

# There is light at the end of the coronavirus tunnel

How can companies come out of the other side of the Covid-19 pandemic stronger, fitter and ready to succeed after the virus has been beaten?

CONTRIBUTOR



Dave Manning



▲ The prime creators of value are manufacturing, agriculture and the exploitation of natural resources

The coronavirus is the most significant issue to hit the world since the Second World War, with the potential to kill millions of people and crash the world economy, which could have an impact on everybody's lives for decades to come. However, we will beat this disease, we will develop a vaccine and there will be life after Covid-19.

It is clear that we are entering a period of economic uncertainty, with demand for many goods and services reducing and possibly a world recession. Many companies face the prospect of reduced demand, consequential lower revenue and difficult decisions to make about supply chain and staffing costs. The obvious

solution is to close down the supply chain, force staff to take holiday, suspend people without pay or even lay them off.

For many industries, such as manufacturing, to advise to work from home is for most staff not practical, closing down supply chains has a knock-on effect on multiple companies and people, and laying off staff risks the loss of vital skills and capabilities that companies will require in the future growth and recovery. Many companies are already working on continuous improvement and transformation projects that have often been held up by the lack of time and resources. As demand for goods and services reduces, we now have the

resources to focus on these improvements and prepare ourselves for success in the future. The strength of any economy is dependent upon the value it creates, and the prime creators of value are manufacturing, agriculture and the exploitation of natural resources.

As in many times of adversity, the time to invest in our future is now. We will have the available resources to drive transformation and technology projects more effectively and more quickly, of course, without the demand and the potential onset of recession; will we have the confidence and financial resources? True leaders need to step up to the plate and earn their salt. Now is the time for leadership not management – see Table 1.

Of course, that still leaves the financial issue: 'What I do not have I cannot spend.' However, companies and the stock markets need to recognise that business success is the long game. The UK government has pledged support for business to help them through the crisis. The focus of this should not be handouts to help them survive, but on financial support that enables companies to retain their resources to work on the investments in continuous improvement and transformation programmes that will set them up for success and growth post-Covid-19.

BusinessSupport.Gov.UK already offers support for leadership development and this is an area in which investment can make a real difference for the future. Manufacturing is a foundation for any economy and, rather than a crisis, coronavirus could be an opportunity to invest in the future.

**Dave Manning FCILT**

Director,  
DM Integration Ltd.  
01948 664 538  
dave.manning@dmintegration.co.uk

The manager administers	The leader innovates
The manager is a copy	The leader is an original
The manager maintains	The leader develops
The manager focuses on systems and structure	The leader focuses on people
The manager relies on control	The leader inspires trust
The manager has a short-range view	The leader has a long-range perspective
The managers asks how and when	The leader asks why
The manager has an eye on the bottom line	The leader has an eye on the horizon
The manager imitates	The leader originates
The manager accepts the status quo	The leader challenges the status quo
The manager is a classic good soldier	This leader is his/her own person
THE MANAGER DOES THINGS RIGHT	THE LEADER DOES THE RIGHT THINGS

**Differences between a manager and a leader**

Table 1