Hewlett Packard
Enterprise

THE FUTURE OF WORK

Guidance for transforming to an innovative hybrid workplace

The definition of the workplace is changing rapidly, and the changes won't be temporary. Organizations are grappling with delivering a quality experience, so employees can work anywhere, at any time, from any location.

Workplaces are evolving along with the ways in which we do business. Organizations are investing in digital transformation to accelerate their growth, respond more quickly to demand, and communicate more effectively with their customers. Due to the unprecedented circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations have been forced to shift large sections of their on-site staff to working remotely. While this has created significant challenges, many are also seeing benefits. The focus now is transformation to a hybrid workplace model, where organizations revisit the purpose and design of on-site working and integrate remote or mobile working to drive transformation, accelerate productivity, and improve business performance.

Universal remote work presents unforeseen obstacles. Organizations need to be sure that they can provide secure access to data and the right collaboration and productivity tools while ensuring the reliability and performance that their employees need when it comes to connectivity. IT management factors, including the complexity and diversity of the infrastructure and variability of demand, must be addressed when considering the support of remote and hybrid environments.

Health and safety in the workplace are more important now than ever. In addition to supporting remote work in ways that many organizations haven't in the past, businesses also need to address ways to make the on-site workplace safe for their employees and customers.

While many of these adjustments are being driven by current events, they will not be temporary. There is no going back. Leaders need to guide their organizations to success by providing a quality experience for employees, whether they're working remotely or in an office.

Workers shouldn't have to adapt to the workplace—workplaces should adapt to the needs of the workers and bridge the gap between the digital and physical worlds. This guide will lay out how businesses can be more productive, efficient, and safe, while keeping employee needs and culture at the forefront.

The best practices outlined here will focus on how to address the challenges of a hybrid workplace. There is no doubt that the future of work will be hybrid. Our hope is that we can help you maximize employee and organizational potential with hybrid workplace solutions for your teams at the office, at home, and everywhere in between.

Organizations must move quickly to create their new normal aligning their strategic digital transformation journey to these culture shifts. To be successful, business leaders should consider the following guiding principles.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1

UNDERSTAND WHERE YOU ARE AND WHERE YOU'RE GOING

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Assessing the changes required to create a hybrid work environment that is beneficial to your business and your employees.

Creating and supporting a hybrid work model means enabling productivity across remote locations and co-locations. At the same time, locations must provide physical work environments that are both safe and capable of ensuring business continuity. To gain a clear understanding of where you are today and where you need to go, you can conduct a thorough current state assessment:

- **Understand how changes in work environment can benefit your business and people:** Remote work capabilities can provide benefits to both employers and employees. Employees benefit by working from where they are and where they want to be, without the need to commute or be located near corporate or sales offices. Employers benefit by being able to recruit from a broader candidate pool and eliminate potential relocation costs.

- **Evaluate how shutdowns have impacted your work environment:** Shutdowns have undeniably affected every business. It's a good idea to carefully examine your experience—what worked well and what didn't. You might want to create a response framework: assess evolving developments and address the ways technology can help your team members, customers, partners, and communities. Also, you should plan for the future as the world recovers and rebuilds.

- **Evaluate technology needs:** Getting this front-end assessment right is key for strategic business-IT alignment, operational process adequacy, systems and software configuration, and environmental robustness. Assessments of your IT environments are essential to your operational success. Hewlett Packard Enterprise can support the assessment and follow up with planning and implementation services to speed business results.

CHECKLIST

✓ Conduct a comprehensive assessment of your workplace strategy to gain a clear understanding of where you are, where you need to go, and what your options are

✓ Perform a full business risk assessment to model the impact of workplace disruption—known or unforeseen—on business performance

✓ Assess the skills and culture of your organization; ensure your technology strategy supports the culture and people profile you want going forward

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Clearly defined goals for accelerating transformation and achieving a successful hybrid workplace model

- Productivity enablement for your workers regardless of location

- Alignment of transformation and desired corporate culture

- Contingency plans in the event of future shutdowns

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2

DEVELOP YOUR PLAN TO ACCELERATE YOUR TRANSFORMATION

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Compelling events have accelerated your need to transition to a hybrid workplace. Determining how on-site facilities will be structured and used is key to your success.

