

RECOVERY READINESS ON THE FRONTLINES

Teaching, training and learning to-dos to help you plan and measure your post-COVID-19 preparations and actions.

In our work with frontline people all over the world, we strive to optimize human potential in the workplace through our core TWI (Training Within Industry) teaching and learning programs: Job Instruction (JI), Job Methods (JM), Job Relations (JR), Job Safety (JS) and Problem Solving (PS). We continually emphasize three key points: skills, safety and stability. We have organized this checklist along those lines and added a section that includes several useful sources of information.

Skills, safety and stability are especially significant in planning for post-COVID-19 recovery. Putting people first should be the focal point of your plan as returning workers bare concern over workplace safety. As leaders and managers, you want to reassure your frontline people that the environment is secure. At the same time, you'll need to meet productivity goals while juggling customer demand, supply chain fluctuation, altering physical workspaces, job definitions, hours of work and other factors. So reskilling, upskilling and cross training must focus on achieving stability.

There is no shortage of information, checklists and the like, about COVID-19 and what you should do in recovery. Our goal in preparing this **ADVISORY** is to focus more on front-line issues, the people who will be affected by them and the ways the TWI Institute can help make the tasks you face in the post-COVID-19 world just a bit easier and your people happier and more confident. We have tried to put the relevant advice of experts in this bite-size format as a convenient resource and reminder as you move your teams into recovery.

The TWI Institute contributed to this ADVISORY. Other items on this list were inspired by a variety of sources including the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), World Health Organization (WHO), Bain & Company, Gartner, Harvard Medical School, McKinsey & Company, National Association of Manufacturers, **pwc**, and others.

STABILITY

Coming into the recovery, control over your operations and processes is paramount. You'll face many questions centering on the nature and scale of demand, the reliability of your supply chain and how your frontline teams will deal with such things as social distancing, staggered shifts, altered jobs and added jobs, absenteeism, new regulations and the like. One of the best ways to get control is through stabilization and standardization of work.

1. Create a "source of truth", a workplace coordinator for COVID-19 who can "own" workflow and stability issues and has authority to act. Your coordinator should be trained in handling upstream and downstream job relationships, in developing new job methods for the "Next Normal" and using the right tools to support continuing Job Safety. Create a support team, if necessary, that aligns with the scale of your operation.
2. Make sure stability is a shared goal and that there is common understanding of stability targets. It's important for everyone to know and feel that he and she can make important contributions. Communicate status and progress regularly. *TWI Job Relations can support this.*

3. Have you created different scenarios based on situations affecting demand, supply chain, workforce and production? Are you prepared to shift fluidly and adapt from one scenario to another? *TWI Job Instructions and Job Methods can support this.*
4. What jobs, processes or procedures most heavily impact stability? Where are you most vulnerable? What kind of safeguards or training can you put in place to develop standardized work and eliminate variation? What new ways of thinking will be required in the “Next Normal”? *TWI Job Instruction can support this.*
5. Is active use of PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Adjust) part of your monitoring, flexibility and improvement design?
6. Consider your position with work standards and standardized work. Do you have standards for the content and quality of output, for machines or processes, and for people and systems? (For more on Work Standards and Standardized Work, see the Blog at www.twi-institute.com and the whitepaper, “The Secrets of Isao Kato, Toyota’s Master Trainer.”)
7. Are you using visual tools (e.g. charts, tables, diagrams, GEMBA Boards) to make “normal” – and “abnormal” – easy to see for supervisors and frontline workers?
8. Dealing with the new sources of stress among your employees will be essential to achieving production and productivity targets going forward. Assess the impact on stability of policies for sick leave, flex time, WFH and non-WFH personnel, childcare and the like. What adjustments must you be prepared for in order to maintain flow. *TWI Job Relations can support this.*
9. Monitor essential functions. If there is disruption, is there a plan for alternate suppliers, prioritizing customers or outsourcing? Having your supervisors and critical employees trained in Problem Solving will insure smoother and more orderly outcomes.
10. Should you establish a piloting plan to test various scenarios, new workflows or other modifications to production? If so, then new tools, techniques or skills may be required. *TWI Job Instructions and Job Methods can support this.*
11. Assess teaching and learning systems. TWI Institute has solutions focused on establishing work standards and standardized work, can adapt them to your facility and people, and can apply them rapidly and correctly to insure repeatable and predictable outcomes across your entire organization. *TWI Job Instruction can support this.*
12. Consider cross training for essential functions to maintain the pace of operations and production should key workers fall ill or be absent. *TWI Job Instruction can support this.*

SAFETY

All of a sudden, going back to work isn’t routine. Your people may feel risk not only at the various workstations, but during the commute, dealing with customers or suppliers, making deliveries, interacting with fellow employees, or heading home. It’s not only important to take specific safety actions in the physical sense of the workplace, but also to address fear and uncertainty through consistent listening, communications, teaching and training. Many safety plans are developed post incident and not enough time is spent developing prevention before incidents occur. TWI Job Safety preparations and training can help preempt unwanted events.

