

The background features a vibrant tropical pattern with various leaves in shades of pink, orange, and blue. A light blue rectangular frame is centered on the page, containing the main text.

Mastering Flexibility: The Key to Bouncing Back Faster

Will your business merely survive or truly thrive after the pandemic?

Read on to learn how to master flexibility in every aspect of your business -
and emerge more resilient and competitive than ever.

re·sil·ience

1. the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties, toughness.
2. the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity.

Bouncing back from Coronavirus will require resilience.

The economy is reeling from the effects of the pandemic...
workplace shutdowns... overtaxed healthcare systems...
employee reluctance to return to work.

How can companies survive and even thrive in the face
of the most significant challenge most of us have ever faced?

*It will take **flexibility** to adapt to this new business reality.*



The one-size-fits-all workplace doesn't work anymore.

We have entered the age of personalization.

Thriving businesses focus less on developing a monolithic company culture than accepting the professional, personal and cultural influences and viewpoints each individual brings.

The beginning of this crisis was a time of hunkering down and riding out the storm - a wise strategy at the time.

Now we must acknowledge that the pandemic could be with us for a very long time - perhaps years.

Where do we go from here?

We can't just throw up our hands and go back to our normal behaviors. Instead, we must find ways to resume business in a new and altered (maybe better!) form.

Flexible leadership is essential in all phases of pandemic response.



What does flexible leadership look like?

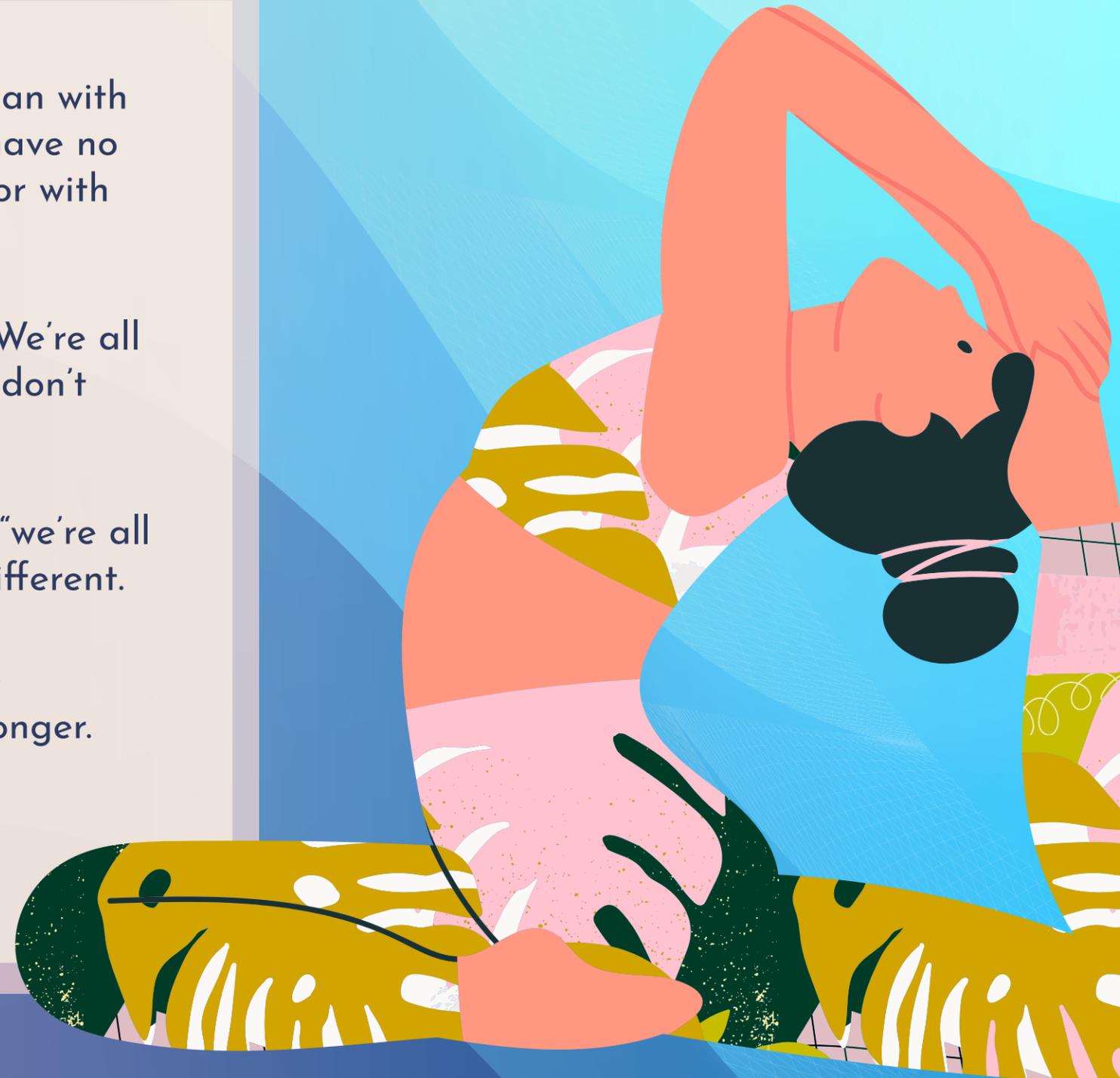
Transparent. People fear the unknown. Be as honest as you can with your employees and encourage them to be open with you. You have no way of knowing if a remote employee is struggling emotionally or with their equipment unless they tell you.