Exceptional circumstances have created a demand for solutions that enable businesses to provide a safer on-site work environment. Businesses are struggling with many issues in parallel; for example, ensuring remote workers have access to data and applications, scheduling meeting rooms in on-site locations, providing safe access to visitors, and tracking occupancy status in real time.

An increase in remote work typically means fewer people in an on-site location at any given time. However, businesses will need to find budget to support a transition to a hybrid workplace that enables them to reduce on-site facility usage. These changes can be significant, and how you manage them is key. While rightsizing real estate costs is a start, additional steps to reduce fixed costs should be considered:

- **Facility optimization:** Apply a transformational approach to your on-site facilities or office space. Look at how much space is available and where office space is truly required to meet and achieve your desired outcomes, such as collaboration, productivity, and a vibrant corporate culture. As remote work increases, the time that individual workers spend in offices will decrease. Alternative workplace strategies, such as shared and flex office space, should be considered. Because real estate and energy costs are significant to many organizations, the overall savings can be rewarding.

- **As-a-service models:** This approach offers the flexibility of cloud with the control, security, and reliability found in on-premises data centers. It allows businesses to pay for IT resources and capacity as they use it and when they need it. This leads to a reduction or even elimination of IT capital expenses and operations costs. IT resources can be expanded quickly based on business needs, and IT operations is simplified. You have control over your costs, enhanced security, and increased visibility with flexible, consolidated analytics.

Vendors offering as-a-service solutions need extensive experience and wide-ranging capabilities to get it right. They must offer robust choices of technology; expertise in solutions; strong financing; global, enterprise-grade support; and advanced infrastructure management capabilities. The HPE GreenLake edge-to-cloud platform is a market-leading IT-as-a-service offering that brings the cloud experience to your on-premises infrastructure. It can also apply to edge and network infrastructure. With the HPE GreenLake platform, HPE applies a decade of experience to delivering infrastructure in a pay-per-use mode on-premises.

CHECKLIST

✓ Prioritize potential initiatives to accelerate workplace transformation efforts

✓ Build business cases for capital expense projects that demonstrate why a project is needed and what the benefits of the project will be when it is finalized

✓ Use prioritization and business cases to inform funding trade-offs

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Rightsizing of on-site facilities results in more efficient use and frees up budget for transformation efforts

- Deployment of as-a-service solutions lowers capital expenses and IT operations costs

- Pay-as-you-grow scalability delivers the resources you need when you need them

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3

ESTABLISH A RESILIENT AND SECURE FOUNDATION OF CONNECTIVITY

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Providing network and security services so your employees have access to the applications, tools, and data they need regardless of their physical location.

This mobile era has changed many things, such as how and where we work, how we conduct our personal business, and how businesses interact with us. Technology is the great enabler in supporting what's possible for the new normal. It ensures that workplaces are secure and that employees are connected.

The challenge is to enable a hybrid work environment where your employees move seamlessly between working from home and returning to the office for in-person collaboration and meetings. The role of your network infrastructure must change to accommodate this new normal. Seamless, easy-to-use connectivity will be the foundation of the hybrid workplace.

Network hygiene is about making sure the network can meet new requirements and handle the increasing variability. This includes variability in user types, network traffic types, and extranet sites, as well as smaller and ephemeral sites. For example, in the new normal, there are accelerated requirements around immersive rich mixed media. These demand a lot from networks, from the edge to the cloud. In addition, because workers will be at distributed locations, there will be an increased demand for remote support.

Creating a hybrid workplace will require a blended approach to privacy and security, addressing these from both the business perspective and the individual worker's perspective. Supporting a blended security environment will require a new generation of networking products, such as those offered by HPE and Aruba.

CHECKLIST

✓ Build a trusted, high-capacity, pervasive wireless network

✓ Determine the variability of connectivity needs across user types

✓ Implement strong security measures to protect IT infrastructure and safeguard confidentiality

EXPECTED RESULTS

• Security and privacy are ensured on the on-premises network and beyond it

• AI-based data enhancement relieves IT from data collection and analysis tasks, accelerating discovery and investigation when needed

• Users have secure access to the data and applications they need regardless of location

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4

PROTECT ON-SITE WORKERS' HEALTH AND SAFETY

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Provide an on-site work/customer environment that is safe and secure, leveraging technology to quickly make health and safety decisions based on actionable data.

