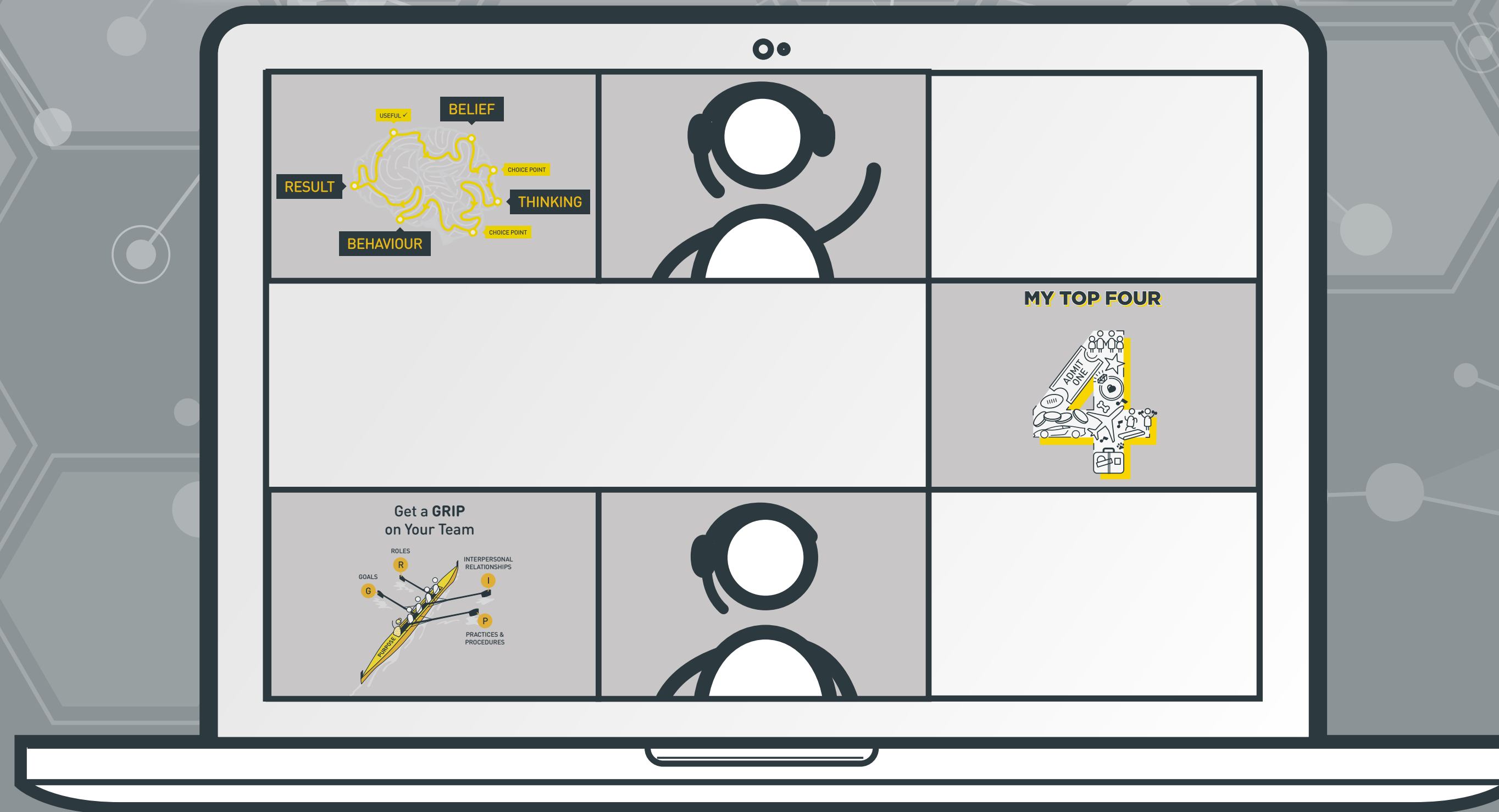


Thriving Online

Thriving online is a mindset. It involves making the most of current circumstances, the challenges and the opportunities.



The Actrúa team have created the Thriving Online interactive resource to help you and your team navigate the complex situation we currently face across the globe. Along with our top tips, we have compiled a collection of great resources to support your personal effectiveness, teamwork and leadership.

