



**Our Guide and Top Tips  
for your People  
through tough times.**

**CONNECT THREE**

# At **Connect Three** we believe in the importance of **employee engagement** and its power to drive the success of our business and the businesses that we work with.

Amid the Coronavirus outbreak, and the uncertain times ahead, it is even more important that we focus on [driving the engagement of our people](#). Even if we are not sure what lies ahead, our people need to feel confident that we are leading them in the right direction.

The **Connect Three** team has already been approached by clients, partners and friends to help them to understand what key points they need to consider in the short term for their people, and how to apply strategic thought to decisions made in the coming weeks when it is so hard to tell what the long term impact will be on your employees and business.

In the absence of a crystal ball, it is essential that we remain as positive as we can and assume that a new normal service will resume so [make decisions now based on what you want the future to look like](#) for your employees and ultimately your business.

There is plenty of government information on how to keep your employees healthy, so this short guide is designed to help kick start your thinking on what you need to be doing for your people, and what help is available for your business.



## Practical steps you can take now...

### **Keep up to date with Government and public health advice.**

Follow this advice and share it with your employees as it evolves daily. See pg. 4.



**Check all data for employees is up to date**, specifically contact details and emergency contact information.



**Review & use video communication channels** so you reach your employees quickly and consistently with regular updates and can seek feedback in real time.



Make sure that everyone, especially managers, **understand which sick pay and leave policies apply** and how and when these can and will be implemented.



**Seek legal advice** on any decisions that you could potentially have to make, for example temporary layoffs, furlough, redundancies, changes to working hours or rates of pay.



**Have daily team meetings** to include current and potential risks that may impact employees and disrupt the business (including supply chain). You should consider how you will respond to downturns in business, and unexpected levels of absence linked to the Coronavirus. Keep your workforce informed, reassured and allow them to ask questions as the plan evolves.



**Identify key people in the business** to form a contingency team - this group should take responsibility for implementing and communicating the contingency plan.



**Develop flexible** working plans and test out remote or home working technologies like Microsoft Teams or Zoom.



**Provide training for staff** who may need to fulfil temporary roles to alleviate the workloads of others. Create a plan for operating with skeleton staff if required, prioritise key projects and postpone non-essential work. Identify those people who have transferable skills and who can fulfil more than one role.



# Our Top Tips for looking after your teams

## How are they?

Staff health and well-being should remain centre stage throughout this whole process. You should regularly assess their mental and physical health to understand how they are coping both financially and practically in the coming weeks and months. Take time to understand everyone's individual situation and concerns and take genuine steps to support them as much as possible.

## Communicate, communicate, communicate.

It is essential that you are transparent with your staff throughout this process.

## Be available.

Answer questions and follow up with individuals or groups of people regularly.

## Involve them in the change process.

Encourage ideas, innovation, suggestions and changes to improve and sustain the business. Use this as an opportunity to protect the business and jobs going forward. Welcome and consider every idea where possible and create an environment where your employees have a voice to contribute to the current and future landscape of the business

## Continue to promote the core values of your business.

Strengthen your employer brand. Keep the health and well-being of your employee sat the centre of all decisions made and go above and beyond to support them. Support your community via volunteering if this is possible, giving back and really paying as much as you can forward to protect your future.

## Understand everyone's individual situation.

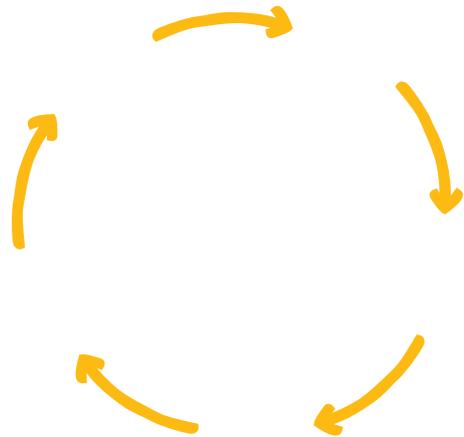
This is essential if you want to implement a voluntary special leave policy. Key things to consider are; who would be willing to take paid or unpaid leave; who would be willing to reduce their hours or would welcome any other flexible resourcing arrangements, for example job share opportunities, or temporary changes to working conditions

## Seek furlough guidance and make redundancy your last resort.

There are many other ways in which to save money and safeguard jobs within a business and make it more efficient. Brainstorm and innovate first around product and service offerings, business model and structure, temporary resourcing plans, furloughing workers and more before considering redundancy.

## Focus on building relationships with your people.

They have helped to build your business and you have the opportunity to come out of this stronger together. Regularly communicate how much you value everyone's contribution and make sure they feel appreciated. Emphasise that you can only succeed as a business and protect your people if you all **pull together**.



# Links to further information & advice

## Government Advice

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

## Business Support

<https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/coronavirus-advice>

## Small Business Loan Scheme

<https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils/>

## Scottish Government

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

## NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>



## Federation of Small Businesses

<https://www.fsb.org.uk/campaign/covid19.html>

## Scottish Chamber of Commerce

<https://www.scottishchambers.org.uk/press-releases/businesssupportcovid19/>

## HMRC

If you run a business or are self-employed and are concerned about paying your tax due to coronavirus, you can call HMRC's helpline for help and advice: [0800 0159 559](tel:08000159559).

## New coronavirus advice helpline for Scottish businesses

tel: [0300 303 0660](tel:03003030660)

## Additional Help

- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme [>more](#)
- Deferring VAT payments and Income Tax payments for the self-employed [>more](#)
- Statutory Sick Pay relief package for SMEs [>more](#)
- Short term cash-flow support is being made available through the British Business Bank. The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme is offering loans of up to £5 million for SMEs [>more](#)
- 12-month business rates holiday for all retail, hospitality and leisure businesses. The Scottish Government confirms that Scottish businesses will get £2.2 billion of support [>more](#)

We would also suggest contacting your bank, local authority and landlord to ask for any relief on rates, rent and loans

**For business owners who just need to speak to someone please contact Colin Lamb**

**[colin@connectthree.co.uk](mailto:colin@connectthree.co.uk)**



**For HR and people related queries please get in touch with Susan Earle**

**[susan@connectthree.co.uk](mailto:susan@connectthree.co.uk)**

**For general queries or questions around systems or communication channels please get in touch with Gordon White**

**[gordon@connectthreeco.uk](mailto:gordon@connectthreeco.uk)**



## **Disclaimer**

**The information in this document is provided as a guide to clients and we recommend that full advice is obtained from one of our team at Connect Three before relying on the information supplied in this document.**

**We are happy to assist you with any queries you may have in relation to this document, please get in touch.**



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