

Digital Workplace

Applications & Best
Practices for Building
High Performance
Organizations



Redefining High Performance in the New Era of Work

In an era defined by rapid technological advancement and evolving workforce expectations, the digital workplace has emerged as a cornerstone of organizational success.

A well-executed Digital Workplace strategy transcends mere technology adoption—it orchestrates a seamless integration of applications, processes, and human potential to drive unparalleled performance.

This book explores how organizations can strategically configure the ideal combination of digital tools to empower collaboration, enhance productivity, and foster innovation.

By blending practical frameworks, real-world case studies, and actionable insights, **Architecting the Future** equips leaders, IT professionals, and change-makers with the blueprint to transform their workplaces into dynamic, high-performance ecosystems.

Whether you're navigating hybrid work models or aiming to unlock your organization's full potential, this book will guide you in building a digital workplace that not only adapts to change but thrives in it.

Redefining High Performance in the New Era of Work

High Performance Organization

While working together is a foundational element of any functional group, elite teams—those that consistently outperform expectations and deliver extraordinary results—go far beyond mere cooperation.

They tap into a deeper set of principles, practices, and mindsets that elevate them from good to exceptional.

In [this article](#) Microsoft explores “Redefining High Performance in the New Era of Work”, sharing key insights on what makes organizations high-performing (HPOs) in today’s hybrid work environment, shaped by the pandemic and AI advancements.

Based on Microsoft research, including a survey of 1,100 leaders across the US, Asia, Europe, and Latin America, and feedback from over 3 million employees at 226 public companies, the article highlights that only 15% of organizations consistently meet at least six of ten performance indicators, qualifying them as HPOs.

These organizations excel in financial performance, productivity, and employee engagement. The article identifies three mutually reinforcing pillars of high performance:

1. **Engaged Employees:** Motivating employees to deliver sustained individual performance.
2. **Productive Teams:** Building team behaviors and infrastructure for effective results.
3. **Resilient Culture:** Fostering adaptability and innovation to navigate challenges.

Redefining High Performance in the New Era of Work

AI is highlighted as a key tool to overcome barriers like employee burnout (36%), inefficient work culture (36%), overburdened managers (33%), tedious tasks (31%), and skill gaps (29%). HPOs are more likely to invest in AI for employee experience use cases (50% vs. 39% for typical organizations) and to address skill gaps (42% vs. 28%).

A Microsoft study of 30,000 people showed a tripling of time spent in Teams meetings since 2020, with inefficient meetings as the top productivity disruptor, and 64% of workers struggling with time and energy, impacting innovation.

The article emphasizes a broader definition of performance [beyond financial metrics](#), including team collaboration (44%) and resilience (41%). It suggests that [AI can enhance productivity](#), reduce tedious tasks, and foster engagement, creating a virtuous cycle for organizational success.

Digital Workplaces: Virtual HQs for the New World of Work

The centrepiece of your platform for Virtual Team collaboration and the Future of Work is a 'Digital Workplace'.

Workplaces provide virtual environments for teams to meet, collaborate and action projects, achieved through web communities, video meetings and integrated workflow applications.

In simple terms this means what is traditionally known as an Intranet, a private, internal web site dedicated to your company, that with today's technologies can be enhanced in various powerful ways.

They are also called 'Social Intranets', as they utilize social networking features, like LinkedIn, so that employees can create member profiles and share updates to exchange knowledge and find one another.

Workplaces provide virtual environments for teams to meet, collaborate and progress complex project management, achieved through web communities, video meetings and integrated workflow applications.

High Performance Virtual Teams

In [this article](#) MIT explores these challenges, identifying best practices that not only support remote team working but in a way where they outperform traditional office-based ones.

The authors identify that yes by default, teams that work in close proximity perform better than those that are remotely distributed due to the face to face human factors that improve communication and collaboration **-but-** when specific apps and tools are applied to systematize high performance behaviours, Virtual Teams perform better.

Digital Workplaces: Virtual HQs for the New World of Work

This is because by their nature distributed teams are inherently more diverse, calling upon members from nationalities and cultures from across the world, which when united via these high performance practices combine to achieve a much more powerful collective than with less diverse groups that rely on accidental improvements arising from close proximity only.

