

RESURRECTION

The Post Quarantine Era -
Period of Resurrection

RESURRECT

The Post Quarantine Era: Period of Resurrection

The world has been subjected to an unprecedented attack on Social and Economic health in recent times thanks to the Covid 19 crisis. With a **profound impact** across various socio-economic strata, geographies and organizations, it is clear this has given rise to **disparate uncertainties** across the world.

Most countries have been heavily impacted with a complete **keeling over of strategic industries** like aviation, retail and hospitality. **Emerging economies** which leaned heavily on developed ones are struggling with their limited means. Plunging capital markets and crude at a record low have deeply eroded wealth across the spectrum. We are nowhere in sight of an end of this pandemic which has gripped the world.

On the **positive side**, gold trading has been on a record high since 2013 and pollution levels are at the lowest the world has seen in a long time. Some call it the **impending felicitous period of the Earth Sanitization!**

Home schooling and digital learning have evolved as the norm and this could potentially **see the rise** of the e-learning sector and would lead to further innovation in the telecom sector.

Governments are making focused efforts to **bolster** their healthcare infrastructure, revamping healthcare policies, practice social distancing, work from home norms and travel bans to flatten the curve. As these measures bear fruit, we are seeing a **'new normal'** shaping around us as we speak. Needless to say, this is likely to be an era of 'Baptism by fire' for all!

Organizations are responding to the crisis and many of them are working out their strategies to counter and manage the crisis as they hope to emerge out of this situation without too much damage to their **people, their businesses and their customers.**

Organizations are focused on

1. Employee engagement & morale of their people
2. Reducing burn rates and managing their cash flows
3. Strengthening technology & digital infrastructure to support their businesses
4. Logistics & Supply chain optimization

As a **Global Leadership Advisory** firm, we see that organizations across the world today are grappling with the immediate measures to be taken to navigate this crisis and also how they are looking to negotiate a tough period post the crisis. **Boards and CEOs** are occupied at this time debating several potential scenarios and strategies.

We engaged with several global leaders from diverse sectors and have constructed a comprehensive approach to this crisis under the acronym 'RESURRECT'

R

----- Regroup

E

Engage -----

S

----- Simplify

U

Unlearn -----

R

----- Revitalize

R

Re-Imagine -----

E

----- Eliminate

C

Communicate -----

T

----- Transform

R E S U R C E S T R A T E G Y

Regroup

As this global health crisis has the potential to result in a large scale global financial crisis, it is imperative that leaders and stakeholders have to sort out the foggy communication channels between themselves and build a culture of consensus. Effective risk mitigation and a reasonable post Covid19 strategy has to be in place for every organization. Investors will view the post COVID-19 period very differently, hence CEOs will have to envisage a future for their businesses with a mix of caution and optimism. Effective communication, defining accountabilities across the organization and prudent resource allocation will be the key to negotiate this period. A post Covid19 strategy team has to work on ideating various scenarios for the business and crafting execution plans in discussion with the operating team.



Rajeev Kakar

Board Member and Renowned Leader
in the Financial Services Industry

“The core objective of all companies is to grow in a predictable, profitable, and sustainable manner while ensuring they meet all their shared responsibilities towards all stakeholders- namely, first the Employees, then the Customers, and finally the collective community/ regulators/ bankers/ vendors/ partners/ media/ consumer groups/etc. While it may be difficult for most to accept, the solution mostly does NOT lie in focusing on right market, or right timing, or trying to find the right strategy, but on focusing on the BASICS.”



Afonso Garcia

Senior Global HR Leader
with healthcare major, Novartis

“Anticipate now, regroup now. Make the time available to think ahead. Think now, how great things would look after the crisis. Get ready in advance, have a narrative and your story ready to inspire your people around a vision”

R TRENDS



Jamie Anderson

Author, Cyclist, Stand Up Strategist, Ted-Speaker and Educator
Visiting Faculty Member at INSEAD Business School,
Columbia Business School, London Business School, IMD

"I guess that the important point will be to encourage organizations not just to return to the work practices and behaviors of pre-COVID 19. It will be important to understand what worked, and how we should re-shape the future of work based on a hybrid model of effective face-to-face and virtual employee engagement through effective and structured internal collaboration".



REFLECTIVE

Engage

Engagement would have to be both internal and external. Besides keeping the morale of the employees high, it will be critical to constantly engage with the customers, partners, distribution channels and the entire value chain. Personal and empathetic conversations with all stakeholders will go a long way in building long term sustainable relationships. This period will be a true test of Employee engagement activities within organisations!



Afonso Garcia

"At this stage, really ask the question: What do they need? What is critical for them? Use interactions with your customers more than an opportunity to sell but rather to engage and creating value through common understanding"



Indrajit Bose

Senior Global HR leader
with global energy major, ABB

"Engagement of customers (asset), people (resources), stakeholders (equity) will have to transition to an overdrive. The same customers with whom you stayed connected/ supported during the crises will now need to be engaged through active solutions and dialogue to ensure you are listening to their evolved/new needs."



REGULATORS



Eva Mattheussen

Senior Human Resources Leader
with logistics major, DHL

"In a crisis environment when things are not in our control, we tend to question the 'why' for everything - this also extends to our professional lives. Never before have organizations and leaders faced such a strong need for purpose driven leadership. Leaders need to consciously communicate the WHY to ensure their people are connecting with the purpose of each activity. This will deliver improved quality and build strong customer value, which in turn will set the wheels of success in motion"



Kiran Scarr

Senior Leader in functions of Legal,
Regulatory Compliance and Governance
Currently the Co-Founder of 'Changeosity'

"We have seen, in recent years, a paradigm shift in the role of regulators from "enforcers" to "enablers". Now is the time for regulators and businesses to form strong alliances, engagement and partnerships to co-create regulatory frameworks that strike the correct balance between business growth, crisis management and discipline."



RECURSIVE

Simplify

Most organizations are dealing with an unprecedented contraction in their respective businesses. In situations like these, it is tempting for leaders to read up books on crisis management and the Harvard and INSEAD libraries tend to get overbooked. While one can never truly create a simple COVID-19 crisis combat plan, doing one big risk assessment to see where your company is most likely to falter after evaluation of the pressure points, could be one way of mitigating immediate and further risk. Creating certain contingency plans around talent and resources will be an effective second. The 'Customer' and 'Cash' will be of prime importance. Overleveraged companies will need to rethink on resource management.



Rajeev Kakar

"The need for simplicity and customer centricity goes up in the time of a crisis. So it is very important not to react by discarding the business models, or rapidly changing key staff members, or blaming the environment, or trying to be over-imaginative and super-inventive in creating new strategies in response to a crisis. A repeatable and predictable business requires consistency of response and consistency of tactic even in the midst of this crisis situation. Businesses need to focus on the 'basics' and follow predictable actions."



REFLECTIONS



Pankaj Sinha

Senior Global HR Leader
& Former CEO for Africa region,
Schindler

“Another dimension of strategic yet simple thinking is looking inwards and cleaning up. All the important stuff that one always wanted to get to but the urgency of running the business prevented us. Simplification is at the heart of looking inwards. De-cluttering processes, structures, bureaucracy so that you emerge lighter and clear-sighted about what matters most – customers and opportunities to create value for customers.”



Eva Mattheussen

“This crisis has taught all businesses that ultimately the key pillar for business Continuity is ‘safety of people’. As a logistics company, health & safety is a part of our DNA already, however we have learned that we also need to expand our HSE standards – not just within the company walls, but across all aspects our lives especially in the case of our front-line and business critical teams.”



UNLEARN

Unlearn

To work towards the 'new normal', un-learning will be a key element. Listening to your customers and understanding the revised scope of value addition will be very critical. What worked well previously may not work well now. Hence creating augmented flexibility on having a listening mindset on the new dynamics around the needs of the external world would be vital. The shift in the needle here would be, from providing smarter solutions to asking 'newer questions'.



Jamie Anderson

"Unlearn the belief that productivity is about input (i.e. hours in the office). Instead leaders should focus on output and what people deliver. This means embracing autonomy and letting go of a control mindset"



Afonso Garcia

"It is essential that we also Unlearn that virtual is the only way of communication now. Face to face interactions are fundamental." He further adds that "I am afraid that people will believe that now that they have witnessed the fact that virtual communication works, face to face interactions are no longer important. Virtual communication can and will make us rethink why we were working the way we were, however, the danger is that we move from 80 to 8 and forget that face to face is still a fundamental way of communicating. Travelling to engage with your people by making it personal, unique and impactful will still be extremely important."

RESILIENT CULTURE



Pankaj Sinha

"Whether it is a V, a U or a flatter U rebound, there will be an upswing. And finally, you will be able to gather around the office coffee machine and re-discover your colleagues in person. Then the question will be - Do you have a plan ready and have you thought through execution? The traditional laborious budget that you built based on past trends and crunching internal numbers may not be fully relevant when you emerge. Chances are, if you have attempted to discover your silver lining, you would have redone your scenarios and there would be one scenario which would be brighter than what your previous budget had anticipated."



Eva Mattheussen

"When we go through a powerful crisis, we have a natural tendency to share our experiences and learnings with our peers. Leaders need to recognize this, and bring their team together to share their learnings and reflect on the new and evolved ways of working to cope with the crisis. Many of these new behaviors and routines are now part of the 'new culture' and it is important to continue, else we risk overwhelming our teams with another 'change'. It is critical for leaders to identify what has worked well during the crisis, (e.g. regular 'pulse checks', or 'virtual Performance Dialogues' etc.) and re-emphasize the need to continue them, while at the same time unlearn many of the 'old-habits' that served us well in the past."



Revitalize

While this crisis is a moment of slowdown in momentum and not a shutdown, Leaders today will have to start thinking like 'fire fighters'. In addition to, revitalizing the key components of the business, the leader plays a key role in orchestrating internal synergies between functional and business leaders within the organization. This would involve working around effective hiring, getting rid of non-core and non-performing assets and creating a blueprint to mitigate further risks in the future.



Indrajit Bose

"Leaders will only be able to revise/ revitalize if they have been close to everything that was lost during the crisis. If leaders stood by their people, customers and suppliers, only then they would be at an advantage to rebuild what was lost."



Re-Imagine

In the pursuit of growth most organizations either seek new markets, create newer products or services and explore adjacencies or expand either upstream or downstream in their value chain. In a post Covid19 world, it will be fundamental to primarily focus on talent, processes and business outcomes. It will be of vital importance to focus on the fundamentals of the business model, which is: **WHO** is the target audience, **WHAT** is the offering/end objective and **HOW** to execute it.

The **HOW** part gains more significance while the **Who and What** will still remain.



Pankaj Sinha

“Leaders will define the agenda, communicate and galvanize thinking and actions. Collaboration & co-creation are important. Lean, agile and digital will definitely move out from the consulting jargon and become embedded in organizations large and small. Agility & collaboration will be the defining currencies in this critical phase”.



Rajeev Kakar

“To meet this challenge of evolving needs of a generational mix of clients, it is important to look at the third arrow of growth (other than ‘Scale-up’ and ‘Scope-up’ being the first two) to where growth is done on principles gradually transforming by creating ‘adjacencies’ – through newer processes/ technology/ other ways to serve changing/ newly evolved client needs while the remaining fundamentals closer to its core proposition and purpose. Older processes and channels should not be eliminated owing to self-serving reasons, but newer changes should be grown adjacent to older channels while providing for the choices of each of the generational-linked evolving client needs

RESOURCES

EFF

TIC

Eliminate

Getting rid of redundant costs in an organization around marginally used tech platforms, layers of ERPs or that fashionable multilayered work flow system could be relooked at. Eliminating negative energy through a positive and transparent work culture will create better efficiencies across the employee value chain. Human Capital leaders will need to look at new ways of creating more defined and structured Organizational Designs.

It will be important to eliminate **bad fat** from organizations and **not muscle**.



Kiran Scarr

“Toxic behavior creates toxic culture. Your strongest financial performers may not come out on top once you quantify the opportunity costs, the recruitment and attrition costs and the lost productivity that flow from their behavior. Reward those who exhibit true leadership behavior during this crisis that creates sustainable business revenues and practices; over short term results.”



Communicate

A direct and transparent communication strategy from the leadership is of vital importance during these times as the employees go through a period of extreme uncertainty and stress. A well planned follow up mechanism down the line is of importance so that the message is transmitted across the rank and file in a large organization. Organization wide communication if done right not only fosters strong understanding and trust but also strengthens relations amongst teams. Digital communication channels and defined personalized communication messages will have to see rapid outbursts, both for the internal as well external stakeholders.