Humble. No one has led a team through a pandemic before. We're all making it up as we go along. Don't be afraid to admit that you don't have all the answers.

Understanding. Treat employees with empathy. As much as "we're all in this together," everyone's experience and circumstances are different.

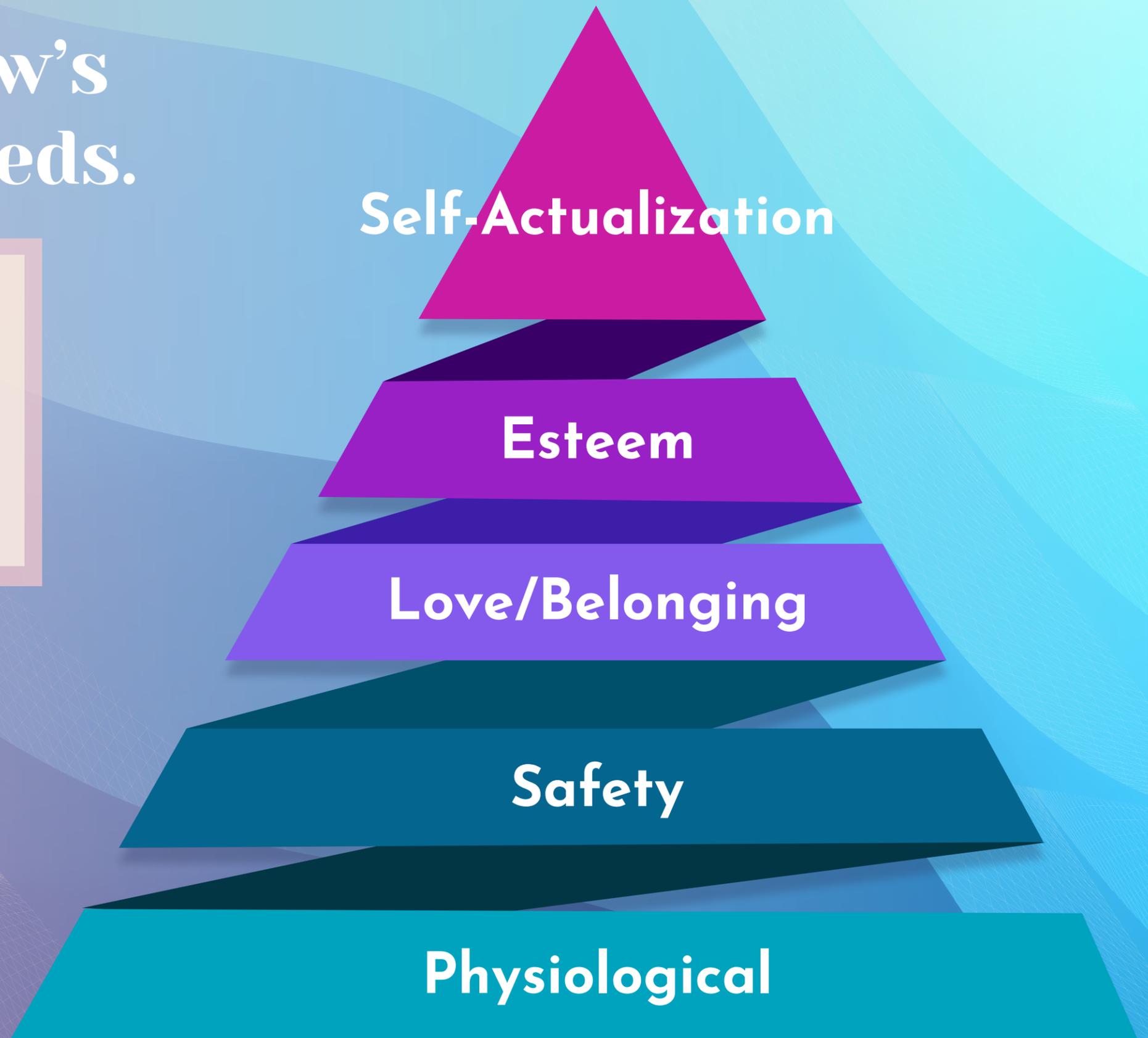
Adaptable. In evolution, the species that can change with the environment are the ones that survive and make the species stronger. Business is the same.