Culture and Employee Experience

Accelerated by the pandemic remote, virtual working has become the norm for many organizations, but this presents many challenges including cultural, operational and technological.

Digital Workplaces provide a platform for addressing these challenges by providing a 'virtual HQ', an online forum for employees to meet no matter where they are physically located, and then offering a spectrum of features and functionality that enables them to be united into a high performance team.

The headline challenge for virtual teams is maintaining employee morale, as working remotely can easily lead to isolation and a sense of disconnectedness. Working together physically in the office brings many benefits, most notably this sense of social inclusion, and the knowledge sharing and collaboration that arises naturally from 'water cooler networking'.

Configuring Your Workplace

Therefore one of the primary objectives of a Digital Workspace solution is the use of technology in innovative ways to address these challenges and replicate the social knowledge interactions.

Tools like employee communities enable you to foster inclusiveness even while working remotely, with apps like surveys to help you check in with your team mates to understand how they are feeling, and enable you to address any inclusion motivation challenges.

Digital Workplaces: Virtual HQs for the New World of Work

Microsoft 365 offers these specific apps and tools, and is ideal for enabling these agile ways of working, as it provides the building blocks for global, remote team collaboration, and further integrated into this suite are apps that can define, implement and measure the high performance practices.

Configuring Your High Performance Digital Workplace



In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, high-performance organizations demand tools that not only streamline operations but also drive exceptional results across diverse functions.

Microsoft 365, a cornerstone of modern workplace productivity, offers a robust foundation for empowering this collaboration, spanning skills and learning, employee experience, project and portfolio management and more.

The core 365 platform provides the building blocks for collaboration, with Teams for communications and Sharepoint for intranet content management. These can then be extended through partner plugins, that cater for this additional functionality.

By extending Microsoft 365's capabilities, organizations can foster seamless teamwork, accelerate skill development, streamline HR processes, and optimize project and portfolio management, all while achieving unparalleled performance.

Configuring Your High Performance Digital Workplace

Customizing Your Workplace

These integrations, seamlessly embedded within tools like Microsoft Teams, SharePoint, OneDrive, and Copilot, allow organizations to customize their digital workspace, driving efficiency, innovation, and measurable outcomes.

Just a few examples include:

- **Mural** is a visual collaboration tool that integrates with Microsoft Teams to provide a digital canvas for brainstorming, planning, and ideation. It offers templates for workshops, agile workflows, and priority scaling, enabling teams to visually organize ideas using sticky notes, diagrams, and drawings.
- **Decisions** integrates with Microsoft Teams to streamline meeting management by enabling collaborative agenda creation, real-time tracking of discussion points, and generation of meeting minutes. It also supports task and decision tracking post-meeting.
- **Polly** is a survey and polling app that integrates with Microsoft Teams to collect employee feedback on HR initiatives, such as satisfaction surveys or policy updates. It supports quick, non-disruptive polls within the Teams chat interface.

These demonstrate how the 365 collaboration blocks can be refined to particular workflow use cases.

Configuring Your High Performance Digital Workplace

A product development team, for example, could use Mural within Teams to map out a product launch strategy, enabling remote and in-office members to contribute ideas in real time using sticky notes and diagrams, fostering inclusive participation and reducing miscommunication.

Similarly, Decisions streamlines meeting management by enabling collaborative agenda creation, real-time tracking of discussion points, and automated generation of meeting minutes. A marketing team might use Decisions to prepare for a campaign planning meeting, ensuring clear outcomes and assigned tasks, boosting productivity and alignment.

Additionally, DocuSign's plugin for Microsoft 365 Copilot automates document signing and management, streamlining workflows like contract approvals. An HR department could use this to automate employment contract signing, pulling data from Dynamics 365 HR and routing documents within Teams, reducing administrative overhead and ensuring compliance, ultimately supporting a high-performing workforce.

These examples demonstrate how the plugins collectively transform Microsoft 365 into a versatile platform that addresses the multifaceted needs of high-performance organizations.