

CHIEF EXPERIENCE OFFICER

PRINCIPAL DUTIES

[CORONAVIRUS EDITION]

1. Listen more than you talk

We tend to want to tell our own story, especially when we are hurting or in stress. It helps us feel better. When we feel scared and uncertain, we focus more on our own needs. However, listening is a great way to show others they are valued and not forgotten. Listening will help uncover ways you can lend a hand to a friend or neighbor. Listening keeps you informed of local, federal, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines regarding the response to COVID-19. Listening helps keep you connected socially to others at this time when we are physically isolated. Listening breeds mindfulness and present moment attention. Be still, and listen.

2. Say nice things in a nice way

Now as much as ever there is power in words. Maybe you've judged someone for buying too many packages of toilet paper. Perhaps you've been critical of politicians, business owners, or other countries for how they have reacted to COVID-19. Maybe the extra time at home with family members has prompted a short-tempered and disrespectful comment to a loved one. In any case, we need more people spreading more messages of compassion, optimism, and calmness.

3. Show appreciation to others

There are plenty of people to be thankful for at this difficult time. Let them know about it! We should be grateful for first responders, health-care providers, priests and pastors, teachers, and retail store associates. They are providing some semblance of normalcy as well as fulfilling our most basic human needs. Find creative ways to show appreciation to them – it doesn't have to take a lot of time, energy, or face-to-face contact. Gratitude is the great elixir in times of tension and strain.

4. Be patient with others

Please...take a breath. This is a time where we need to slow down in order to go fast. Everyone is adjusting to a new normal and there is not a script or instruction manual for how to do it. There have been long lines at grocery stores – take a breath. Your boss may take longer than usual to respond to you – take a breath. Your son or daughter's teacher may have not replied to your email with the answer you needed – take a breath. You may have had a non-urgent doctor appointment rescheduled to a later date – take a breath. You may have been on hold for hours to reschedule airfare for a trip – take a breath. Be at peace, and know that in time all will be well.

5. Forgive others

Did someone cut you off with their cart in the grocery aisle? Is someone causing you anxiety with irrational rants of doom and gloom? Maybe one of your children, in their own fear and disruption from routine, said something insensitive to you. Have mercy on others and assume that they are all doing their best to deal with the current uncertainty and unknown as best they can. That includes you; you are doing the best you can. Exercise self-compassion and don't be too hard on yourself.

6. Apologize when you make a mistake

It is likely you haven't shown up as your best self at some point or another over the last couple of weeks. Are you making errors at work because your mind is somewhere else? No one is expecting you to be perfect in your own response to the Coronavirus. Heck, you've never done this before. So, it is okay if you make a mistake. And be sure to apologize and learn from it. When you look back on this months or years later (yes, we will get through this), you don't want to live with regret for not making amends.

7. Follow through on what you say you are going to do

Can you be counted on? Or have you made a commitment that you didn't follow through on? Did you promise to call and check-in on an elderly parent? Did you tell your children you would help them with their online class? Did you tell yourself you would commit to daily prayer? Have you done all of the things you know you should do? One of the best ways to bring comfort and security during difficult times such as this is to be predictable, reliable, and dependable. Your family, friends, and co-workers are going through enough stress without you letting them down.

8. Sacrifice your time, money, or effort for the sake of someone else

We are all in this together. We cannot flatten the curve without us working together selflessly. We will get through this much faster if we look less to ourselves and turn our attention to others. Limit the amount of bread, toilet paper, water, and hand sanitizer you buy at one time so there is enough for everyone. Don't shop during special hours designated for people who are elderly if you are not elderly. Follow the CDC guidelines and don't gather in groups. Remember, you aren't just doing those things for your protection but for the protection of others. It will take sacrifice for us all to beat this thing. "What profit is there for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" Matthew 8:36

9. Leave all things better than you found them

If you are sick, stay away from stores, workplaces, and other community locations. Self-quarantine when warranted. Clean and disinfect any surfaces that you have contacted, especially if a public space. Wash your hands and don't touch your face. Cover your mouth when coughing and sneezing. Avoid nursing homes and other care facilities. Consider supporting local restaurants providing curbside pick-up. Be present with your family, avoiding social-media. Allow your employees flexibility so they can take care of things at work and at home.

10. Seek the common good over your individual good

It will take much longer for us to slow the spread of COVID-19 if we have differing goals and agendas. This is not a time for politics, partisanship, relativism, or individualism (not that there ever should be that time). Rather than thinking, "What is the minimum I need to do," go the extra mile. Imagine a better future where communities are thriving, people are unified and tolerant, relationships are built on love and understanding, and countries work interdependently for mutual good.

