

# Better Business Focus

May 2020

Expert inspiration for a Better Business



Better Business Focus is the essential key for business owners and managers. It achieves that by focusing on the way in which successful businesses compete and manage their organisations. It focuses on how people are recruited, coached and developed; on how marketing and selling is undertaken in professional markets as well as in markets with intense competition; on how technology and the Internet is reshaping the face of domestic and home business; and on how people are being equipped with new skills and techniques. In short, it offers expert inspiration for a better business.

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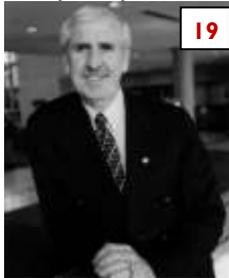
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Marla Tabaka

# Emotional survival tips to refocus in tough times

## How to handle complex emotions during the Covid-19 outbreak, strengthen your focus, and instill hope.

By the third day of my shelter-at-home commitment, I found myself uncharacteristically sleeping in until 8 a.m. I wasn't refreshed by the extra hours of sleep; instead, I felt guilty. Guilt for allowing sadness and fear to get the best of me, to the degree that I had overslept. Guilt because I felt drained and had **no motivation to resume my work** on a new group coaching course or my marketing efforts. I felt **paralyzed by grief** for the world and by the shame I had associated with the consequences of my feelings.

Fortunately, what I've learned as a coach has equipped me with the **tools to manage strong emotional responses** in a healthy manner. And now, in what seems like a blink of an eye, I am helping entrepreneurs delve into complex thoughts and emotions related to a crisis that few anticipated.

You too, could be experiencing a depth of emotion that you have never faced until now. As such, it's tricky to understand and accept your feelings. You may develop the tendency to push them down or deny yourself the right to experience them. Denial may help you to feel better in the moment, but in the long run, it doesn't work well.

### Do you hear yourself saying things like this?

"I shouldn't be this upset about my situation. So many people have it far worse than I do."

"I feel guilty because I can't keep my mind focused on business."

"Why can't I get my act together? I've got things to do."

Questions like these imply you should feel guilty or ashamed of your feelings. There's also guilt associated with not being in control or having planned better for an uncertain future.

Most entrepreneurs don't like unknowns, and we don't function well with the loss of control. But to regain any semblance of control, you need to reconcile your emotions and any guilt associated with them. This process is not a one-time action step; it's the **ongoing personal development** that will benefit you for the rest of your life.

### Emotions don't make you weak, they make you human.

Entrepreneurs are not faint-hearted. Naturally, you want to be strong, but don't misinterpret what that means. Strong people don't diminish or deny their emotions--they develop healthy ways to deal with them.

Give yourself permission to take some downtime as you **grieve and process your feelings**. Minimize your guilt as much as possible by knowing that you are doing the best you can considering the circumstances before you. Be kind to yourself, acknowledge you have a right to your feelings. Everyone does.

### Be firm with guilt and shame emotions.

A kind, accepting approach to your sadness, fear, and grief is healthy for you and will help you heal. Conversely, you don't want to nurture guilt and shame.

There are many demands being placed on you at this time, yet you only have the capacity of a single human being. Any negative soundtracks in your head are

nothing but lies. Now is the time to **count your successes** and reinforce your confidence. Kick guilt and shame to the curb and own your other emotions and your right to process them in a healthy manner.

### Find balance in your thoughts.

When anxious thoughts take over, our minds reveal the worst-case scenarios of the future. This unhealthy anticipatory grief can become all-consuming. You may try to push away these visions and thoughts, but the brain doesn't work that way. Your reptilian brain is on the lookout for danger and produces all-encompassing negative thoughts in an attempt to protect you.

The key to managing your anticipatory grief is to create balance in your thinking. If you imagine a tragic outcome, bring your focus to a less disastrous result. Yes, some entrepreneurs will lose their businesses, but think about how many times entrepreneurs recreate themselves. Focus on your ideas to strengthen your business during this time. And yes, everyone is faced with the frightening thought of contracting Covid-19, yet most develop few, if any, symptoms. We are all doing the best we can. Move your negative vision up the ladder to the next best thought, one rung at a time.

### Bring yourself back to the present.

One of my favourite mantras is, "In this moment, I am safe and well." If anxiety takes hold, bring yourself back into the present so your thoughts don't run wild.

- Feel the contact of your back to the chair and your feet to the floor.
- Take slow, deep breaths, counting to four on the inhale and seven on the exhale.
- Force a smile and straighten your posture.
- Count the paperclips or pens and pencils in your desk drawer.

Follow these suggestions and your strategic, creative mind will kick back into gear. And remember, nothing puts guilt and fear to rest like lending a helping hand to others.

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### About the Author

Internationally known business strategist, national radio show host ([www.bigpitchradio.com](http://www.bigpitchradio.com)), and Inc. Magazine ([inc.com/author/marla-tabaka](http://inc.com/author/marla-tabaka)) author, Marla Tabaka helps entrepreneurs achieve personal happiness and financial success. Her integrative approach to coaching combines mindset management and strategic planning, resulting in multi-million dollar businesses for many of her small business clients.

Marla has appeared in noteworthy publications such as American Express Open, Fox Business News, TIME Business, The Huffington Post, Entrepreneur.com, Social Media Mags, and The Business Intelligence Report. If you would like to take the next steps toward a healthy life and business, contact Marla for a complimentary consultation.

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If your organisation is facing a difficult time during the current downturn then here are some questions to ask at your next executive meeting.

Are we doing all that is necessary in order to survive?

I guess that is the question that you are already sharply focussed on. So we will not go into all the ancillary questions and issues that go with it. Needless to say, survival is the number priority for most businesses during a recession.

But you should also find time to consider what is going to happen beyond the recession and how you might profit. Here are some questions to ask which will lead to potential innovations and opportunities.

1. What is our added value?
2. Why do customers choose us? What makes us different?
3. What problem do we solve for customers?
4. In what new ways could this problem be solved?
5. What new problems will customers have in the future?
6. What changes in customer behaviour and needs might there be in the future?
7. What big assumption are we making about our business which might no longer be true going forward?
8. What changes can we make to product or service to make it simpler, cheaper or easier to use?

Paul Sloane

# Ten questions to ask during a recession



9. What entirely new product or service could we sell to existing customers?
10. How would a dynamic new start-up solve our customers' problems with new technologies and a new route to market?

A recession offers opportunities as well as hazards. The world is changing fast and only the nimble will prosper. Ask these questions, be open-minded, think laterally and be ready to place some smart bets.

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**Paul Sloane** is an author and expert on lateral thinking in business. He has delivered hundreds of talks to executive audiences around the world. His talks are different because they challenge your thinking head-on. He is a skilled facilitator and course leader who helps top level teams achieve breakthrough results in their meetings. He helps companies overcome the problems they have making innovation happen. He can improve creativity and lateral thinking for leaders with leadership and innovation master classes. This results in a more agile culture, more ideas and successful innovation.

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Jeff Haden

# Here's how Apple just said you should clean your phone to prevent the spread of Covid-19

If you're concerned about transferring the virus through your phone, Apple now says using disinfectant wipes (gently) is OK.

I conducted a little observational research the other day while getting groceries.

One out of five people wore some form of mask (I decided a scarf counts), and nearly half wore gloves.

But here's the thing: While gloves seem like a great idea, wearing gloves is only as effective as the rest of your "slow the spread" techniques.

**While the CDC says** touching a surface with the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or possibly eyes is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, the organization does recommend "frequent hand hygiene and routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces."

So with that in mind: If you're wearing gloves, touch a bunch of surfaces, and then touch your face... that's basically like touching your face without gloves. You're still potentially transferring harmful material.

Of course, that doesn't mean wearing gloves is a waste of time. It does mean you still have to think about what you touch while you're wearing them. (Which is a definite side-benefit from wearing a mask; if nothing else, the mask helps remind you to not touch your face).

But here's another thing: You probably touch your phone a lot more often than you touch your face. And **one study found** ("ick"

alert) that phones can carry more than 17,000 bacterial gene copies and "may play a role in the spread of infectious agents."

Yep: Ick.

The problem is, Apple long **frowned on using conventional cleaning products**, like disinfectant wipes, to clean your phone, saying that certain chemicals can over time wear away the screen coating.

But not anymore: Apple now says it's okay to use disinfectant wipes to clean your phone, as long as you wipe gently instead of scrubbing, and as long as you keep liquid away from charging ports.

**According to Apple:**

Using a 70 percent isopropyl alcohol wipe or Clorox Disinfecting Wipes, you may gently wipe the hard, nonporous surfaces of your Apple product, such as the display, keyboard, or other exterior surfaces. Don't use bleach.

Avoid getting moisture in any opening, and don't submerge your Apple product in any cleaning agents. Don't use on fabric or leather surfaces.

"Gently" is the key. If you need to remove debris, don't use a disinfecting wipe or spray.

Of course, the best way to keep your phone free of germs, infectious agents, etc., is to leave it in your pocket or purse while you're in an uncontrolled setting like a grocery store and only pull it out again after you've washed your hands.

That's true even if you wore gloves into the store - getting the gloves off without transferring any "material" to your fingers requires some degree of dexterity.



Again, the CDC says the main way Covid-19 spreads is from person to person, so social distancing appears to be the most effective way to help slow the spread. But if you're worried about contaminated surfaces... keep in mind one of the objects you probably touch most often is your phone.

