Deloitte.

RESPOND

RECOVER

THRIVE

Virtual enablement
through high performing
virtual teams and leaders

COVID-19

175
MAKING AN
IMPACT THAT
MATTERS
since 1845

Transforming the nature of work

In a world undergoing immense change, fuelled by macro-economic drivers and in most cases an overnight rise in the adoption of technology, COVID-19 has transformed the nature of work – the type of work we do, how we do it, where we do it, and how we lead.

Under these extreme circumstances the timescale for transformation is no longer years, months or weeks, but days. Organisations are being forced to immediately act both tactically and strategically to respond on an almost daily basis, to the changes that COVID-19 is throwing at them.

As we dive into the 'virtual' deep end with the most generationally diverse workforce, in the most uncertain economic climate, we must embrace not only the vulnerability of our business, but solving for systematic delivery challenges to re-imagine how to deliver work in the future and allow us to test, learn and evolve over this turbulent time.

"The coronavirus, and its economic and social fallout, is a time machine to the future. Changes that many of us predicted would happen over decades are instead taking place in the span of weeks."

Anne Marie Slaughter, President of New America Foundation

Humanising work and innovating ways of working

Great things have happened in the past few months, what can we learn?
We have been hearing some of the great things that have occurred over the past few months that have evolved culture, challenged existing norms and processes, and further built our adaptability muscle. We have been able to humanise work and innovate on our ways of working, through examples of:

- Organisations that have pivoted production and responded to current customer needs and demand – e.g. Archie Rose, an alcohol distillery that started to produce hand sanitiser

- Teams that have been able to co-design and align on outcomes through collaboration, myth-busting that collaboration is an in-person activity, using tools like Miro, Mural, etc.

- Teams that have come together as communities and have made well-being a priority through step-up or push-up challenges, coffee roulettes, sharing how they truly think and feel through empathy mapping, etc.

- Leaders who have been able to make faster decisions with 'imperfect information' letting go of their fear of failure and realising that not deciding quickly is in fact a decision that comes at a cost

- Leadership teams that have been holding daily stand-ups to align, prioritise, remove blockers, and focus on delivering outcomes.

