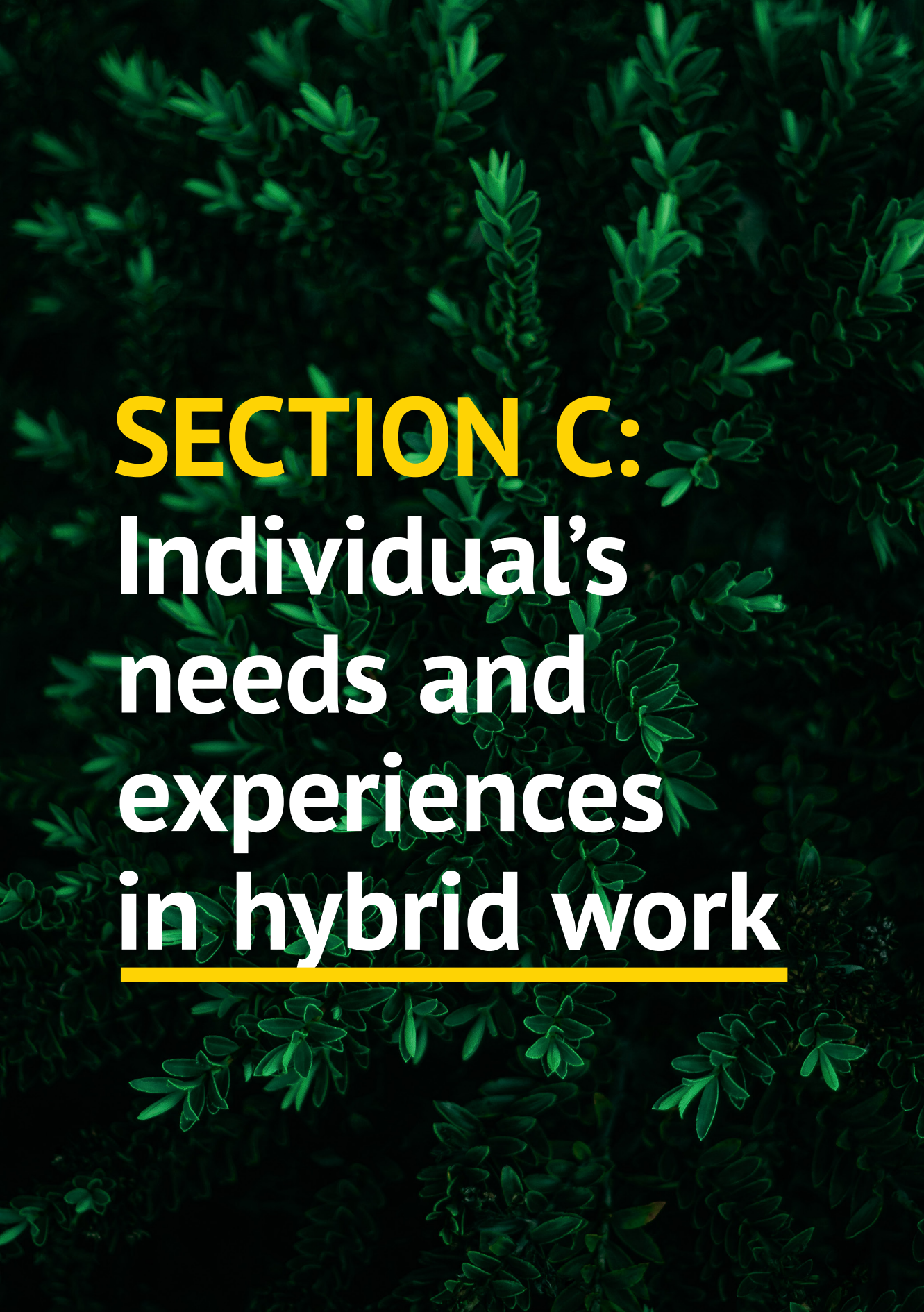
Figure 4.
Transition rituals during the day

5.3.3 Tips

Transition rituals during the day (Figure 4)

- Utilize walking meetings to support your own well-being and recovery: [Why Walking Meetings Should Be Held More Often | Walking For Wellness, EP-2 | Corporate Wellness - YouTube](#)
- Do you have your own workday shutdown ritual? In this video, you will learn concrete ways that you can end your workday and reset for the start of the next day: [Level-Up Your Workday Shutdown Ritual \(Focus on This 151\) - YouTube](#)
- A time for a break or a transition? Enjoy a virtual hike: [4K Virtual Hike through Canadian Forest \(with Nature Sounds\) - Incredible Nature of British Columbia - YouTube](#)

