Strategies for Success in a Hybrid Work Environment

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What we will cover today

1. Best practices that you can put to work immediately

2. Quick review of technology to enable hybrid work environments to be more effective

3. Answer your questions

More resources and tutorials are posted on the ICSPS website and tips sheets available for download
https://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/wioa/wednesday-webinars/2-home/52-virtual-work-place

What is a hybrid work environment?

Hybrid work is a flexible approach that combines working in an office environment and working from home. In many cases, it allows employees to choose how and where they work and offers autonomy to employees to design their working week in a way that works both for them and with company policies.
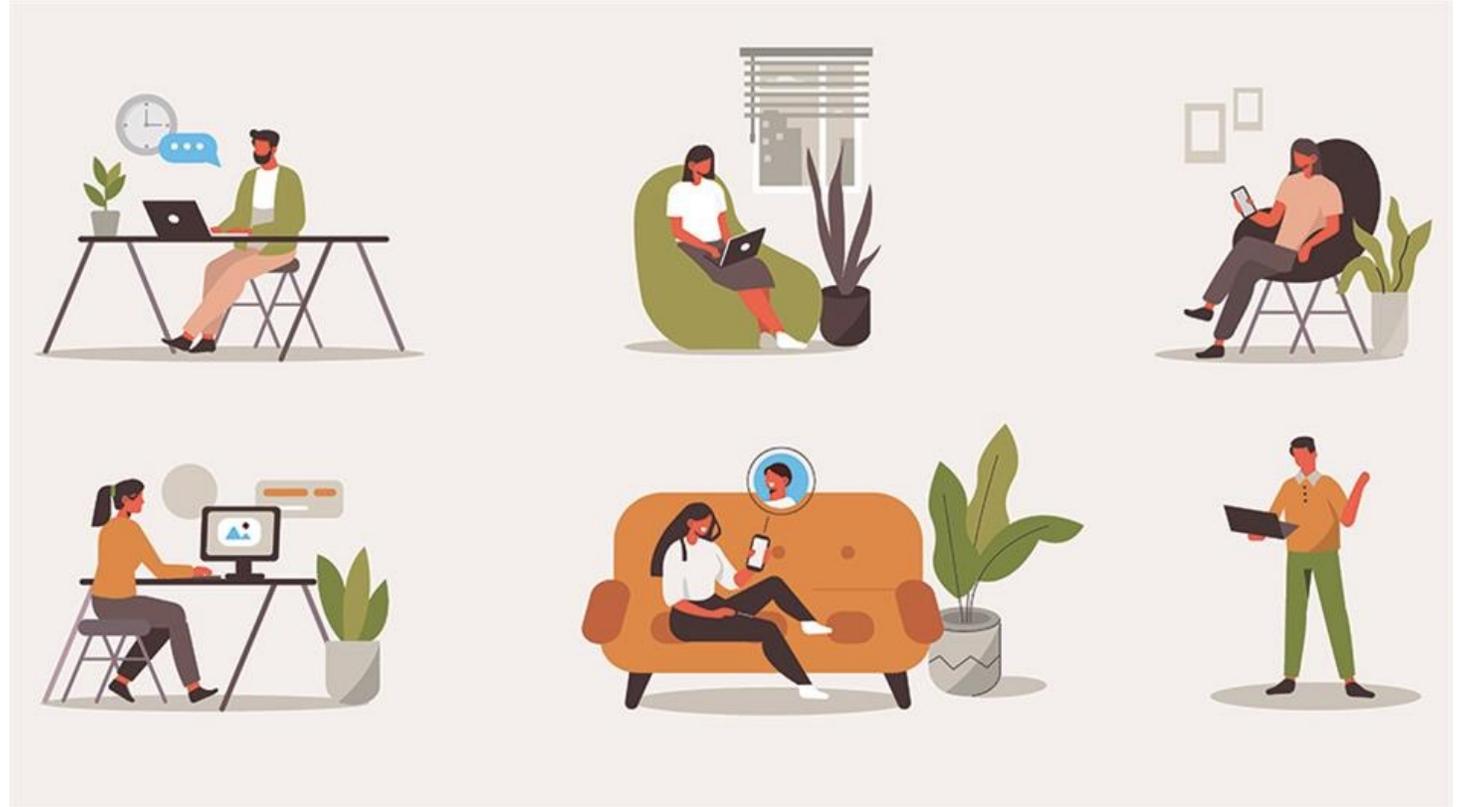
What is a hybrid schedule?

