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CONTINUING TO RETHINK BUSINESS

7 Takeaways from Our Recent Education Series Webinar

The COVID-19 pandemic forced businesses to change how they operate—and that's not necessarily a bad thing. In response, businesses found and continue to discover innovative ways to accomplish remote tasks, improve efficiencies, connect employees and reimagine business processes.

We recently held a webinar with our chief technology officer, Kim Anstett, to discuss why companies should continue to rethink how they operate even when we return to pre-pandemic normalcy. Here are seven takeaways from that webinar that can help you apply lessons learned to ready your business for its new next.

1 Clouds Before the Storm

One thing we've learned during the COVID-19 pandemic: It's essential to have cloud infrastructure in place before a crisis forces you to rely on digital technology to maintain operational continuity.

"[Having cloud in place] was really important and powerful, not only in being able to successfully transition to remote work but also to confirm for employees in all parts of the business that technology enablement is the backbone of our business operations," Anstett says.

2 Boundless Collaboration

Digital, cloud-based technology can enhance how employees interact. That can make a huge difference in a global company, where there is frequently a disconnect between employees in different divisions and locations. With digital technology, employees anywhere can meet remotely in real time. That not only maximizes productivity and efficiency but also promotes cross-functional teamwork and builds camaraderie throughout the business.

"During the pandemic, we [have been] collaborating, not only within our office or region that we would normally work in, but across offices as well. It was so much easier to connect across lines of businesses, functions and geographies that I really feel engagement took a step up," Anstett says.

3 New Talent Pools

Cloud technology can give you an advantage in finding the best employees, no matter where they are. Location is no longer a critical factor when recruiting and hiring. Beyond the obvious skill set and financial benefits, expanding hiring efforts can be critically important for diversity and inclusion initiatives.

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4 Inspired Innovation

When disruption happens—whether due to new competition, a changing marketplace or a global pandemic—companies are forced to rethink how they operate. Employees may have been doing their jobs a certain way for years or decades—and doing them well—but this is a chance to rethink processes, workflows and assignments. That can lead to innovations that have a positive impact on your business.

"Someone commented, 'If it's not broke, don't fix it.' We can't expand and grow if that's the way we think. Accept and embrace the new technologies," Anstett says.

5 Onward and Upward

When things go back to "normal," ensure you continue the momentum you've gained with agile, collaborative and cross-functional teamwork. Take the time to consider how your processes have changed and what past barriers are barriers no more. Write down which processes and roles have changed. Consider where you're more efficient now and where you see better collaboration. Which processes and functions should be permanently changed?

"While we look forward to being able to get back together and work face-to-face and have those human connections that are so powerful, we also want to make sure that the successes and the positive, enhanced way of working continue.

"We should really use this opportunity to push ourselves out of our current boundaries. Really think about it, and make a bold move forward. It'll be very exciting," Anstett says.

6 Sharing Is Caring

Develop operational dashboards to automatically consolidate and display the data you need to know. Make that data easily sharable. That way all decision-makers are evaluating the same data. This will help them make better and faster business decisions.

"We found in the past there were so many different applications or parts of job streams, and each system individually managed data or allowed end users to manipulate data. That leads to an incredibly messy situation that you have to clean up and harmonize," Anstett says.

7 Platform vs. Piecemeal

Even when you select best-of-breed solutions, it can be challenging to integrate several individual solutions. Platforms solve that challenge by providing easy integration where each solution builds on the other.

"When that happens, everyone's job gets easier because it's not left to the individual to make sure things flow across or stay lined up the way they need to," Anstett says.

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Click here to watch the full webinar on demand, and visit ironmountain.com/rethink to discover why you should rethink Iron Mountain as you continue to rethink your business.