KEEPING YOUR PEOPLE ENGAGED AND PRODUCTIVE THROUGH THE CRISIS
In a crisis, engagement matters

Are employees’ skills and abilities fully utilized in their roles, and does the organizational environment support them in getting work done?

Challenging times make engagement and enablement even more critical—but also more difficult to sustain.

“Our employees are a tremendous source of strength and consistency, which is even more evident through a downturn.”
Follow these ten approaches as you rally your team behind you, making sure that you can build upon existing goodwill or bring flagging engagement up.

1. Frequent Comms
2. Put Health & Safety at the Top of the Agenda
3. Be Realistic About the Promise of Technology
4. Take Employees’ Personal Challenges Seriously
5. Rethink Time Management
6. Hone in on What’s Critical
7. Recognize Employees’ Experiences Will Differ
8. Address Rewards Metrics
9. Accept the Gap in Informal Interaction
10. Give People a Voice
## FREQUENT COMMUNICATIONS

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<th>Good for the organization</th>
<th>Good for the employees</th>
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<td>Make a quickly shifting strategy clear, and constantly build alignment for change (albeit change not initiated by the organization itself).</td>
<td>Empathy from leaders reduces stress, while candor builds understanding and feelings of empowerment to act.</td>
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<td>Create engagement by fostering an empathic environment.</td>
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<td>Guard your most critical asset—your employees—both physically and mentally.</td>
<td>Drives physical safety and assuages anxiety.</td>
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TAKE EMPLOYEES’ PERSONAL CHALLENGES SERIOUSLY—AND PROVIDE TRUE RESOURCES

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<td>Teeing up a candid exchange about what can and can’t get done via digital platforms is vastly preferable to having employees quietly wrestle with unruly tech while grumbling and gritting their teeth.</td>
<td>Being able to provide feedback on technology both alleviates frustration and often drives real-time improvements.</td>
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Many employees may not surface complaints – but as with glitchy tech, they may struggle silently. Being clear about resources can break invisible logjams. Employees who feel they received genuine help during this period are more likely to remain long-term loyal to their employers.

Employer proactivity about helping with personal challenges can be a game-changer in a time of heavy “mental load.” Many corporate-level resources have become suddenly relevant and useful, even for employees who’ve never used them before.

Gain real-time learning about the state of your digital efforts by encouraging employees to communicate about their experience.
RETHINK TIME MANAGEMENT AND REARRANGE THE WORKDAY IF NEEDED

Good for the organization

Open conversations about different time management approaches can both revive productivity and lessen invisible distraction/strain.

Better time management practices may emerge on a go-forward basis long past the immediate crisis.

Good for the employees

Being given better control over time use during inherently chaotic days allows employees to create a balance that works for them, across work and life.

A clear—and frequently communicated—view on what’s essential to get done will create movement on make-or-break initiatives.

Understanding what the organization can do less of—and still function well—can help streamline activities for the future.

Good for the organization

Having the freedom to focus on the organization’s true priorities creates concrete space for needed personal activities, and mental space for the prioritized activities they are working on.

Hone in on what’s critical—and what can wait
**ADDRESS REWARDS AND PERFORMANCE METRICS**

**ACKNOWLEDGE THAT EMPLOYEES’ EXPERIENCES MAY BE VERY DIFFERENT—AND EVER-CHANGING**

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<td>As with any change effort, messages and initiatives will land with far more impact when differences in experience are acknowledged.</td>
<td>Being treated as an individual creates the feeling of being valued – especially at high stress moments.</td>
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Employees need their extra efforts recognized and appreciated—and you need to show them that over time there is a balance between what they contribute and what they get back in return.

Calms anxiety about broken linkages between their usual metrics and the extraordinary situation—and creates new pathways to excellence.
ACKNOWLEDGE AND TACKLE THE GAP IN INFORMAL INTERACTION

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<td>Continue to drive new ways of problem-solving, which can be essential to surviving and thriving in a difficult time.</td>
<td>With reduced formal interaction, employees fill those meeting gaps with ad-hoc calls, emails, texts, chats, and so on, creating moments where the real problem-solving gets done.</td>
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To be engaged, employees must feel heard and understood. Moreover, they must see their thoughts and reactions come to life in the real world.

This is an opportunity for new leaders and innovators to emerge.

Perhaps most importantly: Give people a voice.
Thank you