The traditional on-site workplace faces significant challenges. While transitioning to a hybrid workplace gives your business new options and great flexibility, decisions need to be made to ensure a safe work environment for employees who have to be physically on-site.

It's all about your people—first, last, and always. The technology behind the solutions may be sophisticated—secure entry, for example, relies on extensive analytics—but the basic concepts and goals are straightforward and transparent. It's about protecting your employees in what is still a difficult health environment.

Protecting confidentiality is crucial and doable. As in any other area of IT, security and data confidentiality are always primary considerations. Understanding that technology solutions must align with the structures, policies, and processes already in place within your organization is key. Working with your security, legal, and compliance people is critical to make sure that happens.

Consider these key questions:

- How do you prepare your site for a safe return to work for employees? For example, you may want to provide workers with a smooth, hygienic entry system that doesn't require them to touch door handles.

- What technologies are available to help you make health and safety decisions based on actionable data? For example, the ability to track a room's occupancy status in real time may be helpful for your social distancing policies.

How do you introduce solutions designed to protect employees' health while protecting their confidentiality and privacy?

HPE brings together the right expertise, support, financial flexibility, and technology solutions to help you build a safe, flexible, hybrid digital workplace. Our on-site return-to-work solutions include social distance tracing and tracking, touchless entry, fever detection, augmented reality, visual remote guidance, workplace alerts, and information sharing. Delivering these requires deep expertise coupled with support for global scale. These solutions rely on HPE extensive hardware and software capabilities along with cutting-edge offerings from our rich ecosystem of partners.

CHECKLIST

✓ Work with security, legal, and compliance teams to make sure that confidentiality and privacy are upheld

✓ Leverage the network infrastructure to understand when and how employees are utilizing physical locations

✓ Develop workplace analytics that provide on-site employees' contact and proximity history to improve health and safety

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Touchless entry and identify verification provide safe, secure access to your facilities

- Social distance tracing and tracking capabilities help you reinforce your health and safety policies by reminding employees to keep a safe distance

- You can keep employees updated on health and safety issues with timely alerts and information

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5

PUT EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER OF YOUR STRATEGY

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Redefining the employee experience to ensure productivity, collaboration, and access to needed resources.

Understanding the forces that impact performance is fundamental to nurturing a performance culture. With the forced shift to remote working that occurred for many roles in 2020, employers and employees alike learned about the feasibility of high-performance remote working. That experience has yielded a productive, employee-centric model to start from.

By listening to employees—through surveys, focus groups and leadership chain feedback—organizations can understand current sentiment. Future possibilities can be discussed, and the act of listening creates a positive signal for the employee base. Understanding work roles is a critical step to defining the optimal hybrid work model. Work roles typically fall into categories such as:

- **Skilled workers**, who typically have specialized knowledge of equipment and technical processes

- **Task workers**, who perform functions that are specialized, but often repeatable; call center agents and customer support representatives are good examples

- **Knowledge workers**, who work in information or creative fields requiring communication, collaboration, and lightweight specialized tools, such as sales automation

- **Power users**, whose work involves access to compute- and graphic-intensive capabilities such as computer-aided design, animation, media production, financial trading, and data science activities

For each of these roles, it is necessary to consider the feasibility of options for enabling a hybrid workplace from both the technical perspective and the people perspective.

Technologies are available to enable effective remote work for these roles. Disruptions to regular patterns of interaction, such as those seen in 2020, do not have to impede productivity or business performance.

- For skilled workers, consider rich media technologies such as augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) that help bridge location gaps between skilled experts and less skilled personnel on the ground. Using these technologies, a skilled expert at a remote location can help an on-site worker perform technical tasks such as equipment maintenance. By connecting through tools such as smart eyewear, this technology enables both workers to see and collaborate on the same task.

- For task workers, knowledge workers, and power users, consider solutions, such as virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI), that provide access to the applications and data that workers need regardless of location. Data and intellectual property are protected, even in locations that may be outside of your control. Modern VDI solutions provide access to desktops, optimized for the specific performance and data retention requirements of specific workers. Your critical data is secure in your data center, where it is close to the applications for minimum latency.