Actrúa
PERFORMANCE CULTURES

Know the Technology

Mastering a new technology is a learned skill!

KEY POINT

There's no way around it. If we are to work and communicate online, we need to be fluent in the technology that we are using. We know, it's one thing to get good at the button pressing type of technology, and completely another to have a video camera pointed at us and try to sound sensible to our teammates at the same time! The good news is this is a learned skill. Yes, it may not feel natural to all of us, and some may be better than others, but the same applies with driving a car. Or leadership for that matter! The hard facts are we can all be competent at this skill. Once we are comfortable with the technology, we can move on to our real role as productive, collaborative and creative team members and leaders.

In practice...

Our experience of using online communication technology can feel a bit like learning to drive a car and learning public speaking at the same time! Yes, it feels awkward and clumsy at first, but with lessons and practice, practice, practice, it soon becomes second nature. You have to believe us on this one! Pick your technology of choice, read the tutorials, and then find someone to practice with, to get used to the camera, to improve your presence, and to find your way round the many features and functions of online communication.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- What non-useful beliefs or fears are holding me back from becoming an expert with online communication technology? How can I overcome them?
- Am I set up properly? Can people see and hear me well? Do I need to speak with my employer to improve this?
- What can I do to be fluent in online communication? What's my plan for developing my competency?

USEFUL RESOURCES

- LinkedIn have opened up their learning portal for a period of time. They have some great tutorials for technologies such as Teams, Zoom, Skype and Webex.
- [Advanced Microsoft Teams](#)
- [Skype](#)
- [Webex](#)
- [Zoom](#)

Embrace It

Are your beliefs useful for the new environment?

KEY POINT

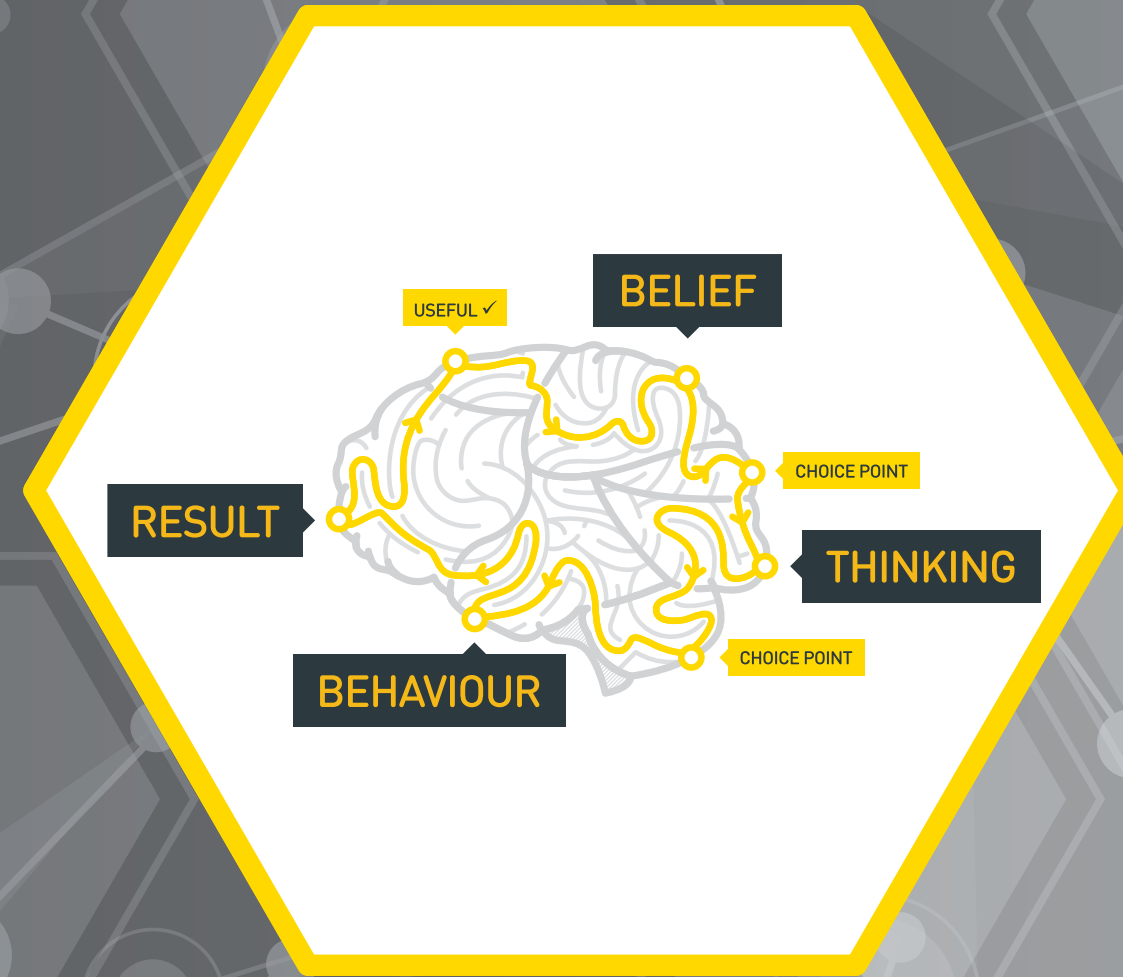
It's very hard to commit to something we don't fully believe in. We may have a fundamental belief, for example that working from home, or online, does not work for us or the team we are part of. Maybe it's hard to control productivity. Maybe collaboration has become difficult. The fact is, this choice has been taken away from us. We have to make this work! What we think, say and do is all framed by our beliefs. The fact is, we have choice points. What if we reframed our thinking from "this is too hard", or "this won't work" to "what's the opportunity?" or "how do I support others"? This can be followed up by useful actions and useful communication. You've reframed your belief! Once your belief is refreshed, embrace it fully, and your thinking, your behaviours and your results will look different!

