



MODERN APPROACHES TO EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN HYBRID EMPLOYMENT MODELS

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INTRODUCTION

Relevance of the study: Developments driven by digital technologies, globalization processes, and the impact of COVID-19 have led to the emergence of new work organization formats. One of these is the hybrid work model, which represents a trend of combining remote and office work. On one hand, this form of work organization is more attractive due to its flexibility in using working hours. On the other hand, there is a noticeable decline in employee motivation and a reduction in direct communication within organizations.

Research problem: The research problem lies in identifying methods to increase employee engagement and motivation in the context of hybrid work.

Research objective: To identify aspects that enhance employee motivation in organizations with a hybrid work structure.

Research methodology: The study employs a systemic analysis to identify interconnections between the conditions of hybrid work and employee motivation levels, comparative analysis of classical and modern motivation theories in the context of hybrid work, and content analysis of scientific sources to summarize current approaches to human resource management in the era of digital transformation.

Teoretical research. The digital evolution of human resource management technologies affects not only workforce sustainability but also the innovation of operational practices. The hybrid form of work compels company managers to seek new tools to enhance employee motivation and maintain team engagement in corporate activities.

The hybrid work format enables employees to establish a certain *work–life balance* between fulfilling job responsibilities and personal life. These aspects of hybrid work are expected to increase employee satisfaction by allowing individuals to manage their own time and minimize stress caused by daily commuting.

However, the use of hybrid work also introduces new challenges — flexible scheduling, communication technologies, and independence from physical location. At first glance, these factors create undeniable advantages for this form of work. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize an indisputable fact: the human being is a social creature. This implies a psychological need for social interaction as a foundation of emotional stability, specifically the sense of being *noticed*. This does not only refer to an employee’s professional importance, but to their perception of being valued and recognized within the social environment. It concerns not only recognition by management but also acknowledgment among colleagues.

This phenomenon can be described as *emotional validity of interaction* — when a person feels attention and genuine interest directed toward them as an individual, not merely toward the work performed. The importance of this aspect was emphasized by Elton Mayo (1933), who demonstrated in his works the significance of social relations, emotional support, belonging to a group, and the impact of informal group interactions on labor productivity.

Similar ideas were developed by Abraham Maslow (1954), who first proposed the hierarchy of human needs. According to Maslow, the third level encomp asses social needs — friendship, group belonging, and peer support — while the fourth level refers to the need for recognition and status, which provides the feeling of being *noticed*.

Carl Rogers (1961) also highlighted the importance of empathy and individual recognition, arguing that psychological comfort and motivation arise when a person experiences this sense of being *noticed*.

Vroom (1964) and Bandura (1977) both supported the notion that employee motivation depends on feedback, recognition of competencies, and appropriate rewards. Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (2000) further reinforced the importance of employees’ social needs in enhancing intrinsic motivation.

According to the Microsoft Work Trend Index (2022), hybrid work is defined as an employment model in which employers and employees perform work in a combined format — both in-office and remotely. The hybrid model creates a balance between employer control and employee autonomy, aimed at improving productivity and job satisfaction.

Research results. As of today, the following hybrid work formats have been officially recognized:

Fixed hybrid – the organization defines the possibility of working with set, fixed days either in the office or from home.

Flexible hybrid – the employee can independently choose when to work from the office and when remotely.

Occasional hybrid – a work format dominated by remote work, with periodic in-office meetings.

Hub-and-spoke model – based on a network of offices in relation to employees’ places of residence.

Virtual hybrid – full virtualization of work with flexible scheduling for both online and offline meetings.

It should be noted that hybrid work has both advantages and disadvantages.

Fixed hybrid – has a relatively low level of autonomy in performing tasks due to strict limitations on online and offline options.

Flexible hybrid – has a medium level of autonomy, as employees are free to choose between online and offline work.

Occasional hybrid – offers the highest level of autonomy, as employees have full control over their work location and schedule.

Despite the self-actualization of responsibility for work and schedules, other challenges arise: communication barriers may emerge, and creativity can decline due to a lack of informal contact. There is also the so-called information asymmetry—employees working offline have more communication, including informal interactions, than those working online. Motivation-related issues may also occur, such as a lack of sense of significance, including public recognition and involvement in team events;there are difficulties in evaluating work results, unstable connections, security risks due to cyberattacks, and mental health problems caused by burnout and lack of colleague support. The implementation of hybrid work has triggered a transformation in human resource management and the introduction of new motivation techniques. When work was fully offline, process control was purely physical. As the percentage of hybrid work increases, control and motivation functions should be individualized. Research on managers after COVID-19 and the spread of hybrid work (Bloom, 2024) shows that effective motivation requires a combination of material and non-material incentives. Using a comprehensive set of stimulation tools increases employees’ sense of social involvement and visibility, even without daily contact with colleagues or supervisors.

Key measures to organize hybrid work and enhance employee motivation include: Corporate communication platforms, such as portals highlighting employee achievements. These tools boost internal motivation by providing visibility to successes, which can lead to healthy competition and higher efficiency, e.g., through point-based evaluation systems or gamification approaches. Employee well-being programs, including psychological counseling, online fitness classes, and mentoring sessions, which help maintain mental health and reduce burnout. Periodic surveys on employee motivation, providing insights into workplace sentiment.

Interaction rituals for both online and offline employees, such as daily stand-ups, online coffee breaks, or hybrid meetings to discuss work challenges. These activities help increase trust and engagement.

In addition to the above measures to strengthen team cohesion, motivation, and organizational engagement, individualized performance evaluation tools are recommended. Potential personalized motivation instruments may include: Flexible performance evaluation coefficients and personal development plans; Analytical studies on employee workload and work engagement; New adaptation and motivation strategies tailored to Generation Z and Alpha employees.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The hybrid form of employment represents a compromise in creating a mixed work format. The main advantages of this model include flexibility, which allows employees to achieve a certain balance between work and personal life. Alongside these benefits, there are several challenges: reduced communication, the emergence of communication barriers, the risk of emotional burnout, and unequal access to corporate resources.

The combination of material and non-material incentives can ensure the creation of an effective employee motivation mechanism. Integrating classical motivation theories with contemporary research allows for the development of a universal methodology for motivating personnel in a hybrid work environment. There is a possibility that a symbiosis of classical and modern motivation methods could form the foundation of the “Human-Centric Hybrid Management” concept, where the cornerstone of management is the individual—their values, competencies, and psychological well-being.

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