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COVID-19 and Virtual Leadership Challenges

By

Rachelle Samsoundar

A Major Research Paper
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Odette School of Business
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Business Administration
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2021

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COVID-19 and Virtual Leadership Challenges

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March 31st, 2021

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to investigate the structure and efficacy of e-leadership in the workplace. In addition, the paper focuses on the impacts and challenges e-leaders must overcome to successfully manage teams whilst maintaining business objectives and goals. Three challenges were selected for this research from productivity, personal management/human resources, communication/change management and organizational structure. To accomplish the objective, the paper addressed the efficacy and suitability of e-leadership in many of today's industries.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Working from home has experienced rapid growth as a result of the global COVID 19 pandemic. Yet, working remotely has existed prior to the industrial revolution the current pandemic has simply accelerated this process tenfold in numerous industries. Statistics Canada's March 2020 Perspectives Survey Series found that as many workers (39.1%) were teleworking during the last full week of March (Statistics Canada 2020)¹ “*Many companies have opened up for remote work during the pandemic, including Google, Facebook, and Twitter, and we're now seeing a proliferating trend among companies*” according to Allan Christensen, COO at Doist.²

Successful implementation of technology, social and organizational restructuring in the work force have rapidly been instituted in many industries to accommodate for the emerging social distancing norms of this pandemic.³ Some of the many challenges facing e-leadership in the midst of the 4th industrial era are productivity, personal management, communication and organizational structure.⁴ E-leaders must try to understand the challenges employees face to be productive such as work life balance, layoffs and mental health from the impact of working remotely.⁵ (*See Appendix F*) For instance, addictions, both drug and alcohol related, have risen significantly due to the instability that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic and the demands of working from home.⁶ E-leaders must discuss, address and create clear

¹ Deng, Z., Morissette, R., & Messacar, D. (2020, May 28). *Running the economy remotely: Potential for working from home during and after COVID-19*. Statistics Canada.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00026-eng.htm>

² Kelly, J. (2020, May 26). *Here Are The Companies Leading The Work-From-Home Revolution*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2020/05/24/the-work-from-home-revolution-is-quickly-gaining-momentum/>

³ Rist, K. (2020, September 7). *Working From Home: The New 'Industrial' Revolution*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kjartanrist/2020/09/07/working-from-home-the-new-industrial-revolution/?sh=72332d4a62fd>

⁴ Wolor, C. W., Solikhah, S., Fidhyallah, N. F., & Lestari, D. P. (2020). Effectiveness of E-Training, E-Leadership, and Work Life Balance on Employee Performance during COVID-19. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7(10), 443–450. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2020.vol7.no10.443>

⁵ Wolor, C. W., Solikhah, S., Fidhyallah, N. F., & Lestari, D. P. (2020). Effectiveness of E-Training, E-Leadership, and Work Life Balance on Employee Performance during COVID-19. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7(10), 443–450. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2020.vol7.no10.443>

workplace policies to handle these issues because of the impact they may have on employee performance. Personnel management must also be addressed in a work from home environment.⁶ Individual characteristics impact employees, these factors include their age, personality, gender and social status all of which are determinants of workforce structures and affect how e-leaders manage their diverse teams. Communication is equally vital. Successful e-leaders have to optimally utilize tools such as Skype, Zoom or other meeting platforms and have more interactive remote sessions to increase employee performance.⁷ E-leaders must have frequent, clear and consistent communication with their employees to establish high standards of workplace dialogue and manage a changing workforce.⁸ E-leaders are also called to set up effective reward systems and look at different ways to motivate employees for greater morale and teamwork.⁹ Overall, with the current change in the delivery of work performed e-leadership is crucial and an effective movement for many companies to flourish and improve productivity amongst their workforce.¹⁰

Significance of the Paper

In the midst of the global pandemic where organizations are being forced to work remotely, there have been a number of recent studies which have focused on how best to structurally set up Virtual Teams from a e-leader

⁶ Rist, K. (2020, September 7). *Working From Home: The New 'Industrial' Revolution*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kjartanrist/2020/09/07/working-from-home-the-new-industrial-revolution/?sh=72332d4a62fd>

⁷ Rist, K. (2020, September 7). *Working From Home: The New 'Industrial' Revolution*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kjartanrist/2020/09/07/working-from-home-the-new-industrial-revolution/?sh=72332d4a62fd>

⁸ Rist, K. (2020, September 7). *Working From Home: The New 'Industrial' Revolution*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kjartanrist/2020/09/07/working-from-home-the-new-industrial-revolution/?sh=72332d4a62fd>

⁹ Rist, K. (2020, September 7). *Working From Home: The New 'Industrial' Revolution*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kjartanrist/2020/09/07/working-from-home-the-new-industrial-revolution/?sh=72332d4a62fd>

¹⁰ Wolor, C. W., Solikhah, S., Fidhyallah, N. F., & Lestari, D. P. (2020). Effectiveness of E-Training, E-Leadership, and Work Life Balance on Employee Performance during COVID-19. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7(10), 443–450. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2020.vol7.no10.443>

perspective¹¹. On reviewing the literature, it became apparent that there was an opportunity to complete further research. Specifically, there could be additional focus on the challenges and opportunities for remote e-leadership across a vast array of disciplines and industries.

Comparative Analysis of Pre-vs Post COVID Online Work Practices

COVID-19's impact on employees, e-leaders and organizations across the globe has been drastic.¹² The global pandemic has forced most employees and employers to move from working predominantly in an office to an online forum while working from home. With a shift of this magnitude there will always be immediate issues and concerns. Some of these include the need to create and lead new internal processes as well as manage and predict economical and psychological impacts such as burnout and mental health.¹³ While e-Leadership is a concept that has been contemplated by many industries in the wake of COVID-19 it has now become a necessity. This paper will provide an analysis of the impact of COVID 19 and the transition to a predominantly online working environment.

COVID has accelerated the reliance on technology and increased the speed of evolution to a new business paradigm. Now that the advent of COVID has changed the face of the modern working environment, e-leadership positions are forced to contemplate new challenges in the working world.

CHAPTER 2: FIRST CHALLENGE IN THE REALM OF E-LEADERSHIP: PRODUCTIVITY

Some of the main challenges that e-leaders must face as employees are required to work from home include organization, emotional fatigue, mental health

¹¹ Pulley, M., & Sessa, V. (2001, November 1). *E-leadership: tackling complex challenges*. Emerald Publishing. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/00197850110405379/full/html>

¹² Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

¹³ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

impact on productivity, loneliness and replacing the interpersonal relationships that accompany career progression.¹⁴ In an effort to overcome those challenges and barriers, e-leaders must make calculated efforts to generate and maintain connections by taking actions to focus and inspire employees to produce optimally, explicit guidelines to facilitate an employee to complete their tasks and provide boundaries so employees can maintain an adequate work/life balance. Additionally, e-leaders must instill purpose to inspire productivity as circumstances become challenging (Petriglieri et al., 2019).¹⁵ It is also imperative that e-leaders take the time to understand individual employees needs on an individual basis looking at various criteria such as cognitive and learning agility, general proactivity, and emotional resilience so that corporations are capitalizing on the unique strengths each and every team member possesses (Ashford et al., 2018).

This paper will narrow in on six economic and socio-psychological impacts working from home that e-leaders must be aware of and address in order to manage a virtual team successfully.

Unemployment and Layoffs

The loss of a career has detrimental impacts on the individual losing their position along with those who remain. For those who remain there is a heavy distrust with senior management and fear that they may too be cast out by the organization. Further, dependent on the size of the organization, downsizing has long-term financial implications that existing employees may see as detrimental to their growth prospects and long-term sustainability of the organization. These all present potential issues to productivity that e-leaders must be proactive in identifying and addressing.

¹⁴ Ashford, S., Caza, B., & Reid, E. (2018, January 1). *From surviving to thriving in the gig economy: A research agenda for individuals in the new world of work*. ScienceDirect. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0191308518300042?casa_token=iRmSuTKPMzEAAAAA:W_Ryexk3ztE3XlhWeuhcmc5aHi_dnLpqLQmVRmwYsk0SvKalK-5PKYKwwsFELxirlj6jPDj-jg

¹⁵ Petriglieri, G., Ashford, S. J., & Wrzesniewski, A. (2019). Agony and ecstasy in the gig economy: Cultivating holding environments for precarious and personalized work identities. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 64(1), 124-170.

The costs of unemployment can be both economic and latent due to the loss of social structure, status and social networking ties.¹⁶ (*See Appendix A*) There are also direct and indirect costs associated with those that remain working within the organization.¹⁷ The direct costs of layoffs from severance pay to outplacement services can be substantial along with intangible costs such as losing experienced sales and marketing employees who have strong relationships with clients/networking ties potentially damaging business relationships.¹⁸ A prime example of this was described by Jonathan Phillips, managing director of Houston-based executive search firm Magellan International that stated when he worked in a management role at Shell in the late 1980s, “*They let a lot of senior executives go, mostly out of sales and marketing, which they thought was a marginal activity until their clients didn’t want to buy from them anymore.*”¹⁹ Furthermore, a report by researchers Christopher Zatzick and Roderick Iverson of Simon Fraser University found that layoffs at “high involvement workplaces” can be perceived as a violation of the psychological contract between an organization and its employees. This results in decreased trust as well as increased stress in the workplace leading to decreased employee commitment and productivity.²⁰ They found that not only are top-performing employees more likely to leave, but the employees that remain may demonstrate less effort and involvement.²¹

Fortunately, e-leaders working remotely can mitigate the negative aftereffects of downsizing by continuing to engage in employee-friendly practices.²² Phillips of

¹⁶ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

¹⁷ Bergfeld, C. (2008, August 21). *The Hidden Costs of Layoffs*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-hidden-costs-of-layoffs/>

¹⁸ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-hidden-costs-of-layoffs/> Bergfeld, C. (2008, August 21). *The Hidden Costs of Layoffs*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-hidden-costs-of-layoffs/>

¹⁹ Bergfeld, C. (2008, August 21). *The Hidden Costs of Layoffs*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-hidden-costs-of-layoffs/>

²⁰ Bergfeld, C. (2008, August 21). *The Hidden Costs of Layoffs*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-hidden-costs-of-layoffs/>

²¹ Bergfeld, C. (2008, August 21). *The Hidden Costs of Layoffs*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-hidden-costs-of-layoffs/>

²² Bergfeld, C. (2008, August 21). *The Hidden Costs of Layoffs*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-hidden-costs-of-layoffs/>

Magellan lists Johnson & Johnson as a prime example of a corporation turning the negative effects of layoffs into a positive. “*Johnson & Johnson has huge family involvement with the firm,*” Phillips says. “*They try desperately to place everybody, even if they know [they] can’t do it. The attitude in HR is, ‘What can we do to help?’*”²³ Companies that cut back on this management strategy amidst company restructuring or layoffs, in an effort to minimize costs, will drastically reduce employee productivity. Statistics state that the coronavirus economic freeze could cost 47 million jobs and send the unemployment rate past 32%, according to St. Louis Fed projections, with nearly 67 million Americans working in jobs that are at a high risk of layoffs.²⁴

Another way in which e-leaders can stand out from others and create a competitive edge is by focusing time, money, and resources into the e-leaders that will help guide and manage the employees who remain in the organization. Glassdoor Senior Economist Daniel Zhao, spoke to several executives and e-leaders across several industries to hone in on the best ways to manage teams through layoffs.²⁵ Daniel Zhao recommends e-leaders operate with compassion and empathy allowing employees the time to grieve at the loss of teammates.²⁶ Second, e-leaders must communicate clearly and with the utmost sensitivity as Erich Mochnacz, HR consultant at Red Clover states, “*Right now, employees are potentially juggling child care, worries about their own and others’ health, and the potential of job loss.*”²⁷ As such, according to Jared Weitz, CEO/Founder United Capital Source Inc. if e-leaders can demonstrate calm, rational thinking and communication they will be significantly

²³ Bergfeld, C. (2008, August 21). *The Hidden Costs of Layoffs*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-hidden-costs-of-layoffs/>

