

# 7 Strategies for leadership during a crisis

What leaders need during a crisis is not a predefined response plan but behaviors and mindsets that will prevent them from overreacting to yesterday's developments and help them look ahead.

McKinsey & Company

## 1. Define intent and priority, then delegate to teams.

Leaders should provide the guide rails for actions of others, set the course and the destination, and then let others take it from there. Let local teams make decisions and offer support. This trust further develops and empowers your teams.

## 2. Communicate with integrity.

The business needs a leader to step up and communicate from a place of truth. Share what you know, what you don't and what you're trying to find out. Employees want to feel you are in touch with reality and they can depend on you.

## 3. Practice "deliberate calm."

Fear and panic are automatic brain responses under dangerous circumstances. Leaders must practice pushing through the fear and override it with rational thought. Over 90% of communication is your tone and facial expressions - very little is related to what you actually say.

## 4. Pause to assess and anticipate, then act.

Frequently pause to assess the situation from multiple vantage points. Avoid overreacting to new information as it comes in. Revise ideas based on new information, critically consider actions and then make decisions.

## 5. Demonstrate empathy.

Acknowledge the personal and professional challenges of the situation. Pay attention to how people are struggling and support them compassionately. Foster an environment where people are not afraid to share ideas, views and concerns openly.



## 6. Apply "bounded optimism."

Combine confidence with realism. Excessive confidence early on can cause leaders to lose credibility. Openly recognize the uncertainty and express confidence the organization will get through the difficult situation.



## 7. Allow concern and heed the advice.

As stress and uncertainty rise, good judgment can diminish. Encourage colleagues to share concern and consider the counsel. Invest time in your own well-being to sustain your effectiveness.

