

swipedon

The Future of Work

How to Enhance the Hybrid Workplace for Optimum Performance

SwipedOn's Guide to Hybrid Workplaces



Table of Contents

O1

An Introduction to the
Modern Workplace

O2

What Is the Hybrid Workplace?

O3

Best Practices for Embracing
the Hybrid Workplace

O4

4 Simple Solutions for Better
Work-Life Balance

An Introduction to the Modern Workplace

The hybrid work era

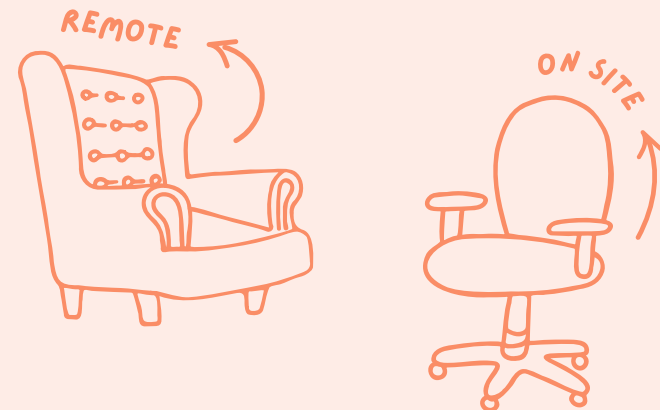
Unless you've been living under a rock the past few years, you'll have heard the term "hybrid workplace". The hybrid workplace is one that embraces the future of work and offers employers and employees more flexibility. The idea is simple: create an environment that allows for multiple work locations – a balance between home, office, and public spaces like coffee shops or coworking spaces.

Embracing the hybrid workplace model will help your business stay competitive and desirable for prospective employees. [A recent McKinsey survey](#) found that 9/10 organisations will be moving to hybrid, so if you don't get on board, you might find you get left behind.

The future of work is ultra-flexible

What does that mean?

- > Employees have the option to work from home, at a coworking space, or in an office.
- > Employers are able to accommodate their employees' needs and preferences while maintaining productivity and cost-effectiveness.
- > Teams are connected to each other in a way that works for them, regardless of their location.

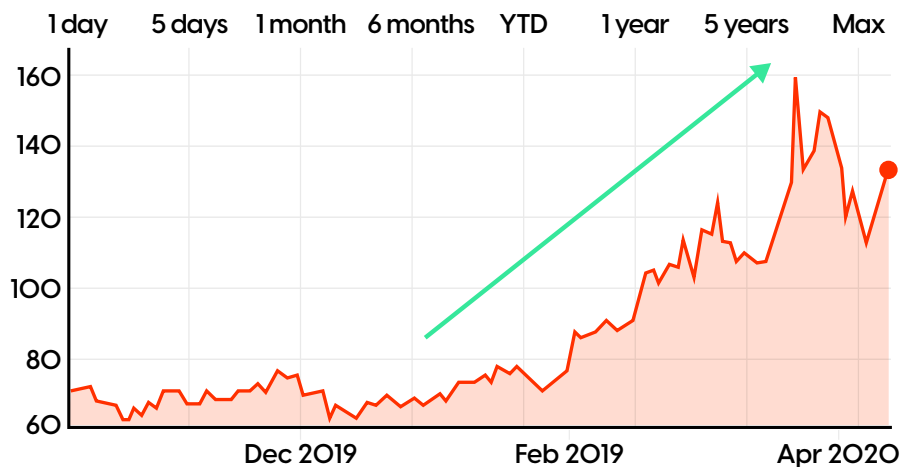


Looking back

Five years ago, the workplace was largely bound to physical spaces. Teams worked together in an office and that's where the best work was produced.

Fast forward to 2023, technology is better than ever at allowing us to keep up with colleagues regardless of where they are working from.

The rise and rise of remote work ([source](#))



This graph shows how the Zoom Video Communication (NASDAQ: ZM) stock price went from \$68.72 on Jan 2nd, 2020 to a maximum of \$159.56 on March 13th, 2020.

How COVID impacted the traditional workplace

Remote working was on the rise pre-pandemic, with tech companies and startups leading the way with hybrid, hotdesking and fully remote models. But when the pandemic hit and stay-at-home orders were issued, business leaders based in traditional office environments across the world were forced to adapt almost overnight.

