New Work Models:
Evaluating in Four Dimensions

As organizations prepare their workplaces of the future, new work models will fall on a spectrum depending on four dimensions: work, worker, team, and organization. Each dimension has key questions to consider when building and refining work models over time.

Ask yourself and your team...

1. WORK: Jobs/Tasks

✓ What is the **degree of collaboration** required to get work done? Do all tasks require the same degree?

✓ How frequently does **information need to be exchanged** to work effectively?

✓ Must work be done at a **specific location or time**?

✓ Do **customers/clients** require face-to-face interactions?

2. WORKER: Employee Preferences/Skills

✓ Does the employee have the **technology, communication and time management skills** to work independently and effectively from anywhere?

✓ What level of in-person, **social interaction** is preferred to remain engaged and productive?

✓ To what degree do **personal circumstances**, such as health concerns, commute time, and caregiving, require flexible time and location for work to get done?

✓ Is the **remote work environment** adequate and free from distractions?

3. TEAM: Manager/Team Dynamics

✓ Does the manager have the **skills and experience** to manage distributed teams?

✓ What are the team's **aggregate work preferences**?

✓ Are team members **co-located or dispersed** across geographies/time zones?

✓ How much collaboration needs to happen **synchronously vs. asynchronously**?

4. ORGANIZATION: Leadership/Culture

✓ How **centralized and well-documented** are decision-making, procedures,and flexible work policies?

✓ Are **organizational and industry norms** oriented more around in-person or remote-first interactions?

✓ Is the **technology infrastructure** adequate to support new ways of working?

Things to consider...

How will you **evaluate and adapt** work models over time as business requirements and employee preferences change?

How much **autonomy** will each business unit have to determine how best to support team performance?

How will you **train leaders** in managing hybrid teams, and **invest in the tools of coordination** that will help your teams succeed?

How will you **ensure inclusion and fairness** as you consider employees' work options? What steps will you take to **mitigate proximity bias** and avoid creating a two-tiered workforce?

How will you **onboard** both new and returning employees and **create shared experiences** among distributed teams?

How will you **assess performance** and **gather data** on your employees' needs and preferences, engagement and productivity, and sense of belonging?

How will you **adapt employee development and networking opportunities** so they don't rely on face-to-face interaction?

How will you help employees focus on their well-being and mental health to **prevent burnout**?

How will you **acknowledge uncertainty** and **communicate routinely** at all levels of the organization?

New Work Models:
Mapping Readiness & Preferences

Consider each dimension as you refine work models across the spectrum. Adjust the slider as you analyze factors within each dimension. Note the action steps required to fully assess readiness and preferences and keep in mind the competing demands of individuals and teams, job requirements and preferences.

In-Person	Hybrid	Remote

1. WORK

Degree of collaboration	Highly collaborative	Independent work
Information exchange	Frequent, informal	Infrequent, formal
Location/time-dependence	Location and time-specific	Anytime, anywhere
Client/customer interaction	Face-to-face required	Remote-first support possible

Action: Conduct a thorough evaluation of how jobs/tasks should be done to meet business objectives.

2. WORKER

Technical/remote-work skills	Lower degree of technical skills	High degree of technical skill
Communication style	Prefer informal, in-person communication	Proactive communicator
Level of supervision	Direct supervision required	Minimum supervision needed
Preferences/circumstances	Work as social, few competing demands	At risk, multiple non-work demands
Work setup/environment	Fixed location, poor remote setup	Optimal setup, distraction-free

Action: Assess employee readiness. Survey employees to understand skills, preferences and circumstances that will help drive engagement and productivity.

3. TEAM

Degree of team-based work	Highly collaborative and interdependent	Independent workers
Aggregate preferences	Majority in-person	Majority remote
Location/dispersion	Co-located in one/few locations	Geographically dispersed
Work hours/coordination	Fully synchronous required	Asynchronous possible

Action: Assess manager readiness. Train, support, and create incentives for managers to manage a more distributed workforce.

4. ORGANIZATION

Degree of centralization	Centralized decision-making, processes	De-centralized decision-making
Physical space/real estate	Limited ability to reduce/re-design footprint	Can reduce/re-design footprint
Flexible Work Policy	Formal policy not updated, in place	Clear guidelines and policies
Digitally-enabled	Poor tech infrastructure, low resources	Tech-enabled, adequate resources
Culture/norms	Face-to-face, in-person highly valued	Remote-friendly culture & norms

Action: Assess organizational readiness. Pilot a phased re-entry. Collect data on retention, mobility, productivity, mental health, and inclusion/belonging among all populations. Evaluate and iterate.