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Working in hybrid mode:

the new methods to adopt

Editorial

In a world in the midst of digital transformation, the Beekast team has analysed the upcoming trends for you. A focus on the methods of collaboration in companies and the useful tools to be able to adapt to the hybrid world in which we live.

But what's a **hybrid working mode?**

To summarise, **hybrid working** is a form of **work** organisation where the employee shares their time between working in the office and working from home. Although it's easy to understand, implementing this system is a real challenge for companies today.

It requires taking into account employees' new needs in terms of adaptability, flexibility and a quest for meaning in their work. And companies must find the best compromise in terms of their organisational method to maximise productivity and efficiency and thereby fulfil their strategic goals.

Discover the methods, tools and advice to make your management a real asset. Facing this new work method, adopt collaborative management to engage your teams and ensure their well-being at work.

While company transformation that is too slow remains one of employees' grounds for leaving, the Beekast platform will be your ally to accelerate and facilitate the implementation of these changes.

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Summary of previous collaboration methods and factors of change

The end of cooperative working

Our work models are bound to evolve continually over time. Certain methods such as cooperative work have become obsolete today and are giving way to new, more modern practices.

But what do we mean by 'cooperative work'?

Cooperative work is defined as a model characterised by **individuality**. It's a sectorised working method with strong division of tasks. In plain terms, the members of a team **work side by side but not necessarily together**. The tasks are not shared and are all independent from each other.

What are the consequences of this work method on engagement?

The cooperative method makes company organisation **truly individual:** line management is very present, information is shared vertically, goals are personal and working from home quite seldom happens. Mobility (between and inside companies) is also under developed.

This means that cohesion, a company culture and the feeling of belonging to a team practically don't exist. **Employee engagement isn't maximised**, due to the feeling of sharing a common goal with the members of one's team being weak. There's very little communication or team spirit and these are generally associated with low employee engagement.

As a work model that's still used in 'traditional companies', it tends to disappear in the face of **new employee expectations** in terms of engagement and investment in their work.

The **digital transformation** under way in many companies supports the change from a cooperative mode to a collaborative mode.

The changes in our organisational modes

More than just changes in our organisational models in companies, some are causing a real **revolution of our methods**. Some models that are considered to be archaic are giving way to modern management and organisational techniques that adapt to our lifestyles.

There are several reasons at the origin of these transformations.

The relationship with work has changed from a **generational point of view**. Expectations and motivations are changing throughout the generations. The needs of generation Z (digital natives, those who have grown up with new technologies) are not the same as those of generations X or Y (the previous generations).

We can see that generation Z has evolved in a faster world, with easy and practically instant access to information thanks to the web and social media. This generation is built on this basis of **instantaneity**. That's why today, it wants to be able to live in a **flexible, roaming and versatile world** where all these physical and temporal barriers that we face in standard modes of operation are erased. According to an OpinionWay study for Microsoft France [1] published in January 2022, employees aged under 35 years are those who most expect flexibility. 65% of them say today that it's a decisive criterion in

their choice of career. Beyond searching for flexibility and mobility, these digital natives are also looking for working conditions that prioritise their well-being instead of stress and a search for performance alone.

Companies, however, still seek **efficiency and productivity** to meet their strategic needs. They soon understood that to get the best out of their employees, they had to adapt to their new expectations.

At the same time, the development and use of **digital tools** (cloud, management and remote collaboration software) within companies enabled them to start a **digital transformation**, facilitated by the arrival of 'digital native' generations on the labour market.

Factor no. 2: The consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic

Covid was just **an accelerator of the digital transformation process** that had already been initiated in certain companies. In an IPSOS study[2] published in 2018, 58% of French employees stated that **collaborative work** was already increasing in their company.

In 2020, the pandemic forced companies to take drastic decisions very quickly. In this way, they had to develop **flexible working methods** and demonstrate a strong **capacity to adapt**.

In this period, teleworking became widespread and **hybrid working** emerged. As vectors of flexibility, these modes of organisation respond to employees' desire to reconsider their work-life balance. According to an Opinion Way survey for Slack[3], 38% of French employees feel ready to change their employer if it requires a full return to the office. These changes prove that employees' expectations have evolved, in particular since the 2020 pandemic.

