



It's a well-worn cliché in business that 'your people are your most important asset'. After all the success or failure of your business will ultimately be determined by the people you employ. It is they who help formulate strategy, provide leadership, execute the plan and get things done. And, properly supported, it is they who will get any business through a crisis and on the road to recovery.

You won't get a better example of the importance of 'your people' than what's happening right now in the public health and aged care services of countries around the globe. It is the doctors and nurses, carers and health specialists on the frontline in the fight against Covid-19 who are providing leadership, executing the pandemic strategies and 'getting things done'.

But, in some instances, they are paying a high price because for years, prior to Coronavirus, they haven't been treated as the 'most important asset' in health services around the world.

Instead, politics, ideology and economics have been put before people. In the US the Trump administration dismantled 'The Global Health Security and Biodefense unit — responsible for pandemic preparedness' in 2018 — part of a cost-cutting and departmental re-organisation exercise to remove "the bloat that occurred under the previous administration" (1).

In the UK they failed to adequately ensure sufficient medical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was stockpiled despite shortcomings being pointed out only last year. These are unfortunate examples of how underestimating the importance of your people can hinder your response in a crisis and slow your business's recovery.

.... "your most valuable asset is your people and they should be treated as such..."

In any business, recovery is the work required to be done to get back to your original business as usual (BAU) operations, or potentially to a newly defined BAU trajectory. Consequently, recovery efforts will encompass all aspects of your business from people to infrastructure, operations to stakeholder engagement, financial to regulatory requirements. And it is people who will execute these elements to enable you to recover quickly.

That's why, "in times of crisis, many businesses will be challenged to safeguard and support employees while continuing to deliver the services needed to keep the business operational and revenue flowing" (2)

It should go without saying that a well-prepared business has a recovery plan and has the right people, with the right training, in the right positions at the right time to execute their recovery plan. And businesses need to pay particular attention to the practicalities of supporting their people both before, during and after a crisis. Key to this is to...

- Prepare your recovery plan
- Identify your key people
- Train your key people
- Ensure support for your key people during and after a crisis
- Communicate, communicate, communicate!

It is essential to keep employees (their families and community stakeholders) well-informed throughout a crisis and during recovery because at times of profound uncertainty a people-first approach will best aid your business's recovery.

Why?

Because your most valuable asset is your people and they should be treated as such.

Refs

1. <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-factcheck-trump-fired-pandemic-team/partly-false-claim-trump-fired-pandemic-response-team-in-2018-idUSKBN21C32M>

2. <https://www.naturalhr.com/2020/03/18/what-is-business-continuity-planning-hr-support/>

Article posted on LinkedIn by Nigel Dearing

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/your-people-key-businesss-recovery-make-sure-you-support-dearing/>