COVID-19 affords you an opportunity to rethink your business

The COVID-19 pandemic is undoubtedly posing several challenges for your business, especially with respect to the measures to be implemented to comply with public health directives. This situation is certainly raising questions in your mind about its impact on your employees and your organization’s resilience. Moreover, it is no doubt also encouraging you to review your ways of doing business and find solutions to mitigate the crisis’ repercussions. This forced pause can also be viewed as an opportunity to rethink certain aspects of your business and to prepare for its revival, since the certain aspects of your business and viewed as an opportunity to rethink this forced paused can also be to mitigate the crisis’ repercussions.

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**Do you have a business continuity plan?**
Take advantage of this opportunity to implement or update your business continuity plan. The elaboration of such a plan affords an opportunity to reflect on the means of reducing the negative impact on your business of adverse events. Worsen-case planning means that you can establish strategies and take precautions that will enable you to pursue your operations or resume them sooner, minimize losses, and protect your employees, assets and even your reputation.

The plan will provide responses. There is no need to be a large business to maintain a business continuity plan. Proven methodologies exist that are well adapted to SMEs. Moreover, the Ministère de l’Économie et de l’Innovation has prepared the Guide de gestion de la continuité des activités pour les petites et les moyennes entreprises québécoises to help you. Be sure to consult it.

**Adopt the digital conversion**
The current crisis is upsetting consumers’ buying habits and more and more of them risk resorting to the Internet. E-commerce is a worthwhile solution that is occasionally even essential to compete if you are a merchant, a retailer or even the owner of a tourism enterprise. This is indeed a good time to consolidate your online presence, which will enable you to better reach your customers and visitors and to more extensively promote your products and services.

Is your business experiencing a slowdown? This is the ideal time to review certain business practices, enhance or automate processes, or find innovative solutions.

The digital transformation offers a genuine development opportunity, especially in the manufacturing sector. The Ministère de l’Économie et de l’Innovation is offering guidance to SMEs that wish to adopt the digital conversion or consolidate their approach. Find out more.

**Step back to improve your business**
Take advantage of this pause to initiate the gradual adoption of management practices geared to enhancing your enterprise’s financial, environmental, social and administrative performance. It can also be worthwhile to review the supply chain and foster buying locally or proximity shopping. Lastly, a sustainable development approach could offer your business extensive benefits.

Since you are often contending with emergencies or engaging in a continuous improvement process, you rarely have time to stop back and explore new options. This is the perfect time to rely on your employees to conduct research and development to improve your products, services, or processes. Reinventing a business also depends on innovation and the implementation of new projects. Do not hesitate to contact the Ministère de l’Économie et de l’Innovation or Investissement Québec to plan your projects.

**Develop your skills and those of your employees**
The revival of your business will certainly rely on professional competencies development and work reorganization, which the Programme actions concertées pour le maintien en emploi (PACME) of the Ministère du Travail, de l’Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, offered in collaboration with the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail, proposes. The program provides for direct assistance to businesses for human resources management activities or on-site, online or remote training. It seeks to maintain the employer-employee relationship, take advantage of the current pause to bolster skills development and thus prepare businesses for the economic recovery.

Other training is available, for example for corporate executives, strategic workers or workers in the Québec tourism sector, such as the formation 100 % accueillant, program of the Ministère du Tourisme, offered by the Institut de tourisme et d’hôtellerie du Québec as individual online training.

A final word
The current exceptional situation is temporary. In the meantime, it is important to maintain efforts and steer a steady course to restore Québec, whose residents are browning with enthusiasm and vitality and which abounds in original, creative businesses.

**Remainder of the measures adopted to support businesses**
- Emergency assistance for small and medium-sized enterprises
- Flexibility measures respecting loans and existing loan guarantees
- Concerted temporary action program for businesses (PACTE)
- Support for the tourism industry

**To obtain additional information, please visit Québec.ca/coronavirus.**
- Investissement Québec (IQ) is offering a moratorium of up to six months on principal repayments. Visit the IQ website to obtain additional information.
- The Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec is providing $4 billion to support Québec firms temporarily affected by COVID-19. Visit the CDQ website to obtain additional information.

**Vos économies, votre protection.**
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Take advantage of tailor-made advice
L’Accompagnement-conseil stratégique au ministère de l’Économie et de l’Innovation can be useful to find solutions, rethink action plans, and obtain tailor-made advice. Experts are present in all regions of Québec to help meet the challenges that you are facing and prepare for resuming your business. To find out more, please contact the regional office of the Ministère de l’Économie et de l’Innovation.

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