Also note the post-covid effect: this period has not been without consequences on **morale and social relations** in general. On the return to working in the office, employees felt the need to give back meaning to the group and create a real company culture. Gradually, collaborative approaches are extending in companies.

Factor no. 3: Development of the management type and company culture

The company's whole organisational structure has changed a lot over the past decade. The vision of leadership has also transformed. **Top-down management** has given way to a more horizontal organisation of the hierarchy. In this way, communication has been facilitated, work is carried out in a more collaborative manner and the manager's role has been redefined. While they used to take on the role of **decision-maker** a few years ago, today they have become a **facilitator** in company projects.

This change in managerial method has facilitated internal communication within teams, placed more trust in employees and allowed them more tolerance and given way to greater recognition, which is one of the key factors of engagement. Employees are now looking for a real company culture enabling them **to have an authentic employee experience**.

In this way, for several years we've taken part in a real transformation of organisational models in companies. This redefines and develops all our collaboration methods.

New methods of collaboration: when the company reinvents itself

True collaboration in companies

The construction of a new collaborative model

The end of cooperation in companies is giving way to **collaboration**. This work method is based on the combination of information and communication technologies and the sharing of synchronous and asynchronous solutions between several people in an aim to achieve **a common goal**.

Beyond simply making its **exchanges interactive or working in a team**, an organisation based on collaboration leads its projects with:

- **Joint reflection,**
- **Joint creation,**
- **Joint decision-making,**
- **Joint construction.**

In this way, the human aspect is put back at the **heart of your concerns** in an aim to give people a voice, facilitate communication and give a collective aspect to company projects.

Teams adopt a work organisation in 'project mode': i.e. each member of the team taking part in the project contributes all their **skills and recognition** of the ins and outs of the project. Each person therefore has an impact on the decisions taken and takes on **collective responsibility for the project**.

In this way, each team has the means to become the most competent with the appearance of **collective intelligence** that will dynamise overall company performance. Also, again according to the Opinion Way survey for Slack[3] published in July 2021, 31% of people questioned believe that the new technologies that have become widespread since lockdown have improved collective intelligence within teams.

Beyond collaboration with team members, the whole **hierarchical environment** has been rebuilt: participative and horizontal management making hierarchical boundaries more permeable.

What we need to remember is that good collaboration is intrinsically linked to more committed, motivated and necessarily more efficient employees.

Furthermore, like in the **Maslow pyramid**, employee engagement is generally governed in companies by five main principles:

- **The feeling of belonging**
- **The meaning of their work**
- **The esteem given to them**
- **Security** (of employment and financial)
- **Development** (professional and personal)

These five drivers refer to the factors that make an employee want and motivate them to increase their productivity and effectiveness in the company.

Concerning the **company culture**, in this model, it takes on a whole other aspect. While beforehand, the employee perceived the company only as a place to work, these days, the work environment has real importance: team building, after-work drinks and inter-company activities. The role of **informal occasions** is to give the employee an **experience** that goes beyond just their position in the company.

In actual fact, how are these new collaborative methods organised?

These new methods of collaboration in companies affect both the organisation of work and the employees' vision of the company.

The conception of work is partly reinvented: **it becomes hybrid, flexible and versatile**. Companies have now understood that offering their employees flexibility at work is the best solution to **retain their talent**

.
These days, to fight **employees' disengagement**, it's necessary to give **meaning to work**. This is why these organisational revolutions have real importance.

For this, we adopt new methods of reflection such as the famous test & learn: thanks to a less processed mode of operation that requires less validation, we give more freedom to teams to be the master of projects they undertake. By using this collaborative method, the team advances step by step thanks to each person's **skills**. Projects are co-constructed gradually by **sharing and passing on skills**.

This spread of operation in agile mode to all the company's branches enables it to gain **collaboration between departments and overall communication**. The benefit is **better cross-functionality in projects**.

