

# VIRTUAL FIRST

**A GUIDE TO EMERGING STRONGER  
ON THE OTHER SIDE**

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The coronavirus pandemic will change the way companies operate and interact. “The world in which you and your team work is forever changed. There are new challenges to confront, yet many more opportunities to seize.

You may be reading this guidebook because you have noticed how massive the effects of pandemic-related changes are. You can probably imagine the changes on your business too, but can’t see them clearly yet.

This guidebook will give you new perspectives and valuable tools to help you successfully adapt your organization profitably and with humanity. We are also connecting like-striving executives into cohorts to make the journey more meaningful and successful. More on that at the end of this work.

We hope you apply what you learn in the next few minutes—and enjoy the positive results we know you can achieve!



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What happens isn't  
up to you...



How you respond, is.



# 5 Big Ideas

- 1 Everyone you do business with now operates in a **virtual-first** world
  - 2 You need to rebalance the **value exchange** with your team
  - 3 Competing against other companies is out; **learning faster** is in
  - 4 You need to **listen for different information** so you can decide better
  - 5 Do **with**, not **to**
-

1

# Everything is now Virtual-First

*Virtual-First* does not mean virtual is inherently better or worse than in-person or that we need to always use a virtual option.

It does mean that we must remember that, while Virtual has always been an option, it is now the *new standard* for doing business responsibly and for keeping all stakeholders safe.

We will get used to virtual, in: meeting, serving, planning, repairing, deciding, managing, communicating, designing, analyzing, and well, you get the picture.

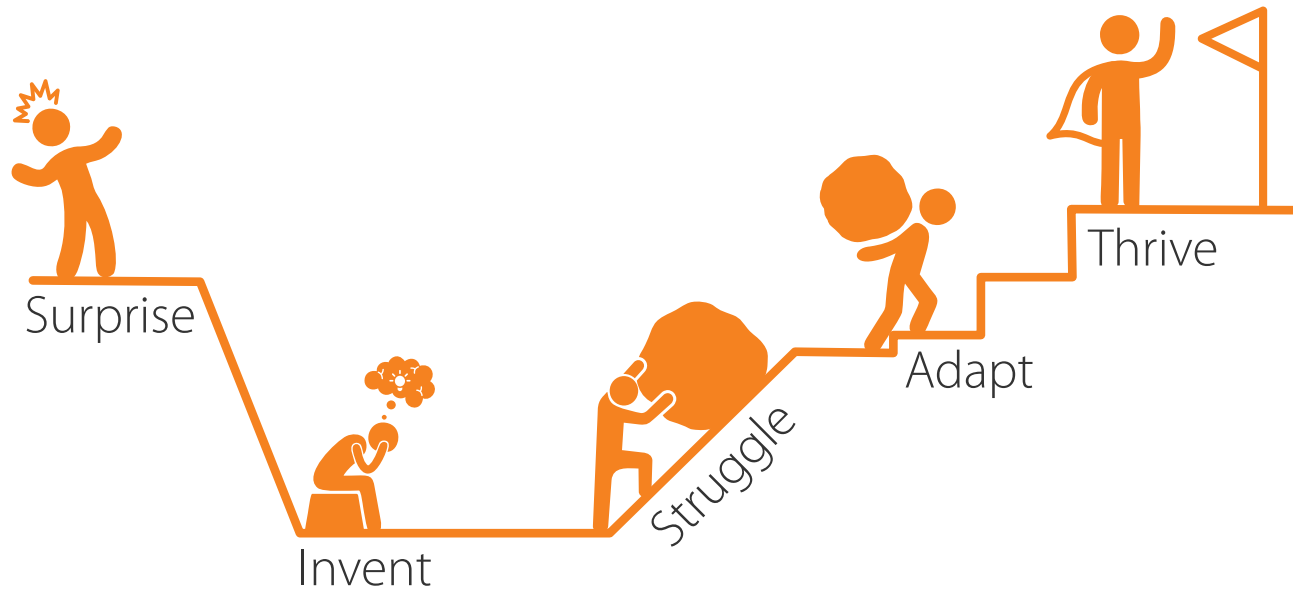
Virtual will work. It will also *change your organization* in many ways.

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1

# Be mindful of the stages

Individually and collectively, most of us go through these stages when facing something new like a lock-down or virtual work from home (WFH).



Virtual-first options should be considered in all new ideas, decisions, processes, and designs. Successful organizations, regardless of their sizes, will leverage the good options and work around the bad ones. As a leader, your job is to help your teams explore and understand the differences.

***Keep in mind that not everyone is in the same stage at the same time.***

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2

# Rebalance the value exchange with your team

Most of your employees work for you because they feel they get as much from work (or more) than they give. Virtual-first will reset that balance.

Unless you act, you might see many of the employees who put in the most leave your company.

Keep **the** Balance





2

# Employees who get less than they give, leave

## What your employees **GET OUT** of work

- *Salary and bonus*
- *Coaching and mentoring*
- *Career progression*
- *Camaraderie and friendship*
- *Personal and professional growth*
- *Sense of belonging to something important*
- *Learning opportunities*
- *Brand name on their resume*
- *Finger on the pulse of what is happening*
- *Chance to make a difference*
- *Chance to be known on a larger stage*
- *Recognition and rewards*
- *Travel and hospitality perks*

## What your employees **GIVE** at work

- *Time in the office*
- *Commute and travel time*
- *Energy and commitment*
- *Leadership and ingenuity*

3

# Competing against other companies is out...

Success on the other side, will not depend on your ability to do the same thing a little faster or a little better. Strategies hell-bent on meeting yesterday's needs, even better than ever before, represent a sure recipe for failure.



3

# ...*Learning faster is in*



Success is no longer about optimizing what you do (or what you used to do). It's about *reinventing the basics*. That means organizing your employees and systems to meet customers' new priorities and desires.

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4

# Listen with a new Intent. Decide Better.

Stop playing games against competitors. Spend all the time you can learning how to create the new kinds of value your customers and clients want most. In ways that fully engage your workforce.



## 4 Listen for different information

You've made a successful career out of listening. You compare what you hear with what you've seen in the past, often discarding ideas and patterns that don't fit.

### Stop that.

Post coronavirus, the world works differently. Use those big ears you have to listen forward (into the future) not backwards (into your past). Backward-looking metrics have never been as useless as they are now.

### Do this instead.

**Listen with the future in mind.** Be diligent about not kicking new ideas or facts to the curb if they don't meet yesterday's criteria. Listen for what's fresh in everything you hear, then think about how it can help you build a better new normal (not the same one you're used to). Be prepared to develop new patterns as you need them.

### Decide better

Most of us have been taught to optimize our decisions around what is most profitable.

● **Think differently.** The smarter game to play in an immensely changed world, is to think about solutions that give everyone more of what they want.

### Share the story

Including your team builds more buy-in-with-optimism. It's the secret ingredient to successful change. Some call that Servant Leadership.





# 5

## Do *with*, not *to*

**Central Command & Control** will not work in a virtual-first world. Think about it, neither command, nor control can penetrate your employees' home offices.



# 5

What works is *Servant Leadership* - a focus on employees and their well being, growth, and success. The journey we are describing will be you and the leadership team focusing on removing all obstacles that can get in the way of customers, suppliers, and partners.

If you focus on people before optimizing for profit, you will automatically gain diversity of thought, create a culture of trust, introduce an unselfish mindset, and instill stronger leadership in others.

*These principles are not new,  
but they are more  
important than ever.*



# We have summarized the Big Ideas in a brief Manifesto

## The Virtual-First Manifesto

*A Guide To Emerging Stronger On The Other Side*

### We Believe That:

1. Virtual-first will be *different*, not better or worse
2. Not everything can or will be done from the home office
3. Virtual-first will provide as many *new opportunities* as it will destroy old ones
4. Virtual-first will *redefine* work and what a company is--and is for
5. “*Central Command & Control*” is unsuited for a virtual-first work force
6. There is no going back

### We Will Strive To:

- *Take responsibility* for the safety of others, i.e., our stakeholders
- *Design the future* of our companies with a *people-first mindset*, and optimize for profit later
- Reconceive the role of our companies, products, and services with an appreciation of the *new needs* of our employees, customers, suppliers and partners
- *Recalibrate the value exchange* between our companies with our employees
- *Embrace the principles of servant leadership*
  - Encourage diversity of thought
  - Create a culture of trust
  - Demonstrate an unselfish mindset
  - Foster leadership in others



# OK, this might be the toughest topic in this Guidebook.

*Your organization will change.* Your choice (and your only choice) is to decide to manage the process of change. To earn the greatest level of support and the fastest adoption from your teams, your people need to see that you truly have a vision for what's coming. To believe that, they first need to see you change. It's what gives them the signal and the confidence to take on the bigger challenges you want them to.

*You will change.* Not just what you do, but how you think, how you lead, and how much you can stretch your organization to deliver the new kinds of value customers want.

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# Don't despair, **change comes gradually**



The speed at which you turn ideas into action is up to you. There's no single recipe for success. But, there is a maturity model you can use to understand stimulate good growth—and ***succeed on the other side.***

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# So, how do you turn these big ideas into action?

## Simple. **Do this;**

### Take This.

**Your Virtual-First Assessment**

Key: **Your Virtual-First Assessment**

Some you to (1 = Less)

**Repair, Replace or Reinvent**

**Your colleagues, your customers, your suppliers, your partners all work differently in a Virtual-first economy. Their needs have changed, as have their abilities to contribute to your company's success. How do you think your company should respond in its key areas and processes to succeed ?**

	REPAIR	REPLACE	REINVENT
Sales, Marketing, Business Development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Customer Engagement/Support/Success/Service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Procurement and Supply Chain Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physical Operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finance and Controls	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information Technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Talent Acquisition and Development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internal Alignment, upward/downward communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Executive Mgmt, Strategy Development and Implementation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

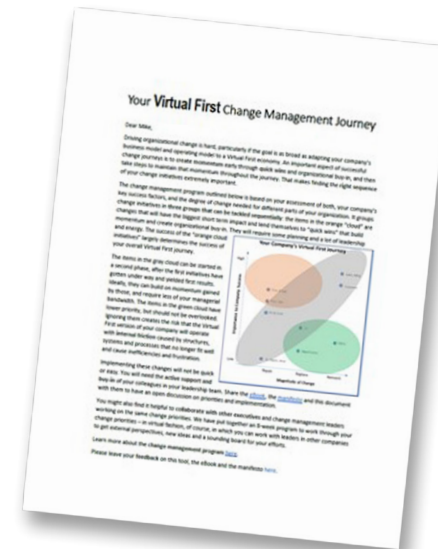
Examples for **Repair**, **Replace** and **Reinvent** in the context of a car dealer's service department:

- **Repair:** Add playglass shields to the service counter
- **Replace:** Turn part of the operation no longer needed into socially distanced customer lounge
- **Reinvent:** Pick-up customer cars and deliver after service with no customers on premises

Back Next

25%

### Get This.



Your turn.

Please show how your company creates value.

**Click here to answer two questions,  
to get your prioritized 2021 roadmap  
and free consult**

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