For many businesses, this meant a sudden shift to almost entirely remote operations. Leaders had to come up with ways to keep teams connected and collaborating from home while ensuring that productivity didn't suffer in the process.

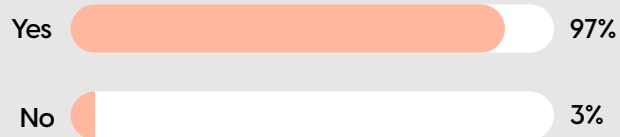
"Productivity [did not suffer] despite many companies going fully remote. Many thrived through that process and continue to [hire](#) at record pace," said Ben Wigert, director of research and strategy for workplace management at Gallup, speaking to CNN.



What is the future of remote work?

Worried about the effects on the bottom line? You shouldn't be. Despite some initial concerns, many businesses have actually found that moving to hybrid work had a positive impact on employee morale and job satisfaction. More flexibility, cost-savings, shorter or no commuting has meant employees have more time to take care of their physical and mental health.

Would you recommend remote work to others?



According to [a report by Buffer](#), remote work is proving overwhelmingly popular among employees.



Employees rate it, so it's here to stay.

What may have looked like a temporary solution is now the norm. According to a [Gartner survey](#), 74% of businesses plan to move their employees to remote roles as part of their post-pandemic plans.

What Is the Hybrid Workplace?

The hybrid workplace embraces a mix of remote and on-site employees. It's a workplace with a physical location that is set up for employees to choose the option of remote working or an office space.

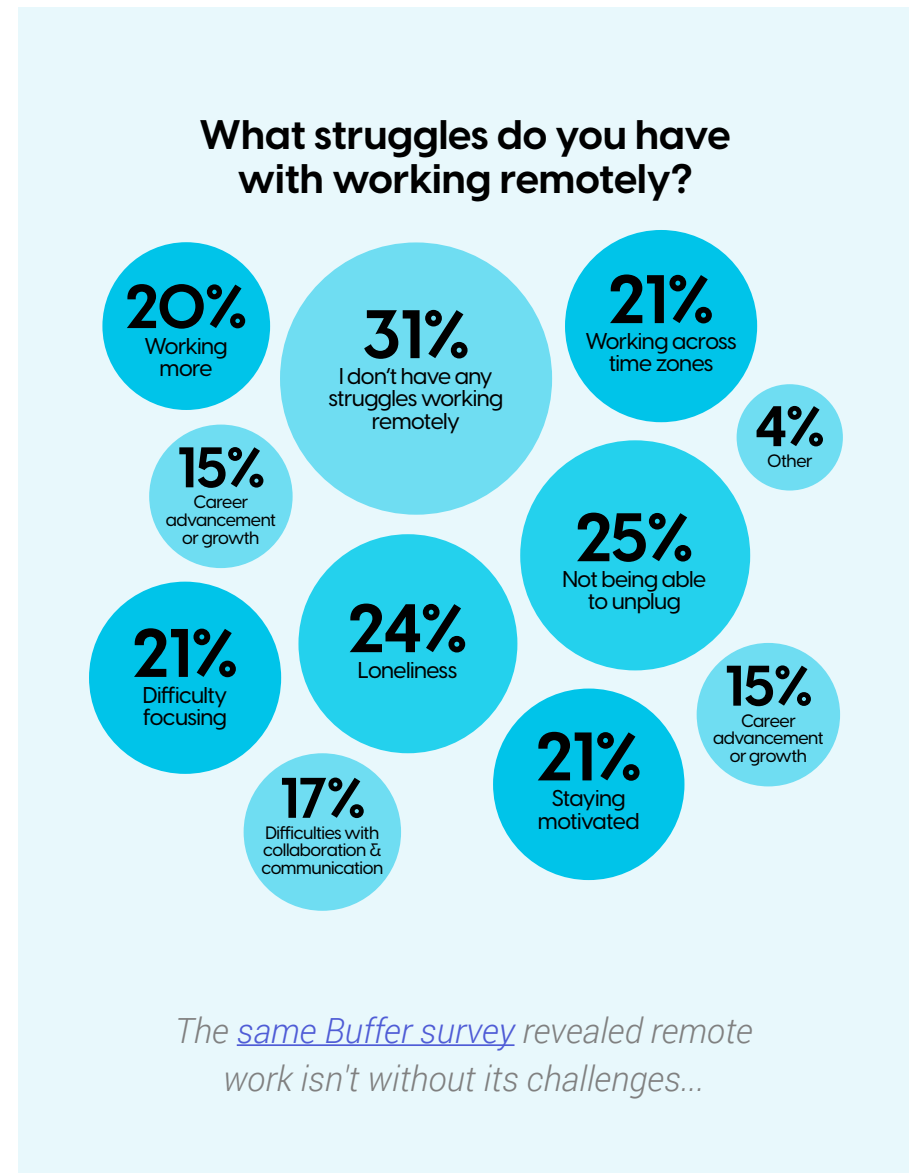
Essentially, people are empowered with the freedom to work from where they like, when they like. Employees have access to all their resources from anywhere while benefiting from the in-person interaction and social aspect that an office provides. There's also considerable benefits for management, including reduced office space costs and a happier, more productive team.

