

PUTTING TOGETHER YOUR BUSINESS'S ACTION PLAN FOR CORONAVIRUS

This is a short guide to help you run a meeting to get you and your team to agree a short-term action plan to weather the coronavirus storm.

It is key that your team takes decisions and comes away with a clear sense of what they will do individually and as a team to help the health of the business, employees and their customers.

Meeting introduction:

- Get a sense of how everything is feeling in regard to the coronavirus situation. You will have staff members feeling scared, and it is important that you can be honest about your own feelings but be positive and upbeat that the business will weather the storm.
- Get agreement to the purpose of the meeting, i.e. putting together a short-term action plan to get through the coronavirus crisis
- Agree timings and who will play what role in the meeting.

Key Risks to the business:

- Brainstorm with your team where they see the key risks to the business are
- Rank each of the risks against their likelihood to happen, (high, medium, low) and the impact to the business (high, medium, low).
- Any risk which is seen to be high or medium impact to the business and also high or medium likelihood to happen needs to be discussed and actions identified to mitigate the risk.

Then it is likely that your business will want to discuss the following subjects, if not already covered in the brainstorm:

Employees:

- How do we keep them safe?
- What do we ask if one of our employees thinks or needs to self-isolate?
- What is our sickness and remote working policies?
- How do we keep morale up during this time?
- How do we keep communication high, particularly when so many of our team may choose to work from home or be off sick?
- Do we need to consider a recruitment freeze?
- How do we find additional resource or capacity if our employees are off sick or told to self-isolate?

Remote working:

- Which areas or functions of our business is this possible?
- How do we support our 'remote working' employees to work safely and effectively from home? E.g. equipment, internet access
- How do we keep our company's IT and systems, and client/customer data secure with employees working from home?

- Is our current infrastructure enough to support video conferencing, e.g. software, hardware, internet bandwidth?

Customers/clients:

- What support will they need from us to trust us and want to use us now, during the crisis and after the crisis?
- What instances do we need to do the right thing?
- How do we inform them of the actions we are taking and how our service may change during the crisis?

Community:

- How can we support and go the extra mile to help our local community?

Financial:

- How do we make sure we have enough cash to ride the storm?
- Which debtors need to pay?
- Which are the customers/clients who are likely to need a payment plan?
- How many of our clients/customers will be vulnerable during the crisis? What can we do to encourage them to stay and also entice them back?
- Do we need to change our payment terms?
- What expenditure is currently unnecessary?
- What help do we need from our accountants to help us with payroll, bookkeeping, VAT or access to finance?
- How much business could we afford to lose before we are in trouble as a business?
- What other lines of credit could be accessed to tide us over?
- Which capital purchases should we delay?

Marketing/business development/customer service:

- What activity needs to stop or be swapped to a virtual rather than face-to-face solution?
- Do we need to increase our marketing? And if so, what, how, when?

Action planning

- Review the agreed actions
- Agree how you will all follow up on progress on the plan
- Agree when you will review the plan