²⁴ Cox, J. (2020, March 31). *Coronavirus job losses could total 47 million, unemployment rate may hit 32%, Fed estimates*. CNBC. <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/30/coronavirus-job-losses-could-total-47-million-unemployment-rate-of-32percent-fed-says.html>

²⁵ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

²⁶ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

²⁷ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

better positioned to build trust with employees and keep workers loyal and engaged.²⁸ Psychology states that humans are creatures of habits and when things are consistent, especially in unchartered and turbulent times, the team will feel safer and better capable to manage their work.²⁹

Finally, e-leaders must inspire and motivate employees and promote comradery in their employees as workers worry about losing their job.³⁰ Alex Axoury, Founder and CEO of Home Grounds states that culture impacts all of the people in an organization, and it is the people that make the culture. As such, layoffs of any kind will inevitably impact company morale and communication can help so long as e-leaders are honest and genuinely reassuring.³¹ One way to accomplish this is to motivate employees and colleagues within the organization to network and share alternative income opportunities with each other says Lior Ohayon, CEO of Hush Blankets.³² Lior states, *“Particularly in a situation like the COVID-19 pandemic, there are still remote work opportunities available to laid-off employees. By spreading the word and providing recommendations, a team can work together to get through a layoff. On top of that, if you're a supportive boss, you are encouraging staff to return to you in better times.”*³³ Perhaps the most important action e-leaders can take is continuing to check-in with their staff. Workplace analyst Cindy Lo of FitSmallBusiness.com speaks to the importance of keeping a retained workforce feeling engaged.³⁴ Cindy Lo states that *“regular check-ins are necessary, especially if things get bad. One on one meetings with each employee as well as the entire team can be a huge remedy. If possible, these meetings should be conducted via video call*

²⁸ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

²⁹ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

³⁰ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

³¹ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

³² Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

³³ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

³⁴ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

*instead of over the phone. After all, face time can be a huge help for people to not feel isolated. While this tactic will increase the number of meetings on the calendar, it's nonetheless necessary for maintaining engagement.*³⁵

Presenteeism

Second, is the physical act of being in the workforce among people serving “essential” jobs. There is likely to be an increase in the number of people going to work when ill due to the nature of the job/service of the organization (*See Appendix A*).³⁶ E-leaders must not incentivize and reward employees to work if they are unwell or experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms as this can create a very dangerous work environment for individuals who still go into work and can inflict harm on employees themselves.³⁷ It has been well documented that an unhealthy trend since the presence of COVID-19 is employees feeling the need to be present at work if they are deemed “essential”.³⁸ Multiple factors contribute to encouraging these unhealthy work practices such as fears over job security, social isolation and ‘digital presenteeism’ with more people working from home and unable to create clearly defined boundaries between work and home lives.³⁹

A recent survey of more than 3,500 adults carried out by the Office for National Statistics conclude that one in five have experienced depression since COVID-19 compared with one in ten previously.⁴⁰ Further research by the Chartered

³⁵ Jackson, A. E. (2020, April 24). *Managing Your Teams Through Layoffs*. US | Glassdoor for Employers. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/managing-your-teams-through-layoffs/>

³⁶ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

³⁷ Stolk, C., & Whitmore, M. (2020, September). *Managing the Challenge of Workforce Presenteeism in the COVID-19 Crisis*. RAND Corporation. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/managing-the-challenge-of-workforce-presenteeism-in.html>

³⁸ Stolk, C., & Whitmore, M. (2020, September). *Managing the Challenge of Workforce Presenteeism in the COVID-19 Crisis*. RAND Corporation. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/managing-the-challenge-of-workforce-presenteeism-in.html>

³⁹ Stolk, C., & Whitmore, M. (2020, September). *Managing the Challenge of Workforce Presenteeism in the COVID-19 Crisis*. RAND Corporation. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/managing-the-challenge-of-workforce-presenteeism-in.html>

⁴⁰ Stolk, C., & Whitmore, M. (2020, September). *Managing the Challenge of Workforce Presenteeism in the COVID-19 Crisis*. RAND Corporation. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/managing-the-challenge-of-workforce-presenteeism-in.html>

Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) confirms this trend stating that, for example, its Good Work Index shows 43% of employees stating that their general mental health has worsened since the outbreak, rising to 52% for those with an existing mental health issue.⁴¹ Moreover, 39% said their financial security has decreased since the start of the crisis. Around 30% say that their ability to work has been impacted by caring responsibilities. Based on these findings it is clear that presenteeism will prove to be a significant challenge that e-leaders must face.⁴²

One way in which e-leaders can meet this challenge is to not ignore the issue.⁴³ The CIPD twentieth survey report on health and well-being found that, pre-pandemic, nearly nine in ten (89%) professionals had observed presenteeism in their organization over the past 12 months.⁴⁴ Only a third had taken real steps to tackle the unhealthy working practices and environment.⁴⁵ Some proactive actions that e-leaders can use at their disposal when dealing with presenteeism include: addressing poor mental health, financial well-being, sleep, and include digital applications and lifestyle programs to hold employees and employers accountable.⁴⁶ Ultimately however, true organizational change must take place from the top of the organization whereby a culture of healthy behavior is the standard by which the organization operates.⁴⁷ This will require e-leaders within the organization to strategize health and

⁴¹ Wells, J. (2020, August). *The CIPD signs open letter committing to prioritise employee mental health during return to work*. CIPD. <https://www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/news-articles/cipd-letter-mental-health-return-work>

⁴² Stolk, C., & Whitmore, M. (2020, September). *Managing the Challenge of Workforce Presenteeism in the COVID-19 Crisis*. RAND Corporation. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/managing-the-challenge-of-workforce-presenteeism-in.html>

⁴³ Stolk, C., & Whitmore, M. (2020, September). *Managing the Challenge of Workforce Presenteeism in the COVID-19 Crisis*. RAND Corporation.

<https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/managing-the-challenge-of-workforce-presenteeism-in.html>

⁴⁴ Wells, J. (2020, August). *The CIPD signs open letter committing to prioritise employee mental health during return to work*. CIPD. <https://www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/news-articles/cipd-letter-mental-health-return-work>

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⁴⁶ Stolk, C., & Whitmore, M. (2020, September). *Managing the Challenge of Workforce Presenteeism in the COVID-19 Crisis*. RAND Corporation. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/managing-the-challenge-of-workforce-presenteeism-in.html>

⁴⁷ Stolk, C., & Whitmore, M. (2020, September). *Managing the Challenge of Workforce Presenteeism in the COVID-19 Crisis*. RAND Corporation.

<https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/managing-the-challenge-of-workforce-presenteeism-in.html>

well-being focusing on the core health issues in a workplace and those most at risk, vis a vis, a clear communication of the strategy, risk assessments, and a range of evidence-based interventions and reporting.⁴⁸

E-leaders must also model appropriate behavior and not attend work when ill as well.⁴⁹ E-leaders must allow their employees to have greater flexibility and autonomy whilst providing job security such that if an employee is unwell they can choose to work from home (permitting the work can be done from home) without worrying about their jobs being at risk.⁵⁰ This is proven by rigorous research published by the International Journal of Wellbeing, (*See Appendix B*) that states, higher job security is related to lower troublesome symptoms, impaired productivity and psychological distress, as well as higher thriving employees at work when controlling for personal and work-related demographics.⁵¹ As such it is evident that the current crisis has created multiple challenges for e-leaders within an organization but a compelling case can be made that in addressing issues of the health and well-being of employees it will ultimately lead to greater productivity within the organization.⁵²

Economic Inequality

⁴⁸ Lakomski, G. (2001, April 1). *Organizational change, leadership and learning: culture as cognitive process* | *Emerald Insight*. Emerald Insight. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/09513540110383791/full/html?journalCode=ijem>

⁴⁹ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

⁵⁰ Pacheco, T., Coulombe, S., Khalil, C., Meunier, S., Doucerain, M., & Auger, E et al. (2020, August 12). *Job security and the promotion of workers' wellbeing in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic: A study with Canadian workers one to two weeks after the initiation of social distancing measures*. International Journal of Wellbeing (IJW). <https://internationaljournalofwellbeing.org/index.php/ijow/article/view/1321>

⁵¹ Pacheco, T., Coulombe, S., Khalil, C., Meunier, S., Doucerain, M., & Auger, E et al. (2020, August 12). *Job security and the promotion of workers' wellbeing in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic: A study with Canadian workers one to two weeks after the initiation of social distancing measures*. International Journal of Wellbeing (IJW). <https://internationaljournalofwellbeing.org/index.php/ijow/article/view/1321>

⁵² Stolk, C., & Whitmore, M. (2020, September). *Managing the Challenge of Workforce Presenteeism in the COVID-19 Crisis*. RAND Corporation. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/managing-the-challenge-of-workforce-presenteeism-in.html>

Overall, the global pandemic has magnified inequalities within society and as a result the most vulnerable groups in society have been disproportionately affected. To further add complexities to the mix, the lack of access to crisis teams, appointments, and other support services (some of which must be conducted in person and face-to-face), have left people feeling increasingly distressed, disappointed, and hopeless.⁵³ With the increase in inequality expected from the shock of COVID-19, it is highly likely that employees will experience burnout, deviant behaviors, and withdrawals which will significantly reduce productivity and negatively impact the business objectives and success of an organization.⁵⁴ One major disadvantage to working remotely is the mere fact that not everyone can work from home. For example, in the US 4.4 million households with students still lack consistent access to a computer and 3.7 million lack internet access.⁵⁵ As such, policies led by e-leaders must be put into place, as soon as possible, to bridge digital divides and avoid widening the income disparity gap.⁵⁶ E-leaders can take action by adapting and reforming education and training systems while closing social protection deficits for workers that are unable to work from home. This occurs whether that be by providing them with the tools to complete their jobs via a laptop or otherwise.⁵⁷ It is important to note however, that women may fare much better than their male counterparts in terms of income inequality as telework could help foster

⁵³ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁵⁴ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

⁵⁵ USAFacts. (2020, September 28). *USA Facts: Internet Access*. <https://usafacts.org/articles/internet-access-students-at-home/>

⁵⁶ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁵⁷ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

more gender-balanced career paths and reduce earnings inequalities.⁵⁸ In fact, it is estimated that half-million more people are likely to experience mental health problems as a result of the economic impacts of the pandemic.⁵⁹

E-leaders must try to reduce selection biases in favor of the demographically privileged and act to prevent further negative spiraling of pay and benefits.⁶⁰ E-leaders play a crucial role in changing the status quo and reshaping society's priorities by putting mental health and wellbeing at the forefront.⁶¹

Social Distancing and Loneliness

E-leaders must face the realities of growing feelings of loneliness and the impact on productivity. Strategies that enable adequate addressing of these issues must now be included in e-leaders responsibilities which previously were dormant.

Prior to COVID-19, 40% of office workers globally felt alone.⁶² The pandemic has heightened feelings of loneliness as can be seen in research on remote working that suggests merely nine months in is when feelings of intense isolation kick in.⁶³ Feelings of loneliness are important in a business context as it can come at

⁵⁸ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁵⁹ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁶⁰ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

⁶¹ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁶² Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁶³ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

a significant business cost.⁶⁴ Workers that are lonely feel less motivated, committed, engaged and productive than those who are not lonely.⁶⁵

Although it may be seemingly deceptive, such that technology has allowed many to keep in touch, people are struggling with feelings of disconnection and loneliness.⁶⁶ E-leaders can try to combat these feelings of loneliness by encouraging employees to embrace their own vulnerabilities and fostering an environment whereby colleagues can share their own personal struggles and successes, and encourage relationships and friendships within the organization.⁶⁷ As e-leaders acknowledge the risk of workplace loneliness and place a high emphasis on the value of social connections as a part of broader employee wellness programs, organizations will notice a more pleasant and social work environment which will translate into greater productivity of workers.⁶⁸

Dr. Ellison, a medical doctor and co-CEO of The Permanente Federation states that “*there’s a tendency for everyone to feel alone, especially with physical distancing.*”⁶⁹ Now more than ever it has become all about what connects you and e-leaders must strive to foster an environment of camaraderie between employees so

⁶⁴ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁶⁵ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁶⁶ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁶⁷ Fogarty, P., Frantz, S., Hirschfeld, J., Jones, A., Keating, S., & Lafont, E. (2021). *Coronavirus: How can society thrive post-pandemic?* BBC Worklife. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201118-coronavirus-how-will-it-affect-inequalities-mental-health>

⁶⁸ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action.* Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

⁶⁹ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership.* Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

that employers feel a strong sense that team members can lead on one another to deal with isolation and grief both in their personal lives and workplaces.⁷⁰

Stress and Burnout

As with loneliness there are negative repercussions associated to employee stress and burnout on the organization. The responsibilities of an e-leader must be expanded to address this new environment and utilize management skills that were previously not as high a priority.