Why people love it:

- > **Increased flexibility:** Most employees can work when and where they want, as long as they get their job done. In many remote working arrangements, employees are free to structure their day in a way that works for them.
- > **Improved work/life balance:** Eliminating the daily commute frees up time that can be used for family time, exercise or personal development instead.
- > **Cost savings:** Transportation costs, meals, and professional clothing are all additional costs for employees to cover. Removing some or all of these can make a huge difference for employees' personal finances.
- > **More choice:** People have the freedom to work for a wider range of companies because they're not limited by geographical location.
- > **Travel opportunities:** Perhaps your employees have always wanted to travel but annual leave doesn't cover the timeframes. They have the freedom to work abroad and travel in between without losing their jobs. And you don't lose your best employees - win-win!

Potential issues to be aware of:

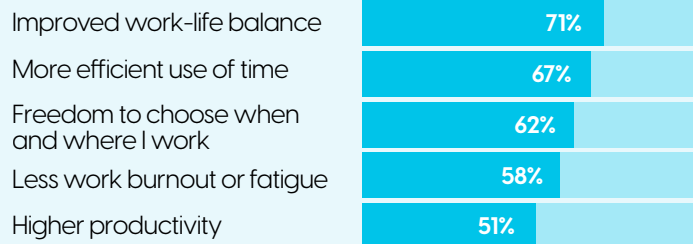
- > **A lack of structure:** Without the physical presence of a manager, it can be hard to keep on task. Distractions can also play a part. Great laundry day, dishwasher needs emptying and the lawns could do with a mow? Let's go. Everyone else is going for a snorkel in Nusa Penida while you're staring into a vortex of spreadsheets? BRB.
- > **Communication gaps:** With teams scattered across different locations, communication can become difficult, take more time, and misunderstandings can occur more easily.
- > **Technology issues:** Remote work requires a fast and reliable internet connection as well as appropriate hardware and software. This can be a challenge if you're working in areas where the internet is patchy or slow or power outages are commonplace.
- > **A lack of recognition:** Out of sight, out of mind. When employees aren't visible, it's easy to overlook them. Managers may be less likely to notice or acknowledge the efforts of staff.
- > **Loneliness:** Working alone can be isolating, especially for people who live alone or don't have a support system outside of work. This can be detrimental for their mental wellness.



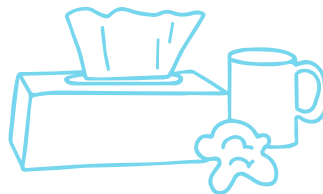
Now we've looked at the pros and cons, let's get down to business

While there are significant pros and cons for employees, there is an overwhelming amount of advantages of using a flexible working model from a business perspective.

