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Yes. These are testing times and the adversities we face now seem severe and almost impenetrable. However, this is not the time to be grim. Or to slacken. We've got to put our head down and work - now more than ever! Adversity teaches us to decide. It teaches us to prioritize and seek solutions to problems that we could have never envisaged before. Adversity also teaches us to concentrate on achieving short-term goals, which eventually translate into the long-term vision.

I have spent 32 years in this industry now and never ever have I been much of an advocate of work-from-home (WFH). This is, therefore, as much new to me as it is for many of us across the world. I am learning - just like the rest of us are. In fact,

the one clear learning I have is that in times like these we need to communicate more. Not less. While we are practicing social distancing, we must practice virtual proximity. People are anxious at times like these and so, it is doubly important for leaders to connect more, and not less, with their teams.

We, at Dentsu Aegis Network, have always been proactive with our decisions. We are competently adept and agile. Its fundamental to our culture. Consequently, when the virus broke out and the news of its impact started spreading globally, we knew that we had to have a plan in place to ensure that the health of our employees is not compromised and, simultaneously, to keep our Business Continuity plan intact.

We immediately formed and activated a Management Incident Team which became part of our Business Contingency Plan framework pertaining to Covid-19. It met every week and monitored the situation right from the time the first case was announced in India. IT and tech-support were systematically put in place to support WFH in anticipation; travel advisories were issued and everything that could potentially prove to be a roadblock to Business Continuity was discussed and taken care of.

Frankly, it has been quite heartening to watch that in these times of social distancing, we are better connected than ever before, albeit virtually. We are leveraging technology to engage in face-to-face communications and getting used to video calls in our everyday lives. For now, work continues as usual. And yes, hats off to my hard-working team in APAC and India who keep surprising me by their incredible commitment as top-class professionals.

Stay Safe. Stay Connected.