



WORKJAM WHITEPAPER

# **Maintaining Operational Resiliency for a Competitive Edge: Best Practices from the Frontline**



As the COVID-19 pandemic raged on around the world, frontline and essential service employers of all sizes had to change their approach multiple times completely.

At the start of the crisis, non-essential businesses had to completely shut down operations because of local government restrictions. Later, some were allowed to open up at reduced capacity and with limited services, while others were forced only to do business online. Soon after, restrictions were eased in many places, and some businesses could open back up, only to be told to change their protocols once again.

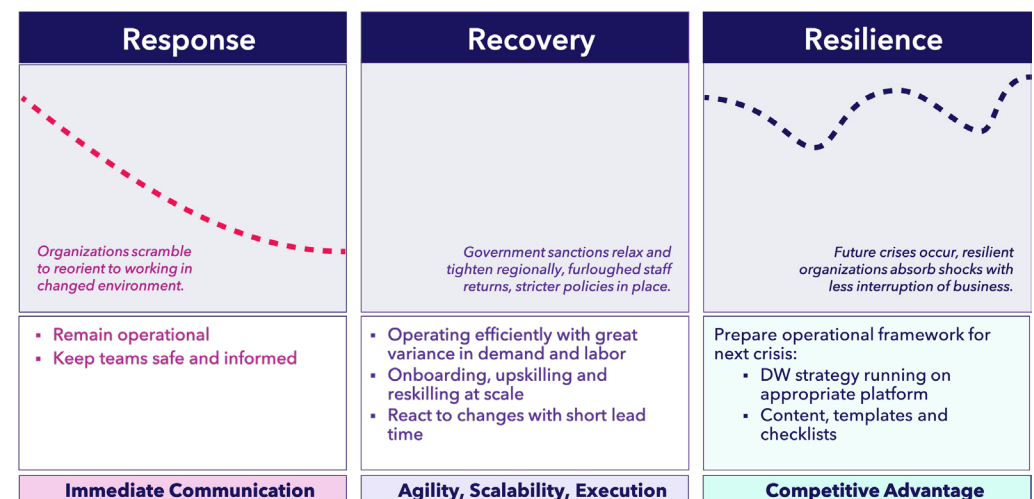
There is no shortage of change that has befallen employers as a result of the current crisis, and it's clear that the change is not over yet. Award-winning global consultancy Baringa<sup>1</sup> notes that if employers want to survive the COVID-19 pandemic – and be in a position to thrive after it – they need to be able to be resilient. Business operations, employee training and overall communication within the organization need to be efficient so that businesses can bounce back whenever a new shift occurs.

Outdated and manual processes – requiring black-and-white printouts and memos on dusty message boards – no longer cut it. Head office, as well as regional management, needs up-to-the-minute details and

communication for everyone from corporate to the frontline.

## Navigating the Phases of Crisis

The current COVID-19 crisis is just one unprecedented event that has changed the way of work. There has been more before it, and there will be more after it. As with any crisis, it's important to note that it affects businesses during three key phases. In each phase, businesses require the ability to manage their operations effectively, train their employees on new procedures, and keep everyone up to date with regular and transparent communications.



### Phase 1: Response

In the first phase of the crisis, the organization gets hit with unexpected change. In many cases, they are forced to close their business temporarily but have no idea when they are able to open back up. During this time, they need to put in new processes and measures in place in order to cope with the change.

### Phase 2: Recovery

In the second phase, the organization is learning how to manage the change for the long term. They are figuring out new processes and procedures and are shifting the focus of their business to meet local regulations.

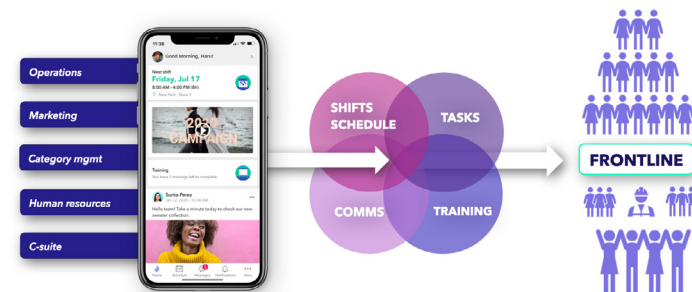
### Phase 3: Resiliency

In the final phase of the crisis, it's time to establish the new normal. Regulations and market needs are shifting rapidly, and businesses need to be ahead of the curve to give consumers what they want. If they are slow to bounce back, customers will end up at a competitor's door.

Being able to quickly change focus and adhere to new regulations and market trends is critical in all phases of a crisis – but especially towards the end. In many cases, there are multiple external factors that are entirely out of a business' control. As a result, organizations need to be prepared to pivot in any direction at the drop of a hat

### Introducing WorkJam - A Solution for Any Phase of the Crisis and Beyond

The WorkJam Digital Workplace is designed to unleash the potential of your non-desk workforce through agile scheduling, transformative communication, experiential learning, and tailored recognition. When a crisis is changing the market demands at a rapid pace, businesses need solutions like WorkJam to keep up with the shifts.



Designed for operational seamlessness, WorkJam connects every employee at every level – from corporate to frontline. In the palm of their hands and on their own devices, employees can access essential tasks for their shifts, detailed training videos and documents, communication channels to ask questions, and so much more.

Serving a range of frontline and essential service employers – from global household names to regional businesses – in every vertical, the WorkJam Digital Workplace solution has

a broad application for every organization. Operational resiliency is built into the WorkJam platform, helping brands survive and thrive through any crisis.

### What Resiliency in Action Looks Like

Working with dozens of major international and local brands during the current COVID-19 crisis, WorkJam has first-hand knowledge of which operational areas businesses need to focus on in order to pivot with the oncoming changes. While operations are multi-faceted, there are three areas that can be modernized to help companies shift their focus to match the pace of change:



- **Agile operations and task management:** Businesses need to do more than identify what changes need to be made to abide by changing regulations. They need to be able to execute those changes at a store level - and deal with differing regulations by neighbourhood, not just by city or country.
- **Modular training and learning opportunities:** In order to ensure employees are following the new protocols, employers need to provide them with training showing them step-by-step instructions. Plus, they need to track training for compliance purposes.
- **Real-time clear communication:** During a crisis, there is a sense of panic amongst employees. Employers need to establish a single source of truth, so employees and customers alike feel they have the right information when they need it.

No two employers have the same needs. Some need to focus on rolling out new procedures while others are worried about re-onboarding returning staff and training new employees. Others are figuring out how to manage mandatory health checks to keep their employees and customers safe. All this is possible with one solution - WorkJam.

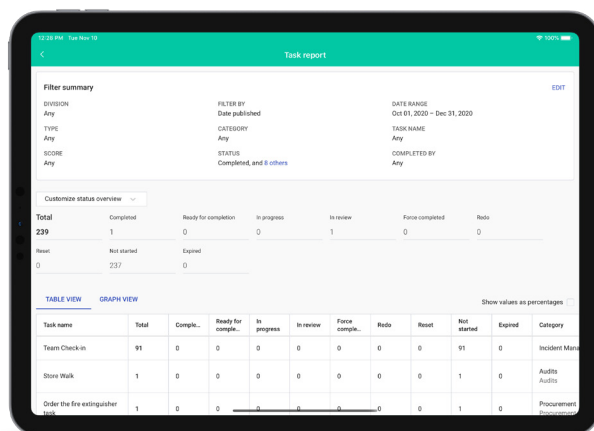
### Enabling Agile Operations and Task Management

A crisis environment is highly fluid. Employers of all sizes are tasked with making the work environment safe for

employees and customers – but what is considered safe can be different from country to country and even neighbourhood to neighbourhood. The level of safety measures is individualized by store, so corporate cannot send out the same requirements for each location. At the same time, employees may be scared to come to work, posing scheduling challenges.

A manual, paper-based approach just isn't feasible when the situation is changing quickly, and store managers need to make decisions on a case-by-case basis. Corporate has to review overall business tasks that don't change during a crisis and balance them with location-specific duties that may be new for all employees involved.

