

swipedon

Hybrid &  
Flexible  
Working:

Work isn't a place we go,  
it's something we do.

The SwipedOn Guide to Adapting to  
the Changing World of Work.

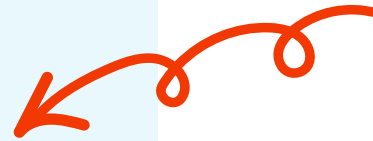


# Setting the Scene: The Workplace Revolution

As the clock struck midnight and we moved from 2019 into 2020, very few people could have predicted the massive global changes that were about to unfold. By March 2020, many businesses were forced to adopt a remote-only work model almost overnight thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic that was spreading across the globe.

After a wild year, it seemed like 2021 might be better as we cautiously moved forward, but similar challenges persisted. And as employees adapted to [working remotely](#) and improved their work-life balance, many decided that they wanted to retain some elements of “the new normal” in some capacity, at least.

Most people would have heard about the benefits of hybrid work: It has resulted in a better work-life balance and improved productivity for many employees. But on the flip side, much has also been said about the potential struggles for employees as well, like feeling isolated from the office environment and their colleagues.



We won't sugar coat it - adopting a new approach isn't without significant challenges. It requires examining your current business model from the top down: processes, office space, communication strategies, and employee wellbeing.

However, once you tackle these issues, there is light at the end of the tunnel: higher levels of collaboration and innovation, with happier and more engaged employees with a better work-life balance (it's amazing what not having to deal with a commute can do).

We put together this eBook to help you solve some of the common issues with hybrid working agreements with actionable tips to give you the best chance of success in the long run. So let's get started!

# Let's Get Started



## O1

Why the Hybrid & Flexible Revolution is gaining momentum

## O2

Common challenges to be aware of

## O3

Tips for creating a successful Hybrid Office

## O4

Hybrid Work is here to stay. Will you adapt?



# 01

## Why Hybrid and Flexible working?

### **The world was already moving in this direction.**

Flexible work is nothing new. Even pre-COVID-19 (ah, remember those days?), the world was moving toward more people working remotely, either for companies or themselves.

The research backs this up; in January 2020, [GetApp](#) revealed that remote work increased almost four times during the 2010s. Even then, before most countries had gone into lock down, many people reported working outside the office at least some of the time. The vast majority did so at least once per month, with over a third doing so each week.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, several prominent industry reports have been released looking at employees' attitudes towards flexible working agreements in the future. Spoiler alert: they're overwhelmingly in favor and businesses need to adapt (like, ASAP).

In 2020, Slack found that over 70% of their employees said they'd like a [hybrid working agreement](#). In January 2022, the Future Forum Pulse [survey](#) revealed that desires for flexibility in working agreements still remained high across a variety of ethnic backgrounds in the US.

# Give the people what they want



72% of participants who weren't happy with the flexibility in their current job said they planned to look for a new one in the next 12 months (If that's not motivation to get on board, we don't know what is).

When looking at the benefits of hybrid work, it's not difficult to see why so many people want more flexible agreements. Sometimes, it's as simple as not needing to face the morning commute. Did you know that in 2021, Londoners spent an average of 148 hours sitting in traffic? Moscow, Paris, and Brussels also lost over 100 hours. Delays like these add unnecessary stress to people's lives, making them less likely to perform well before the day has even begun (Source [INRIX](#)).

But that's not the only reason more employees are searching for more flexible work. In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on the importance of work-life balance. We only have a finite amount of time in our days.

If we focus too heavily on work, something else tends to suffer—and most of the time, it's time with family and friends that falls to the wayside. [This](#) Reed study found that 60% of participants feel they have enhanced their work-life balance since being allowed to adopt a [hybrid work agreement](#).

Allowing employees to work from their chosen location not only increases employee satisfaction and wellbeing but can also lower your operating costs. When you successfully adopt a hybrid working agreement, you have an opportunity to examine your office space use and potentially downsize.

