

EBOOK

The hybrid work playbook

How to #WorkFromAnywhere with success



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Ch 1:

Hybrid teams are the future—here's why

A [Gartner survey](#) of company leaders found that 80% plan on letting employees work remotely at least part of the time after the COVID-19 pandemic. And 47% will allow full-time remote work.

Let's take it back for a sec, to pre-pandemic times, when working at an office five days a week was the norm. The average worker spent [27 minutes commuting](#) each way. That's about an hour a day... which adds up to about five hours a week—that's practically a whole 'nother workday just spent sitting in a car or on public transportation.

As you've likely been one of those commuters yourself, you've probably thought, "Can't I just do this from home?" at least once (or half a dozen times).

The answer—as the pandemic has forcibly taught us—is yes, you probably can.

But as we all get vaxxed and restrictions start to ease up, there's some uncertainty about what the future holds. One thing's for sure though: Remote work is here to stay (according to a [PwC survey](#) of 669 CEOs, in which 78% agreed).

According to [McKinsey Global Institute](#), more than 20% of the workforce could work remotely three to five days a week as effectively as they could working from an office. This means there'll likely be three to four times more people working remotely than before the pandemic.

Which brings us to the reason you're reading this: Hybrid work.

Keep reading to learn:

- The benefits of hybrid work for employees
- The benefits of hybrid work for companies

4 hybrid work benefits for employees

Having the option to work from anywhere can be a big deal for a lot of employees. It's not just about convenience though—the benefits go way beyond that. Here are four of the top perks.

1. More flexibility

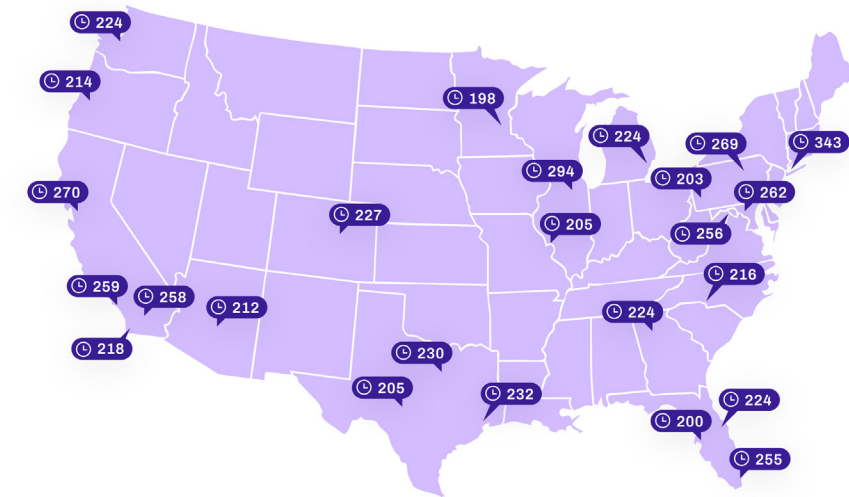
In the traditional 9-to-5 office setting, employees are away from their homes from early in the morning to the middle of the evening. For many, this means 10-12 hours spent “going to work,” including commute time.

Considering there are only 24 hours in a day and seven or eight of those should (ideally) be spent sleeping, a 12-hour workday leaves you with very little time to do much else—y’know, cooking, laundry, spending time with your family, having fun, relaxing... that type of stuff.

A hybrid work model gives employees more freedom and flexibility to choose how to spend their time. Rather than spending it commuting some mornings, they could go for a run, empty the dishwasher from the night before, or just get an extra hour of sleep.

Said simply, the option to work remotely at least a few days a week = better work-life balance.

Commute hours saved annually by working from home



New York, NY	343	San Francisco, CA	270	St. Louis, MO	205
Los Angeles, CA	259	Phoenix, AZ	212	Baltimore, MD	262
Chicago, IL	294	Ontario, CA	258	Charlotte, NC	216
Dallas, TX	230	Detroit, MI	224	Orlando, FL	224
Houston, TX	232	Seattle, WA	224	San Antonio, TX	205
Washington, DC	256	Minneapolis, MN	198	Portland, OR	214
Philadelphia, PA	269	San Diego, CA	218	Pittsburgh, PA	203
Miami, FL	255	Tampa, FL	200		
Atlanta, GA	224	Denver, CO	227		

Source [SimpleTextin](https://www.simpletextin.com)

2. More autonomy

Being able to work from anywhere inherently means more autonomy. Employees have the freedom to work where and even when they want, empowering them to fit work around the rest of their lives, rather than the other way around.

