



WHITEPAPER

Working successfully in hybrid teams

2. Edition

Background and tips for practice

A publication by Tink Tank Coworking
and Commha Consulting in Heidelberg,
Germany





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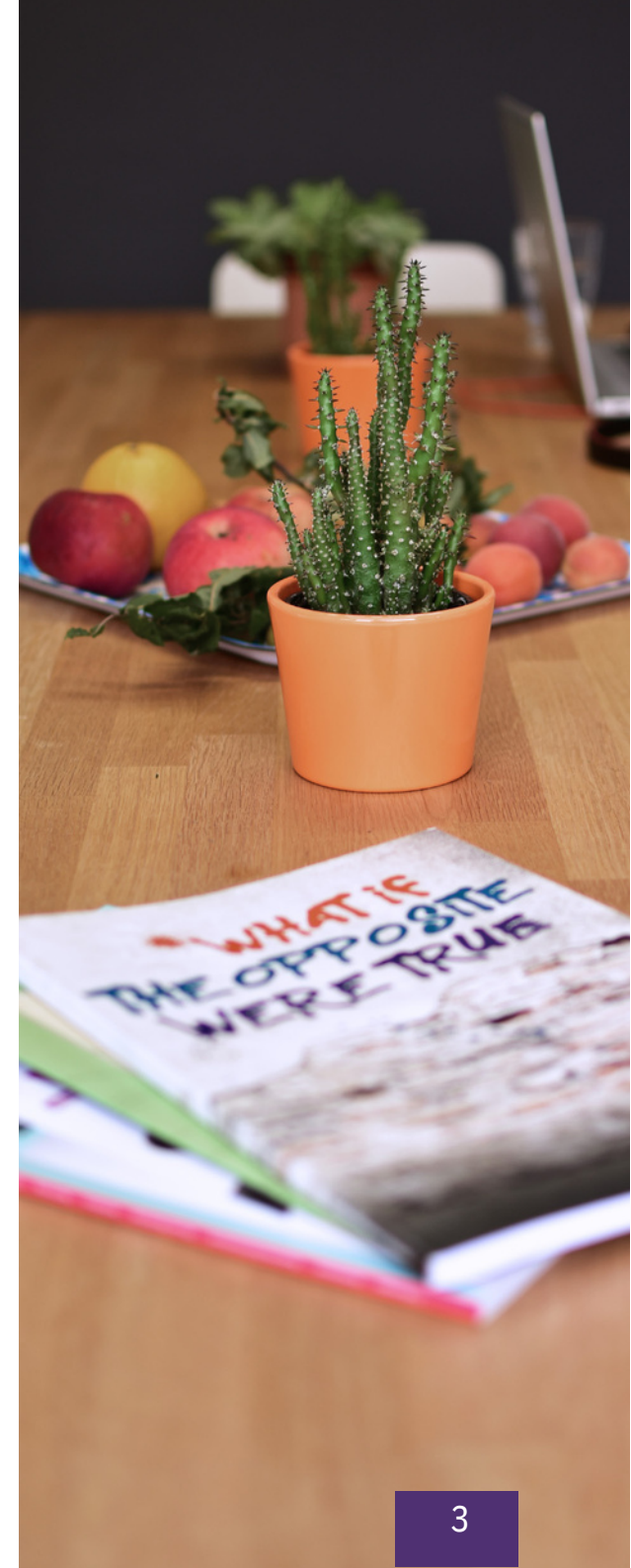
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Introduction

The future is hybrid

Let's take this to the extreme: in 2040, only a fraction of the population will leave the house in the morning to drive to work. The garbage collector will come in a self-driving vehicle with robotic support, all equipment in the laboratory can be operated by remote control, students will learn in virtual events, the excavator operator will operate her machine via the joystick on her desk, the surgeon will operate from home, the doctor will hold telesurgery hours and managers will be coached by apps. You meet your colleagues a few times a year at the summer party, at the strategy meeting and at the team workshop. Is this a brave new world or rather a dystopia? One thing is clear: **The future belongs to teams and organizations that can optimally master hybrid forms of collaboration.**

In the future, digitization will allow almost total spatial and temporary decentralization of teams in many areas. We argue that organizations are not yet sufficiently prepared for this development - and by this we do not (only) mean the lack of conference technology or the right equipment for the home office, but an attitude toward cooperation that understands work (work) spaces as a social structure that needs to be shaped.

«The future belongs to organisations that optimally master hybrid forms of collaboration.»

In extreme cases, the organizations' hunger for efficiency and striving for effectiveness are in conflict with the desire for the greatest possible flexibilization and consideration of the individual preferences of employees.

Spaces for collaborative experience bridge the gap between these two poles, for example through targeted joint events, be they bar camps or hackathons. Managers become bridge builders who shape these new forms of togetherness.

Reinhard Sprenger already wrote in 2018 in "Radikal Digital": "Today, digitization demands completely new forms of collaboration from employees: cross-organizational, cross-functional, cross-departmental. The boundaries between companies are opening up.

