

OUR INSIGHTS

Practical advice on common business challenges
direct from our International team of business experts

INSIGHTS, LEADERSHIP, SERVICE & OPERATIONS



3 Ways to Improve Your Visibility

When panic is an option do you always try to find an alternative response?

Early in lockdown I had many conversations with my clients and contacts across various sectors. What struck me most, was the stories of numerous knee jerk reactions from business leaders we knew, where the looming crisis was leading to them adopting an unintentional low profile approach to navigating the storm. Invisible cloaks all around it seemed.

Some confessed to feeling it was just inappropriate to ask their teams to sell at a time like this. So what will you ask them to do? – I countered in one memorable session when my client stared into the camera on our new friend ZOOM. She pondered the unfolding future scenarios if the business didn't secure at least a portion of what had been a very healthy pipeline of new business. We quickly set to work on a plan to bring focus and clarity to the now remote working teams across the country.

We may not have experienced a crisis like this one but we can help write the blueprint reflecting on prior landscape events.

It may feel counter-intuitive but there are a million reasons to stay visible in a crisis and step up otherwise you leave your customers and staff to their own devices. Working with clients these last weeks we have supported them as we've developed simple ideas to turn their initial fears into easy to implement tactics for their people. The investment in time and support for the teams has been met with resounding positivity. When people are being bombarded with negative press updates and scare stories it's been a refreshing alternative.

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Here are 3 simple tips to combat the invisible cloak with a 3V approach

1. Voice

Communicating effectively in a crisis is so much more important than in normal times (remember them!) – with empathy but optimism.

In your internal communications set yourself a challenge to deliver the messages regularly and succinctly but get critical friend feedback as you prepare them. Check how they have landed and not just with those you like to hear from. Find new ways to increase your impact by genuinely reaching out to all levels across your business.

2. Visibility

When you read about earlier crashes and recessions research reveals businesses which kept their heads above the parapet and kept PR and marketing switched on, as well as training and development for their valuable staff resource reaped the benefits, recovering almost ten times faster than their competitors.

Look for ways to amplify your commercial brand messaging in a much more purposeful way by turning your attention to focus on how you are putting people front and centre of your plan.

Many of the large retailers have nailed it with rewards like staff bonuses and community outreach, so people know they are there for their customers and their people.

Think of those companies who are focusing on emergency care for their customers and wider community engagement, could you contribute more than you are doing currently?

3. Volume

Control the dials on the volume setting.

In the last couple of weeks I've shared some soul searching conversations with clients where they are grappling with the worry that they are being too positive which may lead to false hope across their organisations. Others worried being too realistic may be translated as negative and therefore could create panic.

Most businesses still don't know what the future will look like so these are all difficult message to manage.

My advice is strong on keeping the dial turned high on positivity to maintain motivation, but balance this with an open and honest dialogue about the latest developments. Even when there's bad news share it promptly and pragmatically. Staff will value honesty.

I am reminded of a favourite quote by Maya Angelou "You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them."

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

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**So as we emerge into a Back to Better world
what are you focussing on to be sure you
don't run the risk of disappearing when
increased visibility is well within your grasp?**

Barbara Brown
Partner

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