Leading in Times of Crisis: Building your Resiliency Skills

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Leading in Times of Crisis: Building Your Resiliency Skills

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Leading in Times of Crisis: Building Your Resiliency Skills

AGENDA

● Adapting to dynamics in the workplace
● Managing a diverse workforce during a crisis
● Leadership within a socially distant environment
● Fostering Resilience with Innovation
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Adapting to Dynamics in the Workplace

ADAPTING TO DYNAMICS IN THE WORKPLACE

- Our “Black Swan” Moment
- Crisis Management
- Defining the Canary in your Coal Mine
- Adaptation Questions
COVID-19: Our “Black Swan” Event

What is a “Black Swan” Event?

First set forth by Nassim Nicholas Taleb, he defines three attributes that are common to all black swan events:

1. The event is unpredictable (to the observer)
2. The event has widespread ramifications
3. After the event has occurred, people will assert that it was indeed explainable and predictable (hindsight bias).
2020: Not all Crises are created equal

- 47% of employers say they have the capabilities or processes needed to meet a crisis with the best possible outcome.

- 77% of finance leaders plan to change safety measures during the COVID-19 crisis.

- The top 4 issues on employee’s mind in April 2020 were: financial security (81%), health and wellbeing (56%), family (25%) and productivity and work (24%).

- 50% of American organizations have no remote work policy.

- 30% of crisis professionals believe that employees are the most overlooked stakeholders when their organizations deal with a crisis.

- 62% of work emails received are deemed not important.

Building Your Resiliency Skills: Canary in a“Coal Mine”

What can the canary tell us?

From the 18th century mining idiom, we know of four suggestions for extra diligence during all black swan events.

The canary can...

1. Offer advanced warning of some danger (not readily evident to the observer)
2. Point to oddities, anomalies and unexpected actions which can be integrated into understandings of the Civic landscape
3. Identify those most susceptible among our populations in advance of the majority experiencing adverse effects or widespread ramifications
4. Document failure to predict outcomes
Who is the “canary in the coal mine” that most often offers me the early warning and detection signals to aid adaptations?

1. **Family, friends or trusted colleagues** who mention their discomfort with someone’s action, belief system or a current event.

2. **Anomalies in daily work experiences** which don’t fit into my budget models or expected outcomes... such as a run on services or changes in normal patterns of behavior by others.

3. **The elderly, disabled or underemployed that I know**, and the homeless or jobless report having new difficulties or experiences which are more challenging than usual for them.

4. **When plans don’t work out** more often than they do, when I feel like I’m pushing a rock uphill and not getting anywhere.
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Managing a Diverse Workforce during Crisis

MANAGING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE DURING A CRISIS

- Inter-Generational Organizations
- Generational Characteristics
- Generational Strategies
- Unconscious Bias
- Diverse and Inclusive Strategies
- Diversity Questions
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Contemporary Colleagues

Inter-Generational Organizations: The 5 Contemporary Office Colleagues

- **Silent Generation** known for “lacking ambition” as they learned to “make things work.” Raised in an era of economic boom with high prospects for employment. Born circa 1925-45

- **Baby Boomers** raised in an era of change and questioned social norms and behaviors. Inherent traits of experimentalism, activism, **individualism** and free spiritedness. Desire for acquired wealth creates tendency to continue working. Born circa 1946-64

- **Generation X** has entrepreneurial tendencies and the first generation to be “peer” oriented, which encourages **team-driven environments**, seeking work-life balance, willing to accept reductions in compensation for external benefits. Born circa 1965-80

- **Millennials** have preference towards meaningful work, a flat corporate culture, social consciousness, **flexibility**, less stability with enhanced short-term opportunity, and instantaneous feedback. Born circa 1981-2000

- **Gen Z’ers** are seeking more than a job; seeking professional fulfillment. Social media has redirected their focus from collective experiences, to **one-on-one interactions**. Born circa 2001-???
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Generational Characteristics

Generational Characteristics:

**Silent Gen & Baby Boomers:** Optimistic, Enjoy mentoring, Strong work ethic

**Gen X (and Xennials):** Independent, Innovative, Strong communicators

**Millennials:** Tech-savvy, Collaborative, Focused on the greater good

**Gen Z (and Gen 2020):** Digitally fluent, Practical, Flourish in diverse workforces
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Generational Strategies

Generational Strategies:

### Silent Gen & Baby Boomers:
Leverage their optimism, utilize suggestions & experience.

### Gen X (and Xennials):
Take advantage of their ability to think innovatively, leverage their communication skills.

### Millennials:
Ask for digital and collaboration ideas, utilize their knowledge of digital sources.

### Gen Z (and Gen 2020):
Get input on ways to socialize while working remotely, leverage their digital literacy.

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**5 Tactics for Working with Cross-Generational Teams**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rethink the Boring Stuff</th>
<th>Flex the Hours</th>
<th>Help Them Learn</th>
<th>Give Good Reasons</th>
<th>Learn From Each Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore new technology offered up by tech-savvy younger employees to reduce repetitive and rote work for everyone.</td>
<td>No matter their age, employees want a life outside work, so balance off-hours coverage so no one has to work 24/7.</td>
<td>Older &amp; younger employees can mentor each other in different ways (eg. being organizationally vs. technologically savvy).</td>
<td>Don’t insist on doing something just because that’s the way it’s always been done.</td>
<td>Both age groups can offer wisdom to one another, if they’re open to hearing it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Building Your Resiliency Skills: Unconscious Bias

Unconscious Biases to Watch Out for in Crisis

- **Affinity bias**: Like individuals vs. Seeking talent outside of “go-to” circles for assignments and opportunities.

