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A PLAYBOOK TO REOPENING YOUR SMALL BUSINESS.

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1 Introduction

COVID-19 has affected every business differently. While some large corporates, especially those who provide some sort of online service, have been able to profit immensely during this period, other businesses have had to shut down completely. Every business will face tremendous challenges as our nation begins to recover from the coronavirus pandemic. This guide will help walk you through the steps your business will need to take to reopen, operate safely and thrive as restrictions are being lifted across the country. This guide will help to prepare you and your business to operate in the 'new normal'.

2 Gather the Right Information

There is a lot of information out there about COVID-19, so you'll need to focus on the most reputable, reliable sources to find the right guidance for your business.

- The Ghana Health Services website provides information regarding the current state of affairs in relation to our COVID-19 cases. *https://ghanahealthservice.org/covid19/*

- The Ministry of Information website provides information regarding the current state of affairs in relation to our COVID-19 cases. *http://moi.gov.gh/*

- The UNICEF website provides information relating to the latest news regarding COVID-19 and what you need to know about the virus to protect yourself, your family and your staff from it. *https://www.unicef.org/ghana/covid-19*

- The World Health Organization website provides information regarding the general overview of the coronavirus around the world and some quick statistics regarding COVID-19 cases across the globe. *https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019*

- This website provides information regarding how to prepare and protect yourself and what to do if you think you are sick. *https://www.coronavirus.gov/*

◄ The official social media accounts for the Ministry of Information also provide credible information and updates regarding the current state of affairs in the country in relation to COVID-19.

> o *https://www.facebook.com/moi.gov.gh/*
> o *https://twitter.com/moigovgh*
> o *https://www.instagram.com/moigovgh*
> o *https://www.youtube.com/channel*

3 Prioritize Safety

Traditionally, businesses prioritize profit making above all. However, to ensure a smooth resumption and running of businesses, organizations need to prioritize safety above all.

General hygiene practices: Consult the *WHO's technical-guidance* for proper, frequent handwashing and respiratory hygiene. Assess your business' current cleaning and sanitation practices against the World Health Organization's stipulated guidelines.

In addition, the government of Ghana through the Ministry of Information has recommended COVID-19 guidelines and protocols for workplaces which advise that all organizations:

Provide handwashing stations, with clean running water and soap, especially at the entrance of the organization's premises to ensure that all persons entering the premise have washed their hands.

Provide hand sanitizers (with a minimum alcohol level of 70%) at vantage points throughout the organization and to regularly spray and sanitize surfaces in the organization with which persons frequently come into contact.

Ensure that all persons entering the organization's premises wear a face mask. Organizations are to strictly enforce the 'No face mask, no entry' policy.

Monitor employee's health and promptly prevent all employees who show any COVID-19 symptoms from coming to work and urge them to self-isolate and seek medical attention.

Stagger work schedules by breaking into shifts to prevent overcrowding in the company premises.

Limit face-to-face in-person meetings, as much as possible, and rather opt for online meeting platforms instead.

Provide a registered nurse on-site if the organization has more than twenty-nine (29) employees.

Carry out frequent fumigation of the company premises and equipment to help prevent the spread of the virus.

Display promotional COVID-19 safety and protocol materials at vantage points within the organization to serve as reminders for employees to adhere to all COVID-19 protocols and guidelines.

