

WORKPLACE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE DURING THIS PANDEMIC

No one knows what lasting effect the coronavirus will have on our economy. We have no idea the timeframes or the long-term repercussions on our businesses.

This disruption is testing everyone's emotional and social operating system and functioning, which is better known as emotional intelligence. As Darwin deduced, those who survive "are not the strongest or the most intelligent, but the most adaptable to change."

It's the responsibility of leaders to show empathy, optimism, and flexibility that will lead business out of this crisis. It may all come down to our ability to be problem-solvers.

This crisis will probably not end in the next few weeks, and with so many people experiencing high anxiety, this could be a good time to refresh our emotional intelligence skills.

BE EMPATHETIC

Keep in mind that this event is impacting everyone, not just you and your business. Remind yourself that you have no idea what someone else may be going through.

Sensing that everyone is in a similar situation is a remedy for elevated levels of stress and pessimism that may only compound your frustration and ability to solve problems.

BE INNOVATIVE

Technology has made it possible for us to work anywhere. With video conferencing, email, chatting and texting, we can continue to work even if we are forced to do that from home.

There's Zoom, Google Hangouts, Skype, FaceTime and more to hold meetings and online conferences. All the solutions are at our fingertips; we just need to embrace them.

BE FLEXIBLE

If your company has plans or an event scheduled for June, think ahead and use a "wait & see" approach as no one knows what is coming. Or, if you are able, consider making it a digital event now, ensuring that those participating will still be able to attend.

Develop and circulate policies now so that staff knows when and if to come to work or stay home. Planning ahead will also make you feel calmer thus relieving stress.

BE OPTIMISTIC

National and local governments, medical institutions, the media, and business leaders around the world are seeking solutions and communicating with the public to prevent panic and the spread of inaccurate information. Consider this a time to be grateful that we can access all the knowledge we need to make educated decisions.

Major changes to the way you work will inevitably be complicated. Show your empathy, optimism and gratitude for the work people have done. Be thankful for their understanding. This sense of optimism and gratitude will allow solutions and new ideas to develop. Remind yourself and employees that you will work on this together. Center yourself, develop a mentality that people are doing the best they can in this time of uncertainty. We are all in this together and together we will find a way forward.

By taking responsibility of your own attitude, to try to be optimistic and find solutions, you are helping yourself and others. This is a human and emotionally intelligent thing to do.