

**The webinar will start shortly**

Please use the chat function at any point during the webinar to post questions or comments

# The HR Response to managing the impact of COVID-19

21<sup>st</sup> May, 2020

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Ed Griffin

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- Revisit the context
- Phase to plan and work through
- HR's role
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# Revisit the context

- Individuals, families and organisations continue to face unprecedented levels of disruption and uncertainty;
- Sharp rise in those claiming benefits, sharp fall in vacancies;
- Some signs of particularly localised impacts in terms of geography and age;
- Organisations have reacted with an incredible speed, working practices have changed and been innovated, many people have worked together in new and better ways;
- HR teams have played a vital role in this; &
- It's Mental Health Awareness Week.

# What the data is telling us about the UK impact

- Every UK Local Authority had unemployment rise by more 1/3<sup>rd</sup>. With 76 LAs seeing the unemployment rate more than double in a month.
- Coastal areas worst hit.
- Approx. 7.5 million people on furlough.
- UK vacancies at 10 May - 329k. Vacancies have bottomed out at a level 60% lower than before the crisis began and 63% below this time last year. Largest year-on-year fall in vacancies since vacancy records were first collected in 1948.
- Potentially bigger impact on both younger and older people.
- Lowest monthly level of property sales.

# React

- All organisations have been impacted, be it a gradual or immediate need to react and respond to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the response of governments to it. For most organisations this started with travel restrictions and the cancellation of events and meetings, which lead in turn to organisations moving quickly to home working or ensuring that staff who needed to, could continue to work in safe conditions.
- For some sectors, Covid-19 has resulted in their closure or collapse. This was most immediately noticeable in sectors such as hospitality, aviation, tourism, and much of shop-based retail. Many organisations had to quickly move to shutting down, running with staff working from home or continuing, but with new working practices to keep staff safe.
- There are, and will be, many organisations for which this is the only stage they face as they are forced to close down permanently as result of the wider impacts of Covid-19.

# Recover

- This is where an organisation focuses on re- establishing itself once restrictions are reduced or lifted, and operational constraints & controls have been removed. It will not be clear if those restrictions have been permanently lifted. Restrictions may be re-imposed or different ones put in place at several points over an extended period.
- When staff who have been working from home or furloughed are able to return to work, employers will need to manage this transition consciously. It may require changes in how people are managed and supported, as well as engaging in new conversations on the flexibility that can be afforded to employees. People may have new needs and expectations, with different impacts financially and psychologically.
- The Recover phase may last for a significant period as organisations are forced to adjust to the predicted major economic downturn. The nature of longer-term state intervention is currently unclear. This may also mean that organisations fall back into the React phase.

# Renew

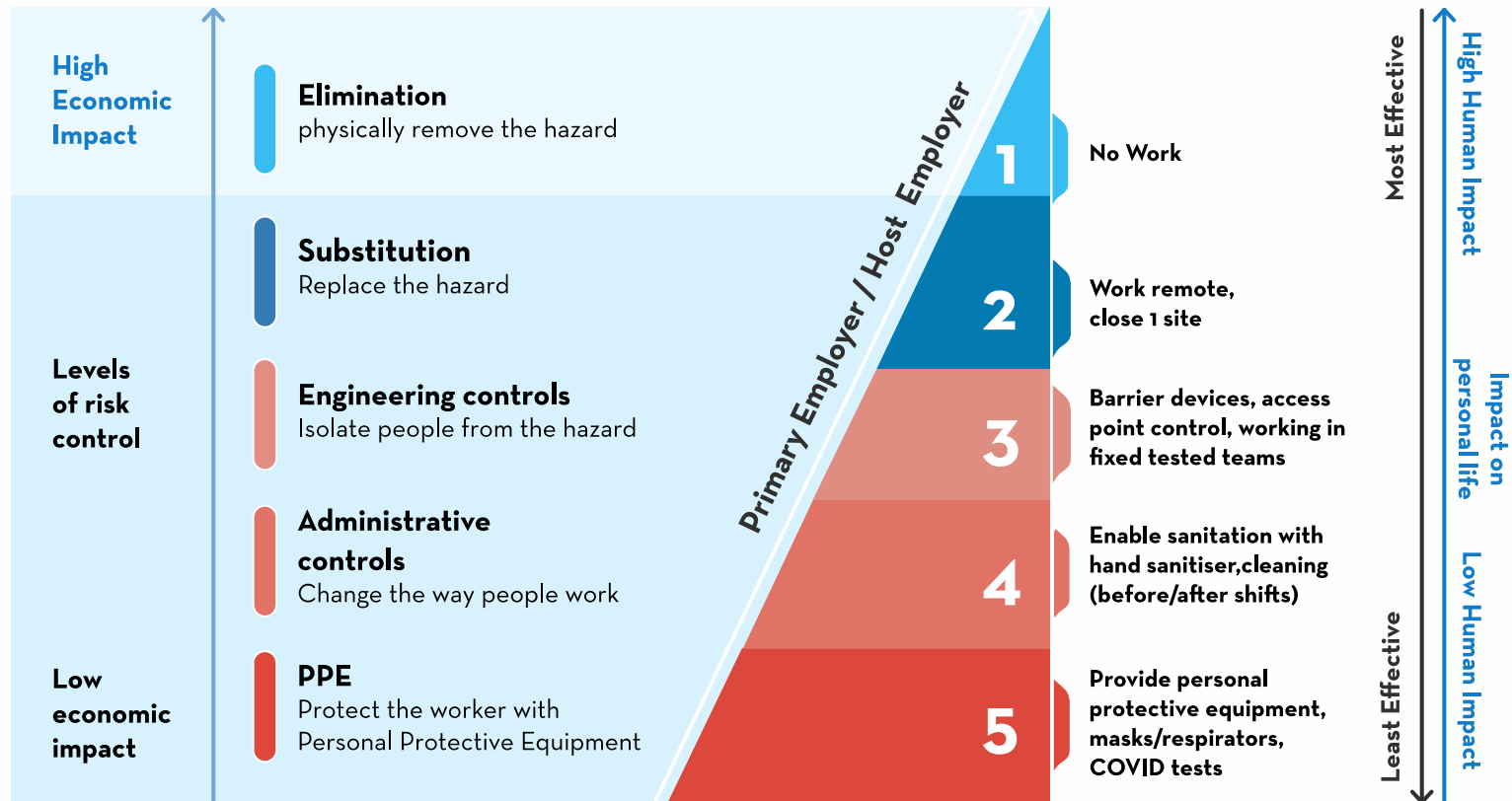
- The future of many organisations is likely to be very different from what it was before the pandemic. Customer, service user and employee expectations may dramatically change and the impact of Covid-19 is likely to have far-reaching implications that could take many years to address. It's currently unclear how this situation will play out from social, economic and health perspectives.
- Given the recent decline in High Street retail prior to Covid-19, it seems likely that many retailers may continue the move to increase on-line businesses.
- For others, their immediate response may have been about using existing capabilities in very different ways. For example, Formula One engineers working on the design and production of respirators, or brewers and distillers moving to produce hand sanitiser. In these cases, the Renew phase may be more about a move to the re-establishment of their original focus. Others may need to completely re-invent themselves.

# HR's role in helping the organisation through the phases

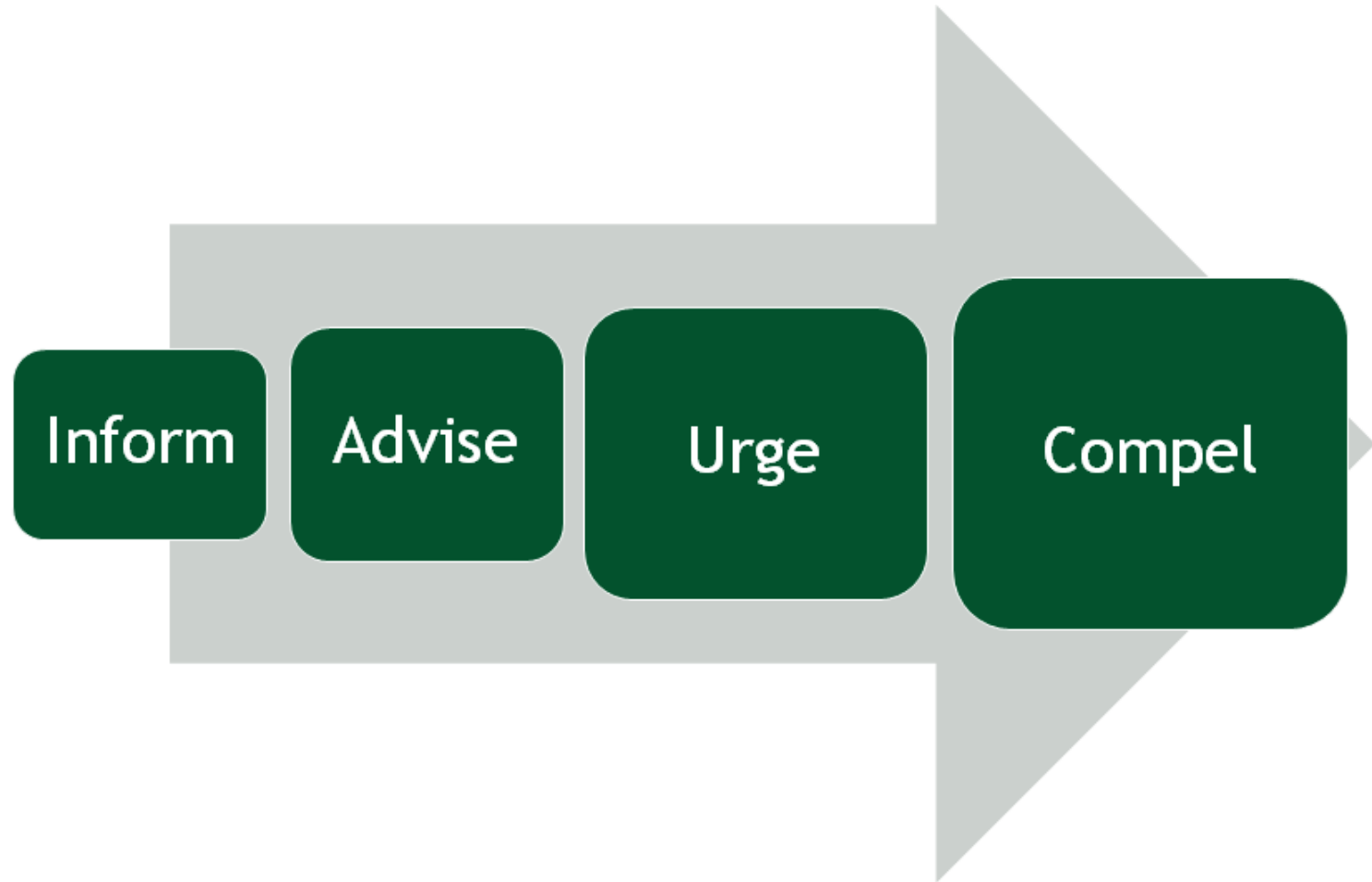
- Clear principles for prioritisation
- Understand the risks and try to mitigate
- Develop and lead the internal narrative
- Think and act systemically to encourage collaboration
- Balance the human with the
- Keep your data up-to-date and use it

