

The “Future of Work” is Here, Thanks to Covid-19

(Source: An article by Jason Wingard for Quartz Online)

There is no doubt that Covid-19 has challenged corporate leaders who have had to scramble to produce new strategies for accessing customers, maintaining supply chains, and shoring up revenue streams. To their credit, the solutions that have come to light have shown remarkable innovation and quick action.

When it comes to the workings of the white-collar work environment, the changes to established paradigms involving when, where and how we perform has catapulted companies directly into a future that has actually been evolving for years. It is the new and exciting future of work and the work place.

Though no one wished for a pandemic to be the catalyst, Covid-19 has necessitated answers for new ways of working, some of which are here to stay. As leaders make adjustments, here are several future-of-work new paradigms that are particularly insightful and show great promise as companies move forward from the traditional workplace paradigm.

Flexible hours. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, our definition of the word "office" has changed dramatically, expanding beyond cubicles and co-working spaces to include kitchen tables, couches, basements and other non-traditional places.

Likewise, the definition of the "workday" has changed. Limitations to certain hours in the day that were once shared by all employees are being challenged. For parents especially, the workday has become whatever they can fit in, whenever the fewest people are vying for their attention.

Without the boundaries of a physical office space or strict working hours, employees have been forced to set their own availability, based upon their personal schedules and productivity levels. This shift would have eventually occurred as workplace habits have evolved to incorporate each worker's schedules.

While some leaders might be nervous that this flexibility will lead to reduced productivity, some fear the opposite outcome. It is quite likely that without the delineation between office and home life, employees may work too much. In one survey of more than 4,500 developers and tech workers, 66% of remote employees reported feeling burnt out citing longer work hours.

With that in mind, leaders should fight the urge to micromanage their teams and instead act as advocates for their newly-remote employees, encouraging them to set clear boundaries and to protect themselves from work-from-home exhaustion.

Data-based employee metrics. In a more flexible environment, leaders will need to create new metrics of success, as they will no longer be able to judge employee effectiveness (foolishly, it might be argued) based on hours spent in the office. At some companies the focus will need to be on outputs rather assessing an employee's hours or availability, inviting the question "What do you actually produce?"

To be well-positioned for continued remote work during and after the pandemic, leaders will need to develop insightful and

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♦ Pharmaceutical conglomerate **Sinopharm** (China) announced an inactivated COVID-19 vaccine developed by its subsidiary **China National Biotech Group's (CNBG) Wuhan Institute of Biological Products** triggered a strong neutralizing antibody response in a phase I/II study, and showed promise when used at the middle strength when given 28 days apart. All 1,120 volunteers in the phase I/II trial have received two injections of the vaccine at low-, middle- or high-dosing strengths—or placebo—either 14 days, 21 days or 28 days apart, according to CNBG. The seroconversion rate for the 14-day and 21-day schedule of the mid-dose was 97.6%. At 28 days, it was 100%. The company did not specify the neutralizing antibody response rates for the low dose or the high one or the exact levels of immune response.

♦ **McKesson Corporation** announced **Tom Rodgers** has been appointed executive vice president and chief strategy and business development officer effective June 5, 2020. In his new role, Rodgers will also become a member of the company's Executive Operating Team. Rodgers succeeds **Bansi Nagji** who stepped down from his role effective March 31, 2020.

♦ Beginning this summer, researchers at the **U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH)** plan to run phase 3 trials of vaccines from **Moderna, AstraZeneca** and **Johnson & Johnson** in the coming months. The NIH intends to start a phase 3 trial of Moderna's vaccine in July, followed by an August trial of AstraZeneca's vaccine and a September study of Johnson & Johnson's shot according to government sources. All three of the shots are based on brand-new technologies, and they're all reportedly among finalists in the *Operation Warp Speed*

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HDA Outlines Principles for Pandemic and Public Health Emergency Response

(Source: HDA Press Release)

The Healthcare Distribution Alliance (HDA) in the U.S. released policy principles reaffirming the pharmaceutical distribution industry's commitment to assisting the country and frontline healthcare providers during pandemics and public health emergencies. HDA highlights four priority areas:

Supply Chain Coordination: Coordination between the public and private sector is key to addressing public health crises. Accordingly, a consolidated contact within the federal government — to provide guidance to and interact with healthcare supply chain stakeholders — would assist in leveraging resources and expertise during emergencies.

Treatment and Vaccine Distribution: The federal government should provide detailed guidance to pharmaceutical distributors on how essential COVID-19 treatments and vaccines should be delivered, so the industry can ensure approved products are distributed as safely and expeditiously as possible. On June 10, HDA sent a letter to Dr. Robert Kadlec, Assistant Secretary for

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measurable metrics of success for each employee based on their position. Because these metrics are so vertical-specific, leaders shouldn't hesitate to co-create them with their teams. Once these metrics are set, leaders must make their new expectations crystal clear by incorporating scheduled meetings with team members to answer questions and eliminate roadblocks. They should also determine a regular cadence for subsequent one-on-one reviews, as workers generally desire a higher degree of feedback when they are remote.

