

SEPTEMBER 2020

The Business Continuity Do's and Don'ts for Business Leaders Amid the Pandemic

By: Agility Recovery with an Introduction by Jeff Cavignac

Q3 Commercial Newsletter

The following material is provided for informational purposes only. Before taking any action that could have legal or other important consequences, speak with qualified legal and insurance professionals who can provide guidance that considers your own unique circumstances, including applicable employment laws.

Agility Recovery is in the business of helping its clients recover from disasters or other incidents that can materially affect that company's operations. Whether it is a Cat 3 Hurricane or a fire in your server room, Agility will help you get back in business faster. Cavignac is in the Risk Management business, and we cannot afford to have our company shut down for any reason. With this in mind, we have been an Agility client for years. Fortunately, we have not had to call on their "Recovery Services", but we know they are available if we need them.

Agility recently authored a particularly relevant article we would like to share with you all: "The Business Continuity Do's and Don'ts for Business Leadership



Amid the Pandemic". If you want to learn more about Agility, you check them out at www.agilityrecovery.com. We also welcome any questions you might have.
- Jeff Cavignac, CPCU, RPLU, ARM

According to the latest research, over a third of employers lacked an emergency preparedness plan when COVID-19 hit. Whether due to the infrequency of viral outbreaks, or lack of any business continuity plan in place, the road to recovery for those companies is long and complicated.

In the time of unpredictable and muffled economic recovery, leaders face the pressing matter of reopening their businesses. To outplay the unexpected, reopening can't mean going back to the old ways. Such a turbulent time calls for reinvention. It also allows many organizations to build the expertise they wish they'd developed before: having a strong business continuity plan, training and educating its workforce, testing for different emergency scenarios, and maintaining proper communication channels. Leaders should be more strategic when they decide to reopen their business to embark on a new journey of a broader transformation.

What is Leadership Doing During COVID-19

Today's leaders can't ignore the role of COVID-19. It is time to [learn lessons](#) and make wise, tactical changes that will benefit a company as a whole. The coronavirus has wildly disrupted global trade, upending production and supply chains in almost every sector. Each industry has been hit differently. For example, canceled major tech events alone account for over [\\$1 billion](#) in economic losses. No matter how, each industry has been affected. Whether supply chain issues most touch your business, the sudden turn to remote work, or something else, your responses have to take those impacts into account. Today's leadership definition isn't "stick to the familiar" - it's "adapt and reinvent." More than half of employers are updating their emergency preparedness plans to reflect the times. This is an excellent example of good leadership. Let's take a closer look at the company leadership do's to adopt right now.

Leadership Business Continuity Do's

Good leaders are put to the test during unpredictable

events. With these do's, you'll be able to pivot appropriately and meet the challenges and demands of this new era.

Do Embrace Reinvention

Even in the best of times, good company leadership requires change. This is the time to fearlessly reinvent not only your strategies, but yourself as a leader. Failure to adapt is always a problem for leaders, but it is now more than ever. Leadership response to immediate challenges - safe workplaces, employee well-being plans, and advanced business continuity programs - must be prepared for the possibility of reversal and disruption. Quick coordination will be core to the long-term skills they build.



Do Look for Immediate Revenue

One of the most pressing concerns in any business today is the rapidly bleeding revenue. The coronavirus has cut revenue away in nearly every sector. Leaders must quickly look for ways to replace those losses before they become too big to recover from. While long-term thinking has value, now is the time to look for quick revenue. Leverage digital revenue options to replace in-person ones. Look for your brand's ways to help solve Unique COVID-19 pain points and turn them into

revenue sources.

Do Invest in Education

Educating your team on what's new, different, and vital is essential. Providing training in the form of, for example, tabletop exercises and giving access to free educational resources is a long-term investment in your company's success.