Employees also get to create or choose the work setting that's most comfortable for them. For some, that can mean steering clear of all the annoying things about an office: Loud or distracting coworkers, freezing cold AC, and even dress code—these things can kill productivity and even cause workers to look for work elsewhere.

Instead, employees can set up their office somewhere quiet, at the temperature they want, wearing the clothes that they want. Aka. everything they need to be their most productive.

3. Better overall health

Sitting in an office all day isn't necessarily better or worse than sitting at your desk at home (unless of course, you have a standing desk or one of those cool under-desk treadmill things). But being in an office does increase your exposure to germs from coworkers who are sick, so there's that.

Then there are lifestyle habits. [One study found that](#) 42% of remote workers eat healthier working from home than they do from an office. That's probably because, at home, you can cook your own meals, heat up leftovers, and stock up on healthy snacks versus be faced with vending machines of processed, sugar-filled bites present in many office environments.

Remote work also means you can re-allocate time that would be spent commuting to exercising. That 30 minutes that would normally be spent at a drive-thru on your lunch break? Squeeze in a quick workout instead!

It isn't just physical health either. According to a survey by [FlexJobs with Mental Health America](#), employees without access to flexible work are nearly two times more likely to have poor or very poor mental health.

The UK's [Office of National Statistics found](#) that people who commute over half an hour to work each way (about the average) report higher stress and anxiety levels compared to people with shorter or no commutes.

Lastly, being able to work from home means you're not as drained at the end of the workday from all that commuting (and human interaction, if you're an introvert). So you'll have more energy to do other things.

4. Saves money

Making money costs money.

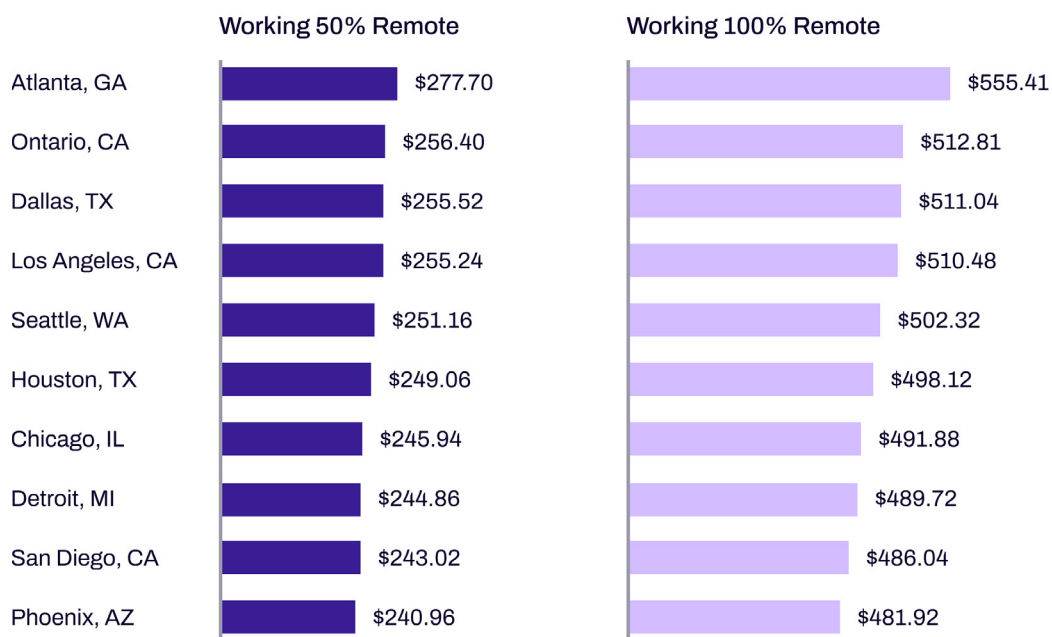
Let's break it down, shall we?

- **Commuting:** For car owners, there's gas, insurance, more frequent maintenance, and faster depreciation. For public transit users, there are monthly pass fees.
- **Attire:** Depending on your office dress code, you may need a whole separate wardrobe for work.
- **Food:** Those daily Starbucks', frequent lunch outings, and work socials add up fast.
- **Housing:** Remote work gives people more options for where to live since they [no longer need to](#) live near large metropolitan areas to maximize career potential.

