Microsoft 365

The People-Powered Workplace:

Reimagine the Employee Experience

Who this is for

This e-book is for decision-makers seeking to empower employees and teams to be their best. It discusses the need for a more modern employee experience, and how Microsoft and our partners are bringing this vision to life through Microsoft Viva. This new, integrated employee experience within Microsoft Teams helps people manage communications, knowledge, learning, resources, and insights as part of their natural workflow, and in the apps and services they use every day.

Estimated reading time:
7 minutes

Contents

The way we work has changed— challenging our definitions of success

2020 was a year of challenge and change. How we work will be permanently transformed by the pandemic. Many organizations have shifted to remote and hybrid work, demanding unprecedented agility and flexibility from people in every industry.

Leaders are grappling with how to make this new world of work more sustainable for their people, their organization, and themselves. They are realizing that what is needed to survive and thrive is a new

culture of resilience that enables people and organizations to continuously adapt to what's next.

This requires transforming traditional models of work and culture. Hybrid work is becoming the norm in many industries. Location matters less. Work is becoming more digital—and everything moves faster. Technology empowers us to do more, be more, and pushes us harder as the pace of business accelerates.

These changes are driving home the lesson that human productivity is not solely measured by efficiency. We need to empower human ingenuity by reimagining the employee experience. Wellbeing, team cohesion, and trust are linchpins of success and catalysts for creativity, innovation, and resilience. We must nurture them accordingly.

Business is better when people can be their best. People bring an organization's strategy to life—they plan, execute, communicate, and innovate. To help their business succeed, organizations can create a more meaningful employee experience that enables employees to do their best work—and bring their best selves to work.

This requires leaders to put people at the center of everything they do. It starts with the needs of individuals and teams, empowering them to take ownership of their fulfilment, growth, and success. It elevates the impact of managers through learning, support, and privacy-protected insights to create the best experiences for their teams. It builds simple, repeatable habits and routines at all levels of the organization that lead to engagement and success at work—seeking and receiving feedback, having conversations, checking in regularly on progress, learning, and growing.

The challenge is to bring these capabilities together naturally, in the flow of everyday work, joined together in a way that empowers people and teams to be their best.

A fresh perspective is needed

There are six key elements to a great employee experience[1].

Wellbeing:
You feel safe and uniquely valued at work and are treated equitably and with dignity.

Connection:
You belong as a trusted, integral member of a diverse community. You have high-quality relationships with your colleagues, characterized by mutual respect.

Focus:
You know what success looks like and what to prioritize. You know when you're on track and regularly receive feedback that helps you improve.

Empowerment:
You can easily find information, people, tools, and resources you need. You're empowered to make decisions about how to best direct your talent and effort.

Growth:
You get what you need to maximize your strengths, learn new skills, broaden your experience, and progress toward your goals.

Purpose:
You're part of something bigger than yourself and you know it. Your work serves others and has a meaningful impact.

[1] Adapted from Glint's People Success Pillars

However, creating a great employee experience is more challenging than ever. People feel stressed, disconnected, or disengaged. There has never been a bigger need for technology, data, and insights that are designed to improve the employee experience.

- **Employees** want to feel more connected, more aligned to their company's purpose and mission. They want to grow, make an impact, and make a difference.

- **Leaders** need a modern way to engage and develop their employees.

- **IT** needs to be able to quickly enable this modern employee experience without having to replace their existing systems.

What is needed is a new approach and a new category of technology solutions called employee experience platforms or EXP[2].

An EXP is a digital platform that puts people at the center by bringing together systems of work with systems of support into an integrated employee experience. It provides people with the resources and support they need to succeed and thrive, no matter their location.

It helps employees identify ways to balance wellbeing and productivity, and to respond to changing needs over time. It helps managers develop their teams and respond to employee needs, while fostering decisions that improve team performance, work/life harmony, and wellbeing. And it helps business leaders drive better outcomes with tools to help them understand and guide how work happens.

Communications
Announcements, News, Events

Growth & Development
Learning & Coaching
Recruiting, On-boarding & Career
Talent & Performance Development

Company Resources
Employee Portals and Apps
Workplace Services (pay, benefits, IT, legal, compliance)

Wellbeing
Physical, Mental,
Emotional, Financial

Employee

Insights
Analytics, Nudges, Surveys
Feedback, Sentiment

Communities
Diversity & Inclusion
Interest groups
Team cohesion

Knowledge
People & Experts
Documents & Content
Projects

[2] "Employee Experience Platform: A New Category Arrives," 2019.

Meet Microsoft Viva

To meet these needs, we created Microsoft Viva, an EXP that empowers people and teams to be their best, no matter where they're working. It helps elevate each employee's experience—how they engage, find knowledge, learn, and work. By improving productivity while also supporting people's wellbeing, Viva helps the whole organization thrive.

What makes Microsoft Viva unique?

- It is an **organizing layer for employee experiences,** powered by the full breadth and depth of Microsoft 365 and is experienced primarily through Microsoft Teams.

- It puts **people at the center**, uniting them to share knowledge, skills, and connections in the natural flow of the workday. It's designed to be intuitive and easy to use to drive adoption and immediate value.

- It delivers **personalized and actionable insights** when and where they're needed throughout the workday.

- It offers **privacy and security** you can trust. For example, your personal insights are visible only to you, while insights for managers and leaders use aggregated and de-identified data, with privacy protected every step of the way.

- It provides an **open and extensible platform**, and a strong and growing ecosystem of partners, so it works seamlessly with your existing systems and tools, like your systems for HR, CRM, and Learning Management (LMS).

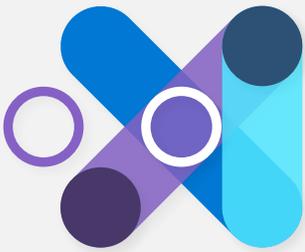**An EXP for the new world of work, Microsoft Viva includes the following initial set of modules:**

Viva Connections:

Keep everyone informed, connected, and inspired to bring their best to work every day.

Viva Insights:

Give leaders, managers, and employees data-driven, privacy-protected insights that help everyone work smarter and thrive.

Viva Topics:

Free up time by making it easy for people to find information and put knowledge to work.

Viva Learning:

Empower people to gain targeted skills in the apps they already use, so everyone can learn and grow.

They work together as a comprehensive solution to support key requirements of a modern EXP and can also be customized for specific needs with additional integrations.

Let's take a deeper look.

Microsoft Viva Connections:

Amplify culture and communications

60%

Nearly 60% of people say they feel less connected to their team after shifting to remote work.

Source: Microsoft Work Trend Index, 2020.

Microsoft Viva Connections is the launch pad for Microsoft Viva and the gateway to a modern employee experience. It helps your entire organization stay engaged and informed, giving everyone access to the tools they need. It's personalized and appears in the apps employees already use every day, like Microsoft Teams. Viva Connections provides them with a curated experience that includes relevant news, conversations, and other resources all in one place.

Keep everyone engaged and informed

Easily discover relevant news, conversations, and tasks to stay engaged and informed in the flow of work.

Curate a personalized and branded employee destination

Connect everyone, from frontline workers to information workers, to unite them around the organization's vision, mission, and strategic priorities.

Build on your existing infrastructure

Deploy Microsoft Viva Connections with minimal effort building on existing capabilities in Microsoft 365, such as SharePoint and Yammer.

Microsoft Viva Insights:
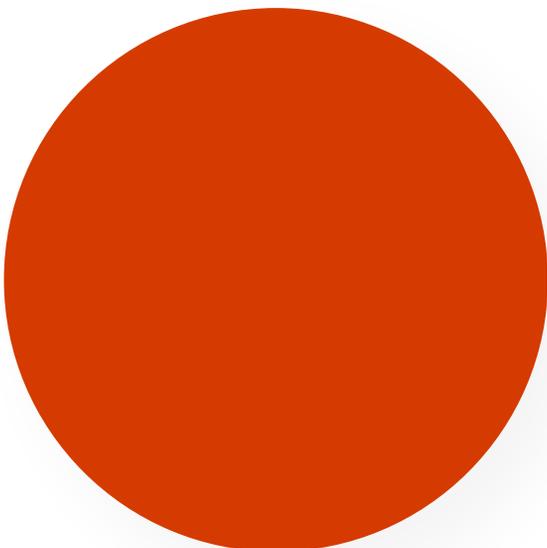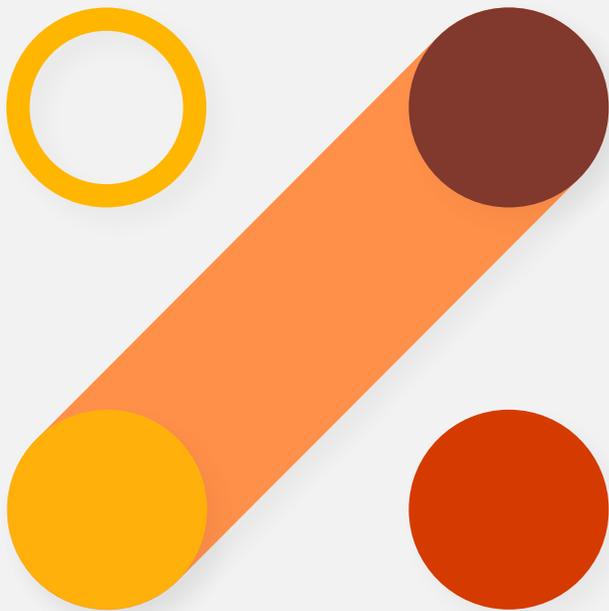
Balance productivity and wellbeing

70%

Nearly 70% of employees reported higher stress levels and over 40% are experiencing decreased mental health.

Source: Qualtrics study on mental health, 2020.

As the pace of work accelerates, preventing burnout and enhancing wellbeing are critical to sustainable success. Microsoft Viva Insights helps people and business thrive with data-driven insights and recommendations to improve productivity and wellbeing.

Deliver personalized and actionable insights

Empower individuals, teams, and organizations to achieve balance, build better work habits, and improve business outcomes with personalized, privacy-protected insights and recommendations.

Quantify the impact of work on people and business

Gain data-driven visibility into how work patterns affect wellbeing, productivity, and business performance.

Address complex business challenges

Use advanced tools and integrations with other data sources to perform deeper analysis, address complex challenges, and respond quickly to change.

Microsoft Viva Topics:

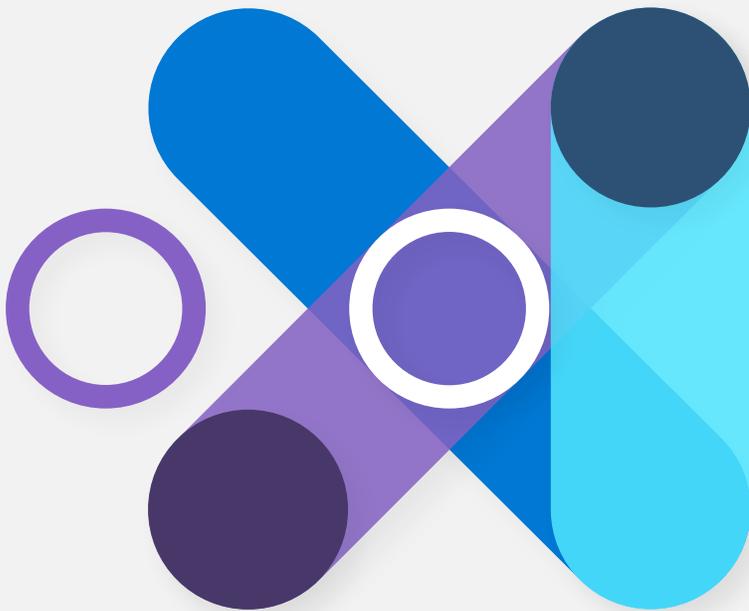## Harness knowledge and expertise

60 min

People spend about an hour a day—or up to seven weeks per year—searching for or recreating information.

Source: Knowledge Sharing in a Changing World - Spiceworks/Ziff Davis, commissioned by Microsoft, 2021.

Whether employees can easily utilize organizational knowledge effectively is a key factor in any company's success. Microsoft Viva Topics is an AI-powered solution that automatically organizes content and expertise across your systems and teams into related topics such as projects, products, processes, and customers. Experts can rapidly curate and share knowledge through simple, highly customizable web pages. Viva Topics builds on and integrates with Microsoft Search.

Turn content into usable knowledge

Use AI to reason over your organization's data and automatically identify, process, and organize content.

Organize knowledge into topic pages

Share and refine knowledge through curated topic pages that are automatically generated and updated by AI.

Make knowledge easy to discover and use

Deliver timely, relevant topic cards in the apps people use every day.

Microsoft Viva Learning:

Accelerate skilling and growth

79%

of CEOs worldwide are concerned that a lack of essential skills in their workforce is a barrier to future growth.

Source: PwC CEO Survey: Talent Trends, 2019.

We envision a world where learning powers people and business success as a natural part of the company culture and each person's daily habit. Microsoft Viva Learning delivers learning through Microsoft Teams, integrating world-class content from LinkedIn Learning, Microsoft Learn, and third-party providers with your own content library. From traditional learning courses to microlearning content, you can access a wide variety of modalities to match your culture and needs.

1%

Meanwhile, employees only have 1% of their workweek to focus on learning new skills.

Source: Leading in Learning, Bersin by Deloitte.

Make learning a natural part of your day

Easily discover, share, and engage with learning integrated into Microsoft Teams.

Make all your learning content available in one place

From microlearning to formal learning, simplify the learning experience by enabling the delivery of world-class content.

Drive results that matter

Empower leaders and employees to curate, assign, and track learning aligned with business outcomes and individual goals.

Empower people and teams to be their best

We are entering an era of rapid workplace transformation with the ability to maximize human potential as never before. Multigenerational workplaces, new patterns of teamwork and collaboration, and hybrid work models are opening new possibilities.

There is increasing awareness that wellbeing, connection, engagement, and growth are critical to employee engagement and organizational success. Yet in a digital world, we need the right tools to support these needs—inside the natural flow of work.

Microsoft Viva brings together data-driven insights in a personalized experience, delivered virtually anywhere you work, in the tools you know and use every day. Powered by Microsoft 365, integrated with your technology ecosystem, and built on a foundation of privacy and security, Viva helps your organization foster a culture of human connection, growth and wellbeing, and success.

Join us on a journey toward a modern digital workplace, where people are at the center.

Visit the Microsoft Viva website >

Microsoft 365