

## Leadership Barometer 110 Post-COVID Advice Robert T. Whipple, MBA CPTD



In a recent interview, I was asked if I had any advice for leaders in the Post COVID journey. Many organizations are wrestling with whether to insist that employees return to work, get vaccinated, wear masks, or work at least partially from home. I thought of two actions that seem prudent at this time.

### **First Action – Let People Decide for Themselves**

We each have a unique set of conditions that will bring out the best in us. If a leader tries to impose a set pattern of work location and rules for everyone, most likely the majority of people will not be happy.

It is far better to lay out some guidelines but allow each person to find his or her sweet spot. Keep in mind the optimal pattern for any individual may change with time, so allow for that kind of flexibility as well.

By empowering people to decide for themselves how they choose to work, the leader has the enthusiasm of most of the people from the start. Showing trust in the people to make the best decision is uplifting, and the result will be a more engaged workforce throughout the organization. Naturally, people need to be accountable for getting things done and done well.

Granted, there will be some circumstances where a person simply must be present, but the general pattern of attendance usually can be made flexible enough to allow each person the freedom to choose the details.

### **Second Action – Double Communications**

When people are working at least partly remotely, it is imperative that they have more frequent contact with others in the organization. During “normal” times, a standard pattern of communication is usually adequate, but in times of stress, it is imperative that communication occur more frequently.

I used to observe that when things were difficult or edgy, rumors would tend to spring up within the workforce. I would observe managers wanting to hide in their offices because they did not want to face the questions people might ask.

The opposite reaction is much more helpful. When people are upset, leaders need to double their interface time with them. That action tends to increase trust and maintain engagement as well as reassure the people.

### **The Actual Interview**

In case you are interested in watching the entire interview, here is a link to it. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=apezCmMDYAs> The part where Kevyn asks me the question on COVID Advice is at minute 39, so feel free to scan forward.

The whole interview is over 50 minutes long, but it is highly entertaining throughout as Kevyn Rustici and Tyler White ask odd questions that draw out comical answers. Also, I have ample time to share my theories on how important it is to have a culture of high trust and actually share the secret sauce for how to obtain that huge advantage.

I also have the opportunity to share some stories that illustrate my points and that you may find inspiring.

*The preceding information was adapted from the book *Leading with Trust is like Sailing Downwind*, by Robert Whipple. It is available on [www.leadergrow.com](http://www.leadergrow.com).*

*Robert Whipple is also the author of *The TRUST Factor: Advanced Leadership for Professionals and, Understanding E-Body Language: Building Trust Online*. Bob consults and speaks on these and other leadership topics. He is CEO of Leadergrow Inc. a company dedicated to growing leaders.*