A hybrid work schedule is a flexible work model that combines remote and in-office work. It lets employees work from home on some days and from the office on others. Workers don't need to be in the office all the time, but they're not strictly telecommuters either. Instead, team members on hybrid teams reap the benefits of both worlds—the camaraderie of in-office work, plus the focus and flexibility of remote work.

The three different work models

- **In-office work schedule:** Team members work from the office all the time.

- **Remote work schedule:** Everyone on the team works remotely from different locations. There's no physical office, but remote employees may see each other in person a few times a year for team events or off-site meetings.

- **Hybrid work schedule:** This is a combination of the two prior models. Employees work from home on some days and from the office on others. Some hybrid work models let employees choose when to come in, while more structured schedules dedicate specific days for at-home or in-office work.

Schedules

There are options and different models.

Choose what works for your organization and team.

# Four types of hybrid work schedules

- Hybrid at-will
- Hybrid split-week
- Hybrid manager-scheduling
- Hybrid mix
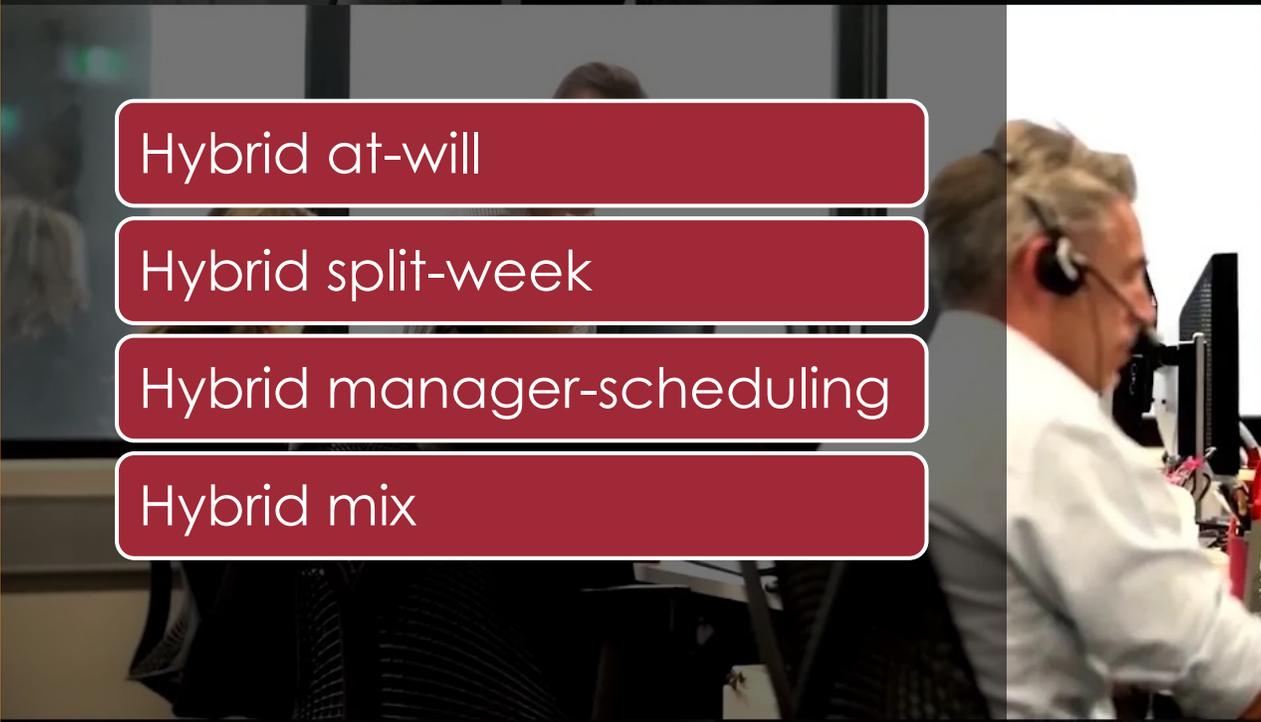
Types of Scheduling Team Models

- 3:2 Model

- Individualized Model

- Staggered Schedules Model

Hybrid employees tend to outperform office-only employees and are far happier. The reason is that flexibility is a huge benefit for them—they get to do activities they really value while outperforming at work."