In practice...

It may be semantics, but we often find the words we choose help us set up a useful mindset. Try avoiding using the words "social distancing", "remote" and "virtual". The mindset that they can create is one of distance and, avoidance. Hardly useful! Instead, think about words such as "physical distancing, social connection" "online", "collaborative and empowered" and "open" to describe the new way we work. Different mindset!

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- What are my beliefs about working from home and online working? Are those beliefs useful in the current environment?
- Could I replace my current belief with something more useful?
- Are there any words I could be using or actions that I could be taking which might support a reframed belief?



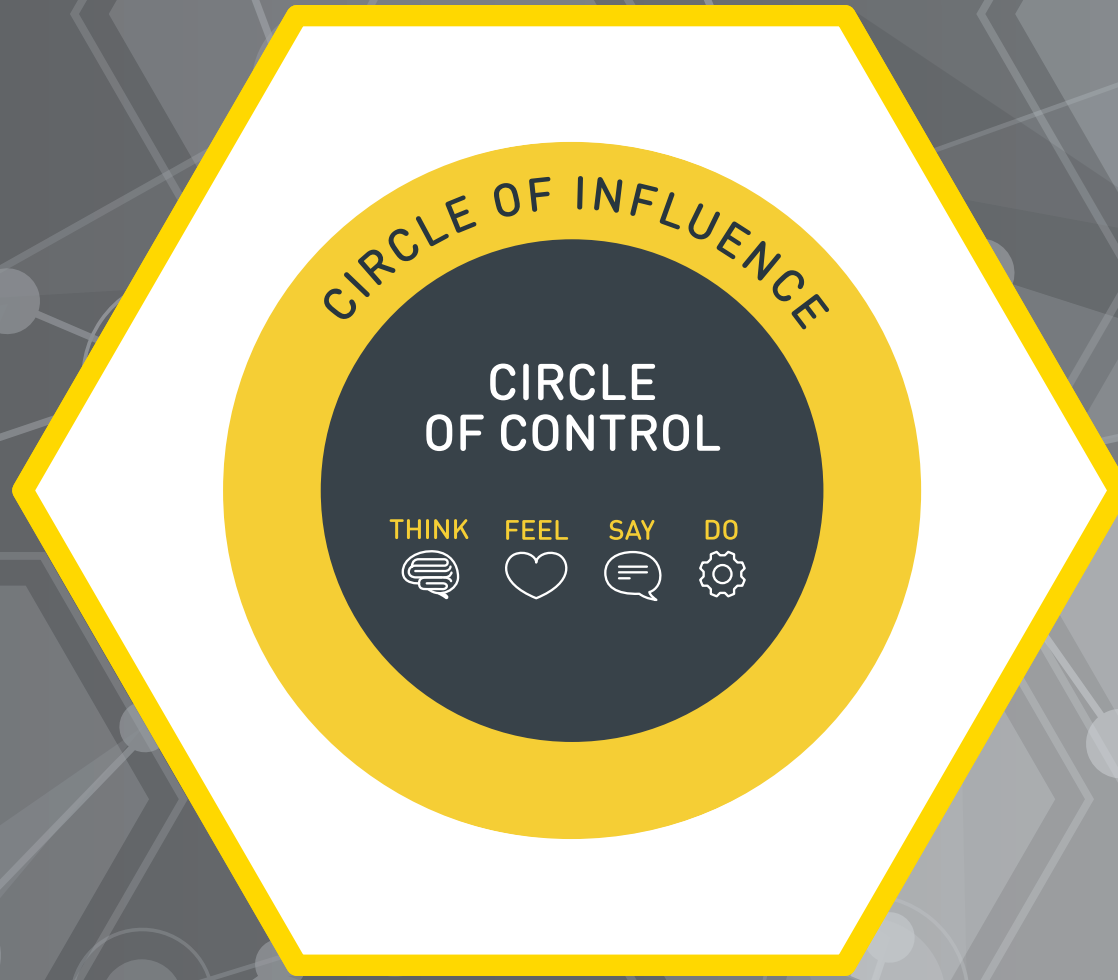
[CLICK](#) on the model to dig a little deeper into how it might be useful in this situation.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- Trello have produced a great guide called "How to Embrace Remote Work" [CLICK HERE](#)
- Slightly off topic, but a deeper insight by one of our favourites, Brene Brown, interviewing David Kessler, using the grief /change model to find meaning. [CLICK HERE](#)

