

Welcome to the IT Learning Centre

You are in the right place ...

We'll be starting soon

1

Digital Wellbeing: Healthy Habits for Hybrid Working

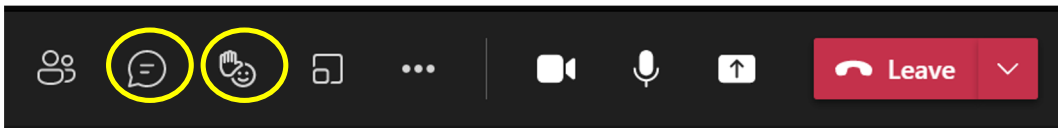


maren.deepwell@it.ox.ac.uk

2

Ready To Learn?

Today's session takes place in a video-call using *Teams*



You can turn on Live Captions using 

Don't plan to multi-task



3


Today's resources

You can find the slides for the course and templates of the activity resources from the IT Learning Portfolio at

<https://skills.it.ox.ac.uk/it-learning-portfolio>




4




Digital Wellbeing: Healthy Habits for Hybrid Working

Session 2: Wednesday, 28th February



5



Hello again!

I'm Dr Maren Deepwell, and I work as an ICF accredited coach and independent consultant with industry and education organisations.

Building on my experience of over ten years as a CEO I now work with leaders at all levels, including emerging, student leaders through the 1 Million Mentors programme in the UK, entrepreneurs and leaders in education internationally.

Some of my work is focused specifically on enhancing our understanding of hybrid working, and I also work in organisational change and troubleshooting.



6



Welcome to part 2

Hybrid working offers a lot of advantages, enabling us to work more flexibly than before.

When it comes to digital wellbeing however, hybrid working can pose challenges, too: for some, the increased use of digital technologies for communication and collaboration become oppressive, for others physical and mental wellbeing suffer due to long hours spent staring at the screen.

Over two sessions we will analyse and audit what works well and what you'd like to change about how you work and the impact this has on your digital, physical and mental wellbeing.

7

Digital Wellbeing: Healthy Habits for Hybrid Working

Course Objectives

1. Reflect on how your current habits are impacting on your digital wellbeing
2. Identify your hybrid working skills strengths and areas for development
3. Understand the long term impact of hybrid working on digital wellbeing
4. Develop a sense of how to foster digital wellbeing

8

What is Digital Wellbeing

Digital wellbeing is commonly defined as the impact of technologies and digital services on people's mental, physical and emotional health.

If you are familiar with the [Jisc digital capabilities framework](#), then you will have come across the term Digital identity and wellbeing (self-actualising).

The term is also used to describe tools and apps developed to help users manage their relationship with technology, such as Android's Digital Wellbeing app.

The term Digital Wellness is often used interchangeably with Digital Wellbeing.



Model showing four aspects of digital wellbeing for individuals (Jisc, 2019)

9

Quick reminder

Free staff digital skills health check

Personalised support to develop your digital skills

<https://skills.it.ox.ac.uk/jisc-discovery-tool>

Receive a personalised digital skills report

Complete a digital skills self-assessment and receive a personalised report.

- The self-assessment is part of the Jisc Discovery Tool
- It takes up to 30 minutes to answer the questions (including thinking time)
- Your answers are automatically saved, so if you run out of time you can pick up again where you left off
- The goal is to help you identify opportunities to improve your digital skills, not to compare you to others
- No-one will be able see your personal results unless you download and share them

TRY THE DISCOVERY TOOL >

10

This session is designed to be interactive.

Be ready to take notes and take part in discussions.

Using practical tools and activities the sessions will support you in reflecting on your current practice and identifying what actions to take next in your digital wellbeing journey.

11

Course Session 2

Time	Activity
10:30	Introduction, overview of the session
10:40	Quick chat: Where are you on your hybrid working journey?
10:50	Presentation followed by discussion: Understanding the long term impact of hybrid working on digital wellbeing
11:20	Office origami
11:30	Presentation: How to foster digital wellbeing
11:40	Activity: Make your own digital wellbeing roadmap
12:00	End of session, thanks and goodbye

12

I have worked from home for over five years...

I had a baby since I started hybrid working..

I built an office in my garden

In my team I don't see everyone regularly anymore

I do more housework when working from home

My desk is now a hot-desk or shared desk

I am new to hybrid working.

Quick chat: Where are you on your hybrid working journey?

