

**NESPRESSO**<sup>®</sup>  
PROFESSIONAL



**THE NEW OFFICE – RETHINK  
HYBRID WORKING IN 2023**



## THE FUTURE OF WORK STARTS WITH YOUR EMPLOYEES



69%

Hybrid working is no longer a rare business perk – it's a large conversation that involves all departments and business areas. **69% of employees who are happy with the number of days in the office report good or very good mental health.** So, what is this magic number, if there is one?

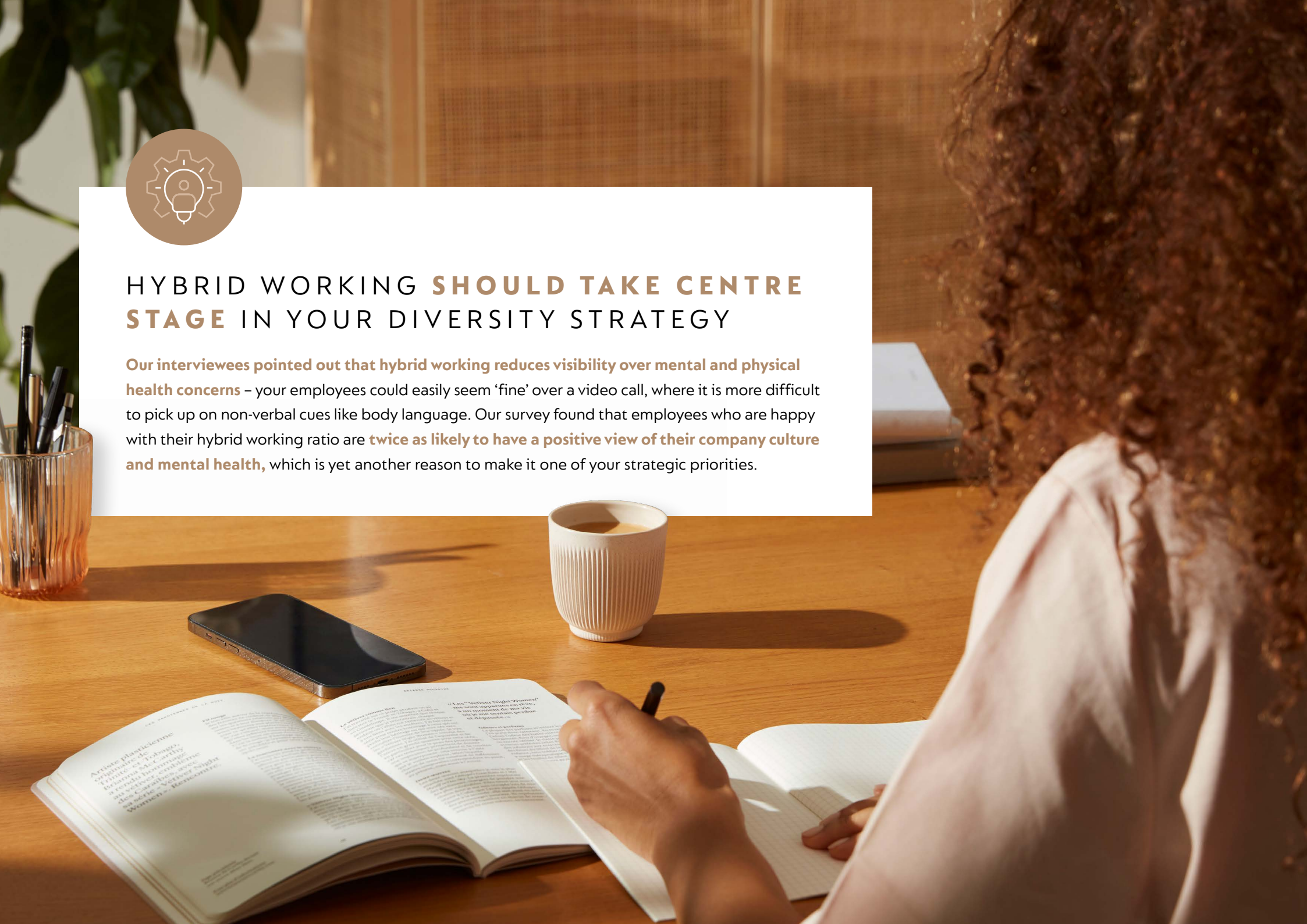
At **Nespresso® Professional**, we are dedicated to understanding our customers and working with them to enhance their employee productivity and collaboration. We surveyed managers and employees about their expectations of hybrid working in 2023, and the data tells a complex story. Employees are the ones holding the cards – while statistically they want to spend less time in the office (and managers would prefer to see them more), employees can back up their preferences with viable explanations. Visiting the office simply because 'they have to' is not enough; instead, people want to see their employer adapt to long-term hybrid working practices with an engaging company culture, an appealing working environment and a reason to look forward to the office.