## Levels of Control to categorize the measurements

This model is adapted and based on Health & Safety Executive (UK), Hierarchy of Controls. There are five levels of control to consider. The purpose is to prioritise safety and reduce risk to acceptable levels, as well as limiting economic impact to the business.



# Crisis comms and beyond



From Nadine Smith - <https://medium.com/centre-for-public-impact/four-communications-phases-of-an-escalating-crisis-how-covid-19-will-put-trust-in-government-to-a624a729f3fb>

# What are the principles to help you prioritise?



Efficiency & Effectiveness



Service delivery



Clear roles and responsibilities



Effective management of people risk



Scalability to support the increased workforce trajectory



Single points of accountability



Cost and value of activities to be understood



Workforce to be delivered and sustained



People Strategy to be achieved



Consistency and standardisation



Economy of scales to be realised

# Components of a Target Operating Model



# HR Leadership & Behaviours

- You're human too and may be experiencing the same stresses and anxieties. Can you be honest and open about this with your people?
- Remember cognitive overload means we need clear simple messages with a call to action.
- Collaborate – remember the power of diverse teams. No-one knows all the answers.
- Use the HR function as a test bed for what you may need to do more widely.

Use our guide to help navigate the challenges



# Covid-19

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR  
THE HR PROFESSIONAL

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# Questions

# An opportunity to be involved in some of our research...

## **Good recruitment for older workers**

You're invited to contribute to research that aims to understand the current recruitment landscape in the UK by exploring employer, expert and recruiter views and practices. The project is being conducted by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) on behalf of the Centre for Ageing Better. The project will also investigate differences in recruitment practices, future trends and the diversification of recruitment.

We are looking to hear about your current recruitment practices for all applicants as well as any specific interventions, if any, that are made to that practice to support diversity of applicants. We are also interested to find out whether you have any future plans in this field. If your organisation is interested in this area, we want to hear from you.

The key questions for this research are:

- What are your most common recruitment approaches (including specific tools, methods and techniques)?
- Do these recruitment approaches differ according to your sector or the occupation and level of your role?
- How does your recruitment approach fit with your wider people/HR strategy?
- How do you imagine these will change in the future and are there emerging trends you are monitoring?
- Do you have specific inclusive approaches in place and to what extent do they work?
- Who do you look to for advice and guidance on your recruitment approach?
- What determines your choice of recruitment approach?

Approaches and techniques in recruitment are varied, and we are interested to find out about what you are doing, or thinking of doing, and why.

**Thank you for joining the webinar today**

**[ed.griffin@employment-studies.co.uk](mailto:ed.griffin@employment-studies.co.uk)**