

Kith

Crisis Communications & Reputation Management

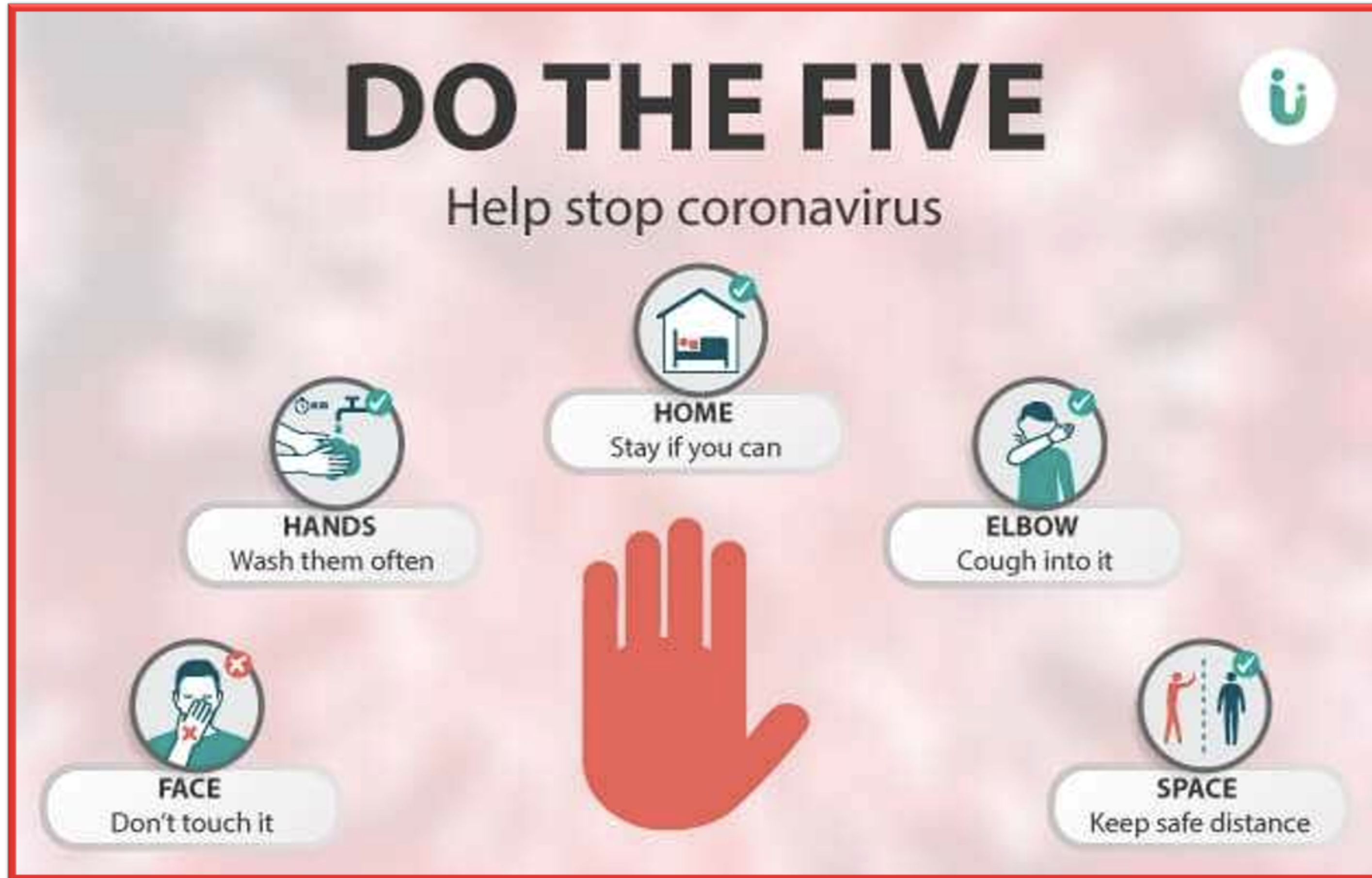
CRAFTING HARD MESSAGING: HOW TO COMMUNICATE DIFFICULT DECISIONS

Hosted by Bill Coletti

Webinar#6 in Kith's COVID-19 Communications Series

WHAT WE WILL COVER:

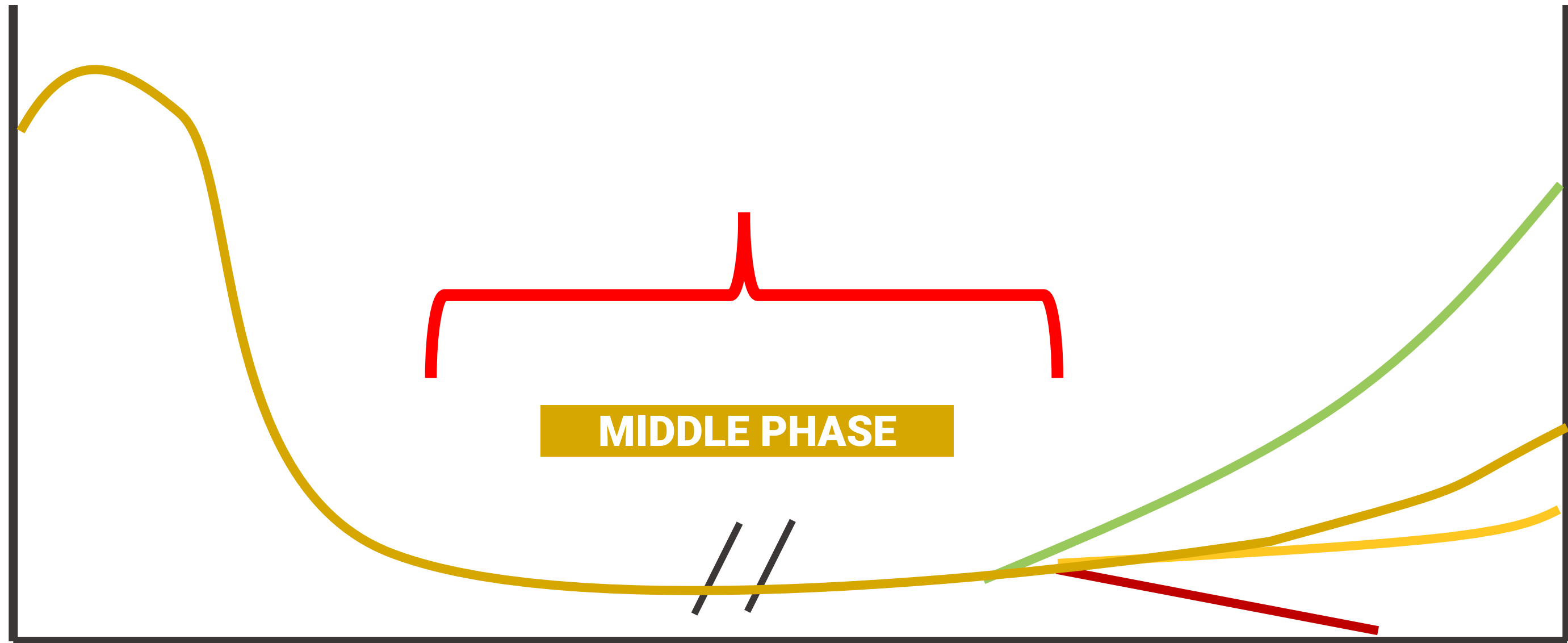
- Conducting a “changed” policy inventory and deciding whether you will move forward with innovation or consistency.
- A practical framework for “how to say hard things” and craft difficult messaging for those that matter most.



WE ARE IN THE LONG MIDDLE

INITIAL RESPONSE

COMING BACK



Realities all companies must consider when planning to reopen and resume business operations.

FINANCIAL

Fed officials see risks in reopening economy too soon, but acknowledge need to move

SOCIAL

Under pressure to reopen this fall, school leaders plot unprecedented changes

MORAL

The Moral Meaning of the Plague

The virus is a test. We have the freedom to respond.

