

Decentralized technical communication: A digital utopia?

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The rapid shift to hybrid and remote work models has significantly impacted technical communication, raising questions about the effectiveness and sustainability of decentralized technical writing. This research examines whether remote technical communication can be considered a digital utopia or if it faces substantial challenges that diminish its effectiveness. Through qualitative interviews with technical communicators and project managers, the study explores the influence of remote work on productivity, team cohesion, and documentation quality.

The findings reveal a complex landscape where the benefits of remote technical communication—such as increased flexibility and enhanced digital collaboration—are balanced against significant obstacles, including communication difficulties and inequitable access to resources. This study provides a nuanced understanding of the practical realities of decentralized technical communication, contributing to the ongoing discourse on the future of the field in a digital era. It offers insights into the viability of decentralized work models and their implications for the profession's future.

Keywords : technical writing, remote work, work dynamics, company life, decentralized communication

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Introduction

The global shift towards hybrid work models, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, has fundamentally transformed the landscape of technical communication. As the pandemic went on, including some form of hybrid work became an integral part of office work, which has stuck even well after two years since the last restrictions were lifted. According to Forbes (2022), while “traditional in-office work is far from obsolete”, the statistics of remote work are rising year by year, especially for some positions that are more compatible with decentralized models. Unsurprisingly, technical writers rank at the 7th place for remote work job postings in 2022.

Thanks to collaborative tools, ever-evolving technology and generalized computer literacy has made this all possible even in unprecedented times of urgency. However, this seemingly perfectly interwoven web of servers, software and contact lists remains vulnerable and perfectible.

This paper explores whether technical communication and its decentralization can be considered a digital utopia. Are the benefits of remote work overplayed? Is remote technical communication the ideal every company must strive for? Or is it widely sought after by technical communicators and management teams alike? To conduct this research, we have conducted interviews with technical communicators and project managers working with technical communication. This qualitative approach seeks to provide a sample of the point of views from the field.

Methods

Our research article strives to get a pragmatic overview of decentralized technical communication. Thus, seeing as we knew enough willing participants to conduct a satisfactory number of interviews, we agreed to choose the qualitative approach. We also worried that surveys would not allow us to further explore elements mentioned by our interviewees.

A Participant selection

The respondents were either colleagues or part of our professional network. While some of us had experts, developers or other professionals in different fields of work, we preferred to keep our article focused on technical communicators. Our data was collected through structured interviews where we allowed ourselves to redirect our interviewees when the answers strayed too much from the topic, as well as when we found their answers worth expanding upon or clarifying. Some of the interviewees had access to the questions beforehand but this did not seem to make much of a difference, as most of the respondents were busy with other tasks prior to the interview.

Data collection

Most of the interviews were conducted online, through collaborative software such as Teams, recorded and transcribed. We then anonymized the data to protect our respondents' privacy.

Two interview structures were prepared. The first targeted technical communicators and the second targeted managers working in technical communication as they face different challenges. The interview questions are as follows:

Technical communicator interview

1. To what extent do you work in a hybrid mode or not? (Number of days, etc.)
2. Which mode of work do you prefer between work from home, in-person, or a combination of the two?
3. Do you feel more productive? Have you observed increased productivity?
4. What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other stakeholders remotely? Are you satisfied with these online collaboration tools? How do you use these tools? How are they useful?
5. How do you ensure team cohesion? (task sharing, communication, efficiency, etc.)
6. How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed a change in the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team?
7. In your opinion, what are the main obstacles related to decentralized technical communication?
8. In your opinion, what are the main advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Manager, head leader interview

1. To what extent do you work in a hybrid or not? (number of days, etc.).
2. Which work mode do you prefer? Remote work, at the office or a combination of the two?
3. Do you feel more productive? Are you more productive?
4. What initiatives have you taken to bring together, organize, evaluate and/or motivate your team in a hybrid/full-remote context?
5. What are the main obstacles to managing a decentralized technical communications team?
6. What do you see as the advantages of managing a decentralized technical communications team?
7. How do you organize the integration and support of new team members in hybrid/full-remote environments?

Results

This section presents the results of interviews with 17 participants from May; including 12 technical writers and five managers. All of them were asked a series of very well crafted questions aimed at revealing their experiences and say in decentralized techComm. We designed the interviews to provide insights into these key areas:

Work Scheduled and Preferences:

The results indicate a strong preference for flexible work arrangements among the interviewed technical writers and managers.

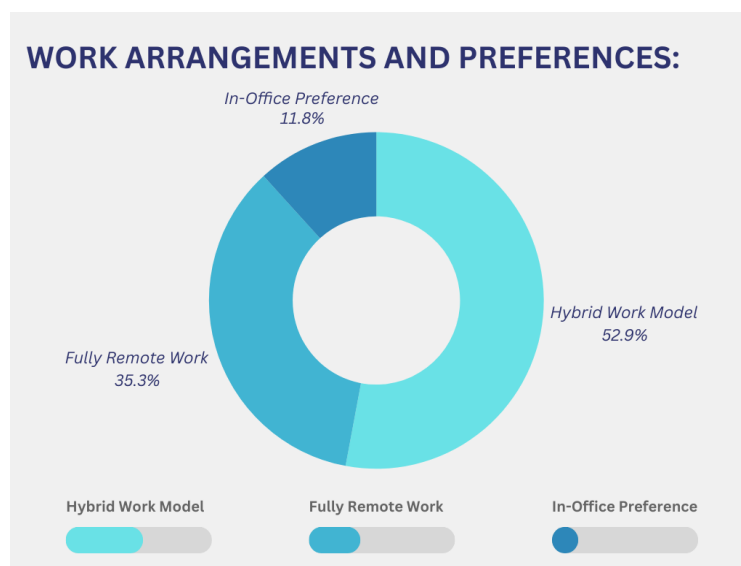


Figure 1 Work arrangement and preferences ? interview with 17 respondents, May 2024.

Hybrid Work Model:

The majority of respondents (52.94%) expressed a preference for a hybrid work model, combining both remote and in-office work. This arrangement is valued for its ability to balance focused individual work with essential in-person collaboration.

Fully Remote Work:

A significant portion (35.29%) favored fully remote work, emphasizing the benefits of flexibility, time management, and personalized work environments.

In-Office Preference:

A smaller group (11.76%) expressed a preference for working entirely in the office, citing advantages in direct communication, collaboration, and maintaining work-life boundaries.

Productivity:

Notably, every participant (100%) indicated a boost in productivity under their current work arrangements. Key factors contributing to this improvement included reduced distractions, enhanced control over their schedules, and the elimination of commuting. These insights were corroborated by all the interviewees, highlighting the significant role these elements played in their increased productivity.

Positive Team Cohesion:

100% of interviewees (17 out of 17) reported positive team cohesion. Regular virtual meetings, status updates, and collaborative platforms are crucial for maintaining team cohesion and alignment.

Quality and Consistency of Documentation:

100% of interviewees (17 out of 17) reported maintaining the quality and consistency of their documentation. This is achieved through adherence to style guides, standardized templates, and rigorous review processes, despite the decentralized nature of teams.

Challenges and Advantages of Decentralized Work:

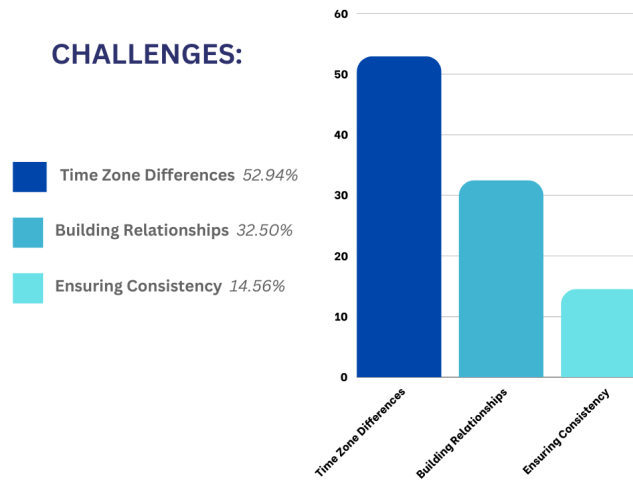


Figure 2 Challenges of remote work, interview with 17 respondents, May 2024.

Time Zone Differences:

52.94% of interviewees (9 out of 17) cited time zone differences as a significant challenge, leading to delays in communication and decision-making.

Building Relationships:

Several interviewees (32.50%) mentioned that the lack of face-to-face interaction can hinder quick problem-solving and relationship-building.

Ensuring Consistency:

Some interviewees (14.56%) noted the difficulty in maintaining consistent documentation quality and task alignment without direct supervision.

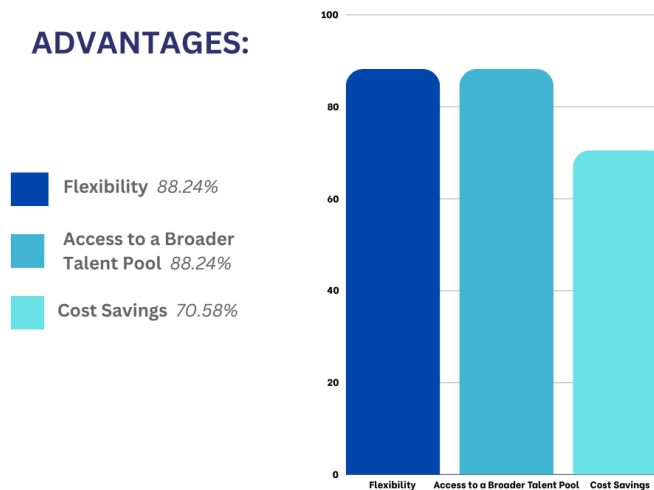


Figure 3 Advantages of remote work, interview with 17 respondents, May 2024.

Flexibility:

88.24% of interviewees (15 out of 17) highlighted flexibility as a major advantage, allowing for better work-life balance and higher job satisfaction.

Access to a Broader Talent Pool:

88.24% of interviewees (15 out of 17) mentioned that decentralized work enables hiring from a broader geographic pool, bringing diverse skills and perspectives.

Cost Savings:

Reducing the need for physical office space can lead to significant financial savings, as noted by 70.58% of interviewees.

Discussion

. While GitLab (2020) highlights that a significant majority of respondents (86%) believe remote work is the future, the analysis of the interviews reveals diverse preferences for work modes—remote, in-office, or hybrid—highlighting the contextual nature of these choices.

Many participants favored a hybrid model, which they believed offered a balanced approach, such as the flexibility and focus provided by remote work, combined with the collaborative benefits of in-office interactions. Conversely, some interviewees expressed a strong preference for fully remote work, citing flexibility and efficiency as key advantages. According to Brown (2020), remote work environments can enhance productivity by allowing employees to work in settings tailored to their personal needs, thereby minimizing distractions common in traditional office settings. Similarly, even respondents who preferred a predominantly remote setup but recognized the importance of occasional in-person meetings for team cohesion. A minority preferred full-time in-office work for its immediacy in communication and clearer separation between work and personal life.

The notion of a digital utopia is tempered by the reality of challenges inherent in decentralized communication. Worbel (2020) discusses the preference for hybrid work models, suggesting that while remote work offers many benefits, the complete absence of in-office collaboration can be limiting. In traditional workplaces, organizational culture is often transmitted through direct personal interactions, shared rituals, and the observation of mutual behavior. This is limited in a remote setting. Furthermore, in international settings, coordinating across different time zones, often leads to delays in communication and decision-making.

Maintaining team cohesion is another concern across remote companies, pointing out that the lack of face-to-face interactions could weaken team unity and complicate collaboration. Additionally, the absence of spontaneous communication and the need to ensure consistent documentation are cited as challenges that require rigorous processes and effective tools to manage. While digital tools have made it possible to manage teams and projects remotely, they cannot fully replicate the richness of face-to-face interactions. (GitLab, 2020).

Despite these challenges, several benefits of decentralized communication were also highlighted. Increased flexibility was frequently mentioned, allowing employees to better manage work-life balance and work from preferred environments. For instance, research by GitLab (2020) found that remote work not only allowed employees to maintain a better work-life balance but also contributed to increased job satisfaction and lower turnover rates. Additionally, remote work provides access to a broader talent pool, enabling organizations to tap into diverse perspectives and skills from various geographic locations, as emphasized by Palo (2020). Furthermore, significant cost savings from reduced reliance on physical office space were

noted, with the potential to redirect these savings toward strategic areas like employee development and technology upgrades (GitLab, 2020).

In conclusion, the interviews indicate no single optimal work model, as preferences vary widely depending on individual circumstances, job roles, and organizational culture. The hybrid model is particularly favored for its combination of flexibility and in-person collaboration. While decentralized communication presents challenges such as time zone coordination, team cohesion, and documentation consistency, these can be mitigated through structured communication protocols and collaborative tools. Ultimately, decentralized work offers significant benefits, including flexibility, talent diversity, cost savings, and enhanced productivity, requiring organizations to balance these factors to determine the most effective work model for their teams.

Conclusion

While decentralized technical communication can sometimes be heralded as the future of office work, especially for jobs already compatible with remote work, field studies show that decentralization is not exactly the utopia it seems. The positive effects of decentralization are undeniable, offering better life-work balance, more opportunities regardless of location and seems to increase focus, productivity and efficiency in most technical writers. Since the pandemic, companies have been increasingly adopting hybrid methods for a reason.

However, it seems that the age of “fully-remote work for everyone” is not yet upon us. Face-to-face interactions continue to be valued, if not essential, for most technical writers. Isolation, loneliness and the barrier created by the screen hinder the implementation and adoption of remote work.

Hybrid work, on the other hand, seems to be closer to the ideal work setting for a lot of technical writers. Being able to enjoy the comfort and quiet of one’s own home to better focus on both work and personal life while still knowing one’s coworkers face-to-face remains the most satisfying option.

In a way, the real utopia is not decentralization but choice itself. Being able to have more control over one’s work environment and conditions based on their own preferences instead of following the status quo is what truly motivates the professionals studied across the literature and our own research. The only danger to this utopia of choice would be for remote work to become imposed to all, possibly ushering in a dystopia where we have lost track of the importance of face-to-face interactions.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Senior Technical Writer (Paris)

Interviewer: Thank you for joining me today. To start, can you describe the extent to which you work in a hybrid mode? For instance, how many days a week do you work from home versus in the office?

Interviewee A: I currently work in a hybrid mode, splitting my time between home and the office. Specifically, I work from home three days a week and come into the office twice a week. This arrangement helps me balance focused writing tasks at home with collaborative activities and team meetings in the office.

Interviewer: Which work mode do you prefer: remote work, in-person work, or a combination of both?

Interviewee A: I prefer a combination of both. Remote work allows me to dive deeply into writing and editing tasks without the usual office distractions. However, in-person work is crucial for brainstorming sessions and building team rapport. This hybrid approach provides the best of both worlds, optimizing both productivity and team cohesion.

Interviewer: Have you noticed any change in your productivity with this hybrid setup?

Interviewee A: Yes, I've observed a significant increase in productivity. Working from home reduces interruptions and allows me to dedicate uninterrupted time to writing. On office days, I use the time for collaborative tasks and face-to-face meetings, which enhances team coordination and speeds up decision-making.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate remotely with other stakeholders? Are you satisfied with these tools, and how do you utilize them?

Interviewee A: For remote collaboration, I rely on Slack for real-time communication, Google Docs for collaborative editing, and Zoom for virtual meetings. Slack is excellent for quick, informal updates and discussions, Google Docs facilitates simultaneous editing by multiple team members, and Zoom is invaluable for detailed discussions and presentations. Overall, these tools are effective, though I occasionally face minor connectivity issues with Zoom.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion in a hybrid or remote environment? How do you manage task sharing, communication, and efficiency?

Interviewee A: Ensuring team cohesion involves setting clear goals and deadlines, regularly updating the team through status meetings, and using project management tools like Trello to track progress. We also have scheduled weekly check-ins to discuss ongoing projects and address any issues. This structure helps maintain alignment and fosters a collaborative team spirit despite physical distance.

Interviewer: How do you maintain the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed any changes in quality or consistency?

Interviewee A: To ensure quality and consistency, we use standardized documentation templates and adhere to a comprehensive style guide. Regular peer reviews also play a crucial role in catching inconsistencies and ensuring that the documentation meets our quality standards. While decentralization can introduce some variability, these practices help maintain high standards.

Interviewer: What are the main obstacles you've encountered with decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee A: One significant obstacle is managing time zone differences, which can lead to delays in feedback and decision-making. Additionally, varying levels of expertise among team members can sometimes result in inconsistent documentation quality.

Interviewer: How do you address these challenges?

Interviewee A: We mitigate time zone issues by using asynchronous communication tools and setting clear deadlines for feedback. To address varying levels of expertise, we conduct regular training sessions and maintain detailed documentation guidelines to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Interviewer: Lastly, what do you see as the main advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee A: The primary advantages include greater flexibility and access to a broader range of expertise. Decentralization allows us to tap into diverse skills and perspectives from various locations, which can enhance the overall quality of our documentation and drive innovation.

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing your insights. Your approach to managing technical writing in a hybrid and decentralized environment is very informative.

Interviewee A: Thank you for the opportunity to discuss these topics. I'm glad to share my experiences and insights.

Appendix B: Junior Technical Writer (Paris)

Interviewer: Thank you for joining us today. To start, could you describe the extent to which you work in a hybrid mode or fully remote? For example, how many days do you work remotely versus in the office?

Interviewee B: Currently, I work fully remote. Our team transitioned to a completely virtual setup about two years ago. This decision was driven by the realization that remote work could enhance flexibility and productivity, particularly in our field where digital tools and platforms facilitate effective communication and collaboration. Prior to the transition, we had a hybrid model with a mix of in-office and remote work, but the shift to a fully remote setup has proven to be quite efficient for us.

Interviewer: Considering the different work modes, which do you prefer: working from home, working in-person, or a combination of both?

Interviewee B: I prefer working from home. One of the biggest advantages is the elimination of commuting time, which allows me to start my workday earlier and have a better work-life balance. Working from the comfort of my own home also means I can create a personalized workspace that suits my needs, which has positively impacted my overall productivity and job satisfaction. However, I do recognize the value of in-person interactions for building relationships and brainstorming, but for my current role, remote work aligns better with my personal and professional needs.

Interviewer: Have you noticed any change in your productivity with this fully remote setup? For instance, do you feel you are more productive now compared to when you worked in a hybrid or in-person mode?

Interviewee B: Yes, I have noticed a marked increase in productivity since transitioning to fully remote work. The ability to structure my own day and minimize disruptions has been incredibly beneficial. For example, I can concentrate on complex documentation tasks during my peak productivity hours, which are often early in the morning. The flexibility to manage my work environment and schedule has allowed me to optimize my time and output. This has led to more efficient project completion and a higher quality of work.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you utilize for remote collaboration with other stakeholders? Are you satisfied with these tools, and how do you use them? How do these tools contribute to your workflow?

Interviewee B: For remote collaboration, we primarily use Microsoft Teams for communication, Jira for project tracking, and Google Docs for documentation. Microsoft Teams is invaluable for real-time discussions, video meetings, and file sharing. We use Jira to track project progress, manage tasks, and coordinate deadlines, which helps us stay organized and aligned. Google Docs is essential for collaborative editing, allowing multiple team members to work on documents simultaneously, which facilitates smoother revisions and feedback. Overall, these tools are highly effective and have become integral to our workflow, enabling us to stay connected and maintain productivity despite the physical distance.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion in a remote setup? Can you elaborate on how you handle task sharing, communication, and overall efficiency?

Interviewee B: Ensuring team cohesion remotely involves a combination of structured communication and informal interactions. We hold weekly virtual meetings to discuss project updates, address any issues, and align our objectives. Task sharing is managed through Jira, where everyone can see project statuses and assign tasks. To enhance team spirit, we organize virtual social events, such as online coffee breaks and team-building activities. These informal interactions help maintain a sense of camaraderie and ensure that team members remain engaged and connected, which is crucial for maintaining efficiency and collaboration.

Interviewer: How do you maintain the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you observed any changes in quality or consistency since the transition to a fully remote setup?

Interviewee B: To maintain quality and consistency, we adhere to a detailed style guide and follow a rigorous review process. Each document undergoes multiple rounds of peer reviews and editing to ensure it meets our standards. Despite being a decentralized team, these practices have helped us maintain high-quality documentation. We also use version control features in Google Docs to keep track of changes and ensure that everyone is working from the most current version. The decentralized setup has not adversely affected our documentation quality; in fact, our systematic approach has ensured that our standards remain consistent.