Fun fact: [According to Zillow](#), 4.5% of renters in the US (nearly 2 million households) who would otherwise be priced out of their current market can now purchase a starter home, thanks to remote work. That's huge.

Hybrid work helps make life less expensive. Goodbye monthly bus pass, hello daily coffee—freshly brewed in the comfort of your own kitchen.

Annual commute cost savings



Source [Weforum](#)

4 hybrid work benefits for companies

Hybrid work isn't only beneficial for employees—it's got massive benefits for managers and business owners too. Here are four big ones.

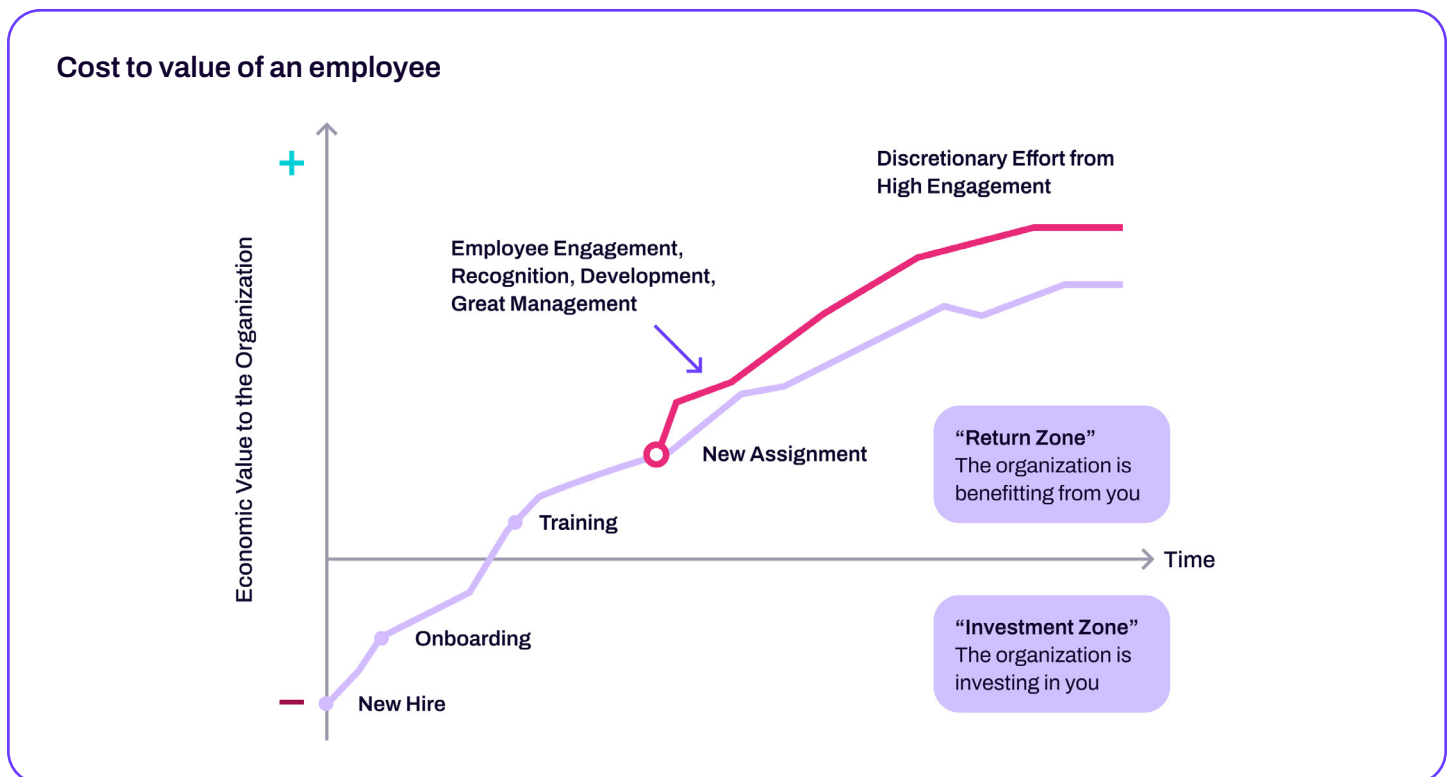
1. Better retention

Turnover costs businesses time and money. Not only do they have to re-hire and onboard replacements, but project timelines, team engagement, and business error rates also take a hit.