What “changed” & the choice of innovation and consistency

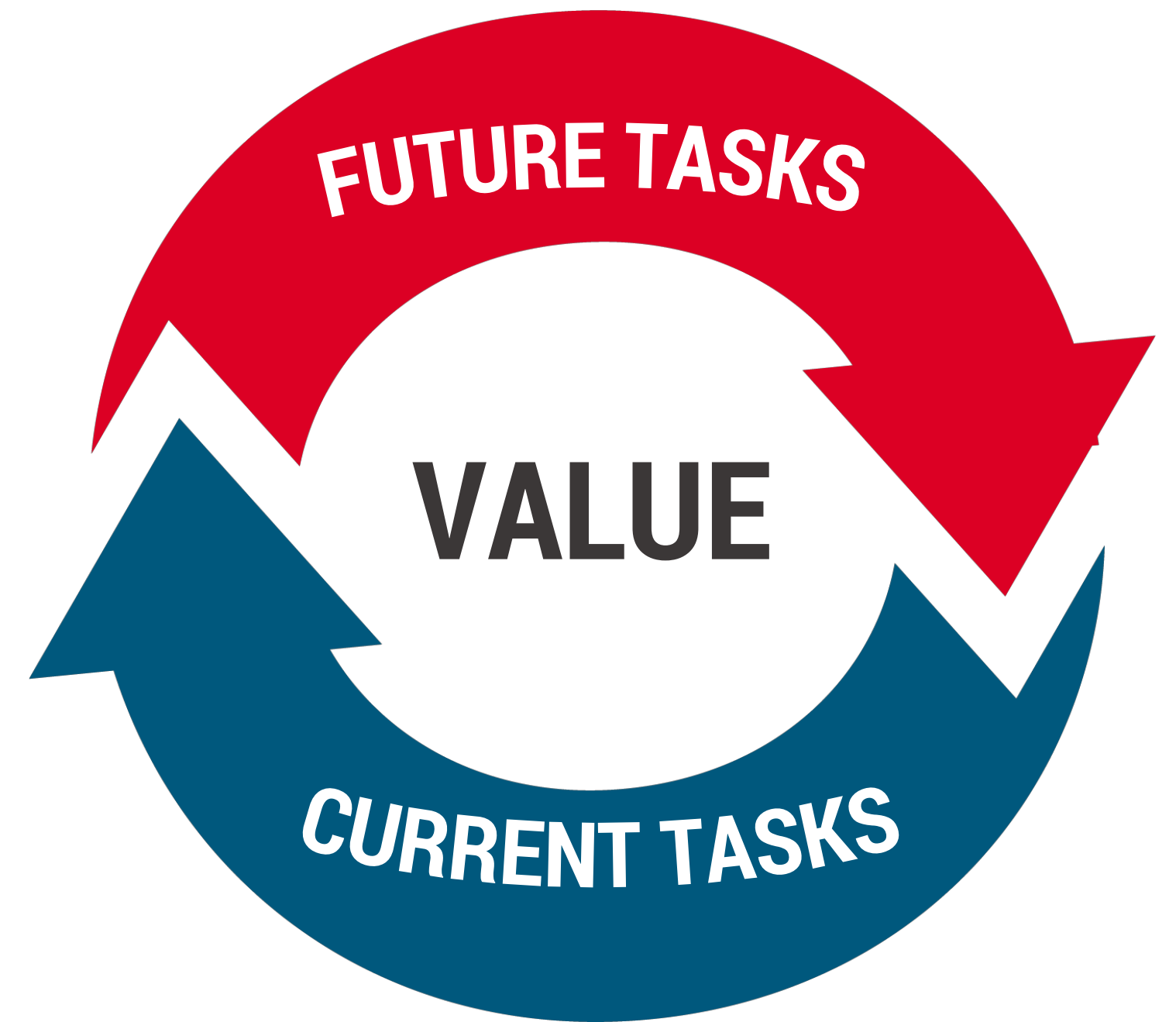
WHAT POLICY CHANGES WILL STICK AROUND POST COVID-19?