Interviewer: What are the main obstacles you have encountered with decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee B: One of the main obstacles is dealing with time zone differences, which can lead to delays in communication and feedback. Coordinating meetings and responses across different time zones requires careful planning and flexibility. Additionally, the lack of spontaneous face-to-face interactions can sometimes hinder quick problem-solving and decision-making, as immediate discussions are not always feasible.

Interviewer: How do you address these challenges in your remote work environment?

Interviewee B: We address time zone challenges by scheduling meetings and setting deadlines that accommodate various time zones as much as possible. We also rely on asynchronous communication tools like email and messaging platforms to ensure that team members can provide input and feedback at their convenience. For issues requiring immediate attention, we have established protocols for escalation and urgent communication. These strategies help us navigate the obstacles and maintain effective collaboration.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the main advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee B: The advantages of decentralized technical communication include increased flexibility, which allows team members to work from locations that suit their personal circumstances. This setup also enables us to attract a diverse range of talent from different geographical areas, bringing a variety of perspectives and expertise to the team. Additionally, operating without a central office reduces overhead costs associated with maintaining physical workspaces, which can be a significant financial benefit. Overall, these advantages contribute to a more adaptable and resource-efficient work environment.

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing your experiences and insights. Your perspective on remote work and decentralized communication is very valuable.

Interviewee B: Thank you for the opportunity to discuss these topics. I'm glad to provide insights into our remote work practices and how we manage decentralized technical communication.

Appendix C : Lead Technical Writer (Paris)

Interviewer: Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today. To start, could you elaborate on your current work mode? Specifically, how many days do you work in the office versus remotely?

Interviewee C: I currently work in a hybrid mode, dividing my time between the office and home. I spend two days a week in the office and work from home for the remaining three days. This arrangement allows me to balance the benefits of in-person collaboration with the flexibility and focus that comes with working remotely. For instance, the days in the office are particularly valuable for face-to-face meetings and brainstorming sessions, while the home-based days offer a quieter environment conducive to focused, uninterrupted work.

Interviewer: Given your experience with both remote and in-person work, which mode do you prefer: working from home, working in the office, or a combination of both?

Interviewee C: I prefer the hybrid model because it offers a balanced approach. Working from home provides me with the quiet and control needed for deep work and complex documentation tasks. On the other hand, being in the office allows for spontaneous interactions and team meetings that enhance collaboration and creativity. This combination helps me leverage the strengths of both environments, making it easier to stay productive and engaged.

Interviewer: Have you observed any changes in your productivity levels with this hybrid arrangement? For example, do you feel more productive compared to when you worked entirely in the office or remotely?

Interviewee C: Yes, I've noticed a significant improvement in my productivity with the hybrid setup. Working from home has enabled me to concentrate more effectively on individual tasks without the usual office distractions. For example, I can dedicate uninterrupted time to developing complex documentation or conducting detailed research. Conversely, certain projects benefit from the immediate feedback and collaborative energy that are more easily achieved during in-person meetings at the office. This mix of environments helps me optimize my productivity depending on the nature of the tasks at hand.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other stakeholders remotely? Are you satisfied with these tools? How do they contribute to your workflow?

Interviewee C: We utilize a suite of tools to facilitate remote collaboration. Asana is used for task management and project tracking, which helps us organize and prioritize our work efficiently. Microsoft Teams serves as our primary communication platform, supporting both instant messaging and video conferencing, which is crucial for maintaining clear and timely interactions. SharePoint is our document management system, allowing us to store, share, and collaboratively edit documents in a centralized location. These tools are integral to our workflow, as they ensure

that team members stay aligned, have access to the latest documents, and can communicate effectively, regardless of their physical location.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion in a hybrid work environment? Can you describe your approach to task sharing, communication, and maintaining overall efficiency?

Interviewee C: To ensure team cohesion, we implement several strategies. Regular check-ins and status update meetings are scheduled to keep everyone informed and engaged. We use shared platforms like Asana for task tracking to ensure transparency and accountability across the team. Additionally, we organize virtual coffee breaks and occasional in-person team-building events to foster a sense of community and strengthen team relationships. These activities help maintain morale and enhance collaboration, ensuring that despite the physical separation, the team remains cohesive and effective.

Interviewer: How do you maintain the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you observed any changes in the quality or consistency since adopting a hybrid or remote work model?

Interviewee C: We ensure quality and consistency by adhering to standardized templates and maintaining a rigorous review process. Each document goes through multiple rounds of review and editing to ensure it meets our established standards. The hybrid model has not negatively impacted our documentation quality; in fact, our structured approach and regular updates to our practices have helped maintain high standards. The key is having clear guidelines and efficient review mechanisms in place, which ensures that all team members contribute to and uphold the quality of our documentation.

Interviewer: In your view, what are the main challenges associated with decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee C: One significant challenge is maintaining consistent communication across various time zones. This can lead to delays in feedback and decision-making, as team members might not be available simultaneously. Another challenge is ensuring adherence to documentation standards without direct supervision, which can sometimes result in inconsistencies. To address these issues, we rely on structured communication protocols and clear documentation guidelines to help manage expectations and maintain alignment.

Interviewer: Conversely, what do you consider to be the main advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee C: The advantages of decentralized communication include greater flexibility in work arrangements, which allows team members to work from locations that best suit their personal and professional needs. Additionally, it provides access to a broader talent pool, as geographic location becomes less of a constraint in hiring. Finally, it reduces overhead costs associated with maintaining physical office spaces, which can lead to significant financial savings for the organization. These benefits contribute to a more adaptable and cost-effective work environment.

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing your detailed insights. Your experience with the hybrid work model and decentralized communication provides valuable perspectives.

Interviewee C: Thank you for the opportunity to discuss these topics. I'm pleased to provide insights into our approach to hybrid work and decentralized communication.

Appendix D: Technical Writer (Paris)

Interviewer: Thank you for joining us today. To begin, can you describe your current work setup? Specifically, how many days do you work remotely versus in the office?

Interviewee D: I work fully remotely. Our team made the shift to a remote setup at the onset of the pandemic, and this mode has continued successfully since then. I'm based at home every day, which allows me to fully leverage the benefits of remote work. This arrangement has proven effective for our team and aligns well with our current operational needs.

Interviewer: Considering your experience with remote work, do you have a preference between working from home, working in the office, or a combination of both?

Interviewee D: I have a strong preference for working from home. The ability to manage my own schedule and work environment is invaluable. It eliminates the time and stress associated with commuting and provides a more flexible approach to balancing work and personal life. This setup has allowed me to tailor my workday to my productivity peaks and personal needs, which I find very beneficial.

Interviewer: Have you noticed any changes in your productivity since transitioning to remote work? For instance, do you feel more productive now compared to when you worked in the office?

Interviewee D: Yes, I've experienced a notable increase in productivity. The elimination of commuting time and the ability to create a personalized and distraction-free work environment have significantly contributed to this boost. For example, I can now start working earlier in the morning and adjust my work hours to fit my most productive periods. This flexibility has been a major factor in enhancing my efficiency and output.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use for remote collaboration? Are you satisfied with these tools, and how do they integrate into your workflow?

Interviewee D: We use several key tools to facilitate remote collaboration. Zoom is our primary platform for video meetings and virtual face-to-face interactions. Slack serves as our main communication channel for daily discussions and quick updates. For version control and collaborative development, we rely on GitHub. These tools are essential for maintaining organization and connectivity within the team. I find them quite effective; for instance, Slack helps us stay connected throughout the day, while GitHub ensures that our code and documentation changes are well-managed and tracked.

Interviewer: How do you maintain team cohesion in a fully remote setup? What strategies do you employ for task sharing, communication, and overall efficiency?

Interviewee D: We employ several strategies to maintain team cohesion. Regular team meetings via Zoom are crucial for keeping everyone aligned and discussing ongoing projects. We also use collaborative tools like Asana

or Trello to manage tasks and track progress, which helps ensure transparency and accountability. Additionally, we organize occasional virtual team-building events, such as online game nights or social chats, to foster a sense of camaraderie and maintain a positive team culture. These practices help keep the team connected and motivated despite the physical distance.

Interviewer: How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed any changes in this area since moving to a remote setup?

Interviewee D: We maintain quality and consistency through established documentation standards and a rigorous review process. Our team follows a set of guidelines that ensure uniformity in our outputs. We also conduct regular reviews and peer feedback sessions to catch any inconsistencies and uphold high standards. Since transitioning to remote work, our adherence to these standards has remained strong, and the quality of our documentation has not suffered. The structured approach we've implemented helps in sustaining the reliability and consistency of our work.

Interviewer: In your view, what are the main challenges associated with decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee D: One of the main challenges is managing communication across different time zones. This can lead to delays in responses and complicate the coordination of collaborative tasks. Another issue is the difficulty in building personal relationships and fostering a sense of team unity when working remotely. The lack of face-to-face interactions can sometimes hinder relationship-building and spontaneous problem-solving.

Interviewer: Conversely, what do you see as the key advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee D: The advantages of decentralized communication are quite significant. Firstly, it offers greater flexibility, allowing team members to work from any location that suits them best. This flexibility can lead to a better work-life balance and increased job satisfaction. Additionally, working remotely can contribute to a more balanced integration of personal and professional responsibilities. Finally, the ability to hire talent from a broader geographic pool enhances the diversity and skills of the team, which can bring fresh perspectives and innovation.

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing your insights. Your experience and detailed responses provide a clear understanding of the dynamics of remote work and decentralized communication.

Interviewee D: Thank you for having me. I'm glad to provide my perspective on these important topics.

Appendix E: Technical Documentation Specialist (Paris)

Interviewer: Thank you for joining us today. To start, could you describe your current work arrangement? Specifically, how many days do you work remotely versus in the office?

Interviewee E: I currently work in a hybrid mode, typically spending three days a week working from home and two days in the office. This arrangement strikes a good balance between focused individual work and essential in-person collaboration. It allows me to enjoy the benefits of both environments, maximizing productivity and maintaining strong team connections.

Interviewer: Based on your experience, which mode of work do you prefer: working from home, working in the office, or a combination of both?

Interviewee E: I prefer the hybrid model. It provides the flexibility to work from home, where I can concentrate without the usual office distractions, while still giving me the opportunity to engage in face-to-face interactions and team meetings when needed. This combination allows me to leverage the advantages of both work environments effectively.

Interviewer: Have you observed any changes in your productivity since adopting the hybrid work model? For example, do you find yourself more productive in one setting over the other?

Interviewee E: Yes, I've observed a noticeable increase in productivity when working from home. The quiet environment and the ability to control my schedule contribute to a more focused work experience. However, in-person days are invaluable for collaborative tasks and brainstorming sessions, where face-to-face interaction often leads to more dynamic and effective discussions. The hybrid model supports both individual productivity and collaborative efficiency.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you utilize to collaborate with your team remotely? Are these tools meeting your needs effectively? How do you use them in your workflow?

Interviewee E: We use a range of tools to facilitate remote collaboration. Google Meet is our primary platform for video calls and virtual meetings, which helps us maintain clear communication despite physical distances. Asana is our tool of choice for project tracking and task management, ensuring that everyone stays aligned on deadlines and responsibilities. For file sharing and document storage, we rely on Dropbox. These tools have proven effective in keeping our workflow organized and ensuring that everyone is updated on project progress. They seamlessly integrate into our daily tasks and contribute to maintaining a cohesive team environment.

Interviewer: How do you maintain team cohesion in a hybrid work environment? What methods do you use to manage tasks, communication, and overall efficiency?

Interviewee E: To ensure team cohesion, we have regular team meetings scheduled both in-person and virtually. We use collaborative tools like Asana to manage tasks and track progress, which helps keep everyone

on the same page. Additionally, we make a concerted effort to engage in informal virtual interactions, such as virtual coffee breaks or casual team chats, to foster a positive team spirit and strengthen interpersonal relationships. These practices help in maintaining a strong sense of unity and collaboration despite the hybrid work setup.

Interviewer: How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation when working with a decentralized team? Have you noticed any changes in this regard since transitioning to a hybrid model?

Interviewee E: We maintain quality and consistency through a structured review process and adherence to established style guides. Our team follows a set of guidelines to ensure that all documentation meets the required standards. We conduct thorough reviews to catch any discrepancies and maintain a high level of consistency. Since adopting the hybrid model, the quality of our documentation has remained high. The established practices and tools we use have helped us uphold these standards effectively.

Interviewer: What do you consider the main challenges associated with decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee E: One of the main challenges is coordinating work across different time zones, which can sometimes lead to delays in communication and decision-making. Additionally, ensuring that all team members adhere to the same documentation standards without direct oversight can be difficult. These factors can impact the smooth operation of a decentralized team, requiring careful management and clear guidelines.

Interviewer: Conversely, what do you see as the primary advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee E: The primary advantages include the flexibility to work from various locations, which can significantly enhance work-life balance and reduce commuting stress. Another advantage is the ability to access a diverse talent pool, allowing us to bring in different perspectives and skills. The reduced need for physical office space also contributes to cost savings for the organization. These benefits collectively support a more adaptable and inclusive work environment.

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing your insights. Your detailed responses provide a clear perspective on the hybrid work model and its impact on technical communication.

Interviewee E: Thank you for the opportunity to discuss these topics. I'm pleased to provide my perspective on the evolving nature of work and communication.

Appendix F: Technical Writer (Paris)

Interviewer: Thank you for taking the time to speak with us. To start, can you describe your current work arrangement? Specifically, how many days do you work remotely versus in the office?

Interviewee F: I work in a hybrid mode, typically spending three days a week working from home and two days a week at the office. This balance between remote and in-person work has proven to be quite effective. It allows me to focus deeply on individual tasks and also ensures that I'm available for important collaborative efforts and face-to-face interactions.

Interviewer: Which mode of work do you prefer: working from home, working in the office, or a combination of both?

Interviewee F: I prefer the hybrid model. This approach provides the flexibility to work from home, which is ideal for uninterrupted, focused work. At the same time, it allows for in-person collaboration when it's critical. The combination of both environments helps me manage my workload efficiently and maintain strong connections with my team.

Interviewer: Have you noticed any changes in your productivity with this hybrid model? For instance, do you find yourself more productive in one setting over the other?

Interviewee F: Yes, I have observed a boost in productivity while working from home. The quiet environment is conducive to concentrating on detailed documentation work, which is essential for producing high-quality output. On the other hand, in-person meetings are invaluable for brainstorming and collaborative projects. These face-to-face interactions often lead to more dynamic problem-solving and quicker decision-making.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use for remote collaboration with your team? Are you satisfied with these tools? How do they integrate into your workflow and contribute to your productivity?

Interviewee F: At our company, we use Microsoft Teams for communication, SharePoint for document management, and JIRA for task tracking. I find these tools to be highly effective. Microsoft Teams facilitates smooth communication through chat and video calls, while SharePoint ensures that all team members have access to the latest versions of documents. JIRA helps in tracking tasks and managing project workflows efficiently. These tools are integral to our daily operations, keeping us organized and connected despite the physical distance.

Interviewer: How do you maintain team cohesion in a hybrid work environment? What strategies do you use for task sharing, communication, and overall efficiency?

Interviewee F: To ensure team cohesion, we hold weekly virtual meetings where we discuss ongoing projects and align on priorities. We also use task management tools to track progress and share updates. Additionally, we organize occasional in-person team-building activities, which are crucial for fostering team spirit and strengthening interpersonal

relationships. These combined efforts help maintain a sense of unity and collaboration within the team.

Interviewer: How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed any changes in the quality and consistency of your documentation since adopting a hybrid model?

Interviewee F: We ensure the quality and consistency of our documentation by following strict documentation standards and implementing a comprehensive review process. Multiple team members review each document to ensure adherence to our guidelines. This process has helped maintain high standards of quality and consistency, even with the decentralized team setup. The hybrid model hasn't negatively impacted our documentation practices; rather, the established processes and regular feedback mechanisms continue to support our high standards.

Interviewer: From your perspective, what are the main obstacles associated with decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee F: One of the main obstacles is ensuring clear and timely communication across different locations, which can be challenging when team members are spread out. Additionally, coordinating tasks and maintaining alignment without direct supervision can be difficult. Effective management and clear communication protocols are essential to overcoming these challenges.

Interviewer: Conversely, what do you see as the key advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee F: The key advantages include greater flexibility in work arrangements, which allows team members to work from various locations. This flexibility can lead to improved work-life balance and job satisfaction. Additionally, decentralization provides access to a diverse talent pool, as it enables us to collaborate with professionals from different geographical areas. This diversity can bring in varied perspectives and enhance the overall quality of our work.

Interviewer: Thank you for your insights. Your detailed responses offer valuable perspectives on the hybrid work model and its implications for technical communication.

Interviewee F: Thank you for having me. I'm glad to share my experiences and perspectives on the evolving nature of work and communication.

Appendix G: Technical Write (France)

Interviewer: To what extent do you work in a hybrid mode or not? (Number of days, etc.)

Interviewee G: I work fully remote. Since joining [Company name], our team has transitioned to a remote work model, which has become the norm.

Interviewer: Which mode of work do you prefer between work from home, in-person, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee G: I prefer work from home. It allows me to create a personalized work environment and manage my time more effectively.

Interviewer: Do you feel more productive? Have you observed increased productivity?

Interviewee G: Yes, I find that I'm more productive working remotely. The absence of daily commuting and the ability to work in a quiet space contribute to higher efficiency.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other stakeholders remotely? Are you satisfied with these online collaboration tools? How do you use these tools? How are they useful?

Interviewee G: We use Slack for instant messaging, Zoom for meetings, and Confluence for documentation. These tools are very useful for maintaining communication and collaboration. I'm satisfied with them as they support effective remote teamwork.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion? (task sharing, communication, efficiency, etc.)

Interviewee G: We use collaborative platforms to share tasks and track progress. Regular video calls and virtual team meetings also help in maintaining cohesion and keeping everyone engaged.

Interviewer: How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed a change in the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team?

Interviewee G: We implement a structured review process and use consistent style guides to maintain quality and consistency. The documentation quality has remained stable, as we ensure adherence to these standards.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the main obstacles related to decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee G: The key obstacles are coordinating across different time zones and ensuring that everyone is on the same page despite not being physically present in the same location.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the main advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee G: The main advantages include the flexibility to work from anywhere, the ability to accommodate different work styles, and the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse team from various locations.

Interviewer: Thank you for joining us today. To begin, can you describe your current work setup? Specifically, how many days do you work remotely versus in the office?

Interviewee G: I work fully remote. Since joining [Company Name], our team has adopted a remote work model, which has become the standard approach for our operations. This shift to a remote environment has been quite seamless and well-integrated into our workflows.

Interviewer: Given the options of working from home, working in the office, or a combination of both, which mode do you prefer?

Interviewee G: I prefer working from home. It offers the advantage of creating a personalized work environment that suits my preferences and allows me to manage my time more effectively. Working remotely helps me maintain a better work-life balance and reduces the distractions often present in an office setting.

Interviewer: Have you noticed any changes in your productivity with this remote work arrangement? For example, do you feel more productive, and if so, in what ways?

Interviewee G: Yes, I have observed a noticeable increase in my productivity since transitioning to remote work. The elimination of daily commuting saves me a significant amount of time, which I can then invest directly into my work. Additionally, working in a quiet, controlled environment enhances my ability to focus and execute tasks efficiently. This setup has allowed me to complete projects more quickly and with greater attention to detail.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other team members remotely? Are you satisfied with these tools? How do they integrate into your workflow, and in what ways are they helpful?

Interviewee G: We rely on Slack for instant messaging, Zoom for meetings, and Confluence for documentation. These tools are integral to our remote collaboration. Slack facilitates quick and effective communication through channels and direct messages, which helps in maintaining real-time dialogue. Zoom is essential for virtual meetings and face-to-face interactions, which are crucial for discussions and brainstorming sessions. Confluence serves as our central repository for documentation, ensuring that all team members have access to the latest information and can contribute to shared documents. Overall, I'm satisfied with these tools as they support efficient remote teamwork and ensure that everyone stays connected and informed.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion in a remote setting? What strategies do you use for task sharing, communication, and maintaining efficiency?

Interviewee G: To ensure team cohesion, we use collaborative platforms to assign and monitor tasks, which helps in tracking progress and

accountability. We also hold regular video calls and virtual team meetings to discuss project updates and align on objectives. These meetings are key to maintaining engagement and fostering a sense of team unity. Additionally, we occasionally organize virtual social events to build camaraderie and strengthen interpersonal relationships among team members.

Interviewer: Maintaining quality and consistency can be challenging in a decentralized team. How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation? Have you noticed any changes in these aspects since moving to a remote model?