13

Post your answers in the chat

How long have you been hybrid/home working?
Has your setup changed over time?
What would you do differently if you started afresh?
Is your current working pattern here to stay?

New to home and Hybrid working?

My top tip for new colleagues would be to...

I like my days at home

Collaboration is more difficult when colleagues are not around

14



Understanding the long term impact of hybrid working on digital wellbeing

15

Understanding the long term impact of hybrid working on digital wellbeing

- What happens to our senses when we work in a hybrid or fully remote setting for long periods?
- How does our embodied experience of work change as we spend more time in front of screens, alone in our studies or on kitchen chairs?
- How does our perception of work shift as our senses of sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing adjust to hybrid working?

16

How hybrid working impacts on sight

Hybrid working typically provides fewer distractions and more reliance on online interaction for communication and collaboration, making it less likely that regular screen breaks are taken.

Even when we step away from the screen, notifications and messages on mobile devices usually stay switched on, making it more likely that we end up with more screen time.

Given the amount of time spent in front of screens, scrolling, staring and not blinking, implementing screen time limits or wearing blue-light-blocking glasses to alleviate eye strain is becoming more common.

Mobile phones now offer a different light mode closer to bedtime and monitor screen time in order to alert us when levels increase, and smartwatches can remind you to move a little every hour.

Other tips include taking a break from the screen, going outside to adjust to daylight, look into the distance or look at something green/natural to help your eyes relax and recover.

17

Example: Zoom Fatigue

Hybrid working has led to more hybrid and online meetings.

Depending on the role you work in, you probably find meeting free hours have become more rare and back-to-back video calls more common. [Zoom fatigue](#) impact us beyond our sense of sight alone, [this article](#) in *Medial News Today* summarises how "headaches, migraines, eye irritation and pain, blurred and double vision, excessive tearing and blinking are the most common and immediately visible physical symptoms of Zoom fatigue".



Photo by [Headway](#) on [Unsplash](#).

18

Healthy habit: step away from the screen

- **What is your starting point?** If you are spending 8 hours a day in back-to-back video calls, then even one or two breaks a day might seem like a stretch. If you are already taking a break at lunch or making tea mid-morning, building in a few extra breaks might feel more achievable. Be honest with yourself about where you are starting from so that you can set yourself an achievable goal.
- **Easy does it.** No matter where you are starting from, find the least busy time of your working day or week. Whenever it is, focus on that time first and plan in an extra break. You can use your calendar, phone reminders, post-it notes or whatever else will help you remember to take a break. Then, when the time comes, step away from your screen and do something that is not screen related for 5 minutes. It doesn't matter what you do. As you get up and start to move, notice how you feel. Are you stiff? Is there any part of you (or all parts...) that feels tense? Get back to work after 5-10 minutes.
- **Make it a habit:** you might decide to set yourself a goal to take an extra break every day or a number of breaks a week to begin with. Observe any physical symptoms of taking regular breaks away from the screen or how your mood changes. If you have a busy day or a busy week and you end up forgetting to step away from the screen or you don't have time, just get back to it when you can. The overall aim is to get into the habit of having breaks, and even one additional break is better than none.

19

Hybrid working, digital noise & overwhelm

Our sense of hearing works hard when we work online more often: from wearing headphones all the time to listening to the radio or music in order to block out unwanted noise, quietude and silence are rare during a busy working day.

We rely on our sense of hearing to fill in the gaps when video connectivity is poor, and we often use it to multitask during meetings, listening whilst checking emails or working on documents.

Audio notifications can be a source of distraction or stress, so check in with how you are using notifications if that's a concern for you.

Most headphones and devices now monitor routinely for noise and environmental sound levels and alert you when you are exposed to excessive noise. Wearing noise cancelling headphones or earplugs can help as can moving to a quieter area to work.

20

Example: Listener fatigue

[Listener fatigue](#) (also known as listening fatigue or ear fatigue) is a phenomenon that occurs after prolonged exposure to an auditory stimulus.

Symptoms include tiredness, discomfort, pain, and loss of sensitivity. Listener fatigue is not a clinically recognized state, but is a term used in hybrid working to describe the wider impact of constant digital noise and overwhelm.



