



Managing Crisis Through Resilient Leadership

Each of these steps build on the last to generate capacity to lead with Resiliency.

1. **Balance before action.** This is the opposite of stay calm. If you could stay calm you would! Being told to do this by others or self is not helpful. Instead, [use your awareness](#) to check in. Determine if you are dysregulated and select an action that brings you closer to your balanced self. Breathing exercises, body scans, room awareness, walking, connecting with a colleague – you make the call based on your needs. This action of first “not acting” puts the creativity, problem solving and abstract thinking part of the brain back online. Don’t move on without it!
2. **Hold space** – You don’t need to have all the answers, or the best answers, and it’s okay for employees to experience anxiety, fear, and rigidity. It’s not your job as a leader to take these feelings away or to fix. Spoiler alert – you can’t control that stuff anyway and leaders often fall into this trap during crisis. A commitment by you to give your teams space allows team members to be in more balanced states of emotional congruency. That helps people become more regulated. This takes guts because it’s about letting go of control – but it is letting go of control you don’t have anyway. Go for it.
3. **Elicit feedback, thoughts and ideas from your teams.** Resilient Leaders plan meetings and/or create spaces for feedback and information sharing. As a leader you don’t have to implement or use any of the ideas or suggestions. This resilient process helps regulate teams, form connections, and tap into employee creativity. Resilient Leaders allow this process to flow through them using their energy to filter and utilize the helpful material while letting the unhelpful pass. And the entire team experiences being heard.
4. **Keep structure, create structure** – In times of crisis Resilient Leaders are deliberate. They do not run into offices, jump out of meetings, or break conversations to answer their phone. These behaviors exacerbate anxiety and stress – your team does as you do. By keeping your meetings as scheduled, honoring existing structures, being punctual, and keeping your own behavior predictable you help create a comfortable environment.
5. **Over communicate** - Eight times eight different ways – In crisis your teams are dysregulated. Their learning brains are offline. In non-crisis times it takes 8 forms of communication delivered 8 unique ways to get change to stick. Resilient Leaders aren’t frustrated when their directives are not followed. They see teaching opportunities to re-enforce their message and unify the team to flow in the direction they have plotted.
6. **Be flexibly directive** - Your teams will need direction. Resilient Leaders own it. Sometimes you don’t have enough information to make the right call. Resilient Leaders make the best call they can because their teams need direction and structure. Your employees are adaptable and creative and will figure things out, but not if they don’t know when and where to go. You can change course; you can modify direction as you get new information. You can be direct about the course of action and flexible that this is not “for-ever.” Recently, I have seen organizations tell employees, ‘we want you to be safe,’ and then leave the work from home determination to the employee. Resilient Leaders do not put the burden on the employee to make that call.

“No matter what is happening, your ability to be a Resilient Leader is right here with you.”

-Nick Szubiak, Principal, NSI Strategies

For more additional information please [visit us](#) or contact [Nick](#).