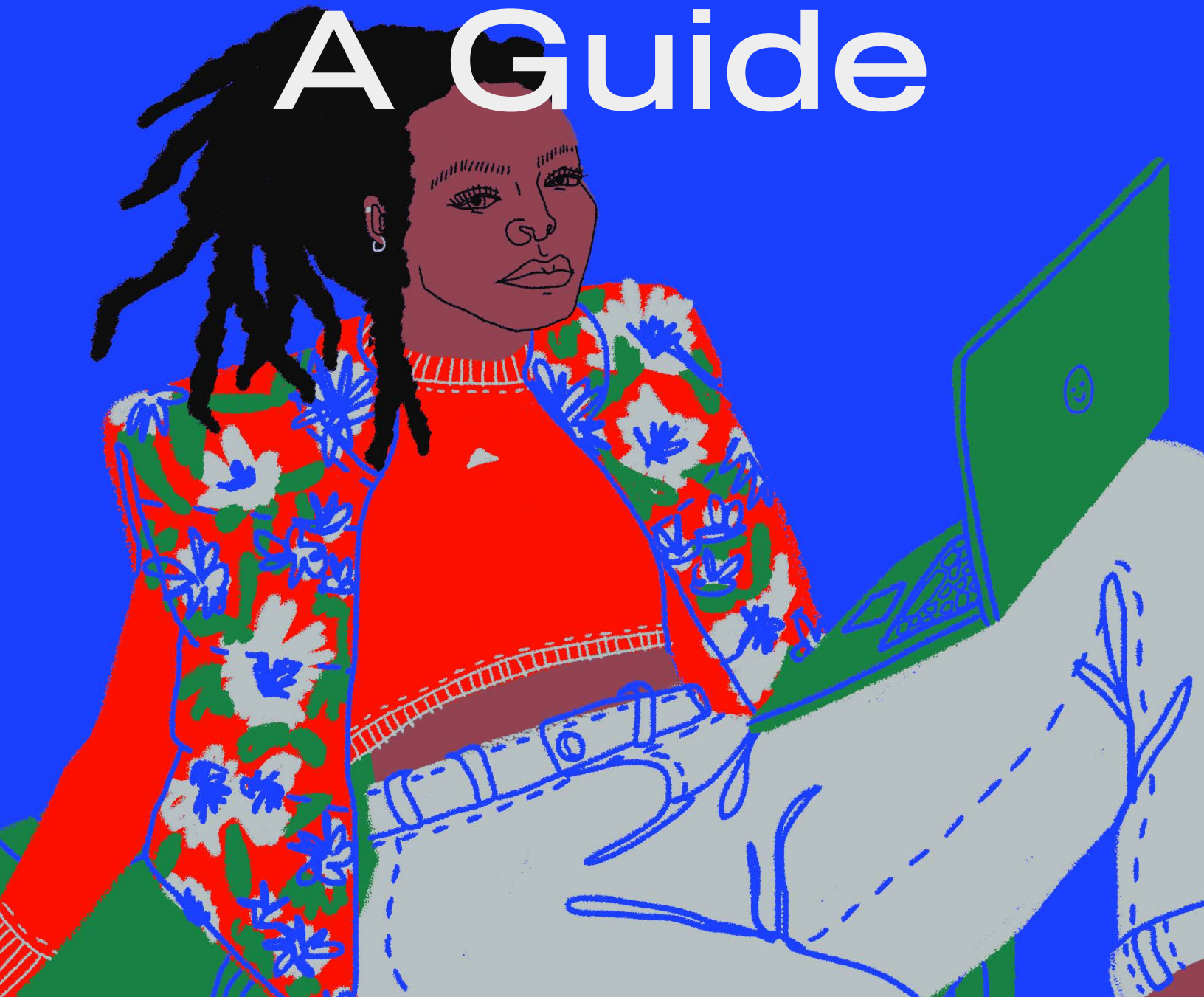




Hybrid Work: A Guide



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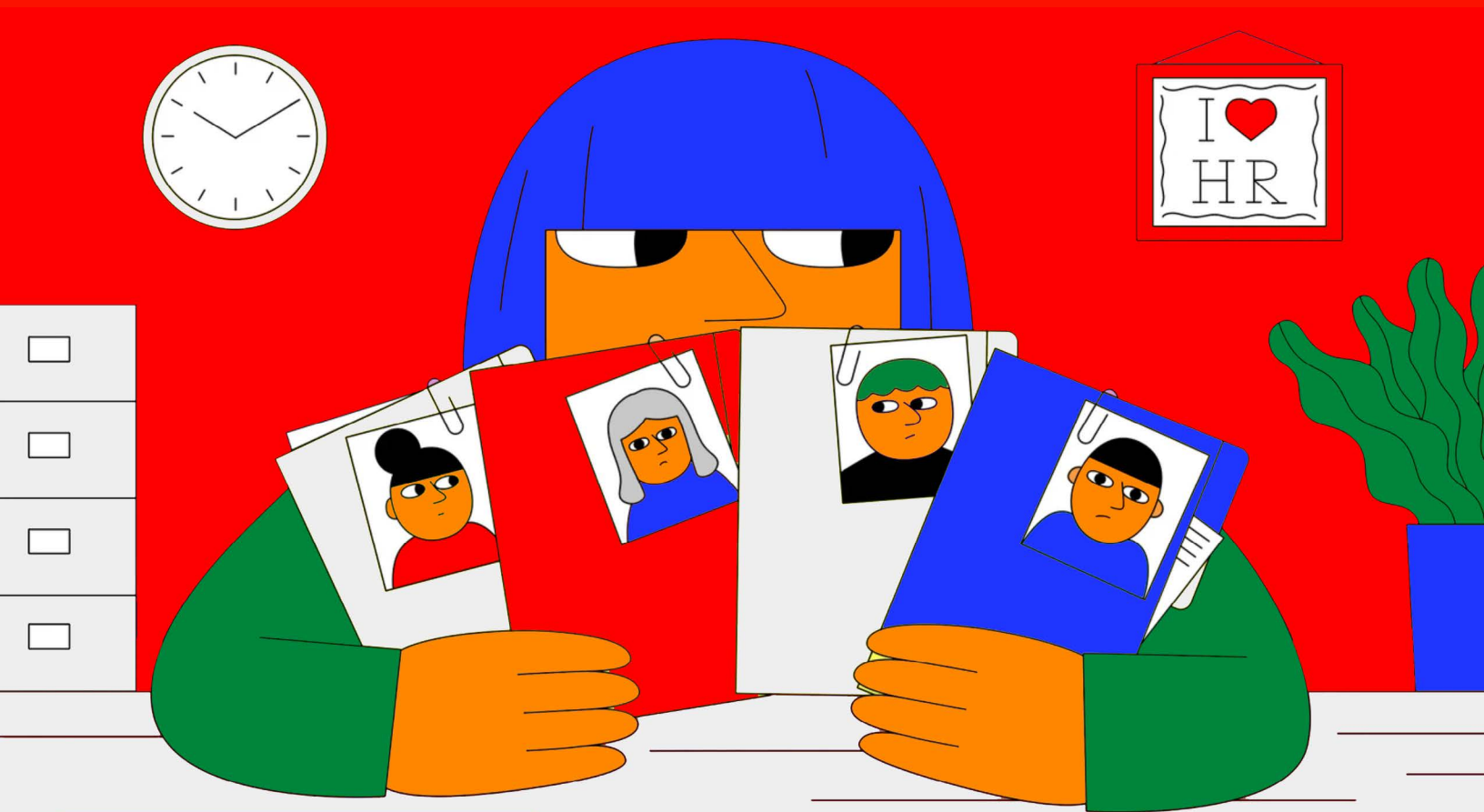
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I. VICE Media Group's Approach



RETURN TO THE OFFICE GUIDE

OCTOBER 2021



If you're feeling overwhelmed with the prospect of managing and operating in a hybrid workplace, remember how far you've already come. Think back to March 2020 when the first COVID cases were cropping up around the world, employees were panicked over how to stay safe at work, and words like "lockdowns" and "essential workers" became everyday vocabulary. At VMG, we sought to ensure your safety first, and went on to design work from home practices with no blueprint to follow.