According to [Josh Bersin](#) of Deloitte, the cost of losing an employee can range from tens of thousands of dollars to up to twice the employee's annual salary.

We can all agree 2020 was... rough. But despite the turmoil, remote workers report a Workforce Happiness Index of 75 out of 100, compared to 71 for in-office employees. 57% of remote workers also reported being satisfied with their jobs versus 50% of office-based workers.

The takeaway? Giving employees the option to work from anywhere leads to happier employees, ultimately leading to better retention.



Source [LinkedIn](#)

2. Larger hiring pool

Many professionals now look specifically for companies that will allow remote or hybrid work. So by being open to having remote workers, you can now hire the best talent from around the world.

In a [FlexJobs survey](#), 65% of respondents said they want to be full-time remote employees after the pandemic, and 31% want a hybrid remote work environment—that's 96% who want some form of remote work.

What's really mind-boggling? 27% of workers said being able to work from home is so important to them that they're willing to take a 10% to 20% pay cut to do so.

3. Reduced overhead costs

Switching to a hybrid work model can help you save (a lot of) money compared to a solely in-office model. Running an office means paying rent, electricity, heating, and cooling. But when a large chunk of your workforce is working from home, it means you no longer need such a big office—and can cut those expenses down along with the space.

Don't get us wrong, having physical offices is still important. But you can lower costs by reducing your real estate footprint. Think: Fewer or smaller offices. You could also look at scrapping the model of having one or two flagpole HQ offices to more of a "distributed model" with more "regional" offices across the country. This can also result in reduced costs, depending on where HQ is.

You might even want to start encouraging employees to work remotely, with incentives like an allowance to put towards their home office or a monthly phone and internet reimbursement. These things might sound expensive, but actually cost less than renting additional office space. Plus, with all the other benefits that come with hybrid work, the ROI is obvious.

4. More productive teams

[Research shows](#) that businesses lose \$600 billion a year to workplace distractions and that remote workers are 35% to 40% more productive than their in-office counterparts.

Meaning hybrid teams aren't only happier, they're also more productive.

According to a [FlexJobs survey](#), 95% of respondents say that their productivity has been the same or higher working from home, and 51% say they're more productive when working remotely. This is for a few reasons, including:

- More time to focus
- Better utilization of time
- Fewer distractions and interruptions
- Quieter, more comfortable work environment



Ch 2: How to build and maintain a successful hybrid team

“How do I know if my remote employees are actually working or just watching Netflix all day?”

A fair concern.

This should make you feel better: 77% of people actually get more done when they work from home, according to a [CoSo Cloud survey](#).

In chapter 1 of this playbook, we went over the benefits of hybrid work for both employees and companies—but all those benefits only work if your hybrid team is set up properly.

Since your whole team isn't going to be meeting in an office every day, it's important to have the right tools, systems, and processes in place to make sure everyone can work as productively as possible.

Keep reading to learn:

- What a hybrid team is
- How to hire a hybrid team
- How to onboard a hybrid team
- How to sustain a hybrid team

What is a hybrid team?

A hybrid team is one with employees working both in-office and remotely (from home, a coffee shop, a beach in New Zealand... wherever). A hybrid team can also be a distributed team, meaning its employees are working in different time zones.

Hybrid teams rely on apps and software to communicate, collaborate, and get things done. Everyone isn't in one place like in a traditional office, so they use video calls or chat instead of in-person meetings. If they're in opposite time zones, they might not have a chance to talk in real-time at all.

How to build and sustain a hybrid team

As you can imagine, hybrid teams need people who are independent, organized, and thrive without any micromanagement. So having proper hiring and onboarding practices in place is super important to attracting and retaining the right talent.

We'll go over the following here:

- **Hiring:** Finding the right talent
- **Onboarding:** Setting up your team for success
- **Sustaining:** Keeping communications, project management, and team morale strong

How to hire a hybrid team

Finding and hiring the right people is the first step in building a successful hybrid team. Here's how you can do that.

Know your company culture

So when the team you're managing is spread out, you need to make sure that these perks of your company culture apply to all of your team members, or at least that there are digital equivalents for your remote employees.

