



Create a Holistic Employee Experience

Four Ways Companies Have
Used Microsoft Viva to Address
the Changing Needs of Employees



Adapting workplace experience for a changing employee

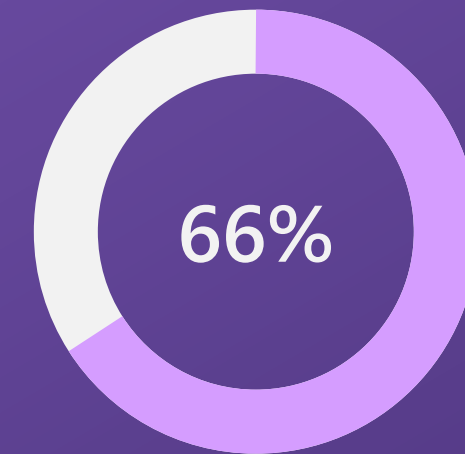
Companies around the world have adapted the way their employees work, shifting from predominantly on-site workplaces to remote or hybrid experiences. Now, it's become clear that this adaptation has evolved into a new, more permanent vision for the employee experience.

This vision changed not only the way business leaders approach the physical needs of their employees, but also the more intangible ones. It's not just about when and where an employee works but how and why.

Decision makers have a responsibility to ensure their employees are technologically set up for success, understand their purpose

and goals as employees and humans, and are encouraged to protect and nurture their work-life balance and overall wellbeing.

Employees are placing a premium on working for companies that care about them as humans. On the flip side, business leaders are recognizing the importance of managing the employee lifecycle with empathy and efficiency. Ensuring a thoughtful and holistic approach empowers the employee to do better work, and a more engaged employee drives better business results.



66 percent of business decision makers have considered redesigning physical work environments to accommodate remote and hybrid workforces.

Source

The employee experience platform

A holistic approach

With remote and hybrid workplace models here to stay, the challenge becomes creating an employee experience that considers three key factors:

- a seamless experience no matter where employees work;
- retention over recruitment; and
- successful business outcomes.

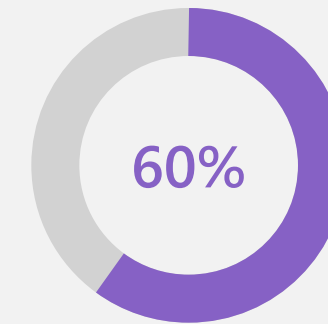
An employee experience platform (EXP) can accomplish all of these goals. When all employees have access to an inclusive, integrated system of employee experiences, they're better equipped to collaborate and achieve business outcomes.

Managing the employee lifecycle at every stage, from onboarding to development to retention, is more critical than ever in today's hybrid/remote work environment. Employees don't simply want a more comprehensive

employee experience; they need it to feel more engaged in their work and valued by their company. That can be more difficult to achieve in this new work model, but it's crucial if business leaders want to ensure retention.

When businesses implement an EXP, they have a more comprehensive view of their employees' wants, needs, and goals at every stage of their employment. This gives business leaders the opportunity to clarify each employee's purpose and align it with the business's goals. The result is an approach to employee experience that empowers the employee to engage with their work and directly and clearly impact business outcomes more effectively.

Microsoft Viva is the only EXP that looks beyond what makes employees more productive, bringing together communications, learning and knowledge, resources, insights, and goals into one seamless system.



60 percent of HR leaders believe the employee experience should be the same for in-office and remote employees.

Source

The value of a holistic employee experience

66% increase of personalized experiences

61% increase in employee satisfaction

71% improved KPIs

61% stronger ROI on EX tools/resources

61% lower cost of new hires

57% faster product development and innovation

Source

Achieving a healthy work-life balance

Working from home can make it easy for work and personal life to blur together. One of the more difficult challenges for businesses to overcome when hybrid and remote work became the norm was knowing when to work and when to take a break. Even Microsoft was not immune to needing productive ways to combat this kind of challenge.

Understanding your employees' perspectives on and needs surrounding work-life balance means finding ways to gather those opinions

and use them to create solutions that encourage a better balance between work and personal time. With hybrid and remote work models, businesses need to be able to collect data and apply solutions electronically.