So feel free to clean yours regularly.

And, according to Apple, to use - gently, and making sure to keep liquid away from ports - disinfectant wipes.

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## About the Author

Jeff Haden learned much of what he knows about business and technology as he worked his way up in the manufacturing industry from forklift driver to manager of a 250-employee book plant. Everything else he picks up from ghostwriting books for some of the smartest innovators and leaders he knows in business. He has written more than 30 non-fiction books, including four Business and Investing titles that reached #1 on Amazon's bestseller list. Jeff is a contributing editor for [inc.com](http://inc.com) and a LinkedIn Influencer.

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Minda Zetlin

# 3 simple tricks to fall asleep fast that are weird but surprisingly effective



You can do these while lying in bed, in just a minute or two.

Do you have trouble sleeping because you can't stop your buzzing brain from thinking about your business? There are unusual techniques for calming your mind that are surprisingly effective. They work, in part, because they offer a distraction that allows you to release your worries long enough to get some shut-eye.

Here are three techniques to try:

## 1. Start with 4-7-8 breathing.

When you slow down your breathing, you activate your **vagus nerve**, which sends signals from the brain to the body. During exhalations, it tells your heart to slow down, which helps you relax. Developed by alternative health expert, Dr. Andrew Weil, **4-7-8 breathing** is known to help people manage stress, among other health benefits, and drift off to sleep.

Here's how to do it:

1. Exhale all the air from your lungs.
2. Place the tip of your tongue on the roof of your mouth, right where the ridge of flesh meets your two upper front teeth. Keep it there.
3. Breathe in for a count of 4. Hold your breath for a count of 7. Breathe out with a whooshing sound for a count of 8.
4. Repeat the cycle four times. (Don't do more than four.)

Want a demo? Watch this [video](#) of Weil performing the technique.

## 2. Visualize yourself doing something you do well.

Visualization is **scientifically proven** to help people fall asleep faster. A common technique is to visualize yourself in a peaceful place, like lying on a beach, or see yourself slowly unraveling a ball of string and letting the string pile up at your feet.

These can be effective, but one I find really intriguing is to visualize yourself doing something you're good at. A Reddit user **quoted** by BuzzFeed says a pitcher who was having trouble sleeping was advised by his coach to visualize himself throwing 10 perfect pitches. You might try picturing yourself teeing off or cooking a favorite dish. It just has to be something you do well and makes you happy.

## 3. Tap rhythmically, but lightly, on your legs.

Jim Donovan, sound healer and former drummer for the band Rusted Root, describes this technique in detail in a [TEDx Talk](#).

He started using it on himself after people in his drumming workshop kept telling him simple rhythmic drumming was very relaxing.

To start, tap lightly on each leg, alternating between them, at about four taps per second, the speed of a ticking stopwatch. Then add breathing, to a slow count of four on the inhale and four on the

exhale. Continue for three minutes, then make the tapping slower and slower for the last 30 seconds.

When you're done, you should feel more relaxed because of the brain's tendency to be drawn in by a rhythmic pattern. It's the same reason you tap your foot while listening to music.

Any of these techniques can be the nudge your brain needs to switch from worrying to winding down. Next time you want to fall asleep faster, give one of them a try.

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## About the Author

Minda Zetlin is an author, speaker, and journalist whose work has appeared in publications from *Inc.* to *New York Magazine* to *Computerworld*. She is the author or co-author of several books, most recently **The Geek Gap: Why Business and Technology Professionals Don't Understand Each Other and Why They Need Each Other to Survive**.

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Geoffrey James

# Mindfulness meditation is a management tool



Steve Jobs, and thousands of CEOs since, have used it to improve focus, remain calm, and tap into creativity.

I've been reading (and writing) **business books** since the 1980s and, as pointed out earlier, much of the advice they give today seems hopelessly dated. Ditto with the advice of **management gurus**. The world has changed; things are different.

Given that's the case, where should an entrepreneur (either internal or external) be looking to improve their leadership skills? Outside of reading about how great leaders (like **Winston Churchill**) managed during a crisis, I think there's only one place to turn: inward.

Being an entrepreneur means being a leader, and you can't possibly be an effective leader if you're crippled by anxiety and panic. This is true regardless of what's going on in your business or in the larger, outside world.

Popping a Xanax won't cut it. If you want to inspire your team to achieve more than they thought possible, you've got to role model the sense of calm, purpose and focus from which emerges both creativity and endurance.

Over the years, I've interviewed some of the most talented managers and entrepreneurs in the world, and I can say with the authority of experience that the CEOs whose companies do best during difficult times are those who have a rich internal life.

It might be meditation, it might be prayer, it might be philosophy, but when you're working with these CEOs, you quickly sense that everything they do emerges from and is colored by their self-awareness.

The other CEOs - the ones who are all about showmanship, bluster, and bluff - inevitably reveal, in times of trouble, that they're worse than empty suits.

Of all the ways one might turn inward, mindfulness meditation is the probably the easiest for most entrepreneurs to practice. Because there's plenty of science behind it (see this article in **Scientific American**), mindfulness doesn't require a belief in the supernatural. And unlike philosophy, mindfulness doesn't entail months of study.

In my previous column, **How Steve Jobs Trained His Brain**, I shared the method of mindfulness meditation that I was taught some thirty years ago by world-renowned martial artist Yang Jwing Ming.

If you practice mindfulness, you'll discover that from the very start, you're calmer and more centred every day. Your colleagues and co-workers will probably notice the change. When situations are challenging, they'll be drawn to you.

One thing you must NOT do, however, is try to convince others in your team to meditate. Demanding that somebody else

become self-aware is an oxymoron. (It's very similar to forcing your employees to pray, but that's a story for another time.)

As you strengthen your ability to remain in the moment, it will help you look at problems from a more centred perspective and come up with grounded, sensible, creative solutions. Plus you'll be role modeling the behaviour that you need from your team.

By practicing mindfulness on a daily basis, you'll be stopping your brain from aging and might even be able to put that aging process into reverse, **according to the latest neuroscience**.

But that's just a side benefit.

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## About the Author

Geoffrey is a contributing editor for Inc.com, is an author and professional speaker whose award-winning blog, Sales Source, appears daily on Inc.com. His most recent book is **Business Without the Bullsh\*t: 49 Secrets and Shortcuts You Need to Know**.

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Marcel Schwantes

## 3 major causes of recent employee turnover, according to new research

People may be getting laid off but employee turnover is still a possibility during the Covid-19 crisis.

Today's workplace extends beyond the physical office - particularly as companies roll out mandatory work-from-home policies amidst the Covid-19 outbreak.

As new developments continue to unravel surrounding the global pandemic, it's likely that employees will need additional support to maintain their personal well-being and levels of performance employers are asking them to achieve.

Though it's true that many employees are unfortunately getting laid off, companies need to be cognizant of the fact that employee *turnover* is still a possibility during these times.

A recent [report from Limeade](#) (an employee experience software company) surveyed 1,000 full-time U.S. employees and found that there's one overarching factor that can be the antidote to unwanted employee turnover: organizational care.

**Dr. Laura Hamill**, Limeade Chief People Officer and Chief Science Officer, discussed with me the realities of care in the workplace. Specifically, how employers fall short, how a lack of care manifests in the workplace and how companies can retain top talent.

Here are three noteworthy findings from the report, as well as what organizations can do to make positive changes to their culture - even while working remotely:

### 1. Nearly half of employees who have disclosed a mental health issue in the workplace have experienced a negative consequence by doing so.

Although we've seen improvements in recent years, Limeade data shows that stigmas against mental health conditions are alive and well in the workplace. Employees confided that "you get treated differently... it's a look, a feeling and even the way things are worded in talks." Another employee disclosed that "basically, I was told to suck it up and come to work."

Dr. Hamill noted that when employees struggling with mental health issues see there is an established, transparent and fair policy for handling their situation, they are more likely to find the support needed to thrive in the workplace.

She recommends that organizations train managers to not only know the policy but to have these conversations with their people in a respectful, non-judgmental way.

It's important that employees aren't treated as weak or that they are afraid of negative consequences if they are honest about where they are struggling.

Employers should also proactively offer tools and resources that support emotional well-being - starting with policy transparency and consistency at the leadership level.

### 2. Employees will leave in pairs if things get bad enough.

Limeade found that only 31% of employees strongly agree that their employers care about them as individuals. And some

employees who feel cast aside will encourage co-workers to leave with them - posing a double threat to employers and proving that turnover can be contagious. As is the case, 38% of employees have been asked by a colleague to leave a job with them.

Dr. Hamill recommends that organizations don't rely on exit interviews. Limeade research found that 88% of respondents were truthful about why they left a job in an exit interview, but many still wished they had said something more. "These concealed details are valuable information for your organization to improve how it cares for its employees, so it's in your best interest to dig for it," noted Dr. Hamill.

Additionally, train HR representatives and managers on how to create an open and safe environment where employees not only feel empowered to provide candid feedback, but also have ample opportunity to discuss their experiences throughout their job tenure.

### 3. Nearly half (48%) employees don't believe their employers' diversity and inclusion efforts are genuine.

When employees were asked whether their companies' D&I (Diversity and Inclusion) efforts are genuine or not, some revealed that "D&I training is a 15-minute video and five-question quiz that anyone could pass." Other responses noted that "when the higher-ups all look the same, the feeling of a glass ceiling for people of color is very real."