1. Do you have a “hierarchy of controls” in effect and how will it impact frontline personnel with respect to engineering, administrative, practice and PPE controls?
2. How comprehensive are your current and conditional safety plans? Do they “look ahead”? Are they public for all employees to see?
3. Make certain that all your frontline employees know what you have done to ensure their safety and what they must do to ensure their own safety and that of their fellow workers and families.
4. Develop a list of critical safety and sanitizing to-dos for everyone. Pocket cards in the TWI style can be very helpful.
5. Make video safety, cleaning and sanitizing “how-tos” and tutorials available or distribute them through a company communications channel or mobile app. (See sample videos on www.twi-institute.com)
6. Will social distancing on the frontlines be necessary? If so, how will that impact layout, workflow and other functions? *TWI Job Methods can support this.*
7. Promote frequent and recommended handwashing (See and utilize the video on www.twi-institute.com). Do workers, customers and visitors have a place to wash their hands? Is there adequate signage demonstrating correct handwashing? Provide hand sanitizing dispensers or give everyone pocket- or purse-size bottles of sanitizer.
8. Educate employees on respiratory hygiene, i.e. the recommended way to sneeze or cough. Provide pocket tissue packets to reinforce.
9. Clean and sanitize work surfaces, keyboards, equipment, tools, phones, microphones, headsets and the like; or provide job instructions for this. Discourage workers from using other workers’ materials (See workplace cleaning and sanitizing videos on www.twi-institute.com).

Non-WFH employees face a unique set of concerns.

Perceived unfairness: Having to continue going to work while other employees got to stay home with their families.

Safety risk: Significant increase in potential exposure to the virus.

Perceived value: They may not feel as valued by the company and that their safety is not prioritized.

Fear of illness: In addition to clinical harm, fear of being isolated from their families if ill.

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10. Control or limit public or third-party access to work areas and consider minimizing face-to-face contact with visitors. Be certain visitors bring or have access to protective wearables. *TWI Job Methods can support this.*
11. If PPE is used in the workplace, have workers been trained to put on and take off PPE correctly and in the proper sequence (See donning and doffing videos on www.twi-institute.com)? Are there written Job Instructions for reference?
12. Is all safety training and educational material in the context of the current or expected conditions and duties? Is the material easy to understand and available in the appropriate languages and literacy levels? *TWI Job Instruction can support this.*
13. Direct your employees to local and national resources that can help them with questions and concerns about safety on the job and at home (See examples of resources at the end of this ADVISORY).

SKILLS

*Will your workforce be exactly the same in the post-COVID-19 recovery? Will it number the same? Will workflow be the same? Will everyone's job be the same? Will any skills be rusty or worse, forgotten? Will job sharing and cross-functioning create skill gaps? Organizations like OSHA and companies like **pwc** have cautioned that such gaps could impede productivity, threatening a return to volume and profitability on one hand and disappointing customers on the other. Reskilling, upskilling, cross-training and work standards can all help close the gaps quickly and securely.*

1. Integrate business planning with manpower planning based upon current situations and expected conditions. Develop scenarios and link them to a "skills share strategy" (See next entry). If business performance metrics change, are skillsets aligned?
2. Develop a "skills share strategy." Take an inventory of skills that are essential and determine which can be easily transferable to others or if training is required to upskill. Are there Job Instructions for essential skills that can be used and referenced? *TWI Job Instruction Training Timetable can support this.*
3. Does "gig" work apply at your location? Will "freelancers" be used to fill in for absentees or furloughed workers? What will they need to learn and how will you teach them? *TWI Job Instruction can support this.*
4. Compare current and estimated performance metrics to skills requirements and determine whether your operation is balanced or unbalanced in any areas. *TWI Job Instruction Training Timetable can support this.*
5. Will physical and engineering changes (e.g. distancing, partitions, etc.) redefine skillsets in any way? Will any new skills be required? *TWI Job Methods and Job Instruction can support this.*
6. Have a backup plan for high absenteeism. Will you need temps or contract workers? How quickly can they learn and do critical jobs? Are there Job Instructions and Work Standards in place? *TWI Job Instruction can support this.*
7. Do you have a "master trainer" on staff, or on call, who can upskill, reskill or cross-train as required during periods when production fluctuation is high?
8. Assess teaching and learning systems. The TWI Institute can not only help you evaluate your training capability and readiness, but can also help train workers on critical jobs quickly and effectively.
9. Can skills be built and/or refreshed digitally? Are there real-time online video teaching and learning options such as those available from the TWI Institute?
10. Having a firm and confident grasp of skills can help mitigate some of the uncertainty. Reinforce what you're doing to keep skill levels high and address any gaps that may exist or develop. Be quick to solve and act.

LINKS TO SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19

Government Sources

[Centers for Disease Control Coronavirus Updates](#)

[World Health Organization COVID-19 Situation Reports](#)

[U.S. Food & Drug Administration COVID-19 Information](#)

[Occupational Safety & Health Administration Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)

[Equal Employment Opportunity Commission COVID-19 Guidelines](#)

[United Nations COVID-19 Response](#)

Healthcare and Academic Sources

[Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Hotspot Map](#)

[Harvard Medical School COVID-19 FAQs](#)

[Mayo Clinic Coronavirus Protection Tips](#)

[Cleveland Clinic: Preparing the Work Area](#)

Business Sources

[Gartner: Adapt Marketing Strategy for COVID-19](#)

[RSM: Adapting to New Workforce Dynamics During COVID-19](#)

[Accenture: Human and Business Impacts of COVID-19](#)

[Bain & Company Tracking the Global Impact of Coronavirus](#)

[KPMG: COVID-19 Business Implications](#)

[McKinsey & Co.: COVID-19 Implications for Business](#)

[Harvard Business Journal COVID-19 Insight Center](#)

[Brookings Institution: COVID-19 Global Response](#)

The TWI Institute hopes this ADVISORY is useful for you and your people. Our Vision is to prove that people can accomplish anything – including putting down COVID-19. We can help bring more stability, safety and skills to your workplace and more comfort and confidence to your workers. We can perform a Strategic Assessment for your particular facility or work areas, which can project your readiness or identify gaps that need to be closed in teaching and learning best practices. You can contact us through our website, www.twi-institute.com or direct to Scott Curtis, President and CEO, 315-412-0303 or scurtis@twi-institute.com. Thank you and best wishes for a successful recovery.