Hybrid work can also help the bottom line with increased staff productivity levels. [Upwork](#) found that hybrid working improved productivity in 61% of cases. With better output, you can improve your services—and ultimately increase revenue.

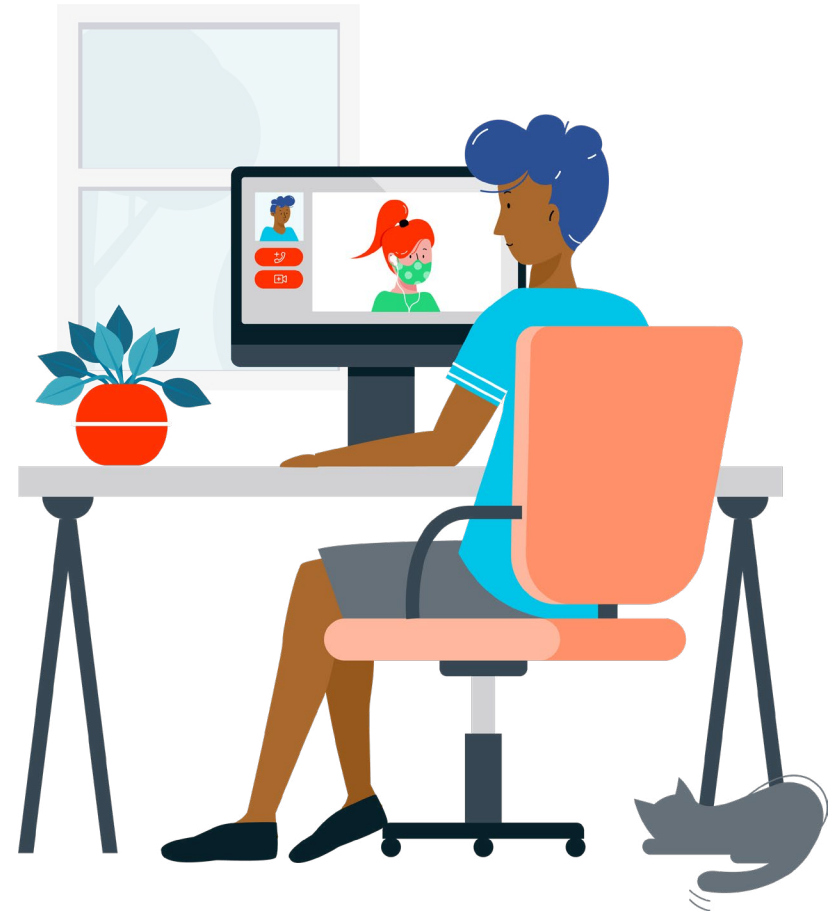
# If it's good enough for them...

**Many of the worlds biggest companies have already started preparing for the hybrid future.**

The music streaming giant, Spotify, has implemented a "work from anywhere" program. The strategy looks like this:

- During the interview phase, employees indicate the region they want to work from. Spotify will determine whether this is possible.
- Employees choose whether they want to work in the office, from a co working space, or at home.

Another example is the tech giant [Microsoft](#), who announced in 2021 that employees are able to work remotely for up to half of their work-week, giving them a degree of flexibility that isn't possible everywhere.



# 02

## Common Challenges



We would be lying if we said everything in flexible work is sunshine and rainbows. Of course there are associated challenges and if these aren't acknowledged, you could be setting yourself up for failure in the long run.

### Physical & Mental Health:

One of the biggest challenges for employees working remotely is the feeling of being isolated. With two years of remote working under our belts already, research has shown the impact that working away from the office can have when left unchecked.

The UK was one of the countries hit hardest by the pandemic. [Finder](#) revealed that 30.9% of British employees said they struggle with

loneliness when working away from the office. Loneliness can have several knock-on effects, including lower levels of motivation and not feeling a sense of belonging at their company, possibly leading to dissatisfaction in other areas of their life.

Working from home can also have an impact on physical health and well-being, not having the proper resources like a good chair and monitor can lead to back and eye problems from sitting too long or incorrectly.