Increased job demands and reduced resources are likely to lead to greater stress and burnout among employees.⁷¹ A new survey of 3,900 employees and business leaders across 11 nations, led by The Workforce Institute at Ultimate Kronos Group (UKG) and Workplace Intelligence, discovered that burnout and fatigue are equally concerning for employee's working remotely (43%) and those in a physical workplace (43%).⁷² Overall, three in five (59%) employees and business leaders say that their organization has taken at least some measures to guard against burnout and nearly a third (29%) of employees wish organizations would act with more empathy.⁷³ E-leaders must pivot their approach to tackling stress and burnout from outdated practices pre COVID and at the very start of the COVID-19 lockdown.⁷⁴ For example, e-leaders must realize that asking employees to spend countless hours on video conferences and then come back online for an afternoon happy-hour is counterproductive and will only exacerbate stress and work overload.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁷¹ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

⁷² Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁷³ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁷⁴ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁷⁵ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

Todd McKinnon, CEO of Okta quickly realized that during the pandemic his staff were not taking the time off they needed to recuperate and said, “*the data shows that, at home, our staff were kind of working 24/7.*”⁷⁶ Todd tried to give his employees Fridays off but the staff would end up compensating by working extra on the following day to keep up with the workload. One highly effective strategy Todd implemented as a result was to change the deliverables and stated, “*If you really want to take the pressure off the team, you have [to] adjust the workload.*”⁷⁷

E-Leaders must strategically tackle stress and burnout in their employees by first, leveraging the data-based decisions to assess what the root of the stress is within the organization.⁷⁸ The second step, according to the Jennifer Moss author of *Preventing Burnout is About Empathetic Leadership*, is to employ upstream strategies to tackle the problem while being supportive about people’s fears right now during these unprecedented times.⁷⁹ A prime example of implementing these strategies is seen by Eugenie Fanning, VP of People at Squarefoot, a tech-enabled commercial real estate company based in Manhattan. Eugene quickly recognized that there was fear about returning to the office as such, Eugene and her e-leaders continued to reinforce trust to mitigate burnout and went beyond the typical standard safety protocols to reduce anxiety and ease the tension between employees.⁸⁰

One significant source of stress comes from working parents with children under 18 that currently comprise of almost one-third of the U.S workforce.⁸¹ According to the American Psychological Association’s report, “Stress in the Time of Covid-19” nearly half of parents (46%) say that their stress level is high (between 8 and 10 on a 10-point scale where 1 means “little or no stress” and 10 means “a great

⁷⁶ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁷⁷ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁷⁸ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁷⁹ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁸⁰ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁸¹ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

deal of stress”).⁸² Coakley, VP of People for Electric, a New-York based IT Solutions company asked her employees how they are doing with work and life balance.⁸³ The common response was, “*We’re not. You’re either a bad parent or a bad employee.*”⁸⁴ E-leaders can try to work around these issues by providing flexible hours for their employees but sometimes that may not be enough as workers will still always feel like they have to be in two places at once.⁸⁵ Ultimately, as e-leaders lead from a place of empathy and address the foundational needs such as physical safety, psychological safety, job stability and flexibility, employees will trust their employers and reduce potential stress/burnout from occurring to an extent that hinders ones performance.⁸⁶

Addiction

Unfortunately, one of the most severe consequences of COVID-19 is a rise in substance misuse both drug and alcohol related.⁸⁷ E-leaders must tread carefully when addressing issues surrounding addiction and substance abuse that has become perpetuated by the global pandemic resulting in risky and deviant behaviors in employees.⁸⁸ Employees are able to hide their addictions better while working from home as e-leaders cannot physically assess workers that may be exhibiting early addiction behaviors. As such, it is imperative that e-leaders are trained to detect any signs or symptoms of employee addictions and manage expectations within the virtual work place early on. Managing their expectations ensures the efficient

⁸² *Stress in the Time of COVID-19*. (2020, May). American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2020/stress-in-america-covid.pdf>

⁸³ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁸⁴ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁸⁵ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁸⁶ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

⁸⁷ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

⁸⁸ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

completion of organizational tasks, empowers e-leaders to address conflict resolution, effectively assess employee performance, and fully inform employees of resources available to them. Ultimately these steps all have an impact on organizational productivity.

In an article written by Dr. Yusuf Sherwani on January 7th 2021, Yusuf states that COVID-19 has resulted in a host of challenges that have exacerbated an already serious substance abuse situation and obstructed efforts to contain it.⁸⁹ Specifically, as per preliminary federal data that is available, between April 2019 and April 2020, there were 76,000 drug overdose deaths, an alarming 13% increase over the same time the year before that.⁹⁰ As such, if e-leaders in organizations fail to address the growing concern of employee addictions then the mental health and overall productivity of workers will deteriorate significantly.

Coronavirus has had a massive impact on patients being treated for substance use disorders (SUD) as patients were reluctant to seek treatment in fear of contracting COVID-19 which is an airborne disease.⁹¹ To make things worse, many recovery programs and addiction treatment centers were forced to close or significantly scale back their hours and services.⁹² In addition, many patients struggled severely with the isolation that accompanied lockdowns and social distancing precautions.⁹³ As such, there was a rise in people overdosing alone, with no one around to call 911 or administer medications to prevent death or severe illness's.⁹⁴ Fortunately, the U.S

⁸⁹ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hr executive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

⁹⁰ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hr executive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

⁹¹ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hr executive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

⁹² Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hr executive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

⁹³ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hr executive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

⁹⁴ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hr executive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

federal government has eased restrictions for virtual addiction treatment which has made it easier for patients to access treatment.⁹⁵

COVID-19's impact on psychological systems and disorders, addiction and behavioral health is significant and will negatively impact employees' long-term mental health, putting employees at a greater risk for chronic illness and addiction.⁹⁶ As such, now more than ever, e-leaders must address and devise strategies to help employees if they have addictions that they are overcoming or working on.⁹⁷ Dr. Yusuf Sherwani states that, "*this escalation situation could pose a serious threat to worker safety and cost companies tens of thousands of dollars in productivity losses, absenteeism and workers' compensation claims if employers don't plan ahead.*"

There are three specific strategies that e-leaders within the organization can utilize to handle workplace addiction.⁹⁸ E-leaders must find a fine balance between being compassionate towards employee's needs and keeping the organization running smoothly whilst also following the company's policies.⁹⁹ The first strategy is for e-leaders to begin an open dialogue with staff whereby substance abuse can be discussed openly without any judgment.¹⁰⁰ Additionally, awareness programs can also be launched that focus on substance abuse and ways in which employees and family members can work with people struggling with substance use disorders.¹⁰¹ Second, employ technology tools to manage substance use disorders in the workplace for both on-site and remote employees.¹⁰² Third, e-leaders must have a clear set of

⁹⁵ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hrexecutive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

⁹⁶ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hrexecutive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

⁹⁷ *Employing and Managing People with Addictions*. (2019, August 16). The Society for Human Resource Management. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/personswithaddictions.aspx>

⁹⁸ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hrexecutive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

⁹⁹ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hrexecutive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

¹⁰⁰ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hrexecutive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

¹⁰¹ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hrexecutive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

¹⁰² Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hrexecutive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

rules to follow such that, there are clear workplace policies like self-help or peer-based programs along with treatment resources and referrals that provide support for employers and their families.¹⁰³

Key Findings of E-Leadership and Productivity

E-leaders are being tested to their limits as corporations require employees to work from home. E-leaders must continue to project vision in order for the business to not only survive but thrive in today's marketplace. E-leaders are faced with new challenges to supervise and cultivate the development of their subordinates remotely. As such, e-leaders need to balance optimism and realism in their communication strategies with employees whilst also being charismatic and motivating to maximize profit and productivity from workers.¹⁰⁴

While productivity via working from home might be a top priority for e-leaders, employee wellbeing must equally be at the forefront of all business decisions especially during these difficult and unknown times.¹⁰⁵ According to Buffer's 2020 survey of 3500 remote workers, 20% of remote workers struggle with loneliness, and another 20% face difficulties in collaboration. As such, it is important that e-leaders do not overstress performance during the coronavirus as employees are trying to balance personal and professional obligations on a daily basis without the help of their complete and usual support systems.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, leaving some margin for error or marginal loss of productivity is essential in that it takes away the pressure and allows employees of different personalities and preferences to enjoy (at least

¹⁰³ Sherwani, Y. (2021, January 13). *What happens when COVID-19 and addiction collide?* Human Resource Executive. <https://hr executive.com/what-happens-when-covid-19-and-addiction-collide/>

¹⁰⁴ Moss, J. (2020, September 30). *Preventing Burnout Is About Empathetic Leadership*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/09/preventing-burnout-is-about-empathetic-leadership>

¹⁰⁵ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁰⁶ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

some) benefits of remote working and ultimately contribute meaningfully to the company's growth and bottom line.¹⁰⁷

CHAPTER 3: SECOND CHALLENGE IN THE REALM OF E-LEADERSHIP: PERSONAL MANAGEMENT/ HUMAN RESOURCES

This paper will narrow in on six moderating factors in working from home that e-leaders must be aware of and address in order to manage a virtual team successfully (*See Appendix A*).

Age

Older employees face disparate health and economic risks and concerns related to COVID-19, with significant impacts on retirement planning being one. E-leaders can manage this successfully if they optimize human capital across the lifespan and strengthen internal labor markets, vis a vis, cross-age mentoring such that the human knowledge gathered and accumulated by the older workers is passed on to the younger employees.

Not only are older employees at a higher risk for developing serious complications from COVID-19 but statistically they are also over-represented in positions such as janitors and home health aides which can further increase their risk for contracting the virus in these environments.¹⁰⁸ A study for The New School of Social Research determined that close to one-third of workers age 50 or older (18.4 million people) face serious risk of illness or unemployment because of their jobs.¹⁰⁹ Such workers hold 37% of personal care/home health aide positions and 36% of

¹⁰⁷ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁰⁸ Agovino, T. (2020, July 17). *COVID-19 Deals a Dual Threat to Older Workers*. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-deals-a-dual-threat-to-older-workers.aspx>

¹⁰⁹ Agovino, T. (2020, July 17). *COVID-19 Deals a Dual Threat to Older Workers*. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-deals-a-dual-threat-to-older-workers.aspx>

transportation and moving posts, jobs that require close contact with others.¹¹⁰ Additionally, the ageism trend makes it difficult for older workers to find employment, often times forcing them to accept a lower wage if they find a job after being laid off.¹¹¹ As such, older workers are requiring the need for pre-retirement income making them the fastest-growing segment of the workforce and a contingent that many employers rely on.¹¹²

According to Richard Johnson, senior fellow and director of the program on retirement policy at the Urban Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank, in April and May, workers age 65 and older had higher unemployment rates than those between the ages of 25 and 54 (a scenario which seems to be unique to this recession).¹¹³ (*See Appendix C*)

With an increase in working from home, older workers may also be negatively deterred to moving their work completely online as some may lack technology training or the necessary skills to work from home. (*See Appendix D*) Additionally, the stereotype that all older workers are not nearly as tech savvy as their younger counterparts may also result in older workers being laid off.¹¹⁴ This is of particular importance to e-leaders as older workers are forced to retire or leave organizations, the retention of valuable organizational knowledge from these well-seasoned workers is important to keep.¹¹⁵ Skills, knowledge and experience are vital

¹¹⁰ Agovino, T. (2020, July 17). *COVID-19 Deals a Dual Threat to Older Workers*. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-deals-a-dual-threat-to-older-workers.aspx>

¹¹¹ Agovino, T. (2020, July 17). *COVID-19 Deals a Dual Threat to Older Workers*. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-deals-a-dual-threat-to-older-workers.aspx>