—PROFESSOR NICHOLAS BLOOM OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY

5C Challenges
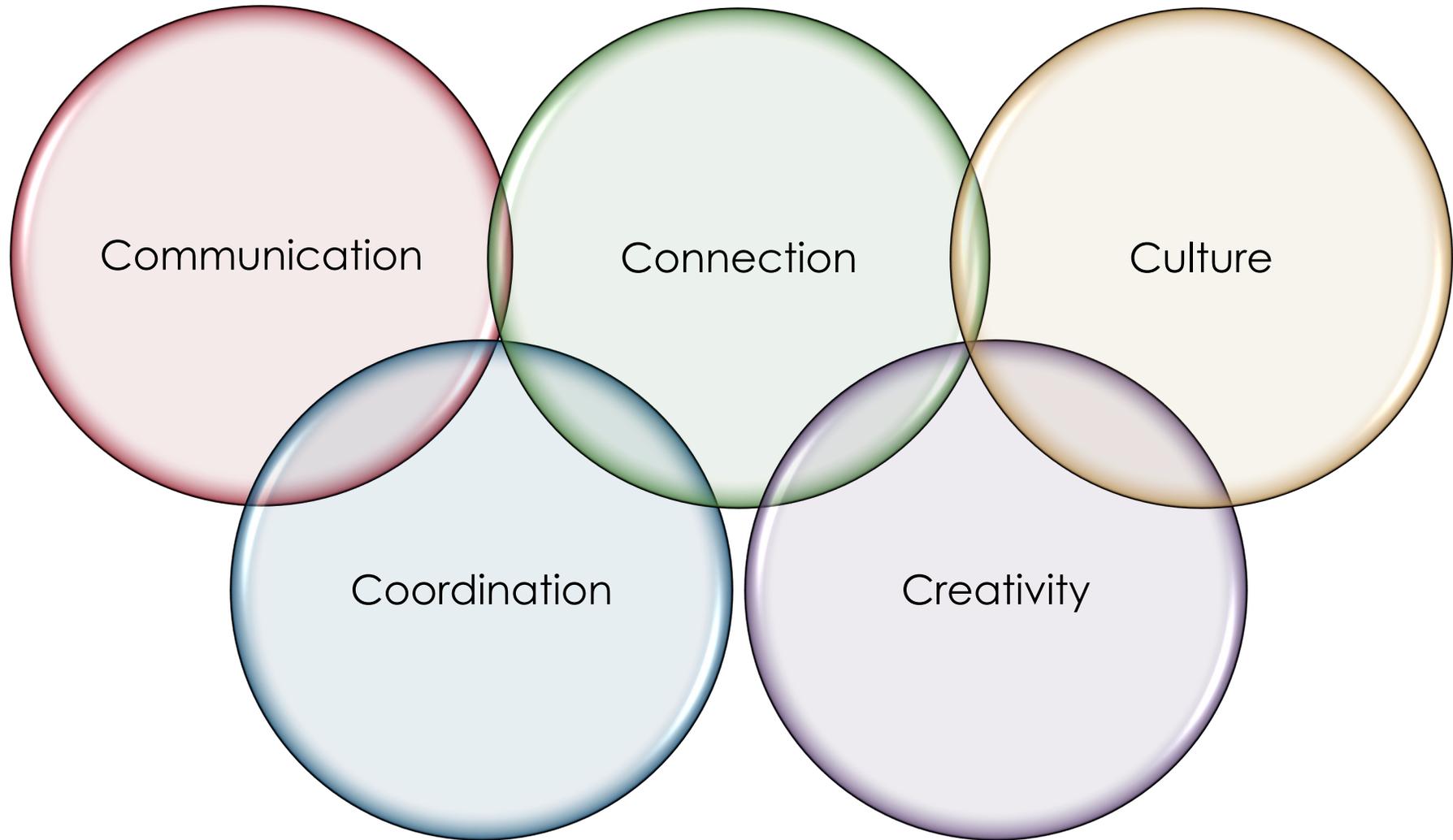
Addressing the Challenges

- 5C Checklist
- Evaluate
- Analyze
- Plan
- Implement

Success Tips!

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- Coordinate time in the office
- Foster Personal Connections
- Create a Culture of Transparency and Trust
- Allow time for focus

10 Tips for Hybrid Work Environment

Focus on the core: employee engagement

Up your meeting game

Acknowledge the human experience

Value people over desk

Be mindful of time

Be strategic about communication

Create Community

See and use the whole playing field

Define outcomes and let your team deliver

Be less supervisor, more coach

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Common Work from Home Challenges

- Social Isolation: Lack of face time with coworkers and supervisors – face-to-face interaction is vital to company culture and workplace encounters. The absence of in-person communication can be strongly felt by virtual teams.
  - Consider collaboration tools to improve employee engagement and increase social interaction between remote team members.

- Video fatigue – On the flip side of the previous bullet, using Zoom all the time to aid connection can have consequences. Empower employees to decide as a team and when meeting internally if they want to be on camera or not.