Dr. Hamill notes that "inclusion is every employee's responsibility, not just a top-down initiative." She

shared that organizations can start by showing employees what their D&I goals are, offer employee-run resource groups and bring in outside expert speakers to provide tangible ways to further the conversation.

As workplaces continue to ask their employees to work from home and do more with less, employers need to reciprocate by providing care and fostering engagement. It is so important that this care is authentic - trust is the prerequisite for employers to reduce the impact of these kinds of negative situations.

When employees feel cared for, they are more engaged, more likely to stay at their company and more likely to recommend the company as a great place to work - making it a win for both the company and the team.

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Marcel is a speaker, entrepreneur, columnist, and Board Certified Coach with 20 years' experience in leadership development. Marcel is passionate about working with forward-thinking leaders intentional about the empowerment of people to create extraordinary impact. His work has been featured on Inc., Time, Yahoo!, Business Insider, Thrive Global, Chicago Tribune, and Denver Post. He holds degrees in Communications (B.A.) and Organizational Behavior (M.A.).

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Dr Lynda Shaw

# Top Tips For Controlling Anger

recognising your triggers you can think before you act and can prevent your temper from running away with you.

**5. When It All Becomes Too Much To Bear** If you are feeling like there is no way out, seeking professional help can help to unravel the core of your anger issues and provide tips, techniques and advice for you to follow. As the saying goes, 'Where there's a will, there's a way.'

© Copyright, Dr Lynda Shaw

#### About the Author

Dr Lynda Shaw is cognitive neuroscientist and chartered psychologist, a Forbes contributor, an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, a Fellow of the Professional Speakers Association, as well as an entrepreneur and author of adult and children's books.

Dr Shaw has lectured in Psychology and Neuroscience at various Universities in the UK and conducted research on brain function and impairment, specialising in consciousness, emotion and the effects of ageing. She was honoured to receive the Professional Speaking Award of Excellence in October 2017, it is the highest accolade for UK speakers given by their peers.

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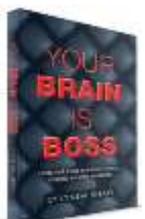


**1. Think Before You Speak** When we feel angry, it is very easy to get lost in the moment and to lose control and vocalise everything that pops into our minds without holding back. Learning to be more mindful before you speak can help prevent feelings of regret and guilt.

**2. Get Active** We all know the benefits physical activity has on our all-round health. The endorphins released from our bodies can help to boost self-esteem and improve mood, so put on your trainers and take your heart rate up a notch for all the right reasons – it will do wonders for your emotional well-being and feelings of anger. Familiarise yourself with your own breathing by sitting down each day and concentrate on your in and out breath.

**3. Take Some Timeout** Anger can sometimes leave you feeling suffocated and trapped. Remove yourself from the situation and have some space to bring clarity to your thoughts. Unresolved problems can always be revisited when both parties have had time to cool off. Practise positive thinking, be around people who can make you laugh or do things that you enjoy the most to help to alleviate tension.

**4. Tame That Temper** Take some time to think about situations or the actions of others that really rile you up. By



Andy Bounds

# In a crisis, think “yes if”, not “no because” (Walt Disney did!)



Walt Disney’s colleagues said he had a “yes if” approach to life.

Can we build Disneyland?

- **Yes if** we get someone else to pay for it
- **Yes if** we hire the world’s best experts to build it
- **Yes if** we locate it somewhere that’s hot all year
- **Yes if** we get transport links
- **Yes if**...

But it’s easy for any of us – especially at times like this – to think “no because”. No because the virus has changed everything, we can’t afford it, it won’t work, it’s too stressful...

I was reminded of this yesterday, I asked someone if they were able to be productive and positive during these hard times. I then had a few minutes of lots of “no because”.



So I told him about “yes if” and asked him to answer my question again, starting with these words.

Yes if I adapt, if I speak to my family and friends more, if I ask my colleagues and customers to tell me new ways I can help them, if I make sure I do something fun each day...

Five minutes later, he had new ways to approach things. He had solutions. A plan.

Great for positivity, productivity and... well, for life.

So my question to you: can you be more positive and productive?

### Action Point

Please answer my question starting with the words “yes if”!

Get 5-10 “yes ifs”, and I promise you things will look better...

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### About the Author

Andy Bounds is an expert at helping companies communicate and sell better. Author of two best-selling books and winner of the title Britain’s Sales Trainer of the Year, Andy has shared his expertise with some of the world’s largest companies, helping every one of them have more success.

Marketing legend Drayton Bird said Andy had taught him ‘... more about effective communicating than a lady who’d taught two American Presidents’.

Are you following me on twitter?

To receive my weekly tips on how to communicate more effectively, [click here](#)

Short of time? Here are my [Quick Wins](#)

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Jim Schleckser

# 3 things you can do to help your business survive an economic downturn



How do you survive and thrive?

For some of you, this might be the first **economic downturn** you've experienced in your career. For the rest of you, who, like me, have been through other economic crises, heed this piece of advice: this too shall pass.

I recognize that things might seem scary right now. And you should be doing everything you can to help your business survive - particularly when it comes to preserving your cash. I have also been using the mantra, "survive and thrive."

But there's actually a **bit of a gift that comes with a downturn** if you can learn how to unwrap it. It gives you time and the opportunity to do things to improve your business you might not otherwise be able to tackle.

Think about it: what do you do when you find yourself with unexpected time on your hands? I know in my case, I'll do things like clean out a closet or the mess on my desk, catch up on emails, and maybe even call a few friends and clients--things I might otherwise put off when I'm too busy.

You can think of a downturn in a similar way - a chance to do things to strengthen your business for when the economy recovers. There are actually three areas you can focus on, topics I cover in my

book, *Great CEOs Are Lazy*, to help use this crisis to make you stronger.

## 1. Fix Your Business Model

It can be difficult, if not impossible, to make changes to your business model when you're growing. Even the idea of raising your prices or adding new products can be overwhelming as you service customers as fast as possible.

But now is the perfect time to put changes like these in place. How could you put through a small price increase that can dramatically impact profits when revenue starts to grow or perhaps add a bunch of value to customer to help retention?

This is also a prime opportunity to explore ways to **add recurring revenue to your business model** because that will dramatically increase the value of your business. Just like how the entire software industry shifted from service contracts to billing monthly on a software-as-a-service basis, you need to be thinking about how to build that kind of model into your business.

## 2. Look at Processes and Automation

Pay attention to the **processes and systems** you use to run the business. With the unique circumstances we're all facing working from home or away from the office, it's given exposure to a

host of new tools we might not have known about before. Everything from using email autoresponders to automated workflow can have a big impact on how you and your team operate.

There's no doubt that any firm that didn't have a work-from-home program will now have one. What we can count on going forward is that this is likely changing the way we work forever. The opportunity is to use this time to think about how you might digitize and use technology and automation to make your business leaner and more efficient.

## 3. Evaluate Your Team

It's inevitable during downturns that companies are forced to lay people off. You always hope that those situations are temporary. The bigger question you should be asking yourself, however, is do you have the **right people on your team**? Are the people on your team the ones who will be ready to fire up and carry your organization into the recovery?

A crisis is a great time to evaluate someone's character. Are they shrinking away - or stepping up? I have always liked to ask: is this someone I would want next to me in a foxhole? Answering that question honestly now, as things start heating up, might be the difference in how quickly your company recovers.

Downturns are horrible. They are difficult times for any leader to go through. Most of us aren't sleeping much these days. But the good news is that you can use these tough times to make positive changes inside your business - in your business model, your processes and automation tools, and your team - that will best position you to take advantage of the upturn when it arrives.

This article originally appeared on Inc.com: [www.inc.com/jim-schleckser/3-things-you-can-do-to-help-your-business-survive-an-economic-downturn.html?cid=readmore\\_ext\\_ab](http://www.inc.com/jim-schleckser/3-things-you-can-do-to-help-your-business-survive-an-economic-downturn.html?cid=readmore_ext_ab)

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### About the Author

Jim helps leaders grow companies. He specializes in the issues that fast growth firms experience in their business models, talent, processes and systems as they reach higher levels of performance. Jim and his team work with over 100 CEOs of high growth companies to identify and obliterate the things that stand between them and continued organizational success.

With 30 years of leadership in business strategy, technology businesses, process improvement, organizational development, mergers and acquisitions, engineering, sales and marketing, he brings experience in leading global organizations in both public and private environments across many functional areas to the table. He has done business in over 26 countries.

His insight is sought by dozens of CEOs of growth companies around the country. If you want straight, strategic advice on your business problem - you have found your guy.

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Mike Shipulski

## You can't Innovate when ...



Your company believes everything should always go as planned.

You still have to do your regular job.

The project's completion date is disrespectful of the work content.

Your company doesn't recognize the difference between complex and complicated.

The team is not given the tools, training, time and a teacher.

You're asked to generate 500 ideas but you're afraid no one will do anything with them.

You're afraid to make a mistake.

You're afraid you'll be judged negatively.

You're afraid to share unpleasant facts.

You're afraid the status quo will be allowed to squash the new ideas, again.

You're afraid the company's proven recipe for success will stifle new thinking.

You're afraid the project team will be staffed with a patchwork of part time resources.

You're afraid you'll have to compete for funding against the existing business units.

You're afraid to build a functional prototype because the value proposition is poorly defined. Project decisions are consensus-based.

Your company has been super profitable for a long time.