Control and Influence

What you think, feel, say or do is within your control!



[CLICK](#) on the model to dig a little deeper into how it might be useful in this situation.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- Mike Gutman walks through his life working from home, offering some great practical advice, being in control. [CLICK HERE](#)
- Some fantastic insights from Heidi Gardner at Harvard Law School for leaders (or anyone), working from home, from connecting, to goal setting. Take control of this part of your life! ▶ [CLICK HERE](#)

KEY POINT

We know that there are things in life that we have no control over, and there are others which are within our control. As we are acutely aware, the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects it has, such as forcing us to work from home, is out of our control. But how we react and respond to it is completely within our power. The problem is we can sometimes confuse the two, or the controllability can change, and this causes stress! We are currently going through one of the largest loss-of-control scenarios of our generation! Being able to let go of those things we cannot control, or influence is an important lesson. An even more important element is, where we can control something, let's do so. And this often starts with the way we respond to things, our thoughts, our actions.

In practice...

So, we can't have a morning coffee catch up with co-workers? Too bad! Be the one who comes up with the most creative way of connecting at a human level. So we can't pull 10 people into a room to brainstorm an idea? Well I have bad news. Brainstorming sessions are made for ... extroverts! So a brainstorm might not be getting the best out of the team anyway! So what are the alternatives to ensure a fully diverse range of input? We encourage you to think of your own, and if you need inspiration, there are many wonderful examples of this emerging. A two minute google search may find your next great engagement idea!

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- In a seemingly hopeless situation, what can I still control or have influence over?
- What is the worst thing that can happen in this situation, and what one thing can I do to stop that from happening?

Create Clarity

First understand WHY. The what and the how can follow!

KEY POINT

Online communication can lose some of the subtleties of face to face communication, or the ability to regularly pop into a meeting room or to just walk up to someone's desk. It becomes incredibly important to find ways to ensure that the team is crystal clear about who is doing what, when, and how the work is passed from one to the other, or how collaboration occurs. Ensuring clarity on a role or task can reduce anxiety and confusion in the individual and result in outstanding (and expected) outcomes! The first step in gaining clarity, for your self and for others is to understand WHY something is being done. Once the context is clear, we can build the methods and processes to achieve the outcome.

