



April 3, 2020

#CoronaVirus

Take a deep breath.

We are in the middle of the most significant crisis many of us have ever faced.

We woke up yesterday to the news that nearly [one million people](#) have been infected, and over [50,000 people](#) have died as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. An [increasing number of countries](#) across the world and [most US states](#) have imposed some form of lockdown. Our [hospitals](#) have become battle zones, our [grocery stores](#), restricted clean labs, our [public playgrounds](#), hazard zones. We have become [teachers](#), [carers](#), and our own [IT support](#).

Across the world, our lives have been upended.

Closer to home, and to our own work, [10 million Americans have filed unemployment claims](#) in the past two weeks. Nearly [half the US workforce](#) has already seen hours or pay reduced. We fear for the health of our families when the [nurses, drivers, and grocery clerks](#) among us leave for work and return home. There. Are. No. Words.

That's why our collection this month includes resources intended to support you, your work, and your well-being. Thanks also to our federal partners for sharing [these](#) essential US Department of Labor COVID-19 resources.

Most of us are lucky – we are, on the whole, well and working, and our work *matters* more than ever. Having spoken to a few of you this week, we learned that some are quietly proceeding, absent pressure from larger agencies at this time. Others are in the throes of managing the kinds of data requests we've been working toward delivering all along. Still others are finding new collaborators as the crisis topples silos and realigns energies. All of you expressed enthusiasm about talking with one another other – and most can now communicate using video.

In that spirit, we plan to use the Zoom video platform for our April convening (and likely ongoing). We will see you on **April 22, 2020, at 2:00 pm EST/11:00 am PST** (details to follow or contact

Maureen_Sarver@spra.com). No need to prepare. Just bring yourselves and think of it as the #WDQI [#MutualAid](#) society.

Remember, your hearts, minds, skills, and data are critical in helping your states, agencies, institutions, and communities find a way through the current to a new future (of work and all else). We are deeply confident in your ability to deliver the extraordinary in these challenging times.

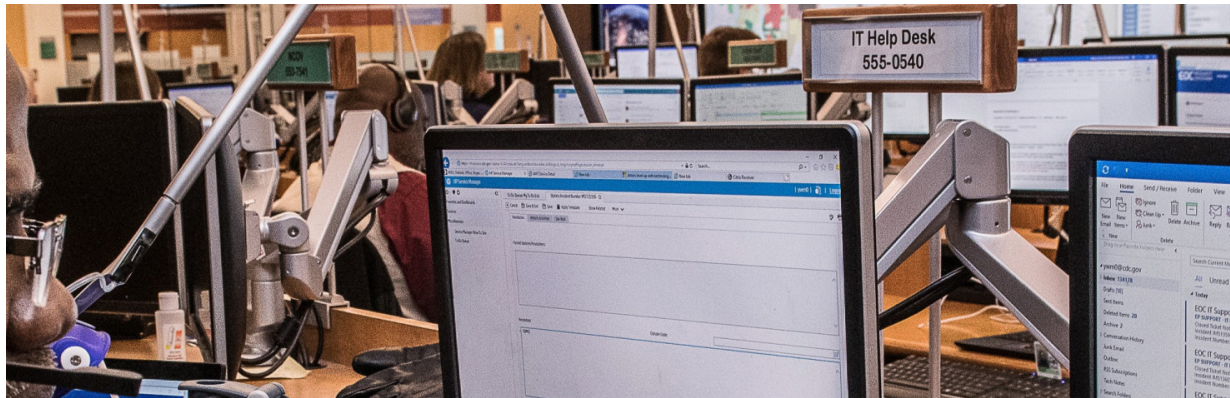
Let us know how we can help.



Kristin Wolff (@kristinwolff), Editor

Maureen Sarver (@maureensarver) & the **SPR/BrightHive Support Team**

Navigating the Now



A Resource Guide to Coronavirus for Government Leaders

The novel coronavirus has tested the durability of federal, state and local governments around the country and the world. This list of resources is meant to connect leaders with useful tools to aid in response efforts (new resources added regularly). If this guide does not fit the bill, the [National Governors Association](#), [Harvard's Ash Center](#), and [NACo](#) offer their own versions.

