Due to COVID-19, a large portion of the American workforce found themselves working from home for the first time in their professional careers, while organizations all across the country scrambled to adapt to unprecedented changes and establish a “new normal”.

**Current Employees – New Motivation**

As organizations reveal their plans for what returning to work will look like for their employees, they have a unique opportunity to establish a “newer normal” and drive a human-centered, future-focused reinvigoration of their workforce.

Our workforce reinvigoration program, designed and facilitated by the Center for Executive and Professional Development in the Spears School of Business at Oklahoma State University, was created to administer a passion injection into your returning workforce and help employees navigate what might seem like a veritable obstacle course of revamped operations, protocols, and procedures.

With topics ranging from “Find Your Why”, “Using Your Talents to Lift Performance”, “Understanding One’s Role and Team for Improved Performance”, and “Persuasive Communication: Navigating the Workplace”, our 100% customizable workforce reinvigoration program helps employees seamlessly reintegrate into your organization and will help them consistently meet and exceed performance expectations moving forward.

**On-Boarding Program**

In addition, as employees are hired into your organization, you may wish to consider utilizing some of these webinars for an onboarding program. These webinars could also supplement what you already have in place to orient new employees to your organization.
WEEK 1: THE EMPLOYEE
Find Your Why – New Hire Workshop
Abbey Davis, MBA, Director, Eastin Center for Career Readiness, adjunct instructor, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University

In this workshop, participants will walk through an intense series of collaboration exercises based on the book, Find Your Why: A Practical Guide for Discovering Purpose for You and Your Team by Simon Sinek. We will start with a discussion around the importance of having a defined “Why” for your organization, and how organizations that know and speak from their “Why” can have better engagement and retention of both employees and customers. Participants will leave this workshop with a clear picture of how they can live out and communicate their organization’s “Why” in every aspect of their business.

Learning objectives:
• Find words to express what truly inspires you
• Make decisions, every day, to act with purpose
• Clearly articulate why you do what you do

Using Your Talents to Lift Performance
Lex Smith Washington, Ph.D., William S. Spears Chair in Business Administration and Associate Professor of Management, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University

How do you feel after a long day at work? Invigorated? Drained? Unfortunately, our culture is obsessed with weaknesses and we tend to emphasize the negatives when it comes to our performance. As such, we do not spend enough energy focusing on what we do well. Based on the work of Marcus Buckingham, in this session we will discuss how to work from our strengths, rather than our weaknesses. We will also discuss how we can use positive influence to lift the performance of others.

Learning Objectives:
• Learn the true definition of strengths and weaknesses
• Focus on strengths, and manage around your weaknesses
• Intelligently leverage your strengths to boost performance

WEEK 2: THE TEAM
Creating and Developing High Performance Teams
Raj Basu, Ph.D., Management faculty, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University

High-performance teams don’t just happen. They are carefully built and well managed, and this is not always a smooth process. A key to strong, performance oriented, teams is building strong interpersonal relationships prior to the formation of teams. This seminar covers issues across the life span of teams, from deciding when to use them, to understanding their stages of development, to moving them toward high performance.

Learning Objectives:
• Learn the characteristics that set teams apart and give teams their performance potential
• Understand the stages teams move through as they develop, the selection of individuals to team membership, the role of relationships and conflict in teams, and the time requirements for team performance
• How to move teams to high performance
• How to approach team decision-making and conflict

Persuasive Communication: Skills for Navigating the Workplace
James Stapp, MFA, Lecturer of Business Communications, Department of Management, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University

Have you ever actually analyzed how you spend your time at work? For example, how much of your day is spent answering e-mail, participating in meetings and conference calls, proposing big ideas in memos, or working on something tangible for a proposal? What if you are trying to land that new client? Or maybe it’s something more ordinary: getting your office mates to finally go to lunch where you want to go. All these activities require moving others to action. All of us spend a large portion of our work day getting others to make an exchange with us. This exchange can be based around money, but more often it includes other valuable commodities: time, attention, effort, ideas, or skills.

Learning Objectives:
• Understand the principles and techniques of persuasion in interpersonal and work settings
• Become more knowledgeable of constructive approaches to communication
• Better understand other’s needs, and bring clarity to murky situations
WEEK 3: THE CUSTOMER
Customer Service
Maribeth Kuzmeski, Ph.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, School of Marketing & International Business, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University

This professional development session will share the principles of exceptional customer service in order to build a customer-focused culture, embed a service mind-set, and deliver exceptional service. Through this seminar, you will gain strategies for effectively engaging customers, respond with care and empathy, and learn to effectively address problems, and implement service fail-safes. In this session emphasis will be placed on improving outcomes including increasing customer satisfaction, giving customers reasons to return, enhancing referrals and word-of-mouth, and boosting revenue.

Learning Objectives:
• Think in a customer-centric way
• Describe outstanding customer service
• Recognize roadblocks to providing unparalleled customer service

Design Thinking 101: Driving Successful Customer Relationship
Pearl Sumanthi, Ed.D., Assistant Professor of Professional Practice, Department of Management, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University

Design Thinking is a proven problem-solving protocol that any business or individual can use to achieve big results and create a competitive advantage. IBM’s Design Thinking Practice produced a ROI of 301% (The Total Economic Impact of IBM’s Design Thinking Practice, 2018). This process enables you to meet the needs of your clients (both internal and external) with creative and innovative methods. This session is a great opportunity to learn the design thinking process and explore ways to connect with your real world of work. No matter which part of the organization you are in, you can use this framework to achieve measurable success with your clients.