Interviewee G: To uphold quality and consistency in our documentation, we implement a structured review process and adhere to consistent style guides. Each document undergoes thorough reviews by multiple team members to ensure it meets our standards. This rigorous approach has helped maintain the stability of documentation quality, despite the decentralized nature of our team. We continuously monitor and update our processes to ensure that we adhere to established guidelines and best practices.

Interviewer: From your perspective, what are the main obstacles associated with decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee G: One of the primary obstacles is coordinating across different time zones. This can lead to delays in communication and difficulties in scheduling meetings that accommodate all team members. Additionally, ensuring that everyone is aligned and on the same page without physical presence can be challenging. It requires clear and effective communication strategies to mitigate misunderstandings and ensure that all team members are informed and engaged.

Interviewer: Conversely, what do you see as the main advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee G: The key advantages include the flexibility to work from any location, which allows team members to create a work environment that best suits their needs. This flexibility can lead to increased job satisfaction and productivity. Additionally, decentralized communication enables us to collaborate with a diverse team from various geographical locations, bringing a wide range of perspectives and expertise to our projects. This diversity can enhance the quality of our work and contribute to innovative solutions.

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing your experiences and insights. Your detailed responses provide a comprehensive view of the remote work model and its impact on technical communication.

Interviewee G: Thank you for the opportunity. I'm pleased to share my experiences and thoughts on how remote work has shaped our technical communication practices.

Appendix H: Technical Writer Specializing in Psychometrical Testing for HR (Paris)

Interviewer: To what extent do you work in a hybrid mode or not? (Number of days, etc.)

Interviewee H: I work 80% remotely. Since joining the company, our team has adopted a predominantly remote work model, which has been effective for our needs, especially considering the nature of psychometrical testing and HR-related documentation.

Interviewer: Which mode of work do you prefer between work from home, in-person, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee H: I prefer working from home. It allows me to create a focused work environment necessary for developing and analyzing psychometrical tests, and it eliminates the commute, giving me more time to dedicate to my work. However, I do appreciate the occasional in-person interaction for team meetings and collaboration.

Interviewer: Do you feel more productive? Have you observed increased productivity?

Interviewee H: Yes, I find that I am more productive working remotely. The quiet and controlled environment at home is conducive to handling the detailed and sensitive nature of psychometrical test documentation and analysis.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other stakeholders remotely? Are you satisfied with these online collaboration tools? How do you use these tools? How are they useful?

Interviewee H: We use tools such as Microsoft Teams for communication, Zoom for meetings, and SharePoint for document sharing and version control. These tools are crucial for coordinating with HR professionals and other team members. I'm satisfied with them as they facilitate efficient communication and collaboration, which is essential for the accurate and timely development of psychometrical tests.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion? (Task sharing, communication, efficiency, etc.)

Interviewee H: To ensure team cohesion, we have regular virtual meetings and use collaborative platforms to manage tasks and track progress. We also engage in virtual team-building activities to maintain a sense of unity and to keep the team motivated and connected.

Interviewer: How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed a change in the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team?

Interviewee H: We ensure quality and consistency by adhering to strict documentation standards and implementing a thorough review process. Despite working remotely, the quality and consistency of our documentation have remained high due to our rigorous standards and collaborative review practices.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the main obstacles related to decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee H: One of the main obstacles is coordinating across different time zones, which can sometimes lead to delays in communication and decision-making. Additionally, the lack of face-to-face interaction can make it challenging to quickly resolve complex issues or build rapport with new team members.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the main advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee H: The main advantages include the flexibility to work from anywhere, which supports a better work-life balance, and the ability to access a wide range of expertise from various locations. This model also reduces overhead costs associated with maintaining physical office spaces and allows for a more diverse team.

Appendix I: Technical Writing Manager (Angers)

Interviewer: Thank you for joining us. To start, could you describe your current work arrangement? Specifically, do you work remotely at all, or is your role based entirely in the office?

Interviewee I: I work 100% in the office. Since joining the company, we've maintained a fully on-site work model. This arrangement helps me oversee the team and coordinate projects effectively in person.

Interviewer: Given the options of remote work, working in the office, or a combination of both, which mode do you prefer?

Interviewee I: I prefer working entirely in the office. Being on-site allows me to engage directly with my team, facilitate spontaneous discussions, and manage tasks more efficiently. The face-to-face interactions help build stronger relationships and ensure that communication is clear and immediate.

Interviewer: Have you observed any changes in your productivity with this on-site arrangement? How does working from the office impact your productivity?

Interviewee I: Yes, working from the office has positively impacted my productivity. The immediate access to my team and resources enables faster decision-making and problem-solving. The structured office environment also minimizes distractions and helps me maintain focus on both individual tasks and collaborative projects.

Interviewer: What initiatives have you taken to bring together, organize, evaluate, and/or motivate your team in a fully on-site context?

Interviewee I: To bring the team together and ensure effective collaboration, we use various organizational tools and practices. We conduct regular team meetings and brainstorming sessions, which are more effective face-to-face. I also prioritize recognizing individual and team achievements publicly, which fosters a positive work environment. In addition, we schedule team-building activities and social events to strengthen team dynamics and morale.

Interviewer: What are the main challenges you face when managing a technical communications team in a fully on-site environment?

Interviewee I: One challenge is maintaining a high level of engagement and motivation among team members. While being in the office helps with immediate communication and collaboration, it can sometimes lead to a more rigid routine. Ensuring that every team member remains aligned with their goals and maintains a healthy work-life balance is also important. Additionally, managing and coordinating tasks across different departments and teams requires effective communication and planning.

Interviewer: What do you see as the main advantages of managing a technical communications team entirely in the office?

Interviewee I: The primary advantages include the ease of communication and collaboration. Being physically present with the team

facilitates spontaneous interactions and immediate feedback, which can enhance productivity and innovation. The on-site presence also helps in building a strong team culture and fostering a cohesive work environment. Additionally, having direct oversight allows for more immediate support and management of tasks and projects.

Interviewer: How do you support and integrate new team members in a fully on-site environment?

Interviewee I: For new team members, we have a structured onboarding process that includes comprehensive training and orientation sessions conducted in person. We provide them with access to all necessary resources and documentation. Additionally, we assign a mentor within the office to help them acclimate to the team and the company culture. Regular check-ins and feedback sessions are also part of the process to ensure that new hires feel supported and integrated effectively.

Interviewer: Thank you for providing these insights. Your responses offer a detailed perspective on the benefits and challenges of working in a fully on-site environment.

Interviewee I: You're welcome. I'm glad to share my experiences and provide a clear view of managing a technical communications team in an office-based setting.

Appendix J: Technical Writing Manager (Paris)

Interviewer: To what extent do you work in a hybrid mode or not? (Number of days, etc.)

Interviewee J: I work fully remotely. The nature of our work in psychometrical testing and HR has made a remote work model highly effective for us.

Interviewer: Which work mode do you prefer? Remote work, at the office, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee J: I prefer remote work. It allows for greater flexibility and is well-suited to managing a team that is spread across different locations.

Interviewer: Do you feel more productive? Are you more productive?

Interviewee J: Yes, I find that I am more productive working remotely. It reduces distractions and allows me to better manage my time. My team also reports higher productivity levels due to the flexible work environment.

Interviewer: What initiatives have you taken to bring together, organize, evaluate, and/or motivate your team in a hybrid/full-remote context?

Interviewee J: To keep the team organized and motivated, we use project management tools like JIRA and Slack for communication. We have regular virtual team meetings and periodic one-on-one check-ins to provide feedback and support. We also have virtual social events to maintain team morale.

Interviewer: What are the main obstacles to managing a decentralized technical communications team?

Interviewee J: The main obstacles include coordinating across different time zones and ensuring that all team members are aligned with project goals and deadlines. Additionally, managing and resolving conflicts can be more challenging without face-to-face interaction.

Interviewer: What do you see as the advantages of managing a decentralized technical communications team?

Interviewee J: The advantages include the flexibility to work from any location, which supports a better work-life balance, and the ability to hire talent from a wider geographical area. It also reduces costs related to office space and commuting.

Interviewer: How do you organize the integration and support of new team members in hybrid/full-remote environments?

Interviewee J: New team members undergo a comprehensive onboarding process that includes virtual training sessions and introductions to the team. We also provide them with detailed documentation and assign them a buddy to help them acclimate to the team and our processes.

Appendix K: Technical Writing Manager (International)

Interviewer: Thank you for joining us. To start, could you describe your current work arrangement? Do you work in a hybrid mode, fully remotely, or in the office?

Interviewee K: I work fully remotely. Given [Company name]'s global operations and the fact that our teams are spread across different continents, we've adopted a remote-first approach. This model has been essential for managing our international teams and maintaining operational efficiency across various time zones.

Interviewer: Between remote work, in-office work, or a combination of the two, which mode do you prefer and why?

Interviewee K: I prefer remote work. It provides me with the flexibility to manage a diverse team effectively without the constraints of office hours and time zones. Remote work allows me to structure my day according to my needs and the needs of my team, making it easier to handle the complexities of our global projects.

Interviewer: Have you noticed any impact on your productivity with remote work? Do you find yourself more productive in this arrangement compared to working in the office?

Interviewee K: Yes, I definitely feel more productive working remotely. The flexibility to create my own work environment and the absence of commute-related stress contribute significantly to my focus and efficiency. Additionally, the ability to work asynchronously with team members across different time zones often leads to more thoughtful and well-paced work.

Interviewer: What initiatives have you implemented to keep your team organized, motivated, and cohesive in a remote work environment?

Interviewee K: To keep the team organized and motivated, we use a combination of Slack for real-time communication and Trello for task management. I hold regular team meetings and one-on-one check-ins to ensure everyone is aligned with their tasks and project goals. These meetings also serve as an opportunity to address any concerns and provide feedback.

We also organize virtual team-building events, such as online trivia games and informal social hours, to foster team spirit and maintain morale. These initiatives help in creating a sense of community despite the physical distance.

Interviewer: What challenges have you encountered while managing a decentralized technical communications team, and how have you addressed them?

Interviewee K: The primary challenges include managing the different time zones and ensuring seamless communication across various locations. Coordinating meetings that suit everyone's availability can be tricky, so we use shared calendars and scheduling tools to streamline this process.

Maintaining team cohesion and handling conflicts without face-to-face interactions are also challenging. To address these issues, we place a strong

emphasis on clear communication and proactive problem-solving. Regular virtual interactions and transparent communication help in mitigating misunderstandings and keeping the team aligned.

Interviewer: What do you see as the main advantages of managing a decentralized technical communications team?