How can you lead your team through this challenging time?



Consider Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

It's a simple method to envision how your employees are doing and what they need to be confident and productive in a post-pandemic workspace. The bottom of the pyramid must be built before you can move to the next level.



What do your people need to be successful?

Physiological. Do your employees have the equipment and resources they need to perform their job duties effectively - either on-site or remotely?

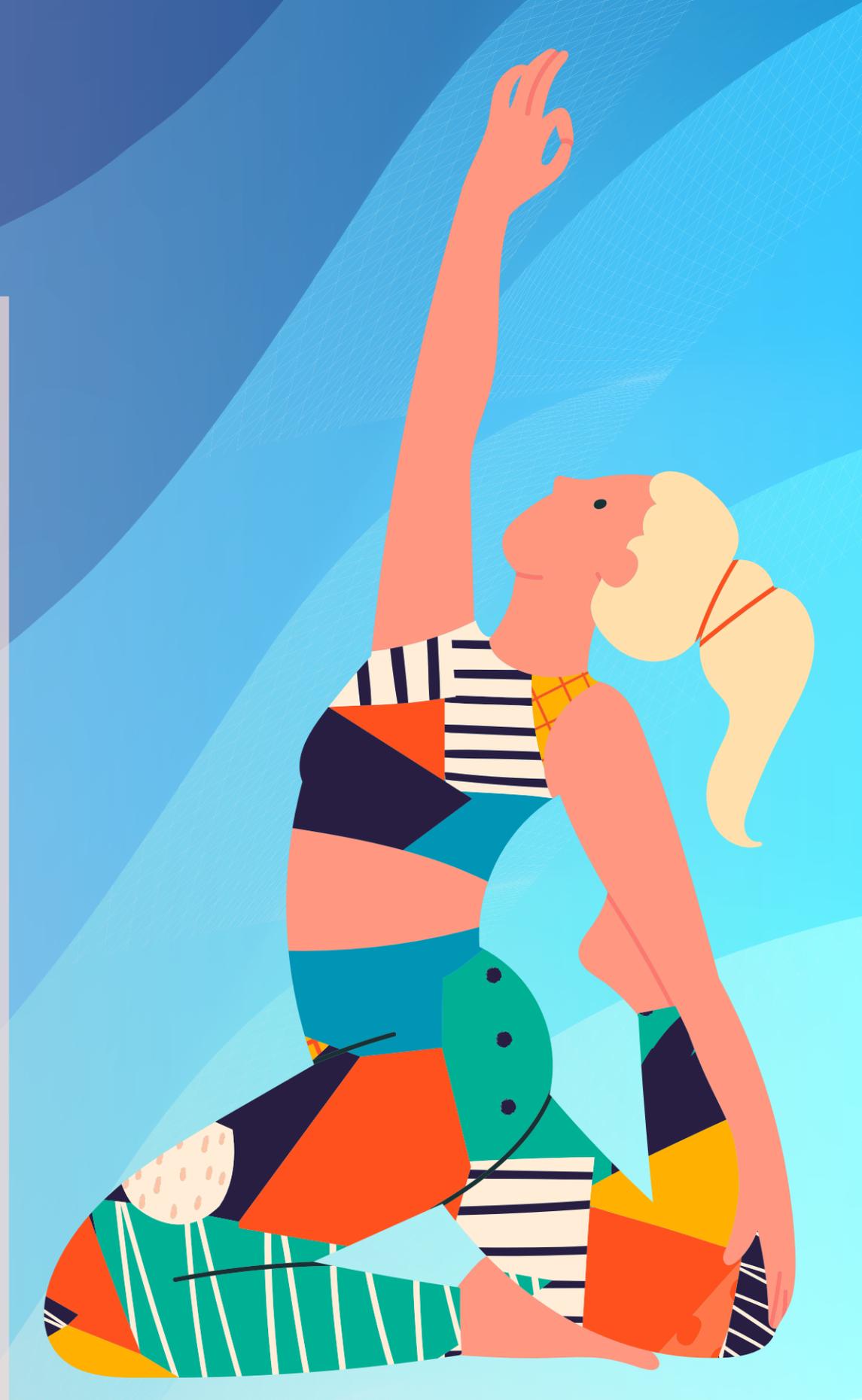
Safety. Is the employee currently healthy? Is your workplace set up to keep them healthy (taking temperatures, providing masks, setting up work spaces for ease of social distancing)?

