

# Communication and collaboration: **best practices for remote, synchronous, and asynchronous communication**

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## Introduction

Hybrid work environments benefit from a balance between synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (flexitime) communication, but both have benefits and drawbacks. A strategic combination of both communication styles is crucial for effective collaboration and productivity in hybrid workplaces.

This guide offers strategies for improving best practices for remote, synchronous, and asynchronous communication.

# Understanding the issue



## What are the disadvantages of synchronous and asynchronous communication?

### Fatigue and reduced productivity of synchronous communication

Virtual meetings via online platforms can be tiring due to the need to maintain eye contact through the cameras and screens, which generates cognitive strain and addiction. Furthermore, there is a lack of informal and formal interactions, and the employees' feeling of being watched can lead to mental fatigue and anxiety.

### Difficulties in establishing employee availability in synchronous communication

Synchronous communication requires all employees involved in a team meeting to be available at the same time. This leads to disruptions in individual workflow, as well as scheduling limitations leading to overlapping due to excessive demand for virtual meetings.

### Lack of immediacy of asynchronous methods

Employees without availability to attend online meetings at the same time as their colleagues can result in responding similar questions and doubts in different moments. This situation can lead to a sense of disconnection or lack of immediate collaboration and social interaction. In addition, waiting for responses and opinions means postponing decision-making.

## How can we mitigate these **disadvantages**?

### **Reduce the number of meetings and shorten them to keep focus.**

Schedule only strictly necessary meetings and opt for asynchronous communication with the presence of all employees whenever possible. Set also meetings with short duration and ensure that these are well-structured through protocols.

### **Define clear roles and expectations**

Establish when and for what purpose each type of communication should be used.

**Synchronous:** to address urgent issues, decision making, and team meetings.

**Asynchronous:** tasks that do not require immediate interactions and decisions, such as project updates, quick consultations, information sharing, and establishing response times.

### **Improve technological resources**

Ensure that employees have technology equipment and tools for synchronous and asynchronous communication. Desktop pooling can be used to determine which employees are in the office and how computers are shared. In addition, internet connectivity and remote collaboration tools need to be easily accessible in all situations or countries to ensure smooth collaboration.

# What are the roles of Managers and Human Resources?

## Managers



- Streamlining communication and driving collaborative decision-making, ensuring projects stay on track and teams stay engaged
- Designing a task management strategy and action plan

## Human resources



- Limit synchronous work to its most necessary function by establishing blocks of collaboration limited to several hours.
- Provide training to employees in using communication tools and techniques and establish good written communication practices.

## Conclusion

Achieving a successful combination of synchronous and asynchronous communication in a hybrid working model requires careful planning, the use of appropriate tools, the creation of clear rules and expectations, and a flexible approach to adapt to the changing needs of the team. This not only improves efficiency, but also team wellbeing and cohesion.



### Further reading

- Asynchronous vs Synchronous Communication in Hybrid Teams:  
<https://pragmaticthinking.com/blog/asynchronous-vs-synchronous-communication-in-hybrid-teams/>
- Asynchronous vs. Synchronous Teams: What You Need to Know:  
<https://www.remofirst.com/post/asynchronous-vs-synchronous-teams>