The past few months we have been unified in our need to react due to the 'burning platform' both from a health and economic perspective. There has been no choice as it has been a matter of survival. The challenge for us moving forward is to make these great things sustainable and systematic.
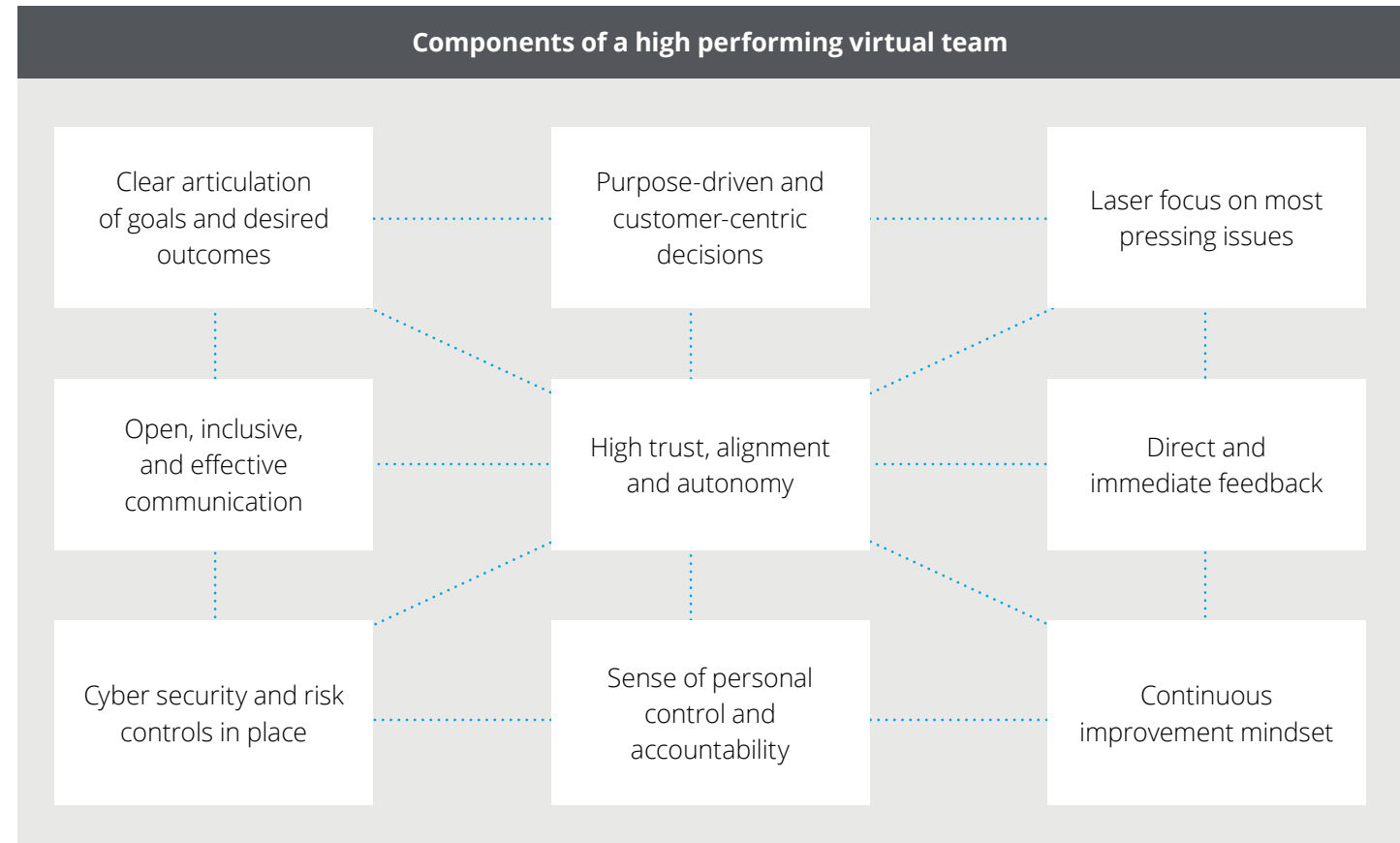
Ways of working disruption is here

High performing teams and leaders are the key to delivering outcomes.

As noted in the Deloitte publication, Workforce Strategies for Post-COVID Recovery, business and government leaders are now being challenged to respond to the crisis quickly and rethink their workforce strategies in real time.

