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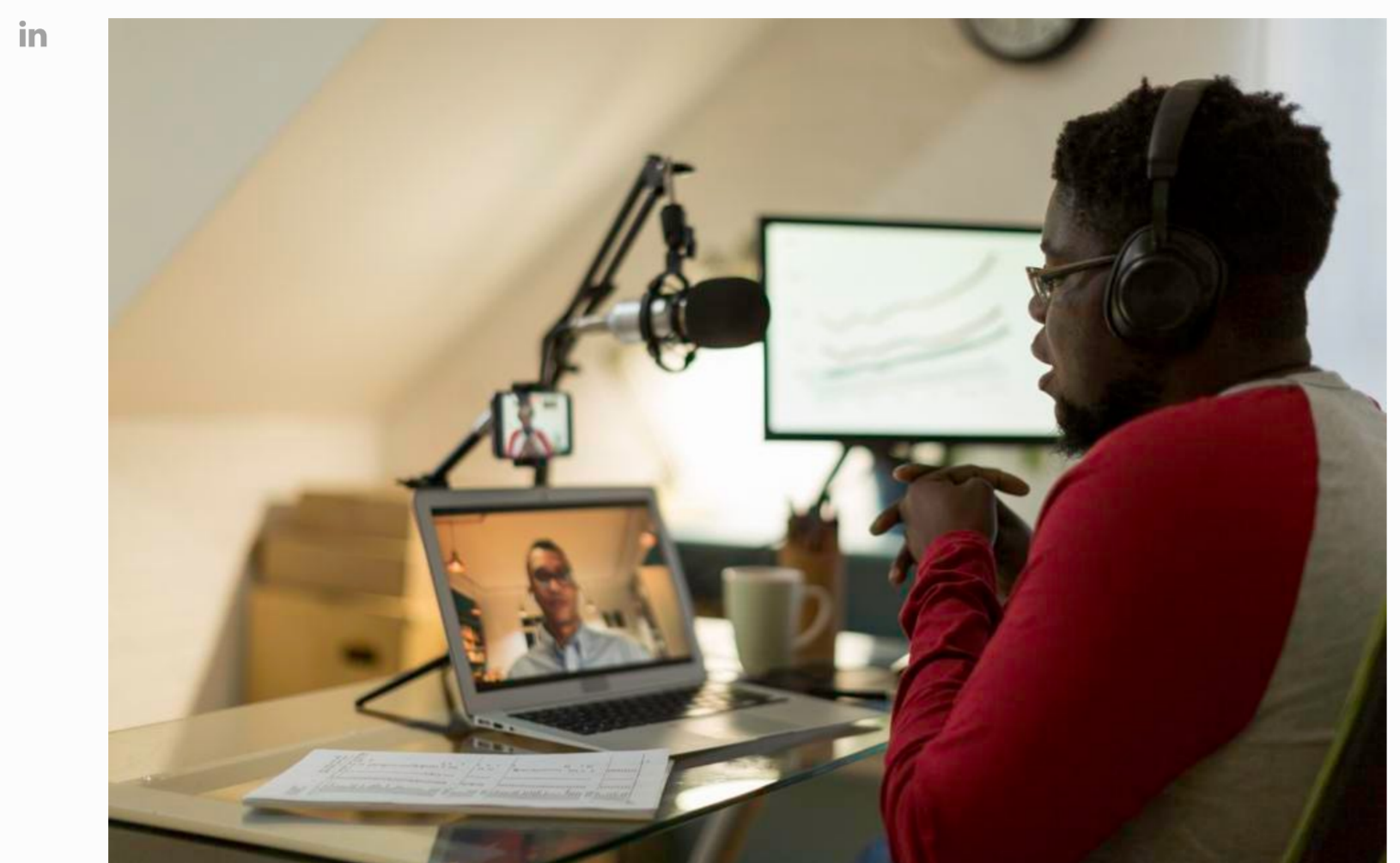
INNOVATION

Hybrid Work Is Here To Stay. Your Workflows Need To Catch Up

ServiceNow BRANDVOICE | Paid Program

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Hybrid work is here to stay. In fact, [one survey](#) found that 66% of leaders are contemplating redesigning office spaces to accommodate a distributed workforce.



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But managing employees across the globe creates an urgent need to [replace inefficient manual processes](#) with user-friendly digital workflows across the organization.

Plenty of trends are driving the shift to digital workflows—from the rise of virtual collaboration to tight labor markets.

“We are in a massive war for talent at the moment,” says Nerys Mutlow, an evangelist in ServiceNow’s Chief Innovation Office. “If your processes are heavily manual, making it very difficult to get work done, and you’re competing against another organization that enables people to work on the devices of their choice ... then, actually, you’re going to lose that talent.”

Shielding Complexities

Without digital workflows that connect an organization, the employee experience can be disjointed and confusing. One department might require employees to send an email to get a question answered or a form filled out. Another might rely on a help desk or spreadsheet.

These siloed, inefficient processes don’t translate to a dispersed workforce, says Mutlow. They introduce inconsistencies and don’t allow for easy visibility into potential risks and bottlenecks.

Manual processes also force employees to focus on the wrong kinds of tasks. Once a salesperson lands a new customer, the best use of their time is to build that customer relationship and land another sale, Mutlow says. What they shouldn’t be doing is inputting data into a customer relationship management system.

“We need to make it super simple for people,” Mutlow says. “Remove or shield them from complexity, and give them the kind of consumer-grade experience you get in real life.”

Navigating With New Technology

Platforms should integrate seamlessly with the technologies your organization already relies on. They should be accessible on whatever device an employee chooses to use, and push out messages based on a worker’s individual needs. That’s how you give employees the tools they need to manage their workload, prioritize tasks and optimize processes, regardless of their location, Mutlow says.

These features not only improve productivity, but also give managers a view into what far-flung employees are doing. Guy Kurlandski, chief evangelist officer at Liquidity Group, likens managers of remote and hybrid teams to a pilot flying an airplane at night in the rain.

“If his workers aren’t in the same office, what you start relying on is really good instrumentation and technology,” Kurlandski says. “If you have the right instrumentation, it doesn’t matter if it’s dark and rainy outside. You’re going to get to your destination. You’re going to be on the route; you don’t need to see out the window.”

Remaining Relevant

The normalization of remote and [hybrid work](#) coincides with other shifts across enterprises. More are moving, for example, from a project-centric approach to a product-centric one. The latter can more effectively serve customers and build relationships with them—but it also requires a shift in strategy.

In practice, that means building cross-functional teams that are organized around customer and employee journeys. To do this, you’ll need the kinds of [digital tools that connect employees and make collaboration easy](#). This product-centric approach helps break down silos, keeping everyone focused on the same end goal and enabling continual evolution—a necessity in the volatile world we live in today.

As workplaces continue to evolve, workflows need to keep up so that employees can spend their time on mission-critical tasks and organizations can stay relevant in increasingly volatile markets, Mutlow says.

“At this point in time,” she says, “we need to be more innovative than we’ve ever been.”

Wash, Rinse, Repeat

During the pandemic, Liquidity Group relied on digital workflows to help lay a foundation for growth. As the working day ended, employees could hand off tasks to colleagues in other time zones, enabling them to serve customers 24/7.

Easily accessible workflows helped the firm expand quickly, opening offices across the globe. Any organization can enjoy the same benefits, Kurlandski says.

“If they do it right, they can potentially expand and grow faster than they ever imagined they could,” Kurlandski says. “Once they have the principles of it down right, it’s almost a wash, rinse and repeat.”

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