


Partnering with Local Governments to Recruit, Retain and Develop Innovative, Collaborative, Authentic Leaders

# The Next Normal

Considerations for Operations in a Post-Pandemic World



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## Planning NOW for Coming Challenges



**Backlog**

Finance staffing still has not recovered to 2019 levels. For an extended period, which means a geometrically cascading backlog is building.



**High Demand**

- Uncertain legal environment
- Changing policies/practices
- Employee anxiety/fear/conflict
- Pressure to cut costs
- Pressure to buy local



**Minimal Resources**

With all the budget cuts, Finance will not rise to the top to receive resources.



**Start Planning**

As hard as it is to think about it... you need to begin transforming your operation NOW.

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## Create a Re Launch Map

- Department by Department – one size does not fit all
- **SGR Free Resources**
  - Pandemic Planning Meta Checklist for Local Governments with a Return to Normal Section
  - Pandemic Self Check List for Local Government Employees
  - Local Government Checklist for Pandemic Preparedness, Response and Recovery
  - Email [Ron@GovernmentResource.com](mailto:Ron@GovernmentResource.com) for any of these.
- Create a **Plan Ahead Team** for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> waves
  - Regularly conduct situational assessments
  - Develop potential scenarios
  - Design and adapt strategic road maps
  - Define right actions in each scenario
  - Identify triggers that prompt the organization to act systemically at the right time

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## Re Evaluate Priorities and Processes

- Have **clarity** across the organization on your strategic vision and values (80/20 values workshops rule)
- Ensure your systems are **aligned** with your vision and values.
- **Question Everything.** Ask "why are we doing this?" and "what happens if we quit doing it?" and "Is there a better way to do it?"
- Move the organizational from **transactional to transformational**

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## Rebuild Operations

- Creating **real and perceived safety** for employees and citizens means new and unexpected policy issues affecting operations and financial operations
  - Example: assigning one person per vehicle instead of 2 doubles the number of vehicles required
  - Example: daily deep cleaning of vehicles and office space and restrooms increases number of janitorial staff
  - WHILE cutting staff and budget

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## Rethink Organizational Culture

- **Embrace agility** (this is cultural more than operational)
  - Increase the speed of decision making
  - **SGR Servant Leader's Library with over 200 training resources in 4 weeks from concept to launch** (and online live training, management team retreats, city council retreats, community wide workshops and interview processes)
- Think:
  - Customers more than comfort of the organization
  - Products more than processes
  - Solutions more than studies
  - Pivoting more than perfection
  - Risk management more than risk avoidance
  - Speed more than status quo
- Think about the whole person and **mental health and resiliency**

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## Reimagine Organizational Structure

- Rethink how people work best:
  - McKinsey found in April 2020 that 60% of businesses surveyed said that their new remote sales models were proving as much or **more effective** than traditional models
  - One university MPA program cited both anecdotal experience locally as well as a national study that found that **learning IMPROVED** in the sudden new online environment with college students
  - You will have to **overcome resistance** of traditionalists

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## Accelerate Digital Solutions

- Move even more into outsourcing
- Move even more into embedded services.
- Move into the gig economy (project based outsourcing)
- Make your processes more user friendly for user departments - high tech yet still easy to connect with a person-
- Conduct process assessment evaluations through user's lenses on every process you own
- Automate where possible
  - Ex - Begin using automated reference check systems on vendors

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## Accelerate Digital Solutions for Training of your Employees on Processes AND Culture

- **Cheaper and faster**
- Who will lead trainings / keep track of participation?
- How will you track required certifications?
- What types of training are required? On-boarding, safety, specific topics?
- Training can be purchased, but funds would be required specifically for that purpose.
- Would you need your own LMS or would you need to subscribe to one?
- Will you be able to purchase generic content or would you need custom?
- How will you keep employees interested and compliant with online training?



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### Invest MORE in Training and Development

- New workplace rules and expectations
- Hygiene Practices
- Digital communication pitfalls
  - Missing social cues online
  - Comfort with technology (or lack thereof)
- Traditional topics
- Upskilling
- Remote working

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### Redefine Great Communication

- SGR example in a **remote working environment**:
  - Daily departmental check in at 8 am with video required
  - Regular All Team email status reports from the CEO
  - Weekly executive team conference call with video required
  - Weekly all team conference call with video required – Sr execs report to the whole team
  - Every 2 weeks virtual happy hour
  - Virtual Bingo with gift card
  - Resulting team reactions:
    - Feel more connected than before
    - Less silos than before
    - More personal knowledge of each other due to at home settings of dining room, home office or whatever and with all of the interruptions of kids, dogs
    - High performance maintained
- Train for compliance with new workplace rules and **consideration of others**
- How will managers translate existing work rules, meeting schedules and communications

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### Evolve from Managing to Leading

- Employees must have total confidence that you put their **health and safety first**
- **Flatter organizations** that push down decision making are more effective AND more efficient
- But that demands overhauling almost all of our **performance evaluation and expectation systems**
- **Embed upskilling** training into your culture
  - Move FROM promoting then preparing
  - TO Preparing before promoting

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## Leadership Questions to Consider

- How will managers translate existing work rules, meeting schedules and communications strategies to the new reality?
- What procedures and protocols must be edited for new work environments?
- Who will pay for remote workers' connectivity and any required equipment, like printers, monitors, headset, etc.?
- How will you recover them if someone quits or is fired?
- How must job descriptions change to accommodate part- or full-time remote work?
- How will you monitor and enforce work attendance?
- What HR functions must adapt? (Talent acquisition and development, discipline, benefits and compensation all introduce their own challenges in a remote work environment.)
- What health and safety protocols and policies will need to change?
- What implications are there for union contracts?
- How do we address the anxiety and fear that has been brought up within our employees?
- How will you handle contact tracing protocols for employees?
- How much flexibility can you give employees to lower stress and fear?

