# HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGIES DURING COVID19

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**Abstract:**
The Human Resource Manager have face many challenges during Covid19, but it might be varies with their company's location, size and industry. Companies are seeking alternate corporate strategies, such as using technology to support work-from-home or reviewing costs to stretch the budget. Crisis management and business continuity planning remain the top challenges faced by Human Resource during the Covid-19 outbreak. In this article, the authors have analyzed different unique human resource strategies followed by many organisations during Covid19. The list of strategies includes employee communications to increase awareness, managing flexible work arrangements, implementing preventive measures, addressing employee concerns on workplace policies, digitizing HR practices, manger-worker relationship, and employees' health measures & reviewing or modifying current welfare policies of employees.

**Key Words:** Human Resource, Covid19, Strategies.

### [1] Introduction:
COVID-19 has thrown a curveball at humanity, disrupting almost all walks of life. In organizations, HR teams have been at the frontline, quickly providing employees with the organization's response to the pandemic.

While rolling out new guidelines for working and providing infrastructural and social support, they have endeavoured to keep employee spirits and productivity levels high during the lockdown. They will now need to look ahead and make changes to policies, structures, and practices to align with the new way of working. The development and implementation of these changes call for collaboration and working closely with all the stakeholders in the organization. However, their challenges are far from over, as the 'new' normal way of working throws up several questions that need the answer before they begin planning. HR teams have more than a handful of challenges to tackle, with most of the staff having to work remotely. They will need to set new guidelines and change policies if needed. Revised job descriptions will need to be framed to accommodate part-time, full-time, and remote working definitions. New methods will be required to monitor the productivity of employees working remotely. The performance management system may need a complete overhaul, with new targets, expectations, and rewards. The revised policies and guidelines should incorporate the process of resource availability and utilization for their employees to be able to work remotely. HR managers will also need to brainstorm and have innovative ideas to keep the organization culture highly spirited – both for existing employees as well as for new incumbents. As HR teams look to the future, they will realize that a lot many practices will change, redefining their roles. In this article, the authors have analyzed different unique human resource strategies during Covid19.

**[2] HR Strategies during Covid19:**
(Singh, 2020) – The authors have suggested following strategies: [1] HR managers that intend to fill vacant positions with contractual staff will also need to deal with challenges concerning the applicability of workplace laws upon the staff. Utilizing contingent workers provides employers with greater flexibility concerning workforce management. [2] Post COVID-19, organizations will continue their focus on employee safety and their emotional well-being. HR teams will expand their involvement in the lives of employees and ensure enhanced people connect. [3] Traditionally, organizations have sharpened their focus on employee efficiency, but in the post-COVID-19 world, it's resilience that will take precedence. Keeping in mind the growing remote working culture and the possibility of future outbreaks of infections, recruiters will look at a job applicant's digital dexterity and digital collaboration skills at the time of hiring. [4] Identify digital tools to impart training for employees - managers, mentors, and trainers. These training will help them manage stress, build a positive outlook, and stay productive under the remote working model. [5] The post-pandemic world will see an increased application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the HR function. Artificial Intelligence will help recruiters find promising candidates from megabytes of job applications, and help organizations not only reach their diversity goals in the hiring process, but also retain top talent, and engage with employees through smart applications.

(Mala, 2020) has elaborated on some biggest challenges of HR department due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these are [1] Financial security and protecting jobs of employees [2] Health and Well-being of the employees, [3] Transition and Management of Remote Work, [4] Communicating frequently and clearly with employees to keep them informed. It was found that financial security became more of a concern for the employees compared to health because the economy had become quite unstable. Also, due to rising unemployment rate, it was required that employees needed some assurance regarding their continuity of work, in order to remain engaged while remotely working. While planning the HR strategy, employees' mental health, financial security and the macro-economic environment are the most important factors to be thought upon.

(TSNE's, 2020) – have imparted the following HR Strategies [1] Create/Activate an Emergency Response Team [2] Make Communication Deliberate, Consistent, and Over Communicate if Necessary [3] Care for Staff! Employee Wellness and Safety Initiatives [4] Reconsider Leaves and Policies [5] Implement Remote Work Strategies [6] Avoid Bias, Discrimination, and Exclusion.

(Divya Bajpai, 2020) - have specified that innovative HR practices will increase the employee's morale and will prove to be a boon to the laborers in the SMEs. The problems during Covid-19 in the Indian SMEs was the migration of employees/ laborers to the home place during the pandemic and then bringing them back was equally critical to bring back the manufacturing units back to operations. One more concern for HR was to create trust and safety at work place so that laborers would be ready to resume work. Some important HR Practices in this phase as stated in the paper are [1] Counseling on board, [2] Creating short term goals which are achievable to ensure motivation, [3] Digitizing HR practices such as providing e-Training.

(Roy, 2021) - discussed the top HR challenges that managers are facing due to the COVID-19 outbreak. [1] The sudden shift in work culture took a toll on overall employee health and wellbeing. Stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues have always been there, and it is no new story. Organizations have always been initiating wellness programs and providing employees with security, health benefits, and flexibility to help them overcome their health issues. But the sudden COVID-19 outbreak has brought the employees' mental problems in the front seat. [2] The transition to remote work culture is not as seamless as it seems. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, less than 50% of companies had a remote work program. Banks, regulated industries, and many financial services companies did not encourage remote working. [3] Communication is another major challenge that is on the priority list. Communication, in itself, is a critical aspect that needs to be taken into account whether or not the workforce is working remotely. Without the right communication channels, it becomes difficult to manage a workforce. The COVID-19 crisis had the HR professionals on toes and kept them looking for the right remote working tools that suit their culture. Though tools like Zoom or Slack are commonly used to meet the

needs of the workforce, it certainly is not enough to get everyone on the same page.

