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for life

Bio sketch

With an background in social psychology Carlijn Brouwer is focussed on different subjects concerning work, health & technology: hybrid working, mental wellbeing at work, health interventions at work and social innovation in health technology development.

“Hybrid working toolbox: The development of a toolbox to support organizations in Hybrid working”

Introduction The pandemic acted as a catalyst for the shift to hybrid working in the Netherlands. This rapid change raised the question: what bottlenecks and success factors do managers and employees experience with hybrid working? And how can we avoid the adverse effects? In this presentation, we describe the research into the main bottlenecks and the development of a toolbox that will help us avoid these bottlenecks. In this study by TNO in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs, 11 organizations were followed in their transition to hybrid working.

Methods 11 organizations were followed from February to September 2022. These organizations all differed in size and sector to get the broadest possible picture of hybrid working. Through a diary study, literature review, interviews and focus groups, we mapped the effects of hybrid working on employees and managers. In total, 281 participants took part in the digital diary study, and this resulted in 36.377 data points. To understand this data even better we interviewed 25 employees and 7 managers and had 21 employees and 11 managers divided into 3 focus groups.

Results The results show the potential bottlenecks of hybrid working. Hybrid working brings the disadvantage of feeling a little less connected to colleagues and work itself on work-at-home days, sometimes ineffective hybrid meetings, more worries from the manager about the health of employees, an increase in the use of communication tools, and less focus on team goals as the desires of the individual have gained more importance. For these challenges we made eight tools for employees and managers. These eight tools deal with conducting a team discussion about hybrid working, cooperation and connection, incentivize employees to return to the office, effective execution of hybrid meetings, healthy hybrid working, tips for and by managers, stories of experience and the results of the study itself.

Conclusion The results from the study were incorporated into an online toolbox published on a public website of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The toolbox contains eight easy-to-use online tools that give both employees and managers guidance on how to organize hybrid working as optimally as possible. Since the launch of the toolbox in the end of January there were approximately 10.000 Dutch employees, employers and managers that visited the toolbox. A follow-up study is currently being conducted to test the applicability of the toolbox in SMEs.

Author and co-authors

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