UKG

The UKG Resiliency Playbook

Why people-centered operations are the key to thriving organizations

Introduction

Imagine yourself in the shoes of a manager responsible for a large team of hourly employees. Faced with mounting challenges stemming from an economic downturn and pressure from leadership to cut costs, you make the only decision you feel makes sense — a round of layoffs and cutting back hours for other employees.

What you don't realize at the time, however, is how much these layoffs and shortened hours negatively affect not just your people but also your organization's resiliency to the very challenges you're reacting to.

Let's take a look ➔

Here are some ripple effects you might see:

Layoffs and shortened hours

You hear through the grapevine that an employee who's been laid off is **struggling to afford groceries for her family**

Former employees who've been laid off use online platforms to **write negative reviews** about you and your organization, threatening both your livelihood and the **reputation of your company**

Employees who have had their hours cut back are **becoming burned out** from trying to fit more work into shorter shifts, **risking more turnover** and issues meeting goals

Others who've been laid off are having **difficulties finding work** in a tough economy

Overall **morale is low** due to employees feeling that their needs are being neglected

Your people **rarely take time off** anymore since they feel they must maximize their working hours in order to be paid enough to get by

The impacts of your decision **affect your own wellbeing** and ability to do your job as you wonder if you made the right choice

To change the outcome of a story like this one and help your organization become truly resilient in tough times, there's one thing that's certain — *people* must be at the center of all operational decisions.

Why Does Resiliency Matter?

More than ever before, external pressures are affecting people and organizations, so focusing on practices that help you stay resilient in the face of change has never been more important. But **the same old reactions won't be enough to ensure success anymore**. It's been said that "if you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always gotten," and that couldn't be truer when it comes to operational decision making. Reaching true resiliency requires a new way of looking at operations — one that puts your people's needs at the center of all your processes. Motivated employees who feel included and genuinely cared for are the key to reaching the kind of growth mindset your organization will need to adapt and thrive in any environment.

> Organizations that value and invest in a culture driven by diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEI&B) outperform others by as much as **400%**.[2]

What Can You Do to Achieve Resiliency?

There are several concrete steps you can take to reset your operations for resiliency while keeping your people at the core of your priorities.

TO DO LIST:

- ✖ Identify **how your employees drive operational resiliency** with their day-to-day activities

- ✖ Map out how your processes and tools **support the different levels of needs your people have** in and outside work

- ✖ Understand **the business benefits** that come from providing this level of support so you can make the case for change if needed

The average recession lasts just 18 months, but the impact of how leaders respond lasts much longer. Historical data show investing in your people pays long-term dividends, especially during challenging times.

— **Karina Monesson,**
Sr. Manager, Human Insights Research & Advisory, UKG[1]

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How People Drive Resiliency

The bottom line is that **keeping people longer and keeping them engaged** leads to organizational resiliency. Let's look at some examples of the difference investing in your employees' needs and building a clear sense of purpose into even the most typical tasks can make.

Take a look at how two employees with opposite experiences handle various day-to-day activities — Tina, a motivated employee who feels supported and cared for and therefore puts in maximum effort on the job, and James, an unhappy employee who doesn't feel that his needs are taken care of and as a result is uninspired to do his best work.

> Businesses with engaged workforces experienced **147%** higher earnings per share than their competitors did coming out of the 2008 recession.[3]