Providing a consistent experience and seamless collaboration for your employees, independent of location, creates a sense of familiarity and stability. This accelerates adoption and skills transferability.

As you enable more work to be location-independent, you can reevaluate your site and facilities strategy. While some work must be performed in specialized sites, a shift of knowledge and task work to a location-independent model allows you to rethink how your sites support your organization's desired culture, innovation, and employee wellness goals.

Collaboration across real estate, plant and facilities, and IT is essential to create a model that best supports organizational goals. For example, with the right approach to technology and change management, together with appropriate leadership and a forward-looking cultural stance, it may be possible to reduce and reimagine office spaces. They can be less focused on permanent in-person working and more focused on intermittent collaboration and social connection.

The key is to get all stakeholders aligned to a consistent strategy in service of an overall goal of long-term business performance.

CHECKLIST

✓ Understand what employees value and the principal drivers of performance

✓ Document the critical work roles across your organization and build a plan to deliver a seamless employee experience across those roles from any location

✓ Build teams across IT, HR, and real estate to evaluate your site and facilities strategy through the lens of the employee experience; determine opportunities to make changes that drive performance

✓ Consider the benefits of a secure, scalable VDI solution, delivered as a service

EXPECTED RESULTS

• Empowered employees—they experience a mobile and BYOD workplace that enables anywhere, anytime, any device access to the apps and data they need

• Increased employee performance regardless of work location

• Increased employee satisfaction

• Reduced IT costs through more efficient operations

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 6

HELP YOUR BUSINESS NAVIGATE THE CHANGE

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Employees will need to do things in significantly different ways than they have in the past. Privacy concerns will need to be addressed, a new level of trust established, and productivity ensured.

Digital transformation and the rapid pace of technology-driven change requires organizations to become more agile. Management of change is critical. To remain competitive, you will need to innovate faster and with a higher impact. These changes put increased pressure on the IT environment and IT staff. New tools and processes affect all workers.

We recommend that you conduct a thorough analysis of your environment, taking account of your current situation and the impacts of planned changes on organizational structures and processes, as well as individuals.

• **Anticipate significant behavior changes:** Management will need to determine what a hybrid work environment will look like, with a focus on how changes will affect productivity and overall costs. While technology is key, the solutions are readily available and therefore not a cause for concern. Management needs to instill trust and be transparent with both management teams and employees.

• **Embrace change:** View the move to a hybrid workplace as an opportunity for innovation and for increasing the productivity and efficiency of workers, management, and IT. A change management program is recommended to address the inherent people challenges in a crisis-driven change. The program must make sure that all of the people impacted by the change are aware of what is changing, and when; how they are personally affected; and what they are expected to do. Ideally, people will be willing to give new ways of working a fair chance.

We know that the technologies are only part of the solution, and we can bring our extensive workforce training and change management expertise to help companies foster a culture of collaboration.

CHECKLIST

✔ Deploy a change management program to address the inherent people challenges in a crisis-driven change

✔ Embrace change as an opportunity for innovation and identify ways to empower employees to be more productive

✔ Be transparent and build trust with your employees

EXPECTED RESULTS

• A smooth transition to the new environment

• Buy-in from employees, who clearly understand the purpose and business benefits of the transition

• Increased speed of adoption and enhanced productivity

• Reduced risk of failure related to the transition to a hybrid workplace

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7

USE THIS MOMENT TO DRIVE CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Fundamental changes to corporate culture need to be reviewed and addressed. Because these changes will be permanent, care should be taken to choose the right approach.

It's not merely about supporting your culture it's about using this moment to accelerate your culture. Organizations should identify changes that have already delivered positive results with the goal of expanding new ways of doing things. Leveraging momentum and improving outcomes are intermediate steps to a potentially new organizational culture. The ultimate outcome is a shift to a new normal driving innovation and breakthrough, and sometimes even leading to new business models.

Evaluate recent changes in the culture of your organization—how people collaborate, share knowledge, and stay productive. This may be a great opportunity to listen to employee preferences. Be bold in reimagining how work can become more flexible while maintaining your focus on wellness and innovation.