- Check out the tips for a good night's sleep: [5 Simple Tips For Getting a Good Night's Sleep - YouTube](#)
- Some facts about sleep and cognition: [The Importance of Sleep for Studying - YouTube](#)
- When it comes to what eat, your choices have a direct and long-lasting effect on your brain. So which foods cause you to feel so tired after lunch? Or which foods manipulate how we feel and behave? Mia Nacamulli takes you into the brain to find out. [How the food you eat affects your brain - Mia Nacamulli - YouTube](#)

The background of the entire page is a dense, close-up photograph of green foliage, likely a type of shrub or ground cover, with many small, pointed leaves. The lighting is somewhat dim, giving it a dark green, almost blackish-green appearance in some areas, which makes the white and yellow text stand out prominently.

SECTION C:
Individual's
needs and
experiences
in hybrid work

Autonomy, competence, and relatedness



6

The employee's internal motivation for the work or any other thing emerges and remains when three psychological basic needs are met. According to the self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci 2000), they are: 1. autonomy, 2. competence and 3. relatedness.

The experience on autonomy emerges from that the employee can affect the issues and decisions which concern their work. In hybrid work, the experience of autonomy can be a double-edged sword: the increasing flexibilization of work (e.g. flexibility in the working time and place) gives freedom for the employee to work also in their spare time. If the employee has difficulties to control their working time, they are at a risk of excessive strain and becoming exhausted from the work.

The feeling of competence emerges from being able and competent to do the work and being able to meet the requirements set in the work. In terms of this, competence is a central factor in many models of well-being at work. In hybrid work, competence is particularly required for how the employee masters working in different operating environments and how they can plan e.g. their work week thus that the work in different places is not full of unnecessary and disturbing interruptions.

The third factor, **relatedness**, or a sense of belonging is important in work communities and their various teams. In hybrid work, work communities can be constructed in different ways and the team in which it is important to belong can be elsewhere than within the walls of the own organization. Therefore, it is important to recognize and discuss which are the work communities that those who do hybrid work belong to. In hybrid work, it is important to develop skills which promote relatedness also when communications take place in digital environments.

In this section of the guide, we discuss how these three elements could be promoted in the daily life of companies.

6.1 Autonomy in hybrid work

The experience on autonomy emerges from that the employee can affect the issues and decisions which concern their work. Often in hybrid work, the employee's experience on autonomy in their work increases. In addition to the independent planning of the tasks and the pace of work, it can be related to e.g., an experience of increasingly mastered balance between work and the other parts of life.

Autonomy inspires and commits employees to the work, and there also lies its risk. The employee can become so immersed in the work that they do it non-stop. When hybrid work environments allow working always and everywhere, detaching oneself from the work can be demanding. It is important that the employee, the managers and teams recognize the benefits and risks of autonomy and ensure that everyone has the skills to lead themselves, no matter how enthusiastic they are, to detach from the work, rest and do something else entirely. (Wang et al. 2021.)

Management styles and practices also require renewals when the employees have extensive autonomy and they work a lot elsewhere than under the supervision of the manager. What are the modern ways of managing such work and, in particular, how can it be ensured that personal communications with the employees is adequate thus that

The survey conducted by NCC (2022) for knowledge workers (n = 586) indicated that culture, values, and leadership play a central part when selecting a new workplace. 47 percent of the respondents say that leadership and the freedom to work anywhere affect the attractiveness of the workplace. 43 percent feels that the feeling of relevance given by the work is an important selection criterion.

hybrid workers don't feel that they are the "masters of their own destiny" or "have been thrown out there in the field"? The mutual interaction between the team members also requires management and leadership. Both employees and managers must be skilled when balancing between freedom, a fluent everyday life and well-being. (Wang et al. 2021; Pass & Ridgway 2022.)

6.2 Competence in hybrid work

Competence in hybrid work requires that the employee can manage not only their work but also the operational environment of their work. The employees must have competence in planning and doing their work in relation to different workspaces and the prerequisites for using them, the transfers required between the premises, the use of working time, the variety of actors encountered in different locations and the challenges of transmitted interaction (Hyrkkänen & Vartiainen 2019).

This guide focuses on the abovementioned questions and offers practical tools for leaders and managers to promote employees' well-being, e.g., their feeling of competence. The purpose of this chapter is to remind once more that the feeling of competence is a basic need of each hybrid worker. Its fulfilment requires, in addition to the sense of control over one's work, an experience of controlling the diverse operating environments in which one does their work. At best, this evolves resources which strengthen the competences of the employee. In workplaces, it is important to identify the requirements and the opportunities of the hybrid operational environment and ensure the employee's adequate competence.

