

Deem[®]

How and Why Deem Is Creating a Hybrid Workplace



Developing a Return-To-Office Strategy

Hard to believe, but it's been a year and a half since Deem first started exploring the idea of a post-pandemic hybrid work strategy. Like many businesses in the tech industry, Deem is adopting a hybrid strategy that blends remote and in-office work to oversee the development of corporate travel management tools. It's an option Deem believes allows for the benefits of both approaches.

If you're looking for a starting point or a guide to build on, you've come to the right place. While return-to-office strategies will vary by organization and industry, our approach to creating a hybrid workplace may help you establish a framework you can tailor specifically to your company.

It starts first by engaging employees, then putting the right technology in place, communicating, and, above all else, prioritizing flexibility.



Engaging
employees



Putting the right
technology in place



Communicating



Prioritizing flexibility

Step 1: Engage Employees and Listen

The first step in the framework is focused on information gathering. Take time to engage and listen to your employees, whether that's in one-on-one conversations, fireside chats, focus groups, surveys, or another listening technique. Seek to understand the feasibility of their return to the office, how they feel about returning, and what they need to transition back to in-office work more seamlessly. A company cannot make sweeping decisions that impact employee health without first understanding the preferences, values, and tolerances for risk among staff.

Step 2: Supply the Right Tech Toolkit

The key is supplying technology that supports work in any setting. Most companies have figured out a video conferencing solution, but there are also hundreds of options for managing projects virtually including Asana, Jira, Trello, AirTable or Monday.com. Messaging apps like Slack, Microsoft Teams, Google Chat, and Twist may help employees have a voice in team decisions. Meeting management apps such as Fellow, Zoho, and Duuoo Teams can make meetings more effective and improve communication between teams.

Our teams at Deem have been incredibly creative in using many of these tools and more. Embrace flexibility to find what works best for you.

Step 3: Communicate

Whenever there is change or ambiguity, communication takes on heightened importance. Especially if your workforce is dispersed, it's critical to consider multiple methods of communication and to repeat messages frequently.

When announcing our hybrid strategy, Deem started by notifying managers in a Zoom meeting followed by:

- An announcement and Q&A at a virtual All-Hands meeting
- An email follow-up
- A Slack message pointing employees to the recorded meeting
- Posts on our internal People & Places site
- Local details communicated in each office
- Video recordings posted to Deem Academy LMS

Step 4: Focus on Flexibility

Employees have a wide variety of interest in and tolerance for coming back to the office. In some cases, isolating in small urban apartments for months on end, homeschooling children while working, or caring for very young or elderly family members can create layers of stress and distractions for employees. Women, in particular, have disproportionately carried the brunt of those duties throughout the pandemic, which leads them to have nuanced feelings about returning to the office and a strong need for flexibility to manage both home and work. Bridging the gaps in preference and needs may require more accommodation than companies are accustomed to extending.