These changes inevitably have direct consequences on employees, in particular with **the rise of working from home** that offers the possibility of gaining **autonomy and independence**, an essential factor of employees' engagement and motivation. As for occasions at work, their aim is to be convivial, to create true **informal occasions** for sharing with the members of our team. Note that social relations remain truly important: since the pandemic, 45% of employees work in hybrid mode admit that they feel less close to their colleagues, according to

the same OpinionWay survey for Microsoft France[1]. And 90% of people questioned say that informal rites have a real impact on their loyalty to the company!

Controlled management of hybrid work and the implementation of new collaboration methods enable us to develop employees' engagement and foster their loyalty.

... at the origin of new work methods

These new organisational methods and the rise of working from home have a major impact on operational methods, both internally and externally, as well as on salary habits. The need therefore arises to **rebuild new managerial methods**. This involves the organisation of rituals, whether in the office or remotely:

- **Increasing time for discussion,**
- **Organisation of activities and leisure,**
- **Agreeing collectively on days spent working from home,**
- **Defining each person's tasks,**
- **Sharing regular feedback,**
- **Defining quantifiable, clear and precise objectives,**
- **Promoting listening,**
- **Holding retrospective reviews.**

To be effective in this approach, we must put in place **new managerial methods**. For example, the idea to adopt the collaborative tools appears to be a solution to gain versa-tility with your employees. They enable us to **gather, discuss and communicate better** together and maintain the remote link to maximise **the feeling of belonging to one's team.**

Continuing from this idea, investing in **collective training** to unite your team on common topics is also one of the new internal organisational methods.

In this way, investing in strong collaboration enables us to establish true **management based on trust** in a team. While before, the manager could 'see' their employees work, today, with working from home, **we must trust**. With these new work methods, one of the major challenges for managers is to gain familiarity with their employees' **weak signals**: understanding, listening, communicating and discussing to **build the foundations of a robust team**.

To adopt these new managerial methods in the right way, it's also important to focus on **recruitment**. It's essential to be able to ensure the motivation of the people met in interviews and thereby **prioritise the human aspect instead of pure technical skills**.

These new collaborative methods are essential today to meet companies' needs in terms of maximising their performance. To do so, efficiency and productivity are essential and the need to **limit lateness and absenteeism is really vital**. This is why, currently, giving back meaning to each person's work (whether at emotional, cognitive or aspirational level) has real importance and plays a major role to avoid the phenomenon of 'great resign' which took place in waves in the United States during 2020.

The new collaboration spaces and tools to adapt to a new era

Although work and management methods are in the midst of change, they must be accompanied by new tools to make companies' organisational transformation truly last. The emergence of hybrid work appears to be a real revolution of our operating methods.

Redefining spaces

These recent years have seen a desire from employees to be able to adapt to how they work. This is how we're seeing this phenomenon of **roaming** grow in companies: i.e. this desire from employees to become more and more **mobiles** in how they work.

In actual fact, this spread of the idea of being able to work flexibly initiated the **modification of work spaces** with a new arrangement both in terms of physical office space and a more flexible organisation of working hours. So, in many companies, a **flex-office** organisation is becoming widespread, creating **real mobility within the company**. Assigned offices are giving way to '**desk-sharing**': each person is free to choose their place when they arrive in the morning.