Setting up and enabling high performing virtual teams and leaders will be critical to the recovery plan as they are the organisation's engine to deliver on its strategic outcomes and business critical activities.
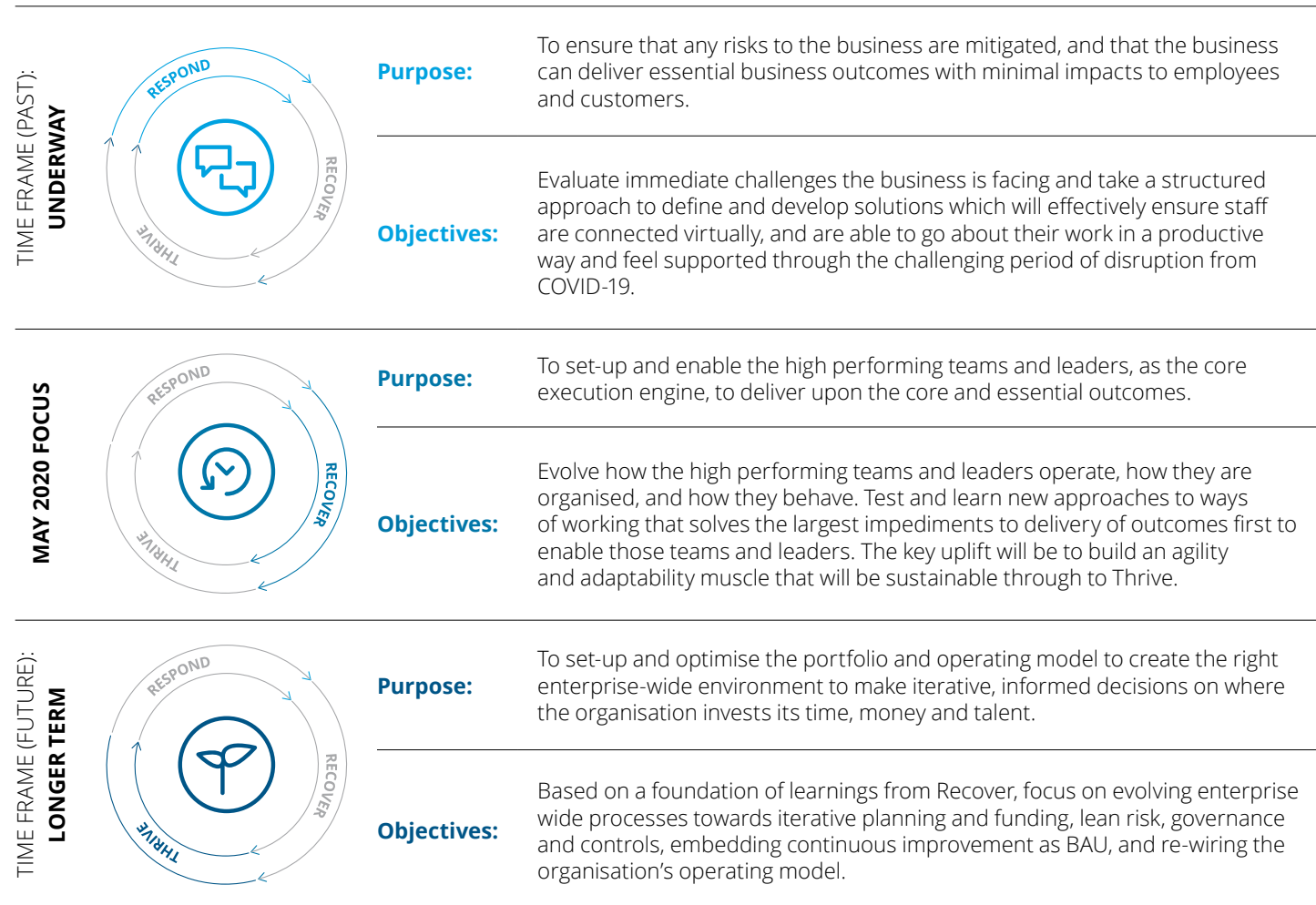
Components of a high performing virtual team

Clear articulation of goals and desired outcomes	Purpose-driven and customer-centric decisions	Laser focus on most pressing issues
Open, inclusive, and effective communication	High trust, alignment and autonomy	Direct and immediate feedback
Cyber security and risk controls in place	Sense of personal control and accountability	Continuous improvement mindset

Virtual enablement through high performing virtual teams and leaders

The recovery process to a 'new normal'

## The time to experiment with ways of working is now.

Whilst maintaining a focus on the immediate challenges faced from COVID-19, businesses need to develop a 'test and learn' approach to recovery that re-invents itself, through iterative and incremental changes to its ways of working, answering how might we:

- Continue rapid decision making and uber prioritisation to deliver upon our strategic intent?

- Trust and empower high performing teams to be the driver behind execution?

- Maintain employee well-being and the human dimension of bringing 'our whole selves to work' as a top priority?

TIME FRAME (PAST): UNDERWAY

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Purpose: To ensure that any risks to the business are mitigated, and that the business can deliver essential business outcomes with minimal impacts to employees and customers.

Objectives: Evaluate immediate challenges the business is facing and take a structured approach to define and develop solutions which will effectively ensure staff are connected virtually, and are able to go about their work in a productive way and feel supported through the challenging period of disruption from COVID-19.

MAY 2020 FOCUS

RESPOND · RECOVER · THRIVE

Purpose: To set-up and enable the high performing teams and leaders, as the core execution engine, to deliver upon the core and essential outcomes.

Objectives: Evolve how the high performing teams and leaders operate, how they are organised, and how they behave. Test and learn new approaches to ways of working that solves the largest impediments to delivery of outcomes first to enable those teams and leaders. The key uplift will be to build an agility and adaptability muscle that will be sustainable through to Thrive.

TIME FRAME (FUTURE): LONGER TERM

RESPOND · RECOVER · THRIVE

Purpose: To set-up and optimise the portfolio and operating model to create the right enterprise-wide environment to make iterative, informed decisions on where the organisation invests its time, money and talent.

