



Good Ideas *in Action*



LEADERSHIP *insights*

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Most of us are getting lots of suggestions about how we should manage the stress and challenge of the current crisis. What I offer you in this space today are some of the things that leaders around me actually ARE doing to support and guide their teams to the future.

1. Focus. David Hartberg, CEO of Vernon Memorial Healthcare in Viroqua, WI grounds his team in the present *and* the future by asking them to answer these two questions:

→ **What is one goal you have for yourself during this unprecedented time?** Setting a goal keeps people focused on the here-and-now actions to take no matter what is going on around us. It helps to prevent overwhelming thoughts from taking over and gives people a sense of agency.

→ **What is the thing you most look forward to doing again when the crisis is behind us?** The thing we choose is a guidepost of what is important and why we are doing what we are doing when the going gets tough. (It also helps to keep a sense of humor, as David said that he looks forward to "sitting in my sweats all day, with a big bucket of sweets and treats, and binge watching the West Wing or Newsroom.")

2. Simple wellness challenges. Throughout April the RWHC Wellness team offered employees a daily checklist to identify one really quick and simple activity to do to jumpstart wellness. The brilliance in this was that they were actions we complete in just a couple minutes (e.g. 15 jumping jacks and a 15 second wall sit; 15 crunches and 10 squats; 5 minutes of meditation, etc.) [Email me](#) for a copy to adapt and make your own. The other brilliance is that most of them were physical. The point was not that these actions alone would create fitness, but they forced getting up. Starting is probably 90% of the motivation we need to move.

3. Basic needs. At Western Wisconsin Health (WWH) in Baldwin, WI the **doctors and employees created a fund** they could contribute to, housed with their foundation, to help any employees in need. Another WWH group set up a "**caring and sharing**" corner where people can donate food items

for other employees to take as they need it. *"From those to whom much is given, much is expected,"* and this team delivers on that wisdom. WWH CEO Alison Page sends out **daily email updates** to employees. One update encourages employees to freely use the **showers available** in the hospital's fitness center before they leave work so that they can go home to their families after work with less fear of potentially infecting them.

4. Make some assumptions. You will usually hear me say just the opposite but in the viewpoint of my friend, futurist Rebecca Ryan, one action that helps in a crisis is to **do some planning**. That planning asks, "What assumptions might you make about your business's future over the next year?" Here is her [blog](#) with more detail on the method she used with her team and an example to follow for yours.

5. Gratitude circles. When giving departmental reports or updates, more than one leader has been asking team members to share one thing that they are grateful for or that is positive. This is a low cost/high return activity that on the surface seems lightweight. But after going around the circle, starting with a leader who is open and emotionally present, this practice has power to lift spirits in a lasting way.

6. More frequent forums. Several leaders talked about ramping up the frequency of open forum times to talk with employees...and to listen. Let people talk about whatever they want to talk about. Being present, transparent and approachable has helped to calm some of the anxiety that everyone is feeling.

7. Forgiveness. There has been more than one occasion in the last two months when I forgot to do something I promised. When I get an email from the boss telling me that it's ok, he feels a little discombobulated too, it definitely eases my stress. Thank you.