Ensure employees have the tools they need to work their best at home too and consider encouraging an active lifestyle with team challenges (did someone say Step-tember?) and incentives.

## Network & Data Security:

When your staff are based in a centralized office location, it's a lot easier to control which network employees use. With flexible working agreements, that becomes more of a challenge—and the consequences can be huge if you aren't careful.

Compared to 2020, in 2021, [data breach costs](#) rose by 10%. And for companies where remote work was a factor, the cost was over \$1 million higher.

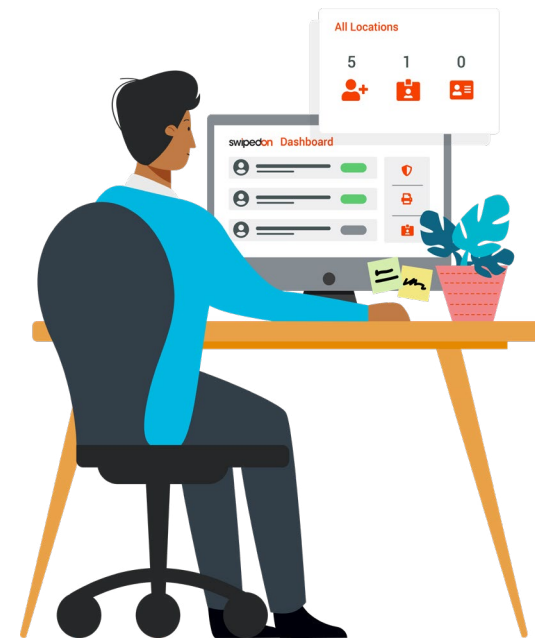
Security breaches can have significant consequences. The recovery period can last for months and you also risk your industry reputation—especially if information like visitor data, is compromised as a result.



## Managing the Workplace:

Adopting a hybrid working agreement means you'll likely have to think harder about your workspace management processes than you have in the past.

When your team works from multiple locations, you should try to [ensure everyone knows where their colleagues are](#); whether they're in the office or working from a different location, and when and how they might be available for communication and collaboration.





## Cooperation:

The key to a successful team is simple: cooperation and when teams are spread out, connecting and collaborating can be difficult.

Keeping track of projects can be challenging if team members are working across different time zones—or outside standard working hours. Not having suitable systems in place only makes this more difficult.

Implementing a system with a digital employee in-out board is a simple way to gain visibility of who is and isn't in the office or available.

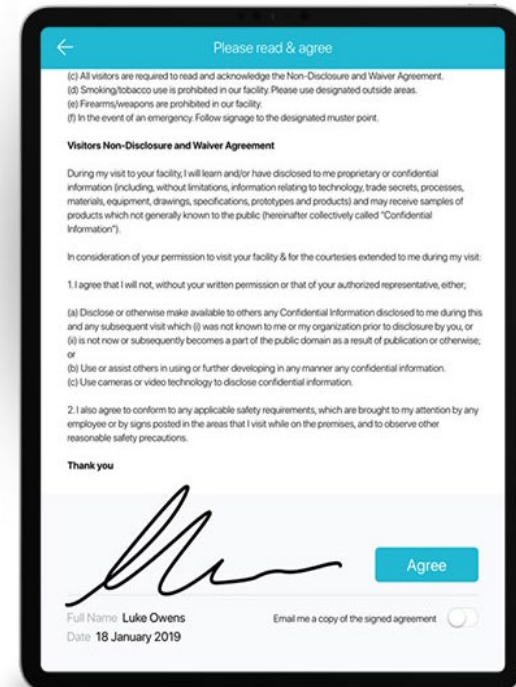
With SwipedOn, employees can use the dedicated employee app; [SwipedOn Pocket](#) to show whether they're working remotely, at a meeting, or out for lunch with the swipe of a screen.

Besides helping to keep team members connected, having a digital workplace sign in system plays an essential role when it comes to evacuations and emergencies. Those in charge of the [evacuation protocol](#) can easily identify who is in the building—and where—and provide this vital information to first responders.