For business leaders at Microsoft, that meant administering surveys to employees and using Viva Insights to analyze feedback and implement solutions to improve work-life balance.

Focus time

Viva Insights proved a powerful tool for collecting and analyzing the data yielded by the surveys, but it also provided a way to implement solutions. For example, it can recommend booking time to focus on tasks and setting up quiet times, which mute notifications from Outlook and Teams for a specific time during the day.

What they learned

Issues affecting Microsoft employees' work-life balance included:



lack of time away from work.



using meeting time inefficiently.



trouble setting priorities.



missing focus time to work.

Using meetings effectively

One effect of adopting a hybrid/remote work model was an increase in meetings to make up for the lost in-person time employees previously experienced in an office. What Microsoft found, though, was that this increase naturally resulted in too many meetings, taking up time better spent completing tasks. To combat this issue, Microsoft team leaders use effective meeting suggestions built into Viva to cut down on unnecessary meetings and eliminate mandatory attendance for employees who may not have been needed.

Setting priorities

Microsoft found that employees who had a clear understanding of their goals and objectives were more likely to productively accomplish them. It also helped alleviate unnecessary meeting attendance and a better outlook on what needs to be done and when. Team leaders use Viva Goals to set objectives and key results (OKRs) so employees know what their goals are and the work that needs to be done to achieve them.

A holistic approach

Microsoft supplements their efforts through Viva with a people-centered management approach. Simply encouraging employees to take time off wasn't working as expected, so managers use modeling, coaching, and caring to set the example for their employees. Leaders allocate five wellbeing days per year for employees to use as they wish, while also taking time off themselves to model a healthy work-life balance for their team. They also make sure to keep one-on-one meetings in place to regularly check in on employees and ensure their needs are being met.

The combination of these tools with people-centered management allows your employees to understand the benefits of disconnecting from work as much as completing their goals. The result is an expectation of consistently higher employee satisfaction, productivity, and retention.

Source



“Focus time, automatically scheduled for me by Viva Insights, ensures I have uninterrupted time set aside for the upcoming week and minimize after-hours work.”

Sunita Khatri

Senior Director of Product
Marketing at Microsoft

“We encourage managers to model habits like **taking time away from work** and **creating focus time** because those changes not only help them personally but also give their teams **implicit permission to do the same.**”

Dawn Klinghoffer

Vice President of HR Business Insights at Microsoft

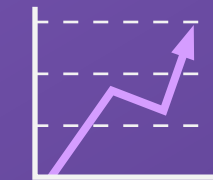
Seamless knowledge sharing through Viva Topics

Even for organizations that are seasoned users of Microsoft applications, collaborating across large numbers of employees in remote or hybrid workplaces can present unique challenges. Finding the right expert or sourcing the best information in digital environments can prove to be a cumbersome task. With hundreds of expert employees and thousands of files to sift through, more time is spent in meetings, email chains, and Microsoft Teams chats. The result is more time spent finding the relevant information for a project before being able to complete the project itself.

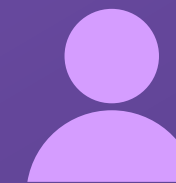
As a leader in cloud-enabled services, business solutions, and design-led experiences, Avanade knows firsthand the need for efficient collaboration and communication between people across various teams. To serve its customers best, Avanade needed convenient, yet accurate ways for team members to consult subject matter experts and access resources.

By implementing Viva Topics, Avanade was able to fulfill that need without sacrificing its existing systems.

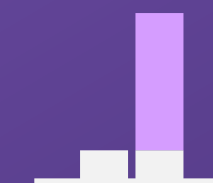
The reality of digital overload



Weekly meeting time is up 148 percent and climbing.



66 percent more people are working in Office docs year over year.



Email output increased by more than 40 billion between February 2020 and February 2021.



Per-person team chats are up 45 percent and rising.

Source



Because Viva Topics uses AI technology to sort through, process, and organize resources, it's easier for employees to discover and use the knowledge at Avanade's disposal. They no longer need to sift their way through thousands of potentially relevant documents or work their way down a chain of experts to find the best person to consult.

As your employees chat in Teams or browse a SharePoint site, they can see highlighted topics that give them quicker access to related resources or experts who can provide additional information on that subject.

Having a faster and easier discovery solution lets employees spend valuable time innovating solutions for customers. And the ability to integrate this solution into your existing applications enables a seamless rollout to your entire organization, immediately connecting departments and empowering cross-functional collaboration.

"The value of Viva Topics is really about placing information that people need in the places they're hanging out."

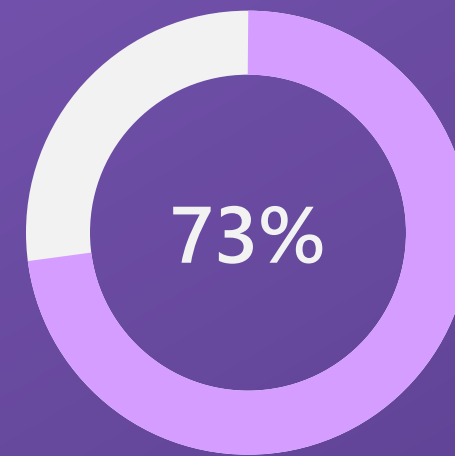
Marci Jenkins
Workplace IT Executive at Avanade

Fostering inclusivity and sustainability in the workplace

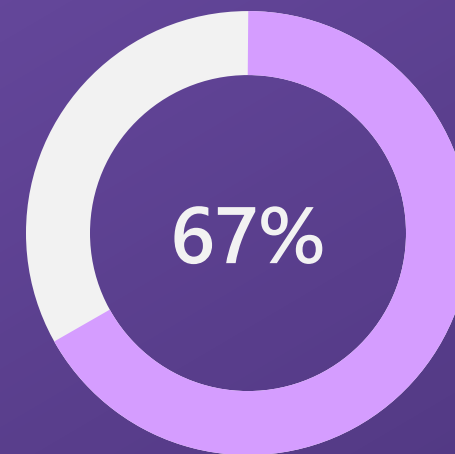
When your organization has thousands of employees spread across dozens of states or even countries, ensuring every team member feels included in a personalized employee experience can be a challenge. While the easy solution may seem to be bringing employees back into the office full-time, that's not always feasible: many employees prefer having the option to work from home and full-time on-site employment can disrupt sustainability efforts.

For a company like REI, sustainability is a high priority. Balancing that effort with employees' desire for more personal interaction with one another could have been difficult without REI's existing Microsoft platforms. Achieving both of those goals while avoiding burnout was also critical.

Employees on remote/hybrid work



73 percent of employees want flexible remote options to continue



67 percent of employees wish they had more in-person time with colleagues

Source

By combining Microsoft Teams with Surface Hubs, REI was able to enable maximum collaboration while ensuring employees felt included in every meeting and face-to-face interaction. Remote employees could see everything on-site team members could, and communication was seamless with Teams integration into presentations and meetings.

To make sure employees were maximizing their meeting time without succumbing to burnout, REI applied Viva Insights to all of these interactions. Insights lets employees keep an eye on how they spend their time, make any changes to their schedule based

on the data, and include focus time to stay on task, all directly within Teams.

These benefits give your organization the opportunity to provide a personal, inclusive employee experience while also contributing to a more sustainable workplace.

As REI discovered, Viva makes insights, learning resources, and communication easier to access and share from the applications you already use, creating an entire workforce that can collaborate as easily as they could onsite, while improving sustainability efforts for the whole organization.

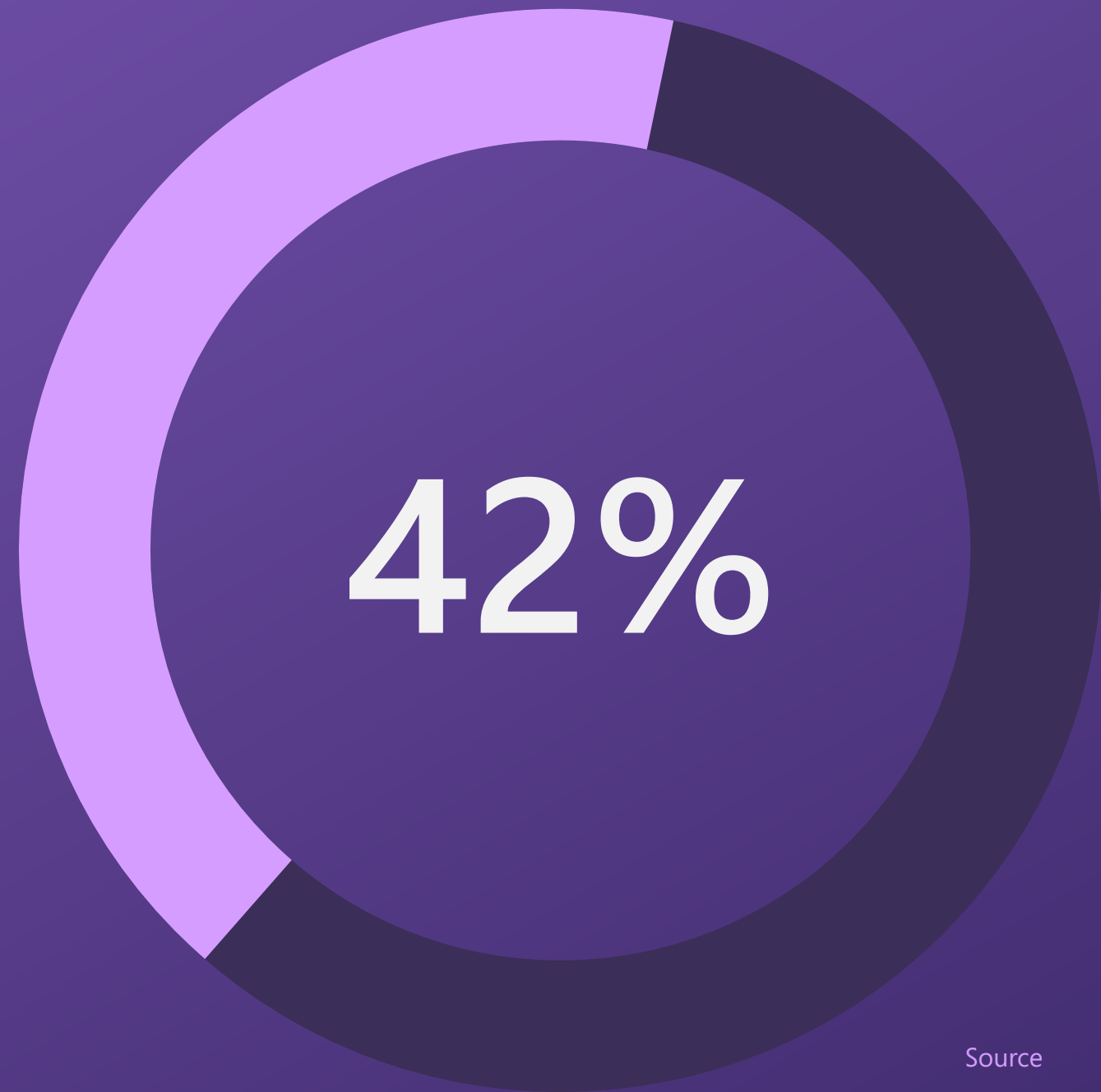
“By using Teams for a more flexible approach to work, we help keep 1,500 people off the road every day.”

Joey Northcott

Divisional Vice President of Enterprise Technology Services at REI



42 percent of employees are more likely to stay at their current job if offered **comprehensive mental health** and **wellbeing** benefits.



Source

Wellbeing as a virtue of the employee experience

Employees are putting a higher value on their overall wellbeing now compared to the pre-pandemic workforce. Because of factors like overextended workloads and less in-person interaction with colleagues, an employee's mental health can experience a negative impact more easily. This, in turn, influences an employee's commitment to their current employer and whether they will stay or find another job.

LifeWorks knows all about the importance of wellbeing. As a leading provider of solutions for organizations seeking to improve the wellbeing of their employees, they knew it was necessary to do the same for their own workforce.

Microsoft Teams has given Lifeworks the opportunity to build a stronger infrastructure. To further enhance the employee experience,

the company integrated Viva Connections into their customized Teams app.

When it comes to wellbeing and mental health, privacy and security are integral to ensuring a valuable benefit. Lifeworks found that Microsoft's security solutions made it possible to build a stronger user experience without sacrificing agility, transparency, or access to the necessary data to effectively provide wellbeing benefits to its employees.

Viva Connections helps you meet your employees where they are. It can automatically notify employees of relevant events or initiatives related to mental health. It also lets employees privately and securely access the wellbeing resources and benefits you've made available – right from the Teams app.



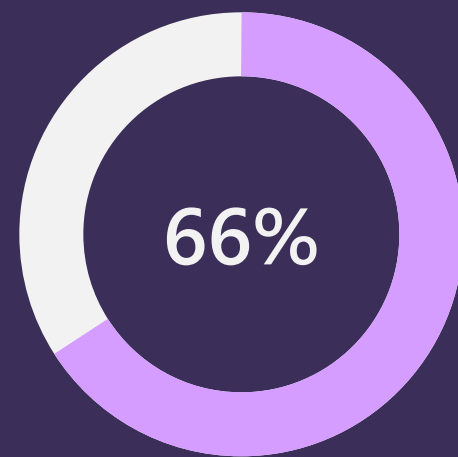
“Paired with our wellbeing expertise, Microsoft can help us deliver accessible and effective digital mental health and wellbeing resources within the flow of work.”

Kaytek Przybylski

Chief Data and Technology Officer and
Executive Vice President at LifeWorks

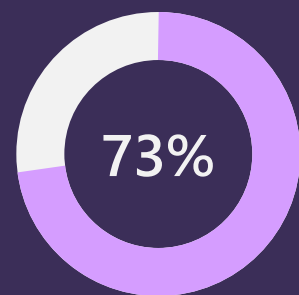
A quick look at the challenges of the hybrid/remote work model

Adapting to the workplace

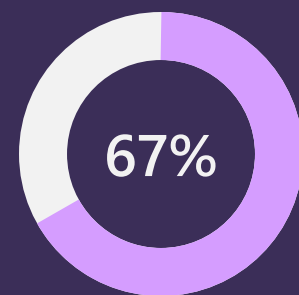


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The challenges

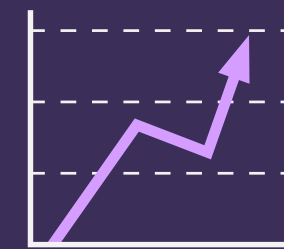


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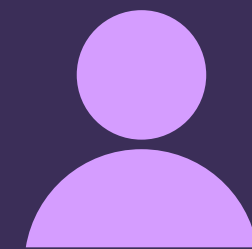


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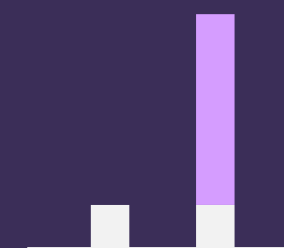
Digital overload



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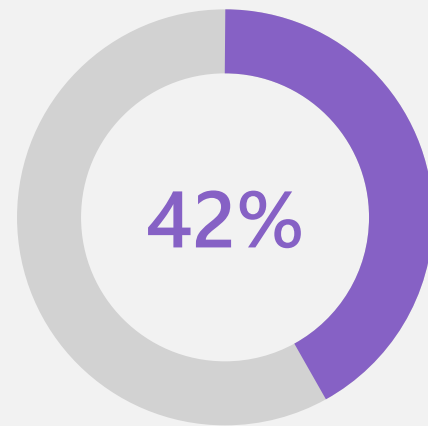


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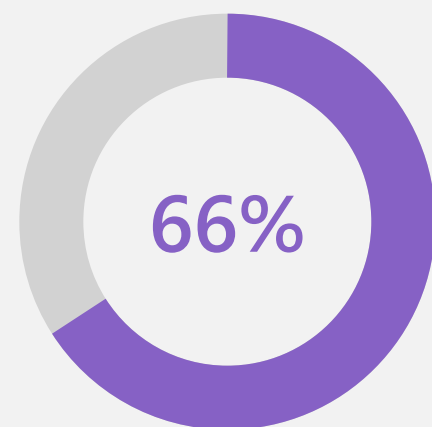


