

Leading During Challenging Times

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It is in difficult times you really see the true measure of someone's character. This is especially true of business leaders. In moments like these, executives and especially CEOs have the opportunity to show courageous leadership that sets the path forward for others.

As Chairman and CEO of Pinnacle Group, this is something I'm keeping top of mind each and every day. From how I guide our executive team, to communicating transparently with our associates, to maintaining relationships with our customers, leadership matters. Now more than ever as we have moved into this unprecedented global pandemic.

As a leader, the first step is to understand the realities of our situation and what we're facing. I cannot help anyone if I don't know what's going on – both in terms of business impacts and the significant personal impacts this is having on our associates. Pinnacle's executive team is communicating constantly to ensure we are all fully aware of what's happening at every level of the organization as well as with our customers. When we understand the situation at both a micro and macro level, we are best able to apply our creative problem solving to work through the obstacles we're facing.

Second, leaders must respond, not react. This means taking the time necessary to gain perspective and be thoughtful in setting a course before taking action. As an entrepreneur I am hard wired for fast responses and immediate action. But as a leader, I know I'm more effective when I take the time I need for thoughtful reflection before action. When new information is presented, or the situation changes, I carefully think through our response rather than allowing an immediate knee-jerk reaction to guide our steps.

Third, leaders must project unwavering faith that we will come through this hard time as we've come through so many others. While this situation is unprecedented on a global scale, going through difficult times as a business, at least for Pinnacle, is not unprecedented. We've been through hard times before, most notably, the recessions of 2001 and 2008, and we've come out stronger on the other side. My job as a leader is to remind my team of everything we've already come through successfully. I also remind them of all the preparations and investments we've made over the years that have positioned us well for the current challenges – Pinnacle is strong, and we can do hard things together.



Finally, a leader's mindset and attitude are contagious, and others look to us for cues on how to think about the current situation. My goal is to project the mindset of the learner. I don't have all the answers and there is power in acknowledging that and being open to the growth opportunity it presents.

I am not focused on getting back to doing what we used to do before, but instead on transforming into what's next. This means reinventing ourselves to learn the skills needed to maximize opportunities in a new world.

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