Re-energizing organizations for the long-term

Discussion document
December 2020
Covid-19 impact on society

~65M Cases worldwide

~1.5M Deaths worldwide

~10 trillion Cumulative global output loss

>50% Of world population have been under COVID-19 lockdowns
COVID has also seen organizations achieve heroic achievements in record time

**Redeploying talent**
A global telco redeployed 1,000 store employees to inside sales and retrained them in 3 weeks

**Launching new business models**
US-based retailer launched curbside delivery in 2 days vs. a previously planned 18 months

**Improving productivity**
An industrial factory ran at 90-percent-plus capacity with 40 percent of the workforce

**Developing new products**
An engineering company designed and manufactured ventilators within a week

**Shifting operations**
Coordinating with local officials, a major shipbuilder switched from three shifts to two, with thousands of employees
Despite the upside, organizations and workforces are struggling with “pandemic fatigue,” which if not managed could drag on for years.

Post-crisis response stages

Trigger events and anniversary reactions
Trigger events and anniversary reactions

Working through grief
Impact

Warning
Pre-disaster

"Heroic" (Community Cohesion)
Honeymoon

Disillusionment

Reimagine and reconstruct a new beginning

Early days
2+ years

Time

75% of employees in the US report symptoms of burnout, and rising

Employees report “very poor” mental health at a rate 3x higher than pre-crisis, and rising

39% of leaders report their own or a family member’s physical health negatively affected by the virus, and rising

Where are you personally?

Post-crisis response stages

- Pre-disaster
- Warning
- Threat
- Impact
- "Heroic"
- Honeymoon (Community Cohesion)
- Disillusionment
- Working through grief
- Trigger events and anniversary reactions
- Reimagine and reconstruct a new beginning

Where do you think your organizations are?

Post-crisis response stages

- Pre-disaster
  - Warning
  - Threat

- Impact

- “Heroic” (Community Cohesion)

- Honeymoon

- Disillusionment

- Working through grief

- Reimagine and reconstruct a new beginning

Trigger events and anniversary reactions

Early days

Time

2+ years

Even as recent news gives hope, it is more important than ever to proceed with bounded optimism.

Post-impact stages of community crisis response

In the face of early good news, i.e., prospect of a vaccine, leaders should retain a healthy dose of realism about the timeframe and struggles still to come.

Too much optimism too soon puts individuals and organizations at risk of further disillusionment.
Leaders can help the workforce through these challenges, mitigate burnout, and recharge the organization with renewed energy.

Post-impact stages of community crisis response

Leaders need to shift focus:

**From:** Responding to the crisis, using “steely grit” to endure, or being overly optimistic about “getting back to normal”

**To:** Providing empathy and support, creating a new narrative for the future, and building resilience & adaptability for what comes next.
Recognizing that each organization will have to “learn its way” into the answer—it could include elements from a few related areas

**EXAMPLES OF WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE DOING**

- **Develop individual skills at scale**
  - Launch modular capability building program to help leaders develop resilient/adaptable behaviors
  - Build communities and networks between learning cohorts

- **Focus on care, connection and well-being**
  - Re-write the narrative with purpose and bounded optimism
  - Hardwire recovery and self-care and have leaders visibly role model its importance

- **Evolve the operating model for the future**
  - Reground in purpose and enterprise priorities
  - Prepare for the hybrid workplace of the future
  - Re-wire the operating model for speed and agility

**Rapid listening throughout**
Since there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach, the path to re-energizing an organization starts with listening.

**Examples of what organizations are doing**

Listen to people

**Executive listening sessions**
For leaders to hear the authentic voice of employees and how they are really doing.

Crowdsourcing ideas
Through tech-enabled platforms like “Synthetron” or “Listening.app” to understand what’s draining energy, what’s working, etc.; NLP can help assess overall employee mood.

Listen to data

**Well-being, Employee Experience (eX) and/or Mental Health Survey Data**
Can be used to identify employee groups with disproportionate needs.

**Pre-existing data**
Can be analyzed in aggregate to monitor where needs are most acute, impact to the business, etc.

Beyond helping understand how your employees are really doing, the mere act of connecting with and listening to employees has a major re-energizing effect.
Develop individual skills at scale: Building capabilities on adaptability and resilience

Adaptability and Resilience addresses adaptability (the “learning and resilience muscle”) at the individual, team, and enterprise level. A plug and play combination of digital self-paced learning, behavior and social reinforcement through the mobile Inspire app, and live virtual workshops.

Learning journey

- **Diagnostics**
  - Pre- and post-program adaptability assessments (both self-rated and rated by 2-5 nominated colleagues)

- **Virtual workshops**
  - Four 2- to 3-hour virtual workshops to conduct deep dives into concepts covered by digital modules. Highly interactive, experiential, and effective for relationship-building among participants.
    - **Personal resilience**: Individual mindsets, awareness, well-being, and coping
    - **Interpersonal resilience**: Maintaining attention, empathy, compassion, and vulnerability, even in difficult conversations
    - **Resilient teams**: Building psychological safety and employing the tactics of learning teams
    - **Purpose**: Organizational, team, and individual purpose in decision-making and prioritization

- **Digital learning**
  - Ten 15- to 30-minute digital courses
    - Required: Learning intentions, learning habits, mindsets, awareness, well-being, psychological safety, learning teams
    - Optional: Personal purpose, strong relationships, organizational team purpose

- **Peer learning teams**
  - Social learning groups managed by the Inspire app— including digital chat and live get-togethers

- **Reinforcement**
  - Inspire mobile app sends personalized, daily push notifications to reinforce behavioral change

Impact and testimonials:

- **99%** recommend the program
- **94%** found content relevant to their role

“This program is a great way to spend some time with colleagues, exploring new ways of communicating and interacting as we adapt to a new way of working. For me personally, the program gave me some reflection time and I left with more energy and more curious to keep trying and exploring new ideas.”

Top 200 client executive, LATAM

“ar is a unique opportunity to develop capabilities to help you lead your team in a way that’s more effective, sustainable and fulfilling.”

Client HR officer, NA
## Focus on care, connection and well-being

### What to get right

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i</th>
<th><strong>Rewrite your narrative to help employees accept their new reality, grieve, and find optimism &amp; purpose</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td><strong>Formalize the informal – build back time for caring human connection</strong></td>
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<td>iii</td>
<td><strong>Hardwire recovery and self care</strong></td>
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<td>iv</td>
<td><strong>Get serious about freeing up capacity and ruthlessly prioritize</strong></td>
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<td>v</td>
<td><strong>Visibly act on employee input and feedback</strong></td>
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### Illustrative examples of what others are already doing

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Share image of what the future workplace could feel like; acknowledge what will never return to “normal”</td>
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<td>ii</td>
<td>Carve out significant time in the calendar and meeting agendas for informal check-ins on how people are really doing; encourage employees to seek community outside work</td>
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<td>iii</td>
<td>Give a paid day off to all employees, “Zoom-free Thursdays”</td>
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<td>iv</td>
<td>Calendar wipeout and clean sheet, sunset initiatives to radically reduce work in progress</td>
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<td>v</td>
<td>Share in public forums the actions that have resulted from employee listening</td>
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### Evolve the organization’s operating model

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<tr>
<td>i. Clarify and cascade enterprise purpose and strategic priorities so that all</td>
<td>Assign full-time resources to top value initiatives and teams; pause or stop other efforts to free up and focus critical</td>
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<tr>
<td>colleagues can focus on what matters</td>
<td>resources on the top priorities</td>
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<td>ii. Refresh working policies to be more flexible and responsive to employee needs</td>
<td>Design future hybrid-remote working model with increased flexibility and employee choice, while enhancing connectivity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and productivity</td>
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<td>iii. Push decisions down and drive radical empowerment</td>
<td>Streamline/eliminate management approvals, steering groups and committees</td>
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<td>iv. Rewrite your organization’s operating model for speed and agility</td>
<td>Move from an annual planning cycle to a quarterly planning cycle, with 90-day cadence to review priorities, flow resources</td>
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<td>(people, capital) to greatest opportunities, etc.</td>
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<td>v. Revisit talent processes and performance management to drive learning, resilience</td>
<td>Integrate new leadership behaviors (e.g., inclusive leadership, psychological safety) into performance management systems</td>
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<td>and adaptability</td>
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