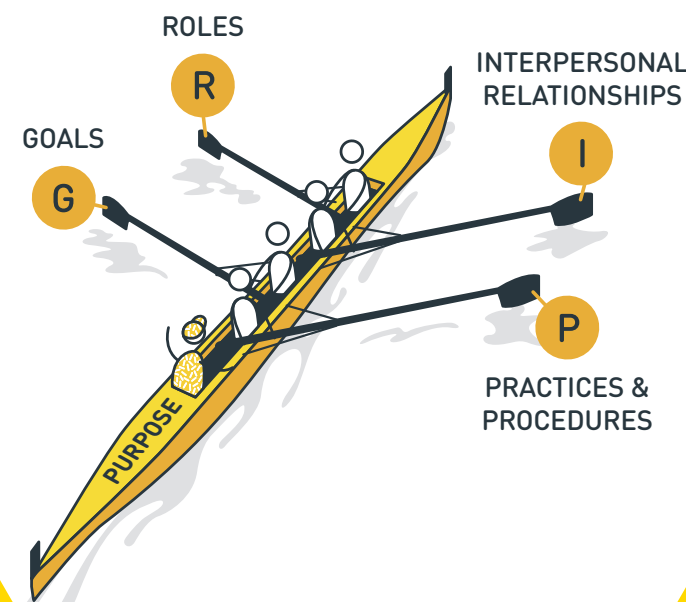
In practice...

Gaining clarity is within our control. Make the search for clarity a multi-way conversation. It is not just the responsibility of the manager to give clarity to their employee. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure you have the clarity you need for a role or task, employee to manager, employee to team members, employee to subordinates, stakeholders etc. Take the initiative! First gain clarity, then take action!

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Why? Do I have context on what the purpose is and what is expected?
- What? Am I clear on the outcomes expected of me and others?
- How? Do I have to follow a specific process, or can I create my own solution? Do I know the resources and collaboration requirements?

Get a GRIP on Your Team



[CLICK](#) on the model to dig a little deeper into how it might be useful in this situation.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- The Simon Sinek book "Start with Why" is a great go-to reminder of the importance of context and purpose. If you know Why, the How and the What become significantly easier to do.
- In his short video, ► Chris Hadfield, a Canadian Astronaut, provides clear insights into keeping clear and focused in an isolated environment.
- This Gartner article has provided a clear and simple set of actions for team leaders. We argue that these could be used by anyone!

[CLICK HERE](#)

Focus on Outcomes

If you are delegating or being given work online, agree on the outcome first.

CONTEXT

PURPOSE

OUTPUT

RESOURCES

TIMEFRAME

[CLICK](#) on the model to dig a little deeper into how it might be useful in this situation.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- An oldie but a goodie, the “Begin with the end in mind” section of Stephen Covey’s “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” is worth reading.
- A model for getting results, engaging others and understanding ourselves while working at a distance. Great insights from LinkedIn by Kevin Eikenberry. [CLICK HERE](#)
- Dave Crenshaw provides sound insights around being clear and efficient in achieving your outcomes working from home. [CLICK HERE](#)

KEY POINT

One of the biggest detractors of working from home, based on years of controlling peoples' time, is the lack of trust that the person is actually “working”. The fact is, people generally work harder specifically because of that! Outcome based work gives accountability to the employee, no matter how they achieve it. This is far more engaging than being managed by time or process. In the absence of ongoing face to face supervision, if you are delegating work, or having it delegated to you, it is crucial to focus on the outcomes required. While it is important to have a framework of structure around how work is completed, and this responsibility is generally moved to the person doing the work, focus should always remain on the outcome.

In practice...

We believe that with the change to online work, moving to outcomes-based work may cause one of the larger shifts in organisational culture. It may be an interesting exercise to go through yours or your teams task lists or role descriptions and identify which are outcome-based goals and which are process based. Then have a conversation with your manager or team about this and realign the goals to become outcomes based. Be clear that with outcomes based work, the employee is empowered to create their own schedule. This may be new, and is also a learned skill. Set yourself up for success by developing your scheduling and time management skills.

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Is this goal focused on the tasks or steps of the process, or is it focused on the outcome?
- How will things have changed upon completion of this goal?
- Are you empowered to create your own path to the outcome? Do you have the tools to do that?
- As a leader, does your team member know the expected outcome? Have you been given a clear pathway with support and resources to get there?