Photo by [Yogendra Singh](#) on [Unsplash](#)

21

Healthy habit: daily quiet time

- **Finding your quiet time:** There is usually a time of day or a point in the week when you crave a quiet moment the most. For many people a couple of back to back meetings or a busy day in contact with others prompts a desire for a quiet moment. Find a time and protect 10-15 minutes. Schedule a meeting or a break.
- **Finding quiet:** Depending on where you are, this might involve going outside, going into a different room, or even using earplugs. Finding quiet places can be a challenge if you live or work in a busy environment. Wherever you go, make sure you are safe and undisturbed.
- **Support in silence:** If you prefer, use a meditation app or sound recording at a low level to tune into quiet moments.
- **Notice the return of noise:** When you return from your quiet time into a noisy environment, notice the impact that has on you.
- **Make it a habit:** how about setting a reminder to schedule a moment of quietude each day? Or you might prefer to pair your daily quiet time with something you already do, such as walking the dog, doing the dishes or exercise. Adding a moment of silence and stillness to an existing habit makes it easier to stick to.

22

Healthy Habits

Share your healthy habit: one of the best ways to make a habit stick is to share and normalise it. It's a powerful way to promote digital wellbeing in any workplace, and if you happen to lead people or projects, your example can help others, too.

So far we have looked healthy habits that relate to our sense of sight and hearing.

All the habits have in common:

1. Time away from screens and digital devices
2. Focus on our senses and our physical self
3. Taking a break from engaging with the 'noise' of being online

23

Hybrid working, digital wellbeing and our embodied self

Sight and hearing do a lot of the work when it comes to hybrid working, so what about our sense of taste and smell? Let's explore some examples of how focusing on our senses can increase digital wellbeing:

Eating snacks, having a tea, coffee or some water and taking lunch breaks are the obvious moment to engage our sense of taste and smell, but we rarely make time to focus on what things taste or smell like when we are distracted by screens, a busy inbox or eating as we listen to a video call.

Focusing on our senses of taste and smell can be an effective strategy for lessening digital overwhelm and increasing digital wellbeing as you engage other parts of your body and mind.



24

Engaging with taste & smell

- Try out new flavours, drinks or foods as powerful way to focus on our sense of taste
- Close your eyes whilst you eat or drink and take a moment to focus on what you taste and smell
- Try a seasonal food or treat
- Share a meal or a tea break with a colleague and enjoy something in company
- Try out a scented candle or room spray



Photo by [Toa Hefitba](#) on [Unsplash](#)

25

Healthy habit: Lunch without digital distractions

- **Switch off your devices:** key to lunch without digital distractions is switching off, silencing or leaving your devices behind all together. If you have to keep your device(s) with you, put your phone in a pocket or your laptop in your bag or desk drawer.
- **Set a duration:** set a time for yourself to avoid distractions, starting for example with 10 or 20 minutes. Check back in with yourself to see if and how many times you use a device during that time. If you have 'focus mode' or similar on your device, use that to ensure you are not distracted by notifications or calls.
- **Find alternative ways to enjoy lunch:** Read a book, go for a walk, meditate or take a nap. Being without digital distractions can take practice.
- **Make it a habit:** as with all of these habits, long term success comes from being intentional about your behaviour and reminding yourself of the long-term benefits for your wellbeing.

26

Movement, touch and hybrid working

Similar to taste and smell, our sense of touch is rarely engaged when we focus on working on our screens. Our physical self is often ignored during prolonged periods of sitting at a screen.

Unless your role specifically requires you to use your sense of touch actively or to move around regularly, chances are that you rarely focus it whilst working.

Working from home offers advantages in terms of focus and fewer distractions, yet getting lost in a flow state of work can easily lead to us sitting in the same position for hours without a break.

Touch can help us move out of our heads and become more aware of physical and mental wellbeing.

Ways to engage your sense of touch:

- Interact with a pet
- Look after houseplants
- Touch a soft surface, a cushion or a blanket
- Touch something that feels warm or cold

27

Healthy habit: More movement

- **Movement at your desk:** you can incorporate desk yoga or stretching exercises into your routine. Try to flex your feet and relax them again. Lift each leg in turn or raise one arm above your head and lower it again. Breathe in deeply and close your eyes. Breathe out.
- **Standing at your desk:** a sit/stand desk or a walking desk can offer an easy way to get more movement into your day.
- **Movement away from your desk:** take a break from your screen and move around your office, home, campus or library. Take every opportunity to wove a little. Get up, out of your chair and stretch a little.
- **Moving outside:** find a way to incorporate more movement into your day that you enjoy: taking a walk, going for a run, walking the dogs, doing tai chi or another form of exercise.