Top advantages



According to [Gallup](#) these are the top 5 advantages

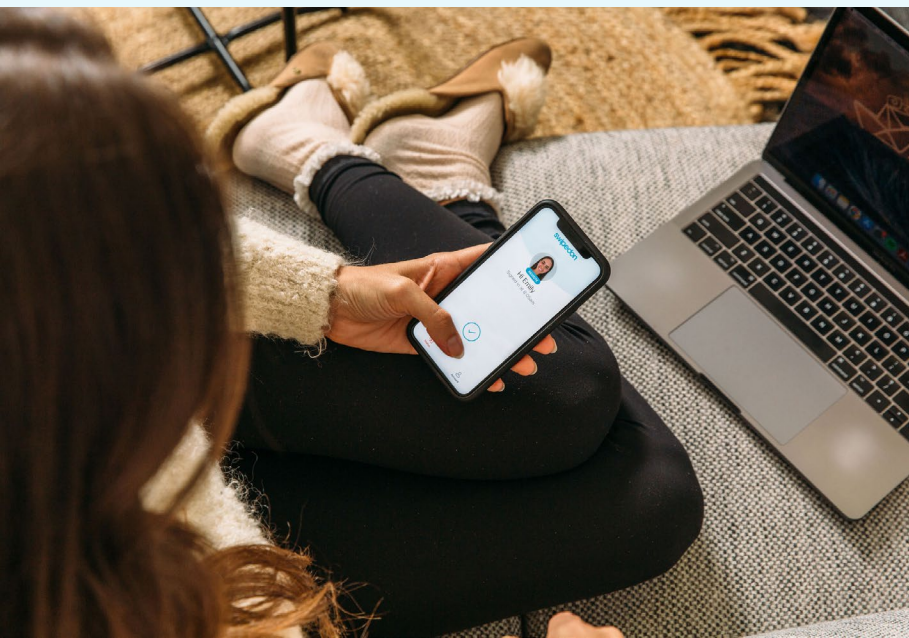


Embracing hybrid working is good for business

- > **Increased productivity:** Some studies ([link](#)) have shown that employees who work from home are more productive than their in-office colleagues.
- > **Increased employee satisfaction:** Employees who have the ability to work from home are generally happier and more satisfied with their jobs. This leads to increased retention rates and decreased turnover.
- > **Cost savings:** Business leaders that embrace the hybrid workplace model can save on office space and other overhead costs.
- > **A wider reach and talent pool:** With more employees able to work remotely or from a hybrid workspace, businesses are able to tap into new markets and reach customers in different parts of the world. This leads to increased revenue.
- > **Fewer sick days:** According to a [Gallup survey](#), those who are engaged and have high general well-being (in such areas as social, financial, career, community, and physical wellness) are 30% less likely to miss work days because of poor health in any given month. **They also miss 70% fewer work days** due to poor health during the year.

Healthy, engaged staff are:

- › 27% more likely to report excellent performance in their role
- › 45% more likely to report high levels of adaptability in the presence of change
- › 37% more likely to report always recovering fully after an illness, injury, or hardship
- › 59% less likely to look for a job with a different organization in the next 12 months



Considerations for implementing a hybrid working model

While there are many advantages to the hybrid workplace, there are also some challenges that business leaders should be aware of. These include:

- › **Lack of collaboration:** One of the biggest challenges of the hybrid workplace is the lack of face-to-face collaboration. This can make it difficult for team members to build relationships and bond with one another.
- › **Communication challenges:** With team members in different locations, it can be difficult to keep everyone on the same page. This can lead to miscommunication and misunderstandings.
- › **Time zone differences:** If team members are in different time zones, it can be difficult to schedule meetings and calls. This can lead to frustration and decreased productivity.
- › **Technology issues:** Working remotely requires reliable internet access, good hardware, and appropriate software. This can be a challenge if employees are working in areas with a patchy or slow internet connection.

That said, there are a few different ways to make a hybrid workplace work. Here's how business leaders can embrace the hybrid workplace (and get it right).

Hybrid Workplace Best Practices

Our top tips for making hybrid work (see what we did there)

01

Use the right tools

There are a variety of tools and software designed to make the transition to hybrid as seamless as possible.

Communication tools

Communication is KEY! Investing in tools that allow your team to easily connect and share information regardless of location will make your move to hybrid much smoother. Ideally, choose one platform that does everything you need rather than managing multiple different systems.

We ❤️ Slack here at SwipeoOn, but tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Google Hangouts are all great options depending on your business needs.

Collaboration tools

Tools like Notion, Milanote, Figma, Google Docs and Trello help staff collaborate on joint projects easily, without the need for never-ending email chains. They are also a great way to increase visibility on what the teams are working on at a given time, which is great for people who may not be office based.

