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pandemic and how thoroughly it took us by storm. From closed offices and remote ...

Gail Perry • May. 20, 2021



As the country's businesses are starting to get back to normal, or redefine normal as the case may be, it seems a good time to reflect on the nature of this beast we call pandemic and how thoroughly it took us by storm. From closed offices and remote workers to virtual meetings and cloud storage, we as accountants jumped right in and, on the surface, it appears we barely missed a beat.

We made our changes to working environments and relationships without being given a choice and with basically no time to plan. Now that our extended tax season

is behind us, it is a good time to reflect and consider how your business and your

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As a result, this might be a good time to meet with colleagues and discuss how the pandemic impacted careers in your firm. Many firms placed advancement opportunities on hold, almost everyone experienced some version of remote working, the definition of productivity became more fluid as did scheduling. We all faced some combination of family responsibilities, makeshift remote working spaces, technology issues, fatigue, lack of social interaction, and restricted access to clients and resources, not to mention health issues.

If we ever face another shutdown for any reason, we'll certainly be better equipped to handle it, but for now, as we think about how we want to work and more forward, I believe it's important to remember that our people represent our most valuable asset, and securing the loyalty of staff is crucial. So, where do you start? Here are some tips to help you move forward post-pandemic:

- Determine what worked well and what didn't work as well with regard to remote working or any other changes you made in the ways in which you work. Discuss with your team how you can incorporate the successful parts into your practice going forward, and consider how you will avoid or improve the situations that arose that were not as successful as you would have liked. For example, video calls might have been successful, but maybe if you use them going forward you'll want to improve the backgrounds or the technology.
- As mentioned above, career advancement has been stalled. Discuss what can change to make sure all colleagues feel their needs are being met. Are responsibilities changing, will client relationships be handled differently, has technology improved, will scheduling be different now? All of these considerations should now be added to the mix when determining how people will advance through your firm.

- Focus on the positive. You all made it through this together. Recognize those high

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