Common Work from Home Challenges

- Communication breakdowns and bottlenecks – When working remotely, we can't peek over the cubicle or slip down the hall to see if a colleague or supervisor is around to answer a quick question. Managers can help address these issues by modeling effective communication strategies.

- Surrounding distractions – Whether it's another coffee shop customer accidentally spilling sugar on a remote worker or a cheerful toddler giving a mighty shout from the living room during a zoom call, distractions seem to come with the remote work territory.
  - Encourage designated workspace when in meetings to limit distractions.

Best Practices for Hybrid Work

prioritize and focus on output

Ensure your WFH infrastructure is set

Create workspace(s)

Adhere to routines
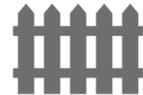
Set work boundaries

Be strategic about communication

Focus on positives

Don't neglect workplace culture

Learn new skills

Prioritize and focus on the output

- Streamline – identify essential work and areas of focus that can be done while working remotely

- Eliminate non-essential meetings

- Optimize Collaboration Tools

Focus…

- Be disciplined! Clarify team rules and make sure everyone knows them (on your team and in your home)

- Learn to be more efficient with meetings – agenda, outcomes, and next steps.

- Consider creating a list of what you will deliver by the end of the day (Pro-Tip: prioritize your to-do list – eat the worm).

Create an inviting workspace(s)

- Your head is your most important workspace. You will need to have your head in the game to stay focused and avoid distractions.

- Where can you reasonably work? What is your ideal work environment?

- Do **not** work in your bed!

- Avoid distractions, e.g., the news, dirty dishes, etc.

Adhere to routines

Develop rituals and have a disciplined way of managing the day. Schedule a start and an end time. Have a rhythm. Take a shower, get dressed, even if it's not what you'd usually wear to work, then get started on the day's activities. If you're used to moving physically, make sure you build that into your day. If you're an extrovert and accustomed to a lot of contact and collaboration with others, make sure that is happening.

From Harvard Business Review: 15 Questions about Remote Work Answered

Set work boundaries

- Set office hours and let your team know

- Don't over-promise

- Learn how to say 'no' well

- Keep your calendar up to date!

- Time block for tasks and use your calendar to block non-meeting work time as a signal to colleagues

- Take necessary breaks

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HOW TO THRIVE AT WORK... WHEREVER YOU ARE
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ALEXANDRA SAMUEL
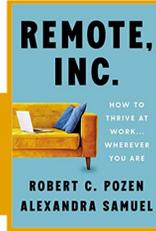
Cartoon by @RobCottingham / @ntos • RobCottingham.ca/cartoon

Remind me in the morning — we need to talk about boundaries.

Technologies to Facilitate Remote Work

- Office Essentials
- File Sharing
- Virtual Meetings
- Instant Messaging/Chat
- Project Management Platforms

Visit Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support at https://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/ for Technologies to Facilitate Remote Work Tip Sheet

File Sharing Options

Microsoft One Drive: OneDrive is a cloud storage service from Microsoft that allows you to store all your important files securely in one place and then access them virtually anywhere. It works just like a traditional hard drive, but it's on the internet, and you get access to additional features.

Microsoft SharePoint: SharePoint is a web-based collaborative platform that integrates with Microsoft Office.

DropBox: Dropbox is a personal cloud storage service (sometimes referred to as an online backup service) that is frequently used for file sharing and collaboration.

Google Drive: Drive lets you keep all your work in one place, view different file formats without buying extra software, and access your files from any device.
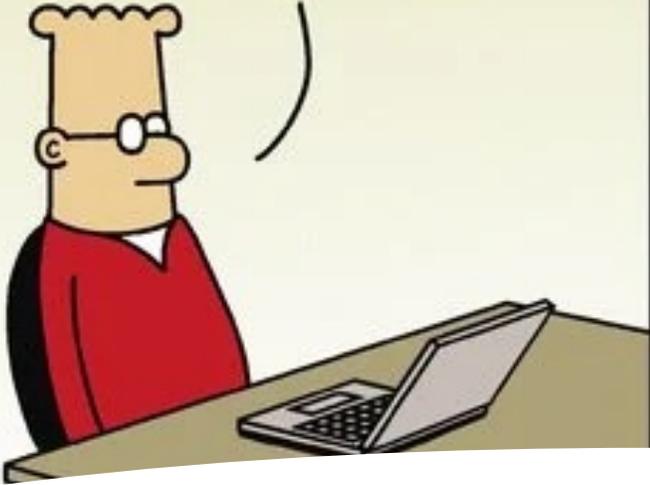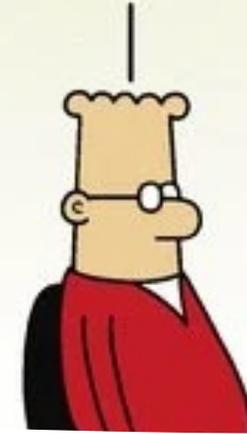
Virtual Meetings

Zoom: Zoom offers an easy, reliable cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, collaboration, chat, and webinars across mobile devices, desktops, telephones, and room systems.