The project team does not believe in the project.

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### About the Author:

Mike strives to define best practices and tools for *Product and Technology Development* and embed them into company culture. With that, practices and tools become a working part of how a company does business instead of ending up in a thick handbook that defines how things "should be done" which is read by no one. To Mike, behavior is most important.

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Pete Foley

# Organizing for Success after Covid-19



We will beat the Covid-19 virus, and innovation will play a major role in that victory. We will find new treatments, either new drugs, or hopefully reapply existing ones. We will reapply existing technology to mass produce respirators. Already a brewery in St. Petersburg has been repurposed to manufacture hand sanitizer.

Innovation is inherent in our DNA, and nothing spurs innovation like a crisis, or a war, and we are in the middle of both.

How quickly we'll achieve that victory remains to be seen, and sadly it will not be without more loss of life or economic agony. I live in Las Vegas, a city that is largely built upon tourism and entertainment, and the economic impact here already is staggering, and will go on for some time. Even if we find a cure quickly, it will still be many months before we return to anything even close to 'normal'.

But no matter how long it takes, we will emerge from this, and some of the tools that will help us are inherent in the crisis itself. Below, I captured three direct effects of the current situation that I believe will ultimately help us to recover from it.

**1. Habits are Broken.** I cannot recall a moment in my lifetime when so many behaviors have been forcibly changed in such a short period of time. This is a massive opportunity that opens the window for new and replacement behaviours, and hence innovation.

It is not straightforward, as we'll be pulled in opposing directions. Once we are back to normal, there will be a strong pull to return to comfortable, familiar patterns of behaviour. Moreover, there may be a pronounced flight to the familiar, as people actively seek psychological safety in nostalgia, and behaviors and products that hark back to more emotionally comfortable times.

However, some behaviours will have changed forever. And the longer this goes on, the more people will be forced to explore and adopt new behaviors, and so the more new opportunities will be created. For example, people who may have been reluctant to try telecommuting, delivery, digital shopping, remote entertainment, leisure and instruction, teleconferencing, and a host of other web based surfaces will have been forced to embrace them, creating unprecedented trial. Furthermore, the financial reality of this global crisis means many people will have been forced to reassess value, or embrace new trade offs between value and convenience. When the dust settles, some people will

move on by embracing new habits, others by returning to old ones. But NOW is the huge window of opportunity to create new business, by going above and beyond for customers who are being forced to try out new possibilities. If we can use this unprecedented trial to provide them with products, experiences and value that exceeds their expectations and past experience, we will keep some of them long after the crisis has passed.

As a concrete example, my old friend Martin Lindstrom shared a lovely example of creative response to a crisis in his recent newsletter, harking back to Hyundai's response to the 2009 Financial crisis

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/coronavirus-playbook-martin-lindstrom/>

They realised that consumers still had funds to purchase cars, but were holding back they were afraid of losing their jobs. To counter this, they launched an innovative sales offer, called Hyundai Assurance: "Buy any new Hyundai, and if in the next year you lose your income, we'll let you return it." Sales increased by double digits, and only five cars were ever returned! It's an approach they are updating for Covid-19, offering an updated Hyundai Assurance that offers to pay 6 months car payments for anyone who loses their job.

**2. Focus on the Future.** When facing a crisis, there is always a strong temptation to look backwards, and spend time analyzing what we could or should have done to avert it, or at least be better prepared for it. And the hindsight bias means we'll always be able to armchair quarterback our response, and see ways we could have done it better. Of course, there is always something we can learn from past experience, but I'd argue that in the short term, our energy is far better spent looking for opportunities as we emerge from the current situation. How can we leverage the opportunities for trial and openness to new experience created by new behaviours, new financial realities and broken habits.

There will ultimately be lessons we can learn, especially if we generalize sufficiently, but it's unlikely to help us recover, take advantage of the post crisis reality, or help people recover. And all too often, this kind of analysis becomes a blame game and finger pointing exercise. The winners coming out of this will be those who looked forward, not those who looked backwards.

That said, having contingencies for generic emergencies is something that we need, both as companies and individuals. Ultimately there will be lessons to be learned. But that is not the first priority, even if the psychological safety it provides will be tempting. And when we do get around to this analysis, it's crucial that we make actions generic, not specific. This specific disaster was a once in 100 years event. There is of course no guarantee that we won't see another pandemic like this in the foreseeable future, but it is more likely that the next Black Swan will be different. Maybe it will be a cyber attack, maybe a terrorist event, maybe a huge natural disaster associated with climate change, crop failure, a meteor strike, war or financial crisis. Most likely it will be something I haven't mentioned here. If we can use this situation to learn how to prepare for disasters in general, it will be a very good thing, but if we use it

only to create readiness for the next Covid-19, we'll likely never get to use it. And as the memory of this fades, so will the commitment to a specific contingency plan.

**3. Don't Waste Hard Earned Experience.** As this crisis unfolded, people will have been exposed to extreme situations, been forced to make very tough decisions, take on responsibility, display agile thinking, bravery and integrity. Natural leaders will have emerged, and creative and innovative thinkers given some likely unprecedented opportunities. Stress can depress creativity, until we reach a tipping point of nothing left to lose, when it often shines, and we are quite likely in that space right now.

As we emerge from this, it will be key to have the agility to respond to what will be a rapidly changing landscape, but also to have the organizational flexibility to embrace the new leadership skills, leaders and innovators who have emerged. If we try and stick them back in the box, and/or remove recently gained autonomy, they will likely go elsewhere. We need to be prepared to embrace those who thrived in the crisis. And we mustn't forget to create environments with sufficient psychological safety for those who didn't. A lot of people will be quite fragile after they've been through this, and will need support for a while afterwards.

Much will depend upon how long this actually lasts, and how deeply it ultimately hurts us. But it will end, and we will recover, and the further we've fallen, the more opportunity there will be to rise. Remember that The Roaring Twenties emerged from the last great pandemic in 1918, and that was tagged onto WWI. We went into this with a robust global economy, so we have considerable reason to hope.

This article originally appeared on LinkedIn:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/organizing-success-after-covid-19-pete-foley/>

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### About the Author

Pete Foley is a Behavioural Science and Innovation Consultant who specializes in applying Psychology, Behavioural Economics and Perceptual Science to deliver innovative solutions to a wide range of business challenges.

An experienced innovation leader, facilitator and practitioner. He draws on 25 years' experience at P&G, whereas a serial innovator, he published over 100 patents, and co-led the foundation of their Behavioural Science capability.

For the last five years he has been an independent consultant, working with large and small companies across a broad range of businesses.

Pete is a sought-after keynote speaker, has extensive experience in designing and leading customized innovation and design thinking workshops, and in supporting the design and placement of consumer tests built around principles of consumer psychology.

Pete blogs regularly about the science and psychology of innovation. He has been recognized as one of the top 20 bloggers on Innovationexcellence.com for the last three years, has written multiple articles for the award-winning biomimicry magazine Zygote.

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Caroline Miller

# Supporting teenagers and young adults during the coronavirus crisis



## Tips for parents with older children at home.

Having teenagers confined to home during the coronavirus crisis may not be as labor-intensive as being holed up with small children, but it definitely has its challenges. While younger children may be thrilled at the prospect of having parental attention 24/7, adolescents are likely to feel differently.

Here are some tips for parenting teenagers (and young adults suddenly home from college) during this time:

### Emphasize social distancing

The first challenge with teens and young adults may be getting them to comply with the guidelines for social distancing.

Teenagers tend to feel invincible, points out David Anderson, PhD, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute, and they are likely to be well aware that the new coronavirus is not as problematic for their age range as it is for older people. Parents are reporting a lot of pushback when teens are told they can't go out and get together with friends. "The fact that data actually is on their side, that coronavirus is less severe for them, is a problem in terms of getting them to follow along," says Dr. Anderson. "They want to see their friends, and

don't see why the social distancing should apply to them."

Parents are asking what to tell them. "Our answer is that exposure to this virus is an exponential thing, and that it's not really about them," says Dr. Anderson. "It's not really about the fact that they feel fine or the fact that coronavirus doesn't affect them as much. It's the fact that they could be asymptomatic carriers and they could kill others, including their grandparents."

One thing to emphasize, he adds, is: "**You just can't know that your friends are well.** And while you may be comfortable taking that risk, you're also bringing that back in your house."

### Understand their frustration over not seeing friends

For teenagers and young adults, friends are hugely important, and they are supposed to be — bonding with peers is one of the essential developmental tasks of adolescents. If your teen is sulking about being stuck at home with parents and siblings, a direct conversation might be helpful, says Rachel Busman, PsD, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute.

Acknowledge that you know it's frustrating for them to be cut off from friends. Listen to what they're feeling, validate those feelings and then be direct about

how you can work together to make this situation bearable.

Loosening rules about time spent on social media, for instance, will help compensate for the socializing time lost with school closings. Encourage them to be creative about new ways to interact with their friends socially.

### Support remote schooling

Parents are reporting feeling pressured and confused about how to help kids with remote learning. With younger children, notes Dr. Anderson, it's more a matter of finding fun activities that can be educational. But with older students, keeping up with expectations from school can be challenging, especially for those with ADHD, learning disorders or organization issues.

"I'm completely overwhelmed by trying to figure out how to structure a school day," one mom told us. "I was never planning on homeschooling my kids. I don't have training in this."