MY TOP FOUR



[CLICK](#) on the model to dig a little deeper into how it might be useful in this situation.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- The Black Dog Institutes' "Settling the Mind" series is an outstanding collection of information to support mental wellbeing whilst working online.
www.blackdoginstitute.org.au
- In this slightly longer webcast, The Centre for Creative Leadership discusses resilient leadership in a practical way. [CLICK HERE](#)

Look After Yourself

To look after others, we should first look after ourselves

KEY POINT

Living and working under the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 is a new experience for everyone, no matter how much or how little you have worked from home previously. With this comes real challenges as environments and routines are changed immeasurably. As we settle into this new world of work, it is important to "check in" with ourselves first, to ensure that our environment, our routines and our physical and mental health is being managed. For many of us, this will include ensuring that our immediate families and friends are ok. And finally, we should check that we are set up well for online work.

In practice...

With working from home, the lines often get blurred between work and home. Setting up a new routine and forming new habits will be an important step to settling into online working (and living). Write it down at first and try to stick to it. This could include regular rising and bedtimes, a separate and specific work place that you "commute" to, regular breaks, getting outside, a daily exercise and healthy eating routine, digital detox time and time to catch up with friends (online or by phone of course!). Developing good habits ensures a positive and healthy mindset!

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Am I ok personally? Am I looking after myself physically and mentally?
- Am I connecting with others, either to support them or to ask for help if needed?
- Have I got a specific workspace and have I set up a routine for myself? Am I getting a break from work and dividing my time between work and personal life?

Stay Connected

It's not just about the frequency, but the QUALITY of connection.

S Status

C Certainty

A Autonomy

R Relatedness

F Fairness

[CLICK](#) on the model to dig a little deeper into how it might be useful in this situation.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- The journal article by David Rock, "SCARF: a brain-based model for collaborating with and influencing others" gives a good foundation for the SCARF process. [David Rock SCARF pdf](#)
- Sally Prosser is a communication expert who is doing a lot of work in the online communication space right now. [LISTEN HERE](#)
- "Making it through Crazy Times" e-book curated by Lou Ahlquist, Actrúa Principal Consultant. [Click](#) to download your copy.

KEY POINT

There is a huge amount of information saying that we should connect more. Whilst this may be true, we should also connect better. Online communication takes away a lot of the nuances of body language, communication frequency and so on. But with a strong will and a bit of creativity, a huge amount can be done to bridge the perceived communication gap.

In practice...

When you are on a call or video-conference, it's worth practicing your online connecting communication. Look at the camera, use your hands, speak clearly. Keep your energy high. Take time to check in with each person, engage them and "bring them into the room" by regularly asking their opinion, or specific questions. Try new things and keep practicing!

USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Am I being authentic, sincere and vulnerable in my communication? Am I building trust?
- Does the way I communicate engage and pull others towards me, or does it invoke defensive or adverse responses?
- Am I getting into the other persons agenda by asking great, open questions?

Further Resources

A few resources from the Actrúa team that we think might be useful!

TED TALKS

- Mini TED talk about a “distributed” network of employees, working from...wherever they like! Some good tips about moving to a distributed structure ▶
- TED Connects provides a group of presentations on Coronavirus and inspiring us through the change. ▶

WORKING REMOTELY

Linked In: Mike Gutman walks through his life working from home, offering some great practical advice. ▶

Linked In: Time Management: Working from Home. ▶

Trello article, how to Embrace Remote Work. ▶

CCL – 10 Tips for working at home. ▶

Heiko Fischer provides a view on democratic organisations and what that looks like for remote work. ▶

LEADING REMOTELY

Getting results, engaging others and understanding ourselves while working at a distance. Great insights from Linked In by Kevin Eikenberry. ▶

Some fantastic insights from Heidi Gardner at Harvard Law School for leaders (or anyone), working from home from connecting, to goal setting. Take control of this part of your life! ▶

CCL “best practices for managing virtual teams and meetings” ▶

This Gartner article has provided a clear and simple set of actions for team leaders. We argue that these could be used by anyone! ▶

Gartner Article about being ready to work remotely. ▶

REMOTE WORKING TECHNOLOGY

- [Advanced Microsoft Teams](#)
- [Skype](#)
- [Webex](#)
- [Zoom](#)
- Sally Prosser, communications expert, provides invaluable tips on webcam technique ▶

MENTAL HEALTH & RESILIENCE

Managing Stress for Positive Change ▶

Building Resilience ▶

CCL Webcast – Building more resilient Leadership ▶

CCL Article – Leadership Resiliency ▶

CCL – Wellness through time ▶

Chris Hadfield, a Canadian Astronaut, provides clear insights into keeping clear and focused in an isolated environment ▶