**There are no experts in hybrid working and we are all learning together.** Hybrid strategies provide an exciting opportunity for employers to define their 'new normal', and to meet employees' expectations in order to build a productive and resilient workforce.



## HYBRID WORKING **SHOULD TAKE CENTRE STAGE** IN YOUR DIVERSITY STRATEGY

**Our interviewees pointed out that hybrid working reduces visibility over mental and physical health concerns** – your employees could easily seem ‘fine’ over a video call, where it is more difficult to pick up on non-verbal cues like body language. Our survey found that employees who are happy with their hybrid working ratio are **twice as likely to have a positive view of their company culture and mental health**, which is yet another reason to make it one of your strategic priorities.



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**69%**



Hybrid working is also a key pillar elsewhere in your people operations. **69% of respondents agree that hybrid working strategies make it easier to hit their diversity and inclusion objectives.** One reason for this is because hybrid and flexible working give a degree of autonomy back to employees, who can therefore tailor the role to suit their lifestyle (assuming that their output is satisfactory, of course). For example, employees with children can use flexible hours to accommodate the school run, and those with physical health struggles might do less in-office days compared to their peers.

Our interviewees said that trust is the number one factor in making hybrid working, well, work. Employees with greater autonomy and flexibility are more likely to stay loyal and contribute to the organisation. Getting this balance right and trusting your employees to tailor their roles to suit them could lead to enhanced productivity and engagement.



## THE BIG HYBRID DISCONNECT

In our survey, employees said they would like to be in the office for two days each week, while HR directors reported that three days would be the ideal frequency.

**Is it possible to find a common ground?**

**EMPLOYEES**

**2**

days a week

**HR  
DIRECTORS**

**3**

days a week





The solution lies in understanding why employees and employers have settled on the above preferences.

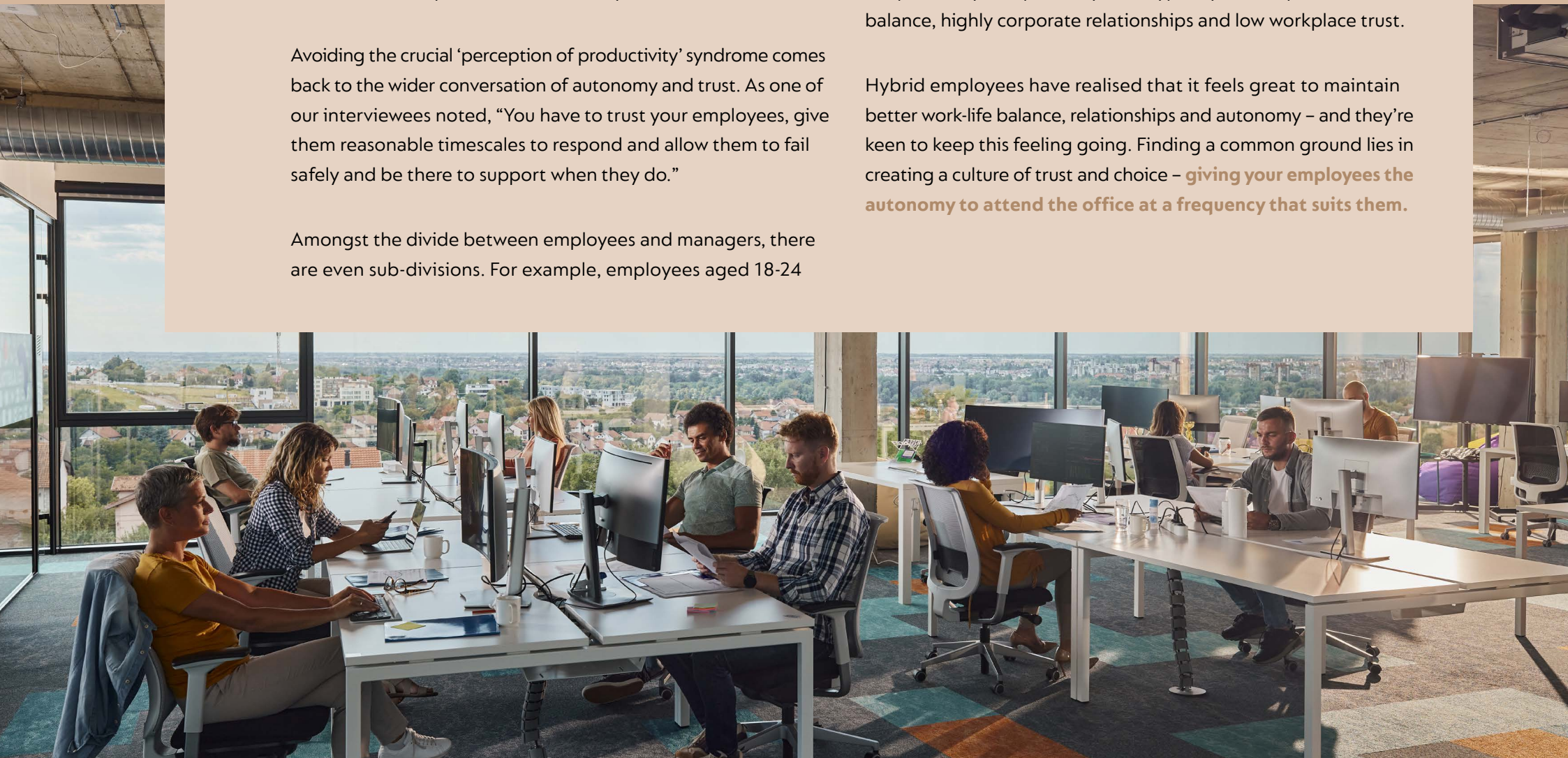
For managers, the **main motivation for in-office working is that they can 'see' employees' productivity.** The risk with this reasoning is that managers begin to lack trust in their teams, which creates an environment of presenteeism, where employees attend the office but are unproductive when they're there.

