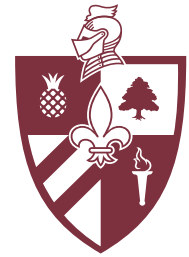


# US AGAINST COVID-19: TIPS FOR SUPERVISORS

COVID-19 is changing the world in many different ways. Of great importance also is to recognize it is occurring differently for each of us. As we navigate this ever-changing crisis, here are tips for addressing different reactions to the virus, communication, motivation, working remotely, not working remotely or otherwise.



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## DIFFERENT REACTIONS

- Check in with your employees to know how they are doing.
- Share your contact information with them.
- Recognize the various reactions they could be having to this situation and pivot to meet their needs.
- Know it takes many tries to empower people to speak up on topics like stress and anxiety so ask frequently to create psychological safety.

## COMMUNICATION

- Create a cadence of communication that works for you and them. Routines in uncertain times can relieve stress.
- Use an agenda that holds interest for all, for example: what's going well; what's not; what you're learning; what you're missing; and what you need.
- Be aware that your interaction with them might be to **listen** more than talk.

## WORKING REMOTELY

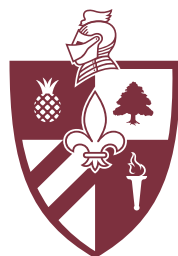
- Ensure all have a sense of the priorities that need to be met.
- Give others the benefit of the doubt believing they are moving essential work forward in an effective way.
- Focus on outcomes not on the timing of how work is being done.
- Realize with so much information and so many realizations unfolding furiously, those closest to the work are the best decision makers. Ensure decision-making data is coming from a network of different sources to capitalize on a more comprehensive way of "knowing."
- Explore the possibilities of working on projects that have been in the queue; documenting core processes; creating processes to better use technology in the future; or getting ahead of the work that will need to be rapidly done once we are on the other side of this pandemic.

## NOT WORKING - REMOTELY OR OTHERWISE

- Some employees need to show up as usual. Ensure all the recommendations issued by the CDC are followed: social distancing (six feet between people); small groups (less than ten in some cases); and handwashing.
- A small number of employees have roles that cannot be done remotely and their work is not essential to current needs. Experiencing this could be a temporary, welcomed respite or a sense of loss and identity. Stay in touch with them; be on the lookout for work they could do; encourage them to stay engaged; and remember to recommend the **Employee Assistance Program** should things get gloomy.

## MOTIVATION

- Motivation is mysterious. What motivates some—doing their best work while being with or around others—can decommission others who need quiet environments or silence to succeed. How can you know what your employees need? Ask them. Be curious about the settings that enable them to do their best work. Help them create it. (Going forward and after we've dealt with COVID-19, use this knowledge to ensure they have the best work environment for them.)
- Mind sprints. Just as a runner benefits from shifts in speed and effort when going from jogging to a full out run, your employees can use this concept to combat the lack of any motivation, that awful state when we say, "I just don't feel like doing anything." A mind sprint is a mental deal your employees make with themselves. They work on something for a focused period of time, for example, 20 – 30 minutes, then they are eligible for a break. Completing a few sprints a day can allow for good work to get done and time to be used well, not wasted.
- Those who study motivation seem to agree on a long-standing saying: "Action breeds motivation; motivation does not breed action." What does this mean? Taking action, any action, allows us to realize we are making progress and that increases both our confidence and motivation. Trying to "think" ourselves into action does not work. Encourage your employees to take baby steps if they are stuck or to "go for it" if they are energized. Regardless of their state, by acting they are increasing motivation.
- Check out the ideas offered by the leaders you follow or admire. Several Bellarmine supervisors and employees have used StrengthFinders based on the work of Dr. Donald Clifton. In an early collaboration, Marcus Buckingham co-authored *Now, Discover Your Strengths with Dr. Clifton*. Buckingham has a blog and other resources on his website: <https://www.marcusbuckingham.com>.



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