- Teleworking/work from home
- Designated shopping hours
- Health and sanitation measures
- Online/virtual service offerings
- Facilities – Format – Footprint
- Assessment standards

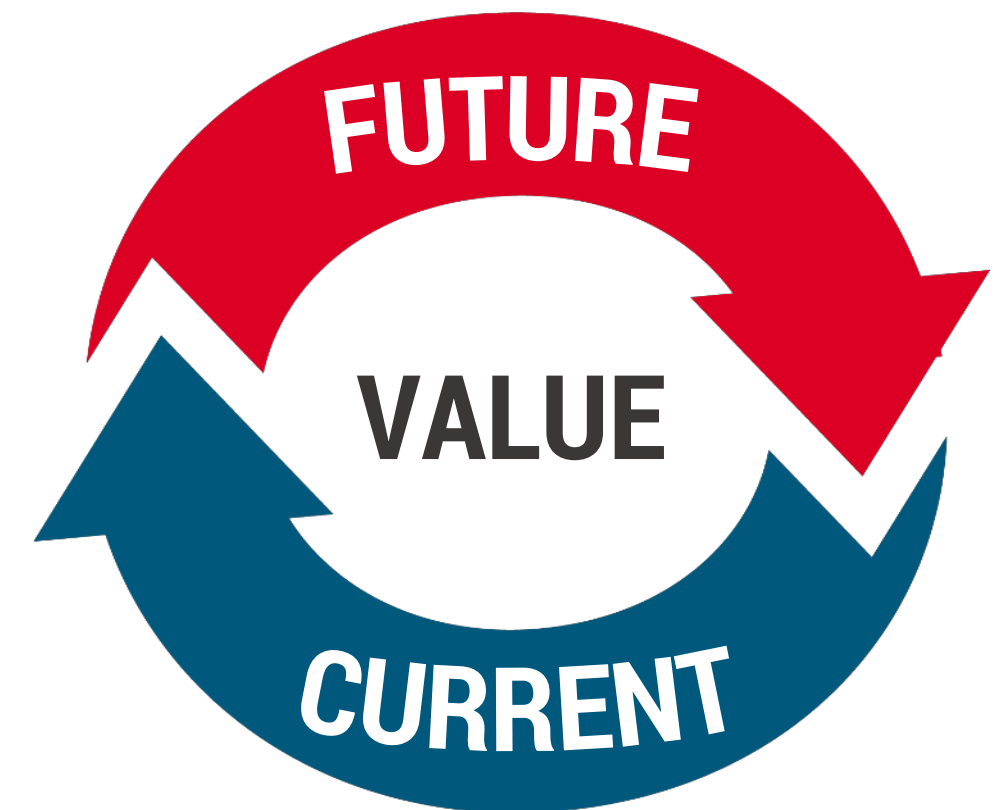
How do you create value?

Consistency

Innovation



INNOVATION CONSISTENCY



CONDUCTING A “CHANGED” POLICY INVENTORY

Now is the time to inventory all changed policies that have been enacted since COVID-19 outbreak. You must decide which policies will stay, and which will go once you reopen.

Will you revert back to **consistency** or will you choose the path of **innovation** and enact long term changes?

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IMPACT VS. DOABILITY MAPPING

Start by listing the ideas, solutions, innovations or strategies you want to map in the topic section below the graph. Next, sort those ideas within the graph based on each idea's doability and the impact it will have on your organization. The ideas that sort to the high impact/ high doability section should become a high priority for action.

IMPACT	High Impact/ Low Doability	High Impact/ High Doability
	Low Impact/ Low Doability	Low Impact/ High Doability
	DOABILITY	

Topics

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

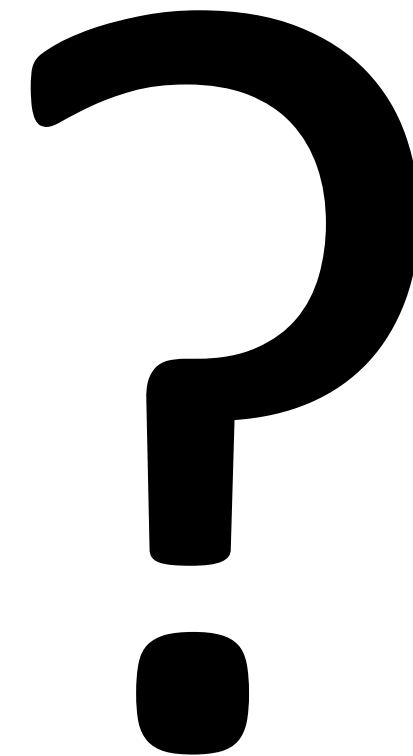
Impact X Doability Drill Concept is credited to SolveNext

