

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?

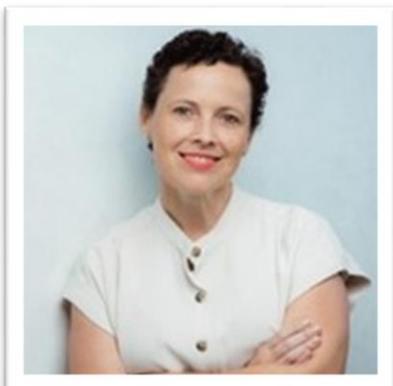
- **Stabilise your supply chain by adopting bridging strategies such as supply rationing, pre-booking logistics capacity, using existing stock and categorising high-priority status on orders.**
- **Prioritise your customer needs by focusing on their pain-points and offering them immediate solutions to 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.