



# Hybrid work and mental well-being

Nadia El-Salanti

Organisational Psychologist

Health & Safety, Global P&O

31 May 2022

# Novo Nordisk at a glance

Novo Nordisk is a leading global healthcare company, founded in 1923 and headquartered in Denmark.

Our purpose is to drive change to defeat diabetes and other serious chronic diseases such as obesity and rare blood and endocrine disorders.

We do so by pioneering scientific breakthroughs, expanding access to our medicines and working to prevent and ultimately cure disease.

1. <https://companiesmarketcap.com/pharmaceuticals/largest-pharmaceutical-companies-by-market-cap/> (As of 4 April 2022).

Products marketed in

**168**

countries

Total net sales

**140.8**

billion DKK

Affiliates in

**80**

countries

Supplier of nearly

**50%**

of the world's insulin

More than

**34**

million people use our diabetes care products



R&D centres in China, Denmark, India, UK and US

Strategic production sites in Denmark, Brazil, China, France and US

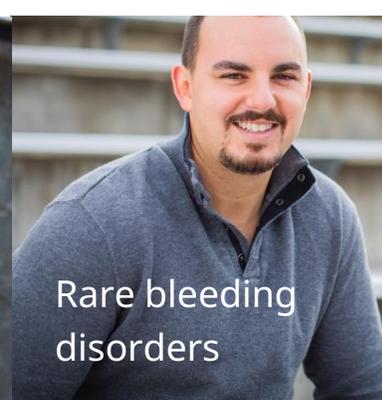
Around

**48,000**

employees



Growth disorders



Rare bleeding disorders



Diabetes



Obesity

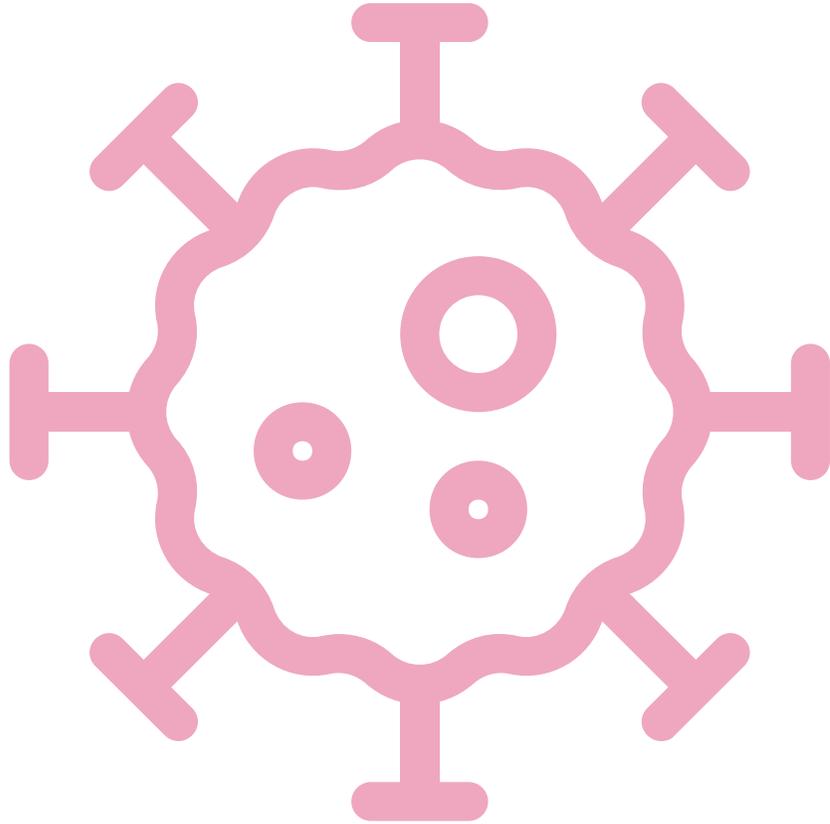
The world's

**6th**

largest pharma company measured by market value<sup>1</sup>



# COVID-19: opportunity or threat?



## Questions derived from the pandemic:

- How to lead according to the NNWay on a distance?
- How to sustain a sense a sense of belonging in an organisation with thousands working remotely?
- How to keep feelings of stress and loneliness at bay when not around colleagues?
- How to keep the Novo Nordisk culture alive among colleagues not meeting in the offices?