"Collaboration is being relearned in times of hybrid teams."

The central questions of this white paper are accordingly:

- How does social interaction work when there is no or hardly any physical space left for it?
- What do managers have to do in this context?
- How can teams be supported in hybrid collaboration?
- What concrete measures can help?
- How can the advantages of hybrid forms of work be best exploited?

We shed light on the challenges posed by (partially) decentralized work and describe the prerequisites for successful hybrid collaboration. We ask about the success factors of successful hybrid meetings. In addition, we take a look at the 'office of the future' and invite you to participate in a thought experiment.

«Decentralization is in full swing.»

Work from anywhere

In the future, I would like to have the opportunity to work from anywhere. Regardless of the company location.

Agree
Disagree

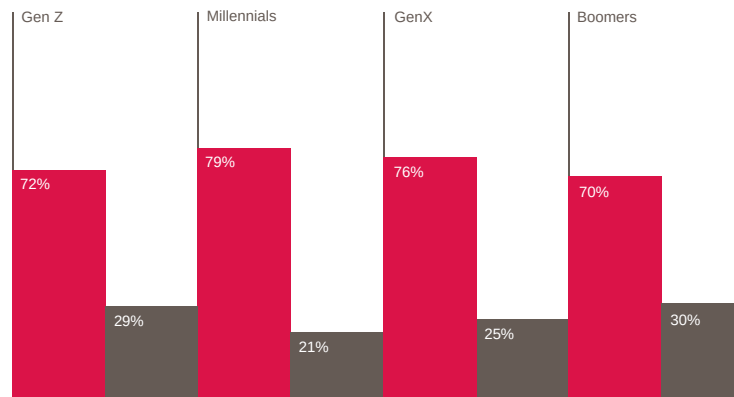


Figure 1:

According to the "Jabra Hybrid Ways of Working: 2021 Global Report," 59% of knowledge workers surveyed say flexibility is more important to them than salary and other employee benefits.³

56 %

According to a study by the Institute for Applied Social Science and the IFO Center for Industrial Economics and New Technologies 56 % of jobs in Germany could be shifted at least in part to the home office.

Dr. Carmen Faust-Ellsäßer
Group Manager Architecture &
Design Elements

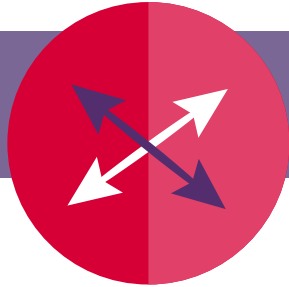
Robert Bosch GmbH



«"For me, the commute is rather long at forty minutes, and I have two small children, so I really appreciate the flexibility of the home office. However, I also appreciate the direct and personal exchange on site. That's why the hybrid approach is the desired model for me. We are currently working out in the team what the concrete design of our hybrid model should look like."»

TEAM WORK

Hybrid Team



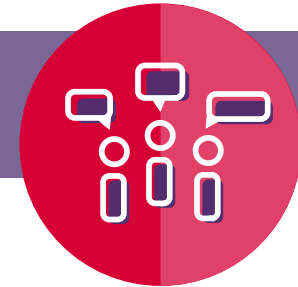
A hybrid team is a group of employees working towards a common goal, whose members are free to choose their work location as needed. Some of the members work at one or more fixed locations (offices), while others work flexibly at so-called remote locations, for example from home or in a coworking space. In practice, this means that at least one person in the team works at a different location. If everyone is working at different locations, it is a virtual team. Alternatively, a team can also be described as a hybrid team, which is sometimes virtual and sometimes present at the same location.

Virtual Teams



A virtual team usually refers to a team whose members work on a common goal from different locations - often across national borders or boundaries within the company. Often, the members operate in different time zones. In contrast to a hybrid team, the locations of the individual team members may be fixed. For example, if a company has one location in Asia, one in South America and one in Europe, and puts together a cross-location team, it is a virtual team, but not a hybrid team, unless the employees can freely choose their work location. In contrast to a hybrid team, a virtual team rarely or never meets physically.

Coworking



In coworking, people from different companies work permanently or temporarily in a shared office. They work independently of each other or join forces for projects, and in any case benefit from exchanging ideas with each other in the shared premises. The coworkers share infrastructure such as printers, projectors and coffee machines. The main advantage is the spatial and temporal flexibility of coworking spaces, which can also be used by coworkers at short notice, depending on their needs.

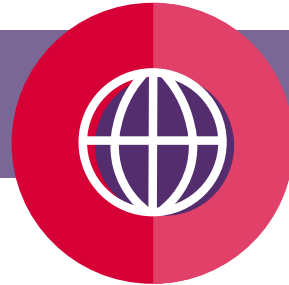
REMOTE WORK

Homeoffice



Home office means that employees work within their own four walls or in a private environment. The term is often used synonymously with the terms teleworking or mobile working. In the case of occasional work in a home office, however, the legislator applies less stringent standards, for example with regard to furniture and work equipment, than in the case of teleworking.