You can help teenagers — and college students who've been sent home — create a realistic schedule for getting work done in defined periods, building in breaks and times for socializing, exercising and entertainment. The key principle: do a session of work first, then reward yourself with something relaxing. Keep in mind that it's not going to be as effective as school, but it may get

to be more effective over time as everyone on the school front, as well as the home front, works to improve remote learning.

### Encourage healthy habits

Teenagers and young adults will do better during this stressful time if they get adequate sleep, eat healthy meals and exercise regularly. Keeping a consistent sleep schedule, with predictable times to wake up and go to bed, is especially important to maintaining a positive mood and their ability to fulfill academic expectations.

Healthy habits are particularly important for young people who may be struggling with anxiety or depression. Losing the routines you've come to rely on can be a big source of stress, so Jill Emanuele, PhD, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute, recommends establishing new routines. "Make sure you're eating properly and sleeping and being social and engaging in pleasant activities," she says, while also warning that young adults should avoid sleeping too much when they're housebound. "There's more of an ability to sleep at home, and while rest is important right now you still need to be active."

Dr. Emanuele also notes that having family members around more often can feel overwhelming or create strain. "Families will need to diffuse tensions in the home with parents and siblings, because everyone is going to be stressed out more," she says. "How to do it will be different for every family, but parents are going to want to think about when to give young people more freedom and how to make sure that their kids' time is still structured. Everyone should be contributing in some way."

### Validate their disappointment

For many the most painful part of the coronavirus crisis will be losing important experiences: high school sports seasons, proms, theater productions, high school and college graduations. And while we're all missing out on very valued activities, adds Dr. Anderson, "it's especially

problematic for teenagers who are wired in their brains to think about novelty and pleasure seeking and seeking out new frontiers to be limited in this way."

Give them room to share their feelings and listen without judgment (or without reassuring them that everything will be fine).

Some will be worried about missing activities expected to help them with college applications and scholarships. Kids are understandably wondering how this will affect their futures. Again, give them room to share how they are feeling and acknowledge the real stress they may be under. Then express confidence in your child's ability to rebound.

### Help them practice mindfulness

Mindfulness techniques can be very helpful in this kind of situation, where our routines are disrupted and we may feel overwhelmed by frustration and disappointment. Mindfulness teaches us to tune into our emotions in any given moment and experience them without judgment.

In what's called "radical acceptance," we let ourselves sit with our emotions rather than fighting them. As Joanna Stern, PsyD, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute, explains, "You tell yourself it's okay to feel anxious right now. It's okay to feel scared. It's okay to feel angry. You're accepting the feelings you have and validating them because we're all having those feelings. It's really important that you accept them as they are rather than fighting them."

In other words, says Dr. Stern, "We say to ourselves: 'This sucks, and I'm going to be sad about it, and I'm going to be angry about it, and I'm going to feel anxious about it,' or whatever it is. This then allows us to move on and say, 'Okay, so now what needs to be done?'"

This article originally appeared on the Child Mind Institute: <https://childmind.org/article/supporting-teenagers-and-young-adults-during-the-coronavirus-crisis/>

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Caroline Miller is the editorial director of the Child Mind Institute. She is a veteran magazine, newspaper and website editor who was editor-in-chief of New York Magazine, which draws 2 million unique visitors a month. She teaches magazine writing at the Arthur J. Carter Journalism Institute, a graduate program at New York University.

Miller's magazine experience also includes stints as editor-in-chief of Seventeen and Lear's. Earlier, she was executive editor of Variety and culture and features editor at Newsday. Her first daily newspaper experience was at the Ithaca Journal, where she was a reporter, city editor and then editorial page editor.

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Sue Barrett

# Organisations are nothing without communication and relationships

Organisations can only exist when there is an active system of communication between parties that creates the scaffolding of relationship dynamics. Without communication and relationships, organisations are hollow, empty. And as much as good communication can do for an organisation, bad communication or the lack thereof can tear it down.

In times of crisis and major upheaval like we are all currently experiencing – in families, businesses, communities, governments, economies and societies – the content, quality and frequency of communication is paramount to our survival, literally.

In particular, what we say as leaders, how we say it and how often we say it has a dramatic impact on people's lives and livelihoods.

You only have to see the positive and devastatingly negative impacts to people and societies from the types of messaging and communication formats coming from the various political leaders around the world at present.

For instance, look at the types of Covid-19 messaging and communication formats used by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern compared to Donald Trump and the subsequent Covid-19 health outcomes in each country. The differences are stark indeed.

### So my question to all leaders is this:

*What are you communicating, how is it being received – by your teams,*

*your customers, your families, your suppliers, investors, your communities – and what are they doing with your message? Especially now...*

### Different types of messages

First we need to look at the different types of messages we need to communicate. It's not a one size fits all. For instance, during Covid-19 we need to act on a whole range of messaging elements including:

1. Crisis communication – What is our crisis plan? How are we going to handle Covid-19 as a business, teams, work conditions, OH&S, supply chain, customers, etc.?
2. Company direction, strategy and purpose – Is it business as usual, or are we changing direction?
3. Work security for staff – Will we have jobs? Who will have jobs? How will we be working? Who will we be supporting? How do we work together remotely? etc.
4. Customer Care – What can our customers expect from us? How are we going to support them? How are we going to service them?
5. Sales Strategy, Sales Messaging & Value Propositions – Are we still selling? What are we selling? Who are we selling to? What is our Value Proposition – Why us? How are we going to sell – remotely, in person, online?
6. Investors & Shareholders – What are we telling the market?

These are just some of the stakeholders we need to have messages prepared for all the time, but especially during this crisis.

In normal times, but much more importantly, in times of deep

distress, uncertainty, confusion and fear, it can be extremely difficult to communicate clearly in a manner that helps your stakeholders:

- Come to grips with what is happening – put whatever is happening into perspective from their own perspectives i.e. how is this going to affect me – my job, my family, my income, my life, etc.
- Feel safe – knowing there is someone and/or some support system that has my back.
- Know what to do moving forward – with the information I have, what decisions do I need to make? What can I do now, tomorrow, next week/month and beyond to secure my future?

Many leaders – political, business, community – have their communication skills and messages tested every day in many ways, especially right now.

Some are shining while others are crashing to the mat.

### Examples of Poor Communication by Leaders

For instance, I heard the other day that the Australian division of an international company has only just made the decision to let people work from home on 25 March and the senior team are still meeting up face to face today. There was no message or anything from the CEO to their large team about what is happening on any level – people are having to piece it together themselves – disastrous. Some of their international teams have even been cut off from any communication as they don't have laptops, and are now very scared about losing their jobs.

### Examples of Great Communication by Leaders

Then there are the various state and national politicians who are doing their very best, in most cases, to come to grips with the massive amount of information and various systems that are ever changing in the face of Covid-19. It's challenging and all-encompassing and some shine better than others. Take the Victorian Premier, Dan Andrews who's been on the front foot from day one of this crisis and the bushfires before that. Here's at least 10 things he's been doing that we can all learn from:

1. Acting early and getting ahead of the curve – out on the front foot
2. Explaining what's happening and what he and the government are doing about it – everyday
3. Acknowledging and reassuring people that he understands their feelings of concern and distress and that he understands the need to give them information and answers now
4. Being as transparent as possible and at the same time trying not to overwhelm people with too much information – upfront, candid, no political double speak
5. Keeping people informed – updates everyday across multiple media channels
6. Being decisive and informing people of those decisions and the consequences, good and bad, for all concerned
7. Communicating the messages in simple, easy to understand formats
8. Repeating the messages across all ranges of media and languages – not leaving anyone out
9. Demonstrating calm, stable, empathetic, authentic and compassionate leadership and stewardship throughout
10. Making sure he is supported by and leading a great team, deferring to the experts, and working in coordination with other leaders and jurisdictions in a bi-partisan manner

These are communication lessons for all of us in leadership roles. In the current climate, I am seeing

this type of communication and leadership excellence coming from all manner of organisations including the Principal of our Melbourne Montessori School, our swim squad board, our hockey club board, our business landlord, and so on. This is not just the domain of our political and corporate leaders, it is the duty of all leaders in whatever area in life to communicate with clarity, purpose, honesty and compassion. This has the ability to save lives and livelihoods.

Communicating effectively under pressure to preserve and evolve human relationships is the ultimate test of true leadership and stewardship.

### How remote working is affecting leadership communication and relationships

Finally, here are some interesting initial side effects on how remote working is affecting leadership communication and relationships.

#### Walking the floor

One of the biggest adjustments many business leaders (and team members) have to work with now is the lack of spontaneous catch ups with people while walking through the office. Walking the floor provides opportunity to have a sense of how their teams are doing and feeling, and that is very difficult to replicate when working remotely no matter how good you are as a leader. This level of communication and relationship building has disappeared for now.

#### Video Conferencing – the Communication Leveller

One interesting side effect of remote working has seen the introduction of video conferencing and the equalising effect it's having on people's roles and status. A number of senior HR professionals are reporting that due to video conferencing there are now no power tools – e.g. No shutting the door, no dressing in expensive suits, no corner offices or strategic seating arrangements/proximity to influencers, certain people can use to assert their power over others. Now we have a levelling of the

hierarchical playing field which is certainly taking some people way out of their comfort zone.

**In summary**, without the system of communication and relationships, organisations cease to exist. They become hollow buildings, nothing more.

For help on how to communicate better with your team, clients and other stakeholders, call us on 03 9533 0000 or email [contact@barrett.com.au](mailto:contact@barrett.com.au)

Remember, **everybody lives by selling something.**

### About the Author

Sue is Founder & Managing Director of Barrett Consulting Group (est. 1995), incorporating Barrett, Sales Essentials, Mind Your Emotions, Sustainable Selling, Barrett Research, and Sell Like a Woman. Barrett is one of Australia's leading sales consulting firms specialising in Sales Strategy, Sales Force Design, Assessments, Sales Training and Sales Coaching.

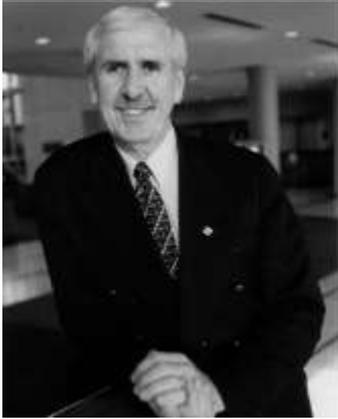
Sue is regarded by many mainstream business press publishers & editors as one of the most authoritative thought leaders reporting and commenting on the selling profession and sales operations in Australia today, with her company's articles featuring weekly in BRW & Smart Company, as well as bimonthly in IPA's magazine The Public Accountant.

Sue has written and published 21 books and 500+ articles to date on the world of 21st Century selling including topics on sales philosophy/culture/ethics, sales leadership, sales coaching, sales training, selling skills, sales mind set and resilience, neuroscience in selling, etc. Sue works as business adviser, sales coach & trainer, speaker, and facilitator.

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Barry Urquhart

## "Isolate, socialise selectively"

Don't be unsociable.

Commerce, like society and families, is dependent on social interactivity. It is indeed the lubricant that ensures the wheels of business keep turning.

Now is not the time to figuratively and literally "self-isolate". Interacting with oneself can be very lonely, unfulfilling and not at all profitable.

Removing oneself from "social settings" reduces, but does not eliminate risk. Only sealable, unimpeachable "bubbles" will do that.

The reality and challenges confronting us all are how best to maintain, review, refine and recalibrate social interactivities.

Many past and present practices will be rightly identified as being ineffective, inefficient and, in some instances, dysfunctional.

The use and frequency of social media in all its forms (blogs, texts, emails, videos and TEDx etc) will doubtlessly be reined in. So too should the deployment of communications in mass media (print, television, radio and out-of-home).

Personal visits and "calls" should also be scrutinised. On balance, many of those are more "social" than they are commercial.

### STRIKE A BALANCE

In the prevailing "over-communicated" marketplace, much of the communications are screened, blocked and filtered by

technical means, and by the psychological process of selective perception.

Self-evaluation of the relevance, benefit, advantages and rewards inherent in intended missives will raise questions about the need for, and value of messages.

Increasingly, "less" will genuinely be "more"

Power words, many of which are evocative, emotional and graphic, will be invaluable when utilised discerningly.

Eliciting responses will be rightly rated highly and prioritised, in favour of simply attracting and resonating with targeted individual group-members and audiences.

Responses signify commencement of the social interactivity process.

### A COMMON VIRUS

Much of the well-intentioned communications which have been generated, transmitted and distributed as a consequence of the Covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic centred on the communicator rather than the recipient. So unsociable!

Greater understanding and empathy would have re-oriented the content to the interests, perspectives, aspirations and needs of those receiving the unsolicited missives.

Too much is as equally annoying, frustrating and ineffective as too little.

### WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Understandably, many people are confused. The contentions, propositions and conclusions that are being so readily shared are often conflicting, qualifying and contradictory.

Little wonder, many are left to contemplate, *who do I believe?*

Moreover, the rapid rate of changing circumstances quickly makes key messages obsolete. Single spheres-of-influence are often countering their previous advice.

Inertia is widespread, and enjoys understanding and sympathy among the masses.

### TOO MANY SOURCES

There is widespread evidence of creeping Covid-19 (coronavirus) news fatigue. The available information seems to be incomplete and often contradictory. Its seeming exponential growth-rate exceeds that of the virus itself.

The mass and social media are feeding the frenzy and, arguably, exacerbating the circumstances. A nominal plaintive call for a little self-isolation from the multiple channels of unedited, unfiltered and non-verified raw information is evident among an increasing number of exacerbated individuals and group-members.

### PLAY YOUR PART

Among the truly great actors, scriptwriters, producers and directors, there is a consensus. That is, brevity of words projects a compelling message. In the current marketplace when addressing the Covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, such a philosophy and set of practices may not win awards, but they will enhance trust, respect, integrity and value.

Captain Albert Jacka, was the first Australian recipient of the Victoria Cross. His actions on the beaches and battlefields of Gallipoli, Turkey, in 1915 were astounding.

Those standards were maintained on the Western front in Europe, where he was awarded the

Military Cross and Bar. These were the hallmarks of a true leader, whose men followed unquestionably.

Bert Jack was a man of few words. When he spoke, people listened, responded and followed.

That message and those lessons retain currency in the current society. Be measured, modulated and purposeful. Above all, be social.

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#### About the Author:

Barry Urquhart, Managing Director, Marketing Focus, Perth, is an inspiring speaker, author of Australia's top two selling books on customer service and an international consultant on dynamic innovation and creativity.

Barry is author of six books, including the two largest selling publications on service excellence in Australasia. He is a regular commentator of consumer issues on ABC radio, is featured on a series of interview topics on "Today Tonight" and contributes articles to 47 magazines throughout the world.

He is one of Australia's most active keynote speakers and is an internationally recognised authority on quality customer service, consumer behaviour and creative visual merchandising. Marketing Focus is a Perth based market research and strategic planning practice. The firm and Barry consult to multinational, national and local entities in the private sector and the public sector. He is a former lecturer in Marketing and Management at the Curtin University of Technology and has degrees in marketing, political science and sociology.

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Sunil Bali

## It wrinkles the soul.....

By all accounts Henry Kravis is a jolly decent chap, with a likeable disposition and good sense of humour.

He does, however, suffer from a phobia which has severely impacted his life. Henry suffers from *quitophobia*: he has an intense fear of quitting.

Henry says his phobia lies at the root of his success in business.

Henry Kravis is co-founder of private equity firm Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, has a personal fortune of \$5.4billion, and has given away over \$250million to good causes.

Kravis says that his quitophobia has helped him persist through the

Criticism  
Rejection  
Adversity  
Prejudice

that he has faced over the years.

It turns out that Churchill's, "Never, never, never give up," was more than just a platitude.

Extensive research by **Professor Angela Lee Duckworth** shows that more than IQ, talent or any other factor, the No. 1 predictor of a person's success is their unbreakable commitment to a long-term goal, or as she says, their *grit*.

In short, no grit in life = no pearl in life.

That's why having a backbone is far more important than a wishbone.

I'll leave the last word on the subject to General Douglas MacArthur who said, "*Age may wrinkle the body, but quitting wrinkles the soul.*"

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#### About the Author

Sunil is a Performance Coach, Speaker and Author.

Ex Head of Talent for Vodafone Group and Santander, and having run a £50m business, Sunil has been responsible for hiring over 50000 people and has had the pleasure of working with some great entrepreneurs, professionals and leaders.

#### Moving minds - Transforming performance

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Janet Sernack

# Upskilling to drive growth in times of uncertainty



Someone asked me recently, how many times I have reinvented myself and my business, throughout my long and stellar career. I found myself hard-pressed to accurately share the actual number. It seems that, for me, reinvention became a really useful and rewarding habit, especially as it forced me to upskill, to successfully and continuously adapt to the constant barrage of changes over my past thirty years in business. Noting that upskilling to drive growth in times of uncertainty requires all of us, no matter our ages, qualifications or set of experiences, to master the social, emotional, and technological skills required to co-create human and machine interactions in the new economy that is emerging in our virtual and connected world.

As advanced technologies automate our world in so many ways, the demand for both “digital” and “human” factors is driving growth in the professions of the future. Making reinvention, through upskilling to drive growth in times of uncertainty, a key critical success factor. According to the [World Economic Forum – Jobs of the Future Report](#), the Fourth Industrial Revolution is creating demand for millions of new jobs, with vast new opportunities for fulfilling people’s potential and aspirations.

Requiring upskilling people in what McKinsey calls the “softies” consisting of the “social, emotional, and technological skills” that are becoming more crucial as intelligent machines take over more of our physical, repetitive, and basic cognitive tasks once the Covid-19 pandemic ends.

## Crucial social, emotional and technological skills

The report goes on to state paradoxically:

*“On the one hand, these reflect the adoption of new technologies—giving rise to greater demand for green economy jobs, roles at the forefront of the data and AI economy, as well as new roles in engineering, cloud computing, and product development. On the other hand, emerging professions also reflect the continuing importance of human interactions in the new economy, giving rise to greater demand for care economy jobs; roles in marketing, sales, and content production; as well as roles at the forefront of people and culture”.*

According to [McKinsey](#), over the next ten to fifteen years, the workplace will be transformed through the adoption of automation and AI technologies, as people increasingly interact with ever-smarter machines. That these technologies, with human-machine interaction, will bring

numerous benefits in the form of higher productivity, GDP growth, improved corporate performance, and new prosperity. It is also expected to change the skills required of human workers, requiring them to upskill in learning how to co-create human and machine interactions.