Love and Belonging. The business equivalent is culture and engagement. Have you built a culture that welcomes diversity and fosters a sense of belonging?

Esteem. Do you go out of your way to recognize and reward employee achievements and play to their strengths?

Self-Actualization. Is developing talent a priority? It dramatically increases engagement and retention. It enables you to hire from within for your most impactful roles and recruit for lower-level positions.

Employees whose needs are met will be better able to contribute to the organization.



Guide your team through the three phases of response.

Recovering from the pandemic will take time, planning and a willingness to change course as more information becomes available.

Isolation.

We have, for the most part, moved through this phase. It was a challenging one where employers and team members alike were forced to find new ways to remain afloat. Managers had to make tough decisions regarding essential employees, how to best use PPP funds and possibly make tough decisions about letting people go.

Caution.

At this stage, work resumes. Decisions must be made regarding how much if any work will be conducted remotely. Steps must be taken to protect workers on the job, insist that employees don't try to "tough out" any symptoms of illness, and remain vigilant in case you need to return to a state of isolation.

Reevaluation.

At this point, employers must consider what changes should be considered long term or even permanent. Will your workforce remain remote? Should reductions in force be made permanent? Do the changes you made to adapt to the pandemic make sense for your long-range business plans?



Every business will move through these phases at different rates, but flexibility is essential in each. Be prepared to drop back to previous stages if it becomes necessary, or to accelerate movement through a stage if circumstances allow.

Build a more flexible workplace.

If you have been allowing employees to work remotely and plan to continue, assess who has done well working from home. For those who haven't - why? Are they distracted by family members at home or are they simply happier and more productive with more interaction? Call these employees back to the office first.

To maximize flexibility, focus on what needs to be accomplished rather than where or when it gets done:

- Work in shifts to reduce the number of employees in the building at any given time.
- Alternate who works in the office and who works from home.
- Allow workers to get their hours in when they are best able to focus.
- Establish core hours when everyone must be available. For example, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., but allow employees to determine when the remaining four hours are completed.



Leverage the advantages of flexibility.

Many companies have been pleasantly surprised by how well they have adapted to changed circumstances. Manufacturers shifted to make and supply medical equipment. Restaurants quickly added takeout options.

Successful, resilient companies...

- Are thriving in a remote workplace.
- Have pivoted production to manufacture in-demand products.
- Adapted their business to a different reality.
- Scale their workforce up and down on demand.
- Capitalize on short-term talent availability.



Flex your decision-making process.

You may be accustomed to having all the information you need to make decisions with confidence. That's not the case right now. Making decisions can often mean moving forward with what you know now, knowing you may need to recalibrate as more information becomes available.

Best practices continue to evolve.

Right now, there is a sharp difference in the number of cases in states where masks are required and where they are not. Mask use may become more widespread.

The impact is global.

Businesses worldwide have shut down or are operating at reduced capacity, potentially causing shortages in raw materials or products you need to run your business.

