GALLUP®

Sustaining and Growing Your Organization's Culture and Engagement Through the COVID-19 Pandemic

Organizations around the world are working to adapt to the rapidly shifting landscape of COVID-19 protocols. The situation is ever-evolving as the virus continues to spread — and policies are being revised daily as employers monitor public health notices.

Gallup stands as your partner in navigating through these times. Below are resources for you and your organization to leverage during this time.

Leading Through Challenging Times

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What do employees want and need?

Gallup has studied the **needs of followers** and discovered four basic needs: trust, stability, compassion and hope.

These four needs intensify in challenging times and become guideposts for how we interact and communicate. Consider the following in relation to the COVID-19 crisis:

- **Trust:** Communicate openly and authentically. Provide avenues to listen and respond.

- **Stability:** Highlight what is <u>staying the same</u> for employees. For example, your aim to serve your customers likely won't change; how you deliver it might.

- **Compassion:** Show you care. Make regular check-ins a priority with employees, even if they are virtual. Ask how they are doing and what they need.

- **Hope:** Provide a sense of hope. Help employees see that these challenges cause us to innovate and grow in new ways.

As leaders and managers craft communications and outreach strategies, these four dimensions are critical to keep in mind. They provide a useful structure to evaluate all outgoing communications, both for employees and customers. They are also useful to consider as a guide for one-on-one manager discussions and team discussions.

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What are best practices for managing in challenging times?

Each organization will face a unique set of challenges and opportunities.

Generally, Gallup has identified the following best practices for managing in challenging times:

- **Empower your managers:** Remember, 70% of how team members feel is influenced by their local manager. Prioritize getting managers the tools to have engaging conversations with their teams during this time and help them meet their teams' needs.

- **Focus on meeting basic emotional needs:** Gallup has identified twelve emotional needs that employees need to feel have been met in order for them to perform well. Use this simple research-based yes/no needs checklist to make sure you are setting your employees up to succeed during this challenging time:

- **Focus Me:** Do our employees know what is expected of them right now to keep the organization focused on the top priorities?

- **Free Me From Unnecessary Stress:** Do our employees have the materials and equipment they need to be free of unnecessary stress during this time?

- **Know Me:** Do our employees feel like we know them, understand any unique challenges they might face at home right now, and are supporting them to do what they do best during this challenging time?

- **Help Me See My Value:** Do our employees still feel recognized and valued?

- **Care About Me:** Do our employees feel cared for during this time?

- **Help Me Grow:** Do our employees feel their development and growth is continuing to be championed throughout this time?

- **Hear Me:** Do our employees feel their opinions count during this time?

- **Help Me See My Importance:** Do our employees feel personally connected to the ways they are helping the organization navigate the crisis to emerge strong?

- **Help Me Feel Proud:** Do our employees feel a sense of pride in the quality we are committed to through this change?

- **Help Me Build Trust:** Do our employees feel they can navigate this change through trusting relationships?

- **Help Me Review My Contribution:** Do our employees understand their progress and contributions during this time?

- **Challenge Me:** Do our employees have opportunities to be challenged to learn and grow in new ways?

- **Hold frequent conversations and touch bases:** Employees want someone to coach them through this challenging time.

  Coaching means frequent conversations — that must continue even as teams become more geographically distributed and affected by factors like childcare challenges. Strategies exemplified by the best coaches include:

  - establishing expectations that are clear, collaborative and aligned with the organization's goals

  - having frequent, focused and future-oriented coaching conversations

  - creating accountability that is fair and accurate and developmental- and achievement-oriented

  Learn more about these strategies: **How Managers Can Excel by Really Coaching Their Employees**

- **Embrace this as an opportunity to show your organization's agility.** Traditional change management focuses on processes and tools — the logistics of "what is changing" and "how it will change." Change management is typically about minimizing disruption, and it often underemphasizes the behavioral side of change.

