



# THE I.T. PRO'S GUIDE TO COLLABORATION FOR THE HYBRID WORKFORCE

How technology can help create equal meetings for all



As the office evolves and more employees continue to work remotely, businesses are looking at how a work-from-anywhere experience can support better collaboration and higher cost savings. There's no longer such a thing as business as usual. Employees, business partners, and customers have new work habits, expectations, and requirements.

What work is and how it gets done looks different for everyone. But all employees now expect to be able to communicate and collaborate effectively from anywhere and on equal footing, regardless of whether they're in-person or attending meetings virtually. Successful hybrid work experiences feature three essential elements: flexibility, consistency, and equality.

**ACCORDING TO HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW, 98% OF ALL MEETINGS NOW HAVE AT LEAST ONE REMOTE PARTICIPANT—AN INCREASE OF MORE THAN 1,000% IN LESS THAN TWO YEARS.<sup>1</sup>**

So how can businesses create a strategy that delivers on the need to extend the workplace outside the office walls? That's where IT comes in. Having the right technology will make a big impact on overcoming the challenges of today's work-from-anywhere world—especially when it comes to collaboration between remote and in-office employees.

**Following are three key opportunities for IT to help solve the common challenges of work-from-anywhere meetings and calls so employees can be their most productive.**





## OPPORTUNITY #1

# WORKSPACES

## PROVIDE AN EQUAL COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCE, REGARDLESS OF LOCATION

The rise of remote and hybrid workplaces requires you to rethink what in-office employees need and want. Today's offices are filled with a variety of spaces that both individuals and groups use to get work done. By understanding the different types of spaces in your office and how they're susceptible to noise and distractions, you'll be able to equip them with the right audio and video devices to make employee collaboration successful.

### LEARN MORE

Read **6 Critical Room Video Decisions That Can Make or Break Your UC Investment** to learn more about the pros and cons of meeting technology choices for conference rooms.

[DOWNLOAD THE EBOOK >](#)



### PERSONAL SPACES

Video is critical to providing the face-to-face experience that enables impactful collaboration for workers at home and in the office. Whether you're at a dedicated desk in an open office space or in a private office, you must be able to take a video call without distractions. Since hybrid employees are working both in the office and at home, their devices must be able to work effectively anywhere.

#### MUST-HAVE COLLABORATION SOLUTIONS FOR PERSONAL SPACES INCLUDE:

- Professional headsets designed to block out background noise
- Portable, personal video cameras
- Desk or soft phones
- Monitors/displays



### GROUP SPACES

Almost every meeting moving forward will have a mix of both in-person and remote attendees. This means technology must ensure remote attendees can hear and contribute as effectively as those around the conference table. Keep in mind that different-sized rooms, or rooms with different functions, will serve your employees best with equipment designed for the job.

#### MUST-HAVE COLLABORATION SOLUTIONS FOR GROUP SPACES INCLUDE:

- Conference/Speaker phones
- Video conferencing equipment
- Cabling to connect PCs for content sharing
- Wall-mounted displays



OPPORTUNITY #2

# PEOPLE

## EMBRACE EMPLOYEE WORKSTYLES AND PREFERENCES

Each employee has specific technology needs to excel in their role, whether at home or in the office. Understanding their preferences for how and where they plan to work helps promote employee confidence and engagement and puts people on an equal footing no matter where they're located.

**Research shows that 92% of employees in an enterprise can be categorized into six different workstyles.<sup>2</sup>**

Here are the six most common types of workers you need to accommodate. Use these insights as building blocks to create a technology strategy that meets the needs of every employee. Benefits include more empowered workers, less fatigue, higher productivity, and support for your diversity and inclusion initiatives.



### THE OFFICE COMMUNICATOR

This type of worker spends most of their day at their desk, communicating through in-person meetings, email, voicemail, or calls. They prefer traditional modes of communication and are slow to adopt new technologies.

#### RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

Audio and video devices and solutions that are easy to set up and use with existing computers and phones.

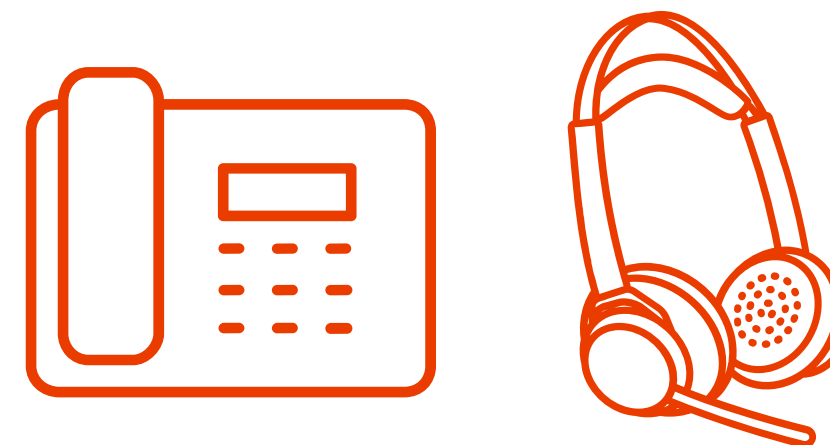


### THE OFFICE COLLABORATOR

This employee is much more comfortable with technology and is open to learning how to use new tools. They primarily work at their desk, which may be in a noisy, open office area.

#### RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

Pro-grade headsets with noise-canceling capabilities.

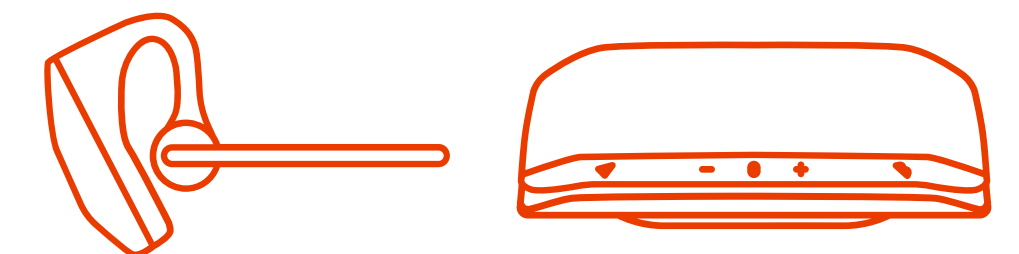


### THE ROAD WARRIOR

This worker is rarely at their desk, which means they rely on mobile devices and video calls to manage communication. They're incredibly adaptable to new technology but place a premium on their ability to sound clear and professional when communicating with current and prospective customers.

#### RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

Portable audio and video devices like Bluetooth® headsets that work well with smart phones.





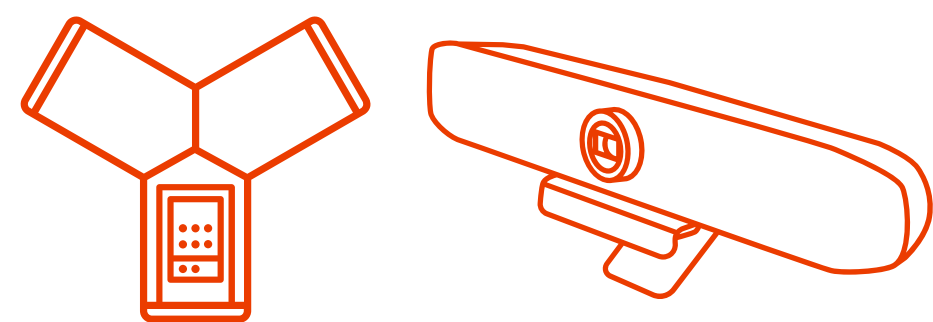


### THE CONNECTED EXECUTIVE

This person is tech-savvy, has a creative mind, and is respected by their peers. They communicate constantly, often under stressful conditions, and value the ability to seamlessly transition from one task to another.

### RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

External webcams and speakerphones that provide the highest level of audio and video quality across private and shared spaces.

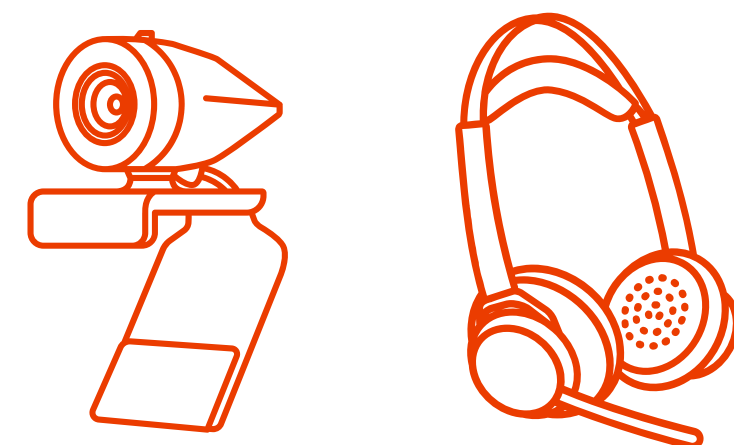


### THE FLEX WORKER

A true work-from-anywhere professional, this person divides their time equally between working at home, on the road, and in shared spaces or meeting rooms at the office.

### RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

Portable audio and video devices that provide seamless transitions between workspaces.

