

WHAT MATTERS IN A TIME OF CRISIS?

AN OFFICIAL CLIENT UPDATE OF PT HEADHUNTER INDONESIA



[Photo : [AFP/CHARLY TRIBALLEAU](#)]

Everything feels new and overwhelming. Employees around the world who have never experienced working remotely have started practicing it for the past couple of weeks. With everyone is spending much of their time virtually, we are adjusting to a new routine. "I will see you on Zoom" has become our new language. Behind our new daily routine, our world also feels overwhelming right now.

[WHO](#) has announced COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic. [International Labor Organization](#) (ILO) described the pandemic as "the worst global crisis since World War II," expecting to erase 6.7 percent of working hours globally in the second quarter of 2020—equivalent to 195 million full-time workers. COVID-19 is not only a health crisis that aggressively claiming human lives but also it has generated a financial crisis that is impacting businesses.

What Matters and Doesn't Matter

An American writer, [Andrew Sullivan](#), writes in his essay observing the silver lining of COVID-19, "Like wars, plagues can make us see where we are, shake us into a new understanding of the world, reshape our priorities, and help us judge what really matters and what actually doesn't." Indeed, crises create moments of truths for everyone, especially for businesses.

This time is a wakeup call for any organization to start noticing what does matter for their growth and what are the things that prevent them from growing. Office drama and politics don't matter at all. Having "me" over "we" mentality can be unproductive during this time. Then what are the things that do matter for any organization so that they can not only survive but thrive after the pandemic is over?

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1. Leadership

The coronavirus pandemic may be the largest test of leadership the world has ever witnessed. Leaders around the world face the monumental dual tasks of reassuring their people that everything will work out just fine and persuading them to follow through on the leaders' decisions in the correct way

[Arjen Boin](#), a Political Scientist at Leiden University who has studied an effective crisis leadership, argues that the most successful leadership response during the crisis tends to have these characteristics. First, leaders know how to craft a thoughtful narrative that helps clarify the problem so that they can mobilize their team to do the next necessary step. Second, the narrative must be delivered quickly, and it contains guidance, hope, empathy and suggests that leaders are in control. Third, leaders must be open with the uncertainty of the situation they are facing to prevent from being seen dishonest by their people.

2. The Willingness to Learn

During crises like coronavirus pandemic, when everything feels so uncertain, every strategy needs to be rethought. Only those who are willing to rethink their strategy, lean and relearn new and old skills, can survive and thrive the pandemic. Businesses are engineered by people, so businesses should be talking about how to invest in their people so that people are given the correct tools to help them cope with the current pandemic and the futures we never even considered before.

Furthermore, since employees are spending a huge part of their lives virtually, they must learn to be their own leaders. They need to learn how to achieve their goals without much supervision from their bosses. Employees who have a strong sense of self-leadership will find ways to be a solution maker. Instead of complaining about the current situation, they bring something to the table to contribute. They practice the notion of a ["growth mindset"](#). Even as we retreat from physical interaction, there's a huge opportunity to learn. The legendary marketer, [Seth Godin](#), once said, "Panic is a choice, and so is productive generosity."



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3. What We Can Control and What We Can't Control

Nobody can control the arrival of COVID-19. It's here already and this is a new normal. We will have to live with the virus and at the same time, think how and what we can help our employees and customers to flourish through this rapidly deteriorating economic situation. That's the only thing that businesses can control--how they are going to make use of this crisis to pivot strategically. [Simon Sinek](#), the author of many best-selling leadership books, believes that when we pivot based on "what," it limits our creativity. However, when we pivot based on "why" or based on the things that we care about deeply, this technique can yield a lot of great ideas that will help others to get inspired.

Besides his profession as a writer, Sinek is a public speaker. Instead of asking himself "how do I do more public speeches online?" he is asking himself, "What ways can we take advantage of this modern world to inspire people to do the things that inspire them?" The former question is based on "what," and the latter is based on "why."

Conclusion

We believe that leadership, the willingness to learn, and the mentality of knowing what we can control and can't control, matter for the growth of organizations during this unfortunate time. Focus on what matters and forget the rest. We hope that every business will use their secret ingredients that will keep their center solid as they continue to evolve during challenging times. Crises can become crises if we let that be. The other alternative is we must pay attention to the possibilities it might contain, one of them is a room for growth. The coronavirus pandemic is the kind of crisis that will make or break businesses. We hope this will make businesses, mine and yours.

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