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Looking after your people in a crisis

When your organization is in the midst of crisis it is important to demonstrate that you care. And not just with words, but also with actions and initiatives to support people as they negotiate the stressful situations that crises inevitably present. People want to know that you have their personal welfare at heart, and not just that of the organization.

Make contact

Ensure you have plans for how you will contact people to make sure they are OK, to see what help they need, and to keep them informed.

Keep asking

Someone who was coping last week may be falling apart this week – keep tabs on how people are doing.

Recognise that how a person experiences a situation is unique to them

Don't assume how badly affected a person may be - it depends on so many complex factors.

Demonstrate that you care

This means demonstrating you care not just with words but also with attitudes, behaviours and actions.

Get a 360° perspective

What else is going on in someone's life has a significant impact on how well they will cope with the current situation.

Be fair and equitable

Don't play favorites - try to ensure no parts of the organization are left behind.

Support middle-managers

Your middle-managers need to be the best leaders they can be – it is through them that all your organization's efforts are translated.

Connect people

Find ways to bring people and teams back together. If they can't meet at work, could they get together in other ways?

Understand that people will be at different stages

Recovery is a roller coaster of ups and downs. Foster a culture that is accepting of wherever people are along that journey.

Don't underestimate the time and effort required

When planning for crises, organizations tend to forget to plan for their people. On the Resilient Organisations website we have a free booklet (resorgs.org.nz/staffed-or-stuffed) with more advice on how to look after your people in an extended crisis.