

## COVID-19: Practical Guidance on How to Lead Through Change



This is not the time for command and control leadership. Autocratic decision-making may help you immediately cope with COVID-19 emergency measures. However, if there is any legacy that comes from COVID-19 it is this; uncertainty is the new constant and leaders must embrace sustainable practices that future-proof their businesses from crises to come.

At changeosity, we believe that curiosity, courage, collaboration and caring will insulate people and business from harm during these unprecedented times. It is a time to focus on long-term solutions to short-term disruption. Lead through change now and your people and your business will come through this stronger than ever into the Future of Work.



### (1) What does collaboration look like in practice?

- **Communicate overall direction in a way that is meaningful to your team members.**
- **Trust your teams and delegate 'how' to the right people at the right time.**
- **Listen to your trusted advisers in order to have varied perspectives.**
- **Be clear about what you know, what you don't know and what you are doing to learn more.**
- **Your communication should be thoughtful, sensitive and frequent.**

- **Encourage cross-department and cross-team sharing of best practice to help solution development to real-time problems.**
- **Be open to course corrections without judgement or adverse reaction.**
- **Adopt abundance thinking; sustainable business practices will be your competitive advantage.**



## (2) What does curiosity look like in practice?

- **Acknowledge to yourself and others that your business is facing uncertainty and that change is necessary.**
- **Taking a risk-based approach, identify high risks and come up with a roadmap to address these as a priority.**
- **Critically assess your contractual risks arising from non-compliance or non-performance including whether contracts allow any relief from termination, payment obligations or other penalties and quantify these risks.**
- **Go far beyond 'low hanging fruit' when it comes to budget cuts; focus your lens on longer term needs as much as short term measures.**
- **Reach out to your customers and encourage risk transparency to start generating options for mutually agreeable solutions.**
- **Reach out to your suppliers and creditors to have open discussions about impact and to generate ideas to overcome any impasse.**
- **Critically assess your cash-flows, profit & loss and balance sheets to identify key triggers that may significantly impair liquidity and likely impact on accounts payable and receivable.**
- **Discuss issues and successes with your peers in the industry and beyond and seek input and support.**





### (3) What does courage look like in practice?

- **Stabilise your supply chain by adopting bridging strategies such as supply rationing, pre-booking logistics capacity, using existing stock and categorising high-priority status on orders.**
- **Prioritise your customer needs by focusing on their pain-points and offering them immediate solutions to assist with the adverse conditions they face.**
- **Also consider implementing immediate replacement arrangements such as low-cost outsourcing, automation and alternative suppliers.**
- **Have brave discussions with banks and creditors about re-scheduling debt, lease or other payment breaks etc to assist to alleviate pressure points.**
- **Optimise cost reduction measures and look at ways to improve cash positions through early divestment of non-core business.**
- **Re-negotiate credit terms, renew efforts to collect payments or create payment plans and proactively manage your cash-flows by pushing out creditors.**
- **Be open to challenging assumptions such as the speed or affordability of implementing automated solutions. Look for solutions that are resilient and future-proof.**
- **Think long-term minimization of payroll costs by putting in place solutions that create efficiency with the Future of Work in mind.**





## (4) What does caring look like in practice?

- On any decision, consider the personal and professional challenges that employees and families are facing during this crisis.
- Encourage employees and stakeholders to openly discuss ideas, questions, concerns and fears, without repercussion.
- Financially incentivise your employees to adopt preventative and protectionist practices (not penalise them).
- Provide necessary support and resources to enable safe and productive home working.
- Consider a variety of leave options in a respectful and caring manner; sick pay, unpaid leave, annual leave, severance package, reduced hours / days by mutual agreement etc.
- Use clear and concise guidance papers for non-mandatory issues to assist employees to understand how to behave.
- Offer internal mentorship and coaching to assist employees to decide on path forward.
- Embrace the opportunity to fine-tune your flexible-working practices to better enable your business to move into the Future of Work.



### About changeosity

We are a Dubai-based boutique consultancy firm. Our three founders have over 70 years of leadership experience in government and multi-national corporates in 50 countries, including 30 years in the Middle East.

Together, we have delivered highly profitable and award-winning transformation in a wide range of sectors in the Middle East.

Our diagnostic, development and implementation programs, together with our coaching, facilitation and leadership services, enable businesses to regenerate, grow and inspire.