[McKinsey](#) also predicts an increase in demand for social and emotional skills across all industries, as much as by 26 percent in the United States and by 22 percent in Europe. Upskilling to drive growth in times of uncertainty, includes empathy, advanced communication, entrepreneurship, and initiative-taking skills as the fastest-growing, with a 33 percent increase in the United States and a 32 percent rise in Europe.

## Higher cognitive skills

They also predict a big shift in the demand toward higher cognitive skills, including creativity, critical thinking, decision making, and complex information processing. With a growth factor, by 2030, of 19 percent in the United States and by 14 percent in Europe, from sizable bases today.

## Reinventing and upskilling to drive growth in the new economy

This provides opportunities for everyone to reinvent themselves and upskill, in these domains, as

well to maintain their professional presence and business relevance. In a world where we will be required to co-create human and machine interactions as a means of securing a sustainable future, and to survive and thrive, through the uncertainty and exponential changes that are coming at us, faster and faster.

### New ways of working together

McKinsey also predicts that the need for **leadership**, teaming and managing others will also grow strongly, requiring everyone to cultivate these vital and highly impactful skill sets. Where a new imperative, is emerging in our increasingly complex, chaotic, networked and mechanistic world, for **everyone to be a leader and to lead**.

Because knowing how to co-create human and machine interactions mean upskilling to drive growth in the new economy. Through upgrading our collective capacity, confidence and competencies across the people and the technology functions.

Enabling people to:

- Live and adapt to chaos, complexity, and uncertainty and enable others we work with, to do so.
- Share information, experience, and knowledge, in ways that elevate people and teams, through genuine empathic and compassionate partnerships.
- Teach, train and coach individuals, groups and teams to cultivate innovation agility to deliver value and become fit for the future.
- Educate and build innovative new enterprises, cultivate entrepreneurship, initiative-taking and deliver customer-centric solutions.
- Lead across three-time horizons: sustaining business as usual, innovating for tomorrow and developing foresight for the future.

### Creating the conditions to co-create human and machine interactions

Knowing that people may resist, avoid and fear these changes, because of the cognitive dissonance that changes causes, it is crucial to create the best, most supportive conditions, that engage and enroll individuals, groups and teams in upskilling to drive growth in times of uncertainty, especially now, that many of us are bound to working from home.

To build their collective capacity, confidence, and competencies, across both people and technology functions, to intentionally manage an effective interface between people and technology.

Enabling people to:

- Communicate effectively, and use constructive conflict to maximize differences and diversity and generatively solve current and future business challenges and problems.
- **Collectively and collaboratively** engage in delivering purposeful and meaningful work.
- Develop **teams** of collective leaders, across boundaries, demographics, time zones, technologies and stakeholder groups and build collaborative ecosystems.
- Continuously learning and adapt to accelerating changes in technology and changes in workforce requirements in an automating world.

### Reinvention and Reskilling are opportunities to upskill to drive growth in times of uncertainty

A wise person once said to me, that unless we are learning faster than the environment is changing, we will quickly become irrelevant and redundant, in a chaotic and disruptive world.

The Covid-19 pandemic is offering all of us the time to pause, retreat, reflect and reboot our lives in becoming relevant in a hyper changing world.

Where there are possibilities and opportunities to play bigger, more co-creative, collaborative leadership and collective games that truly add value to people in ways they appreciate and cherish. By helping retain and reskill talent, to help and support facilitating reinvention processes that will ultimately maximize sustainable human and machine interactions and their impact in the virtual world and the new economy that will emerge post Covid-19.

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### About the Author

Janet is the Founder, CEO & Chief Katalyst of ImagineNation™ a generative and provocative global enterprise innovation consulting, education and coaching company that enables people to be, think and act differently. She has 29 years of experience consulting and leading culture development, change management, leadership and innovation education programs to some of Australasia's and Israel's top 100 companies in the retail, service, IT, telecommunications, financial services, building and manufacturing sectors.

Prior to launching her consulting, training and coaching career she was Marketing Development Manager for the 42 Grace Bros' department stores, which are now, part of the Myer Group. She then launched Australia's first design management consultancy and worked with some of the world's leading fashion and lifestyle brands including Oroton, Chanel and Seafolly.

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Braden Kelley

## Re-imagining drive thru restaurants – innovation or not

Coronavirus (Covid-19) has changed our world with the subtlety of a sledgehammer and now billions of people around the world are under 'stay at home' orders. In many communities restaurants and bars are closed or only allowed to deliver meals or make them available as 'to-go' or takeaway orders.

But, even with the plethora of food delivery services in the United States and elsewhere, people still prefer drive-thru to food delivery when they choose not to dine in. But what are you to do when your restaurant isn't configured with a drive-thru window?

One answer would be to re-imagine the drive thru and takeaway by learning from the automats of the 1930's and 1940's (the last one in New York City closed in 1991) and Amazon Lockers.



You can create lockers for warm food and lockers for cold food. Before the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic began spreading

across the globe some companies were experimenting with food lockers combined with mobile ordering at **ballparks**:



And, **Pizza Hut** was experimenting in Hollywood with Pizza Lockers to eliminate interactions with employees.

One could imagine that as Coronavirus (Covid-19) lockdowns stretch from weeks from months, and the virus lingers for the next 12-24 months, and fears of individuals linger potentially even longer, restaurants may want to re-imagine how they configure and leverage their physical space.

Is it worth redeploying an external wall of the restaurant to optimize to go or takeaway orders?

The idea isn't that difficult for an individual restaurant to adopt as there are companies manufacturing food lockers already, and they can be combined with PIN's to unlock them that can be delivered by email or mobile platforms and reset after each use.

During a virus outbreak (or on an ongoing basis) sanitizing wipes could be provided or if the lockers are on the street, then one employee could be staffed for

delivering food from the kitchen to the lockers and then sanitizing the lockers on the outside of the restaurant.

Have you seen this type of solution growing in your part of the world?

Innovation or not?

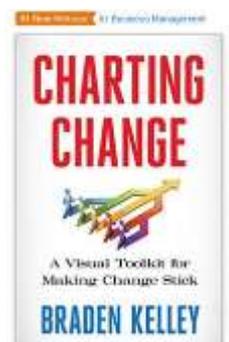
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### About the Author

Braden Kelley is an experienced **innovation speaker**, trainer, and digital transformation specialist. He is the author of **Charting Change** and of **Stoking Your Innovation Bonfire**, the creator of the **Change Planning Toolkit™** and an InnovationExcellence.com co-Founder. Braden has been advising companies on how to increase their revenue and cut their costs since 1996. He writes and speaks frequently on the topics of continuous innovation, digital transformation, and organizational change. He has **maximized profits for companies** while living and working in England, Germany, and the United States. Braden earned his MBA from top-rated London Business School.

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Greg Satell

# Why we fail to plan for the future



I was recently reading Michiu Kaku's wonderful book, *The Future of Humanity*, about colonizing space and was amazed how detailed some of the plans are. Plans for a Mars colony, for example, are already fairly advanced. In other cases, scientists are actively thinking about technologies that won't be viable for a century or more.

Yet while we seem to be so good at planning for life in outer space, we are much less capable of thinking responsibly about the future here on earth, especially in the United States. Our federal government deficit recently rose to 4.6% of GDP, which is obviously unsustainable in an economy that's growing at a meager 2.3%.

That's just one data point, but everywhere you look we seem to be unable to plan for the future. Consumer debt in the US recently hit levels exceeding those before the crash in 2008. Our infrastructure is falling apart. Air quality is getting worse. The list goes on. We need to start thinking more seriously about the future, but don't seem to be able. Why is that?

## **It's Biology, Stupid**

The simplest and most obvious explanation for why we fail to plan for the future is basic human

biology. We have pleasure centers in our brains that release a hormone called dopamine, which gives us a feeling of well being. So it shouldn't be surprising that we seek to maximize our dopamine fix in the present and neglect the future.

Yuval Noah Harari made this argument in his book *Homo Deus*, in which he argued that "organisms are algorithms." Much like a vending machine is programed to respond to buttons, Harari argues, humans and other animals are programed by genetics and evolution to respond to "sensations, emotions and thoughts." When those particular buttons are pushed, we respond much like a vending machine does.

He gives various data points for this point of view. For example, he describes psychological experiments in which, by monitoring brainwaves, researchers are able to predict actions, such as whether a person will flip a switch, even before he or she is aware of it. He also points out that certain chemicals, such as Ritalin and Prozac, can modify behaviour.

Yet this somehow doesn't feel persuasive. Adults in even primitive societies are expected to overcome basic urges. Citizens of Ancient Rome were taxed to pay for roads that led to distant lands and took decades to build.

Medieval communities built churches that stood for centuries. Why would we somehow lose our ability to think long-term in just the past generation or so?

## **The Profit Motive**

Another explanation of why we neglect the future is the profit motive. Pressed by demanding shareholders to deliver quarterly profits, corporate executives focus on showing short-term profits instead of investing for the future. The result is increased returns to fund managers, but a hollowing out of corporate competitiveness.

A recent article in *Harvard Business Review* would appear to bear this out. When a team of researchers looked into the health of the innovation ecosystem in the US, they found that corporate America has largely checked out. They also observed that storied corporate research labs, such as Bell Labs and Xerox PARC have diminished over time.

