

Every Crisis Is A People Crisis

May 31, 2020

It's been two years since I last wrote a newsletter but now, in what is a global crisis, it seems time to add to the discussion.

When I started Bob Perkins Consulting, I wanted a tag line that summed up everything I believe about organizations and life. I decided upon, "*Every business is a people business, every problem is a people problem and every solution is a people solution.*" That statement is always true but, in a crisis, it is even more important to realize how true it is. Sometimes we think we have a "sales problem," or a "marketing problem," or an "organizational problem," but we don't. In every case we have a people problem. Or to adapt to our current circumstances:

We don't have a virus problem we have a people problem!

Somehow, it was people who created the virus. It is people who will get sick from the virus and people who will die from the virus. It's a people problem.

People denied the virus and its effects.

People spread the virus.

People spread the fear about toilet paper.

People ignored the guidelines and partied on the beaches.

People are the problem.

But people are also the solution.

People are making test kits faster than any product of its kind ever.

People are developing a new vaccine.

People are experimenting with existing drugs to see if they work on the virus.

People are staffing the hospitals and clinics where sick people can get treated.

People are driving the trucks and stocking shelves to keep the supply chain moving.

People will be resilient and rebound from this crisis, like they have from every crisis before.

And like all of life, there is one question every person must ask.

"Am I part of the problem or part of the solution?"

Focus on the people.

Who is housebound and can't get out?

Our neighbor next to us is ninety-five years old and isn't leaving her condo. My wife went to the store and got her groceries for her.

Connect with the people who are in pain now and let them know they're not alone.

I was thinking the other day about people who are in pain and I realized that my financial advisor must be dying right now. I called him just to let him know that I'm ok, I know it's not his fault, and that I'm here if he needs to talk. I'm glad I don't have his job, but I know it must be pretty lonely to be in his shoes and if I can be helpful I'm here.

Who is lonely and isolated at this crazy time?

My wife and I called an old – 87 years young – friend that we haven't talked to for years. We just wanted to say "hi" and give him some connection since we know he is in a retirement place and he can't go out at this time. It was a fabulous call. We laughed a lot and caught up, and I'm sure we were more thrilled by it than he was.

Who is struggling with work in this time?

Can you give more work to those who are idle? There are a lot of people who are home with nothing to do. Is this a time when you could use their services to get some of the things done that you've been wanting to do? Things like editing the draft of the book you've been wanting to write or making sure your will is up to date.

There are lots of options and now is the time to think about things you could be doing that will "sharpen the sword" for the future. Who can help you do those things?

We are in a people crisis and people – you and me – are the solution.

Know who you are and be it!