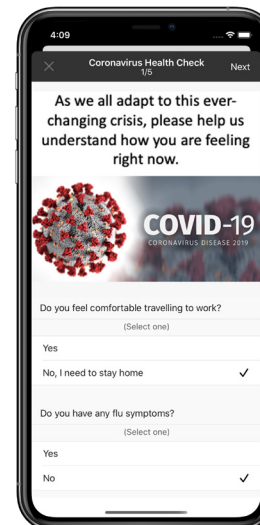
In order to remain agile and keep their competitive edge, employers need to:



- **Create custom task lists and audit trails:** With rapidly changing regulations that differ by neighbourhood, businesses need the ability to create operational tasks by location. With WorkJam, you can finally audit tasks at a corporate level to ensure each store is meeting new compliance requirements.
- **Crowdsourced coverage:** One of the biggest challenges during times of crisis is having adequate shift coverage. Instead of having store managers call or email employees to see who can work, use WorkJam's Open Shift Marketplace to crowdsource shifts. WorkJam ensures only employees who have the experience and required training can pick up open shifts.
- **Require mandatory health checks:** With COVID-19,

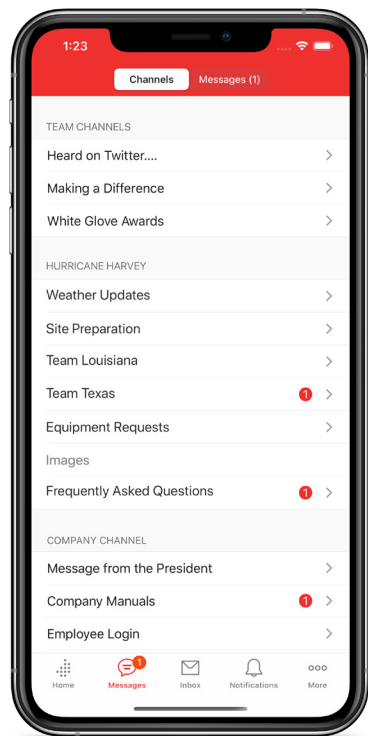
it's crucial to reduce the spread among employees and customers to minimize the risk of potential shutdowns. Mandatory surveys require employees to answer specific questions before they can clock in. Contact tracing is also possible to alert any employees who may have been exposed during a shift.

- **Distribute detailed processes and procedures:** An online library of documentation ensures that employees have all of the SOPs



they need for their shifts. They can access them easily on their phones through WorkJam, reducing confusion without having to leave the shop floor.

- **Gather real-time reports:** Corporate can oversee tasks and operations with up-to-the-minute data on each of their stores. They can quickly pinpoint violations and issues and deploy solutions to ensure all staff and customers are safe during times of crisis.



### Resilient Essential Services Spotlight: Avis Car Rental

When Hurricane Harvey landed in parts of Texas and Louisiana in 2017, this national car rental company sprang into action with WorkJam. Some of their locations were completely shut down, some were open with regular services, and some had new procedures and processes. Using WorkJam's targeted communication channels, corporate was able to keep in touch with all locations to ensure their team members were safe.

Not only that, they had to share

different opening and re-opening procedures with store locations depending on how hard they were hit by the hurricane. Avis maintained business continuity by using a geographical filter in WorkJam, sharing processes and tasks based on store location. This targeted operational communication ensured that Avis was able to provide the same level of consistent service across locations while keeping the unique situation of the crisis at bay.

### Increasing Knowledge So Employees Are Prepared for Any Changes

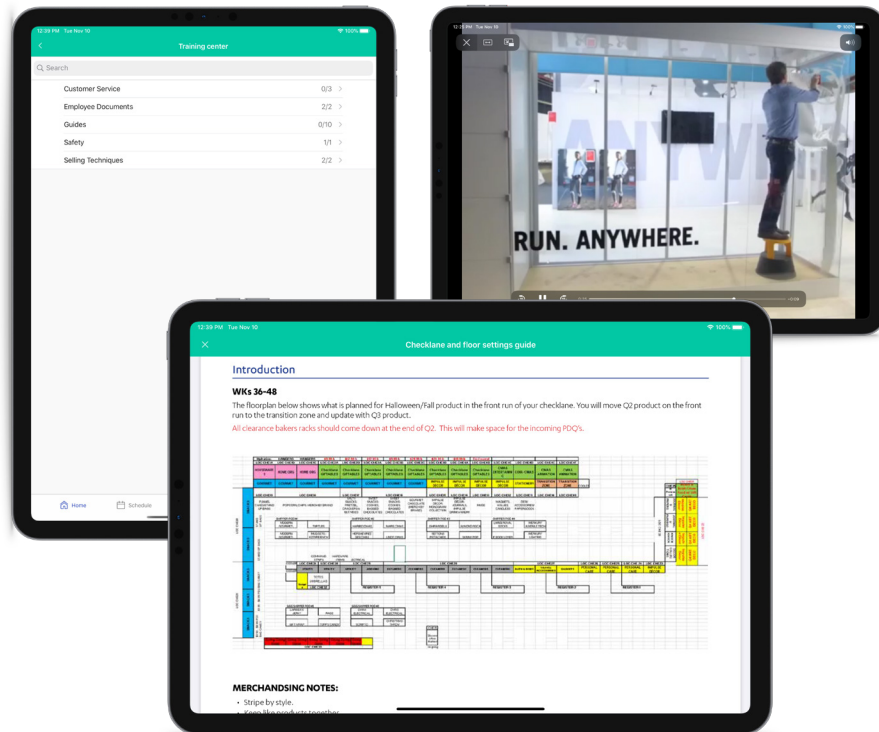
In order to build an agile and capable workforce to withstand any changes in the workplace, it's vital to provide employees with modernized training. The classroom-style manual training that includes printed documents being reviewed in the break room doesn't work when the environment is shifting so rapidly. Plus, today's workforce isn't used to learning processes from a black-and-white video. They want digitized training in bite-sized chunks that is easily digestible.