 govtech.com



Science-backed Tips for Settling into your New Work-

from-home Routine

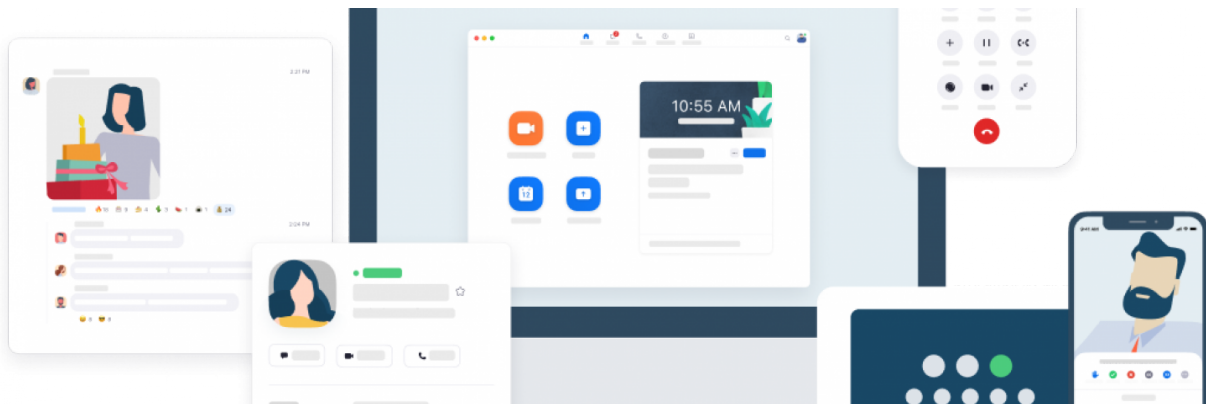
This may or may not be the “new normal,” but the transition to social distancing or remote work can be challenging. These tips can help. If you are looking for a fancier version, the team at [Harvard Business Review](https://hbr.org/) has got you covered.

FC fastcompany.com

The ultimate guide to remote work

Zapier has been working remotely since the beginning. This guide covers important lessons about supporting remote teams. We found it through this [Quartz webinar](https://www.quartz.com/2020/04/06/remote-work-lessons/) on the topic. Smart lessons for many contexts – yes, government agencies, too.

 zapier.com



They Zoom, You Zoom, We all Zoom

Here's your all-purpose guide to Zoom. It's not hard. It can be fun. And once you try it, platforms without video will feel like black-and-white TV. Let's connect. You can even post a photo of your pet if video is not your preferred mode of communication. And no laughing when a colleague can't find the mute button. We're all learning together here 😊.

 zoom.us

Carrying On

INFORMATION SHARING DURING AN EPIDEMIC

Policies and Best Practices

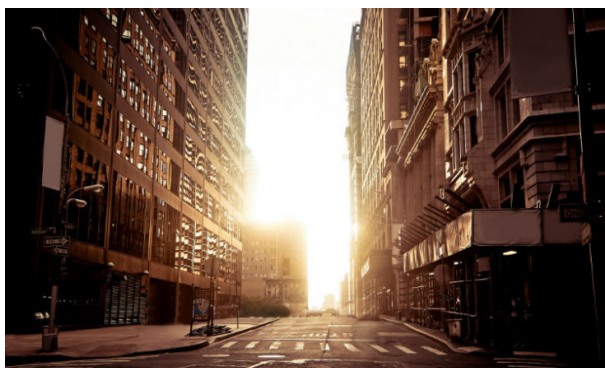
Advice from Duke University

This resource speaks most directly to public health professionals. It offers wise (and brief!) counsel to workforce professionals, too.

Workforce data, unemployment claims, the federal rescue package – never has the need to share this information been more urgent.

The expert recommendations include robust policies and processes and the social media section (rich with examples) can help you reach workers, colleagues, and the public with real help that builds trust over time.

 duke.app.box.com



How to Strengthen Workforce Communications During the COVID-19 Crisis

Strategies, tips, and tools for communicating with staff and team members in uncertain times. No deep analysis here, just a list of proven practices to help you keep moving forward without having to make so many decisions.

 workforce.com

The Story Behind 'Flatten the Curve,' the Defining Chart of the Coronavirus

Read this right now. Especially if you are a #DataViz professional or aspire to be one. This excellent piece reads like a thriller. Never have we been so excited by a header called "The Line." It's a story of collaboration, humility, and placing public understanding above analytical precision. Lessons for workforce professionals abound and are immediately applicable.

FC fastcompany.com

More Curve Flattening

Job loss is hugely painful and inefficient for employers and workers alike. We may be able to stave it off through workshare – short-term compensation programs that subsidize the wages of workers whose hours have been scaled back. The majority of states offer such programs, which were given a boost by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. And if we connect the right data now, we'll soon know whether we flattened the unemployment curve.

