

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

Thriving in Hybrid Work

Mental Wellness for the Distributed Workplace

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

UDYAM-MP-10-0120839



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Programme Overview

This programme addresses the unique psychological challenges arising from hybrid work models, focusing on fostering connection, mitigating biases, and promoting wellbeing. Participants will gain practical strategies to navigate the complexities of distributed teams and build a more inclusive, supportive work environment.

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Participants will understand the common psychological hurdles faced in hybrid settings, such as isolation and communication barriers, and learn why addressing these is crucial for sustained productivity and morale.
- ✓ Attendees will learn to identify and counteract proximity bias, recognizing its impact on fairness and team dynamics, and discover actionable techniques to ensure equitable treatment for all team members.
- ✓ Participants will explore strategies for establishing healthy digital boundaries, understanding how to manage an 'always-on' culture to prevent burnout and maintain personal wellbeing.
- ✓ Attendees will gain insights into building and maintaining strong team cohesion with a mix of remote and in-office members, learning practical methods to foster a sense of belonging for everyone.
- ✓ Participants will be equipped to assess and enhance the wellbeing of hybrid teams, understanding key indicators and learning how to implement supportive practices that promote psychological safety.
- ✓ The programme will equip attendees with tools to foster a culture of open communication and psychological safety, which is vital for innovation and employee retention in any work arrangement.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for all employees working within hybrid or distributed team structures, as well as people managers seeking to enhance their leadership effectiveness in these environments.

Programme Content

1. Psychological Challenges of Hybrid Work

The shift to hybrid work presents unique psychological hurdles, including feelings of isolation, blurred work-life boundaries, and potential communication breakdowns. These challenges can impact an individual's sense of belonging and overall job satisfaction, potentially leading to decreased engagement. Understanding these common experiences is the first step towards mitigating their negative effects. This session will explore these issues using research-backed insights and provide an overview of how they manifest in daily work life.

 **Activity: Group discussion on personal experiences with hybrid work challenges.**

2. Combating Proximity Bias

Proximity bias, the unconscious favouring of those physically present, can create inequities in hybrid settings, affecting opportunities for recognition and advancement. This phenomenon can lead to a two-tiered system where remote employees feel overlooked. This section will delve into the psychological underpinnings of proximity bias and offer evidence-based strategies for managers and team members to actively counteract it, ensuring fair evaluation and inclusion for all.

 **Activity: Scenario analysis: Identifying and addressing proximity bias in team interactions.**

3. Digital Boundaries in an Always-On Culture

The 'always-on' nature of digital communication in hybrid work can lead to significant stress and burnout if not managed effectively. Establishing clear digital boundaries is essential for protecting personal time and mental energy, fostering sustainable productivity. This session will provide practical techniques for setting expectations around response times, managing notifications, and creating dedicated 'off' periods to safeguard personal wellbeing.

 **Activity: Individual exercise: Creating a personal digital boundary plan.**

4. Team Cohesion When Some Are Remote

Maintaining strong team cohesion with a mix of in-office and remote members requires intentional effort to bridge the physical divide. Without proactive measures, remote team members may feel disconnected, impacting collaboration and morale. This section will explore strategies for fostering a shared sense of purpose and belonging, including inclusive meeting practices and virtual team-building activities, to ensure all members feel valued and connected.

 **Activity: Brainstorming session: Ideas for inclusive virtual team-building activities.**

5. Measuring Hybrid Team Wellbeing

Understanding the wellbeing of hybrid teams is crucial for creating a supportive and productive work environment, yet it can be challenging to gauge accurately. This session will introduce key indicators of team wellbeing and discuss methods for gathering feedback, such as pulse surveys and regular check-ins. Participants will learn how to interpret this information to implement targeted support and foster a culture that prioritizes psychological safety.

 **Activity: Developing sample wellbeing check-in questions for hybrid teams.**

6. Fostering Psychological Safety in Hybrid Teams

Psychological safety, the belief that one can speak up without fear of negative consequences, is fundamental for effective collaboration and innovation, especially in hybrid models. When team members feel safe, they are more likely to share ideas, admit mistakes, and seek help. This session will provide actionable guidance for leaders and team members on cultivating an environment where vulnerability is accepted and diverse perspectives are encouraged.

 **Activity: Role-playing: Practicing supportive responses to team member concerns.**

Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Communicate programme benefits and schedule to all employees.	HR/Manager	Week 1	Ensure clear communication highlighting the value proposition for both individual wellbeing and team performance.
Integrate hybrid work best practices into manager training modules.	HR	Month 1	Update existing management training to include modules on managing hybrid teams, focusing on inclusivity and wellbeing.
Launch an employee survey on hybrid work experiences and wellbeing.	Manager	Week 2	Design and deploy a confidential survey to gather baseline data on challenges and needs related to hybrid work.
Establish clear guidelines for digital communication and response times.	HR	Month 1	Develop and communicate company-wide expectations regarding email, chat, and other digital communication channels.
Organize regular virtual or hybrid team social activities.	HR/Manager	Month 2	Schedule recurring informal opportunities for team members to connect on a personal level, regardless of location.
Review and update performance evaluation criteria for hybrid roles.	Leadership	Quarter 1	Ensure performance metrics are fair and objective, mitigating potential proximity bias in assessments.

About Manas



Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

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A MSME-registered organisation dedicated to evidence-based mental wellness.

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Disclaimer: This document has been prepared by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma – Founder & Consulting Psychologist (Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist, PhD, 18+ years), Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling (UDYAM-MP-10-0120839). Content is for programme overview and educational purposes only. Nothing herein constitutes legal advice regarding POSH Act compliance – organisations should consult qualified legal counsel for specific legal guidance. For clinical or psychological support, please reach out to the Manas Team for personalised guidance, or consult a qualified Psychiatrist or licensed mental health professional. © 2026 Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling. All rights reserved. Confidential – prepared specifically for the named organisation. For queries: manu@manas365.com | +91 99818 13224