6.3 Experience of teamwork in hybrid work

A sense of belonging in hybrid work may be challenging. The feeling of relatedness refers to experiencing inclusion, being supported and accepted by the other members of the group and reciprocally giving support and demonstrating closeness (Filstad et al. 2019). Relatedness is an innate need which means that it's important to us in itself, as such. There are different teams and someone may belong to several different teams. The differences between schedules and not being present at the same time can keep the team members apart and reduce the feeling of belonging in the work community. However, the experience on relatedness is our basic need and thus it is important in hybrid work to discuss and seek new ways of promoting relatedness.

6.4 Guidelines

Manager

- Discuss with each employee
 - the autonomy in the work and its pitfalls (such as controlling work and spare time and ensuring adequate recovery
 - their experiences and development needs in controlling not only their work, but also working in a hybrid operational environment
 - their experiences and thoughts about the work community, its team spirit and the factors which promote and undermine the feeling of belonging
- Promote the feeling of relatedness e.g., by ensuring that in hybrid meetings, the equal participation of each employee has been enabled for both remote participants and those who are physically in the room, both in terms of tools and the agreed ways of working.
- Ensure that there is a time and place for sharing competence.
- Ensure that besides autonomy, employees can limit their work, detach from their duties, and ensure adequate recovery from the work.

Employee

- Ensure that you are familiar with the shared rules and commit to them. They give you the freedom to craft your own job and make everyday choices which support your well-being. Ask if you are unsure whether your choice is possible.
- Ensure that you get onboarding and training not only to increasing the competence related to the contents of the work, but also to control the hybrid way of working and the operational environment of the work.
- For your part, ensure that in addition to the joint and operative time, you are also otherwise connected to your community i.e., participate, familiarize and promote the sense of belonging with your own input. Participate, thank, and encourage the members of your work community in different ways.

Together

- Keep up an open and transparent dialogue. This way an atmosphere in which everyone feels good and appreciated as they are is formed in the workplace.
- Agree on the ways of working to support a sense of belonging.
- Remember to encourage, thank, and give positive feedback to individuals and teams.

6.5 Tips

- Plan the tasks for the work week and the location of doing the work beforehand according to your needs:
 - a workspace for tasks which require concentration and silence
 - tasks which require brainstorming and discussion on cooperation at the office etc.
- Can you detach yourself from the work? Is there a clear beginning and end to your working day? What kind of transition rituals could work in your everyday life?
- In the workplace, we are all striving for a sense of belonging. We want to be sure our voices are heard and that we can turn our ideas into action. [The Future of Work - A Place of Belonging | Krys Burnette | TEDxNuremberg - YouTube](#)
- How has the shift to hybrid work affected workplace culture? How are hybrid managers experiencing the shift, and how can leaders support them?: [The Impact of Hybrid Work on Organizational Connection & Culture - Gallup - YouTube](#)
- After extensive research, the Workplace Wellbeing Research Team from the University of East Anglia in the UK and RAND Europe have developed an online toolkit to help employers cultivate and sustain good practice in workplace health and wellbeing. The toolkit is completely free to use and includes a business case calculator. This video introduces the toolkit and explains how workplace wellbeing programs have significant benefits for employees and employers alike. [How to sustain good practice in Workplace Wellbeing? - YouTube](#)

Closing words



7

Hybrid work is here to stay and touches upon an increasing number of people in the world of work. Nowadays it is natural to select the location of doing the work according to the requirements of the duties of the day. Hybrid work includes consideration: why would I go to the office today if I accumulate unnecessary miles and unnecessary noise in my working day or, why would I stay home, if being social gives me energy and I need to meet my team members face to face? The freedom to choose yields well-being. When someone wants to keep their work and home separate, for someone else the home or terrace and listening to birds singing at the summer cottage enable the dreams they have in terms of work.

All this sounds quite simple. And it is – as long as the framework is in order. It has been said that in today's work, "the best culture wins". Building a good work culture is a duty of all of us. It also requires a new kind of leadership. Many issues need to be discussed and agreed: what is the best practice for our work and community.

We'd like to express our gratitude to all the companies who participated in the evolution of the guide – thanks to your feedback and tips we were able to ensure that it is useful to discuss these issues at workplaces and to enrich the contents of this guide. We learned enormously about hybrid work and we hope that the guide will give you tips and things to consider for the everyday life!

In Turku, in June 2023

Anu, Ursula and Marion

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