

Quicker Business Recovery from Crisis Shock caused by Covid-19

An insight into how companies can manage a crisis more effectively and reduce its impact by utilising people insight and tailored communications.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, October 14, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Many business leaders are facing a particularly difficult period. In the early days of “crisis” (such as when Covid-19 first began to impinge on business delivery), people tend to be energised by the focus a crisis brings and the clarity of decision making and action. Soon though, this energy begins to diminish and what is known as the regression phase emerges.

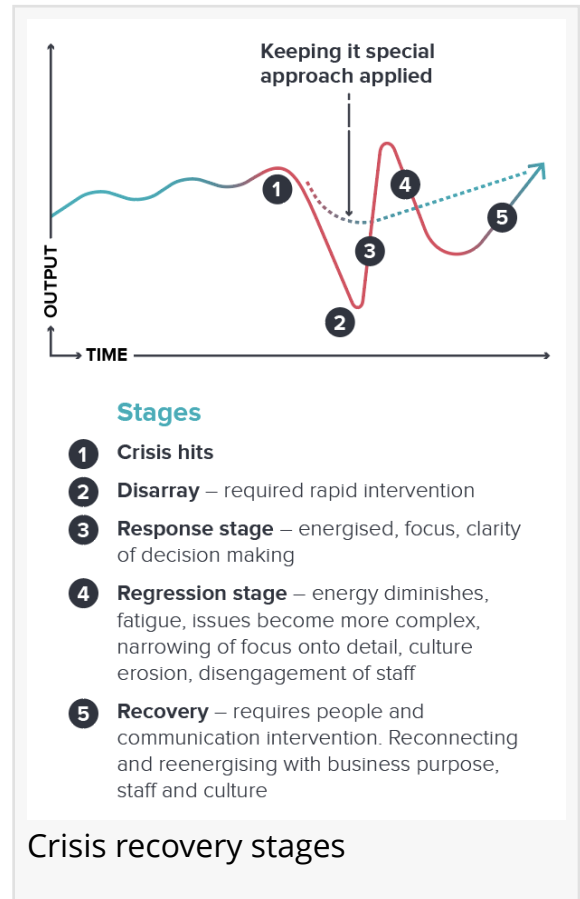
In our experience, there are five stages businesses go through in any crisis. 1)Crisis hits 2)Disarray 3)Response stage 4)Regression stage 5)Recovery

The regression stage can have serious consequences for businesses – and if not handled effectively by the leaders can have longer term effects such as loss of key staff, financial loss and even closure. During the regression stage, the purpose becomes cloudier and attention shifts to the minutiae, people become less productive and the business can tread water.

It is at this stage that leaders need to shift the focus onto recovery – resetting the agenda for the organisation, providing a new focus and taking the team forward. This often means the need for an emphasis on ethos and culture, as these are hard to maintain when teams are not together physically.

The different way in which you are working, and the changed operating environment has the potential to erode your desired culture and requires a different intervention by the leadership team. Culture, in any event, needs to be continuously worked on to be achieved.

An engaged workforce is usually one of the top priorities for a business; but it needs to be an



even higher priority during a crisis. It is an inevitable consequence of lockdown generated remote/home working that there will be some staff disengagement (detachment even) and there is an increase in 'what can the organisation do for me', rather than 'what can I do for the organisation'.

Effective employee engagement increases productivity and satisfaction with your services. Conversely, employee disengagement reduces productivity and satisfaction and can lead to an increase in complaints and active working against the organisation, its leaders and colleagues. Disengagement could have existed before the current period and can happen almost instantaneously.

The engagement impact of the current Covid-19 situation bears some comparisons to Robin Dunbar's number theory. The theory suggests there is a cognitive limit to the number of people with whom one can maintain stable social relationships. As the number of people grow, it generally requires more interventions to maintain a stable, cohesive group. The comparison here is that the current Covid period and remote working is disrupting the existing stable social relationships; so more intervention is required.

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Tony Lewis

In more “normal” times, the most common reasons for disengagement include a lack of effective leadership, the monotony of work, a perceived inequality and perhaps, terms and conditions. With the advent of closed offices and home working, it may also include a perception that the current arrangements are costing them more financially and they have lost benefits (such as free tea and coffee), their home set-up is not as good as the office and social isolation/loss of the normal access to the wider world and friend and colleagues.



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Leaders need to intervene on a people and communication level to kick start the recovery phase. Inspiring leaders establish rituals to connect their team to its core narrative, using them to reflect, remind, reinforce and reignite their collective identity and purpose.

But it's not always that simple. In order for a recovery phase to be successful and halt the disengagement of staff and erosion of culture, leaders need to understand the personality types of their team and wider organisation. Armed with that insight, it is possible to create the ideal environment; one in which everyone can perform their best and aid rapid recovery of the business.

To demonstrate the different types of people and their need, we split people into four categories of and each have their own characteristics, communication needs and ideal environments.

'Direct Action' people will want challenge, are extrovert with high levels of energy and they like stimulation and worthy competitors. 'Happy Radiant' people are lively, strongly extroverted and crave variation and interest where things are fun, lively and above all, challenging.

'Conscientious Dependable' people will want order in things but with some social time. They definitely will require an explanation as to why they are doing things in a certain way. 'Clear Analytical' people want to know more about what's going on around them and understand it. They will want the rules applied along with time to consider what is being asked of them.

Once the personality needs have been established, more effective personal and organisation communications can be created. Current enforced working arrangements – which for many may well become the norm – make it difficult to maintain effective engagement amongst people in an organisation and to keep the service “personal” – the very things that, in normal times, are the essential, defining qualities of strong organisations.

When communicating with the types within your organisation you need to be mindful that the different character types will require different approaches and styles (tempos, frequency, language and level of detail and facts) to ensure the best response and each has different needs when it comes to timing and frequency of contact from managers and colleagues.

Help is available to businesses from Lewis Parnell & Broadgate Creative we would recommend four foundation stones of [‘keeping it special’](#) and [helping businesses recover from crisis](#)

- Creating the right environment for your employees, new starters and board members
- Developing a practical plan to communicate the right messages in the right way, reflecting the needs of your staff profile and your organisation's purpose
- Providing a benchmark barometer of engagement and buy-in to your ethos among staff
- Supporting you and your team with practical delivery plans and coaching support

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