

Hybrid Work; Organizational Transformation Between Flexibility, Autonomy, and Technology

HAMADACHE Chahira ^{1*},

¹ LecturerB, Blida2 (Algeria), c.hamadache@uni-blida2.dz,

Received: 15/11/2025

Accepted: 05/12/2025

Published: 01/06/2026

Abstract:

Hybrid work combines the advantages of on-site and remote working. It is a modern approach that goes beyond the traditional system based on promoting flexibility, independence and modern technologies. It focuses on creating effective integration between roles, spaces and times, which requires employees acquisition and creativity. The main challenge lies in achieving a sustainable balance between job performance, employee comfort, well-being, and team cohesion. In general, hybrid work offers many opportunities and benefits that contribute to the development and productivity of organizations. It also enhances the resilience in the face of challenges and crises.

Keywords: Hybrid work, organization, Flexibility, Teleworking, Technology

* Corresponding author

1. INTRODUCTION

Hybrid work is a new form of corporate work organization designed to adapt to the transformations and changes experienced by the modern world, particularly during the most difficult periods marked by crises and pandemics, or during times when the economic and social development faces major constraints.

The main objective is to guarantee the sustainability of the company and to offer it the best tools involving advanced technology and flexibility in order to deal with new market requirements. Hybrid working thus represents an organizational change in the life of the company, providing it with three essential tools: autonomy, flexibility and adaptation.

In this process, the company is gradually moving away from its traditional missions based on traditional work organization schemes, and is trying to optimize its efficiency by setting up an environment where digital technology is gaining in importance.

In practical terms, hybrid work includes the use of a range of virtual and social elements, enabling employees to be able to work from different locations. However, it requires a high-performance institutional and organizational environment, favoring professional criteria adapted to the modern world, and a mastery of digital technological tools by the parties involved in this mission.

Although the use of hybrid working represents a historic development in corporate organization, its most notable growth came during the Covid-19 pandemic, with the rapid spread of teleworking, particularly in developed countries.

As we shall discuss below, the theoretical origins of hybrid work are aligned with several approaches, including motivational theory (Deci and Ryan) (BOUZIDA & MALEK, 2023, p. 210) which has valued autonomy, co-creation and results-oriented management rather than the physical presence.

In view of the central role played by hybrid work in the managerial modes of the modern company, the problem to be addressed is as follows:

How is hybrid working - combining flexibility, employee autonomy and the use of digital technologies - transforming organizations, and what are its strengths and challenges?

To answer this question, we need to address several issues, the following questions arise:

- What are the main characteristics of hybrid working?
- What are the benefits of hybrid working for organizations?
- What are the challenges and limitations associated with the implementation of hybrid working?

In light of the above, this study aims to understand this mode of working and in particular:

- The organizational and managerial transformation brought about by hybrid work;
- Its role in reinventing workspaces;

The applied study approach is the descriptive and analytical approach which will make it possible to touch on all aspects of the subject and to deepen the reflection on the transformations expected within the company through the use of hybrid work.

To address the problematic raised and achieve the objective set, this study is divided into three main areas: We will first discuss the evolution of hybrid work and its definition. Next, we will examine its effects on organizations and employees, highlighting both benefits and limitations. Finally, we will look at the challenges and issues that arise from it, followed by recommendations.

2- Evolution of work organization methods

The evolution of work organization methods, moving from face-to-face work to hybrid work, stems from the association between advances in

managerial theories and empirical organizational transformations observed in the field. This evolution has occurred in several phases, as follows.

2.1 The beginnings before the digital age

Before the digital age, work organization models were mainly based on traditional approaches focused on productivity and hierarchy. Theories developed before 1940, such as those of Taylor, Fayol and Weber, emphasized a rigid structure based on division of labor (Chevassus, Galliano, Huiban, & Valceschini, 1990, p. 156), direct control and mandatory on-site presence. Although these methods optimized efficiency, they neglected the human factor and lacked flexibility.

During the 1930s to 1960s, the human relations school introduced a new vision by emphasizing the psychological and social dimensions of work. Led by Elton Mayo, Maslow and Herzberg (Kennedy, 2008, pp. 173,267,273), these approaches highlighted the importance of employee well-being, recognition and motivation, while maintaining a face-to-face production model.