Time tracking/attendance tools

Time tracking and attendance tools are essential for managing remote teams. They help everyone stay on top of their hours.

Popular tools include SwipedOn, Harvest, Toggl, and Clockify.

O2

Encourage communication and collaboration

“You have to be deliberate about how you communicate, emphasize goals, and priorities,” said Eugenio Pace, CEO of Auth0, an authentication and authorization platform that has 60% of its workforce working remotely.

As mentioned, communication is essential to a successful hybrid model, so it’s important that team members understand how to make themselves clear on digital channels.

When communicating through emails and message boards we can’t rely on facial expressions or our tone to make our meaning obvious. Clear and direct text are essential. Set up regular check-ins or video calls to ensure that everyone is engaged and informed.

[SwipedOn Pocket](#) is an employee sign in app that allows staff to sign in contactlessly and also indicate whether they’re working in the office, remotely, or from an office in another location. You can keep track of the people in your building in real-time and know who is currently working off-site.



Here are some tips:

- › Use a select number of tools and channels that best suit your business' needs, and show everyone how to use them effectively
- › Encourage team members to ask questions and offer feedback
- › Set up regular meetings, both virtual and in-office
- › Run virtual team building exercises for employees in remote locations
- › Invite remote workers into the office and regular in-person social events

“You have to be deliberate about how you communicate, emphasize goals, and priorities”

Eugenio Pace, CEO of Auth0

O3

Promote work-life balance

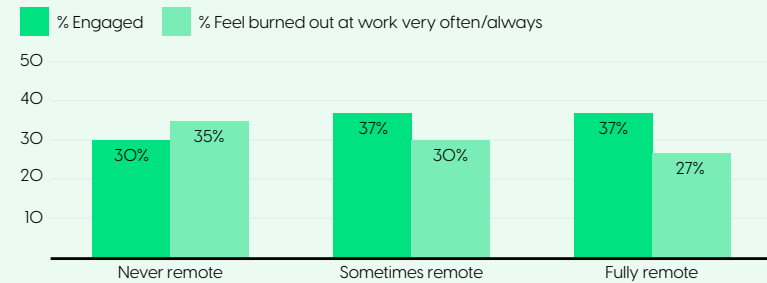
When your home is your office, it can be difficult to switch off.



As a manager, it's important to ensure that your employees have enough time for rest and relaxation. Be aware of your team's work-life balance and don't be afraid to have a chat to anyone who appears to be struggling.

Burnout isn't just something that affects people in the office

Engagement and Burnout Among Remote-Capable Employees, by Remote Work Status



[\(source\)](#)

Here are some warning signs an someone might be struggling with work-life balance:

- > Looking/sounding overwhelmed or exhausted
- > Working too many hours
- > Taking fewer breaks than usual
- > Working and sending emails at odd hours
- > Being irritable
- > A dip in work quality

4 Simple solutions for better work-life balance

Improving work-life balance at your workplace doesn't have to be complicated or expensive, here's some simple ideas you can implement today.



01 Encourage employees to take breaks

Just as they did when working in-office, remote employees need to take breaks. Encourage them to leave the keyboard at regular times to refresh themselves and have a short rest or change of scene.



02 Encourage employees to take holidays

As short breaks are important to prevent burnout, so are longer ones. Encourage your team to make the most of their holiday allowance during the year. If someone isn't taking their vacation time, chat with them about why, explaining why they should, and see what you can do to help.



03 Offer flexible hours

Allow employees to set their own hours or work from home when needed. And if they need to change their current pattern, be as accommodating as possible.



04 Support your employees

Working from home can be lonely and isolating, so it's important to check in on your employees and make sure they have the resources they need.

