

CONNECT THE DOTS

I'm a puzzle aficionado. Always have been; always will be. Connect-the-dot puzzles were one of my favorites when I was young. I could guess the simpler shapes before I even put pencil to paper, but the older I got, the more difficult the puzzles. And the more numbers on the page, the less likely I was to figure it out ahead of time. But if I did it right, at the last number I would draw one more line and voila! There it was—the designer's intended picture! It just took the right steps in the right sequence.

For decades, we have been able to make business assumptions based on past experiences and results. No more. This new COVID "puzzle" has upset everything. Each day we are handed a new piece of paper filled with dots, nary one of them numbered. Try to connect them and it's just a meaningless mess. There is no designer. No shape. No expected outcome. A handful of industries have been able to proceed with business as usual, but most of the world has either come to a screeching halt or been required to drastically change the way they do business.

How can we put numbers to our dots and connect them to develop a workable but flexible strategy to lead us out of crisis mode and into a successful future? Here are some key questions you need to consider and that you need to reflect on every day for the near distant future.

- What are the most crucial challenges you are facing right here, right now?
- How have you responded so far to the reactive marketplace? What is your competition doing?
- Think ahead one week, one month, one year. Have you prepared responses for all possible scenarios? (e.g. What will we do under continued quarantine? How will we respond to partial reopening? Who will we bring back on board?)
- What are you doing, and what can you do, short-term to assure success right now?
- What do we need to do to take advantage of the market once it reopens?
- What opportunities can you see as a result of the current crisis?
- Which of these current changes are positive? Which will you carry into the future?
- Knowing this crisis will end, what innovations are necessary to make sure your company will be prepared to move full steam ahead when it does?

Grab your pencil and begin connecting the handful of dots that are already numbered. The rest will be revealed over time as you...

THINK
about your
present situation

FOCUS
on
the desired future

EXECUTE
by
working the plan

For more information on ways you can use MasterThink's *THINK* • *FOCUS* • *EXECUTE* strategy in your own business, check out our website at www.masterthink.com.

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