LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS: MANAGE THE CRISIS, LEAD FOR THE FUTURE

During a coaching session my client reports, “It is so quiet in my office for a Monday. She explains how different it is now that she can’t just “pop in” and have a quick conversation — how different it is for her to lead remotely. She wonders, “How do I keep my team connected, inspired, and performing?” She asks, “What about our youngest employees? They haven’t been through anything like this before. How will those who survive lay-offs manage the extra work plus stay healthy? How will they deal with survivor guilt? How can I manage this crisis while leading for the future?” She had more questions than answers. A good place to start, really.

You are likely asking similar questions. And, to be sure, there is a storm of how-to articles pouring into our in-boxes about managing the crisis.

A key to sustaining your success is your ability to manage the crisis while leading for the future.

Your daily activities and those of your colleagues will create the norms that build your organization’s culture for the future. Think big about the environment you want to create. Be intentional. Here are some Ideas:

1. Be a role model for company values. Ask for feedback to ensure you are getting it right.
2. Encourage difficult feedback. Get the undiscussables out in the open even though everyone is working from home.
3. Vary your leadership style to meet current needs of every person on the team and the team as a whole. Be sure not to create perceived favoritism by leaning into certain people and leaving others in the dark.
4. Revisit team principles for performance and adapt them for today’s situation.
5. Build trust by sharing challenges we all face. Talk about the tough issues inside and outside the organization, share challenges such as children at home while working, more time with spouse, grocery shopping, and other day-to-day “tests.”
6. Attend to self-care and resilience. This is now essential.
7. Set up a team meeting with the intention of focusing solely on establishing the right environment in the new situation. Make it an intention to discuss that topic as The agenda item.
8. Give back. Do something for others. Get your team involved. Please see this month’s Executive Vitality™, Do Your Part to Help.

What changes do you need to implement to create the environment your organization needs now? What can you do to ensure you bring your intention to reality?