



## Dearest Readers,

Today, as more companies are trying to figure out what “hybrid work” actually means, let’s talk about how introverts (and, really, anyone) can make the case to their managers for remote work.

This topic comes from a question that a reader sent me:

Dear Susan,

I was wondering, what is your take on "hybrid work"?

During the Covid-19 pandemic, it was proved that not only could many people work from home, but most could do so. And many of us who are introverts excelled — for obvious reasons. Now companies are forcing employees to spend more and more time back in the office. I've spent so many years being tired and drained from my work life. I don't want to go back to work days that take me days from which to recover.

How can I communicate the extrovert bias to my company's leadership? How can I prove to them that letting nearly half of their employees continue to work from home will actually benefit the company as well as the employees? You see, I am feeling bullied. Leadership makes statements like "Isn't it more fun to be in the office?" Or "It's true we work better together in person." These kinds of statements are presented as truth. But they are not true for everyone.

I would like extroverts to think on their time during the pandemic. I'm sure many of them felt trapped, frustrated, drained, helpless. They had to live with that feeling for a little over two years. That's how introverts have to live their everyday lives in a world that is extrovert-biased.

I find this a difficult time in my work life. I may have to leave the job I'm in now for one that is truly remote or provides a better balance.

I thank you for your words and your work.

Sincerely,  
Paul

Dear Paul,

I'm so glad you asked this question – especially because I know that thousands (millions?) of others out there are wondering the very same thing.

I wanted to give you the best possible advice, so I've called in my friend, the great [Cali Yost](#), the CEO and Founder of [Flex+Strategy group](#), and an expert on work-life fit.

Here's Cali:

“If your organization is going down a path of more onsite work and you want to work primarily or completely remotely, here's my advice:

- Changing the minds of extroverts who probably do like being in the office more (and who will likely be surprised to learn others find that draining) and trying to convince senior leadership that letting half of their employees work remotely would improve performance is a very heavy lift for one person!
- Instead, what you can do is focus on you, the tasks of your job, and the way you would like to work.
- Before you find a remote-primary job someplace else and quit, draft a flexible work plan to present to your manager outlining the following:
  - The tasks of your job and how you would like to work (for example, full-time remote, primarily remote but coming into the office periodically to complete the following work (specify), flexibly work onsite and remotely based on the work to be done, etc)
  - How will you get your job done working the way you are proposing?
  - How much of your work is done independently and how much requires real-time collaboration with others? If there is collaboration, is any part of it done best face-to-face, in person, or does it not matter?
  - How will you coordinate and communicate with colleagues and customers efficiently and effectively, working the way you are proposing?
  - What else is important to your manager that you will want to address? For example, managers are concerned about “culture” and people who work remotely most of the time feeling disconnected. How will you address that? They are also concerned that people who aren't onsite regularly won't get the training and development opportunities they need. Is this something you should clarify in your plan?

- Present your flexibility plan to your manager. The worst thing that can happen is they say “no.” That will be disappointing, but then you know where you stand, and can make an informed decision whether or not to leave.
- Chances are, however, if you are a good employee who has proven themselves to be a valuable contributor, your manager will approve your proposal to work the way you will work best. They don’t want to lose you.
- But let’s say the answer is no. The good news is that there are many more organizations that are actively hiring remote-primary or fully remote employees today than before the pandemic. But before you take a job offering a certain type of flexibility, make sure that flexibility is meaningful and real. (Recently, on the [CareerCast podcast](#) from the Chicago Booth School of Business, I talked about the signs you should look for and the questions you should ask before taking a job for more flexibility.)

I hope you found Cali’s advice helpful! You can hear more from her [here](#).

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