

Hybrid working – Framework for team conversations

The four modes

Hybrid working is all about using different modes of working to make your team as productive as possible. Thinking about these modes can be helpful when discussing with your team how to maximise flexibility while increasing effectiveness. We have laid out some general principles about the modes, **but there are no absolute truths**. In fact there are numerous tensions and contradictions. **What is right for most teams may not be right for yours; what works brilliantly for one person, may feel unproductive to another**. Leadership is the art of managing these contradictions and grey areas creatively, fairly and with good judgement.

Four modes to consider and balance



1 Working together in person e.g. ideation session at office, client premises	2 Working together virtually e.g. team catch up by video, conference call, Skype
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good for nuanced interactions, complex innovation and deeper relationship building• Less good for managing various people's schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good for keeping in touch and flexible collaboration• Less good for spontaneous interactions, deeper relationship building
3 Working separately on-site e.g. data analysis at office, branch	4 Working separately off-site e.g. writing a report, at home, Regus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good for meeting some client needs, system access, spontaneous interaction• Less good for uninterrupted concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good for home-work balance, uninterrupted time• Less good for staying connected and avoiding isolation



Principles

- Think Client; any working pattern must support servicing our clients' needs
- People Leaders work with their teams to agree working patterns that make sense for our clients, colleagues and business
- Agreements need to be sustainable for individual health and wellbeing as well as individual and team performance
- Review agreements annually and whenever significant changes arise
- Focus on results, not working hours
- Communicate clearly. Ensure all team members understand what is expected of them and who is doing what. Don't wait to be asked, reach out and check in with your team members
- Our Code of Conduct and valued behaviours apply wherever and whenever we work
- Successful hybrid working depends on managing the four modes to balance the needs of client, colleagues and the business. It is likely that you will require a mix of the modes to create a sustainable and productive way of working – remembering that not everything can be planned and that spontaneous interactions can be an important source of innovation and problem solving

Think Team/Project as well as Individual. Each individual will have their own work preferences. It is important to balance this with how work gets done in the team as a whole and the natural rhythms of your activities.



Making the four modes work – Some principles

1 Working together in person

- Make use of in person time to build relationships and plan time specifically for this
- Ideally have everyone present in person rather than splitting the team, with some together in person and others joining virtually
- Use in person meetings to do the things that are best done in person, e.g. innovation, iterating thinking live, difficult conversations
- Tools and techniques such as Luma Human Centered Design tools will help your meeting be as inclusive, effective and focussed as possible
- Consider what days make most sense to meet in person in terms of how busy the office space is and availability of meeting rooms etc.

2 Working together virtually

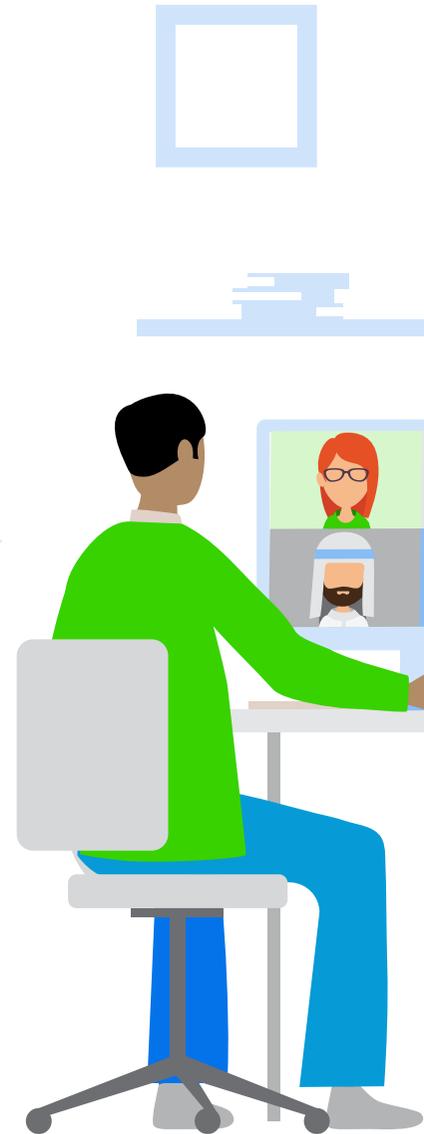
- Engage your team in creating a working agreement, which covers basic ground rules and etiquette for your virtual meetings
- Vary modes of virtual communication. For example, a conference call allows people to walk and talk at the same time
- Whiteboarding Tools, e.g., Mural, planning tools, e.g. Trello and communication tools e.g. Skype and BlueJeans will help the meeting run more smoothly
- All meetings should have a clear agenda, result in an outcome and have a check in so everyone's voice is heard. Structure the meeting to maintain focus, stay on task and build relationships

3 Working separately on-site

- Working separately doesn't mean working alone. You may plan to work in the office when people from other teams or your own are there
- Use smart desk booking to ensure that the team sit close together to maximise collaboration and connection
- Engage your team in creating an agreement about how they would like to work together, which balances the needs for connection and focussed working
- Be clear about roles and expectations so that people know who is accountable for what
- Prioritise tasks for this time which require a combination of independent working and collaboration

4 Working separately off-site

- Agree objectives and revisit them regularly. Check that individuals understand what they need to deliver and how and have the necessary data and detail
- Plan regular check ins. These may be 1:1 or as a team. Individuals should not be working without regular connection to others
- Where individuals are working flexi-hours, ensure overlap with other members of the team with whom they need to connect
- Remember colleagues' well being: make use of tools such as our mental health app, Unmind
- Prioritise tasks for this time which benefit from no distraction, e.g. data analysis, report writing etc.