Mobile Working



With mobile working, employees work for their company regardless of location - sometimes at home, sometimes in the office, sometimes in a coworking space and sometimes at another location of their company. They may or may not have a fixed workplace at these locations. The most important difference to home office or telecommuting is that the employer has no or only few requirements as to where work is done.

Telework



Teleworking is a form of work in which employees work for their company away from the workplace. Teleworking is clearly regulated by law in Germany; requirements are set out in the Workplace Ordinance.

«Home office means that employees work in their own homes or private environment.»

Advantages and Challenges



In the area of conflict between the need for presence and flexibility

Our collaboration has changed permanently. There is no going back to a culture of presence, as was the norm in many companies until the beginning of 2020. On the other hand, many employees have settled into a home office and now want to decide for themselves whether and when they come into the office.

So how can the **advantages of virtual and analog collaboration be combined into a hybrid form?**

Successful hybrid working in the long term requires reflection on the part of managers and teams as well as a controlled process.

Teams need time - and managers need patience -

until new forms of work have become established and the defined processes and regulations have become second nature.

A look at the **tension between advantages and challenges** provides clues for this process of reflection and control:



Anna Herb
Consultant for Communication and Collaboration, Commha Consulting

"Presence needs a new meaning in companies. On the one hand, many employees still associate presence with a nostalgic memory of old working habits and thus with a collaboration to which there is no return. On the other hand, the word presence today has a weight attached to it that comes from somewhere between going to the office, the perceived inefficiency of informal conversations, and leaving one's comfort zone. So I think: We need a new value of presence in companies. As an occasion to be creative together, as a chance to feel connected to colleagues and corporate culture, and as an opportunity to expand one's own perception, reduced by virtual collaboration, to include other perspectives."

“

WORKPLACE



Advantages

- The work location can be adapted to **personal or situational needs** (e.g., home office for high concentration, flexible office for brainstorming or workstation in the coffee kitchen to maintain contacts).
- **Less space required** saves costs.

Challenges

- The **requirements for office equipment** and design are increasing.
- Existing **specifications**, e.g., on the equipment of office workplaces and the presence in the office, should be **reviewed**.
- Employees need **mobile equipment; investments** in office equipment in the home office may be necessary.

Reflection questions

- What kind of work do we do, **what places do we need** for it?
- How do we design these places? How do we involve employees in the **design process**?
- How do we create **transparency about the place and time of work**?
- What offers do we make to employees who can only work from **one place**?

WORKING TIME



Advantages

- Employees can work when it makes sense for them (e.g., during off-peak hours and independently of deadlines); this **flexibility** increases **satisfaction** and the compatibility of the job with private life.

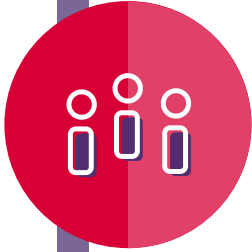
Challenges

- **Asynchronous work**: Team members do not work at the same time.
- **Decision-making processes** change when feedback is given at different times.
- **Existing specifications**, e.g., on working hours defined within the framework of company agreements, must be checked.

Reflection questions

- Do **core times** make sense for our team?
- When do we want to work **synchronously**?
- Which **decision-making processes** require synchronous coordination, and what works well asynchronously?
- How do we organize **asynchronous collaboration**? Which **structures, processes and tools** support us in this?
- Which **specifications** should be adapted?

PERSONAL EXCHANGE



Advantages

- Personal meetings have a **high value**. Personal exchange becomes an integral part of our work.
- New **collaboration forms** with their own dynamics are emerging, for example through **social intranet solutions, internal social networks or virtual exchange formats**.

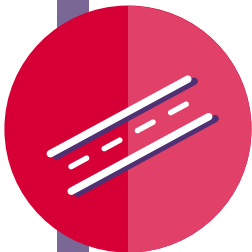
Challenges

- The uncomplicated, **spontaneous personal exchange is becoming rarer**. This increases the need for coordination; encounters require planning.
- **Perspectives** on one's own work and the company become narrower when the chance exchange with colleagues is eliminated.
- **Learning by copying** is made more difficult when teams only meet physically on an irregular basis.

Reflection questions

- When is **presence** worthwhile for us and when is it not?
- How do we encourage **spontaneous, chance encounters and community experiences**?
- Which **collaboration tools** support us in **staying in touch** asynchronously and decentrally?
- What **alternative learning spaces** can we create?
- What types of workspaces do we need to promote teamwork and structured **spontaneity**?

COMMUTING AND TRAVEL TIMES



Advantages

- Less commuting **saves time** and **reduces environmental impact**.
- If you don't switch between buildings and meeting rooms, you save time and your **work becomes more efficient**.

Challenges

- Virtual meetings are often tightly scheduled, resulting in **higher workloads** and **fewer breaks**.

Reflection questions

- How do employees get a **break from work**?
- How do we ensure that all colleagues can take **breaks between meetings**?

TRAVEL



Advantages

- The need for business travel is declining. This saves time, money and ecological resources.

Challenges

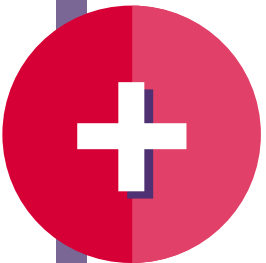
- **Know-how of the situation** on site is lost.
- Personal meetings become less frequent (see "Personal exchange").

Reflection questions

- When do we still travel?
- When is it worth **investing in face-to-face meetings?**

«Perspectives on one's own work and the company narrow when casual interactions with colleagues are eliminated.»

HEALTH



Advantages

- **Private and professional life** can be **better integrated** if employees can choose their work location and time flexibly.

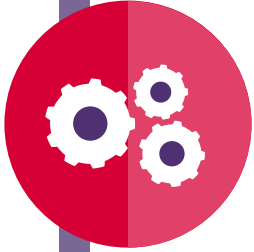
Challenges

- Some employees might find it **difficult to switch off**.
- The time gained is taken up by **coordination work** or new tools. The 'leisure stress' increases.

Reflection questions

- How can we **use the time gained meaningfully** for us as an organization/team/employees?
- How do we provide **space for regeneration?**
- How do we help to put an **end to the workday?** What rules do we give ourselves?
- How do we support **mindfulness** for our own needs and those of our colleagues?

TECHNOLOGY



Advantages

- Many new tools enable **collaborative work** (video conferencing systems, whiteboards, social intranets, etc.).

Challenges

- Employees need a high degree of **technical understanding and motivation to learn** in order to be able to work well at the speed of innovation.
- Technology is **error-prone**, alternative solutions cost time.

Reflection questions

- Which tools are really necessary, which are not?
- How do we integrate new solutions into our existing **infrastructure**?
- How can we **meet the technical** needs of all our colleagues?

COMMUNICATION



Advantages

- **More communication channels** are available (on-site meetings, personal chat or group chat, etc.).
- **Communication** is increasingly shifting to the virtual. The written form dominates.
- **Internal communication** is becoming more relevant.

Challenges

- Employees on site may have a head start in terms of information (**grapevine**).
- The abundance of communication channels can be **overwhelming**.
- It takes a lot of **trust** to be able to address difficult issues across the virtual distance.
- If additional overtones through voice or gestures are missing, asynchronous written communication can lead to **misunderstandings**.

Reflection questions

- Which **communication channels** do we need?
- How do we organize the **flow of communication**?
- What is our **netiquette**?



Even when everyone is busy with their own tasks, being present in the shared space allows for community and trust.

Requirements

Fit for hybrid

How well does your organization already work hybrid?
Answer our questions and get an initial overview.



«Hybrid working should also be reflected in the office concept.»

Tasks

Do the tasks that our organization performs allow for hybrid forms of working without any problems?

- Which tasks can be designed in such a way that hybrid working becomes possible - at least to a certain extent?
- Are there machines to be operated or customer inquiries to be handled on site?
- Are there files that have so far only been accessible in the office?
- How do I create transparency about the pending tasks and their status?
- How does the organization deal with this transparency?

OFFICE CONCEPT

Is our office concept suitable for hybrid working?

- * Can workplaces in the organization be used flexibly by different employees?
- * Do we have premises where people can work together temporarily in one place?
- * Is the working environment designed in such a way that even office drudges feel comfortable on site?
- ** How can rooms be booked?
What options do employees have in terms of remote collaboration?
- * And what about your own desk? Do we need to gain distance from it?

OUR TIP:

"Of course, you can also become a successful hybrid organization if all employees have fixed desks and offices. However, you then maintain office capacities that are no longer needed, at least in parts. And: hybrid working means working from different locations - this should be reflected in your office concept, at least in part."

OUR TIP:

"You can recognize such a culture, for example, by the fact that working hours and attendance are not controlled by superiors, and employees or teams can freely choose working hours or agree on them among themselves. People and their needs are more important than processes; rules are limited to the bare essentials and, ideally, have even been adopted collectively."

CULTURE

Does a culture of trust prevail in our organization?

How do we recognize a culture of trust in our company?
What has a community-building effect in our team? How do we promote identification?
On what occasions do we come together as a team?
What incentives provide for personal exchange?
How do we ensure that employees who work primarily at home are not left out of promotions, information flows, etc.?

AGREEMENT ON WORKING MODELS

Is there clarity about which working time and working location models are generally possible or desirable?

What are the regulations on working hours/locations?

How is work abroad regulated?

Are job rotations or changes conceivable?



DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE & TECHNOLOGY

Does our digital infrastructure support hybrid forms of work?

- Are employees equipped with laptops, headsets, etc.?
- Do we have conferencing systems that enable all participants of hybrid meetings to be heard and seen?
- Can they use them to access data from the organization from anywhere?
- Have we established structures that allow teams to see, who is currently present where?
- Do our processes function largely digitally, e.g., paperless?
- Do we have a functioning enterprise social network?

OUR TIP:

"The technical equipment does not have to be expensive, but should cover some functionalities: The camera should cover the entire room. A conference system with a 360-degree camera, microphone and loudspeaker is ideal. The device is placed in the center of the table so that the camera can focus on the speaker in the room. Additional advantage: The participants in the room do not address the screen when they speak to each other, but speak to each other naturally and are still seen and heard by the virtual participants. This creates a real sense of community in the hybrid setting."

OUR TIP:

"Community is an intrinsic human need. And organizations are not only workplaces, but also spaces for relationships. They create belonging. People need opportunities to get to know each other and come together. When two colleagues sit in the office, this happens almost automatically over time - in hybrid organizations, direct interpersonal contact is reduced. If this contact is missing, it makes it more difficult to learn by imitation and to create an (organizational) culture that is experienced as meaningful. When designing your meeting spaces, there are no limits to your imagination: whether it's rituals such as company celebrations, learning formats or regular joint lunch breaks - it's best to let your employees help decide what direct contact should look like. That way, you also give coincidence a chance - an important tool for innovation."

MEETING SPACES

Do we provide meeting spaces that encourage regular (physical) gatherings of at least parts of the organization?

- How do we allow belonging to develop when it is no longer linked to the place of activity?
- Where and how do we celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, etc.?
- Where is there space to tell colleagues about the weekend?
- Creating community - why is that so important?

CHANGE ACCOMPANIMENT

Do we systematically accompany the change to a hybrid organization?

- How do we involve employees in changes brought about by the hybrid working world?
- Where is there room for concerns, fears and ideas?
- How do we prepare managers for the change?

OUR TIP:

"If you are making the transition to a hybrid organization, it is advisable not to simply declare this change, but to understand it as a process that needs to be shaped. For example, teams or the entire organization can define rules as part of a change process as to what 'their' hybrid working model looks like - also to prevent the part of the employees in the office from always being better informed than those who work elsewhere. Give space for trial and error, run pilot projects and test what works well for your organization. For executives, coaching sessions are useful to guide the journey to a hybrid organization."

REFLECTION

Do we regularly discuss in our team and/or in the entire organization how to work together in the best possible way?

- Which new tools are helpful?
- Is our information flow working?
- What opportunities are there to openly address concerns or dissatisfactions?



«Community is an intrinsic human need - and organizations are not just work spaces, but relationship spaces as well»

«I have been living hybrid working since the turn of the millennium - due to the long distance between my home and the company headquarters. I have never found the mixture of home office and office disturbing, but always enriching. I am used to a high degree of self-organization, and conversely, I benefit from the flexibility of my home office, which leaves me enough time for my family. At Commha, we have long benefited from trust in each other and the self-organization of colleagues instead of unnecessary micromanagement.»



Johannes Dürr
Co-founder and partner of
Commha Consulting



«We now choose whether and how often we want to travel to a physical location - and, more importantly, for what purpose.»



REQUIREMENTS

How hybrid leadership succeeds

What role does the manager still have when everyone works when, where and - if we think of self-directed teams - possibly even on what they want? How can leadership and commitment to the company and the team succeed despite spatial separation?

The role of managers is to actively shape hybrid collaboration.

10 TIPS SHAPING HYBRID COLLABORATION

1. Live the new form of collaboration and actively encourage an exchange about future 'rules of the game' in the team.
2. Have an open ear - and an open door - when things don't run so smoothly.
3. Train your team in the use of tools and methods for digital and hybrid collaboration, e.g., by providing training on how to conduct hybrid meetings (see Chapter 5).
4. Establish a consensus in your team on times when work is synchronised, i.e., at the same time
5. Work out together when the team will meet physically or virtually and how you will fill these 'meeting points' with life. In this way, create a framework for what constitutes these special times of togetherness.



6. Empower your employees to lead themselves - also to maintain the flexibility for yourself to freely arrange working time and place.

7. Ensure that information flows within the team - even outside the coffee kitchen. You can use tools such as enterprise social networks for this purpose, as well as quick update meetings (dailies).

8. When training new colleagues, create space for personal exchange in addition to professional exchange.

9. Take into account the fact that not all jobs can be 'hybridized'. Look for other possibilities for flexibility, transparency and participation, for example through innovative shift models or a news app for private devices.

10. Give presence a new meaning. Employees who make their way to the office expect something to happen there that can't happen at home. So, add value to presence!

In this environment, managers themselves must also work on their leadership skills in a targeted manner. Fields that managers should address are:

Empathy skills - also via digital channels

Contact care

Establish visibility/perceived presence

Setting an example of values, being a role model

Shifting decision-making authority to the teams

Confidence in the willingness of employees to perform

Self-control and avoidance of the delimitation of working time as well as a look at one's own needs in the sense of: How much presence do I need as a manager? How much pure screen work is good for me?