To support this change to work spaces, **specific spaces** are also appearing in companies: phone box, meeting room, coworking space, break rooms, etc. This enables each person to organise themselves how they want according to the tasks to perform. **External coworking** spaces are also spreading within companies. In this way, these days, anyone has the possibility to book a work space for an afternoon, a day, a month, enabling mobile and flexible people to adapt every day.
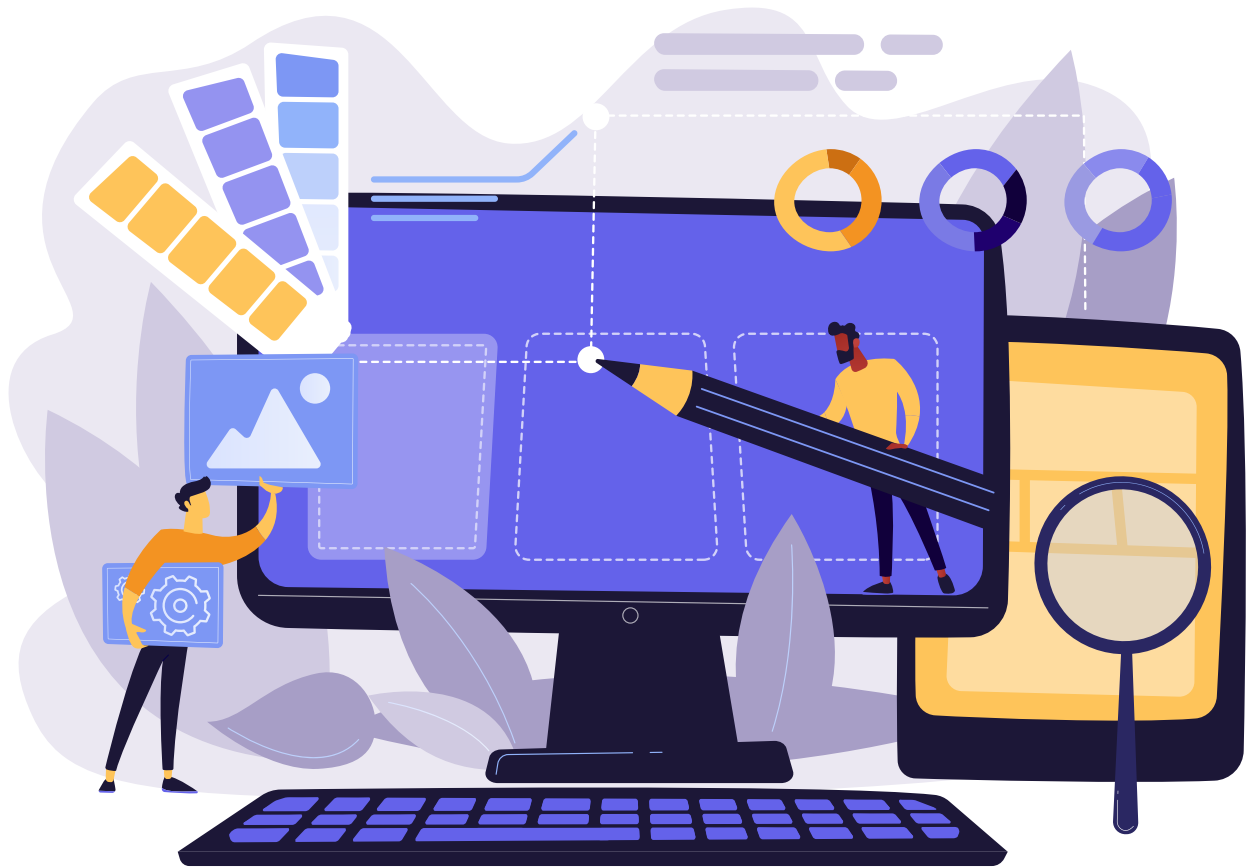
The new tools

The transformation of work spaces has emerged through support to new technologies and tools necessary for good collaboration. This is an obligatory phase to be able to hope for a transition that truly works in the long term.

The rise in collaborative tools has enabled a real revolution in the **organisation of remote working**. The communication appears as a real pillar of a team's smooth operation. By adopting collaboration tools, we give the possibility to r**equalify time and space**: projects in companies may be geographically relocated and management is asynchronous at all times. Most of time these tools are fun and easy to use and free up and encourage communication and enable smooth circulation of information by limiting hierarchical barriers. Employees gain **responsiveness and effectiveness and engage more easily in projects**. According to the Opinion Way survey for Slack[3] already mentioned, 88% of people

questioned who regularly use collaborative tools said that they could no longer do without them in their professional life.

In this context, cloud spaces will have a real impact: within a team, they will **centralise and synchronise information**, facilitating the joint production of projects between all the members of a team. This technology also had the advantage of ensuring that each employee has an **egalitarian vision** of the project in which they are involved.