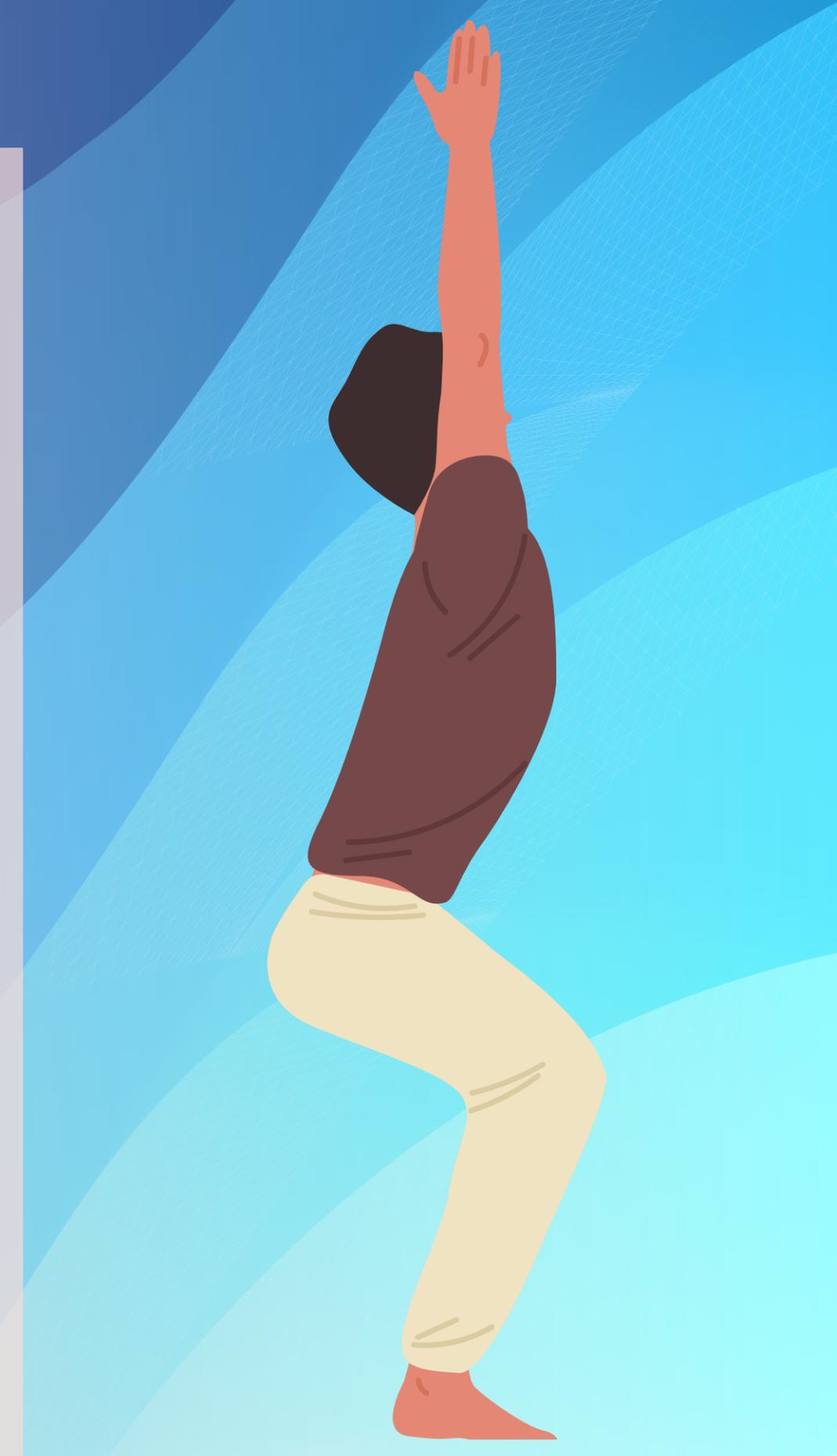
You'll need to make tough decisions - with limited information.

How will you adapt? Cut back on deliverables or find alternate sources? Give customers adjusted delivery dates or partial orders?

Keep your workforce flexible.

Employees will look to you for reassurance if you need to change course as things evolve.

This crisis has shown "that's the way we've always done it" doesn't cut it anymore.