- **Confirmation bias**: Information which confirms our beliefs vs. Lack of information picked up casually from “others” requires creating spaces to connect more deeply.

- **Personality error bias**: Assuming behavior is core to personality without considering external factors vs. not all situations are equal, understanding behavior may be a product of circumstances not the person.

Source: “Practicing inclusive leadership in times of crisis”
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Diverse and Inclusive

Diverse and Inclusive Strategies Designing a Regenerative Culture:

- Get educated
- Get comfortable with being uncomfortable
- Build trust and acceptance
- Provide for different approaches to work
- Generate Creative Friction
- Expand ways in which people can contribute
- Support people with tools and practices
- Invite people to the table
- Excel at Experimentation (… and failure)

Building Your Resiliency Skills: Diversity Questions

What best practices can we adopt to foster inclusivity and support our diversity?

1. What surveys or mechanisms do we have to validate any new policies or guidelines promotes equitable treatment of all employees and to consider whether employees have equal access to the resources needed to perform their jobs?
2. Given remote work and the nature of working new schedules (if possible), are there low-cost, high-impact practices to foster psychological safety and show appreciation for or recognize employees of all types for their contributions?
3. What conditions can we create for employees to speak up and confidently make professional concerns and personal needs known?
4. How can we leverage the collective brain power of our diverse workforce to help expose policies or behaviors that are unintentionally exclusive?
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Leadership within a Socially Distant Environment

LEADERSHIP WITHIN A SOCIALLY DISTANT ENVIRONMENT

- Binary Choices
- Banking on Leadership
- Bodies in Motion
- The Opposite of Meh
- Engaging in Return to Work Planning
- Sample Communication Calendar
- The Power of Yet
- Preparation Questions
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Binary Choices

Decision making in crisis mode: A public servant’s unique role

- Prior decisions have consequences and are (mostly) binary choices
- Define the crisis as your opportunity
- Pivot your perspective
- Make a new decision
- Manage toward your future vision
- Execute a solution

Suggested for more reading:
- Leadership in Times of Crisis
- What Every Leader Needs to Know About Followers
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Banking on Leadership

Building a Reservoir of Personal Good Will

● Prepare the organization and stakeholders in advance
   ○ Outreach
   ○ Be consistent
   ○ Garner trust
   ○ Actively engage
   ○ Always remember
● Create space for support and supporters to go on record, to be ‘deposited’ for storage and safekeeping.
● Pivot “business as usual” to the acts of resiliency.

Suggested for more reading:
- 6 Challenges Leaders Face
- Thoughts about Followship
- TED Talk: How to Start A Movement
A body in motion, stays in motion

- Draw upon your preparation
- Ask a LOT of questions
- Identify gaps in service, ravages to the system and failing delivery technologies
- Find others willing to help, aka the “80/20 Rule”
- Never let doubt slow you down
- Don’t stand still

Suggested for more reading:
- Leadership Theory and Practice (Northouse)
- GAP Analysis Tools Help Identify Opportunities (a blog)
Building Your Resiliency Skills: The Opposite of Meh

The opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference.

- Take Action
- Revitalize old project management skills
- Don’t Give UP, Don’t stop moving
- Outcomes are ultimately determined by the tenacity of our leaders

The price of apathy towards public affairs is to be ruled by evil men.

~Plato~
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Engaging in Return-to-Work

Practical planning steps include:

• Start or renew discussions on agency purpose, based on discoveries from the crisis.
  o For survivors, how do we retain our purpose in a changed world?
  o For adapters, how do we move quickly to new ways of working?
  o For thrivers, how do we maintain our current success as the world slowly returns to normal?

• Set the strategic direction in context by developing, articulating, and sharing the organization’s new/refreshed change story—the “How do we get there, and why will it be worth it?” This will help people understand what the future looks like:
  o What has changed over the last few months?
  o What has stayed the same? (This includes the enduring values story.)
  o How do we prioritize?
  o What are new expectations of leaders? Of employees?

• Commit/recommit to organizational health. This could include new or updated diagnostics and surveys.

• Continue to monitor the effectiveness of communication over the course of a few months; evaluate and adjust as needed.

