

**HOW DID WE DO IT -HUMAN SERVICE MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES UTILIZED DURING & POST PANDEMIC CRISIS**

Tina Fogarty & Mark Doyle  
October 14, 2020  
IABH Conference

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**HUMAN SERVICE MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES DURING & POST PANDEMIC SURVEY**

During this unprecedented period, many Human Services providers have had to alter how they manage/lead their organizations in order to safely and effectively meet the challenges that exist.

In order to support the Human Services system, National Louis University has gathered this information via a short anonymous survey with the intent to share the findings with the Human Services system providers.

Our hope is that we can learn from one another's successes and mistakes.

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**Session Objective**

The objective for today's session will be to review the results of the survey and to have a discussion with the attendees.


We welcome your input and feedback.

The main objectives of the discussion today are:

- To learn from each other on how to effectively manage the pandemic going forward; helping our organizations move in a positive direction despite the challenges
- To grow from understanding where we could have done things differently
- To provide additional management and leadership techniques that attendees can put into practice to better manage their organizations

To participate in the discussion you will need to.....

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### Pandemic Crisis Survey Questions

#### Key Strategies

1. Identify three key strategies used to manage/lead your organization through this pandemic crisis.

#### Mistakes

2. What were two management/leadership mistakes that you would encourage others to avoid.

#### Adjustments

3. What management/leadership adjustments will your organization make following this pandemic crisis?

#### Tips

4. What additional management/leadership tips would you like to share?

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### Pandemic Crisis Survey

**Total Responses - 154**

**Key Strategies Identified - 324**

**Mistakes Identified - 127**

**Adjustments Identified - 127**

**Tips Identified - 107**

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### 25 Human Service Sector Represented

- ✓ I/DD - Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities
- ✓ Medical/ Dental
- ✓ Children's Advocacy
- ✓ Education
- ✓ I/DD and Autism
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ SUD, Child Welfare, Criminal Justice
- ✓ Workforce Development
- ✓ Substance Use & Recovery
- ✓ Community Mental Health
- ✓ CMHC/Senior Services
- ✓ Social Services
- ✓ Behavioral Health
- ✓ Community Action, Behavioral Health, and Community Health
- ✓ Early Childhood, Aging & Disability, Counseling, Com Services – Shelters
- ✓ United Way
- ✓ Emergency Services: Food, Shelter, Water Bill Financial Assistance
- ✓ Supportive Housing
- ✓ TANF & SNAP Job placement program
- ✓ Early Childhood
- ✓ Trauma recovery
- ✓ Supportive Services
- ✓ Food Pantry
- ✓ HIV/AIDS
- ✓ Homeless

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Pandemic Crisis Survey

# Key Strategies Utilized

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Key Strategies Pandemic Crisis Survey

### Most Offered Strategy Focused on Communication

"Maintain very regular and clear communication with staff, clients, and stakeholders."

"We have increased communication with our staff and restructured departments so that they are receiving the clearest most genuine communication that we can provide."

"Communicate availability of services to key constituents and community."

"Communicate frequently, with as much transparency as possible and as allowed (while minding HIPAA, etc). Our CEO sends a daily email to all employees, with enlightening, honest, frequently encouraging details."

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Communications

### Communication from Trade Associations & IDHS

- IABH, IARF, Institute and ARC came together to hold joint meetings
- Intersect held open calls for all organization's
- Retention payments
- CARES ACT
- 37 U billing
- Virtual Day Services billing
- Allowing CDS in ICF/DD's
- Flexibility with allowing agencies to determine policy and protocol

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## How Has Your Agency Addressed Communication During this Crisis?

- Trinity Services, Inc. – Tina Fogarty,  
Chief Operations Officer

- Others in Audience

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### Key Strategies Pandemic Crisis Survey

#### Second Most Offered Strategy Focused on Technology

“Technologies managing workforce remotely ( Zoom ,etc.)”

“Deployed laptops and iPads to staff so they could work remotely and receive training.”

“To leverage investments made in technology to enable both the delivery of services, timely and accurate record keeping.”

“Hosting zoom meetings with staff to check in and share resources and get on the same page.”

“Extensive use of technology.”

“Ensure that all persons have what they need to work from home: laptops and cell phones.”

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## How Has Your Agency Utilized Technology During this Crisis?

- Trinity Services, Inc. – Tina Fogarty,  
Chief Operations Officer

- Others in Audience

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**Key Strategies**      **Pandemic Crisis Survey**

**More Commonly Known Strategies**

"Maintain the health and safety of clients and staff by following recommended social distancing and safety protocol."