For example, using [video conference rooms](#) that in-office and remote employees can come together in, rewards for accomplishments (like e-gift cards), and the [digital equivalent of a water cooler](#) where employees can come together for small talk and relationship-building.

Since you don't have a central location for your team to meet up, your company culture also needs to define exactly how work will flow between different members of the team, how meetings will be held, and more.

Here are some things you can do:

- **Establish your team structure.** One way to do this is by defining the purpose, domains, and accountabilities of each role, so everyone knows exactly how they should be contributing.
- **Set a working schedule.** With distributed teams, some employees may never be online during overlapping hours because of time zones. Determine whether this is okay, or if any overlap does need to happen for real-time communication.
- **Document everything.** Setting clear expectations for your hybrid team will not only help your new hires ramp up faster, but it'll also help you vet applicants more efficiently based on how well they fit within those expectations.

Connect with the right people

The ability to work from anywhere can sound like a dream come true for a lot of people. But not just anyone can handle the realities that come with it—self-discipline to actually get things done being one of them.

Sure, there are no distracting coworkers. But there could be distracting family members, pets, YouTube rabbit holes... the list goes on. So you need to be sure you're connecting with talent who can stay focused no matter where they're working.

An applicant's work experience could be impressive, but how do you know they'll thrive in a hybrid work model? Here are a few character traits to look out for:

- Communication
- Problem-solving
- Organization

To test for these traits, you could ask applicants to run through a virtual scenario or even a paid trial day which will give both you and the applicant a realistic preview of what it's like having them work at your company.

One way to boost your chances at getting qualified applicants is by checking out remote-focused job boards like We Work Remotely, Remote.co, and FlexJobs.

And of course, use your network—LinkedIn and referrals are both excellent ways to find the perfect candidates for the positions you're hiring for.

How to onboard a hybrid team

It's easy for a new employee to feel lost in any scenario, especially one where they roll out of bed one morning to a brand new job from their home desk. Unlike in an office, they can't just pop over to their manager's desk to ask a question or get to know their new colleagues over lunch. This can cause them to feel disconnected from the company and their new role.

According to [one study](#), 69% of employees who have a positive onboarding experience are more likely to stay with the employer for three years. Companies that focus on onboarding also see up to a 50% increase in productivity.

A less-than-ideal onboarding experience can also cause problems in the future. If a new hire isn't caught up to speed on your company's systems and processes from the beginning, they're only going to fall more and more behind and struggle to become a productive member of the team (and are more likely to look for work elsewhere).

Here are some tips for onboarding hybrid teams.

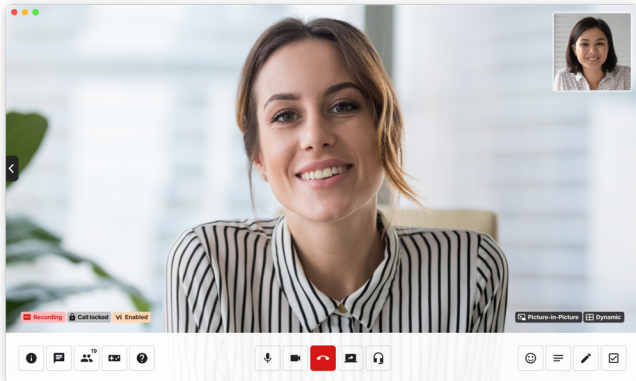
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Give them a buddy

Assigning an onboarding buddy to new hires gives them somewhere to direct all their questions. (And being a newbie, they'll have a lot). It also makes sure someone is “watching over” them during their first few days or weeks at your company, to make sure they're settling in okay and adjusting well to their new role.

An onboarding buddy should schedule regular check-ins with their mentee, giving both of them an opportunity to lay out expectations and offer advice or feedback. [89% of HR leaders](#) agree that ongoing peer feedback and check-ins are important. These check-ins can easily be done through a [team messaging app](#) for a quick resolution or a [video call](#) for more in-depth face-to-face discussions.



Encourage team introductions

Introducing a new hire to the rest of the team does two things: It makes the new hire feel welcome and lets the rest of your team know this person now exists (which is always nice).

This introduction could happen in a team meeting, but in a distributed hybrid team, it's not always possible to round everyone together at the same time. In this case, another option is to send a team-wide email or message out, then encourage the new hire to set up virtual coffee chats with key colleagues and get introduced that way.

