Transitioning to a new 'business as usual'

Sue Parker-Tantush, Group Head of Health and Safety, The Co-op

The Co-op Today
It's what we do

- The Co-op Group has its origins in the co-operative consumer societies off 1844 with the formation of the Rochdale Society

- We operate 2,600 food stores, 19 Corporate buildings, over 1,000 funeral homes and provide products to over 5,100 other stores

- We have 70,000 colleagues and an annual revenue of over £10 billion

- We still remain true to our origins through our campaigning on modern slavery, loneliness and tackling violent crime against shopworkers

- Nearly 3000 Local Causes benefited from our membership fund last year

Our Co-op colleagues:

- Key Workers – Retail, Logistics, Funeralcare colleagues

- Office based colleagues - support centre and enabling functions, Legal, Insurance and Co-op Health

- Adapting to change quickly - New ways of working

- Building new external relationships remotely e.g. sourcing PPE

- Using our Primary Authority relationship useful to field enquiries

- Getting communication right is challenging:
  - Government advice constantly changing
  - Too much information or assumptions made
  - Revisit messages frequently e.g. social distancing measures

- Easing the pressure - scaling back "Business As Usual":
  - Were some of our checks and audits necessary?
  - Classroom based inductions – If you layer on CV information is there too much information to digest?

Supporting colleagues working at home
Top-down messaging is key

- A focus on well being - "Well-being Wednesdays", action plans

- Tool kits: for fear, stress and bereavement

- The right messaging - welcoming colleagues' cats, dogs and children to meetings!

- Working safely - Equipment or return to the office?

- Supporting flexible working

- Replicating the "water cooler" conversations

- Encouraging down time together

Coronavirus has completely changed all our lives both at work and at home. Everything is different, and we know it will be some time before we get back to a more normal way of life.

Through this challenging time, you've been amazing. Our businesses have been recognised as providing critical services to the nation – never has your work been more important or more in the spotlight. The stories of care, innovative thinking, juggling family and schooling and downright hard work that I've seen across Twitter and Yammer have been inspiring. Thank you for all you're doing, you really are our #localheroes.

That said, we know many of you will be feeling anxious, worried and fearful – this is completely normal, and we want to help you – your wellbeing is our highest priority.

I'm hoping you'll have seen the regular Co-op Care communications designed by our Wellbeing team, where they have been sharing information and tools about how to best take care of yourselves, physically and mentally. They've collated all of the most important content into this booklet for you to keep and share with your families.

We all need to support each other through this period. So please, if you feel overwhelmed speak to your manager, to your colleagues or to our Employee Assistance Programme – Lifeworks which is available to your family too.

You're not alone, we're all in this together.

Thank you, Steve

Steve Murrells, Co-op CEO

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Your wellbeing is our top priority

- "Other risks are available" - Revisit safety training

- Fear of the new - pre-start visits, mental health support

- Manage expectations - "what you miss isn't there"

- Reassurance - Cleaning regimes, no hot desking

- Addressing transportation fears – car parking, masks

- Balancing the messaging - The risk of "them and us"

- Considering the impact of track and trace

- Look at how we return to "BAU"

co op

Resources
Build on what you already have in place

Internal Resources

- Employee engagement surveys

- Use existing familiar processes - Return to work, Occupational Health

- Train and support line managers to have challenging conversations

External Resources

- WHO - Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19

- British Occupational Hygiene Society -

- Guidance for Members and non-Healthcare Businesses

- The Society of Occupational Medicine -

- Returning to the workplace after the covid-19 lockdown : a toolkit

- Public Health England and Government guidance

- IOSH - Home office Mobile office