Hybrid working – Creating a recipe

Work with your team to combine the four modes of working into a recipe that works for you, your clients and the business.

Key questions include:

How do we best service the needs of our clients? Are there any implications for where and what time people work?

What are the preferences and needs of individuals in the team and how can these be accommodated?

What would be a natural working rhythm around which we could base a pattern of working? A week, a month, a quarter?

How do we balance the most effective way to get work done with the need to build and maintain relationship and social interaction?

How do we make sure that we have enough time working alongside each other to allow for spontaneous interaction and the connectivity and innovation that this can generate?

Some example recipes are shown on the next slides – to stimulate thinking, rather than as a blueprint to follow. Each team and each colleague will have their own needs and ways of working. Success lies in collaborating with your team to create a recipe that balances the particular needs of yourselves, your clients and your business.



Example hybrid recipe 1 : Same geography

The team is all based in the same geography and uses hybrid working to maximise effectiveness and flexibility. The needs of clients come first and take precedent over any other working agreement.

Planning

Working together in person

- Team meets in office for sprint planning meeting. Everyone attends this kick-off in person
- This enables creativity, facilitates engagement and ensures alignment

Working separately on-site

- Allows individuals to get on with their actions, while still having spontaneous contact with colleagues

Implementing

Working together virtually

- Daily check in on BlueJeans first thing to catch up and review progress. Consider using question of the day to engage and build rapport

Working separately off-site

- Enables individuals to implement actions, gather data, complete emails etc.

Connecting

Working together virtually

- As two colleagues are WFH, everyone joins the check-in by video

Working separately on-site

- Most of the team are in the office two days a week at smart desks for ease of collaboration
- Two colleagues are working separately off-site

Collaborating

Working together in person

- Occasionally, the team divides in two to cover separate issues. One meets in the office, the other at a Regus to minimise travel, while still allowing for spontaneous face-to-face meetings

Working separately off-site

- After morning meetings, everyone has uninterrupted time in afternoon

Concluding

Working together in person

- At end of sprint, check in followed by working separately to complete actions, with plenty of spontaneous 1:1 meetings

Working together in person

- Sprint review followed by after action review

Ensure that everyone is kept up to date regularly, maximise efficiency, focus on execution.

Example hybrid recipe 2 : Different geography and time zones

This global team meets face-to-face twice a year and uses a combination of other modes in between.
Client needs still come first and take precedence.

Nov

Working together in person

- Team meets in person to plan for the year ahead, build relationships and for sub-groups to work on specific issues

Working separately on-site

- Individuals stay together on-site for a day to enable spontaneous contact with colleagues and to follow up on issues from the two preceding days

Jan - Feb

Working together virtually

- Regular check in on BlueJeans to review progress. Frequency will depend on maturity of team and projects

Working separately off-site

- Enables individuals to implement actions, complete emails etc.

Working separately on-site

- Enables meeting in person with clients and connection with colleagues

Mar

Working together virtually

- Two full-day meetings for global team to review progress, unblock issues and innovate

Working separately on- and off-site as required

Apr - Jun

Working together virtually

- Weekly check in on BlueJeans to review progress

Working separately off-site

- Enables individuals to implement actions, complete emails etc.

Working separately on-site

- Enables meeting in person with clients and connection with colleagues

Jul

Working together in person

- Team meets in person for half year review, problem solving and relationship building

Working separately on-site

- Individuals stay together on-site for a day to enable spontaneous contact with colleagues and to follow up on issues from the two preceding days

Regular catch ups to ensure alignment, with occasional in person time to build relationship and conduct deep dives.

Example hybrid recipe 3 : Different geography, same time zone

This team is based in split locations. It meets regularly as a whole team virtually, to ensure alignment. Meetings are held at the same time each week so that client meetings can be easily planned around them.

Mon

Working together virtually

- First of twice-weekly check in. As the team are based in different locations, everyone joins virtually even though everyone has come in person to their respective office

Working separately on-site

- Team members work on site, this facilitates in person meetings with each other and with clients as necessary

Tues - Thurs

Working separately on- and off-site

- In each location, the teams have agreed amongst themselves and with their leader a working pattern which supports time for detail-intensive work at home, with opportunities for meetings between team members, either in person or virtually
- Individuals are flexible about coming into the office to meet clients face-to-face

Fri

Working together virtually

- Second of twice-weekly check ins. As the team are based in different locations, everyone joins virtually

Working separately on- and off-site

- Individuals decide whether it makes best sense for them and their clients to be at the office or working from home

Quarterly

Working together in person

The team get together in person once a quarter for a whole day to review progress, problem solve and innovate

Working separately on-site

- Individuals stay together on-site for a day to enable spontaneous contact with colleagues and to follow up on issues from the two preceding days

Regular cross-location catch ups, combined with local arrangements to maximise effectiveness and meet client and team member needs.