FROM PRACTICE

Effective hybrid meetings, workshops and events

Anyone who works together in a hybrid way **simply cannot avoid hybrid meetings, workshops and events**. This has its advantages: For the colleagues on site, a shared experience is created. Nevertheless, events can be held across countries and locations without incurring travel costs and time. And even those who cannot be on site at short notice can be integrated.

However, facilitators of hybrid meetings face special challenges. While the conditions for all participants are the same in purely virtual meetings as in analog meetings, a **communication gap** arises in hybrid meetings. For example, the digital setting lacks direct eye contact as an important source of information for emotions and attention. The medial transmission through a camera and the possibly delayed transmission make it difficult to 'read' in the eyes of the other person.

The right **technology equipment** helps bridge some of this gap - but it takes more. People, who participate on the PC are cut off from the conversations 'in between'. They often feel like second-class participants. The colleagues on site, in turn, have to deal with questions of camera technology and room acoustics - stress arises. Only **good planning** and **respectful interaction between all participants** will bring success.

«The particular challenge for facilitators of hybrid meetings: Successfully bridging the communication gap between participants in the room and online.»

Participants at the PC have their camera turned on and are visible to all.

Camera shows all participants on site.

Whiteboard that can be accessed equally by everyone on site and on the PC.

For longer workshops: Don't forget food for the people on site.



Room clock

Maximum one PC in the room

Audio input or output device placed centrally.

OUR TOP 5 WILL HELP YOU MASTER HYBRID MEETINGS IN THE FUTURE.

Really hybrid?

1.

Make a **conscious decision to hold a hybrid meeting**. Purely virtual meetings, in which everyone participates on their own PC, or a face-to-face meeting are usually preferable to the hybrid form.

Clarify for yourself: **What do I expect from a hybrid meeting?**

Only choose a hybrid form if the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. After all, hybrid events are usually more time-consuming to organize and therefore more expensive. Especially for hybrid events you sometimes need a complex technical infrastructure if, for example, you opt for live streaming from an event hall or want to broadcast live from two locations.

2.

Is the technology up and running?

Plan a **briefing on the technology** for the colleagues who will participate together in presence. Train at least one participant on how your conference technology works. Do not assume that your equipment is self-explanatory. This is especially true for tools such as video conferencing systems and digital whiteboards.

In the meeting, explain to the participants once again how everything works. Depending on the **maturity level, more or less explanations are necessary**. Don't forget that new colleagues are often sitting in your meeting. Briefly guide them through important functions such as chat, 'raise your hand' or the organization of group rooms on site and virtually. In this way, you provide security!

Open up both virtual and real space in a timely manner. **Plan time to overcome technical hurdles**.

Have a **plan B** up your sleeve: Your conferencing tool stopped working? Or their whiteboard just gives up? The camera is failing? Think about what options you have if the technology fails.

HYBRID MEETING ETIQUETTE FOR PRESENCE PARTICIPANTS

- Do not have side conversations.
- Do not talk about the subject of the meeting if microphones and cameras are not open (everyone must always be able to hear everything).
- Only one person speaks at a time.
- Remote participants are asked first.
- As moderator verbalize the mood of the room to everyone.

Who is interrupting?

3.

When planning the meeting or workshop, **keep different attention spans in mind**: Those who participate via PC usually have a shorter attention span than those on site. You should therefore plan sufficient break times.

Ask all participants to put their **cell phones aside**. Employees working on a PC can also close their e-mail inbox or mute their microphone if there is any noise (e.g., construction site, children in the next room) to reduce distractions and interruptions.

Facilitation-ABC

4.

Define clear roles for the meeting: Who watches the rules? Who keeps track of the time? Who records the results? Who helps with technical problems? Who moderates or prepares the agenda? This **division of roles** is particularly relevant in hybrid meetings, as the moderator or facilitator cannot keep track of everything themselves. For co-moderation is indispensable for larger meetings.

Adapt your methods for the people on site and the people at the PC. Take advantage of the fact that people can interact in a room. For example, plan small group work so that people in the room work together in one group and people at the PC work together in another. Then mix it up again, for example by asking employees to get together in teams of two by cell phone. You can also **use 'analog' media in the room**, such as the good old flipchart, and integrate them into the digital environment, for example by taking a photo.

Small is also Talk

5.

Don't forget the interpersonal and give participants time to arrive. No on-site meeting can do without brief **interpersonal interaction**. In hybrid settings, this is often overlooked. For example, start the hybrid meeting with a short warm-up: How are the participants? What's on their minds right now? You can start with simple questions to get things started. Offer to open the room five minutes before the start of the meeting to allow for an 'arrival' and to clarify any final technical questions.





EXCOURSE

What we demand from our workplace today

I can remember my first workplace and my first office well. Back then, endless rows of desks or small, cramped rooms were not uncommon. In addition, there were low ceilings, little fresh air, and horrible lighting - typically neon tubes. Such offices still exist, even though we all like to talk about 'new work'. At the time, all this was not so wrong. Older generations separated work and leisure more clearly. People went to work for eight to ten hours to earn money, which they then spent after work. People discussed how to bring work and leisure into a tolerable balance.