(Gigauri, 2020) has emphasized on the need to extend support to employees by and focus on their well-being during the Covid-19 pandemic. It has been found that HR policies such as [1] remote working, [2] flexible schedule and [3] employee well-being need to be implemented successfully to overcome the challenges imposed by the pandemic. HRM needs to manage remote working systems and to ensure work life balance at the same time.

(Ashraf Elsafty, 2020) - has conducted a study towards employee retention during Covid-19 in Medical Supplies Sector in Egypt and have suggested that HR managers need to play the role to maximize the satisfaction level of their employees otherwise their retention would be a major problem in this difficult time. [1] Workplace guidelines and support, [2] Access to information and [3] Financial benefits are the main elements that have to be considered to maximize the retention of the employees specifically in the medical supplies sector.

(Drosky, 2021) – the author analysis shows that 60 percent of employees believe their company will prioritize business continuity over workplace safety, and a sizable number of executives (44 percent) believe this as well. And even if a company tries to put safety first, 46 percent of employees and 32 percent of executives don't think their employer can pull it off. The author also suggest for framing HR strategies during covid19 - Rethinking how work happens moving forward, employers must give prioritize to their employees' personal safety, Digitizing the employee experience will be mission-critical in this new world of work. Tools like predictive intelligence, improved enterprise search, and Virtual Agent chat bots make it easy for employees to get what they need so they can concentrate on their important tasks and maintain business continuity.

(Joel Carnevale, 2020) - stressed upon the fact that employees need to be supported so that they can cope with the altered working environment. Employees pose threat to the organizational viability if they are not taken care of. The pandemic creates uncertainty among the workforce and creates stress in their mind which could lead to their ineffectiveness. It is the role of HR managers to keep them comfortable so that their adjustment is done easily. Also employee well-being should be a priority at this time to ensure that employees can work stress-free.

(Lewis, 2020) - Employees, and the CEO specifically, also wanted to rethink the company's approach to employees' health care. That resulted in the company investing in approaches that are more forward-thinking than the standard duty of care. The company contracted with physicians in cities where workers are based to ensure that a doctor is quickly available to provide care, as well as to advocate for them if they become ill and need to visit a hospital. The company covers any testing and treatment costs associated with COVID-19 for employees and their families.

(Marwitz, 2020) – The author has suggested seven HR best practices to maintain during COVID-19. [1] Communicate, communicate, and communicate. [2] Stay on top of current and new leave policies. [3] Know the details of wage and hour considerations. [4] Plan for remote work success. [5] Be ready if employees or employee family members are diagnosed with COVID. [6] Be prepared if employees are impacted by school closures and public health emergencies. [7] Monitor changing laws and be ready to adjust HR policies.

**[3] Major Findings:** The major findings focused on change happened in strategies of human capital/resources management due to Covid19. The following points shows change in Human Resources Management.

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| A. | Remote work became the new normal. |
| B. | The shift to online working environments. |
| C. | Employee communications became the first priority. |
| D. | The new focus on building better employee-manager relationships. |
| E. | More visibility on how miscommunication can impact businesses. |
| F. | A new approach to crisis management. |
| G. | Teamwork and team dynamics are now encouraged more than ever. |
| H. | New policies, procedures and other change management initiatives. |
| I. | The shift to active employee listening. |
| J. | The new focus on the safety and well-being of the employees. |
| K. | Planning for and maintaining business continuity. |

### [4] Conclusion:

Exciting times lie ahead, albeit with a host of challenges. For HR managers, this is a time for them to play a defining role in shaping the future of organizations. To sum up, People, Policies, and Processes will be the three broad pillars on which they can build a new foundation for HR excellence. HR managers have to let employees know that they know they are at home with their family, that they are stressed because the kids are trying to get their attention while they are working, and that the company is there for them. HR managers' number one job right now is to keep people up-to-date, be reassuring and build trust. At the same time, wherever possible, remote working or flexible schedule can be implemented and to keep them motivated, e-training or virtual training needs to be provided. It also has to be ensured that communication is frequent and support is extended to the employees.

Covid-19 has already the altered the normal for every individual, organization, entity and economy. Individuals have feared the harsh effects of the prolonged lockdowns and entering the new unknown post lockdown period. However, to bring back the organisations to operation stage, HR managers have to alter their policies to ensure that employees are able to adjust to the NEW normal working period. In the manufacturing sector, it is quite important to ensure that migrant labor return to their work for which the HR managers have to provided assurance regarding job continuity and safety of their health.

Lastly but most importantly, do not forget to show your humanity and your compassion. Share strategies on how to stay physiologically resilient in the midst of these strange and difficult times. Business is not "as usual" right now, and it will take time to adjust to a new routine. There is still much uncertainty, and the economic and social impacts of this pandemic will have long lasting effects.

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