Building Your Resiliency Skills: Engaging in Return-to-Work

Sample of a Communication Calendar Idea

Create a communication calendar with steps that can help make returning employees more comfortable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On day 1</th>
<th>During week 1</th>
<th>During month 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome back those who are returning</td>
<td>Identify unexpected positive outcomes and cultural changes to retain for when the crisis ends</td>
<td>Hold conversations about ways we have worked during the crisis. What do people want to keep, what do they want to adapt, and what do they want never to experience again?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on discovery from the crisis, and celebrate values</td>
<td>Continue activities to honor the past</td>
<td>Showcase “my isolation transformation.” Transformation could be anything—physical, a new skill. Feature folks in various communications vehicles; award swag for coolest transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlight how employees and the company have rallied through the crisis</td>
<td>Encourage random acts of kindness</td>
<td>Prepare to look to the future by moving the focus of messaging to new opportunities and strategic questions rather than the transition itself (by analogy, talk about married life rather than the wedding ceremony)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For survivors—how have we stayed afloat and who has helped us do that?</td>
<td>• Leaders need to be physically present—perfect the art of the walkthrough; communicate in small groups</td>
<td>Monitor the effectiveness of communication: through regular pulse surveys, probably weekly; evaluate, adjust:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For adaptors—how did we pivot to our new model and who drove that?</td>
<td>• Ideally the week 1 activities will be in person and typically in working groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For thrivers—how did we rally to help our customers/users when they needed us most?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honor the past</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This will ideally be an in-person event for as many people as possible, as well as streamed (and recorded) for those unable to be present.
Read or watch Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck discuss decades of research on achievement and success to learn more about her idea - the power of our mindset.

On Youtube: “The Power of Yet” with Carol Dweck, PhD.
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Preparation Questions

What are strategic ways to prepare for the work world we are returning to?

1. What strategy have you seen used to build social capital in advance of needing organizational and/or community supports?
2. What have you changed in your public role or managerial role to pivot your focus on opportunities for the organization?
3. What new actions have you initiated to revitalize and energize your team, organization or constituents?
4. What gap has been exposed and who might help you move forward?
5. Who can you empower to help?
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Fostering Resilience with Innovation

FOSTERING RESILIENCE WITH INNOVATION
- Establishing the Skill Set
- Fostering Resilience
- Managing for Innovation
- Organizational Resilience
- Innovation Questions

*Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.*

*Steve Jobs*
Building Your Resiliency Skills: The Ability to Bounce Back

Establishing the Skill Set: Resilience

- Hardiness
- Learned Habits
- Reducing Vulnerabilities to Stress
- Effective Communications
- Team Player who enables others to succeed
- Builds Trust
- Authentic
- GRIT: A fighting spirit
- Acts Mindfully
Why Foster Resilience?

- Personally cope with stress and unexpected challenges
- Help buffer workplace stress and frustration that leads to burnout
- Increase physical and psychological wellbeing
- To thrive is to ADAPT

Source: Journal of Organizational Behavior, J. Organiz. Behav. (2015) Published online in Wiley Online Library (wileyonlinelibrary.com) DOI: 10.1002/job.2063
Managing for Innovation

- A bewitching problem that demands fresh thinking
- Novel principles or paradigms that have the power to illuminate new approaches;
- A careful deconstruction of the conventions and dogma that constrain creative thinking;
- Examples and analogies that help redefine what’s possible.

Key Elements of Organizational Resilience in the Face of COVID-19

- Prioritize Safety
- Create Structure
- Improve Trust and Transparency
- Collaborate with Mutuality
- Give Voice and Choice
- Provide Peer Support

Source: "Building Organizational Resilience in the Face of COVID-19"
www.TheNationalCouncil.org
Building Your Resiliency Skills: Innovation Questions

What approaches will you consider for building resilience with innovations?

1. How well did employees handle remote work? Will they feel safe returning? How can you ensure employees follow your advice?
2. Did employees feel informed all the time? Have you designed and implemented new practices and structure to enable success?
3. Were you fast enough in answering employees’ questions? Was the information useful to them?
4. What new activities have you undertaken to connect employees? What tool or practice have you adopted to ensure transparency?
5. Did employees actually read updates? Can you engage more employees in providing information and new activities in future updates?
6. What real choice are you providing to employees? Does the choice that they are given relate to a top concern as expressed by employees?
7. Were you able to control the spread of misinformation in the workplace?
8. What new program or activity have you introduced to provide peer support?
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IN CONCLUSION

- Adapting to dynamics in the workplace
- Managing a diverse workforce during a crisis
- Leadership within a socially distant environment
- Fostering Resilience with Innovation
Sources for More Information- All Citations Available Upon Request

- Tracking the Global Impact
- Six Challenges Leaders Face
- Thoughts about Followship
- TED Talk: How to Start A Movement
- Outbreak Morphs into a Political Minefield
- Pandemic Confusing Uncertainty
- Political Systems Resiliency from Systems Innovation
- How to Increase and Sustain Political Engagement
- Leadership in Times of Crisis: A Framework for Assessment
- What Every Leader Needs to Know About Followers
- GAP Analysis Tools Help Identify Opportunities (a blog)
- USC Price School Master in Public Degree online program
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Thank you!