

Ask the Headhunter:

Stay Calm During a Crisis

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Question: I find that my employees often look to me for answers, especially during times of uncertainty. How do I react?

Answer: Your job as a leader is to eliminate fear and doubt by providing the vision and leadership your organization needs. Here are a few suggestions to help you manage risks, deal with uncertainty and continue to prosper for years to come:

- Take stock of your situation. Clearly state the current fear and brainstorm emergency plans to alleviate concern.
- See where you can be of service. Determine how your business can help create a more enriched, positive, supportive community.
- Imagine the possibilities. Envision what the future can become. Don't be bound by the confines of today's reality.
- Brainstorm opportunities. Determine tangible action plans to solidify your visions.
- Align your vision with your action. Put your plans into action with crystal clear directives.

Question: I hear a lot of rumors from my co-workers that worry me and make me feel doubtful. What can I do to ignore the water cooler gossip and focus on my work?

Answer: Whether global, local or personal, fear shakes our confidence, causes stress, and keeps us awake at night. Yet as scary as these situations may be, we often overestimate the negatives and underestimate our ability to deal with them.

- Rumors quickly become unspoken truths, which cause you to make decisions based on false data. Unmask your fears by making a list of worst-case scenarios.
- Review personal resources and strengths, along with organizational competencies, that could be used as tools to combat the issues.
- Develop contingency plans based on your list of strengths to help you feel prepared in the chance that your worst-case scenarios come true.

About Patrick B. Ropella

Patrick B. Ropella is president and CEO of Ropella & Associates, an international executive search and consulting firm based in Milton that specializes in working with the world's largest corporations. Ropella & Associates focuses on mid-level management and executive level retained search in sales, marketing, manufacturing, and research and development. For more information on its services, visit www.ropella.com or call Patrick Ropella at (850) 983-4777.