Interviewee K: The key advantages include access to a broader talent pool, which allows us to hire the best talent regardless of their geographical location. The flexibility offered by remote work is another significant benefit, as it enables team members to work in environments that suit them best, leading to higher job satisfaction and productivity.

Additionally, operating across different time zones means we can leverage a "follow-the-sun" model, which allows us to keep projects moving forward around the clock. This global coverage can be a major advantage in meeting tight deadlines and delivering results efficiently.

Interviewer: How do you manage the integration and support of new team members in a remote environment?

Interviewee K: New team members undergo a structured virtual onboarding process. This includes virtual introductions to the team, comprehensive training sessions on our tools and processes, and access to essential documentation. We also assign a buddy or mentor to each new hire to help them navigate their initial period and provide ongoing support.

Regular check-ins with new hires are crucial to address any questions they might have and to ensure they are settling in well. This structured approach helps new team members integrate smoothly into the team and understand our remote work dynamics.

Appendix L: Technical Writing Manager at [Company name] (International)

Interviewer: Thank you for joining us. Could you describe your current work arrangement? Do you work in a hybrid mode, fully remotely, or in the office?

Interviewee L: I work in a hybrid mode. Typically, I spend three days a week in the office and two days working remotely. This balance helps me effectively manage both in-person and remote tasks, providing the flexibility to handle a variety of work scenarios.

Interviewer: Which work mode do you prefer? Remote work, in-office work, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee L: I prefer the hybrid model. It combines the benefits of face-to-face interaction for collaborative tasks and brainstorming sessions, while also allowing for remote work that supports deep concentration and uninterrupted writing. This flexibility helps me balance different aspects of my role effectively.

Interviewer: Have you noticed any difference in your productivity with the hybrid approach? Do you find that you are more productive with this arrangement?

Interviewee L: Yes, I've found that productivity is higher with the hybrid approach. The office is ideal for team meetings and collaborative efforts, where face-to-face interaction fosters creativity and problem-solving. Conversely, working from home is better suited for focused tasks like writing and editing, where I can work without interruptions. This combination enhances overall productivity and allows me to allocate time and effort more effectively.

Interviewer: What initiatives have you put in place to organize, motivate, and support your team in a hybrid or remote context?

Interviewee L: We use Microsoft Teams and Confluence for collaboration and document management. Regular virtual meetings are essential for maintaining alignment on projects and discussing progress. We also hold collaborative sessions to address specific tasks and challenges.

To keep the team motivated, we conduct performance reviews and offer training opportunities for professional development. Regular feedback and recognition of achievements also play a crucial role in maintaining engagement and morale.

Interviewer: What challenges have you faced in managing a decentralized technical communications team, and how have you addressed these challenges?

Interviewee L: One of the major challenges is ensuring that communication remains clear and timely despite different working hours and locations. To address this, we set up structured communication protocols and use collaborative tools to keep everyone updated and on the same page.

Fostering a strong team culture and managing team dynamics remotely can be difficult. We combat this by organizing regular team-building activities, even if they are virtual, and by actively working to create an inclusive and supportive team environment.

Interviewer: What do you consider the main advantages of managing a decentralized technical communications team?

Interviewee L: The advantages include greater flexibility for employees, which can lead to improved work-life balance and higher job satisfaction. Additionally, hiring talent from different regions allows us to bring in diverse perspectives and skills, which enhances the quality of our work.

Reduced costs related to office space and the ability to work with a broader range of professionals are also significant benefits. Overall, managing a decentralized team offers flexibility and diversity that can drive innovation and efficiency.

Interviewer: How do you handle the integration and support of new team members in a hybrid or remote environment?

Interviewee L: New team members undergo a comprehensive virtual onboarding process. This includes detailed training materials, introductions to key team members, and access to necessary tools and resources. We also provide ongoing support through regular check-ins and mentorship to help them acclimate to the team and their new role.

By maintaining clear communication and offering structured support, we ensure that new hires have a smooth transition into our hybrid work environment and can quickly become productive members of the team.

Appendix M: Senior Technical Writer (Paris)

Interviewer: To what extent do you work in a hybrid mode or not? (Number of days, etc.)

Interviewee M: I do 3 days of WFH and 2 days in the office.

Interviewer: Which mode of work do you prefer between work from home, in-person, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee M: Work from home. But it's good to come at least once a week.

Interviewer: Do you feel more productive? Have you observed increased productivity?

Interviewee M: Yes, I feel more productive because when you're working in the office, you start talking, so there's less productivity. The advantage of in-person work is that you can exchange ideas within the team and help each other out, but at home you can put yourself in a bubble to produce more.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other stakeholders remotely? Are you satisfied with these online collaboration tools? How do you use these tools? How are they useful?

Interviewee M:

- **Teams:** I use it every day to chat with colleagues and call customers. I like it, I've got used to it and it's great. It works really well. Some people use Meets and don't like Teams, but I prefer Teams because I'm used to it. It's an indispensable tool, otherwise we'd feel isolated when working remotely.
- **SharePoint:** SharePoint lets you work simultaneously on the same document. With auto-save, there are no problems with document versions. It's an indispensable remote tool. Yeah, it's OK in terms of satisfaction, but I can't compare it, because I don't know any other tools like this one. I'm used to it and it's practical. You can synchronize folders on your PC, so it's easier to manage your documents.
- **Adobe:** The Adobe suite is linked to SharePoint; all documents are on SharePoint, so the save is automatic. Allows you to write comments that are automatically visible to all. In my opinion? It's okay... but I have no choice anyway, they have the monopoly. There are a lot of features, but we have a licensing problem: we have to disconnect people because of a lack of licenses. I have to send a message to people to disconnect, and sometimes I can't access it in a meeting, so it creates urgency, and sometimes no one can disconnect in time, so it's quite problematic. This licensing problem is fixable, but it's expensive.
- **Calenco:** My satisfaction level... Yeah, well, yes and no. I've got used to it and it's quite ergonomic, but the tool is too limited. I'm moderately satisfied, I wouldn't mind using another tool. Oxygen and FrameMaker require training, whereas Calenco is simpler to use at first. The problem is that you can't edit the same document with several people at the same time.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion? (task sharing, communication, efficiency, etc.)

Interviewee M: We have the team meeting. It allows us to communicate with each other and keep track of each other's projects. Organized via Teams. We keep in touch via Teams for the rest of the week to share tasks, solve problems, contact others if we have questions. We communicate quickly and easily via Teams. There's a "coffee break" meeting every Friday to exchange ideas. No worries about that. I rarely make any special effort to ensure cohesion. [Colleague] often says "Hi [Interviewee]" in the morning; he's good at that, but I don't do it much. I only contact the others when I have something I want to talk about. Sometimes I'll send [Colleague] a message to check up on her. A call with a colleague that was supposed to last 2 minutes can end up lasting 1 hour to talk about life and catch up on news. I think it's important to keep in touch. But communication happens unexpectedly.

Interviewer: How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed a change in the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team?

Interviewee M: Quality consistency: In the company, we have internal processes and a certain way of working. We know how we're supposed to work, and we work in much the same way, so documentation is consistent. When we have a project, I find out about it and discuss it with the project manager, particularly with regard to methodology. We agree on how to approach the subject and where to start. Throughout the project, we keep in touch to make sure we're going in the right direction. Before sending it off to a customer, we ask someone else to proofread it. But we're in touch so often from a distance that we can sort out any potential problems anyway. I send you messages to see how things are going, because I'm your internship supervisor, but I don't do it too much with the others, because they're all on projects I already know of and they manage themselves well enough. There's regular communication with people who are on the same project as me and we coordinate. [Colleague] and I often send messages to each other about how to approach projects and how to reply to customers. I don't really see any difference between in-office and decentralized work, but being in-office allows for a greater exchange of ideas. You're not necessarily going to dare call someone to propose an idea or give an opinion. It's easier to talk things over, which can improve the documentation a bit in the end, but remote work is good too. We manage to exchange ideas thanks to our regular calls. Especially with [Project manager], because she often calls everyone to check on things, and we use the opportunity to ask questions and exchange ideas. She's in project management, so that's her role. We're afraid of disturbing others. But if there's a potential problem, we don't hesitate to ask questions. Conclusion: there's no problem with quality.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the main obstacles related to decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee M: It's a bit more complicated to “bother” someone online for help or to get their opinion than in person. The internet connection (which is better at home in my case, though). When there's a connection problem, it becomes difficult to communicate. Sometimes meetings are too slow because of the internet. Loneliness in meetings. I don't like to be listened to by others during meetings, but sometimes Mui doesn't participate in the meeting with me, yet she intervenes from her desk to give me advice or correct what I say. At home, no one hears me to sort things out. It's an advantage and a disadvantage: nobody interferes, there's less stress, but sometimes it saves being heard and corrected.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the main advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee M: It's quiet. That's a big advantage. For meetings it's easier; I'm in my own bubble. When there's a lot of talking going on, it's hard to concentrate. I'm easily distracted, so it's better. At home, the connection is more stable.

Comments: Generally speaking, this profession allows you to work remotely, so there's no need to deprive yourself of remote working. Why cram yourself into a crowded train? The quality of the work is good, the processes are straightforward, everything runs smoothly. Why bother going to the office? Even if it can be nice. I'd be fine with 4 days of work-from-home, but I'd understand if I had to come in once a week. As for the idea that you don't do anything at the office: at the office, sometimes I don't do anything. There are days with a lot of work, of course, but with small talk, coffee and cigarettes, for example, you don't do anything, you're less productive. Why be paranoid about working from home? We should 100% let people choose, there's no point in imposing. Everyone's different. Companies need to evolve on this. I've discussed the idea of switching to 4 days of WFH with the boss, but he's not a fan of the idea. I've given plenty of arguments in favor of it and said working from home wouldn't stop me from coming in once a week. But that was when you (Interviewer) were about to arrive, so it wasn't the right moment to be fully remote at the time.

Appendix N: Technical Writing Manager (Paris)

Interviewer: To what extent do you work in a hybrid or not? (Number of days, etc.)

Interviewee N: I only work in the office.

Interviewer: Which work mode do you prefer? Remote work, at the office, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee N: I work entirely in the office, with no remote work, to foster group synergy and avoid overworking. It helps maintain clear boundaries between work and personal life. I live 15 minutes away from the office anyway. Being in the office allows me to engage directly with my team, facilitating more effective communication and collaboration. This way, I'm available to help others spontaneously in the office. I also like talking to the people who work in the same building as us.

