



DAVID A MARSHALL CONSULTING INC.  
Monthly Leadership Newsletter

## FIVE STRENGTHS EVERY LEADER NEEDS TO SUCCEED IN 2021

JANUARY 2021 EDITION

I read a recent article in Industry Week — Five Strengths Every Leader Needs as We Resume Operations — that discussed what leaders at every level need to bring back to their manufacturing operations and try to return to normal.

*As the author, Jay Richards said, “where some see doom and gloom and just go with the flow letting life happen to them, great leaders take the reins and make shit happen.”*

The article was based on research done by Richards and his company, Denison Consulting of Ann Arbor, Michigan, which found that to successfully navigate their way through a crisis, leaders must have these five strengths.

**Communication:** “Be the organization that communicates through the crisis,” said Richards. Communicate with your people working remotely via Zoom or Google Hangout. Distribute information for onsite people via Facebook and Instagram, or even via email and text. Consider holding town halls via Zoom as well. Create videos that you can share privately to people and send it to them via their preferred form of communication.

**Technology:** Embrace the use of technology that allows remote workers to stay remote. I personally am not a fan of remote work, but I know it’s important for some companies in order to remain operational and functional. So find and use the technology that allows it to happen, but just remember to bring everyone back when you can do so safely.

Continued page 3

**Well-being:** For your essential associates who need to remain on the floor or in the operation, take steps to provide for their safety. This should be your top priority anyway, but now you have some additional concerns to address. Limit the number of people in break rooms; strongly recommend or require face masks; make sure people are staying six feet apart in meetings; be sure you have plenty of hand sanitizer and wipes for everyone to use on themselves and their workstations.

**Customers:** What are your customers doing? Chances are, they have their own policies and procedures in place and their own way of doing things. Make sure your processes and practices are aligned with theirs. For example, don't let them into your workplace without a mask, if that's your policy. Similarly, don't go into their workplace without one if that's their policy.

**Connection:** You need to stay in touch with your people, especially as you're working remotely. People will adapt and find new ways of getting their jobs done, so don't stand in the way. Let them do it in the way that gets things done, and then let them tell each other. If you all realize you're in this together, you can make some great things happen. While it's great to be able to see each other on-screen, it's not going to replace the human face-to-face interaction. We still need that.

Continued Page 4



I think all of these items are absolutely spot-on and necessary, but my sense is that the technology part is temporary. It's not a permanent fix. While it's great to be able to see each other on-screen, it's not going to replace the human face-to-face interaction. We still need that.

People need physical interaction and even physical contact. The personal dynamics and nonverbal communication are also important, especially for leaders. You need to be able to see people's body language to know fully how people are taking your communication, whether they're listening, or even if they're fully awake and attentive.

Leaders need to adapt, just like your associates and customers need to adapt. Support them, help maintain their well-being, and connect with them. Communicate everything you're doing with and for them, and return to the office when it's safe for everyone to do so. -END-

Continued Page 5



## About David A Marshall

David Marshall is a Senior Manufacturing Executive with Corporate Culture Development and Operational Excellence Expertise. David most recently was President and COO of Robroy Industries and Board Member where he oversaw this manufacturing organization with four locations in the USA producing high quality electrical products and oilfield products. During his tenure he worked hard on implementing cutting-edge technology into these facilities during renovations of several of the plants and build out of one ultra-modern 130,000 square foot manufacturing facility in Texas.

With David guidance, these companies saw a remarkable seven record years of profitability; eleven consecutive years with profitability exceeding 20% of revenue; and more than \$300 million added to the equity of the business since going private in 2001. David earned his MBA from the University of Virginia: Darden School of Business.

He currently consults manufacturers looking to achieve operation excellence. His motto is: "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it."

He has been a manufacturing executive, as well as a sales and marketing professional, for a few decades. Now he helps companies turn around their own company by making the right decision. If you would like more information, please visit my website and connect with me on Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn. <https://damarshall.consulting/>