Or another idea: Dedicating time for “virtual open office hours”—kind of like the “open door policy” except for introductions. This could be even more effective than formal meetings, which are one-sided (you're forcing someone to go out of their way to come to YOUR meeting vs. it being more flexible).

How to sustain a hybrid team

Okay, so you've hired the right people and onboarding is complete. Now what?

Here are a couple of ways to maintain your hybrid team.

Encourage meaningful connections

When you work in an office, making connections is almost inevitable. Between sitting next to each other, grabbing lunch together, and bumping into one another while walking about the building, the opportunities are endless.

When you work remotely, however, those connections are a lot harder to foster.

The solution is to create opportunities that work in a hybrid setting, like:

- Host a virtual happy hour
- In-person meetups in cities with multiple employees
- Create a virtual club (like online chess or a book club)
- Start meetings off with ice-breakers where employees get a chance to share something about themselves that isn't work-related to encourage fun conversations

Trust your team

The difference between a hybrid team that's thriving versus just getting by is trust. Project management software can tell you who's accomplishing what and when—which is super important but doesn't necessarily measure the amount of time that person spent at their desk.

And that's okay.

As a leader, your job is to provide clear instructions and expectations, offer regular feedback, and avoid micromanaging. Then sit back, let go, and trust your team to deliver.



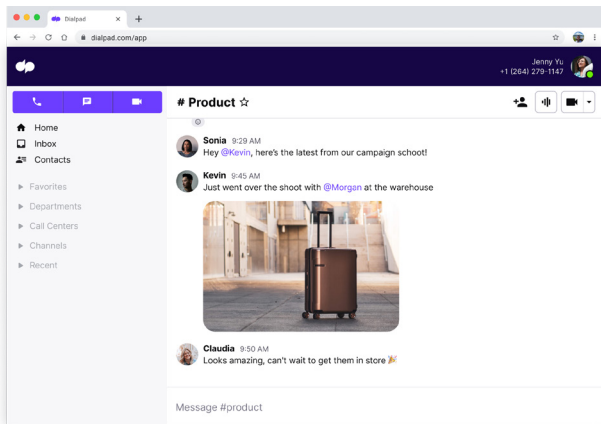
Ch 3:

How to equip hybrid teams with the right tools

By now, we've established there are a lot of benefits to a hybrid work model. But they don't just happen—they need planning. And a big part of that is having the right tools.

Here are some essentials for setting up your hybrid team for success.

Unify all your communications with Dialpad



One of the most important things for making hybrid work, well, work is having clear communications.

Hybrid teams often have team members working in different time zones—sometimes total opposites, meaning they aren't even online at the same time. So it's important to have a strategy in place for how everyone will communicate.

[Dialpad's](#) got it all covered. With cloud-based voice calling, employees can stay in touch anywhere with an internet connection—even if their wired phone lines go down. This becomes especially helpful when it's time for a video conference, since the last thing you want to deal with is choppy video or a dropped connection in the middle of an important meeting.

The need for communications extends beyond calls and meetings. That's what makes a unified platform so powerful: All of your communication needs, from email to calling, are available in one place—nothing missed, and no need to toggle between tabs either!

Dialpad tip: If you have multiple communication channels, like both email and chat, it's a good idea to define what each channel is for so employees aren't confused. For example, email can be used for team-wide updates and announcements, whereas [chat](#) can be used to communicate information to smaller groups or individuals.

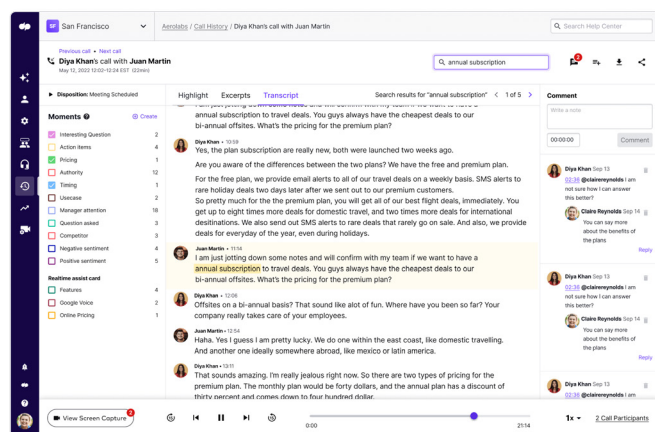
Meet from anywhere, anytime with Dialpad Meetings



Having the right meeting rooms software in place is huge for promoting collaboration equity between in-office and remote workers—especially when it's time for a conference.

