

So, we have to plan for something no one has planned for. The Coronavirus Pandemic is affecting everyday life as we know it. The first thing we must realize; the pandemic is here, and we will need to address it and the effect it will have on our family and business. As a business owner, you will have to deal with stress on many levels, in different forms and from different people. There are several steps that we suggest thinking about during this difficult time.

### **Step One:**

Make sure you and your family are taking all the necessary measures prescribed to stay healthy. Remember that family is important and once they are safe, we can think about our business with a clearer thought process.

### **Step Two:**

Try to understand the stress that everyone is dealing with and know that not everyone handles stress the same way. As business owners, we can sometimes make the comment to an employee “you don’t know how much stress I have, I have to meet payroll every week and all you have to do is show up for work.” That employee may have just as much stress or more than you, and their stress is as real to them as yours is to you, just in a different form. Great example, a lawyer who’s admin is typing a 400 page brief for him that needs to be done by noon for a court case at 1 pm has no other options but to get it done, where the Lawyer can call and postpone the case if he wanted to. Who is under more stress? Remember you are the leader, now is the time to shine.

### **Step Three:**

Have a game plan, and don’t wait until the last minute. Although, you may think it is too late to create a plan, it is not. The longer you wait to implement a plan, the more difficult it becomes, and you will still need to develop a plan in the long run. If you haven’t developed a plan, start one. Here are several points to consider when developing an effective action plan:

1. Involve your employees, they typically know your business the best.
2. Clear lines of communication; establish who calls who, when and for what.
3. Assess current and future supply needs, based against workload and projects.
4. Utilize all digital tools available and work out the bugs beforehand if possible.
5. Evaluate ongoing financial obligations.
6. Understand your insurance coverage (call your agent).
7. Communicate transparency to all.
8. Define expectations.
9. Most business owners treat their business like their baby.
10. This is a big one, understand it is YOUR business (if it has to be, it’s up to me).

Bear in mind as an employer/owner, we expect our employees to think, work and be as dedicated as us. Most of them are, but as the leader you are equipped differently to handle stressful situations, for if they had your skill and capability, they would not be working for you, but would be your competition. YOU HAVE TO BE THE DIFFERENCE.

### **Step Four:**

Remember, although you may now have a plan, it could have to change at a moment’s notice. Be prepared for change and remain calm. We are all facing uncertain times, but we will all pull through together.

CEI - DBE Supportive Services is here for you during this time.

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