Enabling Performance for Hybrid Teams
After more than a year of remote work, many organizations are beginning to reopen offices and call employees back to physical workspaces — at least part of the time.

While some of these organizations still view remote work as a temporary solution, others embrace the idea of a “hybrid” model, allowing workers to split their time between centralized offices and their homes based on personal preferences and business needs. Many high-profile organizations, such as Citigroup, Ford, and Microsoft, have already announced plans for hybrid offices.

As these hybrid workplaces become more popular, that doesn’t mean they are free of challenges. In fact, the logistics of a hybrid office are significantly more complex than either a fully remote or fully in-person model. Hybrid setups require dynamic models for managing real estate and workplace safety.

But beyond the logistics of brick and mortar, you will need to carefully consider team dynamics and develop new ways to set goals and evaluate performance. To be successful in a hybrid environment, you need to foster engaged, purpose-driven employees who know what they’re working toward and how to find the resources they need to get them there. You can’t simply drag and drop your legacy performance management process into a hybrid work environment.

Instead, consider this an opportunity to step back and design a new process that is strategic, flexible, and transparent for everyone on the team, one that shifts the emphasis away from performance management and toward continuous performance enablement.
Align on What and Why

Streamline performance objectives to provide a clear line of sight from each employee to the organization’s larger goals. According to a recent PwC survey, only 28% of employees feel fully connected to their company’s purpose, and only 39% can clearly see the value they create. As you design your long-term hybrid work strategy, be sure to seek input and survey your workforce. If employees aren’t on board with hybrid work practices and policies, they won’t feel aligned with your organization’s goals.

Only 28% of employees feel fully connected to their company’s purpose

Only 39% of employees can clearly see the value they create

Set and prioritize clear goals and expectations that are aligned to the organization’s strategic objectives. If your team members’ work isn’t attached to a clear purpose, they will quickly disengage, and that risk is even greater in remote and hybrid environments.

Take the guesswork out of performance expectations, which can easily get muddled in a hybrid environment. When employees have clear, achievable goals that tie back to transparent strategic objectives, they’ll feel more aligned and connected — whether they’re working at home, in the office, or in their neighborhood coffee shop. Bring this sense of engagement and alignment into continuous learning tracks to help employees understand which professional development opportunities are best for the goals they want to achieve within the company. Allowing employees to choose their own career track helps them stay aligned and engaged with their goals.

When employees have clear, achievable goals that tie back to transparent strategic objectives, they’ll feel more aligned and connected.
Managers have to reinforce the relationship between each employee’s individual performance and strategic objectives. Train managers to coach employees as human beings, not just manage their task load. Build in frequent touch points to remind everyone of the big picture and how their personal goals fit in. These touchpoints should be regular and consistent to:

→ maintain engagement
→ reinforce company culture
→ provide employees a sense of purpose as they work

Adopt a continuous conversation model of performance management, and incorporate purpose-building into performance conversations. Goal alignment software can help managers leave tangible reminders of the importance of each team member’s contributions or give kudos to recognize a job well done.

Managing hybrid employees is more complex than managing all remote or all in-office workers:

70% of a team’s engagement comes from managers, according to a Gallup study.

Encourage each team to develop fair cadences that can apply to the whole group. For example, one team may decide that all check-ins happen over the phone or via videoconference to accommodate fully remote employees. In contrast, another team’s hybrid schedule may allow each member to have the same number of in-person check-ins.
Flex on How

Flexibility is one of the benefits of a hybrid model. When developing performance norms for your hybrid office, give people appropriate levels of freedom in terms of when and where they work. Sixty-five percent of respondents to a recent Zoom survey said that hybrid work is their ideal work model. Of that 65%, 33% favored spending more time in the office, while 32% favored spending more time working remotely.

| 65% of respondents said that hybrid work is their ideal work model | 33% favored spending more time in the office | 32% favored spending more time working remotely |

You can set basic guidelines — perhaps asking employees to come into the office two or three days per week — but respect their ability to decide where they work best on specific tasks. In the past, managers have favored in-person work because they feel like they can see team members at work. However, that approach may also lead to a false sense of complacency.