¹¹² Agovino, T. (2020, July 17). *COVID-19 Deals a Dual Threat to Older Workers*. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-deals-a-dual-threat-to-older-workers.aspx>

¹¹³ Agovino, T. (2020, July 17). *COVID-19 Deals a Dual Threat to Older Workers*. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-deals-a-dual-threat-to-older-workers.aspx>

¹¹⁴ Agovino, T. (2020, July 17). *COVID-19 Deals a Dual Threat to Older Workers*. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-deals-a-dual-threat-to-older-workers.aspx>

¹¹⁵ Burmeister, A. (2016, February). *Knowledge Retention From Older and Retiring Workers: What Do We Know, and Where Do We Go From Here?* Research Gate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/292962442_Knowledge_Retention_From_Older_and_Retiring_Workers_What_Do_We_Know_and_Where_Do_We_Go_From_Here

to a successful business and also necessary to innovate and evolve with the needs of the changing marketplace making it excruciatingly crucial to retain knowledge from older workers.¹¹⁶ Older workers inevitably take with them decades of accumulated skills, experience, networks and personal business relationships as well as first-hand knowledge of why the business has evolved the way it has.¹¹⁷ Effective e-leaders will identify key soon-to-be retirees whose knowledge the company would most likely benefit from if retained and create mentoring programs, staggered retirement and virtual knowledge hubs.¹¹⁸ According to Ben Willmott, Head of Public Policy, CIPD states, “*Organizations need to get to grips with the aging workforce challenge today or face skills shortages that will affect their ability to grow or deliver key services in the very near future... too many employers are sleep-walking towards a significant skills problem that risks derailing their business strategy if not addressed. Not enough organizations are thinking strategically about workforce planning or even know enough about the make-up of their workforce.*”¹¹⁹ E-leaders can also take action to encourage older workers to remain at work by hosting virtual meetings and social events including older employees, providing a “help desk” that can assist older employees who are working remotely and conduct a hazard assessment to make the working conditions manageable for older employees i.e., increasing physical space between employees or creating barriers or partitions.¹²⁰

It is clear that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on older employees and retirees is dramatic.¹²¹ As such, e-leaders can navigate these challenges faced with older workers by committing to inclusive work practices/places and continuously

¹¹⁶ *How To Keep Hold Of Your Institutional Knowledge*. (2018, March 9). The One Brief. <https://theonebrief.com/how-to-keep-hold-of-your-institutional-knowledge/>

¹¹⁷ *How To Keep Hold Of Your Institutional Knowledge*. (2018, March 9). The One Brief. <https://theonebrief.com/how-to-keep-hold-of-your-institutional-knowledge/>

¹¹⁸ *How To Keep Hold Of Your Institutional Knowledge*. (2018, March 9). The One Brief. <https://theonebrief.com/how-to-keep-hold-of-your-institutional-knowledge/>

¹¹⁹ *How To Keep Hold Of Your Institutional Knowledge*. (2018, March 9). The One Brief. <https://theonebrief.com/how-to-keep-hold-of-your-institutional-knowledge/>

¹²⁰ Jones, L. W. (2020, October 27). *COVID-19 and older employees: What employers should know and how they can lessen the impact*. Lexology.

<https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=7c25dc93-ce9e-4a05-b530-73644721c49f>

¹²¹ Jones, L. W. (2020, October 27). *COVID-19 and older employees: What employers should know and how they can lessen the impact*. Lexology.

<https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=7c25dc93-ce9e-4a05-b530-73644721c49f>

considering the needs of older employees and retirees in designing business protocols and systems.¹²²

Race and Ethnicity

Members of racial and ethnic minority groups face disproportionate health and heightened economic risks related to COVID-19.¹²³ E-leaders need to create an environment where all employees, including those of racial and ethnic minorities, are capable of contributing to the organization. The ability to overcome the loss of workplace interaction and identify the adaptive challenges faced by individuals of various ethnic and racial backgrounds allows for a competitive edge when competing against other organizations when attempting to procure the most competent employees.

Conditions in places where people live, learn, work, play and worship affect a wide range of health risks such as severe illness and death due to the COVID-19 virus.¹²⁴ Long-standing inequities in social determinants of health that affect racial and ethnic minority groups such as poverty and healthcare access, are interrelated and will influence a wide range of health and quality-of-life risks and outcomes.¹²⁵ This paper will explore five key areas of social determinants of health that contribute to racial and ethnic minority groups being disproportionately affected by the global pandemic with discrimination, racism, and associated chronic stress being influenced by each area.¹²⁶ First is the neighborhood and physical environment such that people

¹²² Jones, L. W. (2020, October 27). *COVID-19 and older employees: What employers should know and how they can lessen the impact*. Lexology.

<https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=7c25dc93-ce9e-4a05-b530-73644721c49f>

¹²³ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

¹²⁴ *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

¹²⁵ *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

¹²⁶ *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

from racial and ethnic minority groups makes it difficult to find quality housing with a lack of access to reliable transportation and cramped environments that can easily breed COVID-19.¹²⁷ Second, health and healthcare where certain groups are affected by a lack of access to quality health care, insurance, and/or culturally responsive health care.¹²⁸ Third, occupation and job conditions such that minority groups are disproportionately represented in essential work settings such as healthcare facilities, factories, food production and processing, grocery stores and public transportation.¹²⁹ (See Appendix E) As such, people who work in these kinds of settings are at a significantly higher risk of contracting illnesses as they are in frequent contact with the public or other workers and the work cannot be done from home, lacking benefits such as paid sick days.¹³⁰ Fourth, income and wealth such that people from racial and ethnic minority groups have lower incomes, experience barriers to wealth accumulation and carry greater debt.¹³¹ These challenges make managing expenses, paying medical bills, affording quality housing, buying nutritious food, and finding reliable childcare very difficult if not impossible.¹³² Fifth, education such that people from racial and ethnic minority groups are disproportionately affected by inequities in access to high-quality education which in return limits access to quality job

¹²⁷ *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

¹²⁸ *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

¹²⁹ *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

¹³⁰ *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

¹³¹ *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

¹³² *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

training or programs tailored to the language needs of some racial and ethnic minority groups, thus limiting future job options, pay and job stability.¹³³

Yancy Clyde, MD, MSc and Vice Dean for Diversity and Inclusion at the Chief of Cardiology in the Department of Medicine Magerstadt Professor states, “*social distancing is a privilege*” and the ability to isolate in a safe home, work remotely with full digital access and sustain monthly income are components of this privilege.¹³⁴ With that being said, e-leaders now have an opportunity to build a more equitable and inclusive workplace that will strengthen their organizations far beyond COVID-19.¹³⁵ Particularly, businesses that are able to seize the moment, so to speak, will be able to better support their employees and drive sustainable business performance.¹³⁶

Ultimately, why should e-leaders in organizations care about racial and ethnic minority groups? If not for human and compassionate reasons, having a diverse staff has been confirmed to boost innovation and drive financial results.¹³⁷ Stuart R. Levine, author of an article written for Forbes magazine states, that diverse and inclusive cultures can provide a company with a competitive edge over their peers.¹³⁸ Columbia Business School Professor, Katherine Phillips notes that “*Diversity jolts*

¹³³ *Community, Work, and School*. (2020, February 11). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>

¹³⁴ Hooper, M. W., Nápoles, A. M., & Pérez-Stable, E. (2020, June 23). *COVID-19 and Racial/Ethnic Disparities*. Health Disparities | JAMA | JAMA Network. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2766098>

¹³⁵ Ellingrud, K., Krishnan, M., Krivkovich, A., Kukla, K., Mendy, A., & Robinson, N et al. (2021, January 8). *Diverse employees are struggling the most during COVID-19—here’s how companies can respond*. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diverse-employees-are-struggling-the-most-during-covid-19-heres-how-companies-can-respond>

¹³⁶ Ellingrud, K., Krishnan, M., Krivkovich, A., Kukla, K., Mendy, A., & Robinson, N et al. (2021, January 8). *Diverse employees are struggling the most during COVID-19—here’s how companies can respond*. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diverse-employees-are-struggling-the-most-during-covid-19-heres-how-companies-can-respond>

¹³⁷ Levine, S. R. (2020, January 15). *Diversity Confirmed To Boost Innovation And Financial Results*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2020/01/15/diversity-confirmed-to-boost-innovation-and-financial-results/?sh=751202b6c4a6>

¹³⁸ Levine, S. R. (2020, January 15). *Diversity Confirmed To Boost Innovation And Financial Results*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2020/01/15/diversity-confirmed-to-boost-innovation-and-financial-results/?sh=751202b6c4a6>

us into cognitive action in ways that homogeneity simply does not.”¹³⁹ As such, diverse teams become better prepared for decision-making and accomplishing goals and tasks set out by the company due to the differences among team members that bring a different perspectives and unexpected viewpoints for consideration.¹⁴⁰ The Harvard Business Review reported that diverse companies enjoyed better overall financial performance with EBIT margins for companies with diverse management teams nearly 10% higher than companies with below-average management diversity.¹⁴¹ Additionally, a 2013 Harvard Business Review states that when at least one team member shares a client’s ethnicity, the team is more than twice as likely to understand that client’s needs than teams where no member shares that particular trait.¹⁴² It is clear then, that based upon a dense amount of literature and studies, companies and more specifically e-leaders ought to prioritize diversity and inclusion as a strategic priority.¹⁴³

Gender

Extensive literature and research supports that men are more likely to face health related conditions as a result of COVID-19 whereas women are more likely be affected by the adverse economic and social costs.¹⁴⁴ Understanding specific employee needs is imperative to the quality of employee management an e-leader

¹³⁹ Levine, S. R. (2020, January 15). *Diversity Confirmed To Boost Innovation And Financial Results*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2020/01/15/diversity-confirmed-to-boost-innovation-and-financial-results/?sh=751202b6c4a6>

¹⁴⁰ Levine, S. R. (2020, January 15). *Diversity Confirmed To Boost Innovation And Financial Results*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2020/01/15/diversity-confirmed-to-boost-innovation-and-financial-results/?sh=751202b6c4a6>

¹⁴¹ Levine, S. R. (2020, January 15). *Diversity Confirmed To Boost Innovation And Financial Results*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2020/01/15/diversity-confirmed-to-boost-innovation-and-financial-results/?sh=751202b6c4a6>

¹⁴² Levine, S. R. (2020, January 15). *Diversity Confirmed To Boost Innovation And Financial Results*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2020/01/15/diversity-confirmed-to-boost-innovation-and-financial-results/?sh=751202b6c4a6>

¹⁴³ Levine, S. R. (2020, January 15). *Diversity Confirmed To Boost Innovation And Financial Results*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2020/01/15/diversity-confirmed-to-boost-innovation-and-financial-results/?sh=751202b6c4a6>

¹⁴⁴ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

can offer. Thereby, allowing increased focus on non-day-to-day tasks and more capacity to focus on innovation within the organization.