When leaders understand human emotional dynamics — including mindsets, behaviors and cultural norms — they can create a work environment that energizes people to get ahead of change and push the organization forward.

Learn more about how to drive an agile culture in times of change:

- **How to Adapt to Constant Change: Create It**

- **How to Be an Effective Leader in Times of Change**

- **What Leaders Can Do to Prepare for Disruption**

- **Discuss what employees can contribute through their talent.** Gallup knows people are uniquely wired to respond to challenging times through their own talents and strengths. Consider how you process change personally and how your team members do it. Openly discuss:

  - What talent do you *bring* to navigating this challenge? For example, an employee may have a talent to help the team develop a contingency plan.

  - What do you *need* from the team to navigate this challenge well? For example, an employee may need regular touchpoints to feel they are in the loop.

Facilitating Effective Remote Work

What are top considerations organizations should weigh as more employees work from home?

This is less of an adjustment for managers who have home-based or virtual teams. For those whose employees are working from home for the first time, however, this is new, so ensuring they have tips for managing their remote employees is very important.

This is a time where basic needs, which Gallup describes as expectations and materials/equipment issues, are critical. Effective communications, from the organization and reinforced and made relevant by the manager, are essential.

It is also important organizations remain focused on their values during the COVID-19 pandemic. Times of crises are times to focus on values, not dismiss them. It's also a time for leaders to remain humble and authentic. This is new for everyone, and all organizations and leaders are adjusting as best they can, based on the latest information. Setting the expectation that the organization's response will evolve and that we are all learning as we are going will help employees recognize that they would expect the situation to change.

- **COVID-19 Has My Teams Working Remotely: A Guide for Leaders**
- **How to Manage the Loneliness and Isolation of Remote Workers**
- **Remote Worker Isolation: Perception vs. Reality**
- **Employee Burnout, Part 1: The 5 Main Causes**
- **Remote Workers: Managing, Coaching Them Toward Engagement**
- **Do Your Remote Workers Feel Seen?**
- **Is Remote Working Effective? Gallup Research Says Yes**
- **How to Keep Remote Worker Wellbeing High**
- **Employees at Home: Less Engaged**
- **How to Build Trust With Remote Employees**

Considerations for Organizations With Scheduled In-Person Learning Programs With Gallup

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Can my employees still experience Gallup's learning experiences without in-person contact?

Gallup has a diversified suite of digital learning offerings, expertly designed to meet client needs without travel. These are an excellent option, ready for learners to begin today.

Performance Development (NOTE: These are links to internal Gallup SharePoint links. Account leads, please download appropriate resources and share them with your clients.)

- Boss to Coach Journey (**Online Course**)
- It's the Manager: On-Demand Learning (**Digital Series**)
- Leading High Performance Teams (**Online Course**)
- Developing Performance (**Online Course**)

Strengths-Based Development

- CliftonStrengths Discovery (**Online Course Part One** / **Online Course Part Two**)
- Getting Started With CliftonStrengths (**Webinar**)
- CliftonStrengths Coaching for Leaders and Managers

Engagement-Focused Development

- For leaders:
    - Engaging Leader Workshops (can be delivered virtually; **Part One** / **Part Two**)
    - Leadership Results Briefing Session (**Webinar**)
    - Engagement Results Coaching for Leaders
- For managers:
    - Creating an Engaging Workplace for Managers (**Online Course** / **Webinar Series**)
    - Driving Employee Engagement (**Webinar**)
    - Building Accountability for Engagement (**Webinar Series**)
    - Engagement Results Coaching for Managers
- For individuals:
    - Creating an Engaging Workplace for Managers (**Webinar**)
    - Building Accountability for Engagement (**Webinar**)

Talent-Based Hiring

- Employing Top Talent (**Online Course**)

In addition to the above, Gallup's Learning Team can convert existing in-person courses to virtual experiences quickly and effectively. Virtual courses are typically delivered through a combination of live video calls through our Zoom platform and self-paced discovery online in Gallup's learning management system.

