

THE THREAT-ADAPTIVE CULTURE ASSESSMENT

by **Vital**Smarts®

Dear Leader,

Over thirty years ago, my colleagues and I concluded that the health of relationships, teams, and even organizations is a function of the average lag time between identifying and discussing problems.


We were serious about our conclusion. But we never imagined our reference to “health” would become so literal. In coming days, leaders will be challenged to restart operations during a “Danger Gap”— the period of time between a return to closer social interaction and widely available testing and vaccination.

During this Danger Gap, leaders will be challenged to develop COVID-resistant cultures that require unprecedented levels of candor about how to behave in light of these threats to both human and organizational survival. And ironically, there is no easier time to reset norms than when no one knows what’s normal.

During periods of uncertainty, you have a far greater opportunity to invite novel behavior. Power differentials can be flattened. Likewise, when fundamental values are threatened, people are willing to engage in novel behavior to protect them. You can build a healthy culture for the future with far less effort now than ever before.

This diagnostic tool will help you identify the areas of your business that are likely to buckle under the pressure of the current threat. Good or bad, these results are a gift. They will shine a light in the cracks you can begin to heal. Ultimately, you’ll be on your way to building a “Be Safe. Feel Safe.” culture poised to secure results.

Best of luck,



Joseph Grenny

COVID SAFE

This first section assesses whether your organization is on track to keep people safe as they come back to work during this ongoing pandemic.

1. **Our organization has identified (or plans to identify when people return) the times, places, people, and circumstances in our workplace when people need to take special precautions to avoid infection.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

2. **Our organization has created (or plans to create when people return) precautions and workarounds to address these crucial moments when possible.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

3. **Our organization has found ways (or plans to find ways when people return) to add layers of protection (masks, gloves, disinfectant) to use during the crucial moments that are unavoidable.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

4. **I am confident people here will hold their bosses, peers, customers, and others accountable for maintaining social distance, using masks and gloves, and following all safety best practices.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

5. **Our organization has identified (or plans to identify when people return) groups of employees who are at special risk (public-facing staff, cashiers, tellers, custodial workers, food service/delivery workers), and created special protections for them.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

RECOVERY SHARP

This next section assesses whether your organization is prepared to master the massive changes required to achieve business success during this ongoing pandemic.

6. **Our organization has identified all of the difficult and complex conversations we need to have, no matter how controversial, in order to adapt quickly to the current and future inevitable financial challenges.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

7. **Often, the tough conversations needed to accelerate economic recovery are difficult because they may hurt people, damage corporate values, impact metrics, break promises, gore sacred cows, etc. Despite these challenges, do you have confidence your organization will step up to these tough decisions?**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

8. **Our organization has created a plan that ensures all of the right people are involved in these conversations in a way that leads to rapid resolution.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

9. **I am confident participants will engage in open, frank dialogue—speaking up even when their point of view is sensitive, political, or unpopular in order to help us survive and thrive.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

10. **Our leaders have taken needed steps to ensure that, once decided, these decisions will be executed rapidly and in harmony with the full spirit of the decision.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

VIRTUAL READY

This final section assesses whether your organization is on track to master the virtual business environment that is required during this ongoing pandemic.

11. **Our organization has an effective way of managing employee performance that accommodates our more virtual work patterns.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

12. **Our organization has adapted all of our communication patterns to ensure supervisory, team, cross-functional, project and organizational connections are at least as good as before recent changes.**

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

13. Our employees are effective at surfacing even very sensitive issues using virtual communication tools rather than hiding behind distance as a way of avoiding conflict.

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

14. Our organization makes and implements decisions just as effectively using virtual communication as we did in face-to-face work.

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

15. Virtual tools have made it easier for us to leverage resources, solve problems and implement decisions cross-functionally and organization-wide.

Select one.

- Not at all
- Moderate extent, but not enough
- Very great extent. We have mastered this.
- Don't know

SCORING KEY

This assessment is easy to score. Each question asks whether your organization has mastered a key element. If your answer is **“Very great extent. We have mastered this.”** then give yourself one point. All other answers are worth zero.

Next, add your scores for domain:

- **COVID Safe:** The sum of questions 1 through 5.
- **Recovery Sharp:** The sum of questions 6 through 10.
- **Virtual Ready:** The sum of questions 11 through 15.

Scores in each domain can range from a low of zero to a high of five. Below are the norms we’ve found for each domain. But stay tuned.

Don’t make the mistake of thinking your organization is doing well if all it’s doing is beating these norms, because:

The Virus Doesn’t Grade on a Curve!

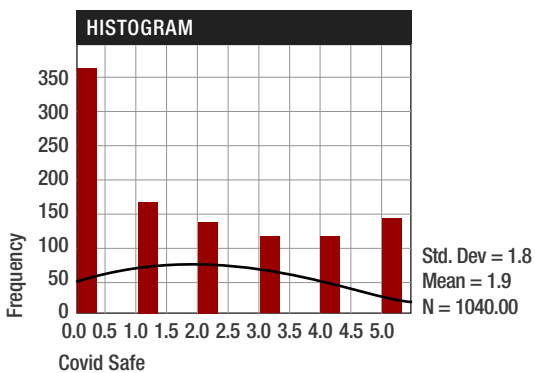
Doing better than average won’t be enough. For example, research shows the average person washes his or her hands for about 6 seconds in the bathroom. If I washed my hands for 12 seconds, I might think I’m ready for a high five, because that’s twice the average. But not so fast!

Germs and viruses don’t care what the average is, or how you compare to others. It takes 20 seconds of vigorous handwashing before you’re ready for any high fives.

The data below are similar to the handwashing example. In our research of more than 1,000 employees and leaders, we found that the average organization is not well prepared to get back to business during this pandemic. Being twice as prepared as the average won’t be enough to keep your people safe and your organization in business.

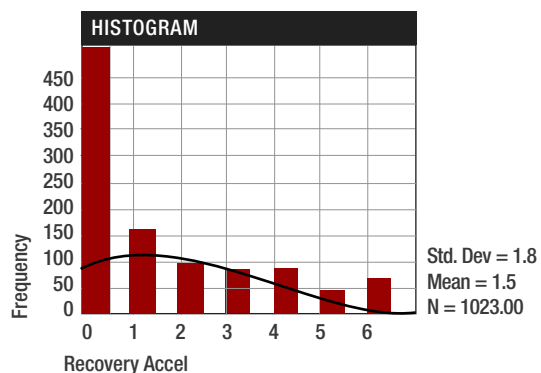
You need to score 5’s in each domain. And, as you’ll see in the graphs below, 5’s are few and far between.

COVID SAFE



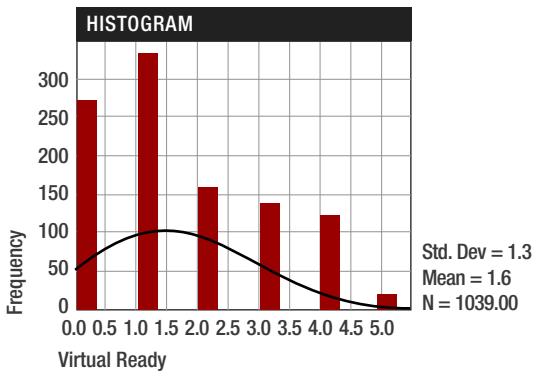
Average score is 1.9. Most common score is 0.
Only 14% score a 5.

RECOVERY SHARP



Average score is 1.5. Most common score is 0.
Only 10% score a 5.

VIRTUAL READY



Average score is 1.6. Most common score is 1.
Only 2% score a 5

ARE YOU READY TO DO BUSINESS DURING THE DANGER GAP?

VitalSmarts can help. For thirty years, we've helped leaders solve urgent problems that require rapid, profound, and sustainable behavior change. And new behavior is the key to building a threat-adaptive culture.

Our *Be Safe. Feel Safe. Facilitated Workshop* is a proven process for creating a plan to do business during an ongoing pandemic. In a series of four, hands-on, live, virtual workshops, a VitalSmarts Master Trainer will guide you through creating a plan perfectly suited to your unique circumstances. When you finish, you will have identified the crucial moments of risk in your environment, you will have created a plan to address each of those risks, and you'll have a strategy for ensuring every one of your employees does the right thing every time.

Want to learn more? Request a conversation today at vital-smarts.com/besafe-feelsafe.