Objectives: Based on a foundation of learnings from Recover, focus on evolving enterprise wide processes towards iterative planning and funding, lean risk, governance and controls, embedding continuous improvement as BAU, and re-wiring the organisation's operating model.

Virtual enablement through high performing virtual teams and leaders

It is critical for organisations to focus on how their virtual high performing teams are organised, operate and how they behave to deliver on essential business outcomes.

ORGANISE

BEHAVE

OPERATE
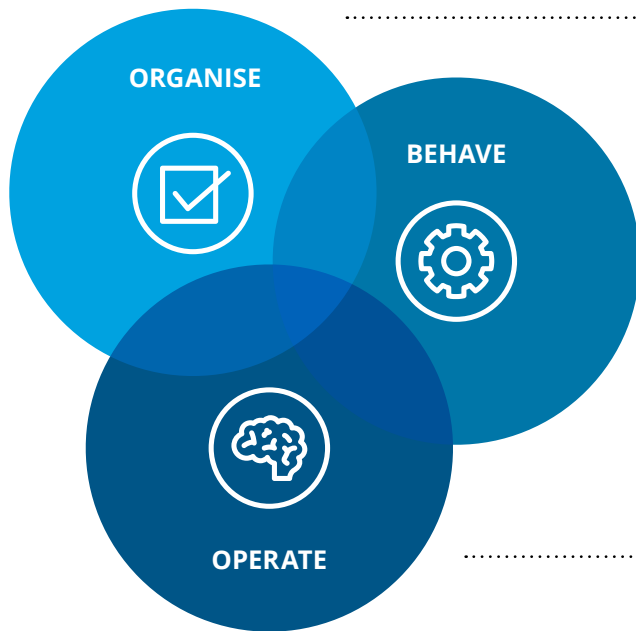
Clearly establish how teams need to be organised, what the outcomes are, and how they are measured

Define team objectives and structure
- Determine objectives and outcomes in the short and medium term (e.g. OKRs)
- Baseline existing capabilities, capacity, and identify delivery challenges.

Optimise ways of working
- Provide structure to the virtual/hybrid workplace, encouraging collaboration and transparency
- Configuring available tools and technology to support virtual/hybrid ways of working.

Trust your teams to own the delivery of outcomes and show you support them in the process with how you behave

Role-model leadership
- Role model the behaviours you want to see in your team
- Partner with your team to build trust, autonomy, and accountability.

Focus on mental wellbeing and culture
- Create an environment of inclusivity, social care, and mindfulness in teams
- Monitor the happiness, engagement, and safety of employees, and celebrate success as a team and more broadly.

Rapidly make decisions about how teams need to operate, based on limited information and communicate widely

Prioritise essential outcomes
- Set clear priorities with the team, ensuring it is aligned to organisational outcomes
- Define essential work for the team to focus on.

Metrics and mindset
- Articulate metrics to track delivery of outcomes
- Focus on building continuous improvement mindset within the team.