Encouraging employees to feel a sense of **purpose** at work is paramount to achieving resiliency and success. When employees feel unmotivated or unsupported, your organization is at risk of lower morale, a greater sense of distrust, and higher rates of turnover. In order to keep your people and keep them happy, the operational processes that affect them must be able to meet their needs and aid them both in and outside work.
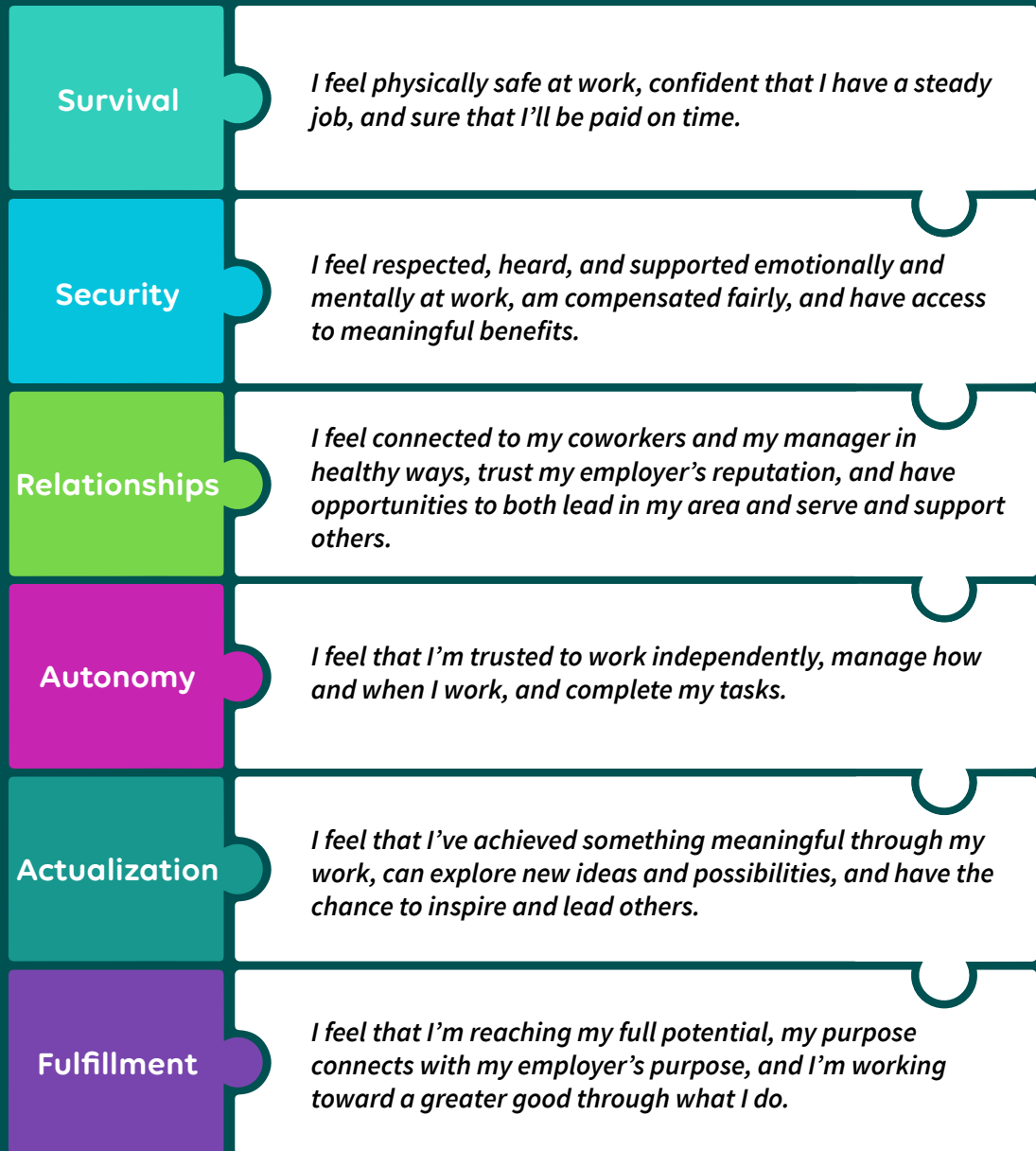
How Purpose Affects Success

Motivated — Tina	Day-to-day activities	Unmotivated — James
Shows up on time and picks up open shifts whenever she can	**Working shifts**	Shows up late, puts in the bare minimum, and frequently calls out unexpectedly
Looks out for her coworkers, enforcing safety standards to ensure that risk is minimized and helping colleagues access resources when they need support under stress	**Ensuring safety**	Rushes through processes, skipping important safety standards and causing inadvertent risk
Feels well versed in new organizational initiatives due to clear communication from trustworthy leadership and is excited to actively participate	**Adapting to change**	Doesn't understand why organizational changes are occurring and therefore resists them; has a negative and distrustful outlook
Is an independent self-starter at work who feels a sense of pride and responsibility for completing her tasks on time and accurately	**Increasing productivity**	Is only able to complete tasks while being micromanaged, resulting in a fear of being reprimanded for any mistakes he might make
Proactively suggests ways to improve various tasks and becomes more efficient at her job through regular feedback	**Improving processes**	Feels locked into the same routine of repetitive tasks and does not feel he has any platform to suggest changes

How Mapping Systems to Needs Supports Resiliency

The **Employee's Continuum of Needs** is a tool that indicates **the six most important factors** that a workplace must provide in order for its employees to feel adequately supported.

Think of it like a puzzle. Without the connection of each individual piece, you can't expect your employees to feel motivated to bring their whole selves to work. ⟶

So, how can you guarantee that these needs are met? By **putting operational processes in place and taking actionable steps to ensure that your people's mental, physical, and financial wellbeing is the top priority**, you can rest assured that you're doing the right things for your employees so they stay engaged and committed.

