HOW TO THRIVE IN A HYBRID ENVIRONMENT.

Six essential areas to support your team in the flexible-working world.
Events in 2020 have forced every business to reassess how they operate. No industry has been unaffected – owners and leaders have had to act fast to ensure that their teams can continue to support customers amid massive disruption.

REMOTE WORKING: WILL IT EVER GO OUT OF FASHION?

In 2020, 71% of companies had employees working from home in some capacity. 58% of businesses said that they planned to change their policies to allow remote working indefinitely. That’s compared to just 3.6% who allowed employees to work from home in previous years — a monumental increase.\(^1\)

Small businesses believe their future is one of increased remote work, even after the pandemic subsides and the public is largely vaccinated. In fact, they estimate that 45% of their workforce will continue to be remote in the future, compared to 18% that were remote before the pandemic.\(^2\)

THE HYBRID ENVIRONMENT.

So we can expect there to be more of a hybrid work environment in the years to come. Businesses will maintain their premises, and employees will come into their workplace on a part-time or ad-hoc basis. This hybrid environment is not a ‘return to normal’ – it’s a new paradigm for businesses to navigate, and it presents its own challenges.

Business owners and leaders shouldn’t look at 2020 as a blip, but as a turning point. The positive choices they make this year could set their business up for competitive success in years to come, while rushed decisions could create new problems down the line. It’s not just about riding out the immediate disruption… it’s about prospering and leading afterwards.

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\(^{1}\) Xerox: The Future of Work in a Pandemic Era, 2020
\(^{2}\) Xerox: SMB Future of Work Survey, 2021
As well as solving the immediate challenges of mass remote working, leaders need to start thinking about how to future-proof their business model. In this guide, Xerox explores six essential focus areas for businesses, where longer-term consideration is needed after the quick-fix reactions in early 2020.

Any responsible leader or owner should be evaluating their performance in these areas. Are the measures you took in 2020 good enough to last?

1. Put your people's safety first
2. Keep productivity up
3. Communicate and collaborate securely
4. Give employees flexibility
5. Put the right infrastructure in place
6. Prepare for the future
SIX AREAS TO POWER UP A FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE.
Businesses who reopen their premises may now be legally required to follow a series of safety regulations. These vary by location, but include measures such as maintaining distance between employees, implementing more regular cleaning schedules, or making facemasks mandatory. These ‘bare minimum’ precautions may be sufficient to comply with the law and keep business premises open, but they might not go far enough to make employees feel entirely safe. Employees could still feel uncomfortable returning to their workplace without more comprehensive safety planning from their employers – such as introducing more touchless technology.

After the pandemic abates, employees and customers may continue to avoid banisters, door handles, printers, elevator buttons, physical cash, or payment terminals. Forward-facing business leaders should see safety provisions as more than just short-term red tape – they’re about safeguarding welfare and peace of mind for all employees and customers.

Do your employees feel safe coming into the workplace? What are their main concerns?

How comfortable are you that you’ve minimized the risk of disease transmission on shared surfaces – including door handles, computers and printers?

**GO CONTACTLESS.**
Print, copy and scan with your smartphone or voice commands. Keep your team safe, thanks to minimal contact with office equipment.

**SHOW THE WAY.**
Make sure everyone knows the latest safety protocols with ready-to-print, customizable office signage templates.

**LOOK AFTER YOUR EMPLOYEES.**
Manage your resources and office space much more easily. Give your team a clear view of how everyone’s feeling and where they’re working.
KEEP
PRODUCTIVITY UP.

Safety became the first and most important concern in 2020. But you still have a business to run. Once you’re confident that you’ve met your responsibilities for employee and customer welfare, your next focus has to be on how you continue to deliver your products and services efficiently.

Employees at many businesses have found themselves spending large chunks of their time searching for documents, or struggling to access them remotely. They may not have access to the right data and applications, or they may have challenges connecting to remote servers.

Looking ahead, these productivity snags will continue to present a challenge for businesses, especially in a hybrid environment. Those that set their systems up properly will be more efficient and gain a competitive advantage. Those that don’t resolve these issues – perhaps sticking with the quick fixes they implemented in early lockdown – could fall further behind.

How has remote working affected your employees’ ability to find, access and share documents?

Where could your document approval processes be sped up, to improve remote workflows?

DIGITIZE YOUR DOCUMENTS.
Capture, digitize, share and access documents easily, wherever you are, to help increase your team’s productivity.

PUT PROCESS ON AUTOPILOT.
Lift the admin burden and reduce errors by automating labor-intensive tasks, so your team can focus on more high-value jobs.

ACCESS YOUR WORK ANY TIME, ANY WHERE.
No matter their location, or what time of day, your team can easily access documents and perform tasks via our server or cloud-based solutions.
Communicate and Collaborate Securely.

