

Get to rational quickly

 By [Allon Raiz](#)

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The scale of the national Covid-19 lockdown is unprecedented in living memory. The repercussions - personal, professional, national and international - will reverberate for years to come.



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As entrepreneurs, we need to be making the right decisions for right now to ensure that our businesses and our people's livelihoods do not become another casualty of the virus. In this series of articles, I will share views and insights on weathering the storm and even thriving after it.

Times of crisis

People follow quite predictable patterns during times of crisis, usually starting out in a state of denial and then moving on to a state of anger and blame. In these heightened times, these states can act as a vortex that holds entrepreneurs back from making important decisions that will determine the life or death of their businesses.

As an entrepreneur, the important thing to do right now is to force yourself through these two natural states quickly and get yourself to a place first of acceptance and then immediately afterwards to a place of rational thinking.

Unlike most crises, the one thing the Covid-19 crisis has done is to level the playing field; nationally and globally, big companies and small companies across all industries are faced by the same enemy. There is no one to blame. Now, it's

about taking the right action for your business. And the right action in these situations requires a huge amount of mental focus and processing power.

Think rationally

Although Covid-19 is the common enemy, the decisions we each have to make in our businesses are unique. As entrepreneurs, we are going to have to balance compassion with survival. We are going to have to balance decisions about surviving the next 21 days with decisions about surviving the next 21 years. We are going to have to balance decisions about cutting functionality in our business with the requirements for post-Covid-19 functionality. And all of this in a general state of panic, of hyper-communication and fake communication.

There is a great deal of noise at the moment which makes it incredibly hard to hear the “signals” but we have to sift through the noise so we can hear them when they come. When we do hear signals from our particular markets – signals that relate to both the now and to the future – we must ensure that our businesses are in a position to take advantage and to mitigate risks accordingly.

You can only do this with a clear head and a framework that allows you to assess the situation in the best possible way. I will discuss how to design an opportunity framework in the next article. The main thing now is to practise getting perspective.

There's no rulebook

I don't think there are many people out there who have experienced something of this magnitude before; most people in the world are grappling with this. There is no experience base to which we can turn except previous historical crises. People going through these crises had to learn to get rational and gain perspective quickly or find themselves swept away in the negativity and hopelessness.

So how do you practise perspective? How do you become rational sooner? Here are a few simple yet effective tools to help you do just that:

1. Cut down your social media time to half the average of your peers. Knowing which celebrity just contracted Covid-19 does not change anything in your life. If you can cut down by more than 50%, try that too.
2. Dress for work. Act the part of a rational entrepreneur. Shave if you normally do, put on makeup if you normally do.
3. Regularly walk around your garden or any area available to you and notice how normal it looks. The trees, grass and birds are oblivious to what is going on and are carrying on being trees, grass and birds.
4. Give yourself thinking time of at least 45 minutes twice a day, and have a blank piece of paper and a pen to write down any thoughts that surface as you allow your mind to wonder.
5. When you hear the words “Covid-19” or “coronavirus” train your mind to replace them with the words “Think and act rationally”. Just as you have started to become reflexive about handwashing and hand sanitising if you touch a stranger, so too should you become reflexive about mentally reminding yourself to be rational when you hear “Covid-19” or “coronavirus”. Be Covid-19 rational and coronavirus rational. You get the point.

ABOUT ALLON RAIZ

Allon Raiz is the CEO of Raizcorp. In 2008, Raiz was selected as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum, and in 2011 he was appointed for the first time as a member of the Global Agenda Council on Fostering Entrepreneurship. Following a series of entrepreneurship master classes delivered at Oxford University in 2014, 2015 and 2016, Raiz has been recognised as the Entrepreneur-in-Residence at the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School.

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