Learning Objectives:
• Understand the different phases of design thinking
• Obtain prime industry examples where design thinking was successfully used
• Practice design thinking through a hands-on group activity
• Identify or commit to an area of your work where you can deploy this framework
• Formulate tips to use this framework in your area of work

WEEK 4: THE WORKPLACE
Ethics Awareness: Self-Managing for An Ethical Workplace
Andrew Urich, J.D., Associate Professor of Management, Chair and Director of Student Development, Eastin Center for Career Readiness, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University

Awareness is the key to making ethical decisions and ethical behavior. Self-awareness and self-reflection provide recognition of potential pitfalls and help us navigate ethical challenges. In addition to heightening awareness, we will look at the main causes of unethical behavior and specific practices to reduce or eliminate problems. This program relies on cases and discussions to help achieve the objectives and reinforce the concepts. This program has been embraced by corporations that wish to maintain their high ethical standards during the challenging times ahead.

Learning Objectives:
• Determine potential conflicts of interest within organizational functions
• Identify and address common ethical issues that arise for individuals and organizations.
• Identify personal values and apply those to making ethical decisions

Better Workplace Habits Equals Better Business
Kyle Eastham, Executive-in-Residence, School of Entrepreneurship, Spears School of Business, Oklahoma State University

We all have personal workplace habits – both good and bad. But how do those habits impact our business lives regarding productivity, teamwork, and profitability? How do I break bad habits and cultivate good habits? What would it mean for our company/organization if we could recognize our customers’ habits? Participants will learn better time management; more consistency; and how to reduce procrastination.

Learning Objectives:
• Increase productivity
• Learn how habits are formed
• Define specific strategies to stop bad habits and cultivate good habits
INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHIES

ABBEY DAVIS, MBA, is an adjunct instructor in the Spears School of Business at Oklahoma State University. Before joining OSU, Abbey worked as a fulltime corporate HR professional specializing in the areas of talent development, organizational development, performance management and compensation. She has supported internal business clients with these specializations in both energy and manufacturing industries. Abbey received her bachelor’s degree in human resources and MBA from OSU. In 2016, Abbey was recognized as an Outstanding Young Alumni for the Spears School of Business.

ALEXIS SMITH WASHINGTON, PH.D., is the William S. Spears Chair in Business Administration and Associate Professor of Management in the Spears School of Business at Oklahoma State University. Dr. Smith Washington received her doctorate in Organizational Behavior at the A. B. Freeman School of Business of Tulane University and her bachelor’s degree in psychology from Rice University. Dr. Smith Washington’s focal research areas span workplace issues such gender and diversity, as well as bias and discrimination. Currently, Dr. Smith Washington is working on projects that examine the impact of social identities such as gender, race and sexual orientation on the ways individuals manage their professional image at work, as well as organizational factors that facilitate the inclusion and advancement of underrepresented minorities.

RAJ BASU, PH.D., is on the Management faculty in the Spears School of Business at Oklahoma State University. Additionally, he is the faculty advisor for President’s Leadership Society at Oklahoma State University – Tulsa. Prior to returning to faculty, Dr. Basu served 15 years as the Vice-President for Academic Affairs for OSU – Tulsa. Dr. Basu researches and teaches in the areas of leadership, employee performance, coaching, team performance, conflict management, and negotiations. He also consults with companies in the energy, financial services, government, non-profit, telecommunications, and other industries.

JAMES STAPP is a Lecturer in the Department of Management in the Spears School of Business. He has taught Business Communication courses since 2014. James earned BAs in Strategic Communication and English and a MFA in English from Oklahoma State University. For nearly a decade, James held multiple management positions in both the music and hospitality industries. His research interests include persuasive communication and the science of influence and decision-making, and James enjoys presenting his findings and insight to fellow educators and practitioners.

MARIBETH KUZMESKI, PH.D., teaches an integrated marketing course at Oklahoma State. Outside of the classroom, Maribeth is a sought after female speaker, and rated a Top 25 C-Suite Speaker by Meetings & Conventions Magazine. She trains organizations on marketing, sales, and persuasive communications strategies. Her list of past audiences she has trained and consulted with include Fortune 500 companies, entrepreneurial-minded corporations, financial services firms, women’s organizations, and industry associations.

PEARL SUMATHI, ED.D., is an Assistant Professor of Professional Practice for the Department of Management in the Spears School of Business at Oklahoma State University. In her current role, she teaches human resources enabling management students to relate theory with practical experience. Pearl is an award-winning designer and leader of learning and development with close to 25 years of corporate experience in human resources. She is passionate about designing and delivering mid and senior level leadership development programs, consulting with organizations on reskilling and preparing the workforce of the future. During her tenure at Wharton Executive Education, she consulted with top global companies to design superior leadership development programs to build successful talent pipelines.

ANDREW L. URICH, J.D., is an interesting and enthusiastic communicator who helps people get what they want. He holds the Eastin Center Chair and is an Associate Professor of Management in the Spears School Business at Oklahoma State University. He also serves as Director of Student Development in the Eastin Center for Career Readiness in the Spears School Business at Oklahoma State University. Andy is an award-winning faculty member and has taught many public and on-site programs to hundreds or companies and organizations.

KYLE EASTHAM is an Executive-In-Residence in Oklahoma State University’s School of Entrepreneurship. He has a Master’s degree in Entrepreneurship and a Master’s in Public Administration. Prior to teaching at OSU Kyle served as a law enforcement officer and as the training director for a state agency. He also ran his own speaking and training business for 10 years. Kyle has also practiced martial arts for 30 years and sings in a local barbershop ensemble.