

## Authors



**Lillie Ritter**  
Partner



**Ali Steffanucci**  
Sr. Consultant

Around the world, people are facing extraordinary personal and professional change. Organizations have experienced significant transformations in shifting operations, introducing new procedures, and adapting to a remote workstyle to overcome the challenges of COVID-19. We have seen many organizations successfully pivot to meet the demands of the evolving environment while others struggle. Now is the time for organizations to anticipate future change and be proactive in preparing for upcoming impacts to maximize employee engagement and performance.

In times of change and adversity, organizations need to optimize their team's potential and begin thinking of ways to upskill their current resources. It is critical to proactively implement change management solutions that provide your organization with the processes and tools needed to successfully navigate change.

Active employees should be provided with relevant, impactful training regarding updates to human resource policy, work-from-home and return-to-work guidelines, performance expectations in a remote environment, system enhancements, and operational protocols. Training should address the gaps and concerns revealed through stakeholder analysis and enable the organization to utilize all functions of virtual systems and applications to meet performance expectations.

### **Case Study**

An event services company faced extraordinary decline in business due to shelter-in-place restrictions. As a result, the organization was forced to make a difficult decision to furlough a large volume of full-time staff. The organization capitalized on this monumental change and created an opportunity to implement a new CRM service platform so their workforce would return to work with a fresh perspective, improved systems, and processes that would allow them to work more efficiently and effectively than ever before. Primed partnered with the event services company to implement an innovative training strategy to meet the strategic goals of the implementation and empower their employees to optimize the technology and serve customers in a new capacity.

This holistic training plan addressed the immediate need for active employee training and incorporated strategies to quickly engage and onboard furloughed employees as they returned to work. This strategy served as a proactive, sustainable solution to recover business and emphasize the organization's goals to provide unmatched customer service. Active employees were provided step-by-step training materials and instruction to equip them with the tools and resources needed to maximize the benefits of the system and serve as system champions to furloughed employees as they return to work. An onboarding toolkit was also developed as a guide to quickly train and energize returning employees. Materials were designed to engage the audience and cater to a variety of learning styles. "Providing active employees with the resources and information needed to succeed in their current roles is important to our organization. Empowering them to onboard furloughed employees is critical to our business and our ability to proactively address change and act with agility." - Vice President of Exhibitor Experience. This strategic initiative allowed them to excel in the current environment and invest in the future state to be a stronger, more effective organization.

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The modality in which organizations train should also cater to their unique audience. Training should be more than a PowerPoint; it should be engaging, interactive, and applicable to every participant – especially in a remote environment. In today's virtual world, there is an abundance of tools that bring the benefits of in-person training to your screen.

When conducting virtual training consider the following tips:

- Start your training 15 minutes early to check that the audience is aware of how to use various functions of the tool being used, such as muting/unmuting, utilizing the chat feature, video and screen sharing, responding to polls and surveys
- Start the training with an engaging ice breaker such as “What are examples of good habits you have formed while working remotely? What is an example of a habit you need to break?”
- Engage an executive leader to present the learning objectives and strategic goals of the training to demonstrate leadership support and encourage audience buy-in
- Conduct knowledge checks and assessments throughout the session utilizing collaboration and survey tools to ensure learning objectives are met
- Encourage the audience to keep their video cameras on to capture the “mood of the room” and adapt your presentation accordingly
- Keep a “parking lot” for questions or comments that need to be addressed using collaboration and organization tools
- Set virtual office hours with your team after the session to discuss the training session and elicit any feedback in a casual format

Organizations have experienced incredible shifts in how they work and how they engage employees. As many organizations prepare for the next phase of COVID-19 and its impacts on the workplace, it is critical to implement initiatives and strategies that anticipate the needs and demands of employees and the environment. Does your organization have the tools, processes, and training in place to successfully navigate the evolving and challenging demands of COVID-19 and to come out stronger on the other side?

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## About Primed Business Consulting, LLC

We partner with our clients to address complex business problems, determine and implement the right solution to drive positive change, and deliver sustainable results. Our core competencies include interim leadership, business strategy, operational efficiencies, organizational and culture alignment, mergers and acquisitions, remediation, spinoffs, and performance improvement. Our complimentary and compatible team of experts know where, when and how to add value across Strategy, Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology.