



How do we prepare ourselves for the future of work when the future is suddenly here and wrought with uncertainty? While there are no concrete answers, one thing is certain; it's time to start looking forward. In the first installment of ***The Post-Pandemic Reboot series***, **Ian Brenner and Sandra Heymann lay the groundwork on why** focusing on talent and clients can fuel both growth and scale.

Over the past 10 weeks we've been flooded with information on how to best lead, work and survive during the pandemic. Needless to say, this initial phase was thrust upon us—we were in crisis mode, continually reacting to a rapidly evolving situation.

AUTHOR

Ian Brenner
Senior Managing Director

Business and health realities collided. Government decisions impacted the economy and the workplace like never before. We looked at our business continuity plans—or developed them on the fly—adjusting and protecting our staff and the business where we could, trying to keep our heads above water. After all, there was no pandemic playbook for us to reference.

Each day brought its own set of new challenges. Every person and business have been touched, and the impacts and learnings will last for years to come.



Reactive to Proactive

The organization you had in early March is not the same as it is today. You may have pivoted your product and service offerings, your employees may be working remotely, or your business has been forced to pause all together. These circumstances have led to a series of cost cutting measures, cash flow wrangling, refinancing initiatives, and many tough decisions. That said, [proactive and agile companies](#) have managed to get ahead of the situation, while others sat idle, waiting—unclear how to proceed.

What is clear, is that no business has been left untouched. It's now time for leaders and companies to develop a game plan and move forward. It's time to motivate and incentivize your talent, nurture and support your clients and, more importantly, align both to fuel growth and scale.

Over the next few weeks, our *Post-Pandemic Reboot* series, we will address these topics and provide insights on how your business can start moving forward.

Your talent

The last two months have been about safeguarding your employees and ensuring they have the technology and wherewithal to function in our new virtual offices. Your weekly in-person huddles have turned into video calls, you're learning valuable lessons on what it means to show-up from your kitchen table, and you're discovering ways to better lead, engage and communicate with your teams in a digital world.

For some organizations, this has been a relatively easy transition. However, for others, the growing pains and lingering questions have been difficult.

How do you lead, motivate and incentivize employees moving forward? Will productivity take a hit? How do you maintain the same level of efficiency when your routines, best practices and team dynamics have shifted so dramatically?

On that note, how do you ensure the mental health and well-being of team members remains intact? From wellness rooms and flex hours to mental health days and special programs, mental health in the office was becoming a top priority for employers. How does this change in the post-COVID world? How do you ensure the mental health of your employees when we can't even see or interact beyond a video conference?

Finally, how do we prepare ourselves for the future of work when the future is suddenly here and wrought with uncertainty? For the last few years, the future of work revolved around ways to innovate, grow, scale and keep up amid rapid technological advances. Now, we are simply wondering if we will ever physically be in the same room together. The times have definitely changed—how do we respond?

Your clients

Without clients, your business wouldn't exist. Just like your business has experience massive change, your customers have also experienced changes. Major spending has stalled, projects and campaigns have been paused, and the



phone has stopped ringing—a collective silence. The last few months have been all about patience, nurturing relationships and lending a helpful hand to clients wherever you could—the epitome of business development. Plant the seeds today and harvest when the time is right.

After a few weeks of reflection, how has your customer base changed? What shifts have you noticed in your customer's behaviour and what demands have you seen or do you expect to see? Perhaps you need to rethink how you approach your client base?

While some clients may be hesitant—it's time to check-in, reengage and listen. Listen to their pain points, assess their situation and discuss plans to accelerate growth in the post-COVID world. Savvy and forward-looking clients will see the value in these discussions.

Your growth

Growth. It's a word that's been temporarily removed from our vocabulary. However, it's a concept that's been in the back of our subconscious for weeks. How do you move past cost-cutting, budget freezes, and collective bearish behaviours? While there's no magical date circled on the calendar, there's no time like the present to start planning and implementing growth strategies.

How has the pandemic impacted your strategic priorities? What new competitive advantages have emerged during this period and what do you want to maintain? What processes do you need to enable, improve and rethink to meet the new priorities and focus areas? What needs to change in the supply chain and distribution channels?

Likewise, what do you need to know about nuances in your specific industry, or geographic locations? How has the landscaped changed and how are you going to respond and keep up?

What's next?

As you can see, there's a lot to unpack here. From motivating and continuing to safeguard your talent, to nurturing and supporting your clients and promoting a growth agenda—getting ahead of the situation is paramount.

Over the next few weeks, we will address these hot topics and what opening up the economy means for your employees, clients, and growth strategies. No matter what type of company you lead, or are a part of, these are some of the issues worth addressing to help you frame your plan and steps toward re-entry.

Distressed times call for an Interim Executive

Selecting the right Interim is critical to an organization's success in navigating uncharted waters. [Learn more](#)



Our Contributors

Ian Brenner is a Senior Managing Director with the Executive Search & Interim Management practice at B. Riley Farber. With a human capital lens, Ian is focused on helping companies manage through the volatility and uncertainty inherent in both growth and distressed situations. Ian can be reached at ibrenner@brileyfin.com or at 437.294.4625