These days, you've got two tools you didn't have back then: data and experience. You now know how your team operates both in-office and remotely. And you now know how other companies have fared transitioning back to the office under a hybrid work policy.

We're built for this! This guide is intended to help us embark on the next phase of our working journey.

With any new model, there's some level of experimentation and innovation. The hybrid workplace is nothing new, but it's coming at a tumultuous time— and we, like many companies, are finding what works and what doesn't work for us.

WHAT IS IT?

At VMG, we're reinventing the future of work every day. We believe that hybrid work is the new remote work, offering employees greater flexibility that generates more productivity and engagement. This requires a culture of trust, empathy and empowerment. It also means managers must focus on outcomes, not just activity metrics.

A hybrid work model is a plan that incorporates a mixture of in-office and remote work in an employee's schedule. This model allows us to have more control over our work and work environment. It's important to note that there isn't a "one size fit all" solution to a hybrid work model and that managers and employees should work together to plan and agree on a schedule and build team norms that create a shared purpose and deeper connections with and among team members.

HYBRID WORK @VICE MEDIA GROUP

There is no denying that the past 18 months have completely transformed how we work together. We believe that easing back into offices at a pace that feels right for your teams will help us rebuild connections, revitalize teams, and continue to build a workplace culture where everyone can feel and perform at their best. Together, we will design new ways of work along with these three flexible work classifications: Mostly remote, hybrid, and mostly in-office. We will experiment, learn and iterate along the way.

UTILIZE DIFFERENT FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

Consider the various communication platforms we utilize and determine the best method for your message.

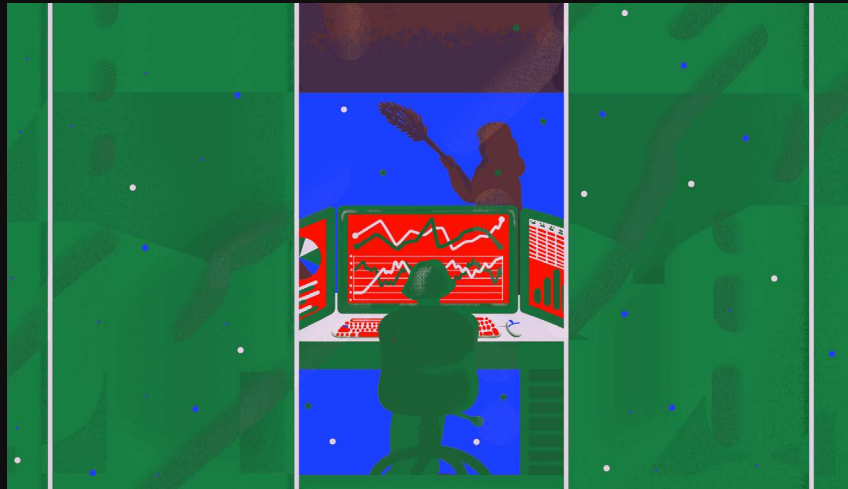
To communicate effectively with a remote team, hold regular meetings, invest in tools to support communication, and create additional opportunities for team members to connect in the absence of in-person interaction.

ACTION:

→ Create guidelines for when to communicate and establish expectations for when to use each communication channel.

- **EMAIL THREADS:** Email is best for formal announcements and high-level communication (often to the larger team)
- **INSTANT MESSAGING/CHAT:** IM is a great stand-in for light or informal in-person conversation, one-on-one needs, or any issues requiring a quick, fast resolution.
- **VIDEO CALLS/MEETINGS:** Video calls have replaced standard in-person meetings, for performance reviews, in-depth projects, and brainstorming sessions.
- **PHONE CALL:** A phone call can be useful for impromptu conversations.

MAKE THE MOST OF TIME IN THE OFFICE



Align with other leaders on how to increase in-person cross-functional collaboration.

Returning to the office may look different for everyone. Make the most of it for those employees who will be in the office at the same time. It's ok to take your time and ease back to what was once the normal way of working. And when you are in the office, consider how you can make the most out of your time there.

ACTION:

→ Put 30 minutes on the calendar to meet with other managers/leaders to brainstorm a list of in-person priorities. Think:

- How has collaboration between teams been sacrificed while people were working remotely?
- Who would be beneficial to get in a room together, and what would the ideal outcome of this group meeting be?
- Which tasks and projects are better completed in the office vs. remotely?

MANAGE PROJECT RESOURCES



Keeping project resources and other team documents in one place saves time.

Another benefit of using Box or Google Drive is that it keeps all resources organized in the cloud for team access.

ACTION:

- Create a dedicated space—or home—for individual projects where any related tasks, documents, and conversations are quickly and easily found. This is critical for knowledge transfer and to accelerate learning and collaboration for your team.
- Consider how you transfer knowledge across your team.

REIMAGINE PROJECTS & WORKFLOWS



Consider how work gets done.

In a hybrid and remote working environment there is more of a reliance on technology to get work done. During this transition into the new way of working, it is an ideal time to assess current work processes and how they can be streamlined to increase productivity.

Managers should work closely with employees to determine the best way forward.

ACTION:

→ While assessing current processes and reimagining workflows, think:

- Are any of my team's tasks redundant or duplicative?
- Can tasks be automated by leveraging technology or reassigned to people across or outside of the team?
- When my team is in the office, how can I change the way we work for better collaboration to make better use of the time working in the same place?
- How can I work more closely with my team to determine next steps?

FOCUS ON OUTCOMES & SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

Measure performance by providing employees with clear tasks and outcomes.

Deliver clear directives and expected outcomes. Allow your team the flexibility and space to design their work to meet their key objectives, while providing them with confidence that the work they are doing is aligned with company goals and will be recognized. Ensure that your employees are clear on leader expectations as well as how those expectations are measured. Working remotely can present challenges. Assigning due dates and clear roles and responsibilities helps with prioritization and execution.

ACTION:

→ Ensure clarity on business needs and establish expectations:

- Are the team's benchmarks and expectations clear?
- Do you understand what is expected and what success looks like in your role?
- Do you have questions about how your role and deliverables support the company's vision?

→ Create a project timeline or expectations checklist.

→ Set clear office hours. Working from home doesn't mean working all hours. Encourage your team to log off at the end of the day and to not expect to be available all hours of the night, particularly for hourly employees who are required to track their hours and incur overtime.

D. REMOTE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES FOR MANAGERS

→ Update Task Boards and Monitor Team Progress:

- For work items that don't require written or verbal communication, use task boards to keep the team on track and monitor goals. This tool can cut down on unnecessary synchronous communication and free up team members to actually work.



BUILD TEAM CULTURE & SUPPORT EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Support your employees.

Offering flexibility, building deeper manager/employee connections and creating a shared purpose builds a culture of psychological safety, employee engagement, wellbeing and innovation. One key way this can be done is by learning your team members' ideal circumstances for productivity and growth. Use the knowledge you gain to adapt to employees' needs and continue soliciting their input along the way through regular check-ins. Additionally, recognition and gratitude go a long way in nurturing connections and encouraging collaboration.

ACTION:

→ Uncover your employee's motivations. Ask:

- What makes you feel valued at work?
- What business processes can we update to create efficiencies?
- What are your goals for the short and long term?

→ Uncover your employee's needs. Ask:

- What work schedules best support your overall well being?
- What tools do you need to perform your job well
- Where do you feel the most productive working

→ Seek insights into how well scheduling is working. Ask:

- What benefits have you seen from hybrid working?
- What difficulties have you seen from hybrid working?
- Should we make adjustments over the next quarter?