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REPUTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Are our “changed” policies more or less likely:

- To improve our customers’ view of us
- To add value to the way we do our business
- To open up new growth opportunities
- To help our employees do their jobs
- To differentiate us as an employer of choice



WHY DO THIS NOW?

- Get ahead with messaging & mitigate risks of negative reaction to keeping a “changed” policy, or reverting to an older policy
- Manage disappointment (e.g., employees able to work from home only under specific conditions, eliminating “thank you” pay incentives)
- Apply lessons of what worked and what didn’t
- Utilize “changed” inventory to update business continuity and crisis plans
- Capture the historical record

THINK ABOUT HOW EACH IMPORTANT AUDIENCE WILL REACT TO A DECISION:

- If it is something they will be **excited** about, then it is an opportunity to build reputational goodwill – and now is a great time to do that
- If it is **unclear** that they will understand, then it is an opportunity to educate and demonstrate the value to them
- If you are **disappointing** them, then it is necessary to explain the decision even though it will be hard to hear

Would a reasonable person expect a responsible organization to do this in this situation?

KEY QUESTION:

Are you considering the
reputational impacts as you
consider the fate of
"changed" policies?



How to communicate difficult decisions and say hard things

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD STATEMENT 6+2

- **Empathy** – express sincere, genuine care for anyone affected
 - **Authority** – demonstrate that an executive has ownership of this issue
 - **Transparency** – be real about what is happening (unprecedented) and how it's impacting your people; address the fact this is a dynamic and evolving situation
 - **Decisiveness** – say exactly what specific steps are being taken to mitigate the situation
 - **Reassurance** – think about who is hurt, angry or scared, and what would calm them
 - **Consistency** – explain how when and where you are going to keep the updates coming
-
- +1: Make a Hero – give shout outs to employees, first responders or others who have stepped up to make a difference
 - +1: Give Back – what steps are you taking to help the broader community

