



Wisconsin Women in Higher Education Leadership

COVID-19:

**Five Fundamental Shifts for
Higher Education People
Leaders**

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Education and Professional Credentials

- ◆ Ph.D., Higher Education Administration, Michigan State University
- ◆ Master of Business Administration/Master of Arts – Human Resources Management
- ◆ Dual Senior Professional in Human Resources Certifications: SPHR; SHRM-SCP
- ◆ International Coaching Federation (ICF) Certified Executive Coach (4X Certified)

Experience Summary

Consultant, change leader and people strategist having worked across government, higher education, management consulting, and non-profit sectors.

Faculty Associate/Instructor for graduate and undergraduate courses in business, human resources, organizational communication, change leadership and strategy

Founder & CEO, Bridge Braintrust LLC, an executive coaching, talent development and career design consultancy.





For exploration

- How has Coronavirus (COVID-19) impacted higher education?
- What is the impact of COVID-19 on the higher education workforce?
- What are the five fundamental shifts people leaders ***must*** make in higher education right now?

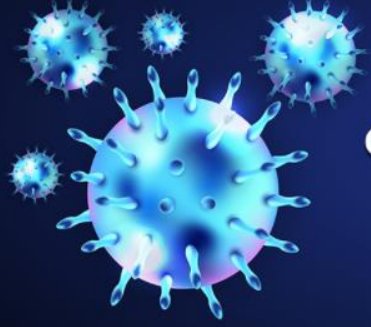




COVID-19: We are living in a VUCA World

- **Volatile:** unpredictable, sudden and extreme change
- **Uncertain:** Important information is not known; present and future situation may be unclear and indefinite
- **Complex:** Multiple parts, often interrelated, varied decision factors and points
- **Ambiguous:** the meaning of an event can be understood in different ways.





**CORONAVIRUS
COVID-19**

How has Coronavirus impacted higher education?

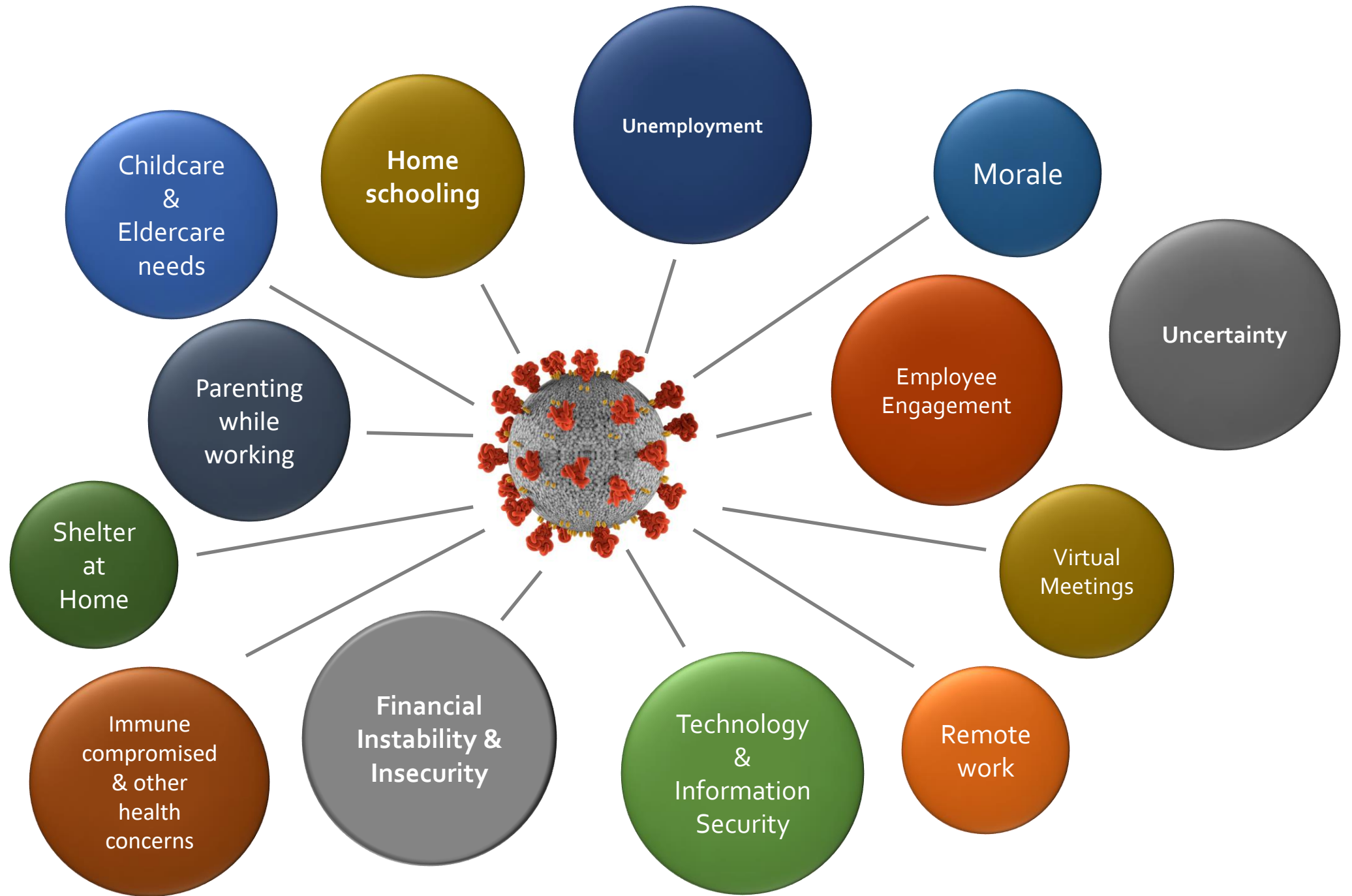
- **Abrupt shift in product delivery to virtual environment**
- **Swift pivot to remote work; greater reliance on technology; increased information security risks**
- **Further declines in student enrollment**
- **Greater constraints on resources**
- **Underutilized physical space (i.e. classrooms, buildings)**
- **Largely inefficient and ineffective campus operations, technology, people**
- **Toll on psychological, emotional and physical well-being**