"Securing and managing necessary supplies, keeping inventories of key needs (such as PPE, water, food, etc.) and moving to access a stock of these from various locations."




"Restricting visitors, guests and volunteers to all sites."

"Allowing staff to work from home."

"Allowing flexibility in work schedules."

"Apply for CARES Paycheck Protection loan."

"Enhanced cleaning following recommendations of the CDC."

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**Key Strategies**      **Pandemic Crisis Survey**

**More Commonly Known Strategies**

"Staying abreast of the current situation by following daily news briefs as well as federal, state and local communications."




"Taking temperatures of all entering the building at congregate living sites and taken each shift."

"For everyone's safety, provide essential service with as few people as possible."

"Adapting programs and services to evolving needs of clients."

"Implementation of screening tool to identify those who might be experiencing symptoms of COVID19."

"Minimize exposure onsite: Masks & PPE to be worn by staff."

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**Of the Commonly Known Strategies Which Ones Presented the Greatest Challenge to Implement?**

**- Trinity Services, Inc. – Tina Fogarty, Chief Operations Officer**

**- Others in Audience**





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Key Strategies Pandemic Crisis Survey

Additional Strategies

- “Being adaptable to the ever-changing situation.”
- “Remaining calm and level headed, not playing into media hype but listening to health officials.”
- “Developed scenario planning model and creating plans for sustainability based on various developments.”
- “Collaborative approach with county leadership.”
- “We have implemented telehealth.”
- “Mental/Emotional - reminding others of supports in place to help them deal with the stress of the situation.”

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Key Strategies Pandemic Crisis Survey

Additional Strategies

- “Self produce cleaning supplies and masks when none can be found.”
- “We converted our day program into needs centers. One day program became a day care for our workers children and we applied for pandemic license. The other was converted into a quarantine and isolation area for any cases.”
- “Created an alliance with our local mental health board, United Way and Community Foundation to ensure efforts and communication are coordinated across our county.”
- “Moved to 12 hour shifts to lessen the amount of people in and out of homes/programs. Healthy Hero pay for programs affected with exposure.”

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Key Strategies Pandemic Crisis Survey

Additional Strategies

- “Support employees. Make sure they have the resources and support they need. Financial incentives for working during the crisis.”
- “Phone and online surveys to individuals with I/DD and families to learn of their needs.”
- “Identify a group of key team members to plan, work together, and implement strategies.”
- “Lead by example: I show up for work everyday and wear my mask. I practice universal precautions.”
- “Plan for back-up people in advance. The idea is that there will always be someone to for coverage in advance to needing it.”

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Key Strategies Pandemic Crisis Survey

Additional Strategies

“Proactive/Planning: How well an organization does is not what they do in the moment of the “crisis” but the plan they develop before it occurs. Adjusting the plan is easier than creating it quickly.”

“Formulating strategic plans to address the unemployment rate, possible long-term business closures and changing business models. Planning for failing and strong industry sectors and training for technology for employment changes.”

“Creating a network of resources among organizations in the community.”

“Plan for new normal.”

Horizontal lines for notes



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Pandemic Crisis Survey

Mistakes to Avoid

Horizontal lines for notes



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Mistakes Pandemic Crisis Survey

“Closure of office buildings could have occurred earlier, but occurred in accordance with official orders & DHS recommendations. Moved very quickly after that.”

“Not trusting staff.”

“Trying to control everything.”

“Not consulting all stakeholders in the process .”

“Lack of equipment in times of crisis, needing to be ordered sooner than it was.”

“Misinterpretation of information leading to confusion in the homes.”

Horizontal lines for notes



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**Mistakes**      **Pandemic Crisis Survey**

“Be better prepared—we did not have the technology to have most of our staff work remotely. We needed different and more support to the systems.”


“Overwhelming staff with resources.”

“Requiring too many ways of tracking work productivity and staff/client needs.”

“Letting emotions trump a plan..”

“Avoid being concerned about the small things at this time. Everyone is in a panic, so everyone knows that there will be mistakes that are made.”

“Illusions of safety.”



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**Mistakes**      **Pandemic Crisis Survey**


“Admitting clients who have not been tested.”

“Not following the guidelines of the CDC in regards to proper PPE and social distancing.”

“Do not try to avoid uncomfortable conversations or try to not inform your employees of what is happening with your organization and their jobs.”

