

Improview: Debrief the Virus

Our thoughts on reconnecting with your employees and focusing on the future

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Reconnection and Refocus

We have never faced this employee and business landscape ever before. Therefore, we need to change our thinking as to how we need to address the needs of ourselves, our people and our businesses. We need to appreciate that this is so much bigger than a different physical environment.

For those not in the know, there are a plethora of emotions surrounding experiences of COVID-19, and it is up to all of us to have appreciation of this fact. We need to have a hugely heightened awareness of how we re-introduce people back to the workplace after the disrupted environment caused by COVID-19.

This raised awareness must to be high on the agenda for all workplaces and in particular highly effective & productive teamwork. After such a period of disruption, there will be a lot of fear, for many different reasons, and feelings of apprehension, uncertainty and loss etc.

Leadership and HR teams will be crucial at this time in leading people in continuing strange and uncertain times. Leaders will need to balance the business economics and the health of their people, which may sound easier said than done. The future success of the business,

service and productivity will depend on the attention given to reconnection and refocusing of your people, irrespective to the amount of two-way communication over the last few months.

Individual Emotional Landscape

We have, over many weeks now, all been experiencing the fallout from the Global Pandemic that is Covid-19. These experiences have been and will continue to be extremely personal to each and every one of us, where very rarely will two people have exactly the same experience and emotional reaction to it. It could be ascertained that although we have had and continue to have a collective human experience, we will all have an individual personal emotional reaction to that experience.

These reactions will have an element of psychological effect, based on individuals, conscious and sub-conscious attention to aspects such as, level of fear, degree of clarity and uncertainty etc. There is an additional element that will have a huge impact of these psychological effects, and that is one of time; to process, think, talk, action and review.

How much attention that business leaders give to their people now, is more important than at any other time in the history of the workplace. Leaders need to have a clear and defined approach to their actions as workplaces start to re-open in their newly formed practices and procedures. We here Improview state ***“Don’t just re-open but reconnect and refocus”***.

Leaders need to ready from the get-go, there will be a fairly small window of opportunity to either get this right or sadly get it extremely wrong, which you may never recover from. Business leaders need to set the tone and pace of these emotional processes and reconnection procedures, which need to be based on a few simple, but extremely important steps.

Create the environment where everyone, should they wish or need to, feel safe and supported to be able to share and discuss their individual experience of Covid-19. They need to feel listened to, not judge and not to have their experience generalised. There should be no regulation of time to share or grouping of the sharing experience, it must just be the right environment at the right time for the right person.

Remembering the past, finding gold

It is sometimes a jerk reaction to forget the past and just focus on the here and now, that is not how humans operate. It is an important step in the process that we spend some time recognising the past, this could be through celebration and/or mourning. Remembering people’s individual experiences, we could safely assume that there will definitely be some differing levels of motivation, enthusiasm, engagement and focus, we need to consider a simple way of gently reconnecting with who we are and what we do around the workplace.





It could be that is it time to ditch the mud and silt of the past, all the stuff that we got stuck in, or just accepted, that was either non-value adding or downright negativity. Then we could ensure we are left with those golden nuggets of the past that really added value and/or were the best of us as individuals, teams and businesses. We should hold these nuggets high, polish them and use them to shape our future of successes.

It will be the leader's role to **reconnect and refocus** people within the workplace and create the environment so that each person can see their own potential for moving forward. We imagine that the experiences we've all gone through will make some people more determined than ever, whereas others might be feeling scared. These, and other, emotions are fine and perhaps just need to be refocused to be able to see hope and possibilities once again.

Navigating new “individual” worlds

Change is not a new phenomenon caused by Covid-19 and its impact on us personally and professionally. Change has been around since the start of life on this planet and it will be around forever more. If it wasn't before, it needs to be viewed now as “change needs to be seen as a template for how we all navigate our lives”.

We won't waste time here listing all the changes we have taken on over this year, but some key ones must be, travel, working environment, physical contact, for some this has been a dream for others a nightmare and all the steps in between. We hear statements like, when we get back to normal, the new normal, what is normal. We believe supporting individuals to navigate the world comes framed by five top level elements:

(1) **Landscape**; what is their individual world like for them and what experiences have shaped that landscape and why.

(2) **Fears**; what is it moving forward that is causing them to be scared, whether this is people, roles, environments, the unknown.

(3) **Fragilities**; meaning is there, or could there be anything that could damage or break them, both personally and professionally

(4) **Trust**; their required levels of trust and what is the tangible requirement that would build faith so that they can depend & count on the leadership and team members, and what they intend to offer to be trusted.

(5) **Needs**; bringing the first 4 elements to a summary to clarity of their personal requirements to reconnect, refocus and deliver in role.

Re-Focusing on workplace goals

Let's not over complicate getting businesses back to what they do best. We have created the safe environment where everyone has shared, listened and understood one another and have started the process of reconnection, whether this is physical, virtual or both. It is time to focus on getting back to productivity and performance. Hopefully time has been used to pause and think differently and focus on two things. The golden nuggets of the past and how these can be kept central to how we use them moving forward and then the need to decide the new playing field and operating arena that business needs to happen on. Finally, what are the business, customer immediate needs, we call this our "Future 12".

So, What...

This is most probably the biggest reconnection and refocusing with business, employees and customers that has ever happened in the history of the World. People are driven, more so than at ever other time, by their emotions and therefore process, procedure and rational drivers will be secondary. Just focusing on what was done before and how it was done, and only rebadging the return to the workplace and debriefing the virus as just "Re-Boarding" (loads of 2 metre tape and Perspex) could do a huge disservice and irreparable damage, remember; ***"Don't just re-open but reconnect and refocus"***.

What Now ...

Simply; make a plan of action now defining why, and how, the business and the employee's need to reconnect and refocus properly. What needs to happen, when, by who and finally how will all this to happen, processes, procedure, virtual, in-person, etc. Whatever happens there is an immediate need to really ***"Reconnect & Refocus"***, and ensuring everyone works through this period together, **As ONE**

Please see our "debrief the virus" offering by clicking below

