Protect people and productivity in times of crisis

A C-suite action plan

A workforce crisis is likely a situation beyond anything you've dealt with as a leader. That's why a series of checks to get people communicating can help your teams focus on the critical actions that should not be missed. For this list don't simply check the box. Use it as a way to communicate what's important and to empower people across your organization. Here's what to consider to protect your people and productivity in times of crisis.

Prepare and monitor the workforce

1. **Determine which critical functions must remain on-site** and which can be remote.

2. **Refine business continuity plans for critical on-site roles,** including:

   a | Appropriate health and well-being training (e.g., US Department of Labor OSHA or Center for Disease Control compliance/readiness)

   b | Emergency health response protocols and escalation paths

   c | Access to healthcare, quarantine sites and evacuation protocols

   d | Sanitization protocol

3. **Develop/update remote working policy,** including:

   a | Eligibility

   b | Remote location confirmation

   c | Approved tools and practices (e.g., collaboration, virtual access, remote conferencing)

   d | Security compliance, including physical assets and systems and emergency procedures for workers in remote locations

4. **Align business and workforce planning.**

   a | Determine where you need to increase or decrease front- and back-office staffing to meet remote work considerations (e.g., increased help desk/support resources, decreased on-site support resources)

   b | Develop or update and execute workforce transition plans, including severance and outplacement procedures as required

5. **Consider global and domestic mobility.**

   a | Clarify business travel protocols and revise as needed to account for international travel bans

   b | Define criteria for critical and non-critical meetings, events and in-person efforts (e.g., agile sprints, design sessions, innovation teams); deprioritize non-critical co-location and provide guidance

   c | Evaluate tax and immigration impacts on global employees and expats that repatriate to a home or alternate location

6. **Refine performance expectations.**

   a | Business performance

      i) Set expectations with internal and external stakeholders

      ii) Refine business performance measures (e.g., sales, profitability, customer, productivity)

   b | Individual performance

      i) Account for a learning curve as you adapt to a change in work locations

      ii) Anticipate a dip in productivity

      iii) Refine goals and incentives (e.g., sales quotas)

   c | Transition success

      i) Define success metrics for transition to remote working or new work locations under crisis circumstances (e.g., people engagement, readiness for change, security, engaging customers)

      ii) Demonstrate and exhibit new work practices (i.e., what empathy, incentives, teaming and experience looks like)

7. **Understand the remote working constraints of individuals** (e.g., home office infrastructure and enabling tech and personal life circumstances, such as: caregivers, single parents, young children whose schools are closed, increased reliance on child care).

8. **Consider contingent worker and service provider readiness,** including:

   a | Policies

   b | Capacity and use of contingent workers

   c | Remote access and technology access/ readiness for contingent workers

   d | Duty of care for contingent workers who may face health or safety risks in the workplace

   e | Potential liability for contingent workers who may expose other individuals to health risks

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9. Consider risk, legal and compliance readiness.

a | Consider impacts on legal and compliance workforce risks

b | Confirm "reasonable accommodations" for people at risk

c | Review sick leave policy and consider adjustments to accommodate potential leaves of absence

d | Clarify data privacy considerations related to protected health information

e | Stay alert for any change to the payroll tax rate

f | Adopt and enact uniform and consistent policies to balance the Americans with Disabilities Act protection of employees with medical disabilities versus duty to protect other employees from reasonable threat

g | Consider employer liability issues related to work injuries in remote work scenarios

Assess technology and tools

10. Determine enterprise IT infrastructure readiness.

a | Enable secure remote access to business critical applications

b | Arrange bandwidth capacity and load-testing to accommodate rich remote working experiences (e.g., video conferencing, hi-fidelity audio, live collaboration)

c | Plan for sufficient software licenses

d | Enhance cybersecurity for remote access, through VPN, multi-device controls, remote identities, and virtual desktops; include protections against malware, ransomware, phishing and business email compromise

e | Plan for personal device access (non-enterprise-managed devices) (e.g., data plans, device compatibility with core systems)

11. Review support services, including third-party service provider and vendor readiness.

12. Consider end-user experiences.

a | Considerations for remote workers with specialized work needs or disabilities

b | Training and help desk support related to user interface and user experience changes

13. Review your managed device policy, including IT provisioning/contingency.

14. Consider core systems and software, including compatibility issues relating to user interface and user experience limitations.

Lead with purpose

15. Develop a communications strategy and plan, that considers:

a | Internal and external stakeholders

b | Communication channels and vehicles

c | Cadence and sequencing (e.g., by employee/stakeholder groups)

d | Key messages and communications protocols (e.g., media and client responses)

16. Build leadership capabilities for remote working.

a | Enable leaders to deliver communications/messaging

b | Build capabilities in leading through uncertainty, leading virtual teams and new ways of working (e.g., employee engagement, performance, collaboration and well-being)

Execute new ways of working

17. Run or reevaluate existing pilots, including leadership adoption and modeling of new desired behaviors in remote working environments.

18. Define ways of working practices (e.g., collaboration, empathy, incentives, teaming virtually, meeting etiquette, inclusive behavior).

19. Develop and roll out remote working training.

a | Include both informational and experiential training as required to demonstrate new and remote ways of working

b | Blend enterprise-wide training and job-specific training as required

20. Develop health and well-being considerations specific to a remote workforce.

We're here to help:

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