Managers must shift from simply measuring hours worked to measuring tangible outcomes of work.
Novartis, for instance, has shifted work from “manager-approved” to “manager-informed” work processes, where employees choose how they work best, as long as they communicate their preferences to leadership. Cloud-based task and goal management software can help managers transparently track task completion and goal achievement, whether employees log in remotely or from the office.

Avoid requiring employees to come in for work that they could perform well remotely. Consider the impact COVID-19 has had on women in the workplace.

26% Women are **26% more likely** to seek remote work, often because they’re more burdened with child care.

In a hybrid environment, flexibility gives women in your workforce more options for developing their careers. When working in person, take advantage of that time to:

→ accelerate problem-solving
→ achieve goal alignment
→ develop discussions

Encourage managers and their reports to collaborate on how work is done in continuous performance conversations. For example, if a miscommunication sent a project off-track in its early stages, it might be helpful for that employee to work in person with colleagues at the beginning of the next project to kick it off right. Dedicate structured time toward collaboration and innovation, such as focused brainstorming sessions, and use unstructured in-office time for check-ins and office hours.
In a hybrid environment, you can’t assume messages will be received by everyone in the same way. Create systems that support intentional communication across the whole team through multiple channels. Be mindful of what you’re sharing “in passing” with people in person, and build in touch points to keep everyone in the loop regardless of where they work on a given day.

Create channels, through Slack or another communication hub, for remote employees to engage in informal communication, too. Goal alignment and project management software can help you record important interactions, along with periodic (monthly or quarterly) all-hands meetings.

Every team meeting should have a clear agenda, which benefits on-site and remote workers. Goal alignment streamlines meetings and creates clear paths to problem resolution. Employees bring problems directly to their managers, who clear the roadblock to enable performance. If managers can’t resolve

Wherever employees are working from on any given day, track and prioritize their progress toward goals continuously, and make sure they have the tools and skills needed to meet those goals. This might mean providing:

- enhanced technology from home offices
- offering access to digital learning subscriptions

For equity’s sake, think of your workforce as fully remote when creating access to tools and resources. Everything an employee needs to do their job should be accessible from a remote location.

Goal alignment software can help managers and employees track progress toward goals and quickly identify any roadblocks. Those reports can be accessed remotely as easily as they can be accessed on-site.

Double Down on Communication

In a hybrid environment, you can’t assume messages will be received by everyone in the same way. Create systems that support intentional communication across the whole team through multiple channels. Be mindful of what you’re sharing “in passing” with people in person, and build in touch points to keep everyone in the loop regardless of where they work on a given day.

Create channels, through Slack or another communication hub, for remote employees to engage in informal communication, too. Goal alignment and project management software can help you record important interactions, along with periodic (monthly or quarterly) all-hands meetings.

Every team meeting should have a clear agenda, which benefits on-site and remote workers. Goal alignment streamlines meetings and creates clear paths to problem resolution. Employees bring problems directly to their managers, who clear the roadblock to enable performance. If managers can’t resolve

Wherever employees are working from on any given day, track and prioritize their progress toward goals continuously, and make sure they have the tools and skills needed to meet those goals. This might mean providing:

- enhanced technology from home offices
- offering access to digital learning subscriptions

For equity’s sake, think of your workforce as fully remote when creating access to tools and resources. Everything an employee needs to do their job should be accessible from a remote location.

Goal alignment software can help managers and employees track progress toward goals and quickly identify any roadblocks. Those reports can be accessed remotely as easily as they can be accessed on-site.

Double Down on Communication

In a hybrid environment, you can’t assume messages will be received by everyone in the same way. Create systems that support intentional communication across the whole team through multiple channels. Be mindful of what you’re sharing “in passing” with people in person, and build in touch points to keep everyone in the loop regardless of where they work on a given day.

Create channels, through Slack or another communication hub, for remote employees to engage in informal communication, too. Goal alignment and project management software can help you record important interactions, along with periodic (monthly or quarterly) all-hands meetings.