2.2. The digital revolution and the advent of teleworking

The digital revolution, marked by the advent of new information and communication technologies (the Internet, personal computers, collaborative tools), has deeply transformed working methods since the second half of the 20th century. The first ideas about teleworking emerged in the 1950s with Norbert Wiener (Lebrun, 2021, pp. 19-20), who demonstrated the possibility of managing a project remotely using the first means of data transmission. In the 1970s, globalization and technological advances, the telephone in particular, fax and the first personal computers, transformed the organization of work by offering companies new perspectives. At the same time, the energy crisis of that period accelerated the adoption of teleworking, supported by innovations in telecommunications.

The concept of ‘telecommuting’, introduced by Jack Nilles in 1973 (Cherkaoui & Jahmane, 2023, p. 16), was part of systems and contingency theories. Systems theory developed by Katz and Kahn in 1978, suggests that the organization should be viewed as an open system (Ghedjghoudj,

2015, p. 72) that requires constant adaptation to its environment through flexibility. Contingency theory supported by Joan Woodward (Bouhafs, 2017,p.161)) emphasizes the importance of adjusting organizational structures according to specific contexts such as technology. These visions have guided the organizations towards more flexible organizational models based on autonomy and decentralization, thus laying the foundations for hybrid working and teleworking.

2.3 The beginnings of hybrid working

Since the 1990s, the appearance of the internet and digital tools has fostered new ways of working that combine office presence and remote working. In the 2000s, the widespread adoption of these technologies strengthened the shift towards collaborative organizations. The COVID-19 pandemic, since 2020, has significantly reinforced the adoption of teleworking and hybrid models (Duchemin, 2023, pp. 4-5), combining flexibility with a better work-life balance. These transformations are now based on trust, managerial flexibility and a more human-centered approach within organizations.

The development of hybrid work is part of a psychological framework, particularly through the self-determination theory of Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (BOUZIDA & MALEK, 2023, p. 883) .This theory highlights the importance of addressing the needs for autonomy, competence and relationships to boost employees' intrinsic motivation. By applying these principles, organizations can promote well-being and performances in these new hybrid environments.

From the above statement, it is clear that traditional work organization was based on direct supervision and physical presence. Today, thanks to information and communication technologies (ICT) and the Internet, models are evolving towards hybrid ways of working, prioritizing flexibility and autonomy:

3. Theoretical and conceptual framework of the study

In this section, we will examine the definitions and links with associated terms, the main characteristics and the various models related to hybrid work.

3.1 Definition

The concept of hybrid work is composed of two fundamental notions, namely work and hybridity. The term work refers to any activity that produces value for both individuals and society, whether paid or unpaid (MESSAHEL, 2025, p. 434), while the concept of hybridity refers to the hybrid nature of something, a term derived from the Latin *hybrida*. It is often used to refer to something that is composed of elements of different origins (think tank, 2023, p. 25), thus forming a mixture.

By combining the essential elements of the two previous definitions, hybrid work can be defined as a productive activity, combining remote and face-to-face work, which contributes to creating value for both individuals and society, whether paid or not.

In this context, Eurofound defines hybrid working as a flexible form of organization in which a person carries out activities on a sustainable basis, either alone or in collaboration, in accordance with an agreement between the employer and the employee (Eurofound, 2023, p. 11). This arrangement is adjusted according to needs, tasks and context, offering flexibility in terms of working time and place, whether in the office, at home or in another space. It relies on the use of digital technologies (Bouchez, 2023, p. 172). It should be noted that this definition introduces a new feature, including the integration of digital technologies.

Furthermore, it introduces a method that combines teleworking and on-site work within an organization, while ensuring continuity, integration and fluidity of activities. This approach emphasizes coordination between these two modes of operation, rather than a simple accumulation, thus representing an advanced form of remote working models. (Bouchez, 2023, p. 172)

These definitions, although varied, converge on certain fundamental points. It is on this basis that we define hybrid work as a flexible organization combining teleworking and on-site presence, while relying on digital technologies.

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The main characteristics of hybrid working that result from this are as follows (Ramanathan, 2024, p. 406):

- Flexibility: hybrid working allows employees to choose the hours and environments that suit them, whether in the office, at home or in third places, thereby contributing to a better balance between their autonomy and collaboration.

- Digital technology: The use of digital tools is essential to ensure smooth communication and maintain productivity in hybrid environments.

In summary, these main characteristics help to understand the specific nature of hybrid work.

3.2 Similar terms

Hybrid working, linking teleworking and office attendance, offers flexibility that allows employees to choose their place of work according to their needs thanks to digital advances. Its multifaceted nature encompasses several related concepts.