Supported by new technologies, new meeting formats are emerging. Have you heard of the **metaverse**? In simple terms, this is a parallel world in which each participant takes part via an augmented reality system. Beyond taking part in a meeting, each person has a real experience in a parallel world. So, will this model become widespread in future years to become our everyday method for meetings?

These new technologies also have real benefits, and there are substantial time and money savings.

If you want to test new collaborative tools, here are some that can help you work even more effectively:

- **Company social networks: Slack, Azendoo**
- **Shared storage space: Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive, Dropbox**
- **Management of tasks/projects: Trello, Wimi, TeamWork, Notion**
- **Video conferencing: Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Notion**
- **Coordinating meetings: Beekast**

Six reasons to develop collaboration methods

As you can tell, **collaboration methods have changed as the hybrid world has developed**. Lots of methods, which have become obsolete today, are giving way to new ways of working as a team.
We're going to present six good reasons to transform your vision of collaboration in companies!

Gain productivity

As mentioned previously, **old management methods** left little room for collaboration. **Individualism** overtook **collective working** and very sectorised tasks made effectiveness **far from optimal performance**.

By adopting a **collaborative method** mixing discussing, sharing and interaction, maximise the effectiveness of your collective working! Also, with the use of collaborative tools, you can easily benefit from true support every day to maintain **your team's engagement**.

Innovate more easily as a team

Stimulate your team's collective intelligence! This is what will give you the possibility to innovate, create and improve your core business.

The more effectively a team's employees work together, the greater their capacity to innovate as a team will be. Enable your team to be more effective thanks to brainstorming, sharing ideas and feedback! This sharing of ideas enables you to gain openness and knowledge of the environment you work in.

Your team will improve its effectiveness when handling certain topics, and also obtains the opportunity to innovate and evolve more quickly than the competitors!

Adapt to your employees' needs

Retaining employees in a company is really a topical subject. Employees' needs and expectations have changed and the need to be able to benefit from greater flexibility weighs heavily in the balance of career choices.

Today, to satisfy, motivate and commit your employees, **adapt your management methods** to the new expectations in today's world!

Strengthen your employees' skills

By establishing a more collaborative system, it is becoming easier to put in place **knowledge sharing** between all the members of the team. Each person contributes their vision, perspective and knowledge according to their skills and experience.

Therefore, all the members of your team can train with better overall collaboration!

Furthermore, thanks to the use of collaborative tools, benefit from better access to information, training and therefore **upskilling**.

Develop soft skills

Beyond pure upskilling, collaborative work also enables you to develop your **soft skills**. These are as important as hard skills and enable you to improve performance, effectiveness and productivity!

Team working, whether remotely or in person, enables you to develop your critical thinking, capacity to respond, communication, coordination and emotional intelligence. All these skills are also necessary for employees' professional fulfilment and performance.

Therefore, enable your employees to improve their skills in all fields, whether technical or not!

Reduce your costs

Adopting a flexible vision of work provides advantages for the company and for the employee.

By effectively putting in place their flexible work strategy, the company can benefit from the **reduction of financial costs**, in particular in terms of tangible and intangible assets (smaller premises with working from home or desk-sharing organisation to limit spending for each employee).

For your employees, too, the advantages are significant. They gain in terms of the financial cost of transport, as well as in terms of a **balance** in the organisation of their work and home life!

Conclusion

The hybrid world in which we live inevitably requires us to review our **collaboration and organisational methods**. For a company to be able to operate effectively in this world, it must adapt quickly to new expectations, whether in terms of management or internal organisational methods.

For this, the role of the **manager as well as their employees** is essential. Helped by the rise of **collaborative tools**, this transition must be prepared to work in the long term.

What's next?

Get in touch with one of our Digital Workplace Consultants:

Request a demo

Discover Beekast yourself:

Try Beekast for free

Resources:

1. Étude OpinionWay pour Microsoft France - La fidélité à son entreprise : ce capital qui s'épuise - 2022
2. Étude IPSOS - La culture de la collaboration en progrès dans les entreprises - 2018
3. Sondage Opinion Way pour Slack - Les employés de bureau et les technologies - 2021

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