Perhaps most important key to managing remote employees is trust. Leaders must simply trust that they hired good people, and that those good people will continue to do the work for which they are being compensated. That trust will allow leaders to foster a successful remote culture.

Social impact. As soon as the coronavirus hit, companies found ways to help by churning out hand sanitizer in distilleries, making hotel rooms available to hospital workers, and donating everything from money to masks to ponchos. While some might speculate these actions were merely PR grabs - and, for some, they certainly were - the end result is the same. Companies have taken up the mantle of social good, and they are not likely to relinquish it once the pandemic dissipates.

The key now is avoiding a culture that leverages every interaction, albeit casual, into something that is transactional. Without water coolers and office banter, employees may feel as though they only hear from colleagues when something is needed. Leaders can encourage more meaningful connections through virtual lunches or happy hours, online book clubs, and exercise or cooking challenges, anything that gets team members talking about something other than their to-do lists. This will help foster a positive team environment.

Although at this moment it is difficult to imagine a day when the coronavirus no longer controls most aspects of our lives, certainly that day will come. When it does, the brightest business leaders will reconsider the need for the constraints of unnecessary formalities, cubicles, or commutes. Instead, they will accept that the future of work has already arrived, and, in doing so, will prepare themselves and their teams for whatever comes next.

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Preparedness and Response at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to offer the distribution industry's logistics infrastructure and expertise to help expedite and streamline efforts in this area.

Data Sharing: The continued ability for distributors to share accurate and timely information with federal and state governments regarding the availability of essential medicines and supplies should be prioritized during public health emergencies.

Supply Chain Production: While increasing American manufacturing is a worthwhile goal, policies related to the supply or sourcing of active pharmaceutical ingredients deserve thoughtful and careful discussion to avoid supply chain disruptions and potential price increases.

"COVID-19 has shown America's pharmaceutical supply chain, powered by HDA distributors, to be resilient," said HDA President and CEO Chester "Chip" Davis, Jr. "Armed with significant logistics expertise and strong relationships across the healthcare ecosystem, pharmaceutical distributors are a vital

partner in our country's response efforts — and HDA members will continue to do whatever it takes, in coordination with the public sector, to ensure the delivery of critical medicines and supplies to healthcare providers and their patients."

For additional information and resources on pharmaceutical distributors' response to COVID-19, visit www.hda.org/covid19.

The Healthcare Distribution Alliance (HDA) is a member of IFPW and represents primary pharmaceutical distributors — the vital link between the nation's pharmaceutical manufacturers and pharmacies, hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics and others nationwide. Since 1876, HDA has helped members navigate regulations and innovations to get the right medicines to the right patients at the right time, safely and efficiently. The HDA Research Foundation, HDA's non-profit charitable foundation, serves the healthcare industry by providing research and education focused on priority healthcare supply chain issues.

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- ◆ **Q2 Solutions**, a leading clinical trial laboratory services organization resulting from an **IQVIA** and **Quest Diagnostics** joint venture announced its partnership with **Thermo Fisher Scientific** to use the *Ion Torrent Genexus System*, the first fully integrated, next-generation sequencing (NGS) platform, to deliver clinical trial lab results economically with unprecedented speed. The Ion Torrent Genexus System improves turnaround time and minimizes human error for genome profiling, resulting in better delivery of services and further differentiating the Q Solutions service offering. This significant advancement in genomic technologies may help ensure the right therapy gets to the right patient quickly based on genomic profiling.

- ◆ **Sanofi** (France) will spend US\$554 million to build a "state-of-the-art" vaccine manufacturing facility at Neuville sur Saône directly to the north of Lyon, according to a company press release. The new facility, dubbed Sanofi's *Evolutive Vaccine Facility (EVF)*, will be built out over five years and eventually employ 200 employees. Sanofi plans to use the facility to manufacture doses of three or four separate vaccines at one time to help supply its **Sanofi Pasteur** unit.

- ◆ **Takeda Pharmaceutical** (Japan) has reached an agreement to divest a portfolio of 18 selected OTC and prescription pharmaceutical products sold exclusively in the Asia-Pacific region to **Celltrion Inc.** (Korea) for US\$266 million in cash up front, and an additional US\$12 million in milestones. The deal is expected to close by the end of 2020.

- ◆ The widely available drug, *dexamethasone*, has been shown to reduce the risk of dying from Covid-19 by a third for patients on ventilators and by a fifth for those receiving oxygen, according to preliminary results from a randomized clinical trial in the UK. *Dexamethasone* is a steroid that is used to reduce inflammation in various conditions. It is one of a range of drugs being tested as a Covid-19 treatment as part of the *RECOVERY* trial, which has enrolled more than 11,500 patients across 175 NHS hospitals. *Dexamethasone* is the first drug anywhere in the world found to reduce mortality from Covid-19.

(Sources: *BusinessWire, FiercePharma, New Scientist, Reuters, Scrip, and the Wall Street Journal*)