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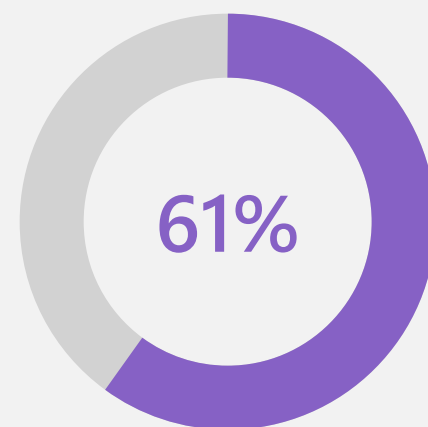
The benefits of an EXP in the hybrid/remote work model



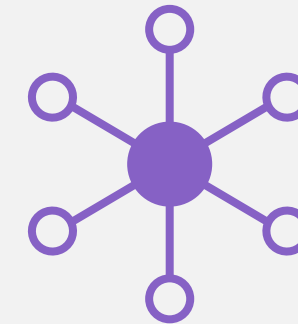
42 percent of employees are more likely to stay at their current job if offered comprehensive mental health and wellbeing benefits.



66 percent increase of personalized experiences



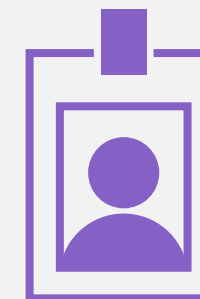
61 percent increase in employee satisfaction



71 percent improved KPIs



61 percent stronger ROI on EX tools/resources



61 percent lower cost of new hires



57 percent faster product development and innovation

Work smarter with Microsoft Viva

A hybrid/remote workplace model works best when a company and its employees are ready and willing to adapt quickly and effectively. Having a digital solution like Microsoft Viva integrated into your existing platform and suite of Microsoft applications makes it easier to succeed no matter how your business outcomes and employee needs may change.

Viva meets your employees where they are, giving them a sense of purpose that ultimately focuses your ability to meet broader organizational goals. In other words, it drives results – both for your business's success and employees' wellbeing.

The ultimate upshot of Microsoft Viva is that it allows your employees to achieve more while doing less. So much time can easily be wasted if employees are subject to unnecessary meetings, sifting through massive amounts of information, and overall burnout. With Viva, your employees can work more effectively, collaboratively, and efficiently, no matter where they are.

Learn more about how Microsoft Viva can foster a more powerful, holistic employee experience and drive meaningful results for your organization.

The features of Microsoft Viva

Organizing layer for employee experiences: It's powered by the full breadth and depth of Microsoft 365 and experienced primarily through Microsoft Teams.

Putting people at the center: It unites people to share knowledge, skills, and connections in the natural flow of their workday. It's designed to be intuitive and easy to use to drive adoption and immediate value.

Personalized insights: It provides privacy-protected, actionable insights when and where they're needed throughout the workday.

Privacy and security you can trust: Powered by Microsoft 365 and backed by Microsoft's commitment to privacy and security, Microsoft Viva sits in your trust boundaries, with privacy safeguards and protections for individuals so that you are in control of your own data.

Customizable, open and extensible: It has a strong and growing ecosystem of partners, so it works seamlessly with your existing systems and tools, like your HR, CRM, and Learning Management System (LMS).

The benefits of Microsoft Viva

Prioritize communication and culture by bringing together relevant news and resources in the applications you use to interact every day.

Improve productivity and wellbeing by enabling employees to see how they spend their time and focus on the tasks that matter most.

Eliminate the cumbersome chain of experts and time wasted sifting through thousands of documents by placing relevant knowledge right where you need it.

Empower employees to easily carve out time for growth and skill development with access to learning modules and resources right from their everyday applications.

Align your employees' everyday tasks and individual goals with the larger mission and aspirations of the company, improving employee purpose and achieving key business outcomes more efficiently.



Learn more about how [Microsoft Viva](#) can foster a more powerful, holistic employee experience and drive meaningful results for your organization.