Pankaj Sinha

“This is the time to reach out, forge stronger relationships with various stakeholders and reassure them of your leadership and you are thinking about their well-being and business too”.



RESURRECT

Transform

True transformation is when the front line employees undertake initiatives to drive change in alignment with vision of the leadership. Organizations would have learnt vital lessons from this crisis and smarter and accomplished leaders will continue with some of the deep and impactful transformation initiatives which they undertook during the crisis to build an organization for the future.



Pankaj Sinha

“Execution and lean will be the defining currency in this phase and will continue to be so in the future as we navigate an uncertain and turbulent future”

We at EMA Partners, believe that this period of reformation will test the resolve of best of the leaders and their respective organizations. Compassion blended with resilience will be fundamental elements most capable leaders will exhibit.

‘Fluid intelligence’ (ability to reason, analyze and solve novel problems) and ‘Crystallized intelligence’ (ability to use one’s past knowledge) as defined by British psychologist Raymond Cattell, will be prime drivers for all professionals who will be actively involved in the new era of change management and business transformation.

Effective ideas with precise execution and a focus on cost and cash, will help to steer the ship in these rough waters. We also believe that there will be creation of fresh functions and jobs globally which will be leaner in orientation and perhaps outgrow some traditional functions. New skills will evolve. We foresee sizeable traction in digital transformation across the organization and not just through a piecemeal approach. Hiring at a leadership level will be focused more on leadership capability rather than just domain expertise. The times are interesting and challenging, and the world will not be the same. Good and fundamentally resilient organizations will RESURRECT and the others hopefully, will as well.



Amarjeet Dutta
Executive Director
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Author

Amarjeet leads the Leadership and Board level engagements for EMA Partners UAE. He works with clients in the Private Equity, Consumer, Industrial, Manufacturing, Energy & Natural Resources and Real Estate sectors. He comes with over a decade of experience in Sales & Marketing, Product & Business Development & Executive Search.

Previously worked with organisations including Canon, Reliance Communications & Tata Teleservices Ltd

Amarjeet holds a degree in Engineering from Pune University and is an alumni of the INSEAD Business School.

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EMA Partners at a glance

Established in 1988, EMA Partners is one of the largest Executive Search firms in the world with over 40 offices across 37 countries.

EMA Partners' presence in the GCC is strategically located in Dubai and Riyadh. Its regional offices are ideally positioned to serve its clients across the MENA region.

An enviable track-record of leadership assignments, a deep understanding of the region and a close affinity to its unique culture, makes EMA a trusted partner across the region.

With access to global intellectual property, EMA Partners Executive Search is also a provider of **Leadership Advisory Services** through a joint venture with Sweden-based Decision Dynamics™.

Expertise

Our expertise lies in **hiring and developing leaders at the Board, C- Suite and Senior Executive** level across an array of industries.

Our clients include global MNCs, regional corporates, government entities, financial institutions and VC/PE-funded start-ups.



GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

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Our Local Presence

United Arab Emirates

EMA Partners' Dubai office (DIFC) is the chosen search partner of prominent companies across sectors including Financial Services, Private Equity, Industrial, Retail, Real Estate, Energy, Healthcare, Education and Technology.

Our focus is not on numbers, but on the quality of the candidates that we present to our clients. Cultural understanding, adaptability and the ability to integrate with the ethos of the company, is equally as important as technical competence. A large emphasis is placed on attracting the right behaviors that are in line with the company's values.

One of our key strengths is supporting our clients with new and niche roles that have not previously existed in their respective organizations, the need for which often arises due to a change in business strategy or growth into a new sector. This also includes nationalisation initiatives across the Gulf.

EMA Partners has significant cross-border hiring experience and has advised several clients on international hiring strategy.

Saudi Arabia

Established in 2007, EMA Partners Saudi Arabia has partnered with some of the Kingdom's largest and most prominent Public and Private Sector organizations across sectors. EMA Partners is one of the very few Tier 1 executive search firms with a presence on the ground in Saudi Arabia, which gives the firm significant strategic and geographical advantage.

EMA Partners Saudi Arabia is the preferred executive search partner for large financial institutions, government entities and family-owned conglomerates.

Its consultants, several of whom are Saudi nationals, are reputed ex-industry professionals, whom are regarded as trusted advisors and experts by their clients.