And for most hybrid teams, device-agnostic video calling and conferencing features are crucial to ensure meetings are accessible for teammates no matter where they're located. Specifically, being able to join conferences via video, send messages and links, share screens, and access call logs is essential. That's exactly what Dialpad Meetings is designed for.

What about teams that are scattered across time zones? If calls and meetings are backed up with AI-powered notes and insights—like with [Dialpad's Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) technology](#) (our real game-changer)—then even employees who can't make it to every meeting (which happens when you have distributed teams) are able to read the transcripts and see if they missed any action items:



Finally, one of the biggest requirements to remember for hybrid teams is that some people may still be in the office. That means that your video conferencing software should be compatible with conference room software—and hardware!

For example, is your software compatible with tablets or whatever meeting room controller device you're using? Can it control the mics or cameras in your conference rooms and huddle rooms? (Check and check for [Dialpad Meetings](#).)

These are just a few examples of things to consider when building a hybrid work environment.

Stay organized with productivity apps

A clean, organized workspace is essential for productivity—and this includes hybrid workspaces. To truly work from anywhere, employees need three things:

1. The ability to collaborate with co-workers on deliverables over the internet
2. The ability to develop deliverables in a non-physical space
3. The ability to store documents and deliverables in the cloud

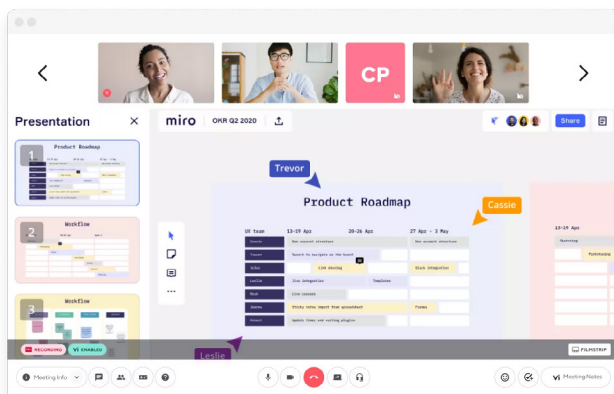
Luckily, there are apps for that. These apps from Google will give you the most bang for your buck (oh, and they all [integrate with Dialpad](#)):

- **Gmail:** It's hard to go wrong with a Gmail account, as Google retains its standing as a reliable player in the email space.
- **Google Calendar:** Another reliable standby. Google Calendar is an easy-to-use, cross-platform solution for all your calendar needs.
- **Google Drive:** This is a cloud storage platform that allows you to store files in a centralized, secure location. Within Google Drive, you have the option to create Google Docs, Google Sheets (spreadsheets), and Google Slides (slideshow presentations). Files can be synced across devices so that team members can collaborate anywhere, anytime.

Collaborate and take things to the finish line with project-management apps

There was a time when most project management was haphazardly carried out via emails. Thankfully, you have several project management systems at your disposal now. Here are two of them:

- **Asana:** Asana helps teams plan, organize, and stay on top of tasks and project updates. This tool's especially helpful if you're trying to manage multiple projects at the same time. You can assign tasks for different projects to different teams, monitor progress, and message coworkers all in one centralized place.
- **Miro:** Miro is the online collaborative whiteboard platform that enables distributed teams to work effectively together, from running brainstorming sessions and workshops to planning projects, from designing new products and services to facilitating agile ceremonies. Miro is lightning fast, making it easy for many people to work all at once—and integrates with Dialpad:



Dialpad tip: When shopping for apps, take a look at their integrations and make sure they're compatible with one another. This will maximize the usefulness of each app.



Ready to switch to hybrid?

As work becomes more and more digital, make sure your company's set up to join the hybrid world successfully, and your team members are too. With the right tools and strategies in place, hybrid teams can reap all the benefits of working from anywhere.

About Dialpad

Dialpad is the leading AI-powered Customer Intelligence Platform that's completely changing how the world works together—including hybrid workforces like yours. Founded in 2011, more than 30,000 businesses and millions of people worldwide now rely on Dialpad to accelerate their digital transformation. Unlock productivity, collaboration, and customer satisfaction with real-time AI insights on Dialpad.

[Take a product tour](#)