This hybridization of work has been implicitly referred to in various reports under similar concepts, such as flexible working, smart working, mixed working or agile working. These terms incorporate the same dimensions as hybrid working, in other words the dimensions of physical space, time and virtual space.

The physical space is defined by flexibility of locations, between the main workplace and home. In terms of time; the emphasis is on managing when and how long work is done. As for virtual space, this is mainly limited to data security issues (Vartiainen & Vanharanta, 2024, p. 9).

In addition, there are other concepts similar to hybrid working, such as teleworking, which shares common objectives, particularly flexibility and performance. This concept refers to any form of organization in which work that could have been carried out on the employer's location, is performed by an employee outside those places, such as at home, in cafés or in co-working spaces, on a regular and voluntary basis, using information and communication technologies (Lebrun, 2021, p. 30).

Although it is a form of remote working, it coexists with other modalities such as nomadic working, involving constant travel, or multi-site working, which distributes teams across several locations (Lebrun, 2021, p. 19).

In summary, similar concepts remain close to hybrid working, including various spatial, temporal and technological dimensions.

3.3 Hybrid working models

There are four types of hybrid working, as the following (Vidhyaa & Ravichandran, 2022, pp. 1-2):

- **Flexible hybrid working:** It gives employees the freedom to choose their working hours and location based on current needs.

- **Fixed hybrid working:** This model imposes specific days and hours for remote working or office attendance. It assists in managing capacity.

- **Office prioritized hybrid working:** This model requires partial physical presence, while allowing employees to telework certain days of the week.

- **Remote prioritized hybrid working:** This model is primarily based on remote working with occasional visits to offices or co-working spaces for team-building or collaborative activities.

Thus, the types of working models offer a variety of adaptable solutions, associating on-site and remote working, in order to meet the specific needs and contexts of companies and their employees, while reflecting the diversity of possible operating modes.

4. The advantages of hybrid work

Hybrid work offers several advantages having significant positive impacts on organizations and employees. Here are some examples illustrating these advantages:

4.1 Benefits for employees

Hybrid work offers employees greater spatial and temporal flexibility, tailored to their individual pace and needs. This flexibility and increased autonomy allow for managing the balance between professional and private life and also contribute to improving quality of life. By reducing stress associated with daily commutes and preventing burnout (Tissandier &

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Mariani-Rousset, 2019, p.6). Furthermore, flexibility and autonomy foster motivation, accountability, and job satisfaction.

Afterwards, to reduce the feeling of isolation generally associated with full-time remote work, the hybrid work model promotes frequent exchanges between employees, ideas sharing and the strengthening of ties between teams.

Furthermore, hybrid work helps reduce the physical obstacles associated with travel and spaces organization, while facilitating the adaptation of working conditions to the specific people with disabilities needs. This model helps promote their inclusion and support their integration into employment.

In terms of performance, hybrid working optimizes personal productivity by a balanced concentration during teleworking and collaboration in the days spent in the office, while developing important skills such as time management and asynchronous communication (Epitalon, Gault, & Rabineau, 2021, p. 33). This mode also relies on the use of modern technology, which promotes greater innovation and creativity.

In short, these opportunities show that hybrid work is emerging as an alternative way of organizing work that is suited to modern needs, combining flexibility, performance and well-being, in contrast to the rigid framework of traditional work.

4.2 Benefits for organizations

Hybrid working offers several benefits for organizations, both practical and strategic.

Firstly, hybrid working improves productivity by adapting working methods to each individual's specific pace and by using flexible spaces such as the office, home or third places. This approach promotes overall efficiency by reducing interruptions, thereby maintaining employees' performance and competitiveness.

More and more organizations are adopting this way of working to attract and retain talent that place particular importance on a flexible environment. This method allows them to achieve a harmonious balance between their personal and professional lives. Connected generations, such as Y and Z,

are particularly attracted to this model, which guarantees both employees well-being and efficiency at work.

From a financial perspective, optimized management of organizational resources regarding real estate-related costs. By defining the amount of space dedicated to offices, the organization can automatically reduce the associated costs. This reduction in rent and other related expenses generates significant savings, which can then be reinvested in promising projects or strategic investments, such as IT equipment and security software.

However, Hybrid work provides flexibility that reduces absences and lateness due to health issues or family commitments. It also helps to decrease stress, risks of burnout and staff turnover, thus reinforcing autonomy and trust within the organization.

