



Business Continuity Plans ~Being Prepared for the New Normal

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2020. January seems like a decade ago. There was a tight job market, it was getting hard to find talent that you weren't luring away. The economy was expanding. Social Media was Tick Tok routines. The stock market was up, the winter was warm and mild... it was looking like it was

going to be a great year.

Just 8 weeks ago we were forced to deal with what we are referring to as the monster... the C'Word (COVID.) With its emergence, it seems like everything we knew about managing our personal lives let alone our company and employees, changed overnight.

Initially, we were forced to cope with employees affected by school closings and then we had to manage "shelter-in-place."

We learned a new term, called... Social Distancing. And said good-bye to standard behaviors like handshakes.

Together we have navigated through our businesses being on the "essential" and "non-essential" lists and learned more about the CARES Act then I am pretty sure we really hoped to.

A common sentiment when I talk to business owners, regardless of the industry / size/ location, is that we are all in this together and not one of us had any idea how to navigate the challenges that the "C" Word introduced and forced us to deal with.

We were inundated with email updates from every person in our contacts. However, information was often conflicting and confusing.

There was never a handbook for this. As soon as you brainstormed on a white board some band aides to get some control, the rules changed again... and then again... and again.

How do you prepare for complete and daily utter uncertainty?

I know for me, I remained in a state of vigilance. On a daily basis trying to ensure that anything that changed overnight was reviewed and understood before 8:00AM, at which point employees got word and started firing off emails about new rules and what the changes meant for them.

Professional attire on the top and Yoga pants and jogging shorts on the bottom have become the new power attire during Zoom meetings.

Here we are today, wait, what day is it anyway?

All kidding aside, there is one thing we know for sure and that is that there is nothing sure about tomorrow.

We are recommending that *Companies plan now for the future* of their tomorrow.

Take the time as a leadership team to schedule your Zoom Video Conference and plan, and then plan and plan some more. When we were initially forced to deal with the C'Word we were forced to react in crisis mode.

We are recommending that Companies plan now and get ahead of the next C'Word crisis and be proactive, as much as they can.

Today, as we are rebuilding and preparing for the “New Normal” of our businesses, we have a few choices; we can give in to the uncertainty that this C'Word brings and follow a strategy of... Hope for the Best.

Or

We can take this opportunity to find a small sliver of a silver lining... and make changes to our business that are on our terms.

Maybe allowing some changes is a good thing. *Changes such as:* work from home arrangements to continue, not requiring everyone to return to the office at the same time, implement staggered shifts (expand the work-day), expanding the work-week to 6 or 7 days versus the standard 5 day work-week with flexible scheduling, permit staff to work a mix of at office / at home; change hourly staff schedules to 4 -10 hour days so that staff are not working in the office all at the same time.

Oh, and its time to consider changing your mindset... that only employees that are physically in the office are successful. Guess what, some employees are more successful when they stay in their Jammies and log on and get work done from their kitchen counter. Be open minded for your New Normal and look for quantifiable employee production results... versus making decisions just because of the way it used to be.

Your employees got a taste of a new quality of life, not waking up so early... not getting all dressed up, not commuting in 20 to 45 minutes of traffic each way, not paying for gas and tolls, not having to make small talk they didn't enjoy but knew they had to, not having to sit in a meeting to discuss a meeting to schedule the meeting about the meeting. **Maybe your workplace adapts to this, in a way that Employee Engagement and morale is HIGHER while work output is also ELEVATED? Maybe this is the silver lining?**

Our team is here for you, as we always have been to help you navigate thru this unexpected time. The below Checklist includes recommendations for you to consider as you start preparing / thinking and creating your Businesses Continuity Plan for your New Normal.

Have a suggestion that is not on this list? Send it to our way at Heather@McCloskeyPartners.com and we will post it in our HR Column.



The McCloskey Partners, LLC Business Continuity Checklist

Recommendation	Completed Yes	Completed No
<p>Has the company posted the new Labor Posters that were released in April?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FFCRA (required) - OSHA (required) - CDC (optional) <p>Are the labor posters available <i>via</i> hard copy, posted in a conspicuous place frequented by employees, as well as electronically for employees working remote?</p>		
<p>Has the company rolled out a Work from Home Policy?</p>		
<p>Has HR updated the new employee onboarding process so its electronic vs. face-to-face?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has the I9 Verification/ E Verify processes been updated? 		
<p>Has the company updated various Handbook Policies that may now be outdated due to COVID?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclement weather/ natural disaster, adding language about pandemics - Defined which positions are essential including which employees can only complete their tasks while working at the facility vs. telecommute when telecommute work is available 		

Recommendation	Completed Yes	Completed No
Paid Leave - Has the company updated Paid time/ FMLA policies to include language about FFCRA paid leave?		
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Has the company notified employees what PPE they provide, what is required to be worn and what the consequences for policy violations are?		
Has the company defined how many employees can be in the same place at the same time?		
When should videoconferencing be used versus in person meetings, when employees are at the office?		
Will the company put markings on the floor to specify social distancing expectations?		
How should the hourly staff clock in/ out for payroll timekeeping purposes?		
Have you notified employees where cleaning supplies are located?		

Recommendation	Completed Yes	Completed No
<p>Has the company increased the number of deep facility cleanings throughout the week/month? Have you changed the cleaning crew's schedule to be during standard business hours versus after hours?</p>		
<p>Have you asked employees to update their emergency contacts?</p>		
<p>Have you reminded employees what is expected of them if they are sick or someone in their household is sick?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - STAY HOME! 		
<p>Have you communicated to employees who to contact if they need to call out of work due to COVID?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We recommend appointing someone and notifying staff who to contact 		
<p>Is the company planning to take employee temperatures?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has the company developed a policy to set expectations for employees? 		
<p>Have you updated the termination process to include the required Unemployment Form that needs to be provided to employees at the time of termination?</p>		

Recommendation	Completed Yes	Completed No
<p>Have you created procedures for what to do if an employee notifies the company that they tested positive for COVID?</p>		
<p>Have you walked through the facility and noted any areas that Sneeze Guard Partitions should be added or possible Safety issues?</p>		
<p>Have you deemed Safe Zones for where people can stand in elevators?</p>		
<p>Have you considered making changes to the standard work-day to accommodate social distancing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stagger work schedules, additional shifts (1st, 2nd, 3rd) - Weekend schedules, scheduling staff all 7 days versus 5-day workweeks 		
<p>Have you shut down common areas such as Conference Rooms?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If not shut down, how you are planning to social distance? 		
<p>Have you decided if employees can use common/ shared refrigerators to store their food?</p>		

Recommendation	Completed Yes	Completed No
<p>Have you taken any doors off the hinges so employees can avoid touching latches?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Installing contactless doors- entrance/ exit, offices, bathroom, common areas, etc. - Installing motionless sensors for doors and lights - 		
<p>Some companies are updating HVAC systems now before the Fall 2020</p>		
<p>Has the Workers' Compensation Rights & Responsibilities Notice been rolled out to employees within the last 12 months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you have clear guidance from your Workers Compensation carrier what, if any, claims should be reported? - Have you double checked to ensure the Workers' Compensation Notice is hung in a conspicuous area frequented by the employees? Is it also available electronically? 		

McCloskey Partners, LLC is a Human Resources Consulting Firm located in Souderton, PA.

Have a Question about a Business Continuity Plan?

Have a Question about how to Navigate through COVID?

We are here to help you. Contact us today at 215-716-3035 x 712 or Heather@McCloskeyPartners.com