Every team meeting should have a clear agenda, which benefits on-site and remote workers. Goal alignment streamlines meetings and creates clear paths to problem resolution. Employees bring problems directly to their managers, who clear the roadblock to enable performance. If managers can’t resolve

Wherever employees are working from on any given day, track and prioritize their progress toward goals continuously, and make sure they have the tools and skills needed to meet those goals. This might mean providing:

- enhanced technology from home offices
- offering access to digital learning subscriptions

For equity’s sake, think of your workforce as fully remote when creating access to tools and resources. Everything an employee needs to do their job should be accessible from a remote location.

Goal alignment software can help managers and employees track progress toward goals and quickly identify any roadblocks. Those reports can be accessed remotely as easily as they can be accessed on-site.

Double Down on Communication

In a hybrid environment, you can’t assume messages will be received by everyone in the same way. Create systems that support intentional communication across the whole team through multiple channels. Be mindful of what you’re sharing “in passing” with people in person, and build in touch points to keep everyone in the loop regardless of where they work on a given day.

Create channels, through Slack or another communication hub, for remote employees to engage in informal communication, too. Goal alignment and project management software can help you record important interactions, along with periodic (monthly or quarterly) all-hands meetings.

Every team meeting should have a clear agenda, which benefits on-site and remote workers. Goal alignment streamlines meetings and creates clear paths to problem resolution. Employees bring problems directly to their managers, who clear the roadblock to enable performance. If managers can’t resolve
the issue, they’ll take it to peers and leaders in a daily standup for resolution. This allows you to limit attendance at meetings to those who need to be there and allow optional attendance for employees with specific questions.

When you do gather people together, practice fair meeting etiquette for a hybrid workplace. Respect how team members want to show up and how they can show up best. For instance, the Zoom survey reveals that 61% of workers prefer to join remotely for large meetings while only 31% want to participate in person. But for small team project meetings, the results were almost evenly split between those logging in remotely (49%) and those joining from the office (51%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoom Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Team Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Team Meetings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Giving employees the choice of how to show up can create a more inclusive environment and better performance outcomes.

Consider employees with disabilities, for example, who may find participating in meetings easier remotely, where they have access to supportive communication tools. These mixed preferences will result in some attendees joining remotely while some are in the office. For these situations, appoint a moderator to call on virtual participants and make sure they have an opportunity to speak.

Team meetings help keep everyone aligned in a hybrid environment, but they aren’t the only way to do so.
Empower Your Workforce to Reach Its Full Potential

Cultivating healthy dynamics among hybrid teams is as important as making logistical, real estate, and workforce safety decisions. With a strategy for performance enablement in place, your teams will be able to collaborate on each other’s goals, cementing a sense of connection — even when they’re logging in from different locations.

Whether in-person or remote, employees will feel connected to the organization if they have a line of sight into how their contributions support larger strategic objectives.

The ability to work flexibly empowers employees to discover how they work best toward achieving their goals. In a hybrid environment, team members can choose to work remotely for periods of focused work or to join others in the office for collaborative sessions and interactions. Giving them the flexibility to find the right cadence for their own work is a simple but powerful method for helping team members reach their full potential.

Keeping hybrid team members in the loop is tricky, but consistent communication between managers and team members maintains alignment and engagement among hybrid teams. And if you’re intentional about meetings and check-ins, then you’ll be able to seamlessly capture performance data on everyone’s progress — empowering you and your employees to thrive in a hybrid environment.
Betterworks closes the loop between people, strategy, and results, enabling organizations to align even their most sprawling, dynamic teams. Industry leaders such as Intuit, Freddie Mac, Asurion, Udemy, Vertiv, HCSC, and the University of Phoenix rely on Betterworks to accelerate strategic growth by supporting transparent goal-setting, enabling continuous performance, and gleaning real-time employee engagement insights.

Betterworks is backed by Kleiner Perkins and Emergence Capital. John Doerr, iconic investor, OKR pioneer and author of New York Times Best Seller “Measure What Matters,” is a board member, and Josh Bersin, global HR thought leader, serves as an advisor.

For more information, visit www.betterworks.com or contact us today.