SAYING HARD THINGS RELIES ON THREE ELEMENTS

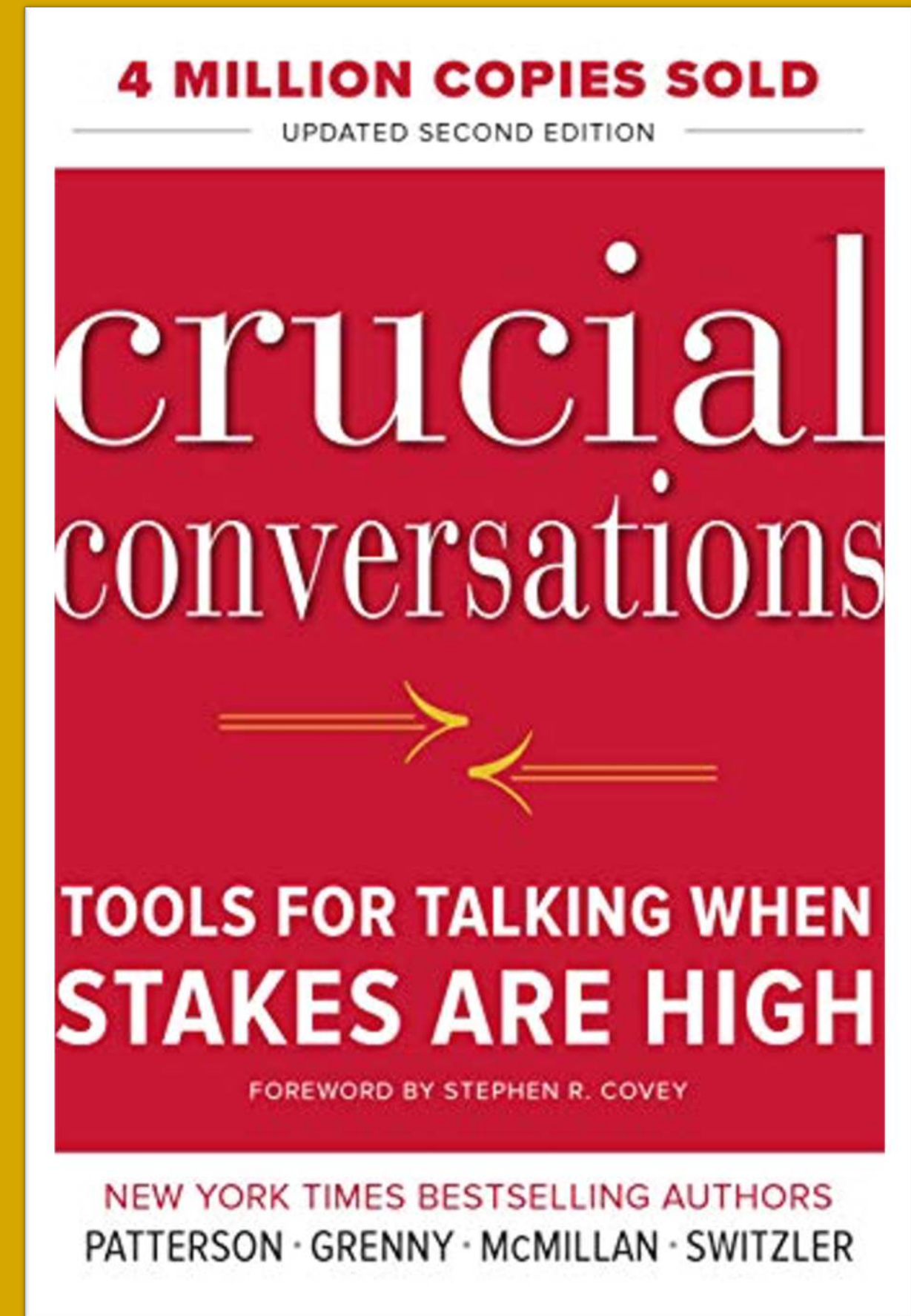
- **Empathy** – you care about them and understand their disappointment
- **Transparency** – why was this decision made, make the case for reasonable people
- **Reassurance** – this will be OK

Demonstrating Authority, Decisiveness and Consistency will not help someone who is hearing bad news.