Guiding principles and practical tips for leaders

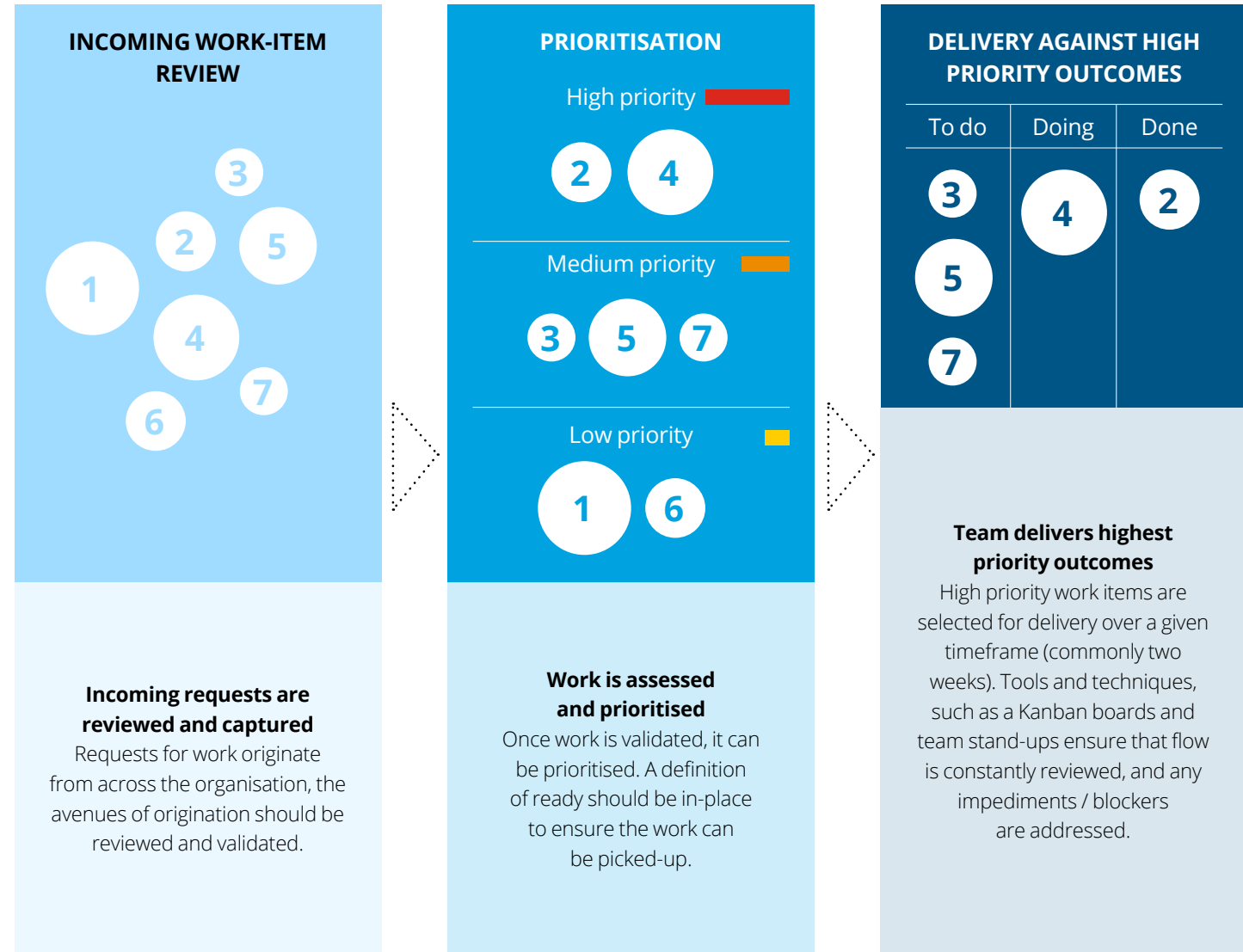## Define team objectives and structure

High performing teams need to be organised for focus and flow. Virtual teams need regular and transparent direction from leadership supported by metrics to track success and continuously improve. They also need to be effectively resourced, agree on team core values and address any inter-team dependencies.

Creating Focus		Creating Flow	
Sense of purpose Does the team know how they contribute to the strategy?	**Team objectives** Are the team objectives clear and understood?	**Roles and responsibilities** Does the team have the skills and capabilities to deliver objectives?	**Core values** How will the team approach their work and collaborate with each other?
Direction and prioritisation How will the team know what is the most valuable work to deliver first?	**Success metrics** How will the team know they are achieving business outcomes and continuously improve?	**Quality standards** What is the level of quality they deliver and expect from each other?	**Inter-team dependencies** What dependencies can be removed to minimise delays?

Be clear, be visible
How will the team know which communications take precedence and when and where they will come from?