All employees, regardless of location during the crisis, need to take the same training at a corporate level to provide customers with a consistent level of service. However, some training also needs to be individualized based on local regulations and crisis-dependant needs. This poses a significant challenge for international and national



organizations.

In order to lead their industry during times of crisis, businesses need to:



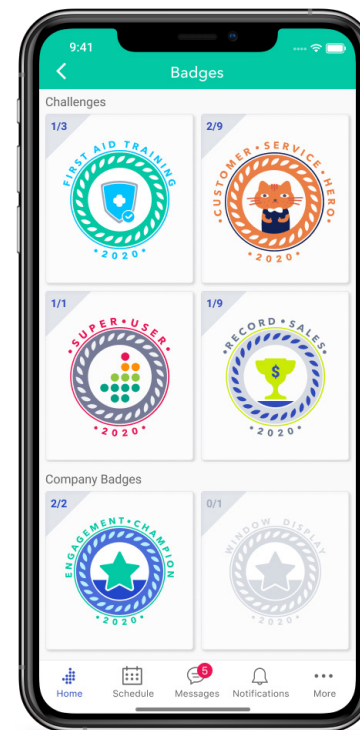
- **Provide micro-training to all employees:** Short videos, detailed step-by-step tutorials, and other short trainings are critical when implementing any new processes and procedures. WorkJam enables you to distribute training

by shift, location, badges, and more, so employees have the right knowledge to execute their tasks.

- **Enable mobile and web-based options:** Only being able to learn on the back-room computer isn't practical when changes are happening at a rapid pace. With WorkJam, employees can pull up training on their phones at any time for a refresher.
- **Implement polls and quizzes:** Test employees to see whether they have digested the new material and

provide additional training to employees who are falling behind. They can also use polls and surveys to determine whether employees feel satisfied and safe as a result of the training they have received.

- **Give the option of formal and informal learning:** Not all learning happens when employees are watching videos or reading through manuals. Often, employees need to ask their managers and colleagues questions. With learning-focused communication channels,



employees can check in with their teams about important information.

- **Offer rewards to incentivize and motivate employees:** WorkJam enables employee performance and completed trainings to be tracked, and measured, for your purposes while offering badges and awards to your employees to showcase their achievements. Badges can be used to unlock rewards, shift preferences, and professional advancement.

## Resilient Essential Business Spotlight: Shell

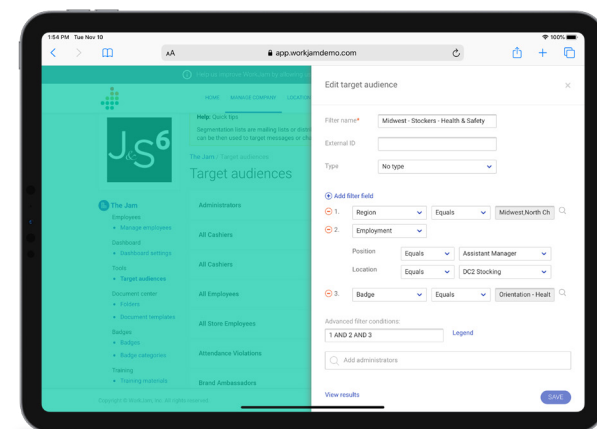
For this worldwide oil and gas company, it's essential to understand who their audience is and how they learn. This ensures they are providing the right training and communication materials to build a capable and agile workforce. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Shell dealt with differing safety and business regulations for their thousands of locations.

They distributed training on sanitization, physical distancing, masks, and more by filtering based on location and region. Customized training ensured that employees were getting details on new processes based on the rules for their area. This kept both employees and customers safe - and feeling confident that Shell was keeping health and safety top of mind. Plus, with WorkJam, Shell could also track training on an individual level for compliance purposes, ensuring their teams were always prepared during the current crisis.

## Establishing a Single Source of Truth with Operational Communication

In order to establish operational resiliency during times of crisis, it's vital to have a single source of truth. Employees are panicked when they are stressed about their safety and the safety of their families. The immediate future seems uncertain, different departments are often working in silos, and the rumour mill can cause additional anxiety.

This is why clear and up-to-date communication is key from corporate to each employee on the frontline. It bridges the gaps between departments, ensures everyone has the information they need and reassures teams that their safety is the business' first priority. With the single truth established, you can then focus on other operational areas of the company to get them up to speed.







In order to bounce back from any crisis before their competitors, management needs to:

- **Provide the right information to the right people:** Instead of causing information overwhelm and sharing all details with all employees, WorkJam enables management to target communication by location, qualification, badge, scheduling assignments, and more through Channels and Messaging. This way, essential details can be sent to the people who need them.
- **Gather insights from employees:** Communication is a two-way street. In order to learn how employees are feeling, Head office can use polls to learn employee sentiments and see where more training or communication is required. This helps improve overall employee engagement.
- **Share best practices, and essential documentation:** Digitizing dusty paper manuals ensures that employees have all of the information they need at their fingertips on their own device. You can also use WorkJam to create a Document Center for necessary HR paperwork, such as pay stubs and insurance.

- **Reduce ineffective and inaccurate processes:** WorkJam's Mobile Punch enables employees to clock in and out on their phones instead of walking across the property to the company clock. This not only reduces viral contagion health risks, but increases accuracy thanks to location, IP address, network, and shift fencing.
- **Provide employees with funds during times of crisis:** Sometimes, employees are not able to wait until payday for a number of reasons – and this can be amplified during an emergency. Through WorkJam, employees can request an advance on their paycheck and receive it right away.

### Resilient Retailer Spotlight: TJX

This international department store brand believes in the importance of implementing best practices in order to keep their customers and employees safe. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of their processes were printed out and laminated, shared between employees and shifts. As the crisis hit, there was a lot of concern that the shared processes were a way to spread viral germs on surfaces.

In order to reduce multi-touch surfaces, and make their processes more easily sharable, TJX digitized all of their processes into WorkJam so employees could review them on their mobile devices. This reduced the spread of germs and made communicating the policies easier.

## Seamlessly Implementing Large-Scale Projects for Operational Resiliency

Implementing a large-scale project during a crisis can seem like a daunting process. However, as leading brands have shown, the key is to start with a high-adoption process, and then expand into other areas of the business. Many leading employers begin using WorkJam through one module that is critical for their business – such as task management, training, communication, or mobile punch. Once employees have adopted the feature, they roll out to other areas of WorkJam.

These leading brands show that it's vital to keep the long-term vision in mind but start with short-term goals. This ensures adoption throughout the organization and enables the business to rapidly roll out other features in order to remain resilient.

Simms & Associates works with organizations to develop an implementation and configuration plan that minimizes the upfront investment while maximizing the return. Organizations are able to see high adoption rates and quickly realize the business efficiencies they need to move forward.

### SOURCES

i <https://www.baringa.com/en/insights-news/trending/covid-19-succeeding-in-the-new-normal/>

Not only does WorkJam give employers a competitive edge, but it also helps to improve their bottom line – fast. A recent Forrester Total Economic Impact™ Study shows that customers who use WorkJam see a return of 410% on their investment within three years. Within just six months, they see the full payback of their investment.

Don't wait for a major crisis to affect your business before you start focusing on making your operations resilient. Moving away from tasks written on post-it notes, training on black-and-white TVs, and communications on cork boards to a compliant world-class and proven platform enables you to keep pace with the changes that come during a crisis.

***Don't fall behind – lead them from the front.***



*For more information on WorkJam and how we can help you unleash the potential of your workforce, contact us today at [sales@workjam.com](mailto:sales@workjam.com)*

Request a Demo