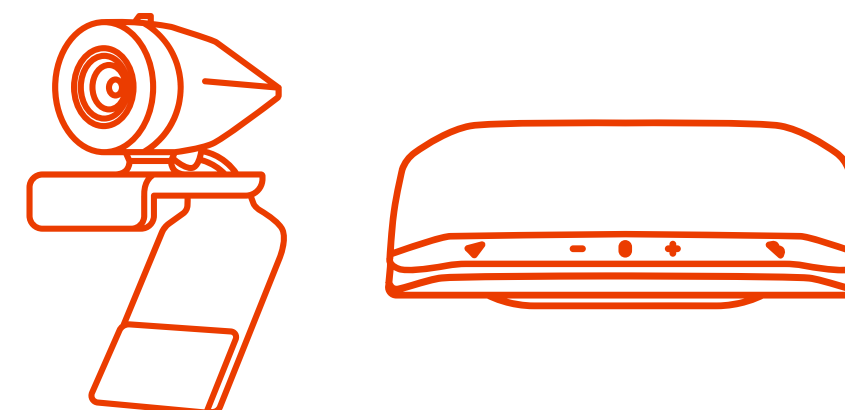


### THE REMOTE COLLABORATOR

This tech-savvy employee works exclusively out of their home. While highly collaborative with workers back at the office, they can feel isolated from the team if they don't have the collaboration and communication technology they need to feel like they are on equal footing.

### RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

Remote collaboration tools that deliver high-quality audio and video in both home and shared-space office environments.



Each of these workers has unique needs that range from their preferred style of communication to the locations they work in. Equipping them with the right collaboration tools for where and how they work is critical for maximizing their productivity.

In addition, keep in mind that different workers within each group may have their own needs. For example, an employee who usually works from the office but would like the option to eventually work from home a few days a week should be given portable audio and video devices now so that the transition is seamless. In addition, employees with physical or cognitive disabilities may require technology like call status indicators, audio prompts, hands-free devices, automatic speaker tracking, and more.

# 31%

of employees are at risk of attrition if their company doesn't provide flexibility to work in the office or remotely.<sup>3</sup>



### OPPORTUNITY #3

# TECHNOLOGY

## CREATE CONSISTENCY ACROSS SPACES AND PLATFORMS

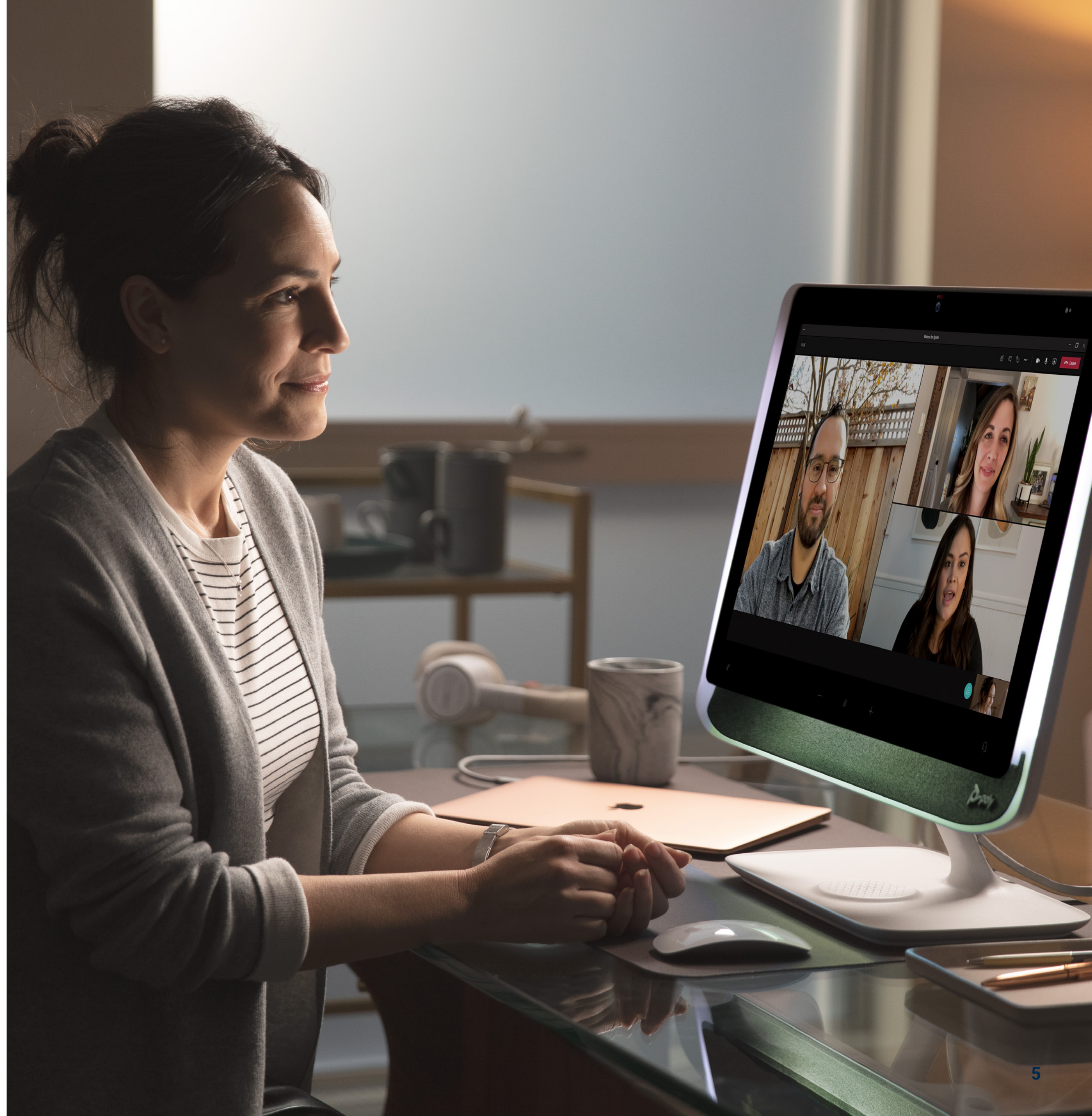
Look for collaboration tools that enhance the meeting for people on both sides of the call. Today's leading technology solutions feature HD audio microphones and speakers, seamless content sharing between devices, and HD tracking cameras that can use facial recognition technology to automatically follow and frame the speaker. This helps remote participants pick up subtle audio and video cues and engage just as deeply as the people around the table.

When adding technology to improve the virtual meeting experience, make sure it's both easy to use and consistent across the entire office. The reason is simple: It's in everyone's best interest that employees can dial into meetings without IT assistance.

**AROUND 15% OF THE TIME SPENT IN MEETINGS IS WASTED TIME, LARGELY DUE TO INEFFICIENT MEETING ROOM EQUIPMENT.<sup>4</sup>**

Employees don't want to waste the first 10 minutes of a call trying to get the technology to work correctly, and you don't want to get called to troubleshoot every meeting.

However, creating a seamless video conferencing experience that requires little or no IT intervention is a challenge. That's why the endpoint devices you employ should be interoperable and work seamlessly with many different platforms and services. Your goal should be to provide your workers with a simple and familiar experience no matter what space they happen to be using so that they can be instantly productive. Delivering a consistent and great employee experience demonstrates that IT is a proactive, positive force for change in the company.







## WHAT KIND OF PARTNER SHOULD I LOOK FOR?

Finding all the audio and video conferencing devices you need, configuring them, and making sure they operate correctly are the keys to success. The right communications partner can help your office and your employees transition to work-from-anywhere workplaces. Here's what to look for:

- **Broad portfolio**  
A range of devices and equipment that can support all spaces and workstyles—in and out of the office—so you can reduce cost and complexity.
- **Monitoring and reporting for devices**  
Real-time access to all devices to monitor performance and quickly identify any red flags.
- **Interoperability**  
Proven track record of devices that are interoperable with your key service and platform providers.
- **Installation and rollout services**  
Services and support to optimize your overall investment.

Progressive CIOs are increasingly focused on delivering a great employee experience. The right partner can help you outfit individual and groups spaces with solutions that make collaboration easy and rewarding.



# HOW CAN POLY HELP?

## CREATING THE NEXT EVOLUTION OF THE OFFICE

While reconfiguring your workspace and technology to meet the needs of modern, hybrid workers sounds intimidating, you don't have to go it alone. Poly is here to help with collaboration strategies and best-in-class solutions to support work from anywhere. Whether your employees are in the office, on the go, at home—or a combination of all three—we'll help you create an environment that supports meeting equality. That's just not good for them, it's good for your entire business.

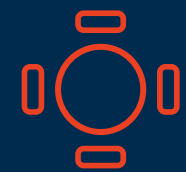
Contact Poly for a free 20-minute consultation with one of our UC Experts to give your organization advice on topics like:



Flexible work environment best practices for employees



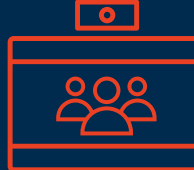
Capacity planning



Repurposing existing spaces for new worker needs



External partner/vendor collaboration



Video etiquette



Poly video, voice, and headset management tips



Managing a flexible work environment



Best practices for moving to Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or another preferred vendor

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1 Harvard Business Review: Five Traits of a Successful Work Environment, July 27, 2021  
2 Poly Global Persona Research, FactWorks 2021  
3 Humanyze 2021 Future of Work Report  
4 Sapio Research

