HYBRID WORK 101

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Identify potential tensions of virtual/hybrid teamwork

2. Recognize critical skills for virtual working

3. Establish common practices for building a thriving team

TENSIONS OF HYBRID WORK

+   **-**

Connectivity ⟷ Isolation
Attention ⟷ Exhaustion
Autonomy ⟷ Coordination

(e.g., Nurmi & Hinds, 2016, Nurmi & Hinds, 2020; Sivunen, Nurmi & Koroma, 2016; Purvanova & Kenda, 2018)

How we manage tensions will define our work results

Most companies **don't have** proper leadership and HR practices to fully support **hybrid work**

N/A

Global experiences:

69% feel more or as productive when working at home vs. at office

86% of workers are more satisfied working remotely.

80% want to continue virtual working a couple of days/week in new world

(McKinsey Report – Future of Work, 2020)
(New York Times' & Morning Consulting study, 2020)

However:

Sick leaves have increased in the fall 2020 due to mental health problems, e.g., stress and fatigue (Heltti)

Disengagement and social detachment increased during the fall 2020 (FutuRemote)

"Zoom fatigue" has emerged as a new employee well-being issue in 2020. (Nurmi & Pakarinen, 2020)

How do you feel about virtual work at the moment?

More than 50% of virtual teams fail

(Ferrazzi, 2014)

WHY DISTANCE MATTERS

Physical distance triggers a sense of **"social distance"** – i.e., low sense of "togetherness" and shared identity (Mortensen 2015)

⬇

Social distance between members creates **coordination problems** and **uncertainty** of how and by whom tasks are handled (O'Leary & Mortensen, 2010).

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Lack of trust hurts team relationships and performance

HYBRID WORKING IS A SKILL

- **Technological & communication skills**
  Strategic use of different communication tools

- **Relationship management**
  Social connectivity, building and leading with trust

- **Coordination**
  Managing task flow, visibility, and engagement

- **Self-management**
  Work routines, priorities, boundaries, well-being

1

CONNECTIVITY TENSION

Connectivity Isolation

CONNECTIVITY

Enriched work challenges

Learning opportunities

High job satisfaction

(Nurmi & Hinds, 2016, JIBS)

ISOLATION

Low visibility to others

Low sense of belonging

Increased loneliness

(Hill, Axtell, Nurmi & Raghuram, under review, JAP)

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Prevent "out of sight, out of mind" isolation problem by ensuring:

- **Inclusiveness:** Keep every member in the loop

- **Getting close from afar:** Get to know each other at the personal level

- **Psychological safety:** Demonstrate interest and empathy to get people open up and talk about any challenges they may have

- **Responsiveness:** Don't keep people waiting. Uncertainty creates stress and break trust.
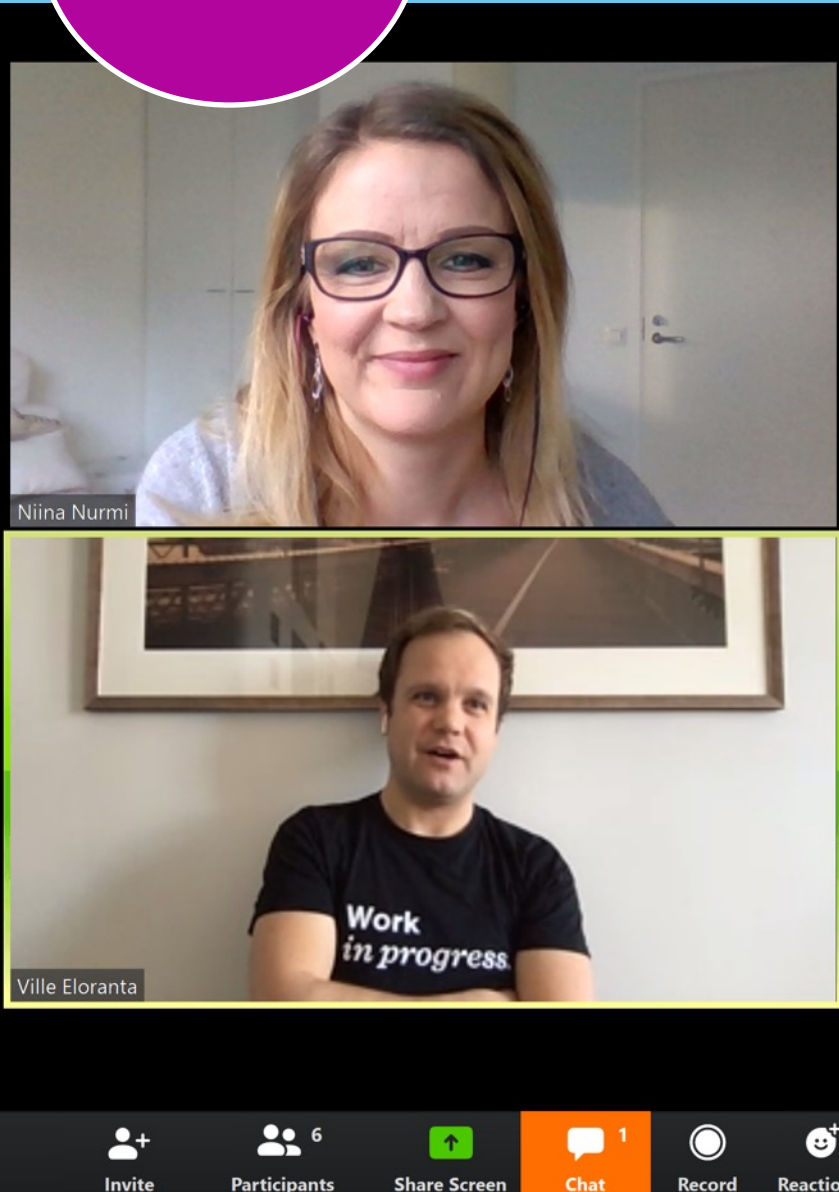
(Nurmi & Hinds, 2020)

Engagement or Enslavement?

Technology enables us to <mark>work anywhere</mark>, any time

Increasing expectations to <mark>be "always on"</mark> and available to work

(Mazmanian et al., 2014; Nurmi & Hinds, 2020)

ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION NORMS

Accessibility and availability

- How and how often do you communicate as a team, one-on-one?

Response times

- How fast should you reply to messages?

Strategic use of communication media

- **Instant mode of communication** (meetings): getting to know each other, creating shared understanding, discussing difficult issues, solving conflicts

- **Delayed mode of communication** (messages): sharing information, ideating, documenting

2

ATTENTION TENSION

Engagement
Virtual co-presence

Exhaustion
Zoom fatigue

Video helps engage participants and hinders multitasking
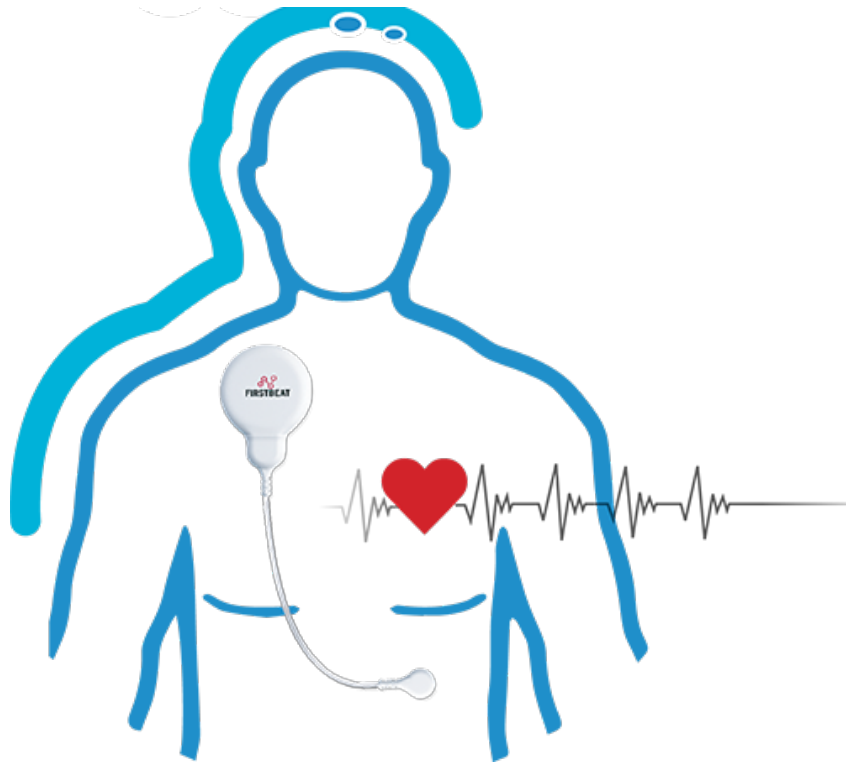(Nurmi, 2019)

Risks of mental fatigue

Engaging in multiple virtual meetings in a day increases so called "zoom fatigue"

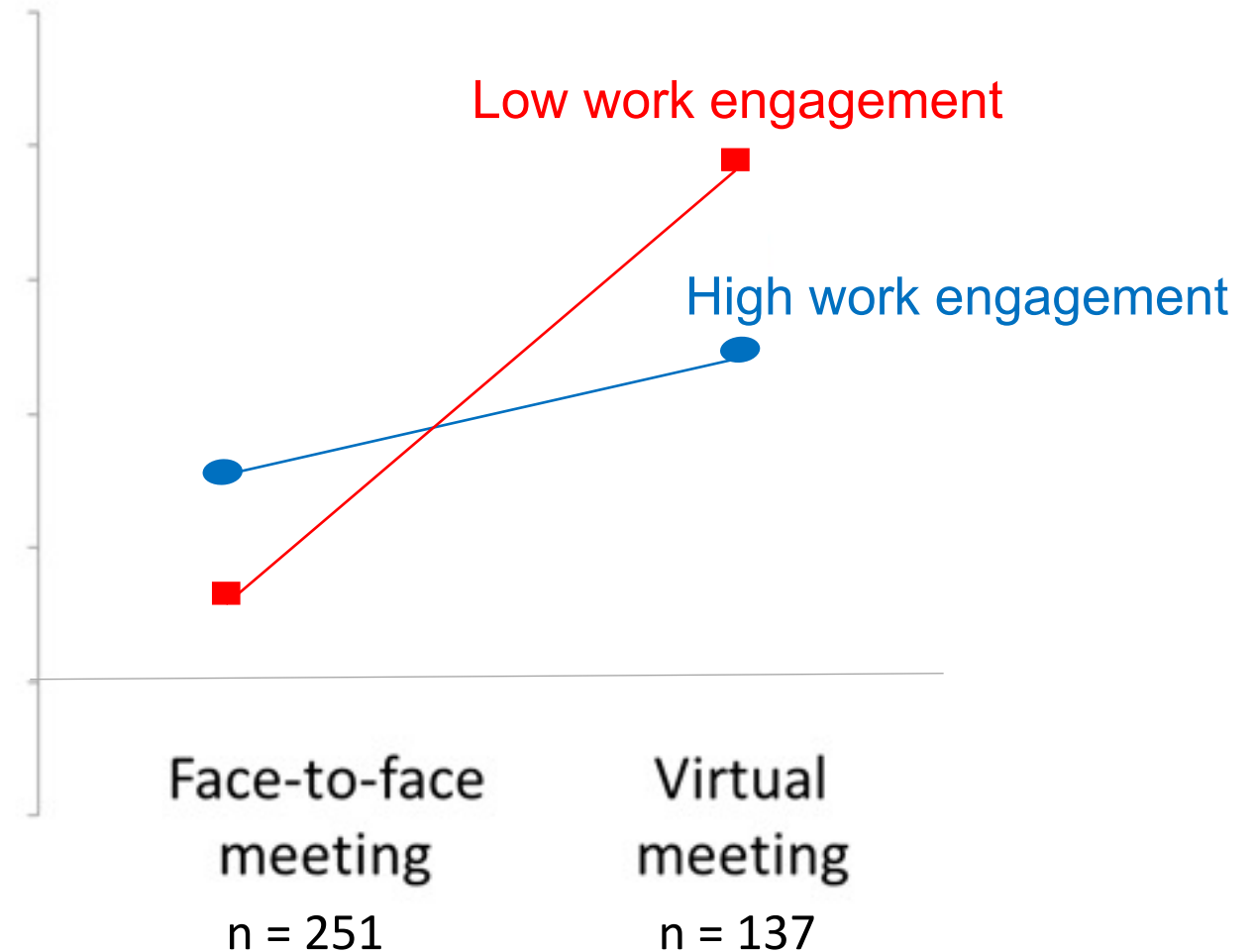(Nurmi & Pakarinen, under review in JAP)

COGNITIVE COSTS OF "ZOOM" FATIGUE

Data from:
44 persons
88 workdays
393 meetings

(Nurmi & Pakarinen, under review in JAP)

cognitive performance decreases

-21%

due to virtual meeting fatigue

(Nurmi & Pakarinen, under review in JAP)

Why do virtual meetings tax our brain?

- **We must work harder to process** non-verbal cues and sustain attention to words

- **Technology disrupts synchrony**, interplay of talk, gestures, and turn-taking

- **Multi-person screen forces partial attention** to many participants at once.

CARE IN CONNECTING

HOW TO DESIGN VIRTUAL MEETINGS

- Invite only those participants who need this meeting

- Keep it short: 30 – 60 min

- Use the time for collaboration

- Avoid long monologues

- Ask questions and prompt discussions

(Nurmi & Pakarinen, under review in JAP)

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AUTONOMY TENSION

Flexibility

Empowerment

Coordination

Lack of control

ORGANIC vs. MECHANISTIC

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

1) Keep the goals clear
- Include all team members in goal setting to ensure **mutual understanding**
- Keep the team **goal statements visible** (e.g., in team miro-board)
- **Follow-up regularly** (e.g., daily scrums, weekly meetings, follow-up system)

2) Manage communications
- Understand peoples' specific **communication needs and styles**
- Select the appropriate communication medium for each message strategically.
  - When is *instant mode* **of communication** (online meeting) needed?
  - When to use *delayed mode* **of communication** (email, slack, etc.)

3) Keep team members motivated

Searching for the sense of purpose

What is the meaning of my work?

Why am I doing this project?

What is my purpose in this team?

When the purpose is unclear:

- Decreased sense of community

- Progressively less passion for the project or teamwork

- Decreased connection with clients and stakeholders

- A "what's in it for me?" culture

(Bundgaard & Roy 2015)

INCLUSION

Understand everyone's unique situation and experiences.

Avoid assumptions, stereotypes, and grand generalizations.

Teams managing hybrid work well **take different members' needs into consideration**

Gibson, 2020. From "social distancing" to "care in connecting." Academy of Management Discovery

People want to be treated equally, but uniquely

(Bies 2013)

AGENDA OF THIS SESSION

1

Thriving Virtual Teams
(20 min)
- Potential tensions and
- Critical skills & success
  factors of virtual teamwork

2

**Team Launch
(40 min)**
- Teamwork in
  breakout rooms

3

Sharing good practices
- Learning from others
- Wrap-up

TEAM (RE)LAUNCH

Working in team-based breakout rooms (40 min)

Use the **Team Launch Canvas** to define your goals and expectations for the teamwork during this course.

Prepare to present your thoughts to others. Agree on who will be the presenter if requested.

AGENDA OF THIS SESSION

1

2

3

Thriving Virtual Teams (30 min)
- Tensions and success factors of virtual teamwork

Team Launch (40 min + break)
- Working in team-based breakout rooms

Sharing good practices
- Learning from others
- Wrap-up

SHARING AND LEARNING

Please share e.g., some of your values, attitudes, strengths, worries, norms and practices that you discussed

This session was designed to help you:

1. Identify **potential tensions** of hybrid teamwork

2. Recognize **critical skills and success factors** to help your virtual/hybrid team thrive

3. Establish **shared understanding** and **team agreement** for launching a successful collaboration