How to support your employees through the hybrid shift

Provide training

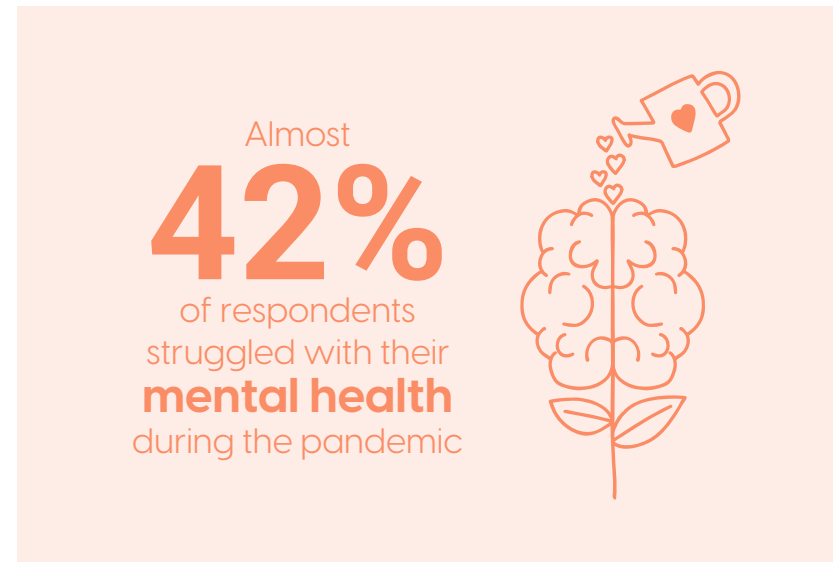
Business leaders should provide training to employees with a focus on how to make the hybrid working model work for them as individuals. This effort helps them feel valued, leads to your business having highly skilled workers, and reduces the need to hire externally. **Hold regular training sessions, and make sure all employees are aware of the tools and technologies that can help them to work effectively.**

Offer support

Harvard Business Review saw an impact on mental health early in the pandemic. In early April 2020, their nonprofit organization, Mind Share Partners, conducted a study of global employees, in partnership with Qualtrics and SAP. They discovered the mental health of almost 42% of respondents had declined since the outbreak began, and people are still recovering.

“The stigma around mental health is rapidly decreasing. It’s now a part of everyday conversation.”

Joe Grasso, Lyra Health



Businesses need to offer support to employees who are struggling to adjust to the hybrid workplace. Set up a help desk, provide access to a coach or mentor, or offer wellness and mental health services to help support employees.

“The stigma around mental health is rapidly decreasing. It’s now a part of everyday conversation. So employers have more visibility into mental distress in their workforce” said Joe Grasso, senior director of workforce mental health at Lyra Health, which provides employees access to a network of mental health professionals and related resources. Many still struggle, so make it as easy as possible.

Encourage feedback

Give employees clear performance metrics so they can measure how they're doing, and you can give effective feedback.

“Firms must have clear performance metrics—ideally ones that can be verified using quantitative data, so remote workers understand how they're performing at any time. Firms must also figure out how to configure ‘virtual watercooler’ interactions so remote workers are less likely to feel like they are out of the loop,” [says Matthew Kahn](#), economics professor at the University of Southern California and author of *Going Remote: How the Flexible Work Economy Can Improve Our Lives and Our Cities*.



Keep them in mind when it comes to promotions

Remote employees are at a disadvantage: they're not seen as often as their in-person colleagues. This means they can be overlooked for promotions or new opportunities.

To ensure remote employees are treated fairly and get the same opportunities as their onsite colleagues, business leaders need to keep them in mind when it comes to promotions and career development—offer remote orientations, send out announcements about job openings, and encourage them to apply for positions. Additionally, encourage them to come into the office from time to time, if possible. You may want to think about incentivizing those who have to travel long distances with transport cost coverage and lunch.

Focus on well-being

The key to happiness “involves moving from profit to purpose, from hierarchy to a network of teams, from leaders who tell people what to do, to leaders who ask how they can best support [their team], from rules to freedom, from secrecy to transparency,” [says Pim de Moree](#), co-founder of Netherlands-based consultancy Corporate Rebels.

As an employer, you need to focus on having happy staff. Offer flexible working hours, plan regular team socials or activities, and show trust. Aim to create an inclusive environment where everyone is respected and appreciated.