As well as being able to access documents and data, employees also need to be able to access each other. Collaboration has suffered for many businesses, with people switching to digital chat channels, videoconferencing and shared cloud-based documents, sometimes for the first time in their careers.

Collaboration tools have quickly stepped in to fill the gaps, but they don’t always include the functionality you need, like easy auditability and teamworking. And crucially for businesses who work with sensitive data, there are questions around their security credentials.

The increase in remote workers has drastically expanded the attack surface for most organizations, and cyberattacks have been on the rise. Investing in efficient and secure collaboration software today isn’t just about facilitating communications. It’s about doing the right thing, not the simple thing, and providing a reliable productivity platform for years to come.

Are your employees all using approved apps to collaborate, or are some of them using platforms that haven’t been approved by IT?

How easy is it for your staff to share documents and collaborate on them in real time?

How confident are you that their communication channels are secure?

Better Manage Your Content.
Your teams can collaborate and make more informed decisions with access to your central and secure document hub.

A Smoother Workflow at Home.
Working from home made easier, thanks to hassle-free printer installation and configuration, and automatically restocked supplies.

Work More Securely Together.
Protect your devices, emails and data from would-be thieves and other threats for better peace of mind.
GIVE EMPLOYEES FLEXIBILITY.

As time goes by, we expect flexible working – the ‘hybrid workplace’ – to become table stakes in many industries. But promising flexibility is not the same as delivering it.

The logistics of flexible working can still be a headache for shift leaders and project managers. They need to know where employees are going to be at a given time, what equipment they currently have and what they’re going to need in future. And get an overarching view of which employees are coming into the office and when, for social distancing considerations. Businesses need a system that gives them that information in real time.

Shift management applications can do just that. These allow businesses to coordinate teams, ensure everyone is safe, manage capacity and meet their commitments to flexible working.

How are you managing the number of employees on your sites? Will you be able to continue this way, at scale, in the years ahead?

What is the experience like for employees switching between working from company premises and their home? Is their access to data disrupted or interrupted? Can your employees complete all their work, no matter where they are?

BETTER REMOTE WORKING.
Thanks to our comprehensive support package, your remote team members get everything they need to keep working more securely and productively.

SEAMLESS WORKING, HOME OR AWAY.
Tools designed to give your employees the same experiences, whether they’re in the office or at home.

EMPLOYEE FLEXIBILITY.
Give your teams more control and flexibility for a better work/life balance. Allow them to choose where to work through a simple portal.
PUT THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE IN PLACE.

Hybrid working also hastens the need for agile, flexible, cloud-based infrastructure – especially when it comes to devices.

Whether you have a ‘bring your own device’ policy or provide employees with work laptops and phones, the process is much more difficult with a remote or flexible workforce. You need to ensure all devices are secure and set up correctly – ideally from the moment you press the power button. Printers are a prime example – in many industries (such as legal, financial services and healthcare) it’s vital to share and use physical paperwork. Businesses should enable remote workers to print and digitally scan and share materials. But the provisioning of new devices can be an issue – how do you set up an environment where remote workers can receive new devices that are secure, straight out of the box?

Similarly, hybrid working changes the dynamics of IT support, which becomes even harder when working remotely. Managed services can help here by freeing up your IT administrators to work on high-value tasks, rather than just answering support tickets. A managed service gives you peace of mind that employees are getting expert advice whenever they need it.

How many of my employees are using unsecured devices for work purposes? This includes laptops and phones, but also printers and other connected hardware.

How much pressure has the pandemic put on my IT support and operations teams? At what point is it easier to invest in a managed support service, rather than hiring more administrative support staff?

IT SUPPORT WHENEVER YOU NEED IT.
Reduce costs and time on IT issues with our flexible support packages. So you can concentrate on your customers, rather than IT.

EASY DEPLOYMENT AND SET UP.
Avoid the headaches of installation issues, by quickly connecting all your hardware devices through an email or QR code.
PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE.

Businesses experience disruption – whether it’s changing market conditions or unpredictable events. This shouldn’t be concerning, but rather seen as an opportunity for differentiation: organizations who are agile, adaptable and resilient are best placed to weather any future storms.

So business leaders should be looking at 2020 as a test. How well did we perform? Where were our weak areas? Which processes were most at risk when the disruption hit?

For some businesses, this planning will be deferred until the immediate crisis is over. But that may be too late – your competitors are already making the necessary changes. Many of the recommendations in this paper are no-brainers for business leaders, and deserve attention today:

- Turn data into insights that help you understand what’s really happening in your business
- Support productivity measures for flexible working
- Digitize and move business processes to the cloud for scalability
- Ensure devices and processes are secured from end to end

How will you keep essential processes running in the case of another full or partial lockdown?

Where were your biggest weak points in this pandemic? And what have you done to ensure those weaknesses are eliminated?

ANALYTICS THAT WORK FOR YOU.
Get a better understanding of your company data to see where you can optimize, automate and improve your paper-based processes, print, and IT infrastructure.

MANAGED SERVICES BUILT AROUND YOU.
With managed services, it’s easy to scale your helpdesk support and monitoring, based on your requirements.

PEACE OF MIND.
We’ll manage and maintain your infrastructure to prevent, detect, protect and report on all threats.
ASSESS YOUR CURRENT SITUATION.
# Assess Your Current Situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Concerning (1 Point)</th>
<th>Moderate (3 Points)</th>
<th>Mature (5 Points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Put Your People’s Safety First</strong></td>
<td>Many employees are concerned about the safety of the workplace, and actively avoid coming in.</td>
<td>Some employees are anxious, but we’ve begun taking measures to address their concerns.</td>
<td>Most employees are confident in the safety measures we’ve put in place, and feel comfortable coming into the workplace whenever they need to.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Keep Productivity Up</strong></td>
<td>Remote working has significantly slowed down many of our key workflows and processes.</td>
<td>We’ve put in place acceptable workarounds for key workflows and processes during lockdown, but they’re perhaps not long-term solutions.</td>
<td>Working remotely doesn’t slow down or affect our processes and workflows in any significant way. We are just as productive as before, or better.</td>
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<td><strong>Communicate and Collaborate Securely</strong></td>
<td>I’m concerned about the amount of time being lost due to slow communications. I am unsure if the channels we use are secure or not.</td>
<td>While remote working has posed some minor problems for collaboration, it only has a limited effect on our ability to get work done.</td>
<td>The communication channels in my business are open, secure, and easy to use.</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Give Employees Flexibility</strong></td>
<td>We want to open our premises in a COVID-safe way, but we’ve struggled with shift management and workforce coordination.</td>
<td>We’ve reopened our premises for employees, although we’re relying on some workarounds to manage shifts. It’s not a scalable solution.</td>
<td>We’ve implemented an effective shift management system, which works at scale. It’s straightforward to find out who’s working where at any given time.</td>
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<td><strong>Put the Right Infrastructure In Place</strong></td>
<td>A lot of our processes are paper based and rely on us having office access. It has been a challenge to continue our core business with everyone working remotely.</td>
<td>Although we have some processes in the cloud, there are several critical business functions that we still struggle to scale and update efficiently.</td>
<td>I am confident that the infrastructure we have in place – both physical and digital – is ready to scale with our business.</td>
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<td><strong>Prepare For The Future</strong></td>
<td>I don’t think we’ve had much progress in making the business more resilient against another major, unexpected disruption.</td>
<td>We have contingency plans for future disruption, but I am not 100% confident in our business continuity capacity.</td>
<td>The systems we have in place give us flexibility, security and stability for the future – I feel like we are in a strong place.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
ASSESSING YOUR SCORE.

IF YOUR TOTAL ACROSS ALL SIX CATEGORIES IS BELOW 20.
You either have some major concerns or you have a series of minor risks which could compound in a crisis. It would be wise to address these immediately, before the risks turn into reality.

IF YOUR SCORE IS BETWEEN 21 AND 26.
You probably have at least a couple of issues which are worthy of attention. Shoring up these areas would improve your resilience and help you retain your competitive edge in years to come.

IF YOU SCORED 27 OR HIGHER.
You are in a strong position for the future. However, situations change and technology evolves rapidly – there’s no room for complacency. An external partner may be able to identify risks you’ve overlooked.
INTRODUCING OUR XEROX EXPERTS.

WE HELP COMPANIES MAINTAIN A FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE THAT ENSURES BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND HAPPY, PRODUCTIVE AND SAFE EMPLOYEES.

Joelle
Joelle has been a Xerox Expert for 10 years. Her expertise spans a wide range of industries, from healthcare to law firms.

www.xerox.com/workforce-experts
For most businesses, the first wave of urgency has now passed – the critical challenges of early and mid-2020 have been resolved, even if it was with a sticking plaster rather than a permanent solution.

So the next step is to start planning for the future, and ensuring your business is resilient enough to succeed in the years to come. Xerox has a long and successful track record of improving business resilience – we can support your plans with our software, hardware, services and expert guidance.

Our Xerox Experts are on hand to help out with any questions you have. If you are interested in finding out more how business like yours are powering up a flexible workforce, visit our website: www.xerox.com/en-us/small-business/contact-request.
ABOUT XEROX.

Xerox Holdings Corporation (NYSE: XRX) makes every day work better.

We are a workplace technology company building and integrating software and hardware for enterprises large and small. As customers seek to manage information across digital and physical platforms, Xerox delivers a seamless, secure and sustainable experience.

Whether inventing the copier, Ethernet, the laser printer or more, Xerox has long defined the modern work experience. Learn how that innovation continues at www.xerox.com.