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How does the virtual experience compare to in-person learning?

Gallup has been working successfully for the past three years to understand the needs of learners in an increasingly digital world, developing transformational courses that are delivered through virtual courses and online content. The combination of research and technology means learners can do many of the same things they would in an in-person classroom, including interacting with the course leader, using all of the

coaching and support materials and discussing and practicing with other course participants, both as a large class and a small group. Additionally, virtual learning allows for an increasingly individualized experience when it comes to meeting specific needs of learners. Participants can tailor their self-paced discovery to their most relevant challenges and be held accountable individually for their full participation — all while flexibly scheduling around different calendars, workspaces and locations. Live interaction and discussion contextualize discoveries, anchor them in practice and bring them to life. This gets people leaning in, engaging and learning with enthusiasm.

Check out **"The Best Learning Blends Online and Instructor-Led Courses"** by Adam Hickman for more details.

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What other considerations should organizations have regarding employee development during COVID-19?

As our current environment illustrates, today's workplaces are evolving too rapidly and are too complex to offer only "how-to" learning experiences. Organizations must instill shared enterprise mindsets and capabilities (i.e., learn to learn and lead change). COVID-19 gives organizations a unique opportunity to reignite employee development, empower managers, focus on the basic needs of employees and help employees understand how their unique talents continue to contribute to organizational value. Leaders should consider how they do the following:

- **Define performance-driving mindsets:** Help managers use this opportunity to show stability to their employees by clearly communicating performance expectations through this change and after this change. Highlight what stays the same.

- **Prioritize transformational over transactional development:** Reinforce your values, mission and purpose as an organization to your employees. More than ever, provide a sense of hope and align developmental objectives to the focus and shared mindset of the organization.

- **Contribute to employee growth vs. just helping employees learn:** Prioritize action learning and application activities. Think about how those applications must transform with a remote working environment. Build trust through authentic, development-focused communication. Show you care and infuse development into ongoing check-ins for all managers to cultivate meaningful conversations.

Organizations should invest in preparing ready-now and future-ready employees. Employee development that teaches employees how to think, rather than telling employees what to do, will transform employees into capable, agile performers.

Check out **"Why It's Time to Disrupt the Traditional Approach to L&D"** by Mara Hoogerhuis and Bailey Nelson for more details.

Considerations for Ongoing Engagement Programs

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How should organizations with an upcoming planned employee engagement survey proceed?

There are several factors to consider and there is no single answer that applies to every scenario. Some criteria to consider:

1) During times of crisis, Gallup has found even stronger correlations between the engagement of workers and performance outcomes. Knowing how people perceive their work environment and what they are going through in their work and lives is very important. Any survey administration reflects a period of time. The goal of any survey endeavor is to provide information to make better

decisions; the importance of management decisions during crisis situations is magnified.

2) It is possible that some workers, particularly in some industries such as healthcare, will be extremely burdened at this time. In some cases, a slight delay in administration could be warranted. These situations also magnify the importance of very short and focused surveys that take very little time to complete. If a survey administration is delayed, it is important to not neglect the most important purpose of any survey endeavor: feedback. Some form of employee feedback should be integrated into the everyday work process so management can address issues as they occur. For many industries with a sudden surge of people working from home, a survey and accompanying feedback is not only possible but highly advantageous to close gaps in communication, belonging, performance management and perceptions of safety.

In the given circumstances, how should our communication about the upcoming survey change?

Gallup will be happy to work with you to craft an effective pre-survey communication. This would include an acknowledgement of the current work environment and challenges, as well as explain the importance of focusing on engagement and basic emotional needs through times of change.

What impact should organizations expect for participation rates as a result of COVID-19?

Gallup employee surveys average an 83% response rate. It is possible that, due to logistical factors, achieving this level of response rate is at risk. But these risks are usually overcome by anticipating communication channels and the best modes of administration. For example, while fielding a survey to more than 100,000 employees in a large, highly dispersed organization during the pandemic, Gallup has not seen any noticeable drop in the response rate from previous administrations. Gallup's best-practice recommendation is to achieve at least an 80% response rate. A high response rate is the best way to reduce the risk of any meaningful differences between those who responded to the survey and those invited to complete the survey. It also maximizes the ability to report data at a local team level. For organization-level reporting, a 65% response rate or higher is generally sufficient, but data cuts should be examined for representativeness within specific subgroups of the population.

Overall, participation rates are improved when an organization has an effective communication strategy that clearly articulates the purpose of taking the Gallup Q^{12} survey and its commitment to creating a trusting, engaged and inclusive culture. In the case of COVID-19, Gallup recommends incorporating information about the engagement survey into the overall communications regarding the organization's response to these times of uncertainty and crisis. Leaders and managers can follow up with teams regarding the engagement survey and reinforce how it will be used to help their teams navigate these uncertain times.

If an organization notices lower participation, or anticipates participation may be lower, they can consider extending the survey period or adjusting communication to get the word out to employees.

Should organizations expect a dip in engagement results as a result of COVID-19? Are results collected at this time able to be trended with past and future results?

Each survey administration and measurement of engagement represents that specific time period, and the factors that co-occur during that time period should be taken into consideration. That said, Gallup has found very little change in aggregate engagement results during very substantial changes to the macro-environment.

For example, engagement has been trended during two recessions, and while there are sometimes slight changes in the percentage of actively disengaged employees during such economically challenging times, the percentage of engaged employees has historically been unchanged. This is most likely due to the

tangible nature of the engagement elements, which are primarily influenced by what happens regularly and locally. Changes in engagement during challenging times have a lot to do with how the changes are communicated through the local manager and how the local manager continues to help employees see their future and contributions toward resolving the challenges. It should also be reinforced that engagement is even more strongly related to performance during challenging times.

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What can you learn from your existing data to apply now?

Your Gallup account team can partner with you to dive into your existing data — including engagement data — to draw information and guidance to help you now. For example, if you have previously tracked remote vs. nonremote workers, we can use this data to identify best-practice managers for remote employees and get their stories and tips to share broadly. We can also identify if there are areas that matter most to remote workers within your organization. There may also be certain roles within your organization we know are more likely to thrive or have challenges at this time. We are here to work with you to understand the data you have and develop a plan for applying it to current conditions.

Tracking Your Employees' Sentiments During COVID-19

Organizations need to understand how their employees are managing through times of intense change or disruption.

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What should organizations ask employees?

Gallup has compiled a list of the following questions most aligned to the issues and opportunities facing clients during their response to COVID-19. This list is provided at the end of this document.

Questions 1 and 2 are recommended for all clients conducting a pulse survey during COVID-19. From there, we recommend you work with your account team to identify the best fits from the remaining questions based on your organization's priorities and needs.

Nearly all recommended questions have benchmarks within the Gallup database. While these are unprecedented times that may bring variation in these scores, relative to previous performance benchmarks, we believe it is important to have a means to quantify how much has changed and may continue to change as the situation progresses.

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What does Gallup recommend for implementation options? What support can Gallup provide?

Gallup is offering open-sample pulse surveys to all Gallup Access clients at no additional charge. If you are not a current Gallup Access client, please speak to your account leader regarding implementation options.

This requires no employee list from your organization. Once you and your account team agree on a list of questions, we will provide you with a link you can provide to all employees to take the survey. All employees receive the same link. Your organization will hold responsibility for survey invitations and reminders.

We recommend fielding the survey in short windows (one to two days). The situation is rapidly changing, and results gathered over a longer period will lose their relevance once aggregated. We recommend re-fielding every one to two weeks until your organization resumes normal operations.

Aggregated reporting will be available to your organization. Workgroup- or organization-level cuts will not be available via the open survey links. If you desire more detailed reporting, please speak with your account team about the feasibility of conducting this pulse by leveraging close sample surveys and an employee list.