28

Healthy Habits

Understanding the long term impact of hybrid working on digital wellbeing

All the habits have in common:

1. Time away from screens and digital devices
2. Focus on our senses and our physical self
3. Taking a break from engaging with the 'noise' of being online
4. Finding a way to move more
5. Balancing the demands of work with the needs of our physical self

29



Photo by Brands&People on Unsplash

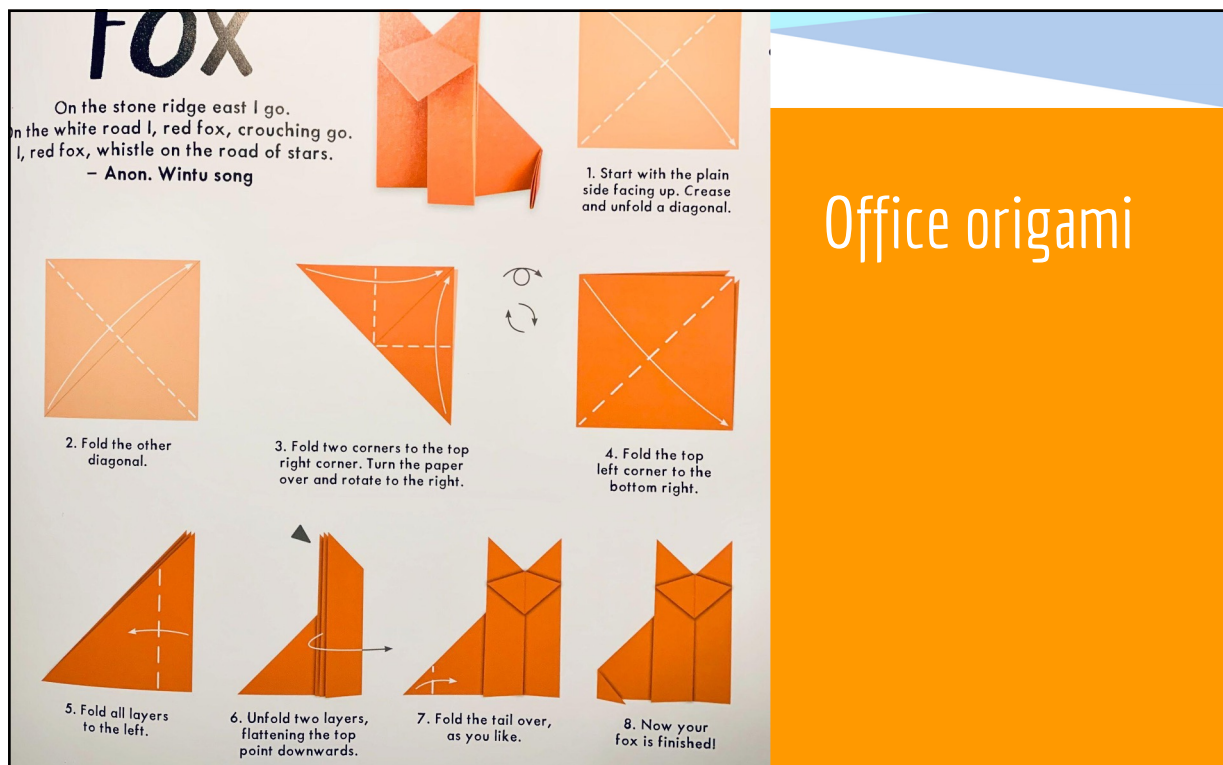
30

Office Origami

You'll need a piece of paper
to take part

- The purpose of this exercise is to engage in something different for a few minutes.
- This can be a really effective way to lessen digital overwhelm and inject a little fun into the day.
- It also helps us focus on something other than our screens.