Set up a team to be trained in health promotion, preventive measures and evacuation protocols, so that, in the case that an employee tests positive for COVID-19, this team will be responsible for enforcing the necessary evacuation and contact tracing protocols.
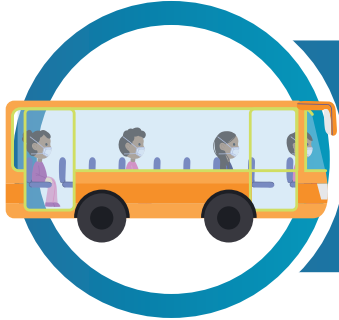
Ensure that there is a strict observance of social distancing protocols in the company buses, if any, as they transport employees to and from the workplace.
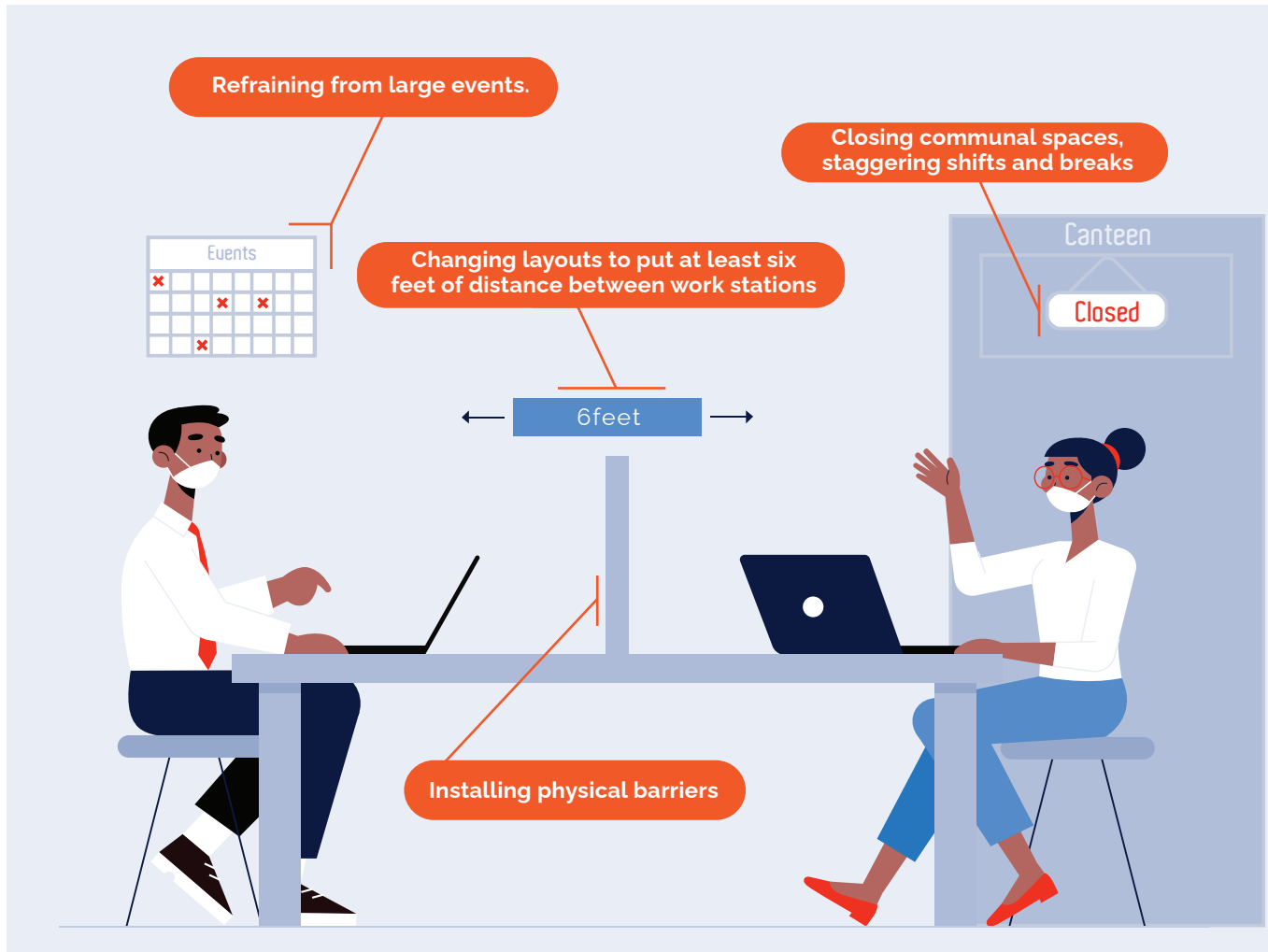
Incorporate floor markings to ensure that their customers observe the social distancing protocols.
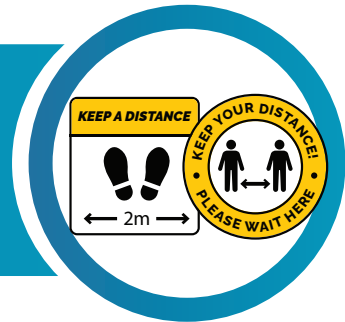
Personal protective equipment (PPE): Businesses must ensure that the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) is made available in adequate numbers for staff. The availability and proper use of personal protective equipment is critical in preventing the spread of the virus. Some essential personal protective equipment include:

| Face masks | Face shields | Hand gloves |
| Respirators | Protective goggles | Hand sanitizers |

Social distancing:
Social distancing: Consider how your current workspace can be reconfigured to encourage social distancing if remote working is not possible. To ensure social distancing in the workspace, businesses could consider:

Refraining from large events.