However, you must educate yourself as a leader first. The latest news on COVID-19 frequently gets updated as researchers learn more about the disease. It's your job to stay on top of those updates. Educating yourself means being open to the latest information as it changes. Doing so will help you become better at predicting likely outcomes for your company. The latest news can inform your next steps, and you can also provide relevant, up-to-date information to your team or your fellow leaders.



Do Think Like a Startup

With so much rapid change, now is the time for every business to think like a startup no matter what stage it's in. Take action fast, and test results as you go. There is no time to deliberate over changes that can be implemented and measured immediately. This is also a good time to adopt a startup's flexible approach to staffing. Instead of upholding rigid

standards, allow people to work how they work best. For example, this might be the time to permit flexible hours for your remote workers instead of maintaining the 9-to-5 hours of before.

Do Make Safety a Priority

In every change, update, and decision the safety of your team and your customers must come first. Make sure that any new protocols make safety a priority. When people feel safe and cared for, they do better work, and they're more likely to stay with your company. You might need to [prepare employees](#) to return to the office safely. However, even businesses that are now running remotely can invest in safety. For example, you can update your staff on how to stay safe at home as part of your ordinary workday communications. Your staff will appreciate a simple weekly email or a text with the latest safety recommendations. Such [incident management software as Prepara](#) has all the features to keep your workforce informed and safe.

Do Understand Changing Customer Values

The COVID-19 pandemic has urged organizations around the world to reevaluate how employees support clients on their customer journey, where they work, and how digital channels can be leveraged to support business continuity through such disruptive time and beyond.

The past couple of months have forever altered our experiences - as customers, employees, citizens, people - and our views and habits are changing as a result. The crisis has radically transformed how and what consumers buy and propelled tremendous structural [changes in the consumer goods industry](#). As soon as the virus starts to die down, companies will need to consider

the effects of these changes on the way we develop, communicate, and manage the experiences people need and want.

Do Smooth Out Remote Work Transitions

Most brands are making a transition to remote work in some sense. While many people believe remote work is easy for employees, the truth is, some people on your team might be struggling. You may be struggling, too. In fact, more than seven out of 10 employers have struggled with this transition. Leadership must figure out how to overcome those struggles. Offer resources to make remote work easier for your team. Study the examples of successful remote brands and learn from what they do best. Avoid assuming that your employees find remote work easier than office work - many times that's not the case.

Leadership Business Continuity Don'ts

It's also important to understand what actions shouldn't take place. Here are the most common don'ts to avoid during these times.

Don't Let Uncertainty Overwhelm You

Now more than ever, leaders must be focused and clear-headed. The fear of uncertainty can lead to emotional decisions, which are poor decisions in leadership. Instead, keep your values in mind, and don't let fear overtake your rational decision-making process.

Don't Prioritize Busy Work

Whether in yourself or your team, now is not the time to look for "[busy work](#)" as a sign of success. This is a



common pitfall especially as many teams have rapidly gone remote. You might feel tempted to demand a daily check-in from everyone on your team, or to implement software that lets you track what employees are doing at all times. You might feel like more meetings and updates are the best use of your time. On closer look though, these strategies typically amount to busy work, and don't really accomplish anything.

Don't Neglect Communication

Now more than ever, healthy communication is a sign of good leadership. Avoid rigid communication that disrupts people's work lives, such as frequently scheduled meetings. However, don't avoid communication on the whole. Instead, implement new, easy, spontaneous communication methods such as open chat channels or "office hours" for unscheduled conversations. These authentic connections will go much further than overdone formal meetings, or worse: a lack of communication altogether.

The Leadership Definition of the Future

Company leadership can be more valuable or more detrimental than ever before in times like these. The

difference lies in how you approach it. What is leadership? The definition is now different than it used to be.

It has less to do with following existing rules and structures, and more to do with wise adaptation, communication, and strategizing. With these do's and don'ts, you'll be poised to be a valuable leader now and in the future. However, the process of learning to be a good leader must never end.

Looking for more ways to improve your company leadership, starting with yourself? Visit our [educational resources](#) here to find a collection of helpful content.