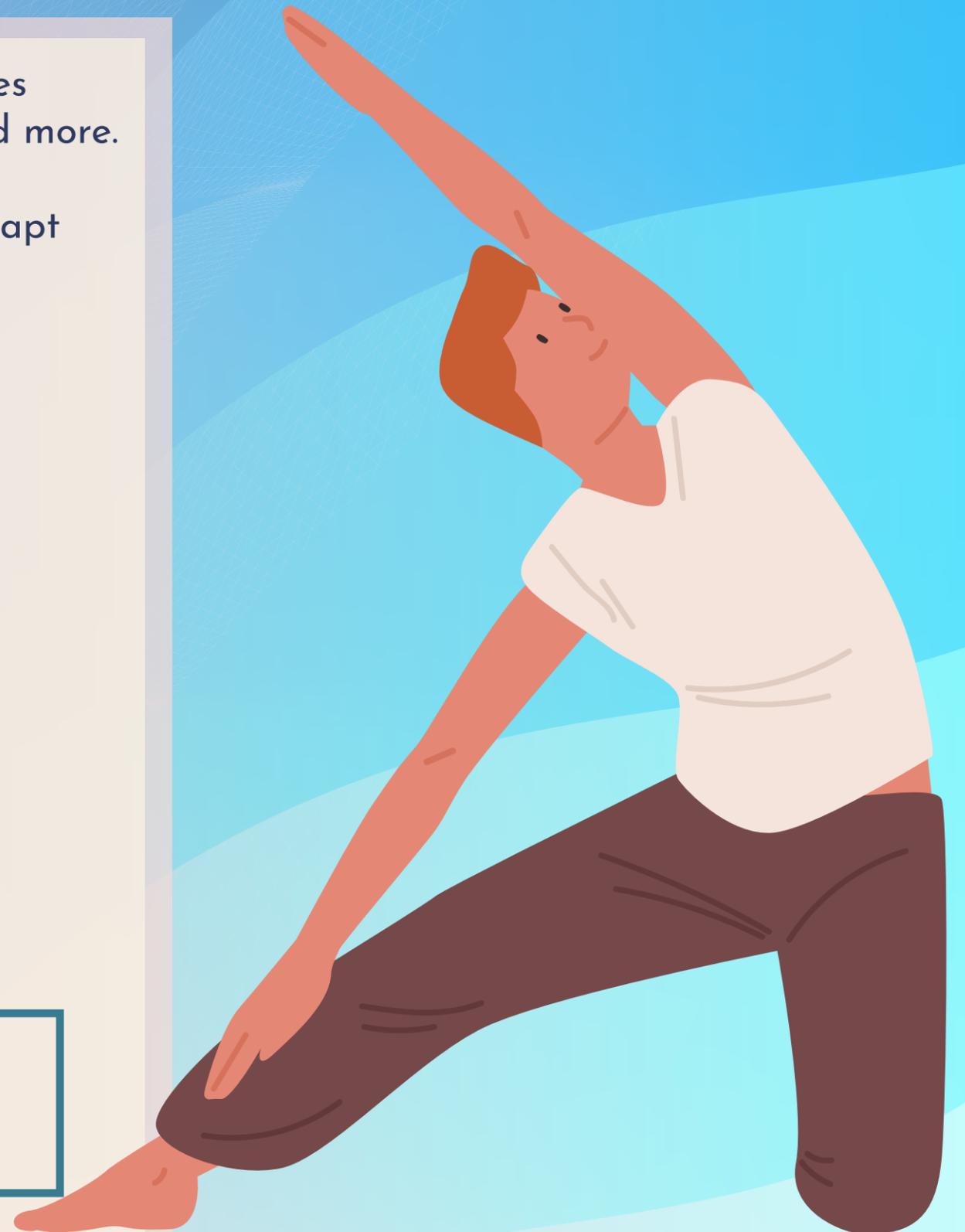
Make your workforce more flexible.

There are many ways to adapt to a business environment that changes nearly every day. Remote work, staggered shifts, product changes and more.

As demands on your business evolve, flexible staffing can help you adapt and thrive by:

- Filling in for employees who are sick or caring for family members.
- Bringing in uniquely skilled individuals as needed.
- Experimenting with innovative new product lines.
- Catching up on backlogged work and removing bottlenecks.
- Staying nimble in an uncertain economy.
- Relieving stress for overworked essential employees.
- Keeping up with accelerated growth or increased demand.
- Postponing full-time hires until you're confident you can keep them.

Staffing gives you the flexibility to bounce back faster and stronger than ever. Contact your staffing partner today for a brainstorming session or to request an employee.



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