Survival
I feel physically safe at work, confident that I have a steady job, and sure that I'll be paid on time.

Security
I feel respected, heard, and supported emotionally and mentally at work, am compensated fairly, and have access to meaningful benefits.

Relationships
I feel connected to my coworkers and my manager in healthy ways, trust my employer's reputation, and have opportunities to both lead in my area and serve and support others.

Autonomy
I feel that I'm trusted to work independently, manage how and when I work, and complete my tasks.

Actualization
I feel that I've achieved something meaningful through my work, can explore new ideas and possibilities, and have the chance to inspire and lead others.

Fulfillment
I feel that I'm reaching my full potential, my purpose connects with my employer's purpose, and I'm working toward a greater good through what I do.

What keeps highly valued employees from leaving an organization? **Purpose.** Studies have shown that when people feel their work is "**more than just a job**," their commitment increases anywhere from two to six times depending on the industry.[4]

Great Place To Work®

Below are several concrete actions you can take to align your operations with the different needs your people have.

Survival

- ✓ Ensure fair scheduling and pay
- ✓ Allow anytime, anywhere access to pay
- ✓ Provide affordable healthcare
- ✓ Always communicate transparently
- ✓ Uphold clear, compliant safety standards
- ✓ Put people-focused crisis response plans in place

Security

- ✓ Provide flexible working hours, locations, and time off
- ✓ Make sure employees have extended leave options
- ✓ Implement employee support systems and benefits
- ✓ Ensure privacy
- ✓ Share proactive guidance on wellbeing
- ✓ Track DEI&B benchmark

Relationships

- ✓ Create an employee community for connecting with peers and mentors
- ✓ Encourage regular coaching and nudges for managers
- ✓ Administer time-off donations and shift swapping
- ✓ Communicate consistent, equitable goals
- ✓ Ensure a welcoming onboarding experience for new hires
- ✓ Advocate for peer-to-peer feedback and team development

Autonomy

- ✓ Allow self-service scheduling sensitive to employee preferences
- ✓ Endorse regular conversations and feedback about goals
- ✓ Give access to learning and development opportunities
- ✓ Recognize successes
- ✓ Provide clear job requirements and activity tracking
- ✓ Ensure access to the latest company standards and resources

Actualization

- ✓ Practice proactive workforce planning to support team growth
- ✓ Create succession plans to map career paths
- ✓ Garner regular employee feedback on culture and process
- ✓ Tune in to burnout and flight risk prediction
- ✓ Aid mentorship opportunities

Fulfillment

- ✓ Provide leadership training and action recommendations
- ✓ Establish employee resource group (ERG) communities
- ✓ Promote charitable giving and community involvement
- ✓ Build opportunities to mentor others
- ✓ Give financial wellness support and aid in retirement planning
- ✓ Involve the team in recruiting and onboarding processes

Business Benefits

If you need to make the case for how a people-first strategy leads to organizational resiliency, point to these clear benefits to convince leaders and other stakeholders:

Intuitive processes

You'll save time and money when processes are aligned with people's needs, because they will be simpler to understand and execute against:

✓ HR professionals who are considered strategy experts are **three times more likely** to make it easy for leaders to tie people data to larger business goals.[5]

✓ Studies show that HR automation can **decrease administrative costs by 30%** for HR professionals and **49%** for employers.[6]

Motivated people

When people feel their needs are supported at work, they'll give extra to ensure the organization reaches its goals:

✓ Organizations with strong cultures saw a **four-times increase in revenue growth** compared to their competitors[7]

✓ Business or work units that score in the top quartile of their organization in employee engagement have nearly **double the odds** of success[8]

✓ Organizations that score in the **top 25%** on employee experience report **double the return** on sales[9]

Proactive compliance

You'll increase your likelihood of avoiding compliance penalties and unexpected costs that can affect resiliency:

✓ Employer fines and penalties due to noncompliance **nearly doubled** from 2018 to 2020, from $1.6 billion to $3.12 billion[10]

✓ Organizations lose **an average of $5.87 million** in yearly revenue due to a **single noncompliance event**[11]

Readiness for growth

You'll adapt to change and external pressures more easily and will be able to proactively put the resources in place needed to succeed without having to replace your people as frequently:

✓ Organizations that build an "Innovation by All" culture generate more high-quality ideas, realize greater speed in implementation, and achieve greater agility — resulting in **5.5 times the revenue growth** of peers with a less inclusive approach to innovation[12]

✓ Employees of organizations that promote a "growth mindset" are **34% more likely to feel a strong sense of ownership and commitment** to the organization[13]

Conclusion

At the end of the day, **your people are undoubtedly your greatest asset**. Putting processes in place that address their personal and professional needs when it matters most is the best way to resist an economic downturn, preserve business continuity, and become efficient. Nobody can predict the future, but investing in people-centric operations is an essential step toward building resiliency to prepare for it.

