



Douglas Wittenauer, CEO

As we edge nearer the pool to dip our toes back into the waters of a normal, everyday workspace, a looming question remains: what will it look like?

Globally, as well as across the nation, state, industry, and in individual service regions, there's sure to be an obvious lag time as businesses re-introduce operations, likely in stages, in one big, collective game of catch-up. Simultaneously, companies large and small will need to make modifications to keep things seamless as they resume functionality.

When the time comes for the world, nation, state and region to spring back to active work status, there will be as many challenges as there will be opportunities. How companies react and position themselves will affect their futures arguably more than any other factor in the modern world. One thing is certain, the workplace will never look exactly the same as it did prior to the outbreak of the Corona virus.

Forbes recently published a great article by Paul Armstrong entitled "Why You'll Never Have a Better Chance to Change Your Business than During COVID-19" on how the pandemic could present unexpected opportunities. It encourages business professionals to take this time to think purposefully and challenge themselves in terms of how to re-invent their business, since there won't be a better time to do so in the foreseeable future than the grand re-opening of corporate America.

"Get uncomfortable now and allow yourself to think big. Fix the problems you find (or decide to let them go) and make bold choices. You'll never have an opportunity like the one in front of you now," the Forbes author recommends. Not bad advice. We can only hope that there will be some positives to come out of this tremendous disaster.

Some of the changes to come seem evident. For instance, we're likely to see an even smaller world in terms of technology allotting for an even bigger slice of general commerce. While this will benefit many companies, it could and probably will hurt smaller businesses. With reduced foot traffic into local stores and shops in lieu of online purchasing, which has become even more prevalent during the pandemic, a lot of these shops will be lucky to stay open.

Remote work has become the rule instead of the exception, which is both good and bad. The productivity issue notwithstanding (and loyal team members will always step up, while the reverse is also true), connectivity can be a hugely interruptive component to the equation. Working from home –or wherever- is a game changer in that offers increased flexibility while opening recruitment to every corner of the world. So, it's key to iron out technology network wrinkles as soon as possible, especially since many workers may be hesitant to return to a traditional office anytime soon, particularly those with underlying health issues.

Clearly, the pandemic has also confirmed our collective ability to become almost completely paperless as a society. Another factor is production independence. The COVID-19 crisis proved that we have capacity for less reliance on foreign manufacturing support. Optimistically, this will mean more American workers who've been displaced will find jobs sooner than later.

We will hopefully become a healthier society since the research and trials being done to combat and treat COVID-19 could improve testing, vaccine and treatment protocols not only for influenza but potentially other viruses and ailments, as well. Many people are cooking and eating at home more than ever, so we're ostensibly healthier as a result and many may choose to skip restaurant/fast food dining and stay home with the family unit they have been connecting with (maybe for the first time in a long while) over the past several weeks.

It's not shocking that this world crisis will readjust life as we know it. Major events in history impact several generations, if the past is any indicator. For instance, the manufacturing boom during the WWII generation produced a slew of worker bees while millennials are proving to be social-minded community servants as a result of environmental and humanitarian influences on their formative era.

Precisely what PDMI will look like post-pandemic remains to be seen. We are fortunate to be armed with a creative, entrepreneurial team of professionals. We have empowered them to share innovative ideas to help us refine previous work practices and protocols to become even more productive and competitive, and to always choose to what's in the best interest of our colleagues, clients, families, and communities. As a business owner and contributing member of society, I truly believe in the fundamental concept of our corporate vision, which states: "When we care, we win together."

Encouraging you all to stay strong and be well,
Doug Wittenauer, CEO

SOURCE: *Forbes magazine*

