

COVID-19 Newsletter One

Monday 6th April 2020



In 1665 the University of Cambridge temporarily closed due to the Bubonic Plague and so Isaac Newton like us was forced to work from home. This time at home became the most productive period of his life, using the time to develop his theories on calculus, optics and gravity.

While we will certainly experience difficulties and hardships with our businesses resulting from the Covid-19 Alert Level 4 enforced lock down response we as owners and managers need to make the best of the situation that we can.

This is maybe easier said than done but the CSNZ Management Committee in a series of emails hopes to provide you with some tips and guidance about how to adopt a positive mindset, some tools to utilise and situation updates. This first email deliberately focuses on Wellbeing, Leadership, and Support because as we know it can be lonely at the top. Who is looking after the leaders, owners, and managers?

If you are anything like me you have been inundated with emails about the Covid-19 situation from Government, Local Chambers of Commerce and a multitude of other organisations. On top of that have spent the last week either on the phone or online platforms like Teams or Zoom talking, talking and more talking to my team and various stakeholders.

While there is plenty of information already out about legal requirements or best practice around COVID-19 response, we do not want to regurgitate the same information and just add to the noise, but to offer a reminder or suggestion of the other important actions you need to consider.

First however a reminder of where the official Government information can be found:

NZ Government information

www.covid19.govt.nz is the NZ Government website dedicated to everything COVID-19. The site includes resources and information relating to government action, alert levels, obtaining updates, help and advice.

Information for businesses

The COVID-19 Leave Payment Scheme and Wage Subsidy Scheme was announced (with seemingly ongoing amendments) designed to support people (and companies) who may suffer financially during the lock-down.

Find out more at [Employment New Zealand](http://www.employment.govt.nz).

NZ Government [guidance for businesses..](#)

Wellbeing

This is a time of change and uncertainty for everyone in one form or another. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed all our lives overnight – working from home, gyms and swimming pools closed, restaurants, bars and cafes closed, physical distancing from anyone that is not in your “bubble”.

As we work through what the lockdown means for our business, we need to look after our own wellbeing, as well as supporting our staff.

Some tips for wellbeing:

- Concentrate on what you can control – there is so much uncertainty right now, but there are also
 - things that we can control and taking some action will help us to feel better.
 - Limit the amount of time you spend on the news or social media, and pick one or two trusted
 - sources of information.
 - Connect – with your staff, your family and your friends. With staff find a way to connect that
 - works for you and your staff – for some that may be zoom meetings, for others it may be a
 - personal phone call.
 - Keep a routine. Get out of bed at a regular time, eat regular meals, and don't overwork – with
 - the office at home it is too easy to carry on working, but it is important for wellbeing to clock off
 - and spend time with the people in your bubble.
 - Be active, in whatever way you can. We may not be able to go to the gym or mountain bike our
 - favourite track, but we can walk or bike in our local neighbourhood, and there are lots of online
 - resources for strength exercises at home. Or try something new – my new favourites are Zuu
 - and yoga.
 - Spend time with nature – feel the sun, wind or rain on your skin.
 - Keep learning
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- **You can't give out of an empty tank – take time to re-charge and have a support network.**

Resources:

- <https://wellplace.nz/facts-and-information/mental-wellbeing/coping-with-covid-19/>
- <https://www.healthyfood.com/advice/coronavirus-why-venting-helps-plus-9-other-ways-to-cope/>
- <https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/covid-19/top-tips-to-get-through/>

Leadership / Vision / Strategy

This is a time of unprecedented change and uncertainty so as leaders we need to do our job and lead. Your team is looking to you to provide a sense of direction, certainty and clarity about the present but also the future. You will need to sell the vision and develop a supporting strategy.

This will be difficult as we do not have a blueprint of how to deal with this particular set of circumstances but keep in mind Covid-19 will pass.

While we do not know how long it will take or what effect it will have on the economy, you need to balance dealing with the immediate issues, but you also need to think about the future and start planning for resumption of business once we come out of Alert Level 4 lock down.

Here are a couple of excellent articles about leadership in these tough times containing some tools and suggestions. The first is from Advisory Work ([Running a business during lockdown](#)) and the second from our very own Fiona Lysaght ([Workplace Culture Can Survive, and Thrive, in Lockdown](#)).

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CSNZ Support

As you may be aware CSNZ has a 'Buddy' support service available which to date has been focussed on helping and supporting members with smaller and new businesses.

In the new environment we are all currently working in, and the challenges that businesses will face as a result, the scope of the 'Buddy' support service has been extended to all CSNZ members who would like some immediate help, advice or simply someone to talk too.

The following 'Buddys' are all senior members of CSNZ who have been through recessions, share market collapses, the GFC and some were directly affected by the recent Christchurch earthquake. As a result, they developed new approaches and strategies to both minimise the immediate impact and effect of the crisis on their business and to ensure success, both immediately and going forward.

Buddy's available to help immediately:

Alastair Seyb	Wanaka	027 262 8052	03 443 8493
Bruce Lysaght	Tauranga	029 286 0272	
David Fox	Christchurch	021 369 099	
Phil Battersby	Taupo	027 240 9212	
Neale Faulkner	Auckland	021 572 694	
Mark Dyer	Wellington	027 450 1158	
John Carter	Wanaka	021 942 441	
Fergus Cumming	Rotorua	027 477 2480	
Mark Allen	Christchurch	027 435 1610	

The next email will look at

- What is happening with the workforce?
- Considerations about working from home
- What work can be done in the various Alert Levels 1-4?
- Where do existing contracts stand?
- What do you need to consider about commercial leases?
- Don't forget your financial duties as a Director or Employer.