



FUTURE-PROOF YOUR WORKFORCE

ATTRACTING, HIRING AND RETAINING TALENT IN THE
NEW WORK-FROM-ANYWHERE REALITY

BROUGHT TO YOU BY POLY.

“The hybrid workplace is here to stay.”

To hear some people talk, the “new” hybrid workplace is purely driven by the pandemic. While it did force millions of people to work-from-home, almost overnight, telecommuting isn’t a new concept. Large organizations like AT&T and Merrill Lynch were champions of remote working way back in the 1990s.

Since the 90's, the number of companies that allowed virtual work grew at a steady clip. Small startups to the largest enterprises offered telecommuting to cut overhead costs, expand their talent pool, and enable 24/7 operations.

What’s driving much of the “new hybrid workforce” chatter is that the pandemic did force organizations that were *staunchly opposed* to telecommuting or those that only supported it occasionally for some employees to accept it as the new reality. It was a bit of an awakening for those organizations, many of which surprisingly realized they could not only survive but thrive with a virtual workforce.

Those organizations are now faced with a big question: In a post-pandemic world, do we dare abandon virtual work? The data suggests “No.”

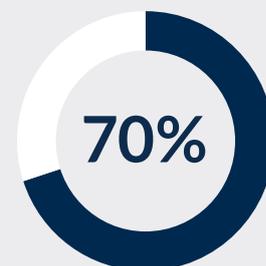
THE TALENT NOW COVETS WORK-FROM-ANYWHERE

Many experts have gone on record saying that the pandemic has changed the workplace forever. Employees got a taste of work-from-anywhere, and they aren’t ready to give it up. Consider the data:

And if the recent Human Workplace Index, a monthly survey released by HR tech company Workhuman, is an indicator, expect the exodus of workers to grow. Thirty-two percent of full-time U.S. workers said they expect to leave their current job, and 48 percent of those respondents are planning to do so as soon as possible.³ Against the backdrop of a massive talent shortage, adopting a permanent work-from-anywhere model has become an imperative to attract and retain the type of talent that drives productivity, sales, and results.



75 percent of hybrid/remote knowledge workers say their expectations for working flexibly have increased.¹



70 percent of employees indicate they will not take a job that doesn’t allow hybrid working.²



55 percent of employees agree that the ability to work flexibly will impact if they will stay at their organizations.¹

While many experts are sounding alarm bells, we see this shift as a tremendous opportunity for organizations. A hybrid workplace has become one of the most powerful, recruiting, hiring and retention tools an organization has at its disposal. It is a win-win where organizations can tap a much larger talent pool and retain talented and skilled workers, while employees gain the flexibility and balance they crave.

However, to ensure employees can thrive in this new norm, business and IT leaders will need to provide the right technology and processes. If employers do provide those tools, hybrid or remote workers' performance will remain as high as on-site workers.

BRIDGING THE DISTANCE BETWEEN ON-SITE AND REMOTE EMPLOYEES

One of the more complicated challenges organizations face in the new hybrid workplace is the disconnect that can often occur between virtual and on-site staff. Notably, remote workers fear that they will miss out on opportunities.

On the other hand, on-site staff often see their remote employees as having it easier than they do because they avoid the commute, office politics, and workplace distractions. In many cases, on-site workers expect more out of remote employees than they do of themselves or their fellow on-site coworkers.



53 percent of remote workers are worried about being left out of in-person meetings and other activities.⁴



More than a third of remote employees fear being overlooked for promotions and pay raises.⁴



50 percent believe working from home negatively impacts their careers.⁵

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For example, it's not uncommon to expect virtual colleagues to respond to messages more quickly or be available around the clock.

Bridging the gap starts with eliminating those perceptions. Leaders can break down barriers, address issues, keep communication open, and reward employees based on merit – not location – to create a sense of equality and trust among all staff.

Additionally, organizations that put the right technology and processes in place will create a borderless workplace where all employees believe they're equal, respected, and trusted contributors to the organization's mission and vision.

BEST PRACTICES FOR CREATING A WINNING HYBRID WORKPLACE CULTURE

So, how can your organization thrive in this new work-from-anywhere environment and fully reap the benefits of a diverse, flexible, happy workforce? It takes a shift in mindset and access to the right technology.

Here are some best practices for creating a winning hybrid workplace culture – and how technology should play a role.

1. FOSTER CONNECTION, COLLABORATION, AND COMMUNICATION

Remote employees, especially if most of the team is on-site, can feel isolated or even alienated.

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And it's common for silos to form between on-site and virtual staff, which can be a productivity killer as employees increasingly operate in a vacuum.

Make it a priority to encourage employees to connect and collaborate. Here are some tips to do so:

- Share information freely with everyone – not just those in the office. It's easy to forget to share updates and announcements with remote employees, especially during busy times. Make it a point to use chat features to quickly disperse important information and be sure to schedule regular video visits with remote staff.
- Adopt cloud-based collaboration tools so employees can work securely and efficiently from anywhere.
- Provide consistent meeting experiences where all employees feel empowered to share feedback and offer insights.
- Create opportunities to connect when work isn't the primary focus. Virtual team-building events can be powerful motivators if executed properly.

2. ENSURE MEETING EQUALITY

For meetings that consist of all remote participants, everyone is on equal footing. However, when some employees are in the office and others are remote, the balance can often shift. It's common for employees "in the room" to monopolize conversations. Managers and leaders often fall into the trap of calling on those sitting next to them, rather than virtual staff. Side conversations among on-site staff can disrupt calls, and virtual participants can feel left out and confused. It's critical that everyone feels included in the discussion and empowered to participate, so ensure that you:

- Provide the same virtual meeting experience regardless of employee location.
- Give all participants equal facetime and voice.
- Offer the same screen sharing capabilities to everyone.
- Adopt a robust communication and collaboration platform that is supported by headsets, speakerphones, and external video cameras to elevate the virtual meeting experience.