Prioritise essential outcomes
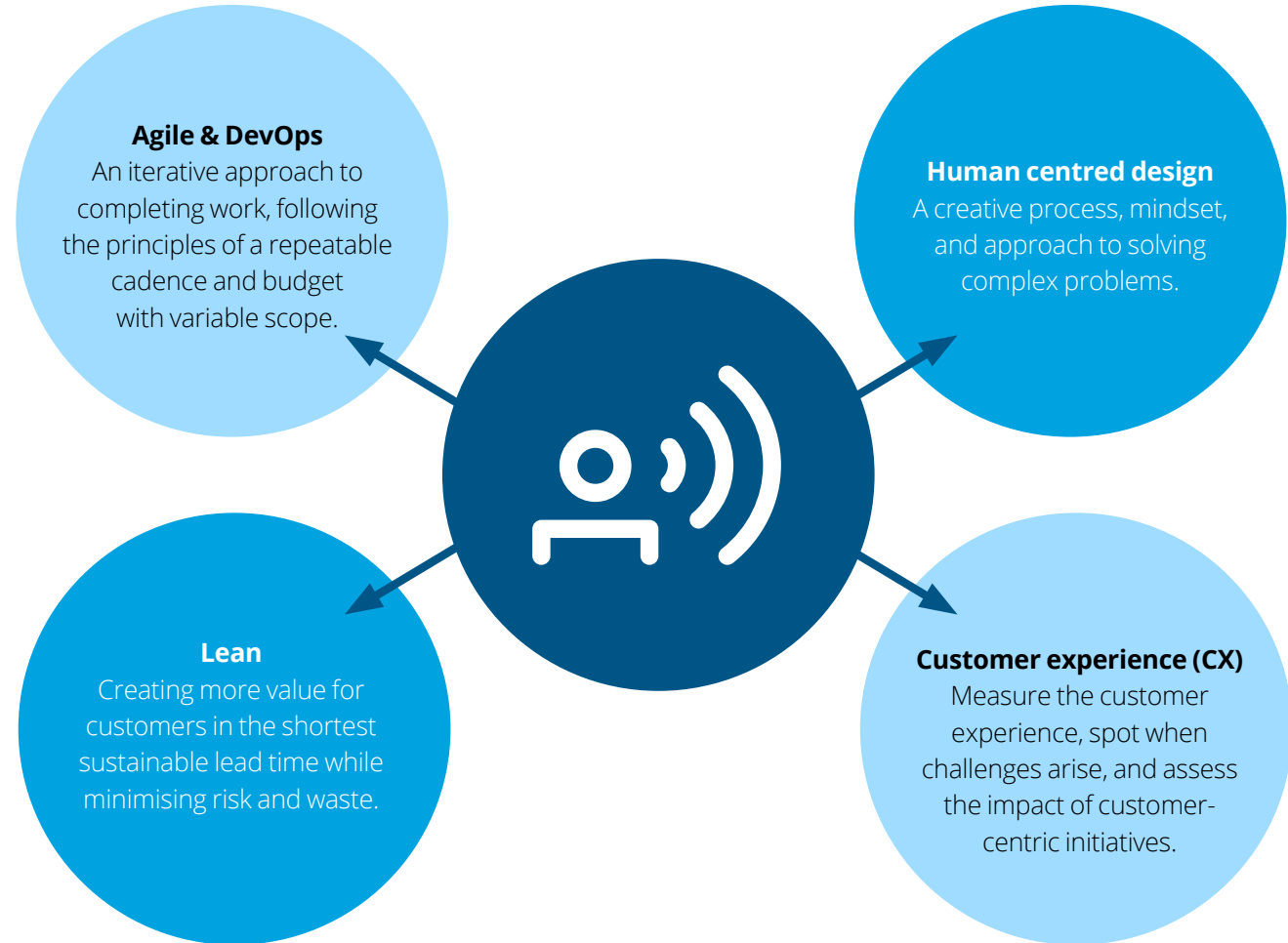
A clear view of the current work helps provide a virtual team with clear direction on what needs to be done and why.

INCOMING WORK-ITEM REVIEW

3
2 5
1
4
7
6

Incoming requests are reviewed and captured
Requests for work originate from across the organisation, the avenues of origination should be reviewed and validated.

PRIORITISATION

High priority ▬▬

2 4

Medium priority ▬

3 5 7

Low priority ▭

1 6

Work is assessed and prioritised
Once work is validated, it can be prioritised. A definition of ready should be in-place to ensure the work can be picked-up.

DELIVERY AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY OUTCOMES

To do	Doing	Done
3	4	2
5		
7		

Team delivers highest priority outcomes
High priority work items are selected for delivery over a given timeframe (commonly two weeks). Tools and techniques, such as a Kanban boards and team stand-ups ensure that flow is constantly reviewed, and any impediments / blockers are addressed.

