**New Beginnings and Re-engagement**

**Leadership During and After the Crisis:**

**An Up-date**



**THE FUTURE OF LEADERSHIP**

**Skills to look for and develop**

**Promoting Excellence**

**March 2021**

**Introduction and Context**

A crisis is when it is most important for leaders to uphold a vital aspect of their role -making a positive difference to peoples’ lives.

Doing this requires leaders to acknowledge the personal and professional challenges that employees and their loved ones experienced during the crisis.

It is widely recognised that effective leaders must be in-tune with the emotions of those around them, as well as their own **emotional intelligence. This is no longer just a nice thing to have but now it is absolutely critical.**

Creating a compassionate environment where colleagues feel valued as people and can voice their opinions and concerns … is essential both in difficult situations, and at all times.

Leaders need to be transparent and realistic with their expectations which can help to build a culture of trust. Employee engagement is higher when leadership continually communicates.

**Lessons Learnt**

1. **Having healthy priorities**

It is important to recognise that everyone is human. The pandemic has affected us all emotionally and checking regularly on a colleague’s emotional health and wellbeing will bring sustainable success.

Be aware of stress levels building up which will have detrimental effects on mental health. This inevitably leads to poor motivation, absenteeism and more mistakes and accidents. **Promote psychological safety.**

1. **Flexibility and Creativity**

There has been a need to innovate and to anticipate the unexpected. Adaptability and creativity remain for the future. Now there is a need for a sharper eye on opportunity, the ability to withstand sudden changes and a .

1. **Mindful Work**

Leaders must now show good judgement and able to sort out ‘need to do’ tasks from ‘not as necessary’. Post-crisis, the ability to accurately prioritise what is essential, **putting mindful work over constant work.** 

1. **Generous Collaboration**

Planning for the future now means being open to and sharing ideas. Significant features of the crisis have been an inspirational, collective and generous spirit, remarkable resilience and true grit.

There is now a great opportunity for collaboration. Current and future leaders need to create an atmosphere whereby collaboration, both internally and externally, is encouraged.

Team members need to feel comfortable in presenting innovative ideas, being vulnerable and taking chances. **They have to feel safe to collaborate freely.**

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1. **The need to re-evaluate**

* Are there better ways of working and doing things?
* What does effective leadership look like now?

These are just two core questions that courageous organisations should be asking.

Determination, effective communication and passion remain key,

But transparency, seeing ourselves and others as people first, a

willingness to adapt and being excellent listeners will be **critical to**

**future success**.

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| The Seven C’s of Crisis Leadership  During and after the Crisis₁ |
| 1. Calm – projecting a sense of calmness |
| 2. Confidence – being a positive presence |
| 3. Communication – on a regular basis |
| 4. Collaboration – encourage consultation with all staff |
| 5. Community – creating a friendly and supportive environment |
| 6. Compassion – being kind and considerate of others |
| 7. Cash – ensuring financial prudence |

₁Miami Herbert Business School 2020

**Summary**

**Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Skills Post-Pandemic**

Leaders with “soft skills” will be needed post-pandemic to empathise and show

compassion towards their staff who may have experienced a range of unexpected,

tough situations. The new type of strong leader will not only be able to guide an

organisation, but ensure that it flourishes in these unprecedented times

Strong leaders will know that:

* It is particularly important for colleagues to feel valued, **trusted** and to be able to share their concerns.
* To be effective, leaders need to **be open, transparent and there for all colleagues**
* Demonstrating **empathy** really helps
* Good communication skills are important, but now even more so as leaders need to be in **touch with their staff on a regular basis** to check on their wellbeing, maintain transparency and provide frequent updates.
* The ability to **cope with change, be flexible** and seize opportunities is vital for all organisations if they are to survive and flourish.
* **Pause to assess and anticipate**, then acting will get better results.
* **Time management and prioritisation** are key to ensure wellbeing and positive results thus avoiding becoming overwhelmed and not achieving. Assessing what are important but not urgent tasks to allow essential work to be completed without burn-out by leaders and staff is vital.
* Establishing a **culture of collaboration** where ideas can be shared to benefit the whole organisation and allow it to thrive without personal egos getting in the way.
* **Resilience or ‘true grit’** has to be part of a leader’s toolkit if they are to survive and inspire employees. By acting as role models they can encourage all staff to become more resilient.
* Exhibiting ‘**deliberate calm’ –** being cool and collective in fraught situations has many positive benefits. Deliberate calm is most often found in individuals who possess humility but not helplessness.

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