The World Health Organization has stated that globally, women represent around 70% of all health and social sector workers.¹⁴⁵ In the vast majority of cases, women earn less than their male counterparts.¹⁴⁶ Typically, women also work part-time or with flexible schedules which often means they do not have a safety net in case of reduced hours or job loss.¹⁴⁷ Additionally, in an article published by McKinsey & Company it is found that women are highly concentrated in sectors that are expected to suffer high rates of unemployment in 2020, including hospitality, food services and retail.¹⁴⁸ As such, women are more economically affected by the global pandemic than men.¹⁴⁹ Women also face greater challenges working from home as women are often the caregivers for children and elderly relatives in many households.¹⁵⁰ In the wake of COVID-19, many daycares and schools have been closed and additional responsibilities, such as homeschooling, have been taken on by woman.¹⁵¹ Unfortunately, the financial burden experienced by COVID-19 in addition to an increased levels of stress can lead to household tension to put it mildly, or more

¹⁴⁵ Ghebreyesus, T. (2019, March 20). *Female health workers drive global health*. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/female-health-workers-drive-global-health>

¹⁴⁶ Ghebreyesus, T. (2019, March 20). *Female health workers drive global health*. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/female-health-workers-drive-global-health>

¹⁴⁷ Randstad Canada. (2020, May 28). *Prioritizing Gender Diversity in the Era of COVID-19*. Randstad. <https://www.randstad.ca/employers/workplace-insights/women-in-the-workplace/prioritizing-gender-diversity-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

¹⁴⁸ *Diverse employees are struggling the most during COVID-19—here's how companies can respond*. (2021, January 8). McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diverse-employees-are-struggling-the-most-during-covid-19-heres-how-companies-can-respond>

¹⁴⁹ Randstad Canada. (2020, May 28). *Prioritizing Gender Diversity in the Era of COVID-19*. Randstad. <https://www.randstad.ca/employers/workplace-insights/women-in-the-workplace/prioritizing-gender-diversity-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

¹⁵⁰ Randstad Canada. (2020, May 28). *Prioritizing Gender Diversity in the Era of COVID-19*. Randstad. <https://www.randstad.ca/employers/workplace-insights/women-in-the-workplace/prioritizing-gender-diversity-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

¹⁵¹ Randstad Canada. (2020, May 28). *Prioritizing Gender Diversity in the Era of COVID-19*. Randstad. <https://www.randstad.ca/employers/workplace-insights/women-in-the-workplace/prioritizing-gender-diversity-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

severe issues, such as domestic violence, which disproportionately impacts woman.¹⁵²

E-leaders in organizations must prioritize gender diversity during COVID-19 as several studies have shown that a diverse workplace drives employee loyalty, increased worker engagement and a higher overall capacity for innovation.¹⁵³ E-leaders must prioritize diversity and inclusion in the workplace to bring together various ideas, experiences, voices and perspectives that are vital to organizations ability to work and operate at full capacity.¹⁵⁴ Women are typically known to be far superior in terms of soft skills such as: the ability to foster and make connections, think and act creatively, as well as adapt to change and tune into their surroundings using a high level of emotional intelligence.¹⁵⁵ As such, e-leaders must work with each and every individual to understand their own unique needs and challenges that each employee (male or female) faces and provide opportunities to help each person reach their full potential.¹⁵⁶

Family Status

Working parents with school age children face challenges, especially during lockdowns and when schools are closed.¹⁵⁷ E-leaders should strive to adequately

¹⁵² Randstad Canada. (2020, May 28). *Prioritizing Gender Diversity in the Era of COVID-19*. Randstad. <https://www.randstad.ca/employers/workplace-insights/women-in-the-workplace/prioritizing-gender-diversity-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

¹⁵³ Randstad Canada. (2020, May 28). *Prioritizing Gender Diversity in the Era of COVID-19*. Randstad. <https://www.randstad.ca/employers/workplace-insights/women-in-the-workplace/prioritizing-gender-diversity-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

¹⁵⁴ Randstad Canada. (2020, May 28). *Prioritizing Gender Diversity in the Era of COVID-19*. Randstad. <https://www.randstad.ca/employers/workplace-insights/women-in-the-workplace/prioritizing-gender-diversity-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

¹⁵⁵ Randstad Canada. (2020, May 28). *Prioritizing Gender Diversity in the Era of COVID-19*. Randstad. <https://www.randstad.ca/employers/workplace-insights/women-in-the-workplace/prioritizing-gender-diversity-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

¹⁵⁶ Randstad Canada. (2020, May 28). *Prioritizing Gender Diversity in the Era of COVID-19*. Randstad. <https://www.randstad.ca/employers/workplace-insights/women-in-the-workplace/prioritizing-gender-diversity-in-the-era-of-covid-19/>

¹⁵⁷ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

address these emerging issues effectively for organizational excellence and internal growth.

Of those still working, mothers are disproportionately affected by COVID-19.¹⁵⁸ For example, US mothers with young children have reduced their work hours at a rate that is 4 to 5 times higher than fathers to take on childcare, homeschooling, and household responsibilities.¹⁵⁹ US mothers are also 1.5 times more likely than fathers to spend an extra three or more hours a day on housework and childcare – equivalent to an alarming 20 hours a week, or half a full-time job.¹⁶⁰ A recent online study covering men and women across 17 countries on six continents found that 48% of female respondents and 38% of male respondents declared that they spend more time doing household work since the pandemic.¹⁶¹ Furthermore a recent report by Women in the Workplace 2020, confirmed that in the United States and Canada, the burden of this double shift has led one in four women in corporate jobs to consider downshifting their career or leaving the workforce.¹⁶² The financial consequences to businesses that are unable to keep women in the workforce, particularly senior-level women, can be astronomical.¹⁶³ Research shows that company profits and share performance can be close to 50% higher when women are well represented at the top.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁸ Ellingrud, K., Krishnan, M., Krivkovich, A., Kukla, K., Mendy, A., & Robinson, N et al. (2021, January 8). *Diverse employees are struggling the most during COVID-19—here's how companies can respond*. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diverse-employees-are-struggling-the-most-during-covid-19-heres-how-companies-can-respond>

¹⁵⁹ Caitlyn Collins, et al., “COVID-19 and the gender gap in work hours,” *Gender, Work & Organization*, July 2020, onlinelibrary.wiley.com.

¹⁶⁰ Caitlyn Collins, et al., “COVID-19 and the gender gap in work hours,” *Gender, Work & Organization*, July 2020, onlinelibrary.wiley.com.

¹⁶¹ Shetty, D. (2021, January 29). *Women Across 17 Countries Report Increased Stress, Household Work Due To Covid-19*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dishashetty/2021/01/29/women-across-17-countries-report-increased-stress-household-work-due-to-covid-19/?sh=32a6d3502f0a>

¹⁶² Ellingrud, K., Krishnan, M., Krivkovich, A., Kukla, K., Mendy, A., & Robinson, N et al. (2021, January 8). *Diverse employees are struggling the most during COVID-19—here's how companies can respond*. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diverse-employees-are-struggling-the-most-during-covid-19-heres-how-companies-can-respond>

¹⁶³ *Women in the Workplace 2020*. (2020, October 8). McKinsey & Company.

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/women-in-the-workplace>

¹⁶⁴ Sundiatu Dixon-Fyle, Kevin Dolan, Vivian Hunt, and Sara Prince, “Diversity wins: How inclusion matters,” May 19, 2020.

For those employees that are taking on parenting and teaching their children, while trying to maintain productivity of their full-time job, the support e-leaders is fundamental to the success of working parents.¹⁶⁵ E-leaders can effectively manage their employees with children by being accessible, understanding, flexible, and communicative.¹⁶⁶ Accessibility can come from having a forum whereby employees are welcome to ask questions or holding weekly office hours where parent employees can count on their e-leaders to be there.¹⁶⁷ E-leaders can be more flexible by allowing their employees to work in the evenings or on weekends permitting their tasks allow for this type of work structure in an effort to alleviate some of the employee's stress and simultaneously build trust between the e-leader and employee.¹⁶⁸

Successful e-leaders will use flexibility, understanding and communication in supporting employees who have children and various household demands.¹⁶⁹ It is imperative that e-leaders set clear expectations but also leave room to adjust as a margin of safety buffer.¹⁷⁰ These tools and strategies will allow e-leaders to more easily overcome the challenges of dealing with parents and caregivers working from home.

Personality

The impact of social distancing and work from home for those that are highly extroverted versus those that are more introverted can pose challenges for

¹⁶⁵ Lena Waizenegger, Brad McKenna, Wenjie Cai & Taino Bendz (2020) An affordance perspective of team collaboration and enforced working from home during COVID-19, *European Journal of Information Systems*, 29:4, 429-442, DOI: [10.1080/0960085X.2020.1800417](https://doi.org/10.1080/0960085X.2020.1800417)

¹⁶⁶ Lena Waizenegger, Brad McKenna, Wenjie Cai & Taino Bendz (2020) An affordance perspective of team collaboration and enforced working from home during COVID-19, *European Journal of Information Systems*, 29:4, 429-442, DOI: [10.1080/0960085X.2020.1800417](https://doi.org/10.1080/0960085X.2020.1800417)

¹⁶⁷ Lena Waizenegger, Brad McKenna, Wenjie Cai & Taino Bendz (2020) An affordance perspective of team collaboration and enforced working from home during COVID-19, *European Journal of Information Systems*, 29:4, 429-442, DOI: [10.1080/0960085X.2020.1800417](https://doi.org/10.1080/0960085X.2020.1800417)

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¹⁷⁰ Lena Waizenegger, Brad McKenna, Wenjie Cai & Taino Bendz (2020) An affordance perspective of team collaboration and enforced working from home during COVID-19, *European Journal of Information Systems*, 29:4, 429-442, DOI: [10.1080/0960085X.2020.1800417](https://doi.org/10.1080/0960085X.2020.1800417)

employees.¹⁷¹ E-leaders must seek to learn the personality types of their employees in order to best capitalize on their individual strengths. It can be a challenge for e-leaders to assess personality types remotely however every effort must be made to try to learn about employees' habits and behaviors. Additional unique differences between employees such as segmentors and integrators leads to various struggles as employees are forced to work from home.¹⁷² As such, e-leaders should strive to reduce unpredictability at all costs by providing job clarity as per job roles and work goals which in turn will help restore the benefits of traits such as conscientiousness.¹⁷³ The primary difference between this factor and others is the existence of tools, such as the Myers-Briggs test, to fully understand the dynamics at play within various employees. In order to understand the next-steps for an e-leader it is crucial for them to understand the varying kinds of personality traits tested, the nuances of each, the category of each employee, and create an effective plan of action. In order to provide increased clarity on the potential next-steps and their relative attainability, details have been provided as to each factor.

Katherine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers introduced the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator in 1944.¹⁷⁴ The Myer-Briggs Type Indicator proposes four ways to classify personalities, each type requiring its own needs/expectations that must be met whilst working from home.¹⁷⁵ From an e-leaders perspective, this

¹⁷¹ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

¹⁷² Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

¹⁷³ Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

¹⁷⁴ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁷⁵ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

test is crucial in understanding the differences between the unique employee needs as employees must transition from in-office work to working from home in a seemingly overnight switch.¹⁷⁶

The first classification according to the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator is introvert versus extrovert.¹⁷⁷ Introverts for instance, may enjoy a calm peaceful environment and initially enjoy working from home so long as there are not too many people around.¹⁷⁸ Whereas extroverts may have a very difficult time with the transition as they often enjoy a busy, lively environment that is ripe with opportunities for social interaction that cannot be easily achieved from home.¹⁷⁹ Twenty seven percent of employed parents are concerned about managing children and trying to stay productive at work during this pandemic.¹⁸⁰ E-leaders can help introverts with this regard by formulating clear work schedules with allotted time for childcare so employees do not find it difficult to focus and stay on task when they are working. On the other hand, according to the Glassdoor report, 22% of employees are worried about going “stir crazy” because they were mandated to stay at home.¹⁸¹ E-leaders can overcome this challenge particularly for extroverts by leveraging remote collaboration tools to hold a town hall, virtual events, and meetings in an

¹⁷⁶ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁷⁷ Carlyn, M. (2010, June 10). *An Assessment of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Taylor & Francis. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/s15327752jpa4105_2

¹⁷⁸ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁷⁹ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁸⁰ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁸¹ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

effort to maintain a strong social networks and connections.¹⁸² Successful e-leaders will maximize virtual resource tools such as Skype, Zoom, or other meeting platforms to facilitate more engaging remote interactions which will ultimately lead to an increase in worker potential and performance.¹⁸³

The second classification according to the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator is sensing versus intuitive.¹⁸⁴ Sensing personality types perform better when given outcome-focused, research based tasks and in the midst of the coronavirus, they would need access to all COVID-19 related information so that they can make their own inferences and judgements.¹⁸⁵ As e-leader in an organization, making COVID-19 related knowledge available and accessible as well as the company database will greatly benefit the sensing personality type.¹⁸⁶ On the other hand, intuition led employees may be at a higher risk of panic especially when being cut off from in-person interactions with colleagues and peers.¹⁸⁷ E-leaders can overcome this challenge by using online tools such as WhatsApp or Slack to stay in touch with this particular employee group gaining from their intuitive and creative ideas while providing them with accurate, reliable, and certified information.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸² BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁸³ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁸⁴ Carlyn, M. (2010, June 10). *An Assessment of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Taylor & Francis. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/s15327752jpa4105_2

¹⁸⁵ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁸⁶ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁸⁷ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁸⁸ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist.

The third classification according to the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator is thinking versus feeling.¹⁸⁹ John Hackston, head of thought leadership at The Myers-Briggs Company states that, “*employee personality can be studied on whether we prefer to make decisions on the basis of objective logic (Thinking) or on the basis of our values and how people will be affected (Feeling).*”¹⁹⁰ As such, it is imperative that e-leaders foster an environment that lets employees feel empowered even when working from home as the coronavirus has diminished a sense of autonomy in employees.¹⁹¹ A study conducted by LinkedIn of 32 million employee profiles found that empowered employees have a 47% chance of staying with a company after three years, compared to only 35% for those without adequate autonomy.¹⁹² As such, e-leaders in organizations can strengthen communication between employees and senior leadership via chat threads and leadership newsletters as well as allowing employees to make their decisions heard across the organization benefiting both Thinking and Feeling personality types.¹⁹³

The fourth and final classification according to the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator is judging versus perceiving.¹⁹⁴ This category refers to the level of structure an employee follows in their day to day work whether they choose to follow highly structured work hours or opt for a more flexible and “spontaneous” route.¹⁹⁵ People

<https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁸⁹ Carlyn, M. (2010, June 10). *An Assessment of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Taylor & Francis. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/s15327752jpa4105_2

¹⁹⁰ Carlyn, M. (2010, June 10). *An Assessment of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Taylor & Francis. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/s15327752jpa4105_2

¹⁹¹ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁹² Cheng, C. (2019, November 20). *3 Factors Strongly Linked to Better Employee Retention, According to 32 Million LinkedIn Profiles*. LinkedIn. <https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/blog/trends-and-research/2019/3-factors-linked-to-better-employee-retention>

¹⁹³ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist. <https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁹⁴ Carlyn, M. (2010, June 10). *An Assessment of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Taylor & Francis. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/s15327752jpa4105_2

¹⁹⁵ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist.

with a judging preference perform best when their life is planned and organized which is the opposite of what COVID-19 brought to the workforce, that is, disruption and upheaval.¹⁹⁶ Alternatively, people with a perceiving preferences may enjoy aspects of remote working such as the flexibility of hours that it may allow.¹⁹⁷ However, it is important to note that whilst perceiving employees may enjoy this feature of flexibility, others may feel increasingly stressed and obligated to respond to colleagues that send out email after work hours.¹⁹⁸ As such, e-leaders must strike a fine balance between flexibility and order within the workplace.¹⁹⁹ One way e-leaders can achieve this balance is to set up a company-wide calendar that clearly articulates stipulated work hours, beyond which work-related communication is discouraged.²⁰⁰ Additionally, an Artificial Intelligence (AI) based workforce scheduling tool (e.g. Humanity) can be used to manage the flow of tasks according to the preferences of the personality types.²⁰¹

Cultural Differences

<https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁹⁶ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist.

<https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁹⁷ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist.

<https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁹⁸ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist.

<https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

¹⁹⁹ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist.

<https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

²⁰⁰ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist.

<https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

²⁰¹ BasuMallick, C. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Work From Home: Are You Facilitating Remote Work for Each Personality Type?* HR Technologist.

<https://www.hrtechnologist.com/articles/mobile-workforce/remote-work-personality-types-coronavirus/#>

E-leaders need to understand how to be flexible in creating social norms, particularly, knowing when to tighten and loosen as needed, striking a balance between protection and an environment that facilitates creativity and innovation.²⁰² A concept known as cultural adaptability reflects an organization's ability to innovate, experiment, create and take advantage of new opportunities.²⁰³ E-leaders hold the greatest role in continuing to cultivate their company's culture remotely to ensure employees remain focused on their tasks during these unprecedented and continuously changing times presented by the pandemic.²⁰⁴

There are three strategies that e-leaders can utilize to ensure that the company culture remains adaptable as per Jenny Chatman and Francesca Gino, authors of an article on Organizational Culture in the Harvard Business Review.²⁰⁵ First, e-leaders should hire and promote people in the firm that are resilient, adaptable, and calm cool and collected in stressful situations.²⁰⁶ These employees are integral and sought after to the organization as they will approach uncertainties with both curiosity, a unique perspective, embrace novelty, and leverage differences whilst maintaining a positive attitude.²⁰⁷ Second, e-leaders must curate and communicate examples of how the organization is maintaining its cultural values through new practices.²⁰⁸ One example

²⁰² Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

²⁰³ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²⁰⁴ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²⁰⁵ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²⁰⁶ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²⁰⁷ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²⁰⁸ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

of this can be seen in the e-leaders of a major pharmaceutical company that is headquarters-centric.²⁰⁹ The e-leaders quickly realized that Zoom meetings, necessitated by shelter-in-place orders, was a lot more fair to their employees in other locations. This enabled the company to maintain one of its core values, inclusivity.²¹⁰ As such, the e-leaders at the pharmaceutical company decided that a new norm for the business is such that if one person needs to attend a meeting remotely, then the meeting will become remote for everyone.²¹¹ The third strategy that e-leaders can implement is to model transcendent values.²¹² One example of this is seen in the leaders of &pizza, a Washington, D.C. based pizza chain that serves oblong pies.²¹³ The leaders of &pizza created an initiative in March 2020 to provide free pies to health workers in hospitals and raised workers' hourly pay and increased benefits i.e. they offered free access to Netflix and paid for their travel to work.²¹⁴

CHAPTER 4: THIRD CHALLENGE IN THE REALM OF E-LEADERSHIP: COMMUNICATION/ CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Change Management

²⁰⁹ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²¹⁰ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²¹¹ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²¹² Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²¹³ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

²¹⁴ Chatman, J., & Gino, F. (2020, August 17). *Don't Let the Pandemic Sink Your Company Culture*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/08/dont-let-the-pandemic-sink-your-company-culture>

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged companies more than ever to get creative and manage their organizations in new ways.²¹⁵ In the short term, companies are facing massive changes to their business plans and models, whereas in the long term they must adapt and continue to make progress on their original goals and targets.²¹⁶

E-leaders must focus on how to best care for and guide their people during this time of tremendous stress and change.²¹⁷ E-leaders must act with empathy and understanding and enable employees to succeed.²¹⁸ If e-leaders can demonstrate these traits then employees will feel more engaged and committed to the organization, putting in extra effort, and work for the good of the organization.²¹⁹

Korn Ferry, working at a management consulting company, states ten things that e-leaders can do right now to keep their team engaged and build on existing goodwill.²²⁰ First, e-leaders can provide frequent, candid, consistent, and personal communications.²²¹ This is good for the organization as the company can quickly adapt/pivot strategies and constantly build alignment for change.²²² When e-leaders create an empathic environment, employees will be highly engaged and have reduced

²¹⁵ Burton, P., & O'Neill, K. (2020, June 19). *Charting a crisis: Bolstering business continuity with organizational change management*. TEK Systems.

²¹⁶ Burton, P., & O'Neill, K. (2020, June 19). *Charting a crisis: Bolstering business continuity with organizational change management*. TEK Systems.
<https://www.teksystems.com/en/insights/article/charting-a-crisis>

²¹⁷ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²¹⁸ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²¹⁹ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²²⁰ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²²¹ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²²² Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

workplace stress whereas candor will build understanding and feelings of empowerment to act.²²³ Second, e-leaders must put health and safety at the top of the agenda and personalize their messages to each and every employee to meet their specific needs, concerns, and emotions.²²⁴ The benefit of this approach to the organization is that it will protect the most valuable asset in a company, its employees, both from a physical and mental standpoint.²²⁵ Third, e-leaders must be realistic about the promise and the reality of technology in the workplace.²²⁶ Providing employees with feedback on technology will alleviate frustrations and drive real-time improvements.²²⁷ Fourth, e-leaders must take employees' personal challenges seriously and provide realistic and practical resources.²²⁸ According to Korn Ferry's research, employees who feel they have received genuine help during the pandemic are more likely to remain loyal to the company and their employers.²²⁹ Fifth, e-leaders can rethink time management and rearrange the workday to be more accommodating to working parents if needed.²³⁰ E-leaders that choose to engage in open conversations about different time management approaches will reap the rewards of increased productivity in their employees as well as better time

²²³ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²²⁴ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²²⁵ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²²⁶ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²²⁷ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²²⁸ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²²⁹ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²³⁰ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

management practices that will last long past the immediate crisis.²³¹ Sixth, e-leaders must hone in on what's critical and what can wait by exercising judgment and adaptability.²³² As such, e-leaders need to give clear direction to their employees on what tasks must be focused on and are essential to lessen the mental space for the prioritized activities that are crucial to the business.²³³ Seven, e-leaders must acknowledge that employees' experiences may be very different from one person to the next and in a constant state of flux and change.²³⁴ As such, e-leaders must talk to each employee without any assumptions as to how they may be feeling and experiences the COVID-19 crisis so that they feel valued, heard and acknowledged.²³⁵ Eight, e-leaders must address and adjust rewards and performance metrics.²³⁶ Success may now look different for organizations and their ability to reward employees may be constrained due to the current work from home conditions.²³⁷ Instead, e-leaders must look at different ways in which they can reward employees such as reduced hours, reduced pay or taking unpaid leave.²³⁸ Additionally, non-monetary recognition like acknowledgements or awards for employees who are

²³¹ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²³² Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²³³ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²³⁴ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²³⁵ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²³⁶ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²³⁷ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²³⁸ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

exemplary can have a significant impact in the short-term.²³⁹ Whichever approach an organization would like to take it is imperative that e-leaders make it clear how they plan on managing rewards and performance to reinforce a sense of equity and fairness amongst employees during the pandemic and for years to come.²⁴⁰ Nine, e-leaders must acknowledge and tackle the gap in informal interactions.²⁴¹ According to Korn Ferry, research shows that productivity can be the same or even better while people work remotely.²⁴² However, informal connections play a critical role within the office i.e. the office kitchen conversations or coffee table chats with coworkers that play a crucial role in generating innovative ideas.²⁴³ Successful e-leaders must find creative ways to maintain these informal interactions. For example, scheduling informal meetings via “virtual lunches” can be helpful in building informal interactions.²⁴⁴ On that note, it is also important for e-leaders to recognize when employees have higher formal interactions (such as 80% of their time in formal meetings) and scale back these interactions to make room for more spontaneous informal interactions.²⁴⁵ The final strategy and arguably the most important one, is for e-leaders to give people a voice.²⁴⁶ Employees need an opportunity to express what they think, feel and experience without judgement by their e-leaders as this can allow opportunities for

²³⁹ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²⁴⁰ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²⁴¹ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²⁴² Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²⁴³ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²⁴⁴ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²⁴⁵ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²⁴⁶ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

new e-leaders and innovators to emerge.²⁴⁷ This in return is good for the organization as employees will feel engaged, heard and understood leading to higher productivity and better quality of work being done.²⁴⁸

Working from Home and Capitalizing on Lean to Maintain Competitiveness in the Job Market

Lean is a business concept that is centered on the idea of maximizing customer value while minimizing waste and thereby creating more value for customers with fewer resources.²⁴⁹ The ultimate goal of lean is to provide perfect value to the customer through a perfect value creation process that has zero waste.²⁵⁰ Lean models can accomplish this by changing the focus of management from optimizing separate technologies, assets and vertical departments to the flow of products and services through entire value chain streams that flow horizontally across technologies, assets, and departments to customers.²⁵¹ The benefits companies can reap from eliminating waste along value streams is exponential as it creates the need for less human effort, space, capital and less time to make products and services at a lower cost and with fewer defects.²⁵² Additionally, this business system allows organizations to respond to rapid changes in customer desires, wants and needs with high variety, quality and low cost.²⁵³

²⁴⁷ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²⁴⁸ Korn Ferry. (2020). *The COVID-19 Leadership Guide: Strategies for Managing Through the Crisis*. Korn Ferry Consulting. https://www.kornferry.com/content/dam/kornferry/special-project-images/coronavirus/docs/KF_Leadership_Playbook_Global_FINAL.pdf

²⁴⁹ Lean Sensei Women. (2021, January). *What is Lean?* Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁵⁰ Lean Sensei Women. (2021, January). *What is Lean?* Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁵¹ Lean Sensei Women. (2021, January). *What is Lean?* Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁵² Lean Sensei Women. (2021, January). *What is Lean?* Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁵³ Lean Sensei Women. (2021, January). *What is Lean?* Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

The concept of lean can help during COVID-19 according to Karyn Ross, consultant and author of several award-winning books.²⁵⁴ There are four ways in which lean can help during the current pandemic and era of working from home.²⁵⁵ First, safety both physical and psychological in keeping team members and customers safe is a top priority for a lean model.²⁵⁶ This can be achieved by e-leaders limiting the number of people working and abiding by social distancing protocols.²⁵⁷ This can be achieved by arranging for people to work remotely, add spacing for teams that cannot work remotely by removing desks, and keeping work stations away from each other providing cleaning supplies to employees to avoid the spread of germs and teaming employees proper COVID-19 safety techniques i.e. proper hand-washing.²⁵⁸ From a psychological safety perspective, e-leaders must treat their employees politely and with respect, guard against overburden to relieve some stress on workers and make a plan to help team members that become ill.²⁵⁹

Second, e-leaders must check in frequently with team members to assess team morale and psychological well-being as well as whether or not work is being done for customers.²⁶⁰ It is important that organizational e-leaders encourage team members to continue to share ideas and solutions to problems that arise from changing conditions such as reduced workforce, outdated practices, obsolete systems or supply chain disruptions.²⁶¹

²⁵⁴ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁵⁵ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁵⁶ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁵⁷ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁵⁸ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁵⁹ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁶⁰ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁶¹ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

Third, e-leadership must have buy-in and guidance must be quickly communicated in a tight lean business model.²⁶² E-leaders must be able to come together quickly, make business decisions and communicate the follow-up actions immediately in these unprecedented and fast-changing times.²⁶³ E-leaders can do this by deselecting priorities that are not immediately necessary to managing the COVID-19 crisis and the day to day functions of the organization.²⁶⁴ E-leaders must host meetings to review key products and service offerings and determine what customers need most right now.²⁶⁵ This will allow the company to plan for how to proceed with its most vital services if the number of team members are reduced due to illness or need to care for children or other relatives.²⁶⁶ Finally, e-leaders must manage visually so that everyone can see the problems, solutions and techniques.²⁶⁷ E-leaders can achieve this by setting up posters if the business is still open to essential workers demonstrating proper cleaning techniques or visuals to help team members communicate their stress levels, thoughts and feelings.²⁶⁸

Virtual Teams and Compensation

The art of understanding virtual management in this day and age and even more so during this worldwide pandemic that we are currently facing can help companies gain a competitive edge. The ability to manage a team effectively whose members are no longer meeting at the office or workplace and may not even work for the organization is a skill that companies must have to succeed and thrive in the

²⁶² Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁶³ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁶⁴ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁶⁵ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁶⁶ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁶⁷ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

²⁶⁸ Lean Sensei Women. (2020, March 20). *Why (and How) We Believe Lean Can Help During Covid-19*. Lean Enterprise Institute. <https://www.lean.org/LeanPost/Posting.cfm?LeanPostId=1141>

marketplace. Fortunately, there is a wealth of research that has been conducted on the keys to successful virtual team management.

Some lessons which companies may draw from are as follows. First, companies must start slow when beginning to incorporate new practices and ways of conducting virtual leadership. George Metes, president of Virtual Learning Systems of Manchester, N.H., a company that trains virtual teams, states that “*Managers have always talked about managing people when in reality they’ve usually ended up managing the budget.*”²⁶⁹ This is a key takeaway that companies must learn from. Online corporate culture requires companies to move past the framework of only looking at the profits of a company and instead focusing on the people of the organization and make managing the members of a team the top priority.²⁷⁰ Second, having a uniform and clearly articulated and defined mission is the key to successful virtual team management. According to Jessica Lipnack and Jeffery Stamps authors of a book called *Virtual Teams* states that teams often fail because they lack a clear purpose.²⁷¹ As such, members of the virtual team must gather together and have input during the initial meetings to hone in on a mission and vision as a virtual team. Third, virtual teams must have the rules and team practices accurately laid out and articulated.²⁷² For instance, the ways in which the team will communicate, the expectations surrounding dates, timelines, and work deliverables. This will reduce the assumptions that coworkers may have to make on their own once the team meetings are over and therefore potentially deterring any possible catastrophes from occurring. Fourth, communication as a means to build trust, transparency, and

²⁶⁹ Wardell, C. (1998, November 1). *Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Key Lessons*. Harvard Business Review. <https://store.hbr.org/product/art-of-managing-virtual-teams-eight-key-lessons/U9811B>

²⁷⁰ Wardell, C. (1998, November 1). *Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Key Lessons*. Harvard Business Review. <https://store.hbr.org/product/art-of-managing-virtual-teams-eight-key-lessons/U9811B>

²⁷¹ Wardell, C. (1998, November 1). *Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Key Lessons*. Harvard Business Review. <https://store.hbr.org/product/art-of-managing-virtual-teams-eight-key-lessons/U9811B>

²⁷² Wardell, C. (1998, November 1). *Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Key Lessons*. Harvard Business Review. <https://store.hbr.org/product/art-of-managing-virtual-teams-eight-key-lessons/U9811B>

understanding.²⁷³ The lack of physical meetings and interactions requires virtual teams to go above and beyond to get acquainted with one another through more messages, emails, phone calls, and frequent meetings. Research suggests that teams that had more overall communication during the project by regularly discussing goals and schedules led to an increase of workers helping one another and a quick identification of nonperformers thereby increasing the likelihood of getting the work done on time and efficiently.²⁷⁴ Additionally, e-leaders must also work hand in hand with employees to clearly identify objectives, goals and ensure everyone is on the same page.

Compensation for virtual teams must be looked at creatively as this can either have a positive or negative impact on the team's motivation and willingness to meet company deliverables and goals.²⁷⁵ Ken Campbell, a senior consultant with Genesis Consulting in Ridgefield, Connecticut, who has served on several virtual teams, suggests basing incentives on both project and personal performance.²⁷⁶ As such, it is important that companies suggest asking all team members at the beginning and/or start of a project what it is that they want out of the project? Moving teams online adds an additional element of compensation that must be addressed. Some employees may value more flexible work hours if they are home with their children and cannot put in the time in the early mornings. This may be one way in which a company may compensate and accommodate online workers and teams.²⁷⁷

²⁷³ Wardell, C. (1998, November 1). *Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Key Lessons*. Harvard Business Review. <https://store.hbr.org/product/art-of-managing-virtual-teams-eight-key-lessons/U9811B>

²⁷⁴ Wardell, C. (1998, November 1). *Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Key Lessons*. Harvard Business Review. <https://store.hbr.org/product/art-of-managing-virtual-teams-eight-key-lessons/U9811B>

²⁷⁵ Wardell, C. (1998, November 1). *Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Key Lessons*. Harvard Business Review. <https://store.hbr.org/product/art-of-managing-virtual-teams-eight-key-lessons/U9811B>

²⁷⁶ Wardell, C. (1998, November 1). *Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Key Lessons*. Harvard Business Review. <https://store.hbr.org/product/art-of-managing-virtual-teams-eight-key-lessons/U9811B>

²⁷⁷ Wardell, C. (1998, November 1). *Art of Managing Virtual Teams: Eight Key Lessons*. Harvard Business Review. <https://store.hbr.org/product/art-of-managing-virtual-teams-eight-key-lessons/U9811B>

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

This paper ultimately focuses on the adaptability of an organization's e-leaders in the face of existing shifts to our work environment due to the pandemic along with long-term permanent shifts on the horizon due to the lessons learned during these times. It will be the organizations that efficiently adapt to these changes that reap the rewards and not only survive but thrive in the years to come. In order to do so we must organize the challenges we face into different categories and that has been my attempt in this research paper.

First, we must examine e-leadership controllables. The impact of overworking employees or watching as seasoned employees depart the organization has impacts on morale, loss of workplace knowledge/guidance, and financial implications that cannot be ignored. These all heavily impact productivity directly and indirectly. The intangible losses cannot be quantified and thereby it becomes essential that the approach to these be proactive and not reactive. In order to ensure that e-leaders possess the needed skills to anticipate these losses and hindrances to employee performance within the organization. Organizational decisions will have a pendulum effect on its performance by witnessing its effects on employees. In order to combat these issues e-leaders must be able to ensure there are policies and procedures in place to recover from heavy losses in productivity quickly while aptly motivating employees during difficult times. It is also imperative that e-leaders identify ongoing issues that may arise and ensure there are avenues available to resolve conflicts that may arise in the workplace. This can occur from ensuring there is clear and open communication between employees, promoting flexible work schedules, ensuring there is workplace security, and several other measures to reduce anxiety in the workplace. This level of stress reduction will be integral in the area of controllables within e-leaders workforce changes.

Second, there are uncontrollables that an e-leader must adapt too in order to be successful. These encompass characteristics of an employee that have a detrimental impact due to societal or legislative schemes. Individual race, creed, ethnicity, age, and other factors all play a significant role in their ability to adapt to

working from home or any form of remote work environment. Additionally, there are increased risks for those employees who must go into work as they may face significant struggles and issues within their personal lives due to their economic or social private life. Gender and family structure allow both additional resources to individuals when facing issues in adapting to a new work environment while previous issues that always existed may become more apparent. In a society where we have yet to fully embrace our data on personality traits and characteristics to fully optimize our workforce we now lose the ability to *learn on the fly* as e-leaders due to a lack of interpersonal interaction. In order to survive e-leaders must ensure they adhere to policies and procedures while ensuring that they are fully understood by employees. Further, e-leaders must ensure they provide flexibility to workers and provide support to those who may need it based on the above stated characteristics. However, in order to attain a competitive edge in this area e-leaders must see these characteristics as an opportunity to increase exposure to varying kinds of perspective and expertise that may shift away from the norm. These also present a new way of thinking and must be encouraged by e-leaders to gain insight while others seek to simply maintain employee awareness. Increasing employee satisfaction will require a great deal of effort on the part of e-leaders and a great deal of learning. However, once there is an increased level of acceptance, understanding, inclusiveness, and openness to share there are countless benefits. There may be competitive edge benefits related to ideas from brainstorming sessions, ideas brought forward by employees, or simply benefits from being a highly recognized organization when highly competent employees may pick from several employers and seek job satisfaction/work-life balance.

Finally, there are controllables within the large organization that must also be examined. With an increased focus on the utilization of online tools and networking applications there are both challenges and opportunities that present. This opportunity provides e-leaders to observe how new models of management work within other organizations and attempt to re-consider how organizations consider virtual management, compensation structures, reduction of red-tape bureaucratic processes, amongst others. There is increased risk accompanying these approaches however there are several benefits that ultimately allow for an increase in creativity

and innovation. Again, these may allow for a competitive edge pushing for both higher employee satisfaction and provides an organization that appeals to those seeking something unique in their employer.

Ultimately, there are continuing challenges facing us in every industry following our rise from this pandemic. It will be those organizations that aptly adapt based on statistical research and social science evidence that will prosper leaving others late to the party.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Summary of implications, issues and insights regarding COVID-19 and the workplace. Adopted from: Kniffin, K., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S., & Bakker, A. (2020). *COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action*. Harvard Business Review. https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/20-127_6164cbfd-37a2-489e-8bd2-c252cc7abb87.pdf

Summary of Implications and Actions for Implementation regarding COVID-19 and the Workplace		
Economic and Social-Psychological Impacts Impacting Productivity		
<i>Nature of Work</i>	<i>Implications</i>	<i>Actions for Implementation</i>
Unemployment and Layoffs	Unemployment can lead to economic as well as latent. Examples of this include a loss of social structure, status, social communications and networking connections. Additionally, there are costs both direct and indirect associated with workers that continue to work in the firm where other employees have been laid off.	Job Seekers must maintain a positive outlook and be resilient and persistent, seeking support and information from co-workers and other support networks. Job seekers should also prepare for a longer job search than would ordinarily be the case as unemployment rates increase amidst the pandemic. E-leaders must be patient, understanding and encouraging in their search and the mental health of employees.

