

hybrid workweek **toolkit**



how to use this toolkit

A hybrid workweek is more than an HR policy. It's a strategic opportunity that can be transformational for people and businesses. But with a wide variety of hybrid models and competing needs, knowing where to start—and then how to implement your approach—can be a challenge.

This toolkit simplifies the process with a decision-making framework and checklist:

- Assess employee needs and attitudes.
- Review real-world examples of hybrid models.
- Prepare employee communications.
- Help employees maximize the value of their in-office experience.

As we look toward a more flexible future, the right workplace is a critical advantage for connection, opportunity and growth. Irvine Company's expert teams are here to help as our customers reimagine the role of the workplace because we all believe that the best things happen when people come together.

How can we help? From space considerations to workplace wellness questions, contact your Customer Resource Team.

developing your hybrid workweek approach

Use this framework to help guide your decision-making process as you develop and communicate your approach to hybrid work. Track your progress, review materials and check off each step as you complete it.

1

understand employee needs

With definitions of “flexibility” varying widely, do you know what your employees expect from a hybrid workweek? Customize our employee survey template to assess expectations, needs and priorities.



2

develop your plan

Review different models for hybrid workweeks. Follow our checklist to translate employee survey findings into a custom approach for your company.



3

engage employees

Return excitement can be tempered by anxieties over being together safely and adjusting to new routines. Set your teams up for success with our return checklist.



4

activate your workplace

Learn how your Irvine Company workplace solves common hybrid challenges: company culture, community-building, connection and communication.



**understand
employee needs**

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step 1: understand employee needs

No workforce is homogenous. Effective hybrid planning integrates employees into the conversation as early as possible. This survey template is a starting point for assessing employee needs and attitudes. The questions address these key considerations:

- Where do employees feel their work can be done most effectively?
- What type of work do employees feel needs to be done in the workplace?
- Which employees want to be in the office and how frequently?
- How comfortable do employees feel returning to the workplace?

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survey: employee sentiment about hybrid workweeks

Which of the following factors impacts your desire to be in the workplace?

Select all that apply:

- ☐ General risk of COVID-19 exposure
- ☐ Concern about pre-existing conditions for myself or a family member
- ☐ Child care availability or school schedules
- ☐ Need to collaborate with coworkers in person
- ☐ Need for a quiet place to focus away from home distractions
- ☐ Concern about being present for advancement opportunities
- ☐ Experiencing “work-from-home fatigue”
- ☐ Want to use workplace amenities, like the fitness center or conference space
- ☐ Miss socializing with coworkers

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Which of the following best describes your ideal hybrid workweek?

Choose one:

- ☐ I want the option to choose which days I come into the office, which could vary week to week.
- ☐ I want the option to choose which days I come into the office but will be consistent week to week.
- ☐ I want my entire team to be together on set days that are consistent week to week.
- ☐ I prefer to continue working remotely full time.
- ☐ I'm already back in the office.
- ☐ I want the entire company to be in the office on set days that are consistent week to week.

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On average, how many days per week do you want to work from the office?

Choose one:

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

What type of work do you prefer to do in the workplace?

Select all that apply:

- ☐ Focus work in a quiet space
- ☐ Collaboration sessions with 1 or 2 coworkers
- ☐ Team meetings or brainstorming sessions
- ☐ Meetings with my manager
- ☐ Client or customer meetings on site
- ☐ All-hands meetings and companywide events
- ☐ Training/education

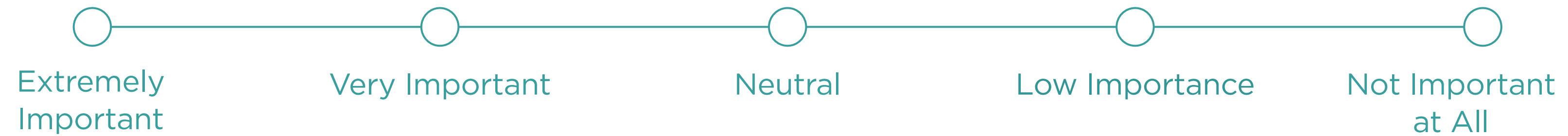
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Use the Likert Importance Scale for the following questions



- How important is it to have mandatory days each week for everyone to be in person?
- How important is in-person collaboration for your work?
- How important is it for you to have a dedicated desk when you come into the office?
- How important is it for you to have access to team collaboration space, like small meeting rooms or lounges?
- How important are team meetings or companywide events?
- How important is it to feel connected to coworkers?

**develop
your plan**

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step 2: develop your plan

There's no one-size-fits-all approach to developing your hybrid plan, and what's effective for your company may evolve over the next six to 12 months. To help with your planning, we've summarized two of the most common hybrid model approaches.

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the frequency and location model - “when and where”

One approach to hybrid models is to consider the frequency employees will be physically present in the office and the location where employees will be based when not in the office.

FRAMEWORK

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In Person First

Frequency: High | Location: Local

This approach prioritizes in-person interaction. The majority of employees are in person 4-5 days/week. Fully remote employees are rare and approved on a case-by-case basis.



Local Hybrid

Frequency: Medium | Location: Local

Local hybrid balances in-person interaction with the desire to provide employees with some flexibility in their weekly work schedule. The majority of employees continue to be based locally in order to be in person several days per week.

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Remote First

Frequency: Low | Location: Dispersed

This location agnostic approach means employees are likely to be based in different geographies and time zones, expanding talent acquisition reach. The office is primarily used for annual in-person all-hands meetings when employees come together for team building and strategic planning.



Remote-friendly Hybrid

Frequency: Medium | Location: Dispersed

Remote-friendly hybrid gives employees greater location flexibility—they may be based locally or in another geography—but the office remains open for teams to connect as desired. Locally based employees have the option to be in person several days per week. Employees who live in different geographies come in monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually.

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the team model - “what and who”

Another approach to hybrid work models is to consider how the office will be used when employees are present. This starts with defining what work requires in-person collaboration and who needs to be present for this work to be accomplished.

“what”

- What types of work styles exist within your organization?
- What is your organization’s culture, and how does this culture impact the way teams collaborate?
- What is the dominant management style, and how does this style impact in-person versus remote work effectiveness?

“who”

- Are there teams or departments who need to be in person to be effective?
- Which employees benefit the most from virtual work?
- Which employees are most successful working alongside colleagues and managers?

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Based on the answer to these questions, your company may develop one of the following approaches:

- **Activity-based work.** Employees may work together or individually when they are in the office. The office layout accommodates quiet, focus work and team breakouts. Employees may or may not share the same schedule as other employees on their team.
- **Team-based work.** Employees primarily do team work when they are in the office. An entire team reports to work on the same day. The office layout prioritizes collaborative team spaces, like breakout rooms and lounges. Most employees “hot desk*” rather than having their own dedicated workstation.
- **Event-based work.** Employees primarily complete their work at home and come to the office only for all-hands meetings, planning sessions, client pitches or other events. The office layout prioritizes team spaces and large conferencing/event space for group meetings, brainstorming and socializing.

*Hot desk - use a desk as required or on a rotating system, rather than having one’s own desk.

**engage
employees**

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step 3: engage employees

Return excitement can be tempered by anxieties over being together safely and adjusting to new routines. Expectation management and communication transparency help teams know how to prepare and what's expected of them.

Use our checklist to guide your company's hybrid workweek policy development. Need additional support for in-office health and wellness policies? We've included a link to the customizable Employee Guidebook from our Return Planning Toolkit.

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hybrid workweek policy checklist:

what to include

An effective hybrid workweek policy combines practical considerations, like in-office schedules and safety considerations, with transparency into the policy's developmental process. In addition to detailing in-person requirements, consider addressing the following in your policy:



What your company learned from the pandemic. Briefly summarize how teams have been working since March 2020. Which elements of this approach have been effective and which have been challenging? How have the lessons learned from a fully remote or hybrid approach impacted your current policy development?



How the current policy was developed. From company surveys (like the one included in this toolkit) to team leadership discussions, transparency into the policy development process boosts employee buy-in.

FRAMEWORK

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Connect back to company values. How did company values impact policy development? For example, if innovation or collaboration are key company values, explaining their connection to in-person work can increase employee support for your policy and strengthen company culture.

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Health and safety considerations. Boost employees' confidence in their workplace environment by detailing your company's workplace wellness approach, such as vaccine requirements or an adjusted sick day policy. Additionally, you may wish to share details about Irvine Company's comprehensive workplace wellness approach. Full details are available at ComeBackWithConfidence.com

3



Timeline for policy rollout. Share key dates, even if they're estimates. Let employees know when the office will be open for required in-person work days, when to expect team meetings to resume in person, plans for return events, etc. Understanding the timeline for returning to the workplace will give your employees the freedom to start making informed decisions and appropriate plans.

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FRAMEWORK

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Commitment to improvement. No policy is going to be perfect from day one, so let employees know that your company is committed to improvement. Inclusive language—“we’re all learning together the best approach for in-person collaboration”—invites employees to become part of the improvement process, rather than putting the onus on executive leaders or your HR team. Consider the best mechanisms for soliciting ongoing feedback, like a follow-up survey or dedicated email address for suggestions.