Today, the boundaries between work and life are more fluid, and therefore the offices of the future must become more human. The keyword is 'work-life blending' - a state in which work is seen as an integral part of life. It is no longer about work-life balance, in which 'feel-good oases' are only visited after work. We realize ourselves in the work process. We strive for jobs that meet our needs as people - for quality of life. We 'live' more and more in the office or work more and more outside.

In the "New Workspace Playbook," the consulting firm Dark Horse Innovation describes how we've been mixing more and more work into our lives since the late 1990s. We took work home; suddenly home office was a common term. Now we've taken it a step further: we're striving to create workplaces that feel like home. We work from the couch, with the dog on our leg and surrounded by people we call friends. We bring life into the office. We've 'livened up' work. What can we change to make our work environment more human? It starts with simple questions: What do we want, and how do we want to work?

«We're bringing life into the office.»

Sunlight? Plants? Then let's create places of work where the light shines and where it greens and blossoms! The focus should be on the task we are working on. If I have to deal with large amounts of paper, for example, I need a larger desk.

At home, we do this intuitively: We settle wherever it suits us - for the call on the couch, for brainstorming in the kitchen. As soon as we enter a company, this free spirit is still too often lost, and with it the ability to adapt, to decide flexibly and creatively how and where we do things.

New Work does not mean imposing a new way of working on others, but opening up a discussion about how we want to work. This also includes the space in which we spend time. Often the restructuring or new construction of an office is an occasion for such a discussion - but the offices are only one side. If you don't live the New Work mindset, you won't be happy even in the most modern office buildings.

The difficulty here is that good solutions are rarely what employees want from the start. We want what we already know: The individual office has a strong lobby.

If we question our habits, meetings become adventures: Why not replace formal meetings with other, faster formats? Open meetings, soft meetings, stand-up meetings, web-based meetings.... Space is valuable, space is expensive. The offices of the future will be smaller. They will become hubs for communication and collaboration.

Today's office buildings are mostly empty at night. The office building as a monofunctional architecture is useless and not sustainable. Around 60% of people are not in the office anyway because they are traveling, working at home or sitting in a meeting. Our offices will become cultural centers - places to meet and exchange ideas, to learn from colleagues and to communicate face to face. In this way, companies strengthen identity and cohesion.

We will seek out smaller places and corners where we can come together, and we will shape and transform these places to our liking. We say goodbye to the lightless corridors.

Lone Aggersbjerg

Lone Aggersbjerg, founder and managing director of the coworking space Tink Tank in Heidelberg, Germany.

«Offices
become
hubs of
commu
nication

.»



Community areas with coffee, water, fresh fruit, snacks

Lockers for personal belongings

Rooms for spontaneous meetings

(Online) community for spontaneous exchange - across industries, companies and people

Authentic and informal atmosphere







THOUGHT EXPERIMENT

Hybrid Teams: The 4 Types

So how do you succeed in working together in a hybrid team? Be aware of the areas of tension in which a hybrid team is always on the move:

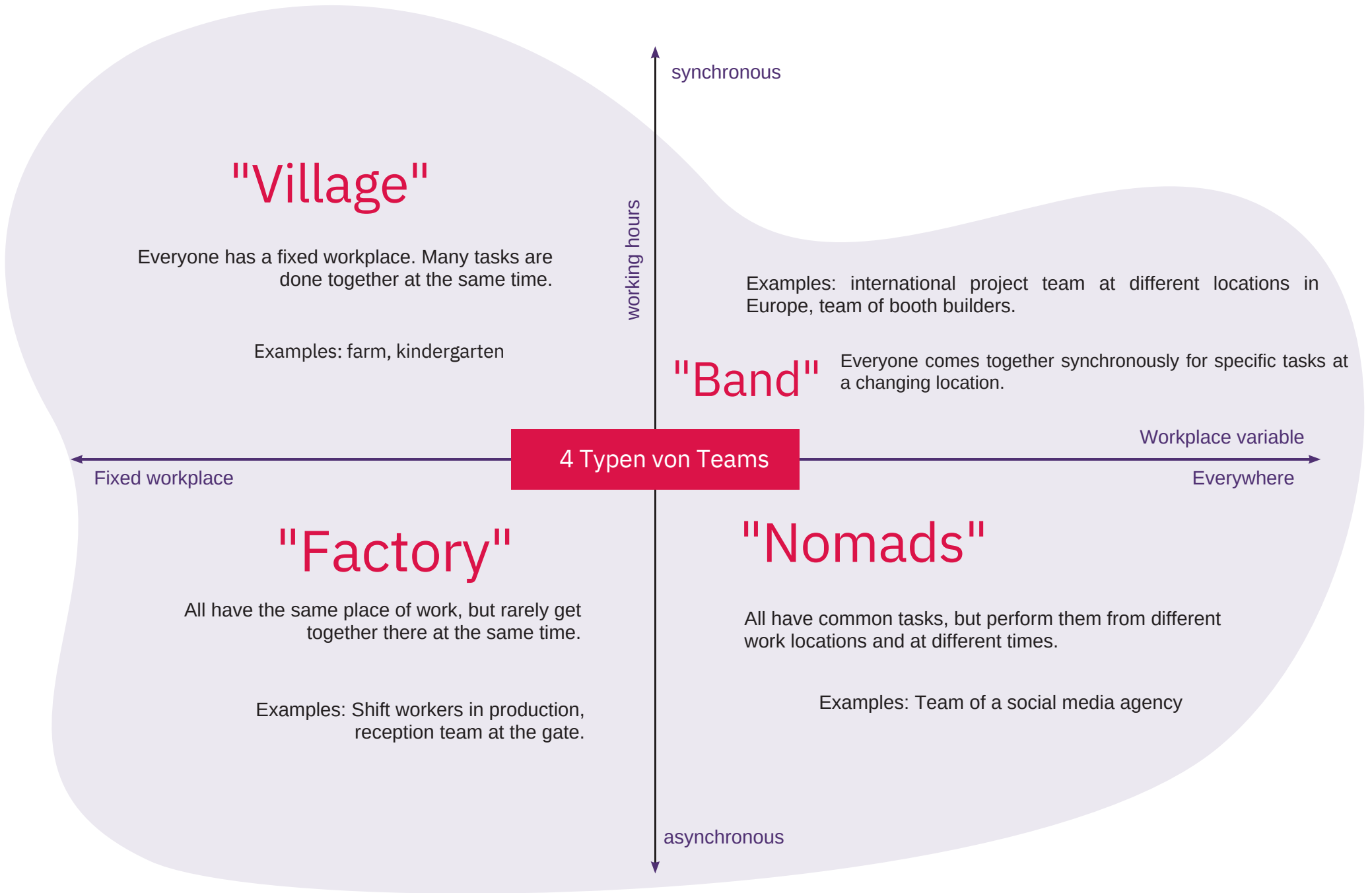
Connectedness comes more easily through direct encounters. However, every direct encounter reduces flexibility for everyone involved. Conversely, asynchronous work, for example, increases the amount of written communication - and thus the risk of misunderstandings or even more e-mail traffic.

Within this field of tension, this matrix shows four exemplary types of cooperation:

«Connectedness comes more easily through face-to-face encounters. But any face-to-face encounter reduces flexibility for everyone involved.»

Reflection questions for you and your team:

- -Which of the four collaboration types do you mainly use in your team?
- -Which collaboration type is suitable for which of your work processes?
- -Which form of collaboration would you like to try out as a team? What else is needed for this?





CONCLUSION

From conscious decisions and workplace design as an employer branding factor

People want to choose their workplace and **combine workspaces in a way that is necessary and meaningful** for them. Sometimes they want to interact creatively with others, sometimes they need full concentration and as few distractions as possible. What's more, people have **different needs and demands** of their workplace. Hybrid forms of work offer us the opportunity to **live and reconcile these differences**.

«Successful hybrid work models are becoming a critical employer branding factor.»

NUMBERS, DATA, FACTS

70 %

According to a study by the consulting firm Deloitte, 70% of respondents say they work more efficiently or just as efficiently at home as in the office.

70 %

In a survey conducted by the Hans Böckler Foundation, more than 70% of participants stated that home office makes it easier to reconcile work and family life.

NUMBERS, DATA, FACTS

85 %

The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft has found that 85% of home office employees lack personal interaction and 66% lack professional interaction.

According to the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, the following factors in particular contribute to satisfaction in the home office: good technical equipment, regular team meetings, clear separation between work and private life, and suitable premises

At the same time, the new hybrid forms of work increasingly demand self-management skills from employees. The management team can support the training of these skills and offer appropriate advanced training.

Companies that recognize that the willingness to work in a hybrid way and the flexibility in the daily work routine - in terms of location, process or tasks

- are necessary to attract and retain talent for the company will emerge as winners in the medium and long term - even if they consciously choose to live a culture of presence and synchronicity and take advantage of this workplace design.

Successful hybrid work models will become a decisive employer-branch factor. Employees who can freely shape their work will repay their employers with loyalty.





Die Autorinnen

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is a business, linguistic and cultural scientist. Born in Denmark, she first worked as a project manager in Denmark after her studies. Later, she worked in Germany in the media and software development industry in various large corporations, usually with management and board-level responsibilities. At the end of 2019, Lone Aggersbjerg turned her back on life as an employee and founded Tink Tank, a creative and professional coworking space with a focus on "corporate coworking", to make her vision of a healthy and creative work environment come true. She also advises medium-sized companies and corporations on the conception of new work environments. Lone Aggersbjerg lives in Heidelberg with her husband and children.

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