UKG has the modern innovation and expertise needed to help organizations like yours achieve a people-first focus in your day-to-day operations. See for yourself how our solutions can guide you to becoming resilient to the potentially harmful effects of uncertain times.

GET THE TOOLS TO BUILD A RESILIENT WORKPLACE

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Appendix

Resiliency Evaluation Worksheet: How dedicated is your workforce?

Working shifts

1. Do your employees show up to work on time?
    _____
    _____

2. Do they pick up extra shifts when available?
    _____
    _____

3. How often are employees calling out unexpectedly?
    _____
    _____

4. Do your employees feel inspired to go above and beyond their normal scope of work?
    _____
    _____

Ensuring safety

1. Do employees follow safety standards?
    _____
    _____

2. Are they actively working together to prevent risk?
    _____
    _____

3. Are resources readily available when they have safety-related questions?
    _____
    _____

4. What processes do you have in place to ensure safety?
    _____
    _____

Adapting to change

1. Do your employees tend to react positively or negatively to change?
    _____
    _____

2. How well do you think your organization communicates changes to employees?
    _____
    _____

3. Are leaders transparent about the state of the business?
    _____
    _____

4. Do employees adapt to changes quickly, or are they more hesitant?
    _____
    _____

Increasing productivity

1. Do your employees feel they can be independent self-starters at work?
    _____
    _____

2. How often do you feel employees must be micromanaged in order to complete tasks?
    _____
    _____

3. Are employees recognized for a job well done?
    _____
    _____

4. Does your organization offer opportunities for training or learning new skills?
    _____
    _____

Appendix

Resiliency Evaluation Worksheet: How dedicated is your workforce?

Improving processes

1. How often are employees polled for feedback on workplace processes?

   _____
   _____

2. Do you have a system in place to collect employee feedback, and do you act on their feedback?

   _____
   _____

3. How frequently do you review and optimize processes?

   _____
   _____

4. Do your employees find existing workflows easy to understand?

   _____
   _____

Vendor Evaluation Worksheet

Use this worksheet to ensure that vendors' human capital management/workforce management solutions enable you, at minimum, to execute the features based on the **Employee's Continuum of Needs** listed below.

Mapping Systems to Employee Needs	UKG	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Survival			
Integrated fair scheduling and pay tools			
Anywhere, anytime access to pay			
Affordable healthcare access			
Transparent communication platform			
Clear, compliant, and readily accessible safety standards			
People-focused crisis response plans			
Security			
Flexible working hours, locations, and time off			
Extended leave options			
Employee support systems and benefits			
Assurance of privacy			
Proactive guidance on wellbeing			
Tracking of DEI&B benchmarks			

Vendor Evaluation Worksheet (cont'd)

Use this worksheet to ensure that vendors' human capital management/workforce management solutions enable you, at minimum, to execute the features based on the **Employee's Continuum of Needs** listed below.

Mapping Systems to Employee Needs	UKG	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Relationships			
Employee community for connecting with peers and mentors			
Regular coaching and nudges for managers to check in			
Time-off donations and shift swapping			
Consistent, equitable goal mapping			
Welcoming onboarding experience provided for new hires			
Peer-to-peer feedback and team development integrations			
Autonomy			
Self-service scheduling that takes employee preferences into account			
Regular conversations and feedback about goals			
Learning and development opportunities			
Recognition of successes and milestones			
Clear job requirements and activity tracking			
Access to the latest organization standards and resources			

Vendor Evaluation Worksheet (cont'd)

Use this worksheet to ensure that vendors' human capital management/workforce management solutions enable you, at minimum, to execute the features based on the **Employee's Continuum of Needs** listed below.

Mapping Systems to Employee Needs	UKG	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Actualization			
Proactive workforce planning to support team growth			
Built-in succession planning to map career paths			
Platform for regular employee feedback on culture and process			
Burnout and flight risk prediction			
Mentorship opportunities			
Fulfillment			
Leadership training and action recommendations			
ERG communities			
Charitable giving and community involvement			
Opportunities to mentor others			
Financial wellness support and retirement planning			
Recruiting and onboarding team involvement			

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About UKG

At UKG, our purpose is people™. As strong believers in the power of culture and belonging as the secret to success, we champion great workplaces and build lifelong partnerships with our customers to show what's possible when businesses invest in their people. Born from a historic merger that created one of the world's leading HCM cloud companies, our Life-work Technology™ approach to HR, payