

SA legal tech giant adopts hybrid working model

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LexisNexis workplace officially goes hybrid in March 2022

Legal technology company [LexisNexis South Africa \(LNSA\)](#) has adopted a hybrid working model designed to meet the needs of its workforce of the future, following the proven success of this style of working during the pandemic.



Videsha Proothveerajh

“Our purpose is to provide an ideal working environment to support both the business and our employees. We believe the hybrid model we’re implementing officially from 1 March 2022 aligns perfectly with our company culture based on trust, empowerment and innovation. These values have been key to our growth, which was sustained throughout the turbulent Covid-19 period when remote and hybrid working became the new normal,” explains LNSA CEO and chairperson of the board, Videsha Proothveerajh.

“The flexible work arrangement will include a two- to three-day in-office work week that combines the benefits of remote work with the best use of office time. By providing more freedom over where and how our employees work some of the time and reducing the time they spend commuting, we believe this arrangement will promote better work-life balance for our people,” she added.

Proothveerajh says that while remote working enables employees to work on specific tasks, the days in the office will be used for face-to-face meetings and teamwork, to ensure the company maintains the human touch and enjoy the benefits of collaboration for both itself and its customers.

“As a tech company we will also continue to use technology to find fresh ways of collaborating with the best minds in the world to innovate and develop world-class products to meet the evolving needs of the professions we serve,” she added.

LNSA’s official adoption of the hybrid model follows a “Future of Work” (FOW) survey completed by the organisation’s employees, who were in favour of this option.

The decision to adopt this model is also in line with local trends, as reflected in a Microsoft survey of 610 leaders and employees in large enterprises within South Africa, which examined people’s experiences since the beginning of the pandemic, as remote ways of working became common practice. Almost nine out of ten leaders (88%) at large enterprises in South Africa expected to adopt a more hybrid way of working permanently.

Navigating WFH challenges

While remote work has been shown to increase employee productivity, it can also lead to isolation and burnout as the line blurs between work and home. Mental health and issues of gender-based violence have also emerged as serious challenges, coupled with financial and personal losses due to the pandemic.

“Remote working can be difficult for many, logistically and mentally, while infrequent interaction with co-workers could also stifle creativity and reduce team cohesion,” acknowledges Proothveerajh.

“In this new hybrid model, companies need to work smarter if they wish to design a culture that prioritises safety, wellbeing, belonging and camaraderie regardless of physical location. We also need to ensure our new ways of working are as

inclusive as possible due to the vast differences in circumstances among employees.”

LexisNexis has risen to the challenge with a range of initiatives to foster constant communication and engagement. Employee wellbeing and mental health are prioritised through programmes such as LexisNexis Wellness Week, Mute Hour which prohibits meetings before 9am, and Friday Connect, when no strategic meetings take place and the day is instead set aside for team building and nurturing relationships. Discovery supports LexisNexis with extensive wellbeing programmes and workshops, including focusing on working parents and gender-based violence.

Extensive employee collaboration encourages the workforce to be engaged, work smart, be flexible, embrace digital, embody agile and succeed together.

“We’ve also strived to ensure that our leaders are comfortable with reduced hierarchy and greater leadership accessibility which takes us – albeit virtually – closer to the field and all levels of the organisation, gleaning valuable feedback to be incorporated into our plan to continuously improve,” says Proothveerajh.

She adds, “We’ve introduced bots to automate our daily repetitive tasks that span from our editorial operations, customer excellence and even finance. This is an example of how we bring the human and technology element closer to work in tandem and not in siloes.”

“Our employee engagement metrics have remained fairly high throughout. We saw a jump in employee engagement scores by over 20%, and by 30 points in our employee Net Promoter Score since October 2019,” says Proothveerajh.

“These are exciting times for LNSA as we embrace a new normal that gives us more autonomy, freedom and flexibility, enabling us to truly enjoy the benefits of technology, while retaining the human touch and staying focused on our business priorities,” Proothveerajh added.

Campaigns to upskill employees in terms of technology, business continuity, health and safety and virtual working support are in progress before the LexisNexis hybrid model goes live on 1 March 2022.

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