31



32

How to foster digital wellbeing

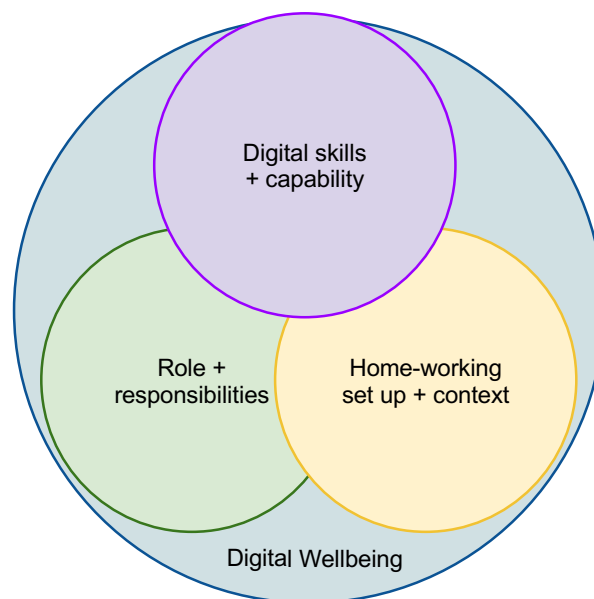
33

Digital Wellbeing is influenced by and in turn has an impact on all aspects of hybrid working:

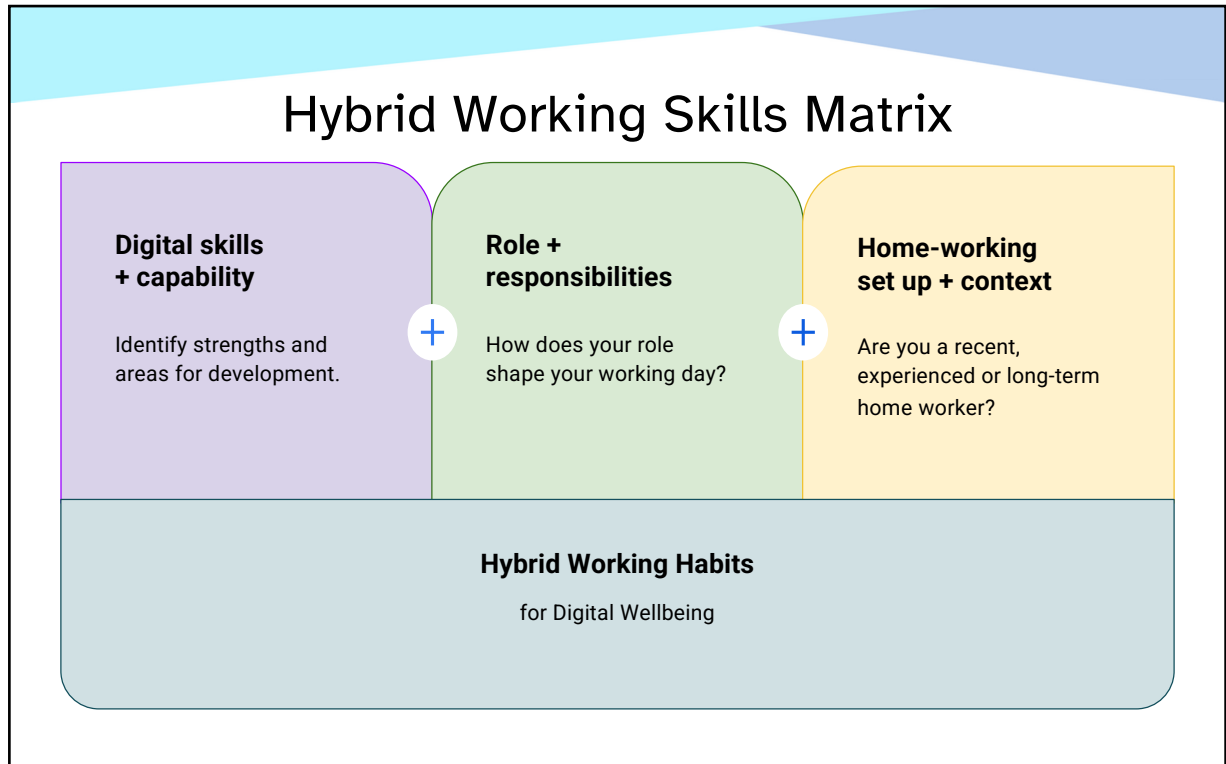
Your digital skills and capability;

Your role and responsibilities;

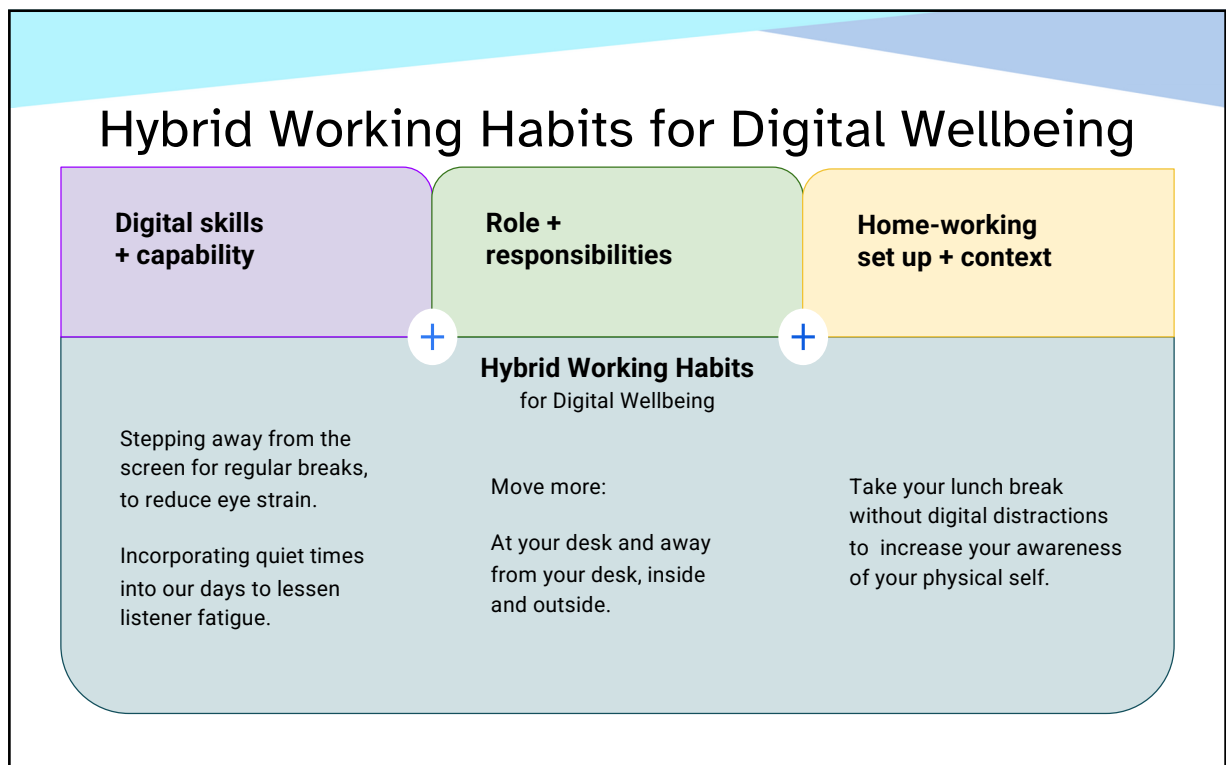
And your home-working set up and context.



34



35



36

Your Roadmap to Healthy Habits for Digital Wellbeing

37

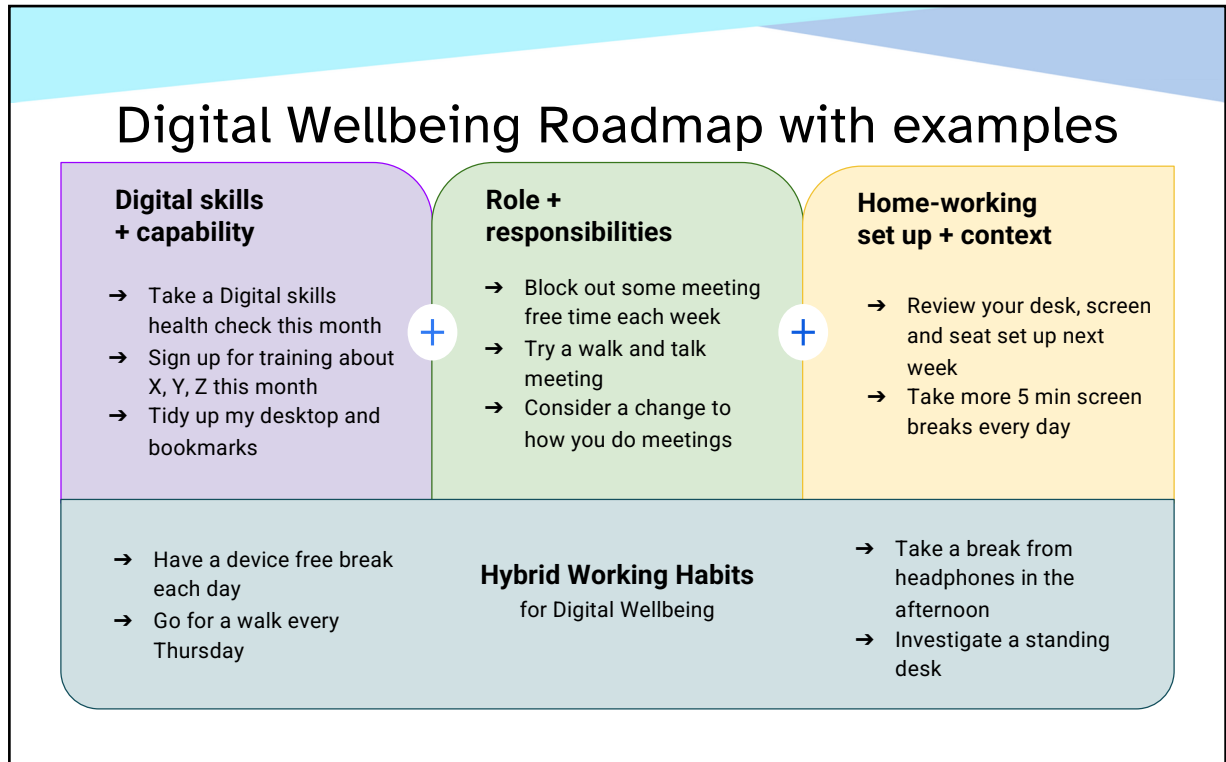
In this last exercise of the course we will bring together:

- What you learnt about your working habits from completing the hybrid working wheel;
- Insights about your hybrid working skills strengths and areas for development;
- Healthy hybrid habits you explored in the course you'd like to try out or learn more about.

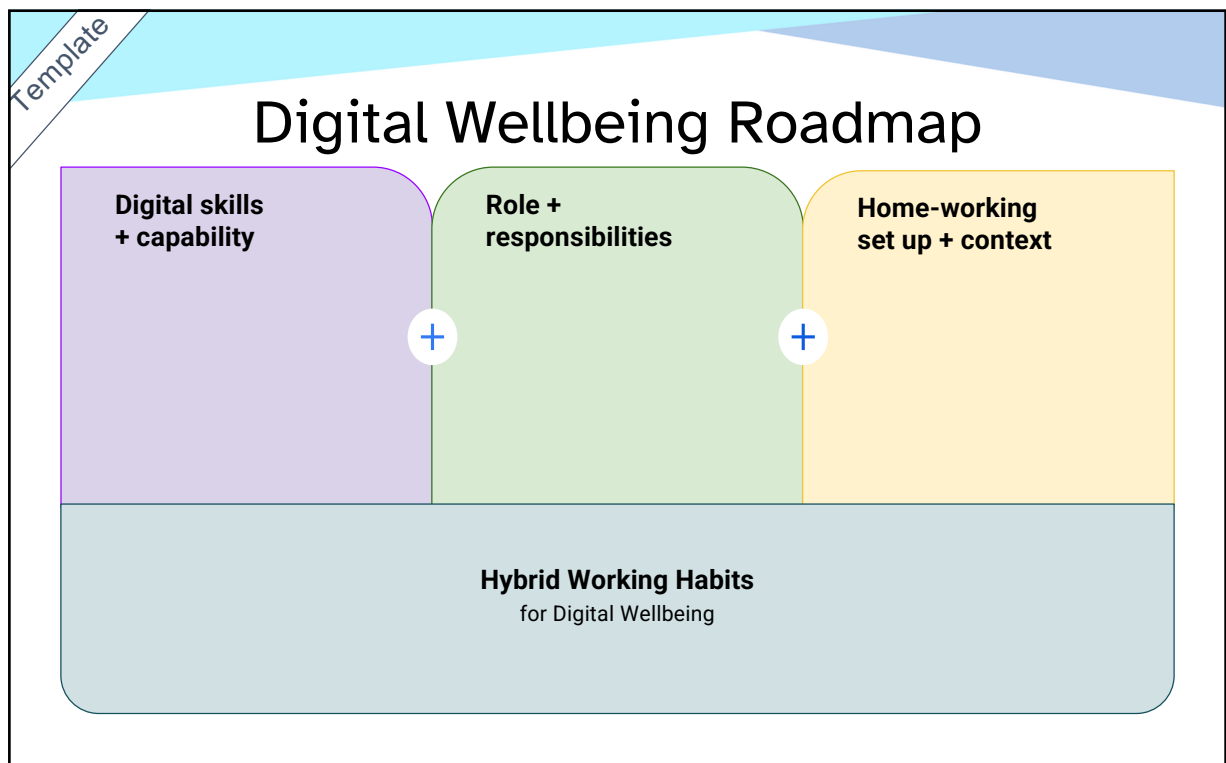
Take a moment now to find any notes you made during the course.