# The four Flex-able **beliefs**:



**Workplace flexibility should always be considered as an option** if tasks and activities can be performed by working from other locations, however, must never jeopardize business needs



**We need to meet physically** to ensure that we continue to strengthen our company culture, innovation power, and relationships in the workplace



**It's a leadership responsibility** to agree with each employee the right level of flexibility



**One size does not fit all.** Workplace flexibility agreements must respect and take differences in job requirements, employee preference, local regulations, norms and cultures into account

# Especially 6 factors are important for our mental well-being at work

## Negative outcome if lacking

---

Powerlessness  
Helplessness

---

Loneliness  
Isolation

---

Insecurity  
Uncertainty

---

Frustration  
Worthlessness

---

Alienation  
Pointlessness

---

Stress  
Apathy

## Psychosocial factor

---

Influence/control

---

Social support

---

Predictability

---

Recognition

---

Meaning

---

Balanced demands

## Positive outcome if present

---

Action competence  
Accountability

---

Social anchoring &  
integration

---

Security and certainty

---

Personal dignity & sense of worth

---

Sense of coherence – inner  
satisfaction

---

Personal development & well-  
being

# How hybrid work affects psychosocial factors



## Less influence

- Ad hoc meetings on site without your presence.
- Important decisions around your work or projects could be taken without your opinion being heard.
- Less use of competencies.



## Less Recognition

- Less daily ad-hoc acknowledgement in interactions, e.g. smiles and comments on the go or in “coffee talks”.
- Managers and co-workers don’t naturally “witness” your performance and progress
- Not sharing successes together.



## Lack of Social Support

- Isolation.
- Low team-spirit/sense of belonging.
- Lack of continuous feedback.
- Lack of help and assistance when needed



## Lack of meaning

- Social bonds and relations as the missing constituent joint of meaningfulness.
- Easier to forget higher purpose of job.
- Conflicts of ingroup/outgroup type



## Less predictability

- Organizational changes while working from home
- Imbalance in communication to employees on site vs. at home.
- Misunderstandings of information and intentions.
- Less just-in-time communication.



## Imbalance in demands

- Managers overwhelmed by keeping track of everybody’s schedules and leading hybrid teams.
- Experience of too long working hours and “packed calendars”.
- New demands for individual structure planning

**3 attention points** will help leaders & employees transition (more) smoothly into the hybrid world

**A:**

Increased focus  
on manager –  
employee  
relations

**B:**

Heightened  
employee  
responsibility for  
own well-being

**C:**

Team need to  
attend to  
Psychological  
safety

# What does leading hybrid teams require of you as a **leader**?



## Leading hybrid teams requires new skills and energy:

- More time consuming
- Need to plan team- and individual activities in a new way
- Need to be mindful of **own bias** towards those within 'eye-sight'

## Recommendations:

- Prioritise leadership reflection time (e.g. every Friday I have 1 hour to reflect on key priorities, planning and people motivation for the next week).
- **'Count' interactions** with employees.
- Plan team meetings carefully and well in advance – make it clear if on-site presence is required.
- Evaluate regularly
- Watch out for your **own mental wellbeing**? Talk to your manager or peers if you struggle with converting into leading hybrid teams.