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How should organizations message results?

Overall results could be shared in companywide communications, where managers and employees can be reminded of key points to clarify expectations, as well as how best to resolve materials, equipment and communications issues.

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A survey is only the beginning of the conversation.

Your Gallup team stands ready to help your organization through these times. We look forward to consulting with you on the results of the survey and identifying strategies to react to your results.

Some organizations will feel that now is not the right time to conduct a survey; we understand these concerns. If your organization chooses not to field a survey, we look forward to continued conversations about how your organization is weathering this situation and how we can support it. Gallup brings a wealth of resources on topics ranging from remote work to the needs of employees during times of change. We want to understand the unique situations in your organization and how you may benefit and be able to act against these insights.

In challenging and dynamic times like these, employees want to see their organization actively reaching out and understanding their needs.

Recommended COVID-19 Pulse Brief

Q#	Question Text	Scale	English Only	Does Question Have Gallup Database Comparison
	RECOMMENDED SURVEY INTRODUCTION As you respond to the questions below, please think about them relative to your organization's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.			
	ORGANIZATIONAL COVID-19 RESPONSE			
1*	My employer has communicated a clear plan of action in response to COVID-19.	5 Strongly Agree 4 3 2 1 Strongly Disagree	X	No
2*	I feel well prepared to do my job.		X	No
3*	My immediate supervisor keeps me informed about what is going on at my company.			Yes
4*	My company cares about my overall well-being.			Yes
5*	Over the past 24 hours, how often have you been practicing social distancing?	5 Always 4 3 2 1 Never	X	No

Recommended COVID-19 Pulse Modules

Q#	Question Text	Scale	English Only	Does Question Have Gallup Database Comparison
	RECOMMENDED SURVEY INTRODUCTION As you respond to the questions below, please think about them relative to your organization's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.			
	ORGANIZATIONAL COVID-19 RESPONSE			
1*	My employer has communicated a clear plan of action in response to COVID-19.	5 Strongly Agree 4 3 2 1 Strongly Disagree	X	No
2	I feel confident that if I follow our company's health policies, I will be safe.		X	No

OUR COMPANY'S FUTURE				
3	I am confident in my company's financial future.	5 Strongly Agree 4		Yes
4	I know I am an important part of this organization's future.	3 2 1 Strongly Disagree		Yes

OUR AGILITY				
5*	I feel well prepared to do my job.	5 Strongly Agree 4 3 2 1 Strongly Disagree	X	No
6	There is open communication throughout all levels of my company.			Yes
7	My supervisor is an active supporter of the changes that affect our workgroup.			Yes
8	I am asked for my input regarding changes that affect my work.			Yes
9	Leaders help me see how changes made today will affect my company's future.			Yes
10	At work, the communication I receive is perfect for me.			Yes
11*	My immediate supervisor keeps me informed about what is going on at my company.			Yes

YOUR SENSE OF BELONGING				
12*	My company cares about my overall wellbeing.	5 Strongly Agree 4		Yes
13	I have confidence in the leadership of the company to successfully manage emerging challenges.	3 2 1 Strongly Disagree		Yes
14	My company cares about my family.			Yes

	YOUR SENSE OF SAFETY				
15	I feel safe in my work environment.	5 Strongly Agree			Yes
16	My company cares a great deal about my personal safety.	4 3			No
17	My fellow employees routinely discuss risks, behavioral choices and safety.	2 1 Strongly Disagree			No
18	I know how to proactively address risks in my work environment.				No
19	My manager encourages sick employees to stay home.		X		No
20*	Over the past 24 hours, how often have you been practicing social distancing?	5 Always 4 3 2 1 Never	X		No
	COACHING EFFECTIVENESS				
21	My manager includes me in goalsetting.	5 Strongly Agree 4			Yes
22	I have received meaningful feedback in the last week.	3 2 1 Strongly Disagree			Yes

* Denotes a recommended question for all pulse surveys

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