

# PRACTICAL STEPS FOR HR



## 1. COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE

When we don't know all the answers, there is a tendency to hold back, precisely when we should communicate more. 'Be strong' CEOs may encourage us to wait until we know what to say.

When the answers are largely unknowable, we need to communicate broad direction, give the most accurate information we can and update when more information becomes available.

- Set up daily check-ins for local teams (20-minute calls), where people can update on developments and ask for support.
- Plus weekly round-ups and planning sessions.
- 'Crowd source' ideas from the team.
- Collate and publish information in a shared domain.
- Re-publicise employee helpline info and gather anonymous but thematic feedback from the helpline provider to see where help is needed.

For more information:  
[\*Is It Time to Reboot Your Approach to Communication and Evaluation?\*](#)



## 2. SUPPORT YOUR MANAGERS

Managers are on the front line. We need to support them with policy guidance of course, but leave them some freedom to act. Their team members will face a variety of issues from ageing parents to child care to isolation of self or partners. They need to be able to flex to the situation.

- Hold conference calls for managers where they can share their experiences and learn from each other.
- HR can facilitate, advise and offer resources like guides to resilience.
- Look out for those who are struggling and offer support.

For more information:  
[\*The Resilient Organisation\*](#)



## 3. COST REDUCTION AND BUSINESS PROTECTION

Be creative about options for cost reductions. How do you maintain capability while reducing cost?

- Define critical talent for business protection and continuity. Refer to talent profiles/talent reviews.
- Consider all of the following and more
  - Short – time working – it shares the burden across teams, everyone takes a hit, but some level of income is maintained for all.
  - Sabbaticals or other work suspensions.
  - Where lay-offs are necessary, use best practice methods to enact them. The way you treat people as they leave will be closely observed by those who stay.
  - Keep in touch with people who you may wish to quickly re-engage as things pick up.

For more information:  
[\*Bird&Bird; COVID-19: Guidance for Employers in the UK\*](#)

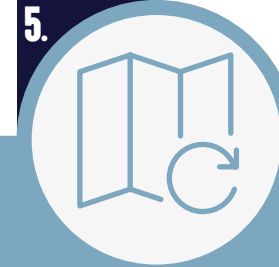


## 4. ONLINE / E-LEARNING RESOURCES

Most companies have access to substantial e-learning materials, e-books, etc. They are usually underused.

- Re-publicise access to these resources. Have someone in the HR team curate and publicise relevant materials.
- As time goes on and staff are potentially working on reduced hours, encourage people to use some of their time to add to their skill base.
- We won't be able to get people together for training for a period, so virtual methods are necessary.
- Encourage people to publicise their learning achievements.
- It all helps keep up morale.

For more information:  
[\*Transforming the Learning Function\*](#)



## 5. SCENARIO PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

At the moment it's hard to understand all of the impacts of the current crisis and how it will change things in the future, but it will pass and we need to have future plans and strategies in place. Scenario planning is a tool for understanding uncertainty and developing strategy accordingly. It challenges your thinking, protects against groupthink and confronts conventional wisdom.

- Encourage the organisation (or the HR function) to spend at least some of its time thinking about future scenarios and preparing.
- Get diverse groups together (virtually) to model scenarios and come up with potential strategies.

For more information:  
[\*Scenario Thinking: Interview with Dr. Kris De Meyer\*](#)