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## HR Policy Issues to be Wrestled With 1/2

- FMLA, ADA, changes in Health Savings Accounts, etc
- Staggered work shifts
- Wearing of PPE at the office (Pressure from both for and against)
- Employees who prefer to work from home for safety reasons
- Employees who share rumors of sick employees
- Employee desire to take time off to care for a sick family member
- Employee requests about health condition of other employees
- Non exempt employees working out side of normal business hours
- Mental health support – fear, anxiety, isolation
- At risk employee population
- Off and on duty activity policies (air travel, large gatherings) including disclosure
- Break room rules
- Staggered breaks
- Personal greetings (handshaking)
- Provision of PPE (including masks, gloves, wipes, sanitizers, disinfectants, etc)
- Dealing with employees who ridicule those who are wearing PPE,

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## HR Policy Issues to be Wrestled With 2/2

- Perceived unfairness over who gets to work from home
- Conducting temperature checks
- Cross training to accommodate more employee absences
- Train employees on policies to prevent the spread of disease and require signing of acknowledgement

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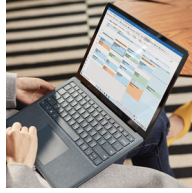
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## Managing Workforce Transitions

- **New roles** for current employees
- **Upskilling employees** to take on more responsibility when other positions have been eliminated
- **Evaluating** what can cease being done altogether as a result of budget cuts
- **Layoffs** of employees for services that are eliminated
- **Recovery Task Force Teams**



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## Remote and Teleworking is the Next Normal

- **Work from home trends** were already growing. This will accelerate that change.
- Local governments have discovered it is not as scary as they thought, and in some cases, is proving to be more efficient. We may **never go back fully** to the old structures.
- **New policies** will need to be made in order to maintain smooth operations.

Please review the following telework parameters:

- I understand that when I am away from the office teleworking, I must comply with all organizational rules, policies, and procedures.
- I understand that my compensation, benefits, and work responsibilities will not change due to the telework arrangement.
- I understand that my telework work schedule will be consistent with my current work schedule and will not significantly change without the approval of my supervisor.
- I understand that if an eligible teleworker pays, I must get advance approval from my supervisor to work over (HOUR) hours per week while teleworking.
- I understand that while teleworking, it is my responsibility to:
  - o Maintain a safe work environment
  - o Protect any company equipment in my possession
  - o Safeguard confidential work-related information
- I understand that I will not hold business visits or in-person meetings with business affiliates or contractors at my home telework site.

Employee signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## Remote Working Considerations

**Provide a remote working guide that features the following items:**

- Key points of contact: especially IT team
- Recommended IT equipment (and how to obtain it)
  - Cell phone allowances
  - Internet connections
  - Hardware
- Methods of remote communication
  - Office phone forwarding
  - Video conferencing tools: Google Hangouts, WebEx, Skype, etc.
  - Chat apps: Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts, Slack, etc.
- Manual of Remote Work Practices and procedures: to maintain security of information and property

**Require daily meetings at 8 am and with video on** – this contributes to self discipline of the employees and aids in creating social and organizational connection and engagement

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## Establishing Workplace Community (Remotely)

- Continually **clarify** team goals and individual roles
- Schedule **regular** team **video meetings**
- Set aside time on the agenda as a **"virtual water cooler"**
- Normalize new work environments
  - Virtual workplace tour so teams are sensitive to others' constraints
  - Acknowledge and **normalize challenges** such as roommates walking through the background of calls, crying babies, barking dogs, etc.
- **Avoid assuming or stereotyping**

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## Employee Wellbeing in a Work From Home Culture

- Implement more frequent Town Halls / check ins with senior leaders
- Require "video-on" meetings for more face-to-face interaction
- Establish "water cooler" opportunities for workers to connect informally
- Require availability expectations to be set by each employee
- Incorporate mental health services into a telehealth policy
- Make company-wide policy announcements regarding changes to benefits such as PTO, vacation, sick leave, etc.
- Curate a list of resources for employees to help with physical and mental wellbeing.
- Provide employee continuing education at a free or reduced cost

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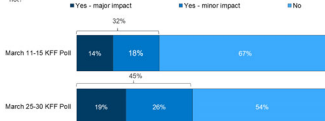
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## Adjusting Benefits for the Next Normal

- Reduce or eliminate copays for **telehealth** visits.
- Consider including **mental health consultations** as part of your telehealth plan.
- Explore apps and AI that offer mental health assistance and provide information to employees
- Investigate options like daily pay, subsidized loans and free access to financial education webinars for those under financial stress.

Figure 1  
Larger Share Now Reporting Negative Mental Health Impacts

Do you feel that worry or stress related to coronavirus has had a negative impact on your mental health, or not?



SOURCE: KFF Health Tracking Poll conducted March 25-30, 2020. See tables for full question wording.

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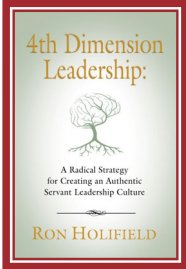
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**THANK YOU**

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**SGR**

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