



PRESENT



A COVID-19 Virtual Ideation Experience

Team Topic and Number: Workplace Wellbeing, Team #19

Team sponsor/chapter (if applicable): BHDP Architecture

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Input your submission below. Please remember that you have 1500 words to share your insights.

Workplace Well-being team 'Covid #19' considered a broad spectrum of scenarios to understand the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of people reentering work. We concluded that we first need to become acutely aware of the risks, fears, and conflicts that exist today and in a world where Covid 19 persists. This 'New as Usual' story is crafted for this awareness.

I barely slept, wondering and worrying, again, until the alarm. But today at least I got up. Had to help with the kids.

First I checked the app, pleased the household was all Green. All four bedtime reports were clear, and the Overnight Symptoms Tracking was Green for everyone. I hit Verify, then Submit. This lets our employers/schools know that we are cleared to come in.

That is, unless 'excess symptoms' are heard. Then we accept a quarantine, or request an Override via video calls with Certified Health Reviewers (CHR) at school and work, and await their coordinated decisions. Last time, we lost the day to CHRs, but avoided the quarantine. Communal well-being

requires this coordination, and makes us safer together, so all schools and credible companies require it now.

I left Pat to drop the kids at school and return to work from the den. Pat was mostly not allowed at the office now, so took on a bit more on days when I put on my mask and headed to the office. I was On Rotation so I could meet in person and wanted to get an early start. With trains running 50% capacity, an early start means really early. Hopefully, I would get on within 3 trains by going early. Bad days, this adds one hour to my commute compared to the Old Days. Really early days like today, several hours, and that is without confrontations from Unmask Advocacy Group. Those mess up the whole day and make me want to shout, "Argue your rights in a letter to the Health Editor, I'm trying to get to work here!"

But I cannot focus on that, I need to stay positive during commutes or Health Guards will see my anxiety and pull me aside for more questions and screening, ruining my whole schedule. So, I smiled, pulled on my gloves, went into the boarding queue and made it onto the second train without even a sniff from the Health Dog (he is so cute). A good start to my day.

While walking from the train, I grabbed my coffee without even a stop. I pay by texting and just pick up a cup from the table outside. They are all premade, so you just grab your persona coffee (mine is a double skinny latte; these are in the tall purple cups) and keep walking. I guess we got truly mobile banking from the virus, that's a plus.

Getting into the office was fraught today. The infrared screened someone Red. He entered via my Designated Lobby Entry Door prior to my approved entry and worse, then was confirmed with a temperature. The doorway was closed until it could be p-cleaned, the deep pandemic cleaning. I was in early, so the P-Purifiers were not on-site yet. That doorway would be closed for 45 minutes anyway. Fortunately, my Designated First Alternate Lobby Entry Door was open, and my badge auto-transferred to that door. The first few times it didn't, and I lost hours waiting for them to let us trickle in.

Once in, the lobby worked smoothly. Yesterday the lobby captain confirmed me for this time slot with two others to nearby floors, so she had a cab waiting for the three of us with the floors already called. I got in and thought how in Old Days there were fifteen folks in here. Now, maximum of four, and a center table and numbers on the floor so you stand apart and enter/exit in the correct sequence.

On my floor I entered the anti-lobby and disposed of my gloves and mask. New company policies - no visitors, no one can enter who has been working from non-certified places like co-working, and on entry you dispose of used PPE, purify your hands and face, and take day PPE that they provide as you enter reception. While leaving you do the same and take night PPE for the journey home. For me this is a good deal – they cover 2/3 of my personal work PPE this way. I got my day badge from the robotic reception – today I was yellow.

At reception I grabbed my coffee persona again, the same purple cup for the same coffee. Sometimes I missed going into a pantry to gab while getting coffee. But this is safer, and the pantry has so much proximity, we just didn't know how bad that was back then. It makes me nervous just thinking about it now.

My day badge established my Desk Designation today as a good one, the aisle seat at the farthest end of the floor. Literally no one walks down there since we only use about a third of the desks anymore. And, if your daily zone is blue or violet or one of the others, you are not even allowed to follow the yellow carpet paths to this area. Thankfully. I took it as good to be important enough to be designated for one of the safer seats.

On the desk the overnight purifiers left my daily hand sanitizer to use each time my phone buzzed, and my Yellow Zone guide showing my restroom, pantry pick up, and collab rooms. It was confusing as I am normally in the Amber or Brown zones, so I had to study it before logging in and entering my Zone Guide Acknowledgement and Release form so I could get my laptop onto the network. To log off I had to certify I wiped the desk with the cleaning supplies they left on it.

Most of my day was collab meetings, typical for days at the office. The company calendar won't even let me request an On-Rotation day if I don't have enough large collab meetings. I have friends who created fake meetings so they could get time away from family, but the system caught on and now verifies the invites have been accepted. Cheating now gets you fired, too. Today I had plenty of group collabs set up, so getting an On-Rotation day wasn't too long a wait.

Toni couldn't come in. She was quarantining from traveling to our most important client. And James never comes in anymore. His elderly mom lives with him and the risk of bringing the virus to her outweighs it in his mind. With over one million dead so far, a number we never thought 2,000 a day could get to, but it did, his worry seems pretty reasonable. But it certainly risks James getting left out of important conversations that way.

It's weird in these big rooms with so few desks and so few people, and having to wipe everything down at the end of each meeting. Since we have to redundancy anti-pair, we cannot all be On Rotation at the same time, so there are many still on video. Staff redundancy used to mean getting fired. Now it's risk management so a containment break doesn't en masse wipe out departments. Who knew this is a thing the virus would create?

Lunch was right on time – I got to my noon collab room and my brown bag was there with my name on it and my order in it. No more outside lunch, now the pantry staff keep us safe and fed, with motivational notes and smiley faces on the bags. During our meeting I ate, sitting behind the plexiglass screens that are in all the rooms now.

At the end of the day I was pretty tired and had a headache from all that unrelenting focus. I just get so stressed whenever I have to venture into public that once again I felt a little ill. It's just the anxiety and stress, so I practiced my breathing like the team therapist taught us, put on my smiley face, grabbed my homebound PPE, and started for home. I was late for my elevator slot, so I had to wait until someone else missed theirs, and my cell beeped that it was my turn to go. I got out and went home.

The bi-weekly food delivery today made dinner easy. By the end of each food cycle, the fridge can get pretty lean what with the pay cuts we've both experienced. Pat and the kids were happy and well fed tonight at least.

Then, when everyone was sleeping and I was reading emails, I went Red again. Now I am in our Q-room until the CHRs and state Contact Tracers decide. It's either stay in this room for 2 weeks, live among my family while we all stay home for 6 weeks depending on their apps, or get lucky with a false Red and an Override. All this because even after 2 years the darn virus continues to mutate faster than I can spell vaccine.

Today made me realize how incredible this is. Just 18 months ago we never thought about it, and now, all day, every day, unrelenting, New as Usual.