3. BOOST PRODUCTIVITY TO REDUCE STRESS

Most employees are experiencing signs of burnout – and workplace stress is severely impacting their mental health, according to the 2021 Mind the Workplace Report, from Mental Health America.

One of the main benefits touted by remote workers is that the flexibility creates more time for self-care, family, friends, and hobbies so it can help with stress. However, the challenge is remote employees often feel like that have to be always on. These tips can help reduce stress and drive productivity:

- Set boundaries. Employees shouldn't feel compelled to check and respond to emails all hours of the day or night.
- Encourage PTO and mental health days. Yes, remote workers tend to have more freedom with how they structure their day, but they should still be encouraged to completely unplug for holidays and vacations.
- Adopt tools that promote highly productive and efficient teamwork so employees can get more done, faster.
- Prevent downtime by investing in professional-grade solutions. Employees are often working on consumer-

grade, mismatched, or incompatible devices and it can be hard for IT to manage updates or offer support for a variety of devices, vendors, software, and applications.

- Invest in customized technology kits that meet team members workstyles, responsibilities, and location to ensure their optimal productivity and satisfaction. For example, noise cancellation headphones and virtual backgrounds become critical for remote employees with kids at home.

4. PRIORITIZE THE USER EXPERIENCE

When we talk about software, applications, and digital products, we're obsessed with user experience. We need to have that same level of obsession when it comes to the user experience of employees.

Virtual communication, and specifically virtual meetings, come with a host of challenges:

- Consumer-grade technology doesn't have the audio and visual clarity of professional grade equipment, which can impact the experience on both sides.
- Mismatched or incompatible equipment can cause delays and disruption, which can negatively impact interactions with teammates and customers.
- Personal and group meeting spaces are often not equipped with the right devices for their size and purpose. Or they're set up with dated, legacy, or overly-complex in-room conferencing technology. They're

often not built with remote participants in mind.

Ensure you are providing meeting experiences where everyone in and out of the room can see, hear, and collaborate well. As you consider technologies that will enable you to provide that experience, be sure to find solutions that offer:

- A broad selection of devices for both group and individual audio and video collaboration.
- The ability to align devices to the unique needs of various workstyles (e.g., executive presence, administrative, sales, heavy travel, frequent video calls) and workspaces (e.g., conference rooms cubicles, home, on-the-go, and hybrid working).
- Voice and video devices optimized for professional all-day use.
- Noise-cancellation technology that automatically minimizes distracting sounds.
- Native platform and interoperability features for multiple video conferencing systems.
- Simplified, cloud-based provisioning and management for all devices.
- Accredited and flexible support and services for your devices and deployments.
- In-room conferencing technology that allows remote attendees to track and participate in the conversation equally.



POLY + MICROSOFT TEAMS ROOMS PROVIDE EQUITABLE VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

Poly has partnered with Microsoft to deliver an equitable experience for in-person, remote, and hybrid employees, so all participants feel engaged, connected, and empowered on every call. With Poly + Microsoft Teams Rooms solutions:



Everyone becomes part of the conversation.



All participants receive equal facetime and voice.



Remote workers don't feel inferior to on-site workers.



Employees look and sound their best when working with one another, clients, and other stakeholders.



All employees are set up for success.



Collaboration happens no matter your location.



Participants enjoy distraction-free meeting experiences.

Microsoft Teams provides the foundation for more collaborative, equitable meetings, but Poly supplies the right audio and video solutions to provide an amazing user experience.

THE POLY DIFFERENCE

Poly connects people, technology, and spaces to transform inequitable hybrid interactions into beautifully connected and seamless work-from-anywhere experiences.

UNMATCHED USER EXPERIENCE

- Pro-grade audio and video solutions provide employees with an equal and consistent virtual meeting experience, no matter where they work.
- Poly's innovative ANC, NoiseBlock AI, and Acoustic Fence technology screen out distracting background noises at home or at the office and can help alleviate unintended disturbances in a work from home environment.
- Multi-directional microphones track and capture the natural voices of presenters as they move, make virtual meeting experiences more natural and satisfying for those on the far end of calls and hands-free for presenters. Our proprietary speaker tracking technology allows remote participants to track conversations and know when to interject so the conversation just flows more easily.
- HD video cameras provide clearer image quality, vibrant and accurate colors, and auto-adjustment for different lighting.
- Audio and video solutions can be matched to the workstyle and workspace needs of in-office, remote, hybrid, and mobile workers.

SIMPLE, CONSISTENT SERVICE

- End-to-end portfolio of headsets, cameras, desk phones, speakerphones and solutions for every meeting room and personal workspace.
- Audio and video solutions compatible with any UC platform.
- Deep technology integration with Microsoft Teams and Zoom.
- Connect and interoperate with legacy video conferencing systems with Poly RealConnect.

DEEP VISIBILITY AND INSIGHTS

- Poly Lens cloud-based device management allows IT to manage, monitor, and maintain your Poly portfolio of devices from a single pane of glass.
- Poly Lens Desktop app simplifies audio and video device setup and use for end-users and allows IT managers to have visibility into home office equipment.

WORLDWIDE SERVICES AND SUPPORT

- Poly Professional Services can manage or support all aspects of your UC deployments – from planning and design through implementation, ongoing operation, and support.
- Poly+ support for personal conferencing devices provides unlimited 24/7/365 support and hardware replacement with pre-paid next day shipping.
- Local support around the globe.
- Pro-grade hardware, service, and support from one reliable vendor.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

visit www.poly.com



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