COVID-19: How States Can Manage the Surge in Unemployment Services

To be honest, we found this piece lacking in the empathy department. After all, it is in part cost-cutting and single-minded focus on efficiency that has left public agencies with very little "extra," which can be useful during a global pandemic. Nonetheless, Example 2 offers a potentially useful frame for prioritizing not just unemployment service responses, but

 newamerica.org

the requests for data pouring into many of your own departments and divisions.

 mckinsey.com

Conducting Public Policy Research During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Experts Weigh In

The spread of COVID-19 has potential implications for all phases of research studies: design, data collection, and analysis. Abt's white paper discusses these issues – for when you are ready.

 abtassociates.com

Today is Unprecedented, but Evidence Can Help Us Forge a Better Tomorrow

The Corona Crisis is not the Great Recession. Nonetheless, there are lessons to be learned from 2008, and from many human service program evaluations since. This piece covers some key ones. The last bullet calls for better data. Tag, you're it.

 mathematica.org

#DataViz: A Complete Guide to Coronavirus Charts

Charts can inform. And they can cause panic. Here's how to employ data visualization to better understand the COVID-19 pandemic, and to better communicate your own data.

 fastcompany.com

Watch How the Coronavirus Spread Across the United States

The first dynamic chart contains data through March 20, 2020. It took our breath away. A similar charting of unemployment claims might just do the same.

 nytimes.com

The Best Charts for Tracking Coronavirus

All the best charts in one place, together with the design elements that make them great – most of them super simple and rooted in human centeredness.

 fastcompany.com

The Better Part

Virtual 'Love Sweet Love' From Quarantined Music Students

Living up to our newsletter's name, we're making (your) work better by including this lovely creation in this month's collection. Berklee College of Music Student Shelby Rassler organized a massive performance of the classic "What the World Needs Now Is Love" and put it on YouTube. Have your tissues handy.

 npr.org

Some Creative Tips for Socializing Distantly

Americans are now in a long-distance relationships with almost everyone they know and love. Here are some tested ideas for making them work.

 slate.com

The Art of Comedy in Quarantine

China is a weeks ahead of the US in its quarantine efforts. Citizens needed a reprieve. TikTok (Dǒuyīn) provided just the platform.

 theatlantic.com

COVID-19 and #HumanWork

Jamie Merisotis is launching his new book and the #HumanWork hashtag to signal a future of learning, working and serving each other better. Singing and dancing sound good, too.

 luminafoundation.org

The Hidden Worlds of the National Parks - Google Arts & Culture

Rainforests. Lava tubes. Glaciers. An escape from your kitchen table. Get a headset.

 artsandculture.google...

Help a Neighbor, Friend, Colleague!

Neighbors Are Reaching Out on Nextdoor

The homebound are turning to Nextdoor connect, organize and help each other without risking physical contact. Complaints about porch thieves have ceased. Humans have returned. You can join them.

 nytimes.com

Gigantic List of #Mutual Aid and other Local COVID-19 Resources

Elder support, resources for kids and teens, ways to be neighborly. It's all there. Do your part or ask for help. Many thanks to [Neal](#) and team [Shareable](#) for pointing us to it.

 docs.google.com

Have a Listen

***Our Very Own #WDQI
#MakingBetterWork Podcast
Now Has 16 Episodes!***

If you haven't subscribed, pull out your mobile device and do it now!

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Search for **Making Better Work** on Google Play (a quirk of the platform).

Again, we hope these new communication channels will bring your work further into the public domain so that kindred spirits in different parts of the public data ecosystem can find each other. It's a big job but somebody's got to do it. Why not us?

Information Wants to Be Shared

This is the 15th edition of *#MakingBetterWork*, the perpetual beta newsletter of the longitudinal workforce data community.

We'd love your continued help in making it great (and your generosity of spirit when we don't quite get there). We changed up the headers this month to make it easier to navigate. Let us know what you think!

Here's our focus (always subject to change) going forward:

- **COVID-19** (until future notice)
- **Impact** (Products, legislation, key policy decisions, and more – what difference is WDQI making in your state, community?)
- **Governance** (In the words of one of our subject matter experts, "It's everything.")
- **Ecosystem** (How do we better align public data efforts and work with nonprofit, foundation, university, and other partners more effectively to address critical workforce and education issues? How do we do this consistently, ethically, and responsibly?)
- **Themes that run through WDQI events and activities:**
 - Federal legislative mandates (WIOA – and evaluation, HEA, Perkins, etc.)
 - Trends in training: non-degree credentials, work-based learning, apprenticeship, technology and distance learning, dual-systems, stackable credentials, etc.)
 - Future of Work – using data to help policymakers, institutional leaders, and the rest of us navigate it
 - #DataViz -- so more people can understand, interact with, and use the data and tools we're all creating.

In case you've received this from a friend or colleague and don't know how to find us, we've provided our contact information below.

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Know someone who needs this newsletter? Forward it or send them here.