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## Organisations should learn lessons from their rapid response to this crisis –Nick Wright & Joe Pacitti

[Nick Wright & Joe Pacitti](#) Wednesday, 6th May 2020, 7:30 am



Never have we faced more turbulent times at work than we do now...well that may be too strong a phrase, but the current global response to managing and dealing with a pandemic such as coronavirus Covid-19 is certainly one of those moment in time that will feature in many health, social and economic reviews for years to come.

Scotland's engineering, manufacturing and technology sectors have stepped up, innovating and creating valued supply chains to produce, often complex, products that need to meet regulatory specifications, testing and deploying them through a world-class logistics process. This is what these companies have always done but rarely at this speed, so what is different? Could it be as simple as having an alignment of purpose, strategy and execution with a focused goal on delivering?

Alignment is something these firms have strived towards in strategy and planning sessions over years, but faced with a challenge bigger than the organisation, they are transformed into agile problem-solving teams.

As society finds its appreciation of contributions refocused on the caring professions, the food delivery system and jobs that keep the fabric of our nation together, manufacturing has a part to play at all scales.

Purpose is found in redesigning alcohol production to produce hand sanitiser, aircraft parts factories to create ventilator parts, spare bedrooms into scrubs sewing centres and so much more.

The goals were clear; transform your productive capacity to serve this new need, the question for manufacturing is, can the spirit and alignment of organisations and individuals leave a legacy from the unimaginable tragedy of Covid-19.

Many organisations have been trained by or exposed to organisations with clear purpose, be they Formula 1 teams focused on race wins or charities aligning all their resources around delivering aid. Few of them had experienced such empowering sense of mission until recently, the question is can this be maintained into more normal times?

Alignment of an organisation is like many practical skills, you can learn about it and aspire to it but there's nothing like experiencing the power released in teams that have clear goals, pressing timetables and passion for what they do.

Rapid innovation has come in many forms, from repurposing production facilities to produce existing designs and formulas, to innovating new solutions constrained by what's available in the supply chain. Is it possible that the speed of innovation and the rapid creation of supply chains many tiers deep holds some lessons that can live beyond the tragedy & loss of the current situation?

Are there a few telling elements at the heart of this which can be used to change the way business will work in the "new normal" – for example, trust built up in supply chains through good times and bad allows for rapid developments, a way of streamlining the regulatory system to allow safe, rapid development, evoking a stronger sense of unified/aligned purpose between management, staff and stakeholders – perhaps one of the main business issues which have hampered strategic change programmes for year – or perhaps, a sense of community and common goal higher than the constraints of the industry and sector – one of community, and in the case of Covid-19 this is a global community and local all at the same time.

Our thoughts or opinion is that maybe this fantastic effort and response is unlocking or reframing, of all of those long sessions deliberating over strategy and mission statements.

- The inherently adaptable, capable and innovative aspect of their DNA are suddenly aligned with those mission statements and strategy days about diversification.
- The barriers to make the change are aligned to a willing set of regulatory bodies who take an advisory/partnership approach to safe yet rapid development.
- The pressure of stakeholder and shareholder pressures which too often become the seemingly impassable hurdles or cloud unified purpose are aligned.

We wonder what the next company/corporate strategy "away day" will look like? Will it include better representation of the whole workforce not just management, supply chain partners, customers and regulators .....is the is the new norm?

Our opinion is that this is possible and the experiences of leaders, managers, employees and individuals responding to this crisis will be powerful learning for organisations and should not be squandered.

With these greater, more intense experiences to draw upon the next CeeD peer-to-peer session on strategy will have greater depth to draw upon.

Read more at: <https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/organisations-should-learn-lessons-their-rapid-response-crisis-nick-wright-joe-pacitti-2842812>

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