D. REMOTE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES FOR MANAGERS



➔ Celebrate successes and encourage your team to express appreciation for their team members:

- Virtually celebrate employees milestones, birthdays and accomplishments.
- Use virtual communication channels (e.g., google meet, email, slack) to publicly give teammates' shout outs.

➔ Integrate continuous check-ins with your team into your schedule:

- Check in individually with team members throughout the week about how they're doing, how they're managing their work, and what support you can offer.
- Allocate 10 minutes at the start of monthly team meetings to do a team wellness check. Prompt the group by asking how they're feeling lately, and what they are doing to support their well-being.

INCLUSION & FAIRNESS

Ensure there is equity within a dispersed workforce.

Feelings of unfairness in the workplace can hurt productivity, increase burnout, reduce collaboration, decrease retention and may lead to legal liability for managers and the company. Workforce studies tell us that leaders may unintentionally hold biases toward remote or in-person work. Proximity Bias is falsely assuming that employees are more productive in the office where they are close to their peers and managers. As a people manager, your imperative should be to facilitate flexibility while ensuring that all employees have an equal opportunity to participate in meetings and other interactions when some employees are home and others are in the office



WHEN, WHERE & HOW OF HYBRID WORK



Consider which type of activities and functions will provide the highest-value in the office vs. working remotely.

Depending on the type of interaction between colleagues and the type of work to be completed, consider whether working in the office or working remotely will provide the highest value of productivity and work. Below are some example activities we've been hearing from our VMG teams as to what may work best for them to collaborate in-person vs. remote. Please note that at VMG decisions around how to best maximize in office time as a team is determined by LOB leaders and people managers. Should you have any questions or feedback please contact your manager, LOB leader or HR Business Partner.

D. REMOTE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES FOR MANAGERS

ACTION:

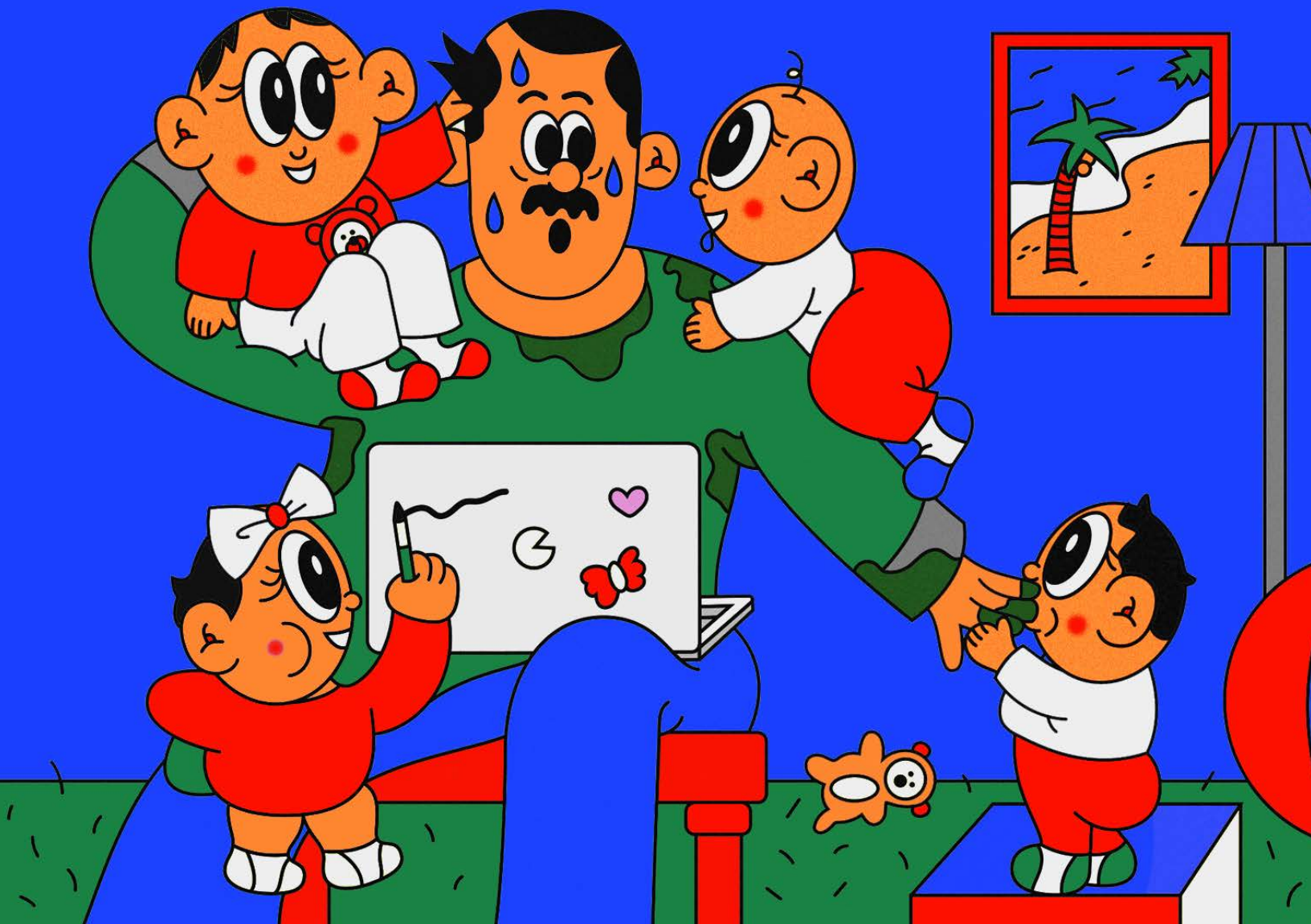
→ Consider the example activities and functions that will provide the highest value when working in the office:

- Briefing meetings and project kick-offs to foster cross-functional collaboration.
- Pitch rehearsals and presentation run throughs in order to nail down cadence and chemistry.
- Creative and project reviews - keeping everything on track and teams aligned to resolve any issues more expeditiously.
- Brainstorms and on the fly collaborations.
- Learning opportunities for junior to mid-level employees regarding starting their careers - it is helpful for this population to learn from those around them, including the nuanced interactions, how to work in an office environment, building business acumen, and other things that may be harder to grasp when working remotely.

→ Consider the example activities and functions that will provide the highest value working when remotely:

- Team and department meetings - tend to work well remote, especially when considering workers in different states and countries whereby everyone has the same level of access via video chat.
- For some, critical thinking and independent work best remotely for fewer in-office distractions, however this may be the opposite for those who have increased distractions at home or different work preferences.

II. It's in Our Work



LINKS TO RESOURCES AND ARTICLES ABOUT HYBRID/REMOTE WORK

TOPIC	LINK
WFH	<u>HOW TO WORK FROM HOME AND NOT FEEL LIKE A LONELY GARBAGE SLUG</u>
CULTURE	<u>57 THINGS TO DO REMOTELY WITH FRIENDS IN QUARANTINE BEYOND 'CATCHING UP'</u>
WFH	<u>EVERYTHING YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE TALKING TO HR ABOUT A PROBLEM AT WORK</u>
DE&I	<u>5 SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE THE WORKPLACE BETTER FOR DISABLED EMPLOYEES</u>
RTO	<u>HOW TO MAKE YOUR OFFICE DESK FEEL LIKE (YOU'RE STILL WORKING FROM) HOME</u>
RTO	<u>WORK ESSENTIALS TO HELP NAVIGATE EVERY CONFUSING NEW HYBRID SETUP</u>
RTO	<u>THE TENTATIVE COMMUTER'S GUIDE TO GOING BACK INTO THE OFFICE</u>
RTO	<u>HOW TO SURVIVE YOUR NEW HOT-DESKING WORK SETUP</u>
RTO	<u>WHAT YOU ACTUALLY MISS OUT ON WHEN YOU WORK FROM HOME</u>
BURNOUT	<u>IS THAT ALL THERE IS? WHY BURNOUT IS A BROKEN PROMISE</u>

Thank You