Avoiding the crucial 'perception of productivity' syndrome comes back to the wider conversation of autonomy and trust. As one of our interviewees noted, "You have to trust your employees, give them reasonable timescales to respond and allow them to fail safely and be there to support when they do."

Amongst the divide between employees and managers, there are even sub-divisions. For example, employees aged 18-24

have a greater desire than any other demographic to attend the office, most likely due to a **yearning for socialisation and to gain a better understanding of the working world.** However, Gen Z employees have stated that they are not prepared to work in the previously accepted ways that typically involve poor work-life balance, highly corporate relationships and low workplace trust.

Hybrid employees have realised that it feels great to maintain better work-life balance, relationships and autonomy – and they're keen to keep this feeling going. Finding a common ground lies in creating a culture of trust and choice – **giving your employees the autonomy to attend the office at a frequency that suits them.**





# WHATEVER HAPPENED TO OUR SOCIAL LIVES?

Our survey found that **59% of hybrid** and **56% of remote workers** say they **now have fewer work friendships** than when they were based in the office full-time. There's a significant longing for personal connections amongst all employees, from junior to senior level.



55%

The need for face-to-face interactions is not just about boosting mental health, but also quickly identifying deteriorating health. **55% of our communication is nonverbal**, yet it's easy to see why factors such as body language can be overlooked or misread during virtual communications. Hybrid employees spend less time together, meaning that the limited face-to-face time should be especially valuable for creating closeness, social opportunities and strong workplace bonds.

In the age of hybrid working, 'company culture' must encompass more than just the occasional party. The managers we spoke to agreed that it must equally address in-person relationships (e.g. through meet-ups, a comfortable and welcoming office space, and coffee stations to get conversations going) and remote interactions. **The latter should aim to foster the human connection that remote employees might feel is lacking in the workplace.** For example, you could introduce virtual games nights, send out meal vouchers and encourage non-work-related conversations – in essence, HR managers are trying to recreate the same social coffee station moments via digital channels.







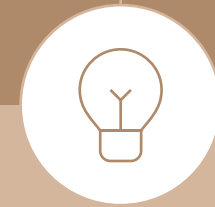
## FIND OUT WHAT YOUR EMPLOYEES **REALLY** **THINK OF THE OFFICE**

Market data shows that **demand for flexible co-working spaces grew by 22% in 2022<sup>2</sup>** and that amenity-rich spaces have an **average occupancy rate of 82%** - a significantly higher rate than 'traditional' spaces<sup>3</sup>. This appetite for convenient and comfortable environments helps explain why employees favour home working – **their homes have everything they need for a productive day.**

**Businesses are making small and large changes to their office environment to create a compelling proposition for employees.**

Tech and productivity amenities like sound-proof pods, interactive whiteboards and built-in charging pads are the go-to choices. Breakout spaces, private meeting rooms and refreshment hubs were also popular amongst our interviewees, who noted the importance of introducing spaces where employees can work, socialise and collaborate.

To ensure you are investing in impactful additions to your space, you could conduct prior research and open up the conversation with your employees. **By demonstrating that you are listening to them and encouraging them to be open through a research session like this one, managers and employers can let down their guards and connect.**



**SOUND-PROOF  
PODS**



**INTERACTIVE  
WHITEBOARDS**



**CHARGING  
PADS BUILT  
INTO DESKS**



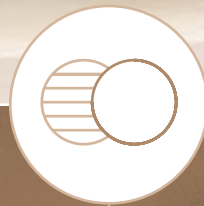
## TIPS TO ENGAGE, EXCITE AND ENERGISE YOUR HYBRID WORKFORCE

The data tells us that the old ways of working no longer meet the needs of most employees – there has to be more pay-off to a commute than a day spent in a siloed environment. In the new world of hybrid working, you not only need to have an engaging office space, but you also need to prioritise human connections and interactions when your employees are together. So, here are a few top tips from leaders in the hybrid working space...



**FACILITATE**  
REAL CONVERSATIONS  
AND COLLABORATION

**Empower people to go beyond just saying 'good morning' and instead have full conversations.** Settings that offer private breakout areas with high-quality refreshments enable the powerful, informal discussions that colleagues may have otherwise had elsewhere (like coffee shops). **Better relationships come first, and loyalty will follow.**



**PRIORITISE**  
THE PSYCHOLOGICAL  
CONTRACT

While our research revealed that employees have very different needs and wants for long-term hybrid working, **honesty and openness are the key to meeting everyone's expectations.** By creating a psychological contract with your employees, you can lead with transparency and trust and agree on what the 'new normal' looks like for your business.



**ENCOURAGE**  
LEADERS TO SHARE  
VULNERABILITY

**Employees no longer want to leave their mental health at the door – instead, they want to open up.** It's understandable that managers may not be familiar with this approach, which is why mental health training can be a great asset to **help team leaders foster conversations that overcome traditional work/life boundaries.**



## LEAD FROM THE FRONT WITH CANDOUR

**Flexible working is a huge benefit** of the hybrid environment for many people, such as taking time out for the school run. As many employees still prefer the traditional 9-5 structure, our research found that **including a 'human notice' in email signatures is a great way to alleviate out-of-hours stress and anxiety.** For example, your employees could add a note to their communications, like **'I'm sending this now because I work strange hours, but I don't expect you to respond until you log on.'**



## CREATE EMPLOYEE AFFINITY GROUPS TO BUILD CLOSENESS

Our data revealed that employees with dependants (e.g. children or care-giver commitments) **found it significantly easier to work in a remote setting,** and the same is true for those from diverse backgrounds. In this instance, you could **create diverse employee groups to ensure that everyone's voice is heard** during hybrid working discussions, including people from different backgrounds, life experiences and social identity communities.



## DON'T RELY ON OFF-THE-SHELF SOLUTIONS

**Wellbeing is more than an off-the-shelf benefits solution – it's individual to your business and employees.** Our interviewees reported unanimously that mental health and wellbeing strategies are crucial for an engaged hybrid workforce. Initiatives like mental health first aid training for managers, partnerships with charities like MIND and bespoke wellbeing strategies are **highly appreciated by employees.**



## CREATE IN-OFFICE MOMENTS THAT TRULY MATTER

People-centric engagement is a cornerstone of successful hybrid working strategies. It's those meeting points between colleagues that enable closeness, connection, and general wellbeing. **It's the interactions that make your employees feel connected both to each other and to your business at large.** Most importantly, it's about defining your new hybrid working culture and using it to build a productive and resilient workforce.

At **Nespresso® Professional**, **our Momento machine makes building human connections in the workplace simple.** When you bring your employees together, the Momento delivers diverse coffee moments at the touch of a button, offering 12 milk recipes and 5 black to suit everyone's tastes. Open up communications with and between your employees over a high-quality coffee that's sustainably sourced in line with our B Corp commitments. At **Nespresso® Professional**, **we source 92.5% of our coffee via the AAA Sustainable Quality Program**, so your customers can enjoy a Momento moment that's as good for their mood as it is for restoring regions and communities across the world.

To discover the perfect machine for your business or co-working space and the blends to suit your people, visit our website

**DISCOVER MORE**

or give us a call on

**0808 100 8844**

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Sources:

<sup>1</sup>Progressive Dental Marketing

<sup>2</sup>Coworking Insights

<sup>3</sup>The Instant Group