“Not having IPADS/laptops available to check out to DSP's that have to work from home. Most of our DSP's did not have technology at home.”

“Not being prepared to offer any type of virtual day training program.”



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**Mistakes**      **Pandemic Crisis Survey**

“Not listening to other's concerns.”

“Refusing to make a decision.”


“Waiting for last minute to make changes.”

“Not ordering enough PPE early enough.”

“Working through a narrow lens.”

“Lack of communication (internally and externally).”

“Don't depend on guidance or leadership from state government on how to address issues with the agency population or your teams. They have limited insight into the needs of the population you serve in your area/region.”



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Mistakes Pandemic Crisis Survey

“Taking the first hints of a crisis more seriously before people started hoarding. It has been difficult to get ppe, hand sanitizer and clorox wipes.”

“We should have started fundraising earlier, as it may have brought in additional funds. By the time we began, we weren't unique anymore.”

“Thinking a “one size fits all” plan will work.”

“Do not give staff information that “could happen” as it gets confused with what “does happen.”

“Waiting too long to communicate.”

“Not providing more flexible staffing models for those that need it (i.e. they have children).”



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Horizontal lines for notes

Mistakes Pandemic Crisis Survey

“Not taking this serious and implementing strategies early.”

“Jumping the Gun - People should avoid this. Get the facts.”

“Not having adequate plans in place for remote access to financial and service records.”

“Not having a clear COVID -19 policy for employees to follow.”

“Underestimating how long this would last.”

“Don't micromanage to the point that it feels like the supervisors are not trusted to be doing work from home.”

“Not taking full measure of steps quickly. Thinking that “it won't affect us like a big city” is a dangerous and potentially reckless approach.”



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Horizontal lines for notes

Pandemic Crisis Survey

Adjustments to Make Following this Pandemic Crisis



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Horizontal lines for notes

Adjustments Pandemic Crisis Survey

"We will be looking at our funding streams and anticipating shortfalls in areas that are financially affected by the pandemic. Then looking for new ways to make up this funding."

"More and or better use of technology."

"Re-configure operation budget."

"Incorporating more options for remote work. Streamlined processes using technology for antiquated systems."

"We are planning to reduce the number of office spaces. We can save money on rent if we can have more staff sharing space since everybody doesn't have to come to work everyday!"

"Increasing use of telehealth in all service sectors."

Horizontal lines for handwritten notes.



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Adjustments Pandemic Crisis Survey

"Continue stressing the importance of physical distancing, frequently washing hands and disinfecting all shared work tools daily."

"We will have to stay more nimble to keep adjusting through the next 18 months of this crisis."

"Flatter structure, even more collective problem solving."

"We will continue to review and develop our safety procedures and add dealing with pandemic circumstances."

"Stockpile of sanitizing and PPE."

"Virtual programs in place."

"Having technology devices available for DSP to take home."

Horizontal lines for handwritten notes.



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Adjustments Pandemic Crisis Survey

"Cleaning areas every time it's been used."

"Staff temperatures are taken daily before they enter the campus."

"We have altered staff schedules and are more creative in how we provide on campus services to clients."

"Agile planning process that allows for reprioritization or course correction."

"Develop stronger networks with area providers and resources."

"More security practices in place."

"We will measure health issues differently."

Horizontal lines for handwritten notes.



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Adjustments Pandemic Crisis Survey

“Re-look at who we consider leaders.”

“Written plan on how to handle pandemic including quarantine procedures.”

“Restructuring of positions.”

“Professional team was split in two and alternate days in the office.”

“There has not been a focus on Residential staff vs Day staff vs. Community staff. We have just been a team. We always thought we functioned that way, but now we see the power of “one team” clearer than ever.”

“More consistent agency updates, discussions, celebrations, etc. via email. We have had some great conversations using this platform that was previously underappreciated.”



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Horizontal lines for notes

Adjustments Pandemic Crisis Survey

“Establish a more inclusive group of thought-leaders; an expansion to our typical Executive Team.”

“I think this crisis will lead to us communicating more fully, more transparently, and with more participatory listening.”

“More meetings can occur on-line or by phone which saves time.”

“We will maintain a server to allow remote access to essential software for multiple users.”

“BE open to more out of the box thinking.”

“Simulate scenarios that require risk management on a monthly basis to enable workers to be versed with different ways of handling risky situations.”



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Horizontal lines for notes

Pandemic Crisis Survey

Management/Leadership Tips



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Horizontal lines for notes

**Tips**      **Pandemic Crisis Survey**

“People working from home are also stressed out & trying to function during a crisis. Be mindful of this.”