In addition, this model promotes digital collaboration, creating a flexible and dynamic environment that is perfectly suited to the challenges facing the organizations today. Through combining flexibility and accountability, Hybrid work becomes a powerful lever for optimizing performance and strengthening the adaptability of contemporary organizations.

Finally, Hybrid working is an organizational model that combines on-site and remote working. This emerging model offers great flexibility, which is its main advantage, allowing the pace and location of work to be adapted to the needs of both employees and organisation.

5. Challenges and issues of hybrid transformation

Although hybrid work offers many advantages, it also poses major challenges and issues for organizations and employees.

Among these challenges and issues, the following should be mentioned:

-Employees face several risks with hybrid work, including social isolation, which limits interactions that are essential to mental well-being and weakens team cohesion (Perron, Buzaud, Diter, & Martin, 2019, p. 120). This way of working can also contribute to burnout by blurring the boundaries between private and professional life, which increases stress. Furthermore, intensive use of digital tools and hyper connectivity can lead to mental fatigue among employees.

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-Adapting management methods is essential for success in a hybrid model. This requires training managers to be able to manage this specific type of organization through internal transformations, dedicated training programs and appropriate support measures. It is also crucial to recruit people who are proficient in digital communication tools and prepared to prevent the psychosocial risks associated with this working method.

- The contrast between on-site and remote working complicates coordination, particularly in terms of communication and information flow, which can lead to a loss of efficiency.

-It is essential to ensure ongoing legal certainty for hybrid work, taking into account the constraints associated with contract management, the right to disconnect and data protection. Organizations must therefore continuously monitor changes in applicable regulations in order to prevent any disputes that could lead to judicial complications.

- The lack of structure in teleworking creates confusion, uncertainty and a decrease in productivity among employees. The lack of clear instructions complicates task management, goal setting and performance monitoring. In addition, insufficient communication hinders problem prevention and weakens employees' engagement.

In conclusion, hybrid work offers a model combining flexibility and autonomy, but it also presents challenges, particularly in terms of team cohesion, performance management and psychological impact on employees.

6. Conclusion

Hybrid working combines office work and teleworking. It relies on flexibility, autonomy and new technologies to transform traditional management methods within the organization. Thanks to technological tools, hybrid working has become established, relying on spatial and temporal flexibility adapted to the individuals rhythms and needs.

This way of working has become particularly prevalent during crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic, where it has become common practice in the modern interconnected world, which no longer recognizes remoteness and distance.

However, the transition from the traditional model to hybrid work requires a profound organizational transformation, demanding the active involvement of managers and constant communication to balance the advantages while overcoming the identified constraints. However hybrid working is revolutionizing the way organizations operate by offering employees greater autonomy and flexibility, while redefining traditional management models. The use of digital tools facilitates this transition by maintaining remote collaboration. These changes improve both productivity and work quality life.

While creating numerous opportunities and improving productivity, hybrid working can pose constraints and challenges, particularly in terms of isolation and communication between individuals. That is why its success depends on striking the right balance between individual autonomy, collective dialogue and technological support. Its implementation could also lead to total dependence on machines and reinforce the dominance of global centers that control technology.

In any case, the development and success of hybrid work is subject to a set of criteria, among which the following should be defined:

- The adoption of a harmonious legal framework, drawing inspiration from recognized international experiences, where hybrid work is governed by precise agreements guaranteeing security, the right to disconnect and mutual employer-employee consent.
- The implementation of investment programs aimed at the digital transformation of human resources in order to facilitate the management of hybrid teams, performance monitoring, and internal communication.
- Training managers and employees in digital tools, remote management and hybrid collaboration to achieve objectives and overcome the challenges related to distance and coordination

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- The importance of employee well-being as an essential element in hybrid work, given its role in reducing stress, improving work-life balance and preventing burnout.
- The need to rethink physical workspaces so that they become places for exchange and collaboration, rather than spaces for mere presence.
- Creating a suitable working atmosphere capable of combining digital tools and team rituals to maintain cohesion and avoid isolation of employees.
- The establishment of a flexible organization with the necessary qualities and resources to respond to the hybrid work strategy adopted by the organization.
- The impact of hybrid work on cultural change, especially since the former involves an evolution of mindset, particularly around trust, autonomy and management by objectives rather than by physical presence.

Finally, the success of hybrid work requires a combination of legal framework, technological investment, training, communication and cultural adaptation, while taking into account local specificities and activity sectors.

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