Presenteeism	In an effort to not risk losing one's job, there is likely going to be an increase in the number of people who feel pressured to attend work and force themselves to go even if they are quite ill and should be at home resting.	Employers should not incentivize or pressure employees to work when they are sick. Additionally, e-leaders should not attend work if they are ill as well to model safe workplace behavior.
Economic Inequality	Inequality as a result of COVID-19 leading to employee burnout, malicious behaviors and withdrawals both in work performance and effort.	E-leaders must make every effort to reduce inequalities amongst those that are privileged and prevent a further decline in pay and benefits.
Social Distancing and Loneliness	Social connections will be at risk as employees are forced to work from home and maintain physical distance from other colleagues. As such, employees mental and physical health will be greatly affected.	E-leaders must acknowledge and make efforts to reduce the risk of workplace loneliness by creating social events online to maintain positive interactions within the organization as part of a wellness program of the company.
Stress and Burnout	As COVID-19 changes the working landscape there will be increased job demands, reduced resources (financial and non-financial). As a result, employees will experience much greater stress than ever before.	E-leaders should be trained to help employees cope with stress and burnout as a result of COVID-19. E-leaders must help employees learn new methods to cope with the uncertain job demands.
Addiction	Increase in substance abuse as a result of employees coping with the world wide pandemic	E-leaders must keep an eye out for behavioral patterns leading to addiction in employees to avoid risky behaviors leading to a

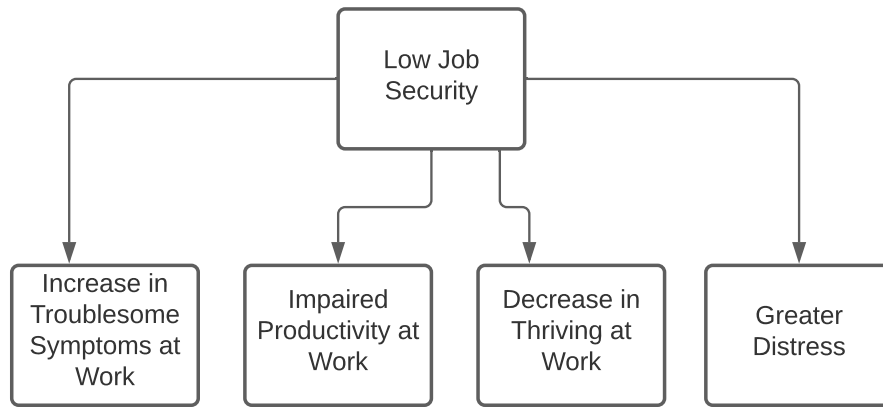
	impacting job performance, absenteeism etc.	decrease in job performance.
Moderating Factors Impacting Personal Management/ Human Resources		
<i>Nature of Work</i>	<i>Implications</i>	<i>Actions for Implementation</i>
Age	Older employees are a target group of individuals that may lose jobs as technological requirements become mandatory for job performance. Additionally, older employees will face disparate health and economic risks related to COVID-19.	E-leaders must optimize employee human capital and facilitate cross-age mentoring so that there is a transfer of knowledge between the older workers and new employees.
Race and Ethnicity	Racial and ethnic minority groups face disparate health and economic challenges as a result of COVID-19 impacting the job market and adaptations to job descriptions.	E-leaders need to create an environment where all employees feel valued regardless of their racial and ethnic background.
Gender	Both men and women are likely to be affected by COVID-19 however in different ways. For instance, men are more likely to face direct health threats whereas women are likely to be affected by the adverse economic and social costs.	E-leaders must aim to treat men and women fairly recognizing the impacts COVID-19 has on the various genders and the challenges men and women face.
Family Status	Working parents with young children will face significant work from home challenges as their home responsibilities will be	E-leaders should allow flexibility in working couples that have family living with them or are caring for family from

	greater and more demanding.	home. Additionally, e-leaders must be open, honest and transparent when expressing expectations of employees.
Personality	Impact of social distancing and working from home will affect different personality types in different ways in terms of personal coping mechanisms and job performance.	E-leaders should strive to learn about the various personality types in their employees to better cater to their strengths and weaknesses and maximize employee performance.
Cultural Differences	Organizational culture will tend to be stronger and less flexible leading to a tighter and close-knit organization during traumatic events such as the pandemic.	E-leaders must be open regarding social norms to facilitate a creative and innovate work environment.
Emergent Changes in Work Practices Impacting Communication/ Change Management		
<i>Nature of Work</i>	<i>Implications</i>	<i>Actions for Implementation</i>
Change Management	E-leaders must find creative ways to deal with new and unrepresented challenges to cultivate the development of their employees from afar. E-leaders must also deal with being flexible and adaptable whilst creating new performance targets and goals.	Now more than ever, e-leaders must balance optimism and realism as they communicate with employees and showcase good behaviors whilst working remotely to set the standards of what is acceptable high.
Working from Home and Capitalizing on Lean to	COVID-19 has forced employees to maintain	E-leaders must create new practices to manage the

Maintain Competitive in the Job Market	social distancing to prevent the spread of the disease forcing employees to work from home virtually. This practice has made companies more open to adopting this practice post-pandemic as it can reduce costs for employers. Companies are forced to operate very lean in order to remain competitive	boundaries between work and home for employees. Organizations must also create new habits and rituals that will allow employees to thrive in a work from home setting.
Virtual Teams	Working virtually has caused employees to develop new methods and ways to deal with conflict online that can result in performance losses.	E-leaders must place communication at the forefront as they navigate virtual teams and manage employees. Organizations must allow opportunities for employees to connect and bond during non-task interactions.

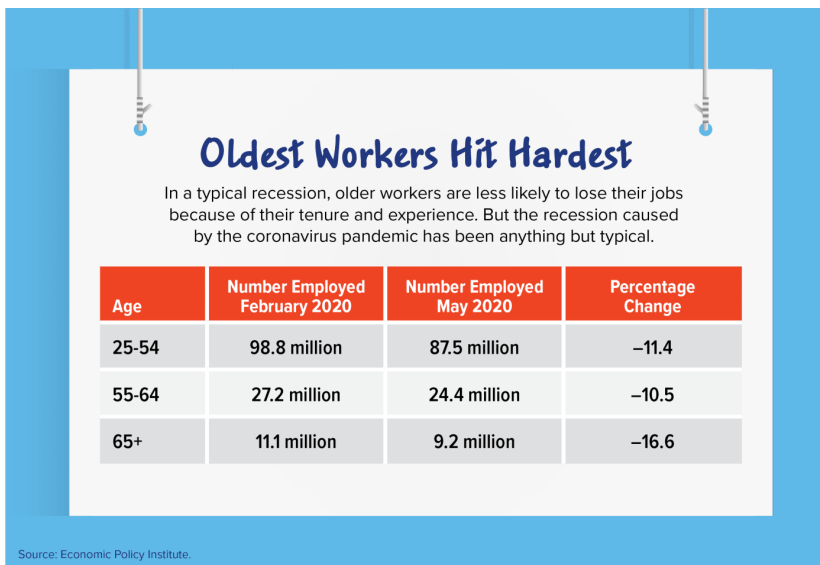
Appendix B – Data looking at the correlation and connection between job security, work performance and psychological distress. Data gathered from: Pacheco, T., Coulombe, S., Khalil, C., Meunier, S., Doucerain, M., & Auger, E. (2020, August 12). *Job security and the promotion of workers’ wellbeing in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic: A study with Canadian workers one to two weeks after the initiation of social distancing measures*. International Journal of Wellbeing (IJW).

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Appendix C- Oldest workers hit hardest during the global pandemic.

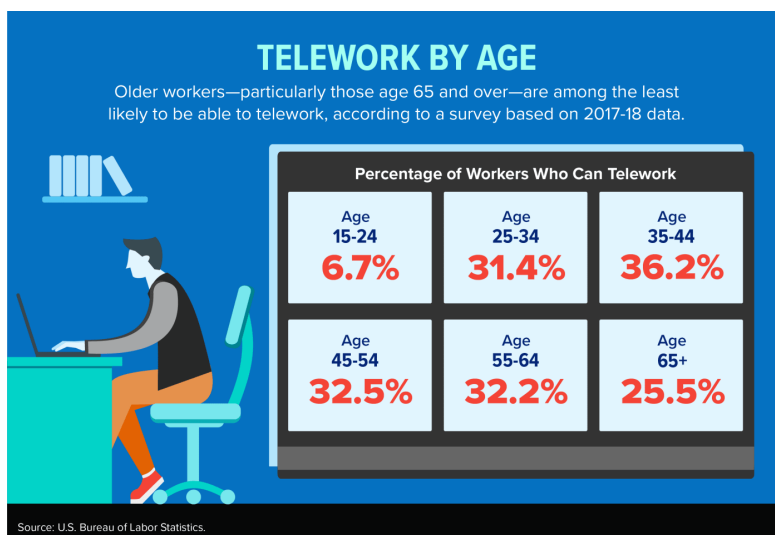
Source: <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-deals-a-dual-threat-to-older-workers.aspx>



Appendix D – Percentage of workers who can telework based on 6 age categories.

Source: Agovino, T. (2020, July 17). *COVID-19 Deals a Dual Threat to Older Workers*. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).

<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-deals-a-dual-threat-to-older-workers.aspx>

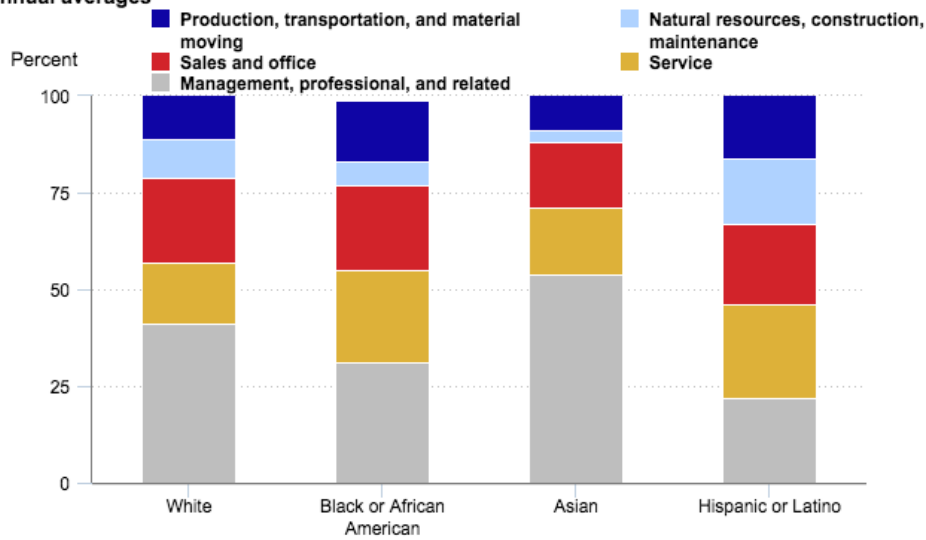


Appendix E – Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic minority represented in essential services.

Source: *Labor force characteristics by race and ethnicity, 2018*. (2019, October 9).

BLS Reports. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/reports/race-and-ethnicity/2018/home.htm>

Chart 3. Employed people by occupation, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2018 annual averages



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.
 Note: People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.
 Data may not sum to 100 percent because of rounding.
 Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS).

Fifty-four percent of employed Asians worked in management, professional, and related occupations—the highest paying major occupational category—compared with 41 percent of employed Whites, 31 percent of employed Blacks, and 22 percent of employed Hispanics.

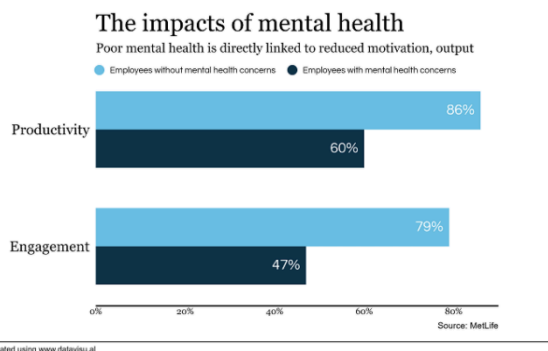
Appendix F – Bar graph looking at the connection between poor mental health

directly linked to reduced motivation and output. Source: Sherwani, Y.

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