

What shape will your business recovery take?

Five phases you will need to navigate.

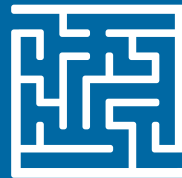


Past recessions have shown, that businesses who recover with speed and discipline can create a small competitive advantage now; which can then be used to extend their lead further in their chosen sectors for years to come.

McKinsey & Company have modelled the future of business & economic recovery in 5 phases, which every business will have to go through.

Resolve:

Address the immediate challenges that COVID-19 represents to the workforce, customers and partners



Resilience:

Address near-term cash management challenges, and broader resiliency issues



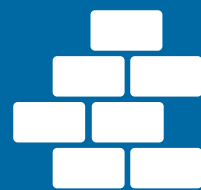
Return:

Create a detailed plan to return the business back to scale quickly



Reimagination:

Reimagine the 'new-norm' and how your organisation can reinvent itself



Reform:

Be clear about how the environment in your industry (regulations, role of government) could evolve



Although organisations will have to address very different challenges brought on by both their industry requirements and changes in demand for their specific products and services; one challenge that everyone is facing is the rate at which change now needs to happen.

For businesses who have already invested heavily in modern workplace solutions and processes, navigating the changes brought about by the Corona climate is a more natural transition. They have been able to maintain a laser focus on their demand, supply chain and their people to pivot appropriately to retain customers.

However, there are a significant number of businesses out there who felt unprepared for this change. These companies are having to make substantial CapEx and resource-heavy investments into their technology stacks

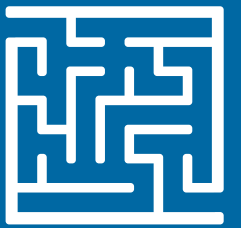
and business applications; to ensure their workforce can remain productive.

As we look to the future it is clear the only certainty is more change. As technology experts at the sharp end of remote working, we are seeing and advising that every business assesses the tools available to them and operating disciplines to prepare for the journey ahead.

We have created a checklist for you so you can benchmark your progress at each phase of recovery and ensure you have the key technologies and critical processes in place that will keep you agile and underpin your new operations.

RESOLVE

Addressing immediate challenges



Your teams will have spent the last few months in this phase ensuring the well-being of your staff; re-designing organisational structures; working hard to retain and assist clients; assessing cashflow; applying for financial support; addressing breakdowns in your supply chain and ensuring your remote workforce has access to the right technology and applications to operate effectively. Whilst the majority are transitioning into the next phase some businesses are still at the tail end, only just starting to better utilise their business applications to keep their people energised and productive.

To ensure you have considered all the bases, the Resolve Phase Checklist is below.

Resolve Phase Checklist:

Productivity – Making the transition to productive remote working

	Do your employees have access to approved devices for remote working?
	Are your employees able to access all critical applications from home?
	Can your employees access business phone systems effectively to maintain client service levels?
	Are all your business files and documents available to employees remotely?
	Have you provided initial training to employees, so they are able to access, and use priority IT systems effectively?
	Is your IT team able to access remote devices to provide IT support and keep your employees productive?

Communication & collaboration – How do you continue to communicate clearly with colleagues, clients and partners?

	Established regular online 1-1 & team meetings to check in, synchronise work and address issues or blockers?
	Do you have the right collaboration tools in place, (e.g. Microsoft Teams), for different scenarios and complexities?
	Have you established a cadence of updates & engagements, offering more frequent update, targeted content, and/or individual outreach?
	Are you able to collaborate effectively with your clients and other external supply chain partners & suppliers?

Business Risk Management – Those business risks requiring immediate attention

	Have you immediately cut low-risk levers to protect your cash position?
	Are you running a 13-week rolling cashflow forecast and acting decisively?
	Have you applied for all funding and business support grants being made available by government and other organisations?
	Have you reached out to your clients to understand how you can provide additional value to support them?
	Have you risk assessed key partners that will impact the services you provide to your clients?

Agile Technology – the ‘tech’ checklist

	Do you have enough laptops and other hardware for your remote workforce to work from?
	Are your remote access systems (i.e. VPN) fit for purpose and have sufficient capacity, including licencing?
	Have you considered increasing internet bandwidth into your office locations with on-premise IT systems?
	Do any of your remote workers live in internet poor areas that you need to consider interim 4G/5G solutions for?
	If your organisation is still using on-premise backups, are you changing media to maintain the integrity of your backups?
	Have you informed your employees to check that wi-fi passwords are secure before using home wi-fi for business purposes?
	Are your IT systems and data protected with multi-factor authentication (MFA) to protect remote access?

RESILIENCE

Be better positioned to absorb future shocks



The majority of companies are now entering this phase of building on the foundations created in the resolve phase to become more robust in their operations and agile to prepare for future change. Some companies will have adopted the ‘band aid’ approach to accelerated change and remote work and will be repairing potential issues that have arisen. As explored previously the companies that were more prepared have had a smoother transition and have been able to invest their resource where it matters most. In other words what made them resilient was their preparation for change and remote working before the crisis.

In this phase the questions build upon foundations previously established; aimed to strengthen your businesses shock absorption so in the event of more change you come out better and stronger than your competition.

Resilience Phase Checklist:

People & Process – Supporting the wellbeing & resilience of your employees	
	Help employees to establish routines & create work-life balance separation?
	Implement a crisis management hub within your collaboration tool that can become the ‘go to’ place for information to help reduce employee stress and anxiety.
	Use tools such as Microsoft Forms to gather information from your team on their wellbeing and challenges they face working from home.
	Provide further training for your employees that improves productivity and security of remote systems usage.
	Make effective use of task management system to ensure work is delivered on time and accountability can be established?
	Establish how to make best use of technology to facilitate effective onboarding of new employees.
Secure & Robust Technology – Remove risk brought about by forced and rapid change	
	Do your employees receive security awareness training to raise their awareness of increased cyber threats?
	Do you need to implement new tools or processes to manage document version control that is becoming difficult to control?
	Does the organisation have an effective ‘Bring Your Own Device, BYOD’ policy to prevent personal devices becoming a security threat?
	Run a session with your employees to identify how technology could have made your ‘resolve’ phase easier.

“The ability to absorb a shock, and to come out of it better than the competition - will be the key to survival and long-term prosperity.”

Business Risk Management – Reducing the near-term business risks

	Have you reviewed GDPR risks if your use of, or location of, personal data has changed?
	Conduct a full review to identify lessons from your resolve experience. What worked well? What didn’t?
	Are your KPI dashboards still relevant, or do they need adapting to help navigate the near-term challenges?
	Is there any sensitive data being saved outside the control of your central IT systems?
	Are you still compliant with your certifications and data regulations that your clients and key stakeholders require?
	Have you reviewed the success, or otherwise, of your business continuity plan, and updated to reflect lessons learnt?

Agile Technology – the ‘tech’ checklist

	Are there systems, (e.g. DevOps), that were not available during the resolve phase, that need enabling for remote access now?
	Review your business phone systems to ensure call routing is configured appropriately for remote working.
	Review the usage, and in particular the security configuration, of collaboration tools that were adopted rapidly during the resolve phase.
	Ensure remote working policies provide clarity about how technology should and shouldn’t be used.
	Are you controlling the use of unauthorised apps (Shadow IT) such as DropBox, WhatsApp and similar tools?
	Identify impractical security measures that inhibit remote working, leading to employees adopting insecure workarounds.
	Are you monitoring the ‘Dark Web’ for breached security credentials?
	Update your backup & recovery systems to prevent loss of data stored in new locations – collaboration platforms, local PCs etc
	Have you installed web protection on devices to protect against web-based security threats? These devices may no longer be protected by the internal company firewall.
	Do you need to install a backup internet line into your office locations to protect against failure of the primary line, which would prevent remote working?
	Has a review of your IT usage outside the company firewall been done?

RETURN

Bringing the organisation back to scale quickly



As the world starts to see a sustained decline in COVID-19 cases and even better a vaccination is on the horizon. Peoples natural craving for order will no doubt mean that the world will return as quickly as it can to the next-norm. It would be wise to keep an eye out for the signs of return and use countries like China, who are ahead of us in the Corona timeline, as a benchmark.

The key considerations of this phase.

Return Phase Checklist:

Protecting Employees – If, how, and when to return employees to offices

	Is it safe to return the workforce to the offices?
	Have you considered precautions that need to be made if you work in a shared office environment with other companies?
	Will shift patterns need to change, or even be embraced, to help protect your employees?
	Can you use flexible working practices to manage a return to work?

Prepare your technology plan – preventing disruptive overload to the IT function

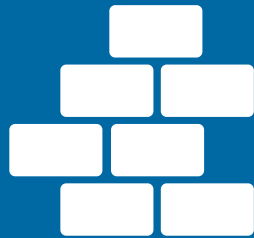
	Provide adequate notice to your IT team of returning furloughed employees to action system access and licencing changes.
	Review policies on PC form factor for future purchases. Will you still purchase desktops or convert to fully mobile devices?
	Identify ‘clunky’ and ‘repetitive’ processes that need to be simplified.
	Transform paper-based processes into digital workflows.
	Integrate your business applications to stop duplicate data entry and keep information up to date in all sources?

Business Risk Management – Set yourself for the next-norm?

	Do you have the right suppliers and partners to help you transition to the ‘next-norm’?
	Have you completed a full risk assessment of your key partners & suppliers to check their ability to return?
	Is your supply chain at risk of failure, or maybe acquisition in order to survive?
	Have you communicated your plan to return to work safely to your clients?
	Are you prepared for increased diligence from your own clients about your own ability to return? Prepare a communication plan to respond appropriately.
	Have you updated your Health & Safety policies to reflect COVID-19 responsibilities?
	Are you comfortable your IT team (internal or external) have the capability and capacity to transform your IT usage for the ‘next-norm’?
	Do you know what your competitors are doing to position themselves for a return to growth? Are they ahead or behind you?

Agile Technology – the ‘tech’ checklist

	Complete risk assessments on devices returning into the company network to remove security & productivity risks introduced whilst remote working.
	Consider dedicated broadband connectivity, appropriate firewalls, and printing/scanning for employees who will become increasingly home based.
	Which on-premise applications and workloads can be transitioned to the cloud?
	How do you need to adapt hot desking facilities to comply with future government guidelines?



It’s fair to say that businesses will have changed, and some may never be the same again. Whilst the changes are hard to predict, we can anticipate a few, as well as possible ways we can help adaptation and capitalisation on the new normal.

Whatever the future looks like rapid changes are continuous and inevitable. We’d encourage that while you look at the shape of your business recovery; it includes the discussed new and agile modern workplace disciplines underpinned by the right technology. So that when change has to happen, you can remain ahead of the competition and change can be done with minimum impact on your business continuity.

Reimagine Phase Checklist:

Agile Work Environment – Physical space and employee expectations?	
	How will the rise in working from home reduce your need for costly office space and on-site meetings?
	How will any office space you keep need to adapt from the traditional office space, into an agile working space?
	Will your clients, partners and supply chain expect different ways of working?
	What support will your employees expect (financial and otherwise) to support home working?
	What initiatives are you planning to support demand from employees for better work life balance?
	Is the movement for a 4-day working week going to build momentum as a result of our experiences?

Future Technology – Embrace innovation to support the next norm	
	How will new technology such as artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, automation, and Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, help your organisation, or introduce new competitive threats?
	Can you incorporate more AI based working into your operations?
	Have you conducted a full and open-minded review to understand the opportunities and threats that new tech presents?

Business Opportunities – Take advantage of the next-norm	
	Can you provide your services in a ‘remote’ manner that could be a better fit for the future?
	Does your marketplace have new challenges that you can help solve?
	Hold an internal ideas session with employees to think about opportunities for the future.
	How will you compete for new talent, assuming that the future workforce will have significantly different expectations to current?

Agile Technology – the ‘tech’ checklist	
	New working from home tools will surface and require further education and implementation. Be prepared and budget for investment.
	Can you incorporate more AI based working into your operations?

REFORM

Shifting regulatory and competitive shifts



As governments intervene and drive changes to regulations, many organisations will face social pressures to continue the reduced amount of travel, as well as other environmental factors. As employees get more used to the work from home life, what will your organisation do to ensure employees don't have to go through yet more change? In addition, supply chain partnerships may have adopted a new work style.

Let's take a look.

Reform Phase Checklist:

People, technology and business reform	
	The possible introduction of telehealth and AI assisted healthcare to benefits packages could end up a requirement that your organisation needs to provide.
	Will future employees, clients, and key stakeholders increase pressure on reduced travel to help the environment?
	How will remote working and gig economy trends impact your organisation?
	Will concern about supply chain resilience spur a reversal of off-shoring services?
	Will government become more aggressive with broadband rollout and 5G?
	Will COVID-19 tracking technology relax or harden our views on surveillance technology? What does that mean for business?
	What regulation's will be introduced leading to a dramatic shift in the work landscape?
	How will these regulations impact your industry, supply chains and worker rights?
	Will taxation and corporation taxes be drastically increased to pay back government spending throughout the crisis?
	What impact will potential increased taxation have on motivation?
	What are the Health and safety implications for increased remote working?

About CMI

CMI has helped thousands of organisations gain a competitive edge through strategic IT and dependable support. As one of the UK's leading Managed IT Service Providers, CMI operates from offices in Belfast, London and the Thames Valley. Awarded IT Managed Service Provider of the year 2019, and one of the Top 50 Best Managed IT Companies, we believe IT is a fundamental building block in the growth of business, and we are passionate about the success of our clients. We take care of your IT, so you can focus on running your organisation.

The ability to absorb a shock, and to come out of it better than the competition - will be the key to survival and long-term prosperity.

To discuss business recovery further, speak to a member of the CMI team today.



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