Interviewer: Do you feel more productive? Are you more productive?

Interviewee N: Absolutely, I feel way more productive in the office. The structure here helps me stay on task and meet deadlines. I can dive into my work and stay focused. Being around my colleagues also makes collaboration easier and more effective. It's how I like to work. That's it.

Interviewer: What initiatives have you taken to bring together, organize, evaluate, and/or motivate your team in a hybrid/full-remote context?

Interviewee N: We have weekly virtual meetings. Every Monday, a team meeting to discuss what tasks are to be undertaken during the week. This is supposed to allow us to ask for help on a project more freely and also be aware of what's being worked on within the company. It's a good way to make sure our remote coworkers get to hear everyone speak every week without fail to keep contact. Every Friday, we have a "coffee break" so we can talk about anything other than work, especially our weekend plans. It's easier to make sure we have casual conversations with each other even when we're far from the office this way. It's also important for us that our remote team

members come to our seminars. We make sure they are all available when we pick the dates. This really helps everyone feel like they're part of the same company and feel like they're working towards the company's future together. Our remote coworkers have expressed that this is a great opportunity.

Interviewer: What are the main obstacles to managing a decentralized technical communications team?

Interviewee N: Maintaining team cohesion. Sometimes there are mistakes being made and when we talk it over, some of them say they didn't want to bother a coworker who might've had the solution. This could happen without remote work, of course, but it's probably exacerbated by being in front of a screen and not real people. Making sure everyone understands each project's goals requires additional effort. Sometimes, I catch errors on the fly by just walking by your screens. This isn't possible online. We have to be more careful. But I'm not shy when it comes to calling... everyone! You've seen it, I call everyone all the time. Well, not all the time, but on a regular basis, if I want to check up on them or have a question. But keeping this in mind even when I'm submerged by work is difficult. Much more difficult. I do believe coming to the office is more beneficial to the company culture. Sometimes there are debates on imposing office days but I don't want to back down on this. [Company CEO] agrees as well.

Interviewer: What do you see as the advantages of managing a decentralized technical communications team?

Interviewee N: I have accepted this job knowing we would do a lot of online meetings and online work, so this (decentralized work) couldn't be something I didn't like. I don't like fully remote but I don't mind remote aspects of work. So I think not being restricted to geographical parameters makes this line of work much more interesting. Like our team members in Nantes; this could mean opening a Nantes office in the future. That's exciting. This also helped them find a job they truly enjoy without sacrificing their family life. I also like helping people find their own work style. Knowing some people are happier working in a hybrid setting reassures that they are more satisfied with the job. This is also good for strikes and other issues. Just the other day the RER broke down and Benjamin was happy to stay home without having to struggle to try and find a way to come to work. This eliminates any worries about attendance or whatnot.

Interviewer: How do you organize the integration and support of new team members in hybrid/full-remote environments?

Interviewee N: This is something we are working on. We have them come to the office for in-person interviews. Ideally, we want full-remote collaborators to come a few days on-site at the beginning to get their laptop and get to know the software, talk to their new colleagues. But we don't have this process streamlined yet. We're a very new and small company so almost every hire has been very different from the previous.

Appendix O: Junior Technical Writer (Vendée)

Interviewer: To what extent do you work in a hybrid or not? (Number of days, etc.)

Interviewee O: I work from home 100% of the time, except for three days a month when I go into the office. It's a choice, because it feels too long working from home all the time, I need to see my team.

Interviewer: Which work mode do you prefer? Remote work, at the office, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee O: I prefer the combination of the two. I need to see my team and realize that I'm part of a company. I feel the need to interact with people. But I also appreciate working from home, because it makes me a better employee and a better mom.

Interviewer: Do you feel more productive? Have you observed increased productivity?

Interviewee O: Definitely. I realize it when I go to Paris.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other stakeholders remotely? Are you satisfied with these online collaboration tools? How do you use these tools? How are they useful?

Interviewee O: We use Teams and WhatsApp. I'm very happy with it; it works well as long as you have a good connection. When I have questions, rather than writing, I call directly. It's also an excuse to talk to someone directly, rather than writing an e-mail which can be misinterpreted. I always turn on the webcam so people don't forget my face. I need to see people visually. I have friends who do a lot of work from home and they have to turn on their webcams; it's the trade-off for being allowed to work from home.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion? (task sharing, communication, efficiency, etc.)

Interviewee O: I asked to come into the office three days a month to see everyone. I've set up a group chat on Teams so I can ask everyone questions directly and get a general answer. I also plan to bring some beer from Vendée next time. And bread! As far as work is concerned, we keep each other informed of what we're doing, and I let my colleagues know when my tasks may have an impact on theirs. We communicate via Teams and call each other.

Interviewer: How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed a change in the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team?

Interviewee O: I work on a lot of documents alone. I asked my colleagues how they usually worked on [Client company] documents. I ask them how they do it. I find that we lack consistency in file naming. I haven't put anything in place yet, but I think it's a project to be launched soon. More consistency could be introduced via a CRM (customer relationship management) perhaps...

Interviewer: What are the main obstacles related to decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee O:

- Availability: you don't know when people are available or not. I set my profile to “away” to make myself a cup of coffee upstairs.
- Not seeing people, not seeing their facial expressions when I talk to them. I've worked in catering, in a campsite, and I do Airbnb to host people. With 100% WFH, I'm afraid of becoming a bit wild, too solitary. I force myself to turn on the webcam.
- Not getting to know people well enough. At the office, we'd get to talk about other things than work during lunchtime.

Interviewer: What do you see as the advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee O:

- Productivity: I'm more focused. Having worked in an open space office, when it comes to reading or writing a document, I need to be focused so as not to get confused. I find it hard to switch off my focus when I'm immersed in something. I get on with my work.
- Availability for my daughter: she's very independent, so I don't need to put her in daycare, and our relationship is better now. As for the dogs, I can leave them in the front yard. It's a personal and professional asset, and suits me perfectly. I'm much more fulfilled. I work a bit later usually (until 6-7pm) but I don't have any commute to upset me, so I'm definitely satisfied.
- Expenses: I don't have to pay for childcare or gas. That's a financial asset too.

Appendix P: Junior Technical Writer (Paris)

Interviewer: To what extent do you work in a hybrid mode or not? (Number of days, etc.)

Interviewee P: I work in hybrid 1 or 2 days a week. It depends on SNCF or RATP strikes, or sometimes just lack of motivation.

Interviewer: Which work mode do you prefer? Remote work, at the office, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee P: I prefer the combination of the two. It's good to go into the office sometimes to see colleagues and maintain the social link (except with Janaina, of course). Work from home can lead to loneliness, as people rarely use the webcam during Teams calls. The hybrid is sometimes oversold; if you're not organized, you may not work well from home, which can create tension. Being able to move around and not stay at home all the time is important.

Interviewer: Do you feel more productive? Have you observed increased productivity?

Interviewee P: Compared to my alternance year, yes, I feel more productive. I have a bit more responsibility and autonomy in my projects. In distance learning, I tend to take my time more than in the classroom. There's less stress, so I'm more at ease, but maybe a little less productive.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other stakeholders remotely? Are you satisfied with these online collaboration tools? How do you use these tools? How are they useful?

Interviewee P: We use Teams during our working hours (9 AM - 5 PM) and WhatsApp. Teams is efficient, fast, and easy to learn. We use WhatsApp when Teams has issues or to exchange more personal information outside of work. We're happy with these tools; they're useful. We also use Calenco, Word, the Office suite, and Furious for activity reports. They work very well for collaborative work.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion? (task sharing, communication, efficiency, etc.)

Interviewee P: Team cohesion is ensured mainly by communication, often at the start of a project, to avoid wasting time re-explaining the ins and outs to a colleague who could help us, and thus avoid delegation problems. I send GIFs to lighten the mood. We're a small company, so we don't really have the problem of lack of proximity. It's harder to create links in a big company like Dassault. Outside work, we sometimes talk on WhatsApp, which helps maintain team cohesion.

Interviewer: How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed a change in the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team?

Interviewee P: We try to develop a method right from the start of the project. This minimizes divergence and inconsistency in a document worked on by several people. This way, everyone knows what to do, even when they're far away. If we have any doubts, we can ask questions. Thanks to the hybrid system, we can wait to ask questions in the office, with everyone in front of us.

Interviewer: What are the main obstacles related to decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee P: If the work is not properly monitored, this can cause problems. Someone who's comfortable in the job won't have too many obstacles, but a beginner who isn't sufficiently monitored will see their work impacted, as well as that of the company. It's important to make sure there's proofreading. Luckily, SharePoint makes it possible to see everyone's work from a distance. Network problems can cut us off from the world and from work. There's a lack of communication if the link isn't created from the jump.

Interviewer: What do you see as the advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee P: Working from home is an advantage. Face-to-face work can be very time-consuming, due to mini-breaks and conversations. Working from home means greater productivity and avoiding commute.

Appendix Q: Junior Technical Writer (Nantes)

Interviewer: To what extent do you work in a hybrid mode or not? (Number of days, etc.)

Interviewee Q: I work three days in Paris and two days working from home in principle.

Interviewer: Which work mode do you prefer? Remote work, at the office, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee Q: I prefer the combination of the two. I like working from home, but I also like being in the office, especially at the beginning, to get to know the people there. At the beginning of January, I was offered the chance to telework full-time, but I didn't feel part of the team and wasn't comfortable. Work from home allows me to manage my time myself. I've been working this way for a long time, so I'm quite used to it.

Interviewer: Do you feel more productive? Have you observed increased productivity?

Interviewee Q: I'm more productive when I work from home. It depends, like when I'm doing the laundry or the dishes, but generally speaking, at home I don't have anyone around to offer me a coffee or to make small talk with me. However, face-to-face working allows me to ask my colleagues for advice directly, even if Teams technically serves the same purpose.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other stakeholders remotely? Are you satisfied with these online collaboration tools? How do you use these tools? How are they useful?

Interviewee Q: We mainly use Teams. Screen sharing is very useful. In real life, showing your screen directly is nice too, but when you're working from home, the person can see how you're working more easily, there's even a feature that allows you to manipulate the other person's window. Instant messaging and phone calls allow you to reply when you have time, or to call back in an emergency, which is very practical. As far as document sharing is concerned, there are difficulties when you move elements in the document at the same time, like on Word. If I don't disable the "track changes" option, the software crashes, causing other elements on the page to move. We don't use too many connected management tools to organize tasks and workloads. It's something being implemented though.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion? (task sharing, communication, efficiency, etc.)