+1 – provide resources to soften the blow or help them move forward

CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

**Intended for 1:1
Refined for Crisis
Safety - Facts- Listen
[Kith.co/insights](https://www.kith.co/insights)**

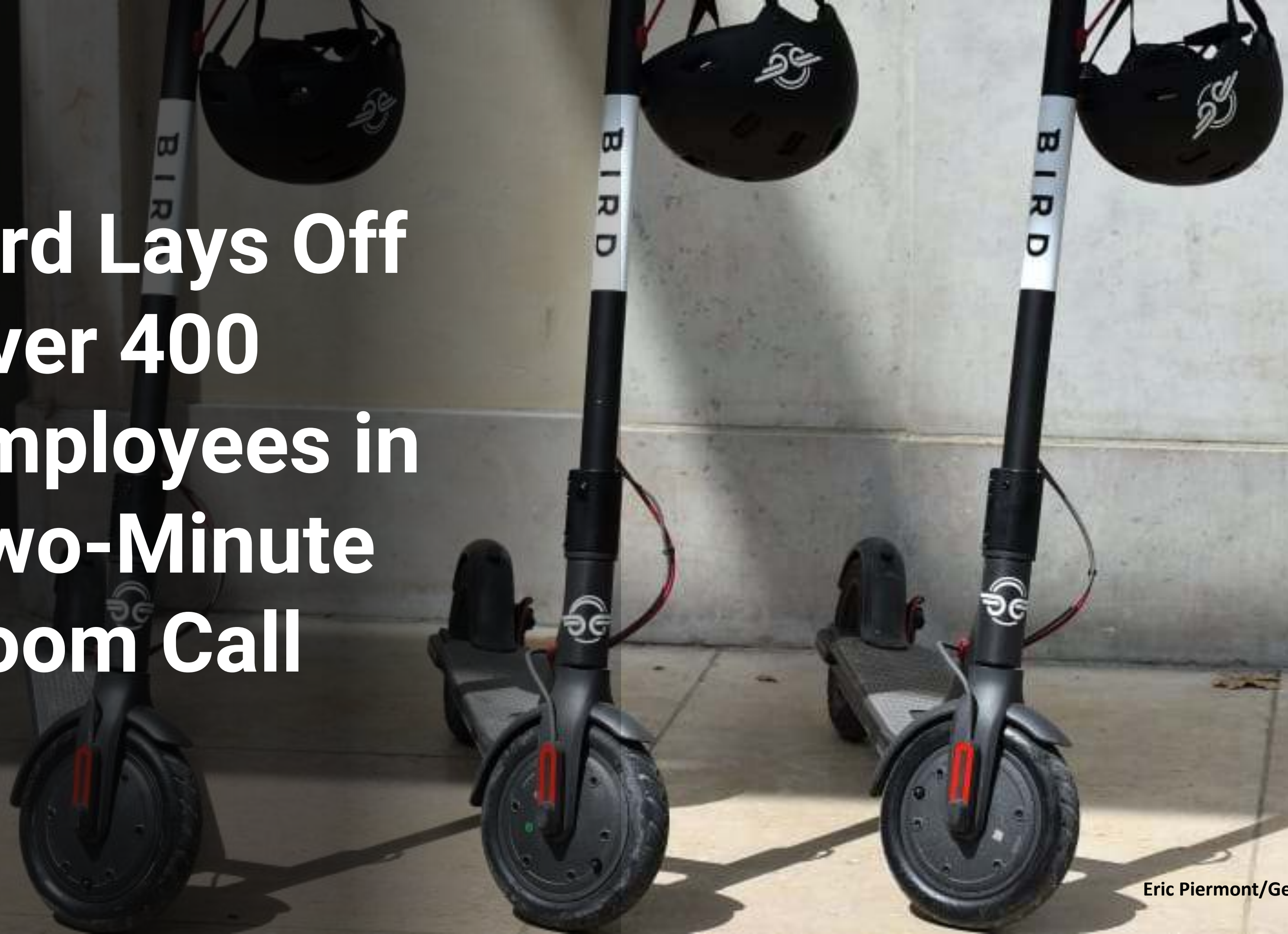


CLARITY TO POWER

We want to empower you to be a strategic advisor to your CEO, President, or leadership team.

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Bird Lays Off Over 400 Employees in Two-Minute Zoom Call



Disappointment

The feeling of dissatisfaction caused by the nonfulfillment of one's hopes or expectations.

When we tell someone we are going to disappoint them, it is a hard conversation.

- We know we are not satisfying their expectations, and we don't like to disappoint
- We understand their feeling of disappointment
- Reasonable people can be disappointed even if the cause of it is perfectly reasonable and rational

FOUNDATION ELEMENTS

Change your mindset. Yes this is difficult, but for a good reasoned reason.

Presumably, you have been communicating all along so that the employee is aware of the situation.

Be Honest:
TRUTH v. YOUR
TRUTH



Be clear & specific:
Begin with the end in mind -
Explain the bigger picture

Be okay with feedback
and give it room

Keep lines of
communication
open

Share how this impacts you and
the team

A photograph of Mark Cuban, a man with short brown hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt. He is speaking into a small lapel microphone and gesturing with his hands. The background is a dark blue stage with some light patterns.

**Mark Cuban says how
companies treat workers
during pandemic could
define their brand 'for
decades'**

KEY QUESTION:

Are we expressing the right
amount of clarity and
compassion when we say
hard things?



WHAT WE COVERED

- Conducting a “changed” policy inventory and deciding whether you will move forward with innovation or consistency.
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A favor please Go into the Q&A and Leave me some feedback. THANK YOU



Q & A

Kith
THANK YOU

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