We'll be using the Roadmap template, which you can either download and complete on your screen or print and write on.

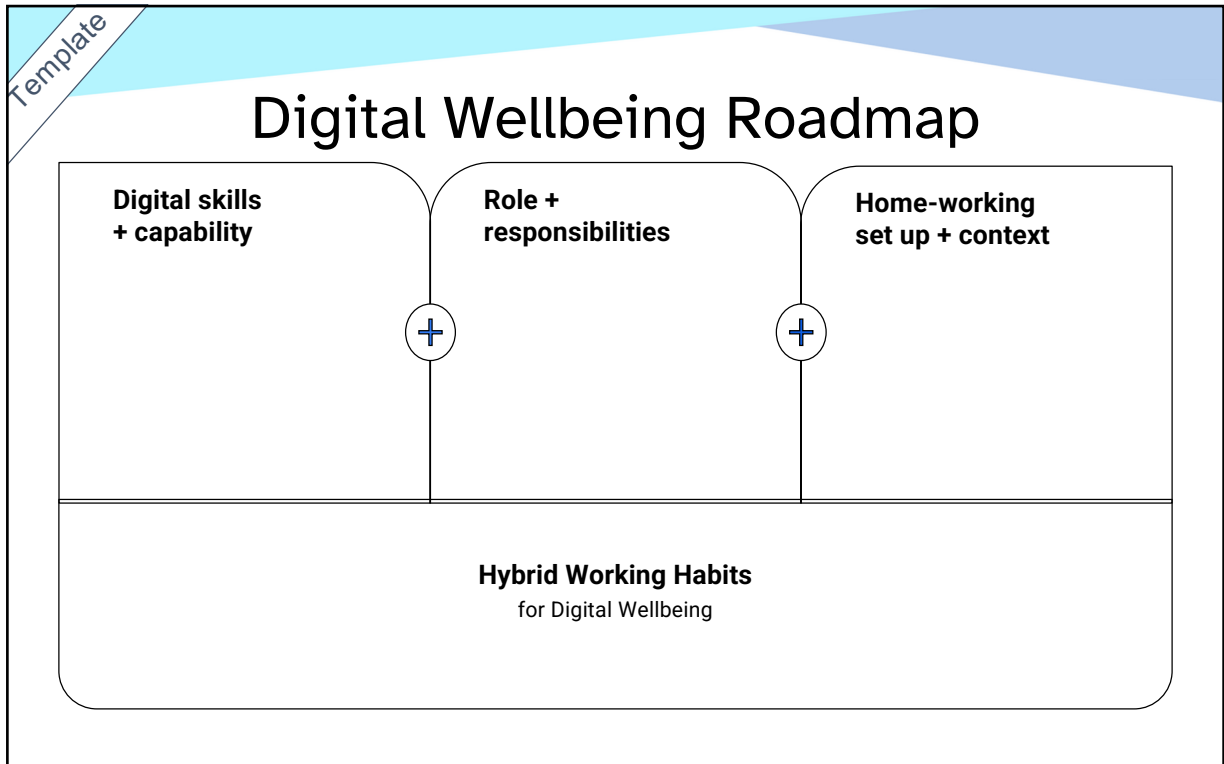
38



39



40



41

Summary - Course Session 2

	Activity
✓	Introduction, overview of the session
✓	Quick chat: The highs and lows of hybrid working
✓	Activity: How do your habits impact your digital wellbeing?
✓	Silent disco (off screen)
✓	Activity: Identify your hybrid working skills strengths and areas for development
✓	Discussion: Hybrid working skills and digital wellbeing
✓	End of session, thanks and goodbye

You can find the slides for the course and templates of the activity resources in OneDrive.

42

This presentation is made available by Maren Deepwell under a Creative Commons licence:

Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike
CC BY-NC-SA

maren.deepwell@it.ox.ac.uk