Optimise virtual ways of working

Clear and lightweight, yet disciplined ways of working are required to support virtual teams. They should encourage autonomy, innovation and drive individual ownership of work and processes. Leveraging principles from existing practices can help your team determine what works best for them.

Tools to enable the virtual team

Communication and collaboration
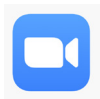
Work and information management

Agile & DevOps
An iterative approach to completing work, following the principles of a repeatable cadence and budget with variable scope.

Human centred design
A creative process, mindset, and approach to solving complex problems.

Lean
Creating more value for customers in the shortest sustainable lead time while minimising risk and waste.

Customer experience (CX)
Measure the customer experience, spot when challenges arise, and assess the impact of customer-centric initiatives.

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Focus on mental well-being and a high performing culture

Mental wellbeing and team inclusivity should be closely monitored as virtual work becomes more prevalent. High performing cultures embrace an open mindset, active listening, suspending judgement, and respecting perspectives.

Building high performing behaviours

Purpose driven, not just profit driven

High trust

Ownership

Transparency

Create virtual company values

Set expectations on communication methods

Measure virtual engagement with pulse surveys

Communicate your culture

Make time for virtual events and coffees as well as celebrations

Encourage remote workers to maintain work-life balance

High performing culture

Focus on Motivation

People are our stars

Fail friendly environment

Experiment friendly environment

Waste repellent culture

Data driven decisions

Model the behaviour you want to see

Culture focused roles

Continuous improvement

10% hack time

Role-model leadership behaviours

An effective leader in the physical workplace does not always translate to an effective virtual leader Clear accountabilities and decision-making frameworks are needed to support leaders so they can, in turn, support their people to ensure their virtual team is powerful and autonomous.

We will work with leaders to develop guidelines so they can ensure they are meeting their pastoral care needs of teams who are distributed. We aim to create leaders who empower and support adaptable teams, over command and control.

Leader checklist:

☐ Have I checked in with all members of my team in the last two weeks?

☐ Have I clearly defined the priorities for our team?

☐ Have I identified impediments to my teams effectiveness, what am I doing to solve them?

☐ Are there any changes to our priorities based on new information today?

☐ Could I clearly articulate how each of my team are feeling and what they are working on?

Portrait of Agile Leaders

Understand and adapt to complexity; use this complexity to achieve business advantage

Are flexible, plan and strategise as they go

Are able to make decisions when little information is available

Develop visions that give direction in the change

Work cross-functionally with diverse teams, and foster such environment

Are hyper connected and always 'on-the-go'

Promote knowledge-sharing and continuously share relevant content and stories with the team

Provide real-time interactive feedback and coaching

Focus on metrics and mindset

Building a continuous improvement mindset within the team begins with developing metrics and pulse-checks to monitor the wellbeing of the team and delivery of essential work, and to adapt as needed.

Measure flow of work

Key business and delivery metrics (e.g. user adoption rates, throughput, etc.) should be determined and tracked and readily reviewed by the leadership team.
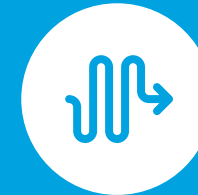
Leverage existing tools to track delivery of essential work

Collaboration tools, such as Azure DevOps, and Jira have inbuilt functionality to measure team effectiveness and delivery.

Monitor individual wellbeing and effectiveness

Individual effectiveness should be monitored, with a focus on individual wellbeing, and contribution to wider team success.

Continuous improvement and adaption

Retrospectives and pulse-checks can help teams to inspect behaviour and use outcomes to adapt the way they work.

Virtual enablement through high performing virtual teams and leaders

How you respond now will create a lasting impact on your organisation moving forward

Like never before, being able to respond with agility and adaptability is a ticket to play in this environment. It can be the difference between survival or suffering the fate of Blockbuster, Sears, RadioShack, or Kodak to name a few. With a focus on these building blocks and a growth mindset, we believe that we can be productive and evolve in this 'new normal'.

For more info, or a virtual coffee, please drop us a line. Thank you.

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