

Build resilience
by trusting more

Back in March, when office workers began the strange, unexpected remote working experiment, there was gnashing of teeth and walling from some executives – how could workers be industrious if they weren't clocking in and out of a physical space five days a week? Surely the allure of Netflix and establishing a kitchen garden on a tiny balcony in a three-person flat share would sideline their sales calls? A parent home schooling a child could not be expected to file those all-important TPS reports? But there was another type of manager: one that supported their team and devolved responsibility to those working on the front line of the

across the spectrum. One of these should be a new relationship with organisational trust that acts as the sine qua non for stronger, makes organisations stronger.

Hierarchical management configurations were already being replaced by structures that devolved responsibility to teams that were judged not on the basis of how long they sat at their monitors each day, but how they could work together to produce results. The rise of trust within business could be the most lasting and impactful trend to emerge from the Covid-19 era.

The organisations that will emerge stronger from this crisis are those that assume best intent and have the conviction to believe in their workforces. As teams return to physical locations, managers that double down on the experience of homeworking during Covid-19 and construct working cultures rooted in interdependence underpinned by trust will find that not only will they attract the strongest talent, but their teams will be better placed to respond to whatever challenges come next.

were given and dug in for the long haul, there was an energy and tenacity about many organisations. Financial forecasts were being redrawn, but the idea of organisational collapse due to employee inattention had been greatly exaggerated. Some industries were (and are) suffering terribly, notably retail, but others, particularly the tech industry, demonstrated vigour and robustness. Professions such as legal services and primary care medicine – which for years had idly played footsie with the idea of becoming digital-first – moved the vast majority of their endeavours online. One prominent energy startup established phone lines for its vulnerable and elderly customers over a weekend. Organisations are currently planning for 2021 and beyond with wholesale changes in their strategic thinking. New assumptions, values and expectations are being factored into businesses

business. As the days turned into weeks and months, what became clear was that the data – for instance, a Stanford study showing an uptick of 13 per cent in productivity in some tasks – demonstrated otherwise: far from avoiding work, employees found that, in unpredictable times, their job offered them not only income but purpose, an anchor against tides that could untether them. With the support of communicative managers, deals were finalised, targets realised and teams developed dedicated resources and behaviours that resulted in new types of products and innovative thinking. It's crucial to remember that the rise in remote work would not have been possible without the millions of people who can't commute virtually and have provided the rest of us with the ability to conduct our lives in relative safety. For those of us working at our kitchen tables, while global economic forecasts



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