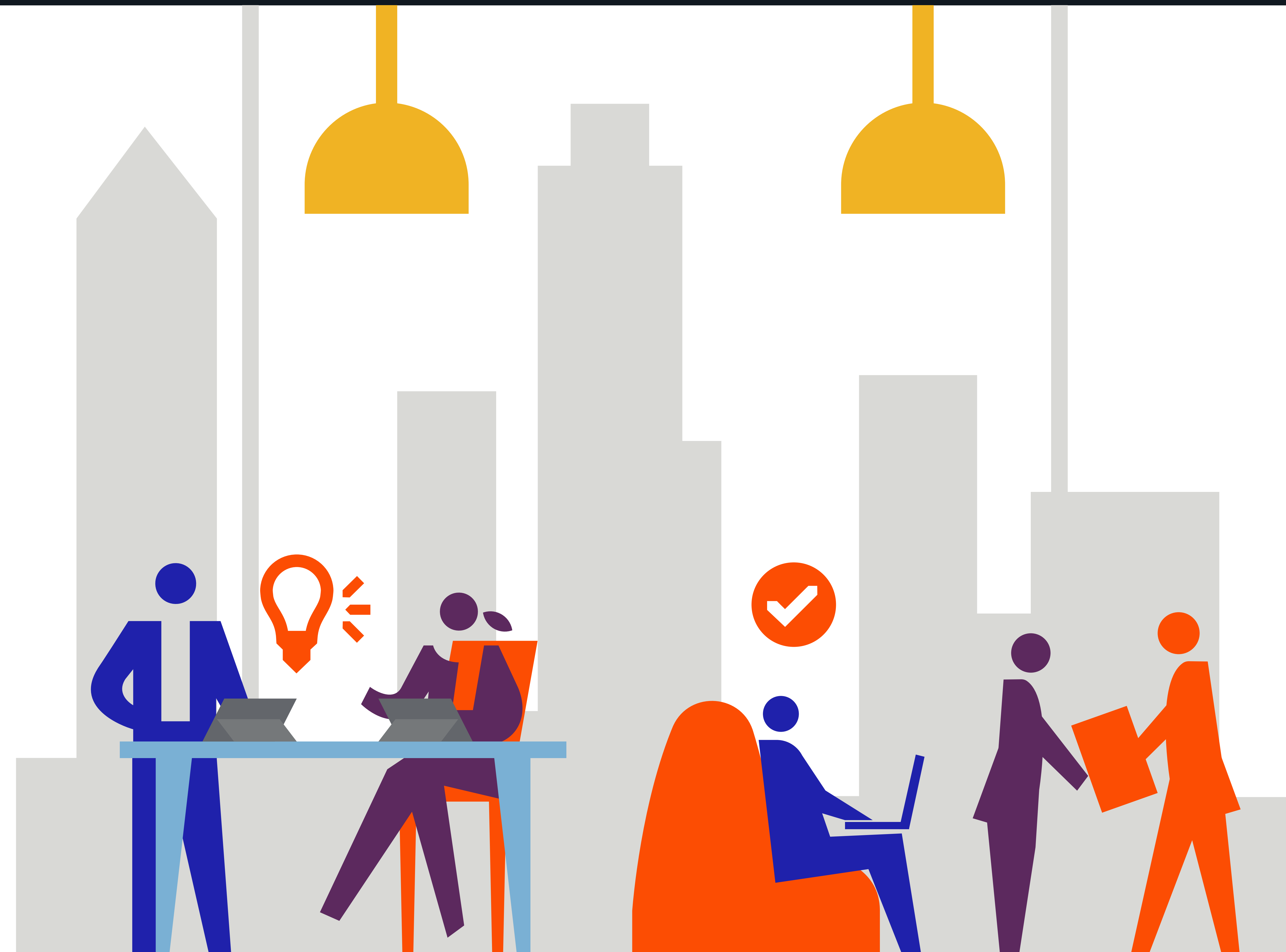
Looking Forward

Nearly a decade ago, Yahoo! banned remote work. Executives said that chance meetings boost innovation, and speed and quality were suffering in a remote environment. Clearly, they'd have a hard time making that argument today.

The most successful office-based companies listen first and make compromises. They'll focus their efforts on reexamining company culture and figuring out how to build and reinforce it both in person and virtually. They'll create employee engagement opportunities and manage the various risk tolerances across age, gender, geography, and role. They will adapt their travel policy to provide clear guidelines and reassurance when bringing team members together.

At Deem, it made the most sense to give employees the varied benefits of a hybrid model. Office spaces will be maintained, and employees will be encouraged to come in once a week to meet with their teams and cross-functional colleagues in person. As a global company with employees all over the world, Deem will continue to emphasize virtual work with opportunities to communicate and socialize remotely as well.

Everyone is still working on getting comfortable not knowing what may change, but the one thing Deem knows is that the key to success is in remaining flexible.



Draw inspiration from Deem as you evolve your company culture to meet the new and varied needs of the current day. Visit our [Resources](#) page for more.



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