## Regulatory Compliance:

As technology continues to develop, regulations will be ever changing to try and keep up.

Some companies have seen their business models challenged and have had to adapt to adhere to new regulations. For example, in California, if your business does not comply with the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), you could receive a \$2,500 fine for each breach—and \$7,500 if found that you intended to break the law.



# 03

## Creating a successful hybrid office culture

So far, we've seen why flexible working models are beneficial for businesses and employees, and some of the biggest challenges. Let's look at some of the ways you can handle these.

### **Foster Communication:**

When your team is working remotely, it's essential that they know which platforms they should use for what. Before putting flexible agreements into place, ensure that your team clearly understands how they will communicate. A [workplace sign in system](#) can be used to see who's online and where and determine the appropriate way to communicate. When there are clear systems in place, employees can focus their energy on more important tasks.

Try your best to ensure that team communication actually does include all team members (we know how common those corridor or water cooler chats can be in the office). One way to help create a more level playing field is to encourage in-office team members to use the agreed channels for work-related conversations (again, Slack and Teams channels are a great way to do this).

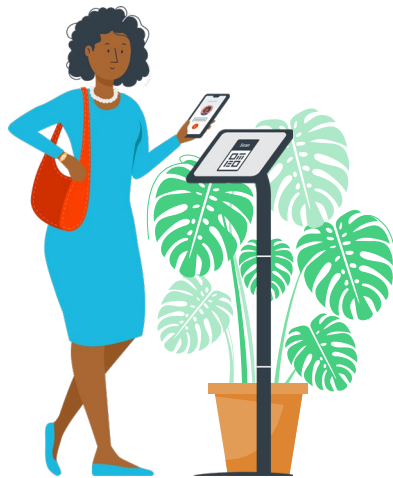


## Simplify Your Sign In:

Even if some team members choose to work remotely permanently, this isn't going to be the case for everyone.

When employees come into the office, it's helpful to remove as much friction as possible from mundane tasks (like clocking in). The easiest way to simplify your sign in is by investing in a dedicated solution like SwipedOn.

The SwipedOn workplace sign in solution allows visitors and employees to sign in contactlessly via QR code. Even better, you avoid having to constantly replace lost key cards or manage passcodes.



## Evaluate Your Office Space:

A key element of a successful hybrid office is using your space well. Establish areas for private work and others for meetings (in-person and video conferencing). If a large number of team

members choose to work remotely, consider reallocating office space, downsizing can help you save on office costs.

With fewer employees having a permanent desk in the office, hot desking is an efficient approach to managing numbers. [Desk booking software](#) can help to ensure that spaces are available as expected and provide an overview of who is and isn't supposed to be in.

## Prioritize Employee Wellbeing:

Employee well-being and safety are two of the most important aspects of operating a successful hybrid office.

With employees working remotely, be sure that they have all the resources to be productive and safe. These resources include a strong internet connection, adequate equipment, and a safe work environment.

Rewards and recognition programs are another way to show your employees that you care about their well-being, especially for employees who often may not meet face-to-face with other employees.

# Hybrid Work Is Here To Stay. Will You Adapt?



The future of work can be exciting and daunting; whichever is more applicable to you depends on how you look at it. There are plenty of opportunities for those willing to adapt and hybrid working agreements could be a win-win for you and your employees.

Flexible working agreements can improve employee happiness and productivity while also increasing your bottom line—if they're done correctly. Not offering adequate support may end up with employees who are burned out, lonely, and unmotivated.

Fortunately, developing a functional flexible working agreement is easier than you might think—as long as you prepare in advance and investing in the right software is a great place to start.

## See for yourself:

SwipedOn offers a flexible and complete workspace sign in solution customized to fit your business needs.

If you're looking to implement a hybrid/flexible work model, [book a demo](#) or try a [14-day FREE trial](#) to see how we can help.

[www.swipedon.com](http://www.swipedon.com)



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