In response to the demands of this new environment, we recommend that you determine how these changes will impact your staff and the resources they need to be productive and grow their skills. This may require a redesign of job roles and training in new tools and technologies. You will want to consider:

- **Culture and people:** Ensure that your organizational culture reflects your desired business outcomes. Communication is key. Explain the change and why the organization is making it and what is expected of people as they adjust to a new environment. Key leaders need to understand and promote the change, taking the message to their teams and peers. An effective communication program is a driving factor in employee motivation and positive change. People need to know where to find information on new technologies and processes, how to acquire the right skills, and how to get access to available resources.

- **IT organizational transformation:** Analyze the organization to determine how it should be restructured in the new operating model. Identify the skills and competencies that will be necessary in current and new organizational roles. Ensure that new technologies deliver value to the business. The HR, real estate, and IT departments should work together to build the foundation for hybrid work. Success doesn't depend on just the technology foundation. It depends on how you maintain culture and performance using that foundation.

- **Knowledge and skills:** Make sure that all of the people involved have the right knowledge and skills at the right point in time. Perform a skills gap analysis to determine training requirements, and build a training plan to meet your staff's needs. Enable them to be productive by providing new capabilities when they need them.

The world changes so rapidly that conventional training programs are not enough. An upskilling program that delivers both formal training and an informal exchange of knowledge provides options for learning how to navigate the new environment. For teams and leaders, a coaching program helps to define ways to operate and overcome specific barriers in the new environment.

Everyone in the organization needs to develop skills and competencies on an ongoing basis. Skills development in a rapidly changing world requires access to a variety of learning opportunities online training, e-learning, on-site classes, knowledge sharing with peers and experts, mentoring, job aids, and many more.
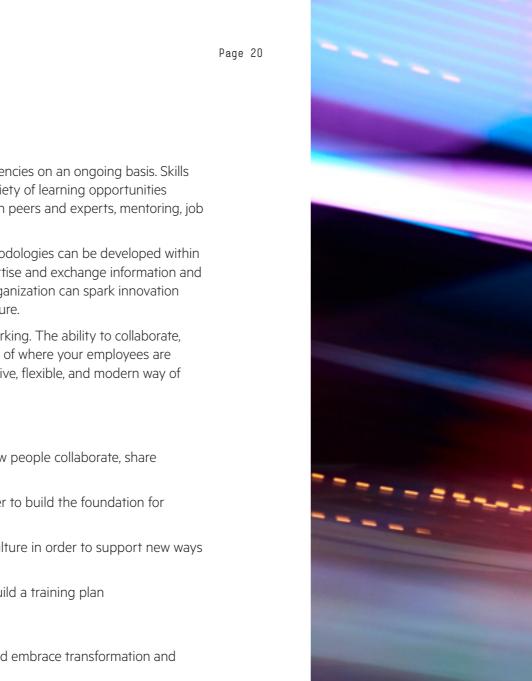
Knowledge and skills related to the latest technologies and methodologies can be developed within the organization. Provide smart ways for everyone to share expertise and exchange information and ideas. Pooling knowledge and leveraging expertise across the organization can spark innovation and drive creative solutions for the complex challenges of the future.

Don't be afraid to take bold approaches to drive a new way of working. The ability to collaborate, connect, and maintain a culture of innovation is crucial regardless of where your employees are physically. This bold vision will enable you to create a more inclusive, flexible, and modern way of working.

CHECKLIST

✓ Assess recent changes in the culture of your organization: how people collaborate, share knowledge, and stay productive

✓ Ensure that HR, real estate, and IT departments work together to build the foundation for hybrid work

✓ Invest in organizational development programs to shift the culture in order to support new ways of working

✓ Identify any skills gaps to define training requirements and build a training plan

EXPECTED RESULTS

• Buy-in from key leaders in the organization, who understand and embrace transformation and promote it within the organization

• Increased IT team productivity with new technology, tools, and processes

• Increased productivity because employees can acquire the skills they need, when they need them

CONCLUSION

On its own, digital transformation is a challenge that many organizations have struggled with. The transformation journey has been complicated by circumstances that have forced significant changes in our workplaces. While most businesses are being challenged to support a remote and mobile workforce while also enabling a safe return to on-site work, many are also seeing the benefits that the switch to a hybrid workforce model can bring. Putting together a plan to quickly address the challenges is key to success.

HPE brings it all together by providing the expertise, resources, and technology you need to assess your unique requirements and develop a custom plan for your journey to a flexible, secure hybrid workplace.

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