Closing communal spaces, staggering shifts and breaks

Changing layouts to put at least six feet of distance between work stations

Events

Canteen

Closed

6feet

Installing physical barriers

Employee health monitoring:
Employee health monitoring: Upon resumption, businesses need to develop a plan for monitoring your employees' health, with a particular focus on *COVID-19 symptoms.*

FEVER

A RUNNY NOSE

SORE THROAT

COUGH

POSSIBLY HEADACHE

COVID-19 symptoms
(www.ghanahealthservice.org)

Positive cases: Decide how you will handle a positive case of COVID-19 in your workplace after you reopen. *OSHA's guidelines* give specific steps on how to manage and isolate employees displaying COVID-19 symptoms.
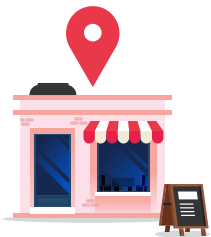
4 Make a PLAN

Develop your new business plan while taking into consideration:

COVID-19 safety measures & protocols

Your budget

Your space/location

Your supply chain

Your products/services

Your revenue impact

5 Communicate

Follow these tips to communicate with your business' various stakeholders throughout the re-opening process:

Employees:
Explain details of the changes, new work practices and guidelines for health and safety.

Vendors/partners:

If you plan to continue working together as your business reopens, inform all vendors and business partners promptly and let them know what (if anything) might need to change about your working relationship.

Customers:

Use multiple channels (including social media platforms, emails, phone calls etc.) to ensure your message is widely received and reinforced.

6 Execute

6.1 Get input from your team

If your business is customer-facing, ask your staff for their thoughts and concerns about interacting with customers in the near term, given the current circumstances.

6.2 Plan out an anticipated schedule of pre-opening task

From deep-cleaning and sanitizing to rearranging furniture to encourage social distancing, make a list of everything you'll need to do to get your business customer-ready.

6.3 Coordinate with your vendors

If you've been shut down, start reaching out to vendors to re-establish your supply chain and administrative support. If you've been operating in a limited capacity, plan ahead for how your inventory needs may increase as business picks up.

6.4 Give your customers a heads up

Even if you don't have an exact date for reopening yet, stay in touch with your customers and let them know to stay tuned for an upcoming announcement.

7 Be READY to adapt to any obstacles

Anticipate and prepare for challenges. No matter how prepared you are, you may find that some elements of reopening your business are more difficult than you expected. You may need to change directions quickly and make swift decisions to overcome obstacles.

Check in with your employees. During your first few weeks of operating "normally" again, frequently check with your staff and see how they're feeling. See if there's anything you can do to make their jobs easier or give them greater peace of mind about their health and safety.

Know that you won't get it perfect on day one. Mistakes may happen as you execute your reopening plan. If something goes wrong, quickly acknowledge the situation and let employees and customers know how you're making it right.

Create formal and informal processes for getting feedback. Listening to your employees, customers, vendors and partners during this time is critical for your future success. Have one-on-one conversations, share polls on social media and send out anonymous surveys via email to encourage your stakeholders to share their thoughts.

Analyze your sales data, customer behavior and ROI. Your numbers likely won't bounce back right away, especially if you've changed your product or service offering. Keep an eye on your business analytics to understand what's working and what's not.

Gauge the overall community response. Pay attention to what customers are saying about you (and your competitors) as everyone adjusts to your industry's operational changes. Take customer suggestions seriously and always acknowledge anyone who mentions your business directly.

8 Respond and PIVOT your STRATEGY accordingly

8.1 Make adjustments based on the feedback you receive.

Your employees and customers may be feeling apprehensive and nervous right now, so it is more important than ever to meet their needs. Do what you can to adjust your operations in response to stakeholder feedback.

8.2 Communicate evolving changes in a timely, transparent manner.

Let people know what's happening and why. If appropriate, give credit to the employee or customer who inspired the change so your audience knows you're listening to them.

8.3 Continue mapping out your road back to normal .

Normalcy is not going to happen overnight. In fact, "normal" for you moving forward may look very different from what it looked like pre-pandemic. Your journey back to the volume of customers you had before may take time, but all your business can do is keep learning, growing and evolving as new information becomes available.