**What is the impact of COVID-19
on the higher education workforce?**

Impacts of COVID-19

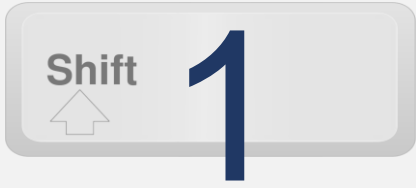




COVID-19: Five Fundamental Shifts for Higher Education People Leaders

1. Engagement of the virtual workforce
2. Psychological well-being
3. Connecting trust, flexibility and productivity
4. Manage change
5. Leveraging generational preferences





Strategies to increase

▲ Engagement of the virtual workforce

- Communicate clearly, broadly, often and with transparency
- Provide resources for success
- Model collaboration and partnering
- Look for fun ways to connect with employees
- Express appreciation, celebrate small wins & recognize progress
- Be flexible and understanding



Shift



1

Strategies to increase

Engagement of the virtual workforce



- Establish expectations for rules of engagement between team members
- Develop a structured check-in schedule
- “*Trickle-down effect*” – two-prong approach: acknowledge stress and express confidence in the team (D. Goleman)
- Monitor workloads to prevent burnout
- Encourage time-off for non-work activities



Psychological Impact of COVID-19

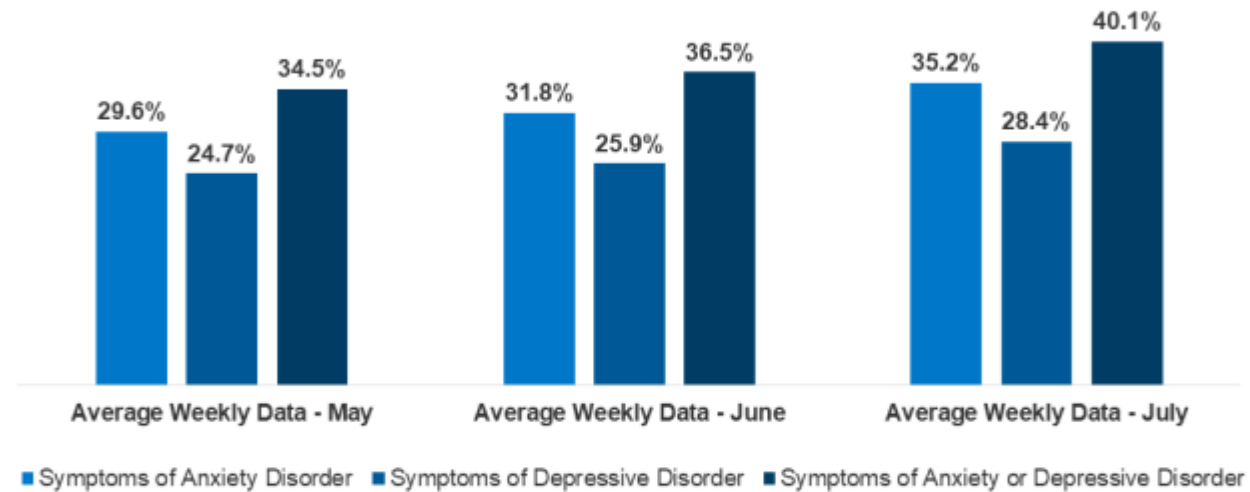
Mental health issues have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Average weekly data for June 2020 found that 36.5% of adults in the U.S. reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder, up from 11.0% in 2019.



Psychological Well-being



Average Share of Adults Reporting Symptoms of Anxiety or Depressive Disorder During the COVID-19 Pandemic, May-July 2020



NOTES: These adults, ages 18+, have symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder that generally occur more than half the days or nearly every day. Data presented for "symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder" also includes adults with symptoms of both anxiety and depressive disorder. Data presented for May is the average of the following weeks of data: May 7-12, May 14-19, May 21-26, May 28- June 2; for June, data is the average of June 4-9, June 11-16, June 18-23, and June 25-30; for July, data is the average of July 2-7, July 9-14, and July 16-21 (last week of published data).

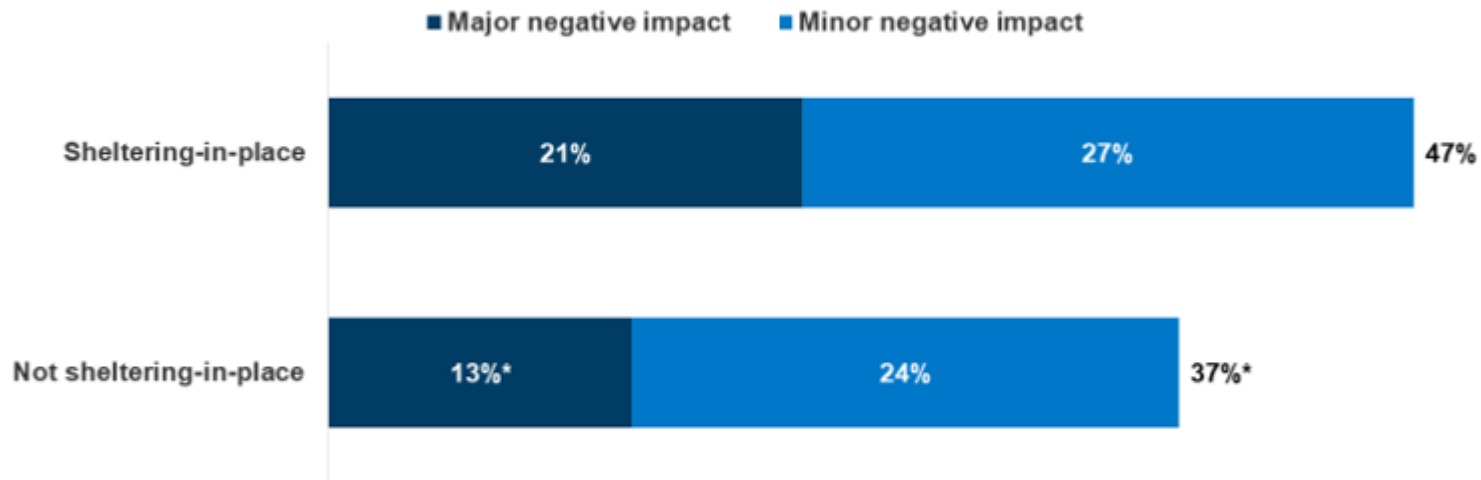
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, 2020.



Figure 1: Average Share of Adults Reporting Symptoms of Anxiety or Depressive Disorder During the COVID-19 Pandemic, May-July 2020

Psychological Well-being

Percent of Adults Who Say Worry or Stress Related to the Coronavirus Has Had a Negative Impact on Their Mental Health, Based on Sheltering-in-Place Status



NOTES: *Indicates a statistically significant difference between those sheltering-in-place and those not sheltering-in-place at the $p < 0.05$ level. Distribution may not sum to total due to rounding.
SOURCE: KFF Health Tracking Poll (conducted March 25-30, 2020).

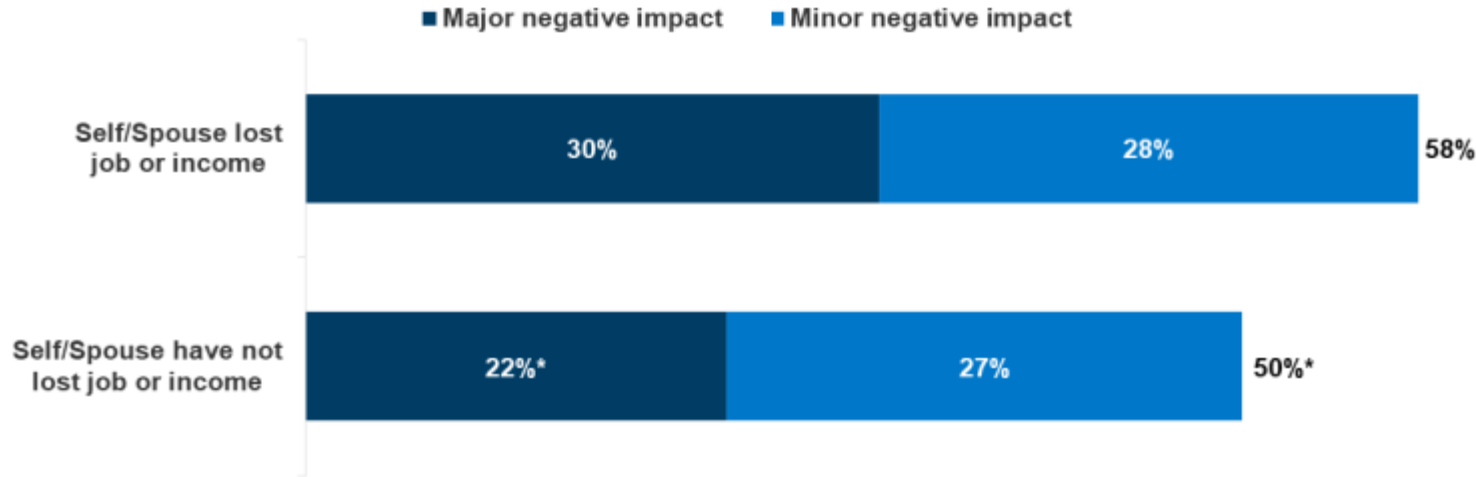


Figure 2: Percent of Adults Who Say Worry or Stress Related to the Coronavirus Has Had a Negative Impact on Their Mental Health, Based on Sheltering-in-Place Status



Psychological Well-being

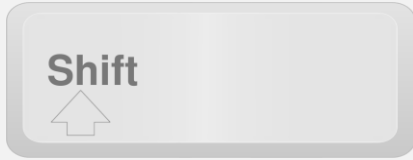
Percent of Adults Who Say Worry or Stress Related to the Coronavirus Has Had a Negative Impact on Their Mental Health, Based on Job or Income Loss



NOTES: *Indicates a statistically significant difference between those who have lost job or income and those who have not lost job or income at the p<0.05 level.
SOURCE: KFF Health Tracking Poll (conducted July 14-19, 2020).



Figure 5: Percent of Adults Who Say Worry or Stress Related to the Coronavirus Has Had a Negative Impact on Their Mental Health, Based on Job or Income Loss



Ways to Promote Well-being

- Holistic well-being includes **financial, mental, psychological, social and physical**
- Make **financial resources** available to support struggling employees
- Create **safe spaces** for employees to bring their full-selves to work
- Connect employees to **behavioral health** resources
- Ensure employees feel **physically safe**



Shift



3

Connect **trust** + *flexibility* = **productivity**

Trust = **Likeability** + **Reliability**

Ways to build trust

- Foster relationships & make personal connections
- Promote transparency and open discussions
- Evaluate the work by measuring outcomes against goals
- Develop a feedback culture
- Ask, *“How can I support you?”*



Shift



3

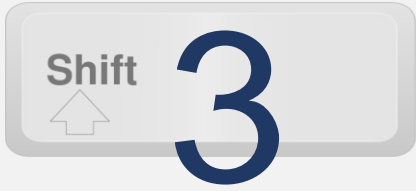
Connect **trust** + *flexibility* = **productivity**



Build in *flexibility* with policy changes

- Revisit policies and workplace expectations
- Promote remote work & flexible scheduling
- Enhance paid leave, perks & benefits



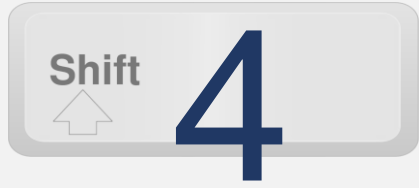


Connect **trust** + **flexibility** = **productivity**

Ways to increase *Productivity*

- Set clear expectations for performance
- Publicly recognize good work
- Express support for disconnecting at a certain time
- Extend grace regularly
- Happy employees are more productive



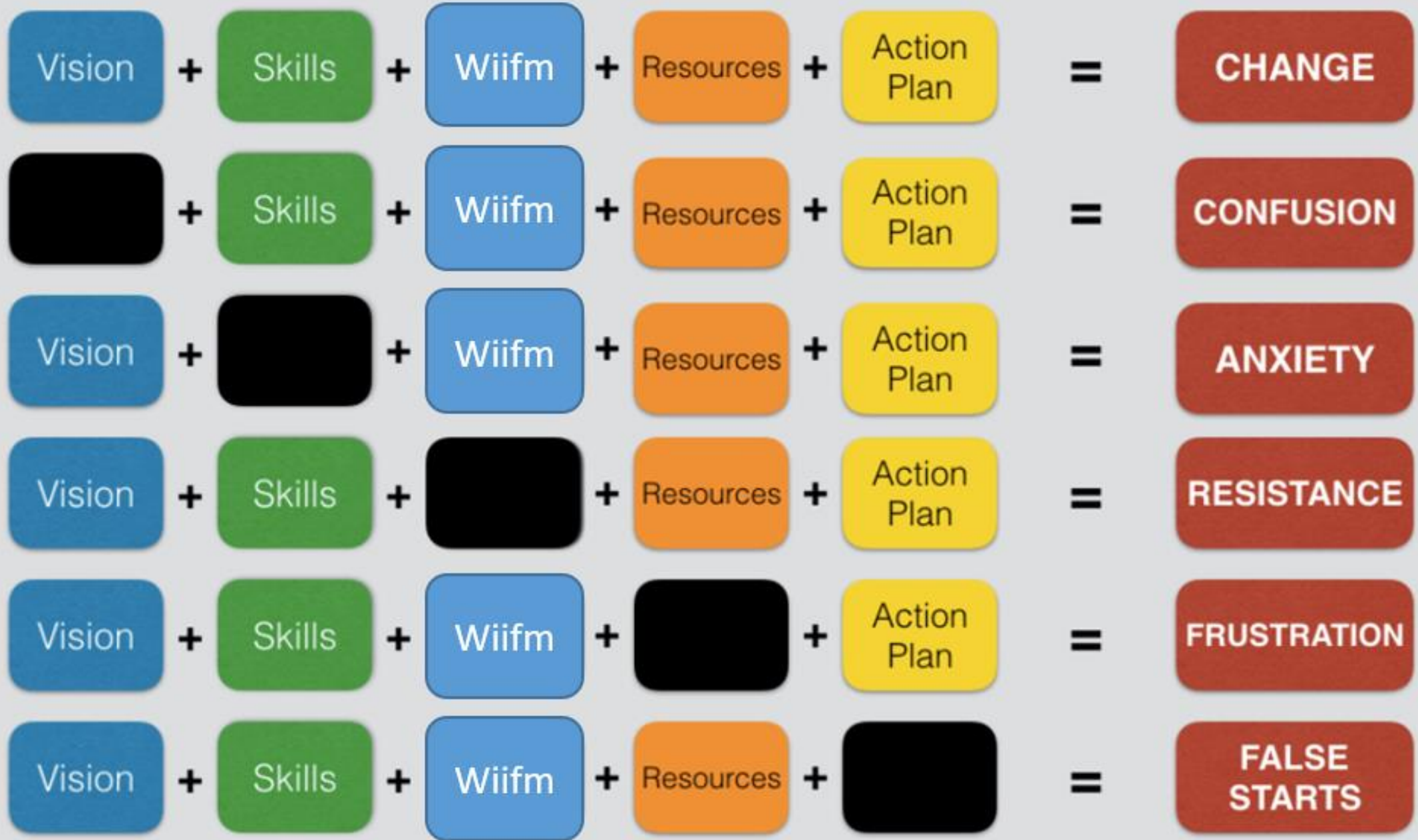


Manage ^{*the people side of*} change

- Identify change champions
- Communicate clearly, broadly, often and with transparency
- Model effective change leadership - DWYSYWD
- Coach by leaning in; listen and advocate
- Steward your mind and emotions –team members are watching
- Foster inclusion



Managing change VUCA World



Source: Copywritten by Dr. Mary Lippitt. A framework for thinking about systems change.

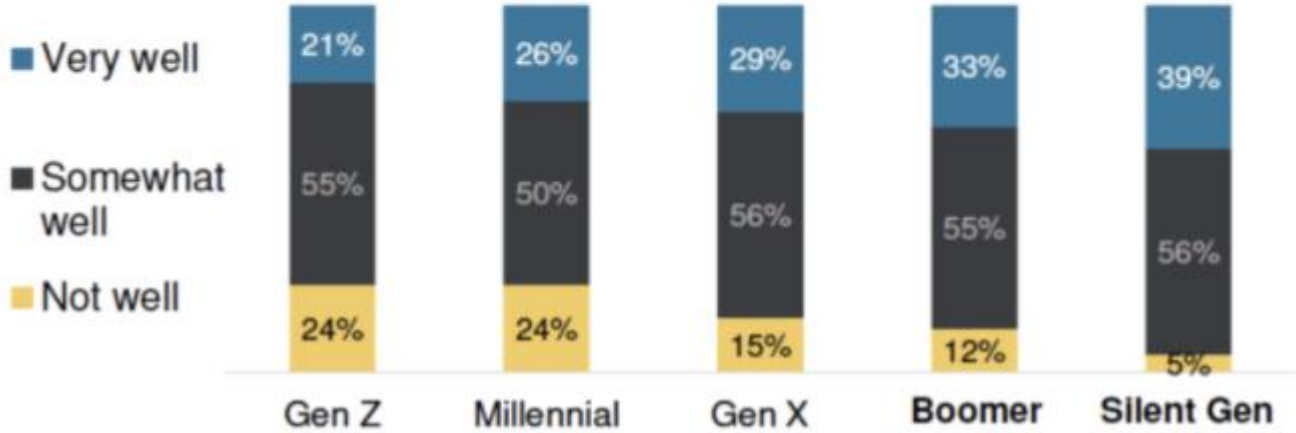
Generations coping with COVID

Generational Breakdown	
Gen Z	1995 – 2012
Millennial	1980 – 1994
Gen X	1965 – 1979
Boomer	1946 – 1964
Silent Gen	1945 & Before

Four Pillars of the New Retirement

Despite the grave health risk, **older adults are coping far better** than younger ones

How well are you coping with the impacts of COVID-19?



Source: Edward Jones/Age Wave, *The Four Pillars of the New Retirement*, 2020 (Base: U.S. adults by generation: Gen Z (18-23), Millennial (24-39), Gen X (40-55), Boomer (56-74), Silent Gen (75+))





Leverage Generational Differences

Cross generational teams are more productive when leaders...

- Establish clear expectations for respect & appreciation of differences
- Confront generational or any other type of bias head-on
- Tap into each individual's strengths and uniqueness
- Create and promote a collective organizational team identity, i.e *our team is known for excellence*
- Leverage collective knowledge and wisdom from all generations
- Encourage two-way mentoring



5 Tactics for Working with Cross-Generational Teams

Rethink the Boring Stuff

Explore new technology offered up by tech-savvy younger employees to reduce repetitive and rote work for everyone.



Flex the Hours

No matter their age, employees want a life outside work, so balance off-hours coverage so no one has to work 24/7.

Help Them Learn

Older & younger employees can mentor each other in different ways (eg, being organizationally vs. technologically savvy).

Give Good Reasons

Don't insist on doing something just because that's the way it's always been done.

Learn From Each Other

Both age groups can offer wisdom to one another, if they're open to hearing it.



Shift



Key takeaways

- Change is constant; master how to manage it!
- Remote work may be our new reality post-COVID
- Communicate clearly, broadly, often and with transparency
- Refresh policies and procedures to enhance flexibility
- Provide resources that enable success
- Set clear expectations for performance
- Be visible and present



Discussion





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