Google Hangout: Google Hangouts is a unified communications service that enables text, voice, or video chats, either one-on-one or in a group. Hangouts is built into Google+, Gmail, YouTube, and Google Voice, plus there are Hangouts apps for iOS, Android, and the web.

Cisco Webex: Cisco Webex offers a range of video conferencing, webinars, team collaboration (chat), cloud file sharing, and more.

Go-To-Meeting: GoToMeeting is a web-hosted service created and marketed by LogMeIn. It is an online meeting, desktop sharing, and video conferencing software package that enables the user to meet with other computer users, customers, clients or colleagues via the Internet in real-time.

Instant Messaging/Chat

Microsoft Teams and Google Hangout both have a chat function.

Slack: Slack is a collaboration hub that can replace email to help you and your team work together seamlessly. It's designed to support the way people naturally work together, so you can collaborate with people online as efficiently as you do face-to-face.

Cisco Jabber: Jabber is an all-in-one communications tool for businesses. Use it to send instant messages, make phone calls, join meetings, and manage your contacts. Take a look for yourself and see how easy it is to get started.

Project Management Platforms

Microsoft Teams: Microsoft Teams is a unified communication and collaboration platform that combines persistent workplace chat, video meetings, file storage, and application integration.

Basecamp: Basecamp is a project management app that you can access in your browser and on your phone. It gives you the tools you need to set up to-dos, a schedule, create and upload documents and files, message and chat with your colleagues, and check in regularly with your group—all in one place.

Trello: Trello is a collaboration tool that organizes your projects into boards. Trello tells you what's being worked on, who's working on what, and where something is in a process. Imagine a white board, filled with lists of sticky notes, with each note as a task for you and your team.

Asana: Asana is a web and mobile application designed to help teams organize, track, and manage their work.
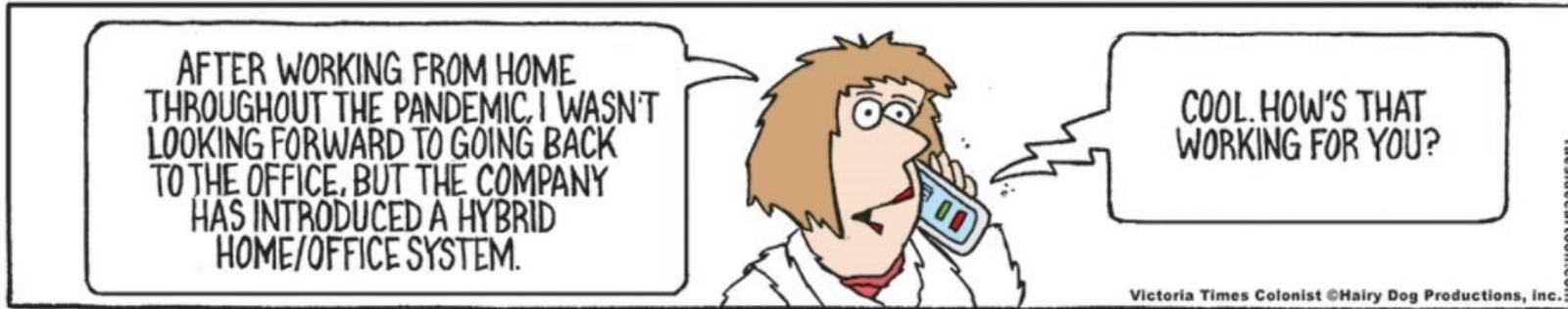
Questions?

Resources...

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About the author(s) Raphael Bick is a partner in McKinsey & Company's Shanghai office. "A Blueprint for Remote Working: Lessons from China." *McKinsey & Company*, www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/mckinsey-digital/our-insights/a-blueprint-for-remote-working-lessons-from-china.

Resources…

https://hbr.org/2022/02/5-challenges-of-hybrid-work-and-how-to-overcome-them 5 Challenges of Hybrid Work — and How to Overcome Them

https://asana.com/resources/hybrid-work-schedule Everything you need to know about hybrid work schedules

https://www.insperity.com/blog/10-tips-for-a-successful-hybrid-employee-work-environment/ 10 tips for a successful hybrid employee work environment