Interviewee Q: We organize team meetings and coffee breaks. I like to be at ease with people, so I'll reach out to lighten the mood or if I feel some tension, especially with colleagues. Not so much with customers, of course. Remotely, I try to be a little more present, responsive, and pleasant. At a distance, misunderstandings can be harder to defuse. On the same project, we don't approach things in the same way. There can be tension when you're working on the same document and you're on edge, but you know it's not intentional. When we talk to each other on Teams, we try to find a solution so

that things don't get complicated despite the constraints. Our team helps me, because I know it's good and motivated.

Interviewer: How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team? Have you noticed a change in the quality and consistency of your documentation in a decentralized team?

Interviewee Q: It's hard to say. I work alone a lot. We each make our own documents for [project name redacted]. Otherwise, we have a weekly meeting with the customer. With [Project name redacted], it's difficult to work on the same document at the same time. We have to agree on how to work to avoid redoing the whole document. Screen sharing helps in this case.

Interviewer: What are the main obstacles related to decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee Q: Demonstrating several tools at the same time can be complicated. In the office, we can show both screens, but with Teams, only one screen is visible. When there are several source documents, it's not necessarily easy to show them all, but we adapt. For example, by putting two documents side by side on a single screen. But the problem doesn't arise too much.

Interviewer: What do you see as the advantages of decentralized technical communication?

Interviewee Q:

- The ability to see and manipulate via screen sharing is an advantage.
- The fact that you're not with your colleagues every day means that you don't have to impose your mood on others, or suffer from others'.
- You can create conditions that suit you. At home, you're free to do things the way you want, but face-to-face, you're more available to share with others, even if it's perhaps a little less productive. It's useful for thinking things through together.
- On Teams, there can be a time lag, and when we talk at the same time, we can't hear each other, whereas in person, it's more fluid. It's also a question of habit; learning to adapt is important in life. Some people don't feel at ease in a group, which can be toxic for others. They don't have to put up with the group, and the group doesn't have to put up with them either. This allows them to step back from a difficult situation, for example.

Appendix R: Senior Technical Writer (Paris)

Interviewer: To what extent do you work in a hybrid mode or not? (Number of days, etc.)

Interviewee R: My current contract specifies that I need to be in the office at least twice a week. Although it's flexible and I can come in more frequently if necessary, I usually adhere to the two-day requirement and work remotely for the remaining three days. This setup allows me to balance office presence with the flexibility of remote work.

The requirement was introduced around October last year. Initially, there was no fixed mandate for office presence, but the board of directors decided it was crucial for enhancing team communication and cohesion. This change aimed to strike a balance between the benefits of remote work and the need for occasional in-person interaction.

My career began with a full-time office setup, where being on-site every day was the norm. The transition to remote work started with the pandemic and has been ongoing since then. Over time, I've come to appreciate the flexibility and autonomy of working from home. I find that remote work allows me to avoid the daily commute, manage my time more efficiently, and create a work environment that suits my personal preferences. The ability to control my workspace and schedule has proven to be highly beneficial for my productivity and well-being.

Interviewer: Which work mode do you prefer? Remote work, at the office, or a combination of the two?

Interviewee R: I prefer remote work overall. The freedom to work from home eliminates commuting stress and allows me to design my work environment for optimal comfort and focus. I've found that remote work significantly boosts my productivity as I can tailor my workspace and work hours to fit my personal rhythms and minimize distractions. However, I recognize the value of hybrid work for maintaining team connections and collaborating on projects that benefit from face-to-face interaction.

Interviewer: What tools and technologies do you use to collaborate with other stakeholders remotely? Are you satisfied with these online collaboration tools? How do you use these tools? How are they useful?

R: I lean towards using Slack and email for most of my communications because I find that meetings can often be redundant. I prefer to use asynchronous tools to reduce interruptions and maintain focus. For complex discussions or topics that require visual aids, I'll schedule a Google Meet session. To manage the flow of information and avoid overwhelm, I've set up notifications and filters to prioritize important messages and minimize distractions.

Interviewer: How do you ensure team cohesion? (task sharing, communication, efficiency, etc.)

R: Collaboration with remote team members is facilitated through a mix of regular updates and collaborative tools. We hold weekly meetings to review progress and align on objectives. Additionally, we have monthly

brainstorming sessions where we discuss new ideas and share resources. For ongoing projects, we use shared platforms like Google Drive or Figma to collaborate in real-time. This approach ensures that all team members, whether remote or in-office, stay connected and engaged.

R: Coordinating with team members who are not always in the office involves leveraging digital tools and clear communication practices. We use project management tools to track progress and set deadlines. Regular check-ins and status updates help keep everyone informed. When necessary, we schedule video meetings to discuss critical aspects of the projects. This approach allows us to overcome the limitations of physical distance and ensures that all team members are aligned and contributing effectively.

R: For new features or products, collaboration starts with thorough discussions and planning sessions with project designers and other stakeholders. We use shared documents and collaborative platforms to draft and refine content, allowing for real-time input and feedback. Regular review meetings help us address any issues and ensure alignment on objectives. Additionally, incorporating feedback from all relevant parties is crucial for delivering a well-rounded final product. This iterative process ensures that we produce high-quality work that meets the needs of all stakeholders.

Interviewer: What are the main obstacles related to decentralized technical communication?

R: One challenge I've faced is maintaining a clear boundary between work and personal life when working from home. To address this, I've established a dedicated workspace and set specific work hours to create a routine. Another challenge is ensuring effective communication with remote team members, which I manage by using a mix of synchronous and asynchronous tools and setting clear expectations for response times. These strategies help me stay organized and maintain productivity while working remotely.

Appendix S: Technical Writing Manager (Paris)

Interviewer: Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today. To start, could you elaborate on your current work arrangement? Do you work remotely, in the office, or in a hybrid mode?

Interviewee S: I work fully remotely. Since our transition to a remote work model, which began about two years ago, this setup has become our standard practice. The nature of our work, particularly in psychometrical testing and HR, has proven to be highly compatible with a remote environment. We found that this model not only supports our operational needs but also aligns with our organizational goals of flexibility and efficiency.

Interviewer: Given the options of remote work, in-office work, or a hybrid approach, which mode do you prefer and why?

Interviewee S: I prefer remote work. The flexibility it offers is invaluable, especially given that our team is dispersed across different locations. Remote work allows me to manage my schedule more effectively, balancing work with personal commitments without the constraints of commuting. It also enables us to utilize a broader talent pool, which is crucial for our specialized field.

Interviewer: Have you noticed any changes in your productivity with remote work? Do you feel that you are more productive in this arrangement compared to working in the office?

Interviewee S: Absolutely, I've observed a significant increase in my productivity with remote work. One of the biggest benefits is the reduction in daily commute, which frees up time that I can invest in work. The quiet and controlled environment at home allows me to focus deeply on complex tasks without the usual office distractions. My team members also report similar productivity gains. The ability to work in an environment tailored to individual preferences and needs has been a major factor in this improvement.

Interviewer: What initiatives have you put in place to ensure your team remains cohesive, organized, and motivated in a fully remote setup?

Interviewee S: We have implemented several strategies to maintain team cohesion and productivity. Firstly, we use a variety of collaboration tools. For project management and task tracking, we rely on JIRA. This tool helps us keep a clear overview of project progress and deadlines. Communication is handled through Slack, which facilitates both real-time discussions and asynchronous messaging, making it easier to stay connected despite different time zones.

To ensure regular communication, we hold weekly virtual team meetings where we discuss ongoing projects, set priorities, and address any issues. Additionally, I conduct one-on-one check-ins with team members to provide personalized feedback and support. These meetings are crucial for addressing individual concerns and maintaining a strong connection with each team member.

Motivating the team is also important, so we organize virtual social events, such as online game nights and casual video chats, to help build relationships and team spirit. Recognizing and celebrating achievements through virtual announcements or awards is another way we keep morale high.

Interviewer: What challenges have you encountered in managing a decentralized technical communications team, and how have you addressed them?

Interviewee S: Managing a decentralized team comes with its own set of challenges. One of the primary difficulties is coordinating communication across various time zones. This requires careful planning to ensure that all team members are aligned and that meetings are scheduled at convenient times for everyone. To mitigate this, we use shared calendars and scheduling tools to coordinate availability and set clear deadlines.

Another challenge is maintaining team cohesion and building relationships without face-to-face interactions. To address this, we invest in creating opportunities for virtual engagement and team-building. We also focus on establishing clear communication protocols and setting expectations for responsiveness and collaboration.

Managing conflicts and ensuring that everyone adheres to the same standards can also be more complex without in-person supervision. To overcome this, we emphasize the importance of adherence to established guidelines and encourage open communication to resolve issues promptly.

Interviewer: What do you consider to be the main advantages of managing a decentralized technical communications team?

Interviewee S: The advantages are numerous. One of the biggest benefits is the flexibility that remote work provides. It allows team members to work from locations that best suit their personal and professional needs, which can lead to improved work-life balance and overall job satisfaction.

Another advantage is the ability to tap into a diverse talent pool. Remote work eliminates geographical constraints, enabling us to hire skilled professionals from various regions. This diversity enriches our team and brings a variety of perspectives and skills to our projects.

Additionally, remote work reduces the costs associated with maintaining physical office space and commuting. This cost efficiency can be redirected towards other areas, such as employee development and technology upgrades, which can further enhance our team's performance and satisfaction.

Interviewer: How do you handle the integration and support of new team members in a fully remote environment?

Interviewee S: Integrating new team members remotely requires a structured approach. We start with a comprehensive onboarding process that includes virtual training sessions on our systems, tools, and processes. New hires are introduced to the team through virtual meet-and-greet sessions, where they can get to know their colleagues and understand team dynamics.

We also provide detailed documentation that covers everything from technical procedures to company culture. This ensures that new team members have access to the information they need to get up to speed quickly.

To facilitate a smooth transition, we assign a mentor or buddy to each new hire. This mentor provides guidance, answers questions, and helps the new team member acclimate to the remote work environment. Regular check-ins with the new hire and their mentor help address any challenges and ensure that they are fully supported.

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing your experiences and insights. Your perspective on managing a fully remote team is incredibly valuable and offers a clear understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with this work model.

Interviewee S: It's been a pleasure to discuss these topics. I hope our experiences can offer useful insights to others navigating the remote work landscape.