"Interactions with other people are essential to human beings and those interactions significantly affect our state of mind"

Phil Kelley Jr, author of Presence & Profitability

Encourage in-person interactions

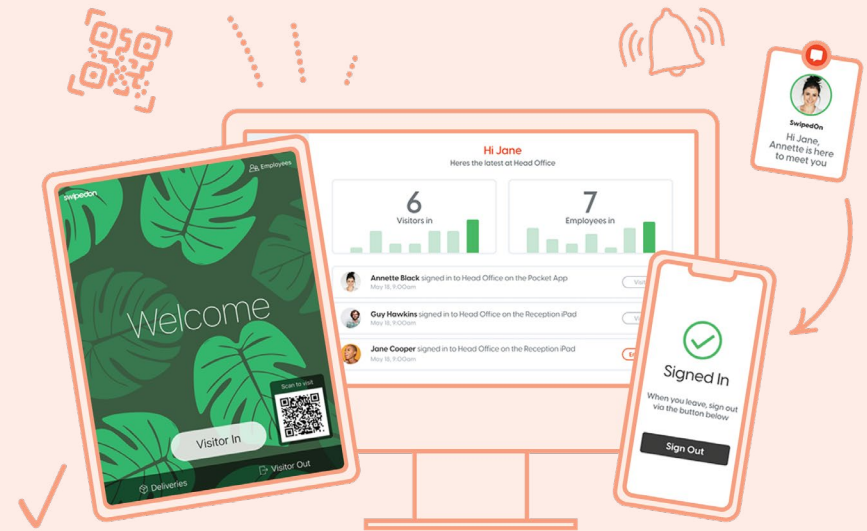
In-person interactions are still important in the age of remote work. “Interactions with other people are essential to human beings and those interactions significantly affect our state of mind,” [says Phil Kelley Jr.](#), author of *Presence and Profitability: Understanding the Value of Authentic Communications in the Age of Hyper-Connectivity*. “We were built to interact, to socialize, to gather and sort ourselves into social groups.”

Even those that have no physical space should emphasize that teams meet face-to-face on a regular basis: “We get the whole company together once a year for seven days so that Automatticians can create bonds that influence them all year long,” [says the website of Automattic](#), the company that owns WordPress and Tumblr.

Create a workplace that supports hybrid working

Ensure flexibility is at the heart of your hybrid office, SwipedOn has been designed with ease of use and flexibility at its core and is the perfect addition to your hybrid office.

Features like desk booking, remote working, and simple sign in all help make the hybrid office a happy one. When employees do come into the office, it's helpful to remove as much friction as possible from mundane tasks (like clocking in) and visitor arrivals.

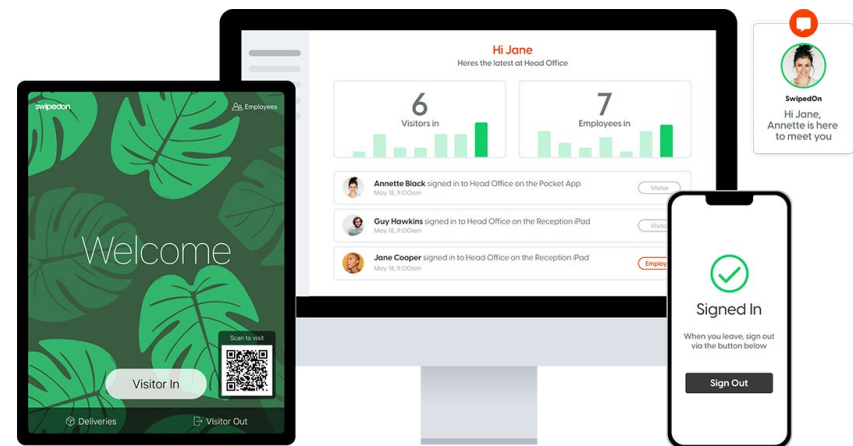


When your team is hybrid, the office becomes a social anchor where people come to meet and collaborate. Focus on making this space as functional and welcoming as possible, with desks, meeting rooms and resources that can be easily booked in advance and systems that make it all as easy as possible.

Hybrid work doesn't have to be a hassle, SwipedOn can help.

In the hybrid work era, the office's primary function of providing a space for employees to come together and collaborate on projects is still relevant. However, how this is achieved has changed.

SwipedOn allows you to maximize the benefits of a hybrid workplace model by ensuring transparency and accountability. SwipedOn's flexible workplace sign in system provides an innovative digital solution specifically designed to streamline a range of office operations.



Ready to take the next step? Book a time to speak
to us about how SwipedOn can help your business.





Signing out



Lou Burton

Lou is our Brand & Content Specialist at SwipedOn

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