



Gympass

Cultivating a new culture of wellbeing in your company post-COVID-19

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1. Introduction

In the post COVID-19 world, HR will continue to play a major role: it is up to you to create a new culture focused on wellbeing, safety, organizational leadership and effective communication.

A recent survey conducted by [Future Workplace](#) shows that investing in remote working, promoting employees' wellbeing, and looking after your business, helps companies tackle the impact of Coronavirus in the workplace.

Another [Optum study](#) reveals that over 70% of companies consider their health and wellness programs to be an important factor in their overall business strategy. Now is the perfect time to set an example of how businesses can help their employees during times of social readaptation.

This ebook aims to guide HR professionals through a new, safe, and supportive way to manage a remote team culture post COVID-19. Welcome to the new normal.



2. How to engage employees during a phased reopening

For the past few months, the management of the COVID-19 crisis has been the priority of companies. Now it's time to plan the next steps regarding the outcomes of the pandemic.

According to [Deloitte's Global Human Capital Trends](#), the new challenge is to build a stronger organization that is prepared to rethink work with purpose, potential and perspective, and key directions for the future. Its important to realize that you are likely going to deal with some, or all of these three types of employees: those who have remained at your workplace, workers that will gradually return to work physically, and those that will keep on working remotely.





a) For employees who have remained at your workplace

Ensure that employees who have kept working within their actual workplace feel supported by your organization. Providing easy access to offerings such as virtual fitness, relaxation and meditation classes is a great way to look out for both the physical and mental wellbeing of those who constantly need to adapt to the changes within their field of work during the pandemic.



b) For employees who are gradually returning to the workplace

Changing work environments can be very challenging for employees, so you can adopt safety measures to facilitate the process. It is vital that your workplace is clean, and that surfaces and objects are being wiped down with disinfectant cleaning products on a regular basis.

Another simple measure that has been adopted by companies like Virgin Pulse is to create conversation channels for coworkers where they can share their experiences, as well as challenges they have faced during the pandemic, and how to overcome them.

Expedia employees, in another example, are blogging about the challenges of working from home - and the company is also using online tools, such as Slack, to help teams maintain camaraderie and personal connections.



c) For employees who will continue to work remotely

As much as working remotely sounds like more freedom, quite the opposite has been true for most.

The lines between working hours and time off have been blurred, and for those who have kids, the responsibilities may have even doubled. With working from home, looking after kids, homeschooling and household chores, most employees barely have had any time to relax and disconnect. With that in mind, it is worthwhile to think about how you can help them organize their day by letting them work in more flexible ways.

Governments in the UK and New Zealand are encouraging companies to allow flexible working hours to help employees to meet their work and other requirements. Walmart, for example, has deployed an 'emergency leave' program, providing time-off for employees depending on various Coronavirus threat levels. LinkedIn is giving free access to online courses to help people stay productive while working from home; Microsoft announced that they will keep paying the hourly workers who support their campus - and many other global companies are doing their best to take care of their employees.

Providing a proper workstation is also important. Look at the possibility of offering discounts on equipment, or a remote work subsidy for your employees to buy a comfortable chair, larger monitors, or whatever it is that they would usually have access to at the office.

3. How to endorse efficient and safe group activities

Exercise is a great stress-relief tool, but there are other tools that also foster a sense of togetherness, enhance work relationships, and can be implemented while your employees are working from home.

Inhale, exhale. Organize group classes that promote practices like yoga, stretching, guided meditation, or mindfulness sessions.

Taking five minutes to yourself before the start of the day can be comforting and help you get on track.





Go holistic. Have you ever heard of guided imagery?

This mind-body phenomenon focuses on how the brain interprets mental images similar to the way it interprets real-life events. It is the ideal activity to trigger physiological responses to thoughts as if they were actually happening in reality. It is a way to create a calm, serene environment in your mind that will allow your body, in turn, to relax.

Research shows that ten minutes of guided imagery can strengthen the immune system, and foster weight loss, as well as fight depression and fatigue, besides reducing anxiety, and lowering glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure levels.



Eat right. Advise your employees to take stock of groceries and find tips in one of our nutrition lessons that are available either via our app, or on our website. Eating right does not need to be difficult, and it is a simple way to boost your immune system.

Stimulate your other senses. Aromatherapy has the ability to increase energy, relieve stress, speed up healing, and improve the memory.

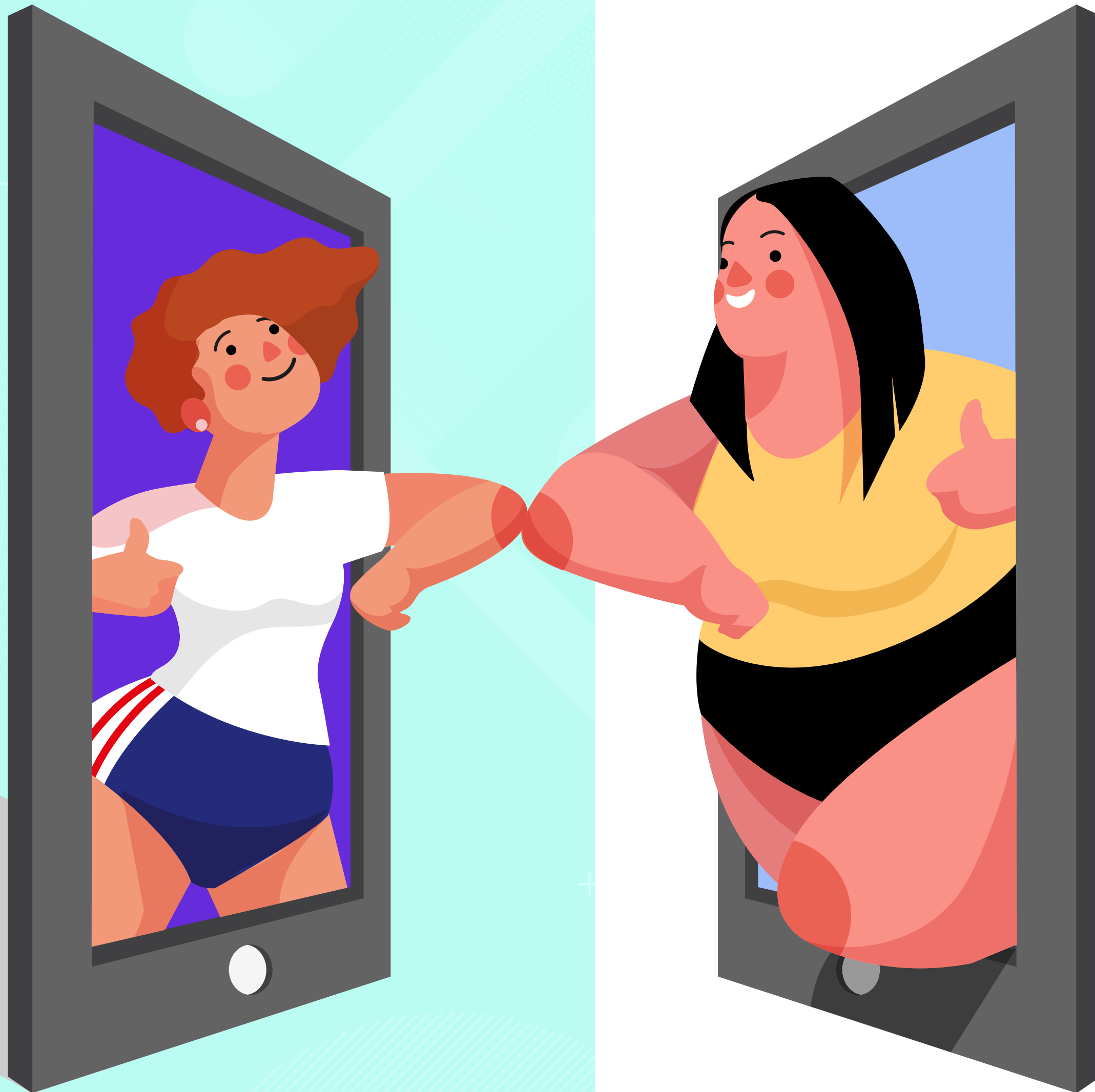
During difficult and stressful periods of time, this approach may be interesting for those of your employees who seek a healthy method to find a balance for their body and mind. Finding a professional that can share with your employees the power of natural oils when seeking a health balance and healing of body and mind is a simple but effective solution when dealing with difficult periods of time.

4. Additional tips

Here are some important things to remember:

- > **Remind your workers why your company exists**, what it brings to the world – and, most importantly, what role they play in it. According to Gallup, only 23% of employees in the US strongly agree that they can apply their organization's values to their daily work. Successful companies have a strong sense of identity and share a common purpose with its employees.
- > As a leader, **send messages of hope, trust, patience and stability** in your daily communications, and share these widely with your employees.





- > **Respect your employees' need for connection.** Be mindful that working remotely can cut out vital interactions that act as a source of energy for many people. Host calls, ask thoughtful questions during conversations, turn on your camera, and call people individually.
- > **Don't be afraid to share your personal stories and anecdotes** - and encourage your employees to do the same. Openly talk about your learnings and allow yourself to learn from others. Sharing experiences is a great way to bond with your employees - and it's free!
- > **Guide your employees to adopt a realistic goal for each day.** With a seemingly endless number of tasks we all intend to accomplish every day, it is easy to get lost in lists. Everyone is affected by the pandemic somehow, so being flexible with resources and deadlines helps the whole team achieve goals together.



> **Focus on personal development.** With some more time at hand due to not having to commute in to work, or some downtime at work, people can use the additional time to work on their existing skills or try something new. This will keep employees engaged and could also be a way to bring people together. Look out for different courses and encourage new skills to be shared. From cooking lessons, to how to create captivating presentations seminars, the sky is the limit.

> **Try implementing an end-of-day group virtual workout to sweat out the stress and increase the endorphin levels of your staff.** Staying connected brings a sense of positivity to the workplace, and it can help people understand when it is time to call it a day.

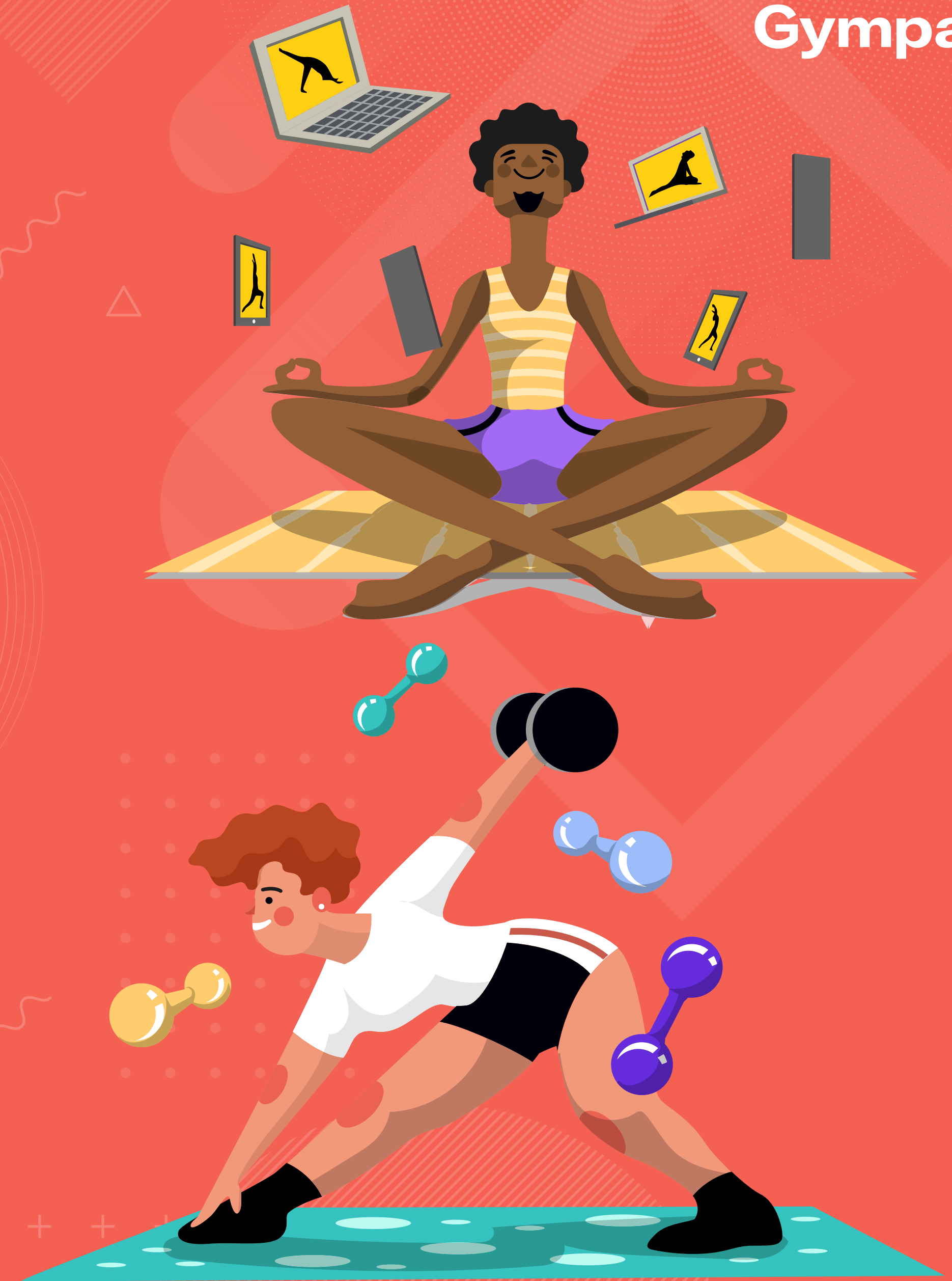
5. Conclusion

There is no specific method for creating a productive and supportive new way of working, but while facing different leadership challenges, keep in mind that patience and resilience are top skills.

Acknowledge that it might take some time until people start getting used to the new normal, and that social, business and economic impacts will have long lasting effects.

Everyone is going through changes at the moment, and it is more important than ever to make sure your employees feel heard.

To find out more about how Gympass can help support the health and wellness of your employees, contact us at gympass.com/uk/corporate



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