Yet take a closer look and the argument doesn't hold up. In fact, the data from the National Science Foundation shows that corporate research has increased from roughly 40% of total investment in the 1950s and 60s to more than 60% today. At the same time, while some firms have closed research facilities, others, such as Microsoft, IBM and

Google have either opened new ones or greatly expanded previous efforts. Overall R&D spending has **risen** over time. Take a look at **how Google innovates** and you'll be able to see the source for some the dissonance. 50 years ago, the only real option for corporate investment in research was a corporate lab. Today, however, there are many other avenues, including partnerships with academic researchers, internal venture capital operations, incubators, accelerators and more.

### **The Free Rider Problem**

A third reason we may fail to invest in the future is **the free rider problem**. In this view, the problem is not that we don't plan for the future, but that we don't want to spend money on others who are undeserving. For example, why should we pay higher taxes to educate kids from outside our communities? Or to infrastructure projects that are wasteful and corrupt?

This type of **welfare queen** argument can be quite powerful. Although actual welfare fraud has been shown to be incredibly rare, there are many who believe that the public sector is inherently wasteful and money would be more productively invested elsewhere. This belief doesn't only apply to low income people, but also to "elites" **such as scientists**.

Essentially, this is a form of **kinship selection**. We are more willing to invest in the future of people who we see as similar to ourselves, because that is a form of self survival. However, when we find ourselves asked to invest in the future of those we see as different from ourselves, whether that difference is of race, social class or even profession, we balk.

Yet here again, a closer look and the facts don't quite fit with the narrative. Charitable giving, for example, has **risen** almost every year since 1977. So it's strange that we're increasingly generous in giving to those who are in need, but stingy when it comes to things like infrastructure and education.

### **A New Age Of Superstition**

What's especially strange about our inability to plan for the future is that it's relatively new. In fact, after World War II, we invested heavily in the future. We created new avenues for scientific investment at agencies like the **National Science Foundation** and the **National Institutes of Health**, rebuilt Europe with the **Marshall Plan** and educated an entire generation with the **GI Bill**.

It wasn't until the 1980s that our willingness to plan for and invest in the future began to wane, mostly due to two ideas that warped decision making. The first, called the **Laffer Curve**, argued that by lowering taxes we can increase revenue and that tax cuts, essentially, pay for themselves. The second, **shareholder value**, argued that whatever was best for shareholders is also best for society.

Both ideas have been partially or thoroughly debunked. Over the past 40 years, lower tax rates have consistently led to lower revenues and higher deficits. The Business Roundtable, an influential group of almost 200 CEOs of America's largest companies, recently **denounced the concept of shareholder value**. Yet strangely, many still use both to support anti-future decisions.

We seem to be living in a new era of superstition, where mere belief is enough to inspire action. So projects which easily capture the imagination, such as colonizing Mars, are able to garner fairly widespread support, while investing in basic things like infrastructure, debt reduction or the environment are neglected.

The problem, in other words, seems to be mostly in the realm of a collective narrative. We are more than capable of enduring privation today to benefit tomorrow, just as businesses routinely take less profits today to invest in tomorrow. We are even capable of giving altruistically to others in need. All we need is a story to believe in.

There is, however, the possibility that it is not the future we really have a problem with, but each other and that our lack of a common story arises from a lack of shared values which leads to major differences in how we view the same facts. In any case, the future suffers.

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### **About the Author**

Greg Satell is an international keynote speaker, adviser and bestselling author of **Cascades: How to Create a Movement that Drives Transformational Change**. His previous effort, **Mapping Innovation**, was selected as one of the best business books of 2017.

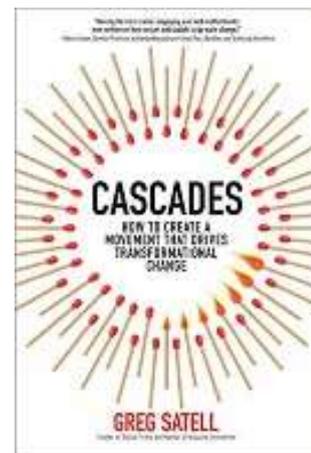
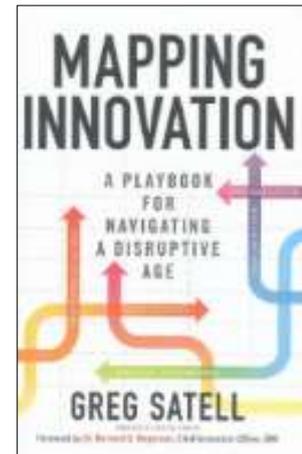
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Soren Kaplan

# Four types of customer experiences for competitive advantage



Want to improve your customers' experience? Try these connected strategies.

What's the secret to a winning business model and **long-term competitive advantage**? It's not just about **technology**, products and services. Your **customer experience** may just be the ultimate competitive advantage.

Strategy and innovation experts Nicolaj Siggelkow and Christian Terwiesch just published a new book called *Connected Strategy: Building Continuous Customer Relationships for Competitive Advantage*. The authors contend that at every step of the customer experiences continuum there's an opportunity to either delight customers, or uncover a pain point or negative experience for them that can be turned into an opportunity.

Customer "journey maps" have been around a long time. Understanding the steps customers go through allows you to simplify or add value within a step or across the full journey. Siggelkow and Terwiesch distinguish three phases of any customer journey:

- **Recognize**—the part of the journey where a latent need of the customer arises and either the customer or the firm is made aware of it
- **Request**—the part of the journey where the need is

translated into a request for a solution to the particular need

- **Respond**—the part of the journey where the customer receives and experiences the solution.

Their research into connected strategies revealed four distinct approaches that organizations use to reduce the friction within the customer journey—i.e., four types of connected customer experiences. These customer experiences are distinguished by the part of the customer journey they affect.

- **The Respond-to-Desire** connected customer experience starts at the point in the journey when a customer knows precisely what he or she wants. The company's goal then is to make it as easy as possible for the customer to order, pay for, and receive the desired product in the desired quantity. Thus, respond-to-desire really smoothens the "Respond" part of the customer journey.
- **The Curated Offering** customer experience acts further upstream in the journey by helping the customer find the best possible option that would fulfill his or her needs; it helps with the request. Both respond-to-desire and curated offering experiences can only work if customers are aware of their needs.

- Firms creating a **Coach Behavior** customer experience help their customers at exactly that part of their journey: they raise awareness of needs and nudge the customer into action, essentially helping with the Recognize stage of the customer journey.
- Lastly, when the firm becomes aware of a customer need even before the customer is aware of it, it is possible to create an **Automatic Execution** customer experience, where the firm solves the need of the customer proactively. In this case, the company can short-cut the customer journey tremendously.

Even when you deliver on these customer experiences, there's another element critical to create a truly connected customer relationship: **Repeat**. If a firm is able to learn from repeated interactions with a customer, it can become better with the Recognize, Request and Response sequence. What makes the repeat dimension so powerful is that it involves positive feedback effects that, over time, can create a tremendous, sustainable competitive advantage.

A tight fit between customer needs and available products—the high degree of personalization—leads to more value, either in the form of higher willingness-to-pay by the customer or by higher

efficiency. This allows the firm to provide more value to current customers, creating more future interactions with these customers, which increases the individual-level learning. At the same time, the increased value allows the firm to attract new customers, enhancing the widespread learning. With more learning at the individual and population levels, the firm continuously improves, creating ever-increasing degrees of personalization. It is a process that feeds on itself and can allow a company to get ahead of its competitors and continue to expand its competitive advantage.

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**About the Author**

Soren Kaplan is the author of two bestselling and award-winning books, Leapfrogging and The Invisible Advantage. He is a former corporate executive, an affiliated professor at USC's Center for Effective Organizations, and the Founder of **InnovationPoint** and **upBOARD**.

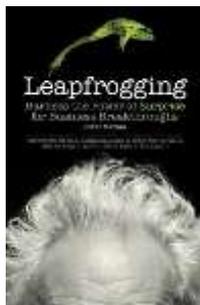
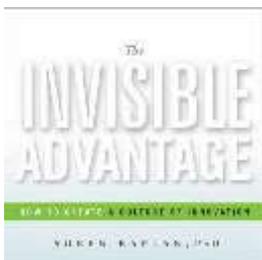
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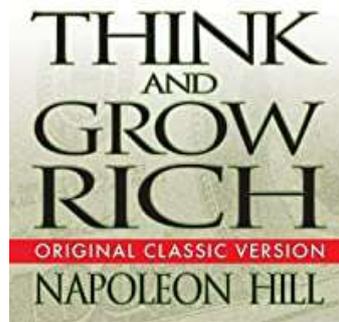
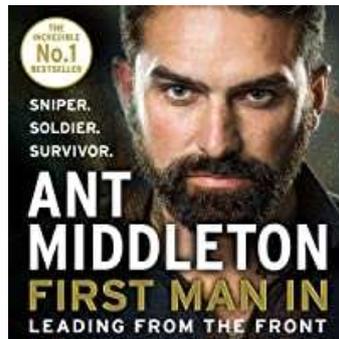
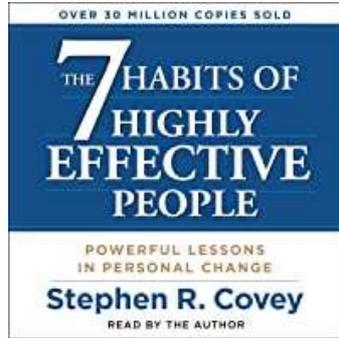
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## Amazons top 4 best selling books in Business Leadership Skills



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