# What does working hybrid mean for you as an **employee**?

Hybrid work entails new mental health risks for employees:

- Risk of developing unhealthy working habits
- Psychosocial factors at work changed or diminished

Recommendations:

- Develop and continuously review healthy working from home-habits
- Assess your own mental health a few times a month, and share your status with your manager at your 1:1's
- If possible, prioritise regular on-site presence
- Assess your psychosocial environment and share any concerns with your manager

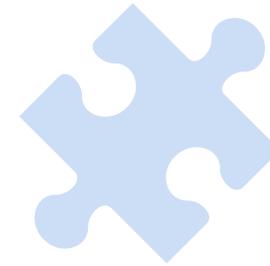
# Psychological safety

At risk of decreasing in hybrid work constellations

- The belief that one will not be punished for speaking up and showing vulnerability
- Characteristic of a well-functioning group that shares ideas, successes, and failures
- Enables the members of the group to collaborate on the core task
- Enables the members of the team to learn from each other
- An invisible resource embedded in the **relations**
- **Can not as such be installed → social investment**



# Hybrid work dialogue game



## Purpose

---

To **explore** each other's different views, opinions, experiences and practices related to returning to the offices and working in hybrid constellations.

## Goal

---

To discuss, identify and agree on what a **new normal** should look like going forward.

# How to play the game



1. Gather with your small group and select a **chair-person** to facilitate the discussion
2. Look at statement-playing cards together. **Discuss one statement at a time** and discuss to what extent you agree or disagree with the statement. You can either pick the cards you find relevant or discuss them chronologically (**30 min.**).
3. Summarize your most important **key messages** from the discussion and prepare what to share with the rest of the department, for instance if the discussion has led to ideas/wishes for your future of work (**10 min.**)

# New work arrangements

1

I feel I am much more efficient when I am working from home

2

I think it should be up to the individual when to work from home and when to go to the offices

3

We need more 'real life' meetings to maintain informal relations in our team

4

I am afraid to miss out on important discussions or decisions when I am not in the office

5

I think we should agree on core working hours in our team

6

People should come to the office minimum 3 days per week

7

We should continue with all logging on to Teams individually when having hybrid meetings

8

At least once or twice a week we should make sure that **all** came to the office that day

9

I generally prefer to meet in person when working on collaborative tasks

10

I would like to work more from home

# Office Code of Conduct

**11**

When working in the office we do not just interrupt a colleague with a question or comment, but always ask first, whether it is okay to disturb

**12**

In the office - we should be able to enjoy collaboration and sparring with each other, it is not a library

**13**

Telephone calls can take place inside the office environment

**14**

In the office environment mobile phones must always have the sound turned off

**15**

In the office we should not talk to each other from seats/desk-islands away

**16**

In the office - It is OK to request colleagues to lower their tone of voice or continue conversation elsewhere if it disturbs me too much

**17**

We acknowledge that we may feel differently about having to return, but we respect and follow the common decisions

**18**

We must find ways to celebrate birthdays and successes even though we are not physically together

**19**

It is OK to strive to sit together with close colleagues even though we have flexible seating

**20**

In our department we should develop a written Code of Conduct with new office "rules"

# Aspiration for on-site presence - based on poll data in Dept. xx

## Good practice example

### MINIMUM 2 DAYS ON SITE PER WEEK

- **Occasional** exceptions (depending on the activities one is involved in) to be agreed with manager
- **Full flexibility** in managing which days to work from elsewhere
- Everyone to write in calendar when working from elsewhere
- Strive to coordinate on-site presence with co-workers when working on collaborative tasks
- Some meetings (e.g. knowledge session, bi-monthly meetings) may have mandatory on-site presence (mgr. decision)

#### Drivers behind this recommendation

To actively ensure that we strengthen our relations, culture, team coherence and sense of belonging. A certain volume of on-site presence ensures:

- Everyone to tap into (and co-create) a great social vibrance and enjoy the real-life company of their colleagues
- Unplanned encounter with known and new colleagues – a strong driver of innovation and problem solving
- Rich communication, collaboration, and co-creation at face-to-face meetings

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a white cable-knit turtleneck sweater, is sitting at a wooden table in a cafe. She has her chin resting on her hand and is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. On the table in front of her is a glass of water, a blue and white patterned mug, and a smartphone. The background is a blurred indoor setting with warm lighting and wooden beams.

# Questions?