Hybrid Equity Concerns. A blend of remote and in-person employees creates new concerns over equity. Employees may worry how a hybrid approach impacts promotion opportunities, compensation increases and performance reviews. Any equity initiative implemented by your organization will be an ongoing effort that starts with an open conversation around these concerns.

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return planning: customize your employee guidebook

Need additional guidance for your return planning? Our customizable Employee Guidebook provides a general overview of four key areas that are critical to successful return-to-the-workplace communication:

- Employee Health & Safety
- Keeping Your Space Safe: Workplace Wellness & Building Systems
- Your New Work Day: What to Expect
- Using the Workspace: Keeping Teammates Safe

This guidebook is available in a downloadable Microsoft Word file and can easily be customized to reflect your company's specific policies and procedures.

[Download your customizable guidebook](#) to get started.

**activate your
workplace**

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step 4: activate your workplace

Experience-driven amenities and on-site events elevate the workplace from a transactional space to an essential destination. This is where employee ties are strengthened and company culture flourishes. At Irvine Company, our workplaces are activated to attract and retain talent. This means whenever your business is ready, your workspace is ready, too: for team lunches, company happy hours, employee training and more. Here's how to use your workplace as a tool for hybrid success.

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preparing teams for the return

If your teams are working primarily from home, returning to the workplace can be an adjustment. For most companies, going fully remote happened very quickly with limited warning. Fortunately, your return approach can be more gradual and intentional, giving employees time to adjust schedules and work habits. These are some strategies that can help employees feel confident being back in the workplace and “break the ice” about coming together.

- **Bring everyone together outdoors first.** For many companies, it’s been two years since all employees were together in one place. Consider using outdoor event space at your workplace to hold an informal company gathering, like a companywide picnic or happy hour.
- **Hold skills workshops and leadership training.** While large networking events and conferences may be on hold, your employees can still enhance their leadership and management skills. Many of our event-ready outdoor workspaces include outdoor televisions and AV hook-ups that are ideal for hosting a training.

FRAMEWORK

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- **Onboard employees in person.** There's more to onboarding than just learning new systems and processes. Building connections with coworkers is essential for your new hires to thrive. In-person onboarding sessions are an opportunity for new hires to begin forming these ties with their coworkers, while quickly resolving technical issues or process questions in person.
- **Build back to a “normal” routine.** Going from fully remote to in person can be an abrupt change for some employees. Even if a full in-person week is the goal, consider offering “transitional weeks” in which employees are in person 2-3 days per week and gradually reacclimate to the office environment. This is an opportunity for the team to become comfortable with new wellness protocols that may be in place, new office layouts and adjusted routines.

As an Irvine Company customer, your business has access to more than 40 meeting and event spaces throughout our portfolio. [Explore spaces online](#) or contact your Customer Resource team for assistance.

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establishing new workday rhythms



Utilize outdoor workspace.

If employees are hesitant to gather indoors together, encourage teams to hold their meetings in an outdoor workspace. With Wi-Fi, outlets, shaded coverings, comfortable seating and a variety of work surfaces, these spaces are equipped with everything employees need to be productive safely.



Start new traditions.

Missing your old pizza Friday or taco Tuesday? With employees returning, now's the time to start a new company-wide tradition, like a weekly food truck lunch, that will create opportunities for employees to connect across teams and divisions.

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Be intentional about coordinating work.

Depending on your hybrid approach, some team members may be in person for meetings while others will be joining remotely. Enabling hybrid work connection is essential to smooth communication and teamwork. Our workplace conferencing centers are equipped with universal access capabilities for platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, WebEx and more, supporting in-person meetings and events while allowing out-of-office employees to join virtually.



Remind employees about on-site amenities.

Returning to the office can mean a shift in your employees' daily routines. Help them navigate this adjustment by reminding them about the different amenities available on site or nearby. From time-saving conveniences like EV car charging and dry cleaning drop-off to craft coffee and fitness centers, consider sending an email listing amenity availability. Your Customer Resource Team can provide the latest operating hours and access.

we're ready when you're ready

Your Customer Resource Team is ready to support your team's return and answer any questions you may have about workplace wellness and amenity access in your specific workplace community. Our workplaces are the first in the nation to be designated as UL Verified Healthy Buildings and have our wellness protocols affirmed by UCI Health.

For more information about Irvine Company's workplace wellness commitment, visit [**ComeBackWithConfidence.com**](https://www.comebackwithconfidence.com).

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