



Managing Director of the Nine Twenty Engineering & Manufacturing, Karen Stewart writes in her latest article

The World is in the middle of one of the biggest shifts in a very long time.....a virtual future lies ahead and for those of us who were fluent in our old ways, this will be hard to take, difficult to adjust to, but for my children, your children, this could be the only World they know. We have to adjust as we will not be given an option.

While there is optimism about life going back to normal, I am speaking to business leaders daily and from their conversations, they are planning to get back to normal, but it will be a very new normal.

As a board member of CeeD, who are a community, a group of people and business (I might even say a family – or as Joe call it a Hang-Out Club) who share best practice, open up about business challenges and find solutions together, our board and the CeeD team have had to take a real look at our business model which often comprises of clinics, events, training on a face to face basis. I have to say, I have been super impressed with Joe and his team in flipping their business model within 4 weeks and have been hosting more events than ever before.....but online.

The appetite has been huge and whilst people are busy firefighting with new challenges that they have never considered before and planning for their new normal, many businesses recognise the absolute need to collaborate now more than ever.

Now, I am going to be very open and honest here, perhaps more than I should be, but I do feel this is important. Part of our intense planning sessions have been around cash flow (like many other businesses) and how to survive these tough and unknown times. Our discussions were around do we furlough and go into hiding to try and keep our cash and come out the other side? But then how would that be supporting our members and helping them get through some of the toughest times they are likely to see?

It just doesn't sit well with us. *To quote another of my Board colleagues Johnny Mone at UWS – he has been so impressed that CeeD have run head on into the COVID 19 situation that faces the engineering community – and not hidden from it*

So why am I writing this? Well, I want to appeal to our community to commit to CeeD (or if you are involved in another community then this will be the same for them) – if you see the value in having them around to support now and in the future, if you and your teams are signing up to our many online events taking place, if you want them around now and after this to help drive innovation then please continue to pay your memberships. For those of you signing in to our open sessions, speak to the team about becoming members.

We are all in this together and we all need each other.

CeeD have some amazing news to announce which will be exciting for their journey in supporting the manufacturing community. On top of this, look at our events calendar online and you will see how quickly the team have flipped to a more digital model and the topics are valuable for you and your teams not only now, but for when the new normal happens. We are looking at online training to help support the ongoing Growth 500 groups (and this will resume again over the next few months proper) and we are starting to highlight specific opportunities for your employees on furlough with CeeD activity and with trusted partners & CeeD strategic members content to have somewhere to go and talk business and we will have all sorts of topics for them to enjoy and get their teeth into. We are really focussed on the wellbeing and mental health of YOUR staff.....OUR members. We will be hosting online clinics and have our first getting up and running over the next couple of weeks and are looking into how we can support young people stuck at home with some STEM related content through Nine Twenty Insp-Hire initiative.

So come on CeeD community and the warm watchers around us, let's keep our journeys going and let us keep helping you. Sign up, commit to a new membership or continue your membership. Don't think short term and don't kick your renewal down the road as you will need support now, going through the restructure to the new normal and when things move again. This is not a diet of cold webinars – this is built from interaction and sharing and continues in the trusted vein of CeeD's philosophy of Peer to Peer best practice sharing – our CROWD Learning community help each other!

On the same note, if there is a particular issue you are facing and need help....come and speak to the CeeD Team and they will be happy to pull together our members and try to collaborate to get you some solutions.

I am hoping our new normal will be have an element of face to face as virtual skittle bombs just doesn't seem the same for next years annual awards!

Take care and we look forward to working with you through these challenging times

<https://www.weareninetwenty.com/blog/view/1614/ceed-a-view-from-the-board-and-a-valued-member-company.aspx>



Karen Stewart

Director - Nin9Twenty Manufacturing & Engineering & Board Member of CeeD

T: +44 (0) 7825 449 039

E: kstewart@weareninetwenty.com