“Stress levels are high among front-line staff. Check in with them often.”

“During crisis, those who cope best are those who help others. So to help yourself, start by helping others.”

“Make sure EVERYONE in your organization knows how to execute procedures in the event leadership is not able to.”

“The best advice I can share is trust your instincts, and if you need to do act, do it. Taking action quickly almost always will be the best course as opposed to waiting.”

“Communicate regularly, and don't assume that your Leadership Team will always share what you talk about.”

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**Tips**      **Pandemic Crisis Survey**

“Have a plan prepared for what the agency will do when someone reports that they have tested positive for coronavirus.”



“Develop a plan, write it down and share it with EVERYONE! And, follow it.”

“You can't thank people enough for what they are doing. You also can't remind them enough about social distancing, hand hygiene and proper use of PPE.”

“Daily emails from CEO help staff feel like things are less out of control. Develops more confidence that leadership knows what they are doing.”

“Remind staff and clients that there are limits to what we can do.”

“Be diligent in getting your staff what they need.”

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**Tips**      **Pandemic Crisis Survey**

“Just treat everyone like they have been exposed to COVID19.”

“Telling people the truth earns their trust.”

“Seek resources and advice from other agencies and the department.”



“Stay in contact with staff and clients to keep everyone engaged.”

“Don't over educated your staff on the pandemic. After a while they are so use to hearing it that they forget it is real.”

“Balance: you have to find balance with everything including work and home.”

“Lead by example.”

“Build confidence not just hope.”

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**Tips Pandemic Crisis Survey**

“Don't let distractions consume your time.”

“Share ideas.”



“Board engagement so they are informed about the crisis without dragging them into the details. This is a situation that requires quick decisions with a limited amount of information.”

“Listen to and learn from others.”

“Be prepared to change and rethink decisions as you learn more about what is going on.”

“Obtain information from many sources and have a good crisis plan in place.”

“Being decisive has been key to success thus far.”

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**Tips Pandemic Crisis Survey**

“Stay positive. The leader is responsible for trying to keep everyone's spirits up and give people hope.”

“Schedule daily briefings with your team. Even if they take only 15 minutes, it's worth grounding everyone on the status of things. The daily meeting was the only place where decisions were made, which kept things organized and gave us the ability to stay focused on the goal.”

“Maintain a "do whatever it takes" attitude. Expect to work seven days a week for a while. My team didn't even question it. It was just understood.”

“Use technology to your advantage. We used Microsoft Teams, which includes 1-on-1 or group videoconference (including scheduling), all-team discussion channels, 1-on-1 or group chat and document organization. It is very powerful. One team member acknowledged that we never would have been able to do what we did without it.”

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**Tips Pandemic Crisis Survey**

“Communicate, communicate and communicate.”



“Ultimately, rebuild reserve operating accounts to withstand minimally 6 months of business interruption.”

“It is OK to show your employees that you are struggling as well. We are all in this together and don't expect everyone to be calm all the time.”

“Be nimble and shift quickly in crisis. People are counting on us as nonprofit leaders.”

“Having a pandemic team and an email for that team is a great idea to share all info with them, and questions people may have.”

“Relationships with our sister Arc chapters and our Arc state office have strengthened during this pandemic. Building on those collaborations will be helpful.”

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Tips Pandemic Crisis Survey

"Transparency is crucial."

"Must be ready to have difficult conversations and allow leadership staff to disagree."

"Be flexible. This is key, as directions from the state keep changing."

"Balance your time effectively. Those in your organization who are on the "front lines" or "boots on the ground" need to see you and know that you are aware and care about the challenges and new realities of doing the work your org does in the midst of COVID. However, you must also stay focused on doing the things that only you can do as leader."

"Be firm about safety issues."

"Focus on the positive first and foremost before bringing up the negative."



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Fall 2020 Online Cohort

NLU is a leader in online education with years of experience and a faculty that is well versed in providing online instruction.

Now that you may be spending more time at home and social distancing, take advantage of the opportunity to further your education by enrolling in our Online Master's in Human Services Management/Leadership program.

We are excited to be accepting applications for the Winter 2021 Online Cohort!



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To learn more, please contact:

Mark Doyle, Program Director, NLU at Mark.Doyle@nl.edu or call 630-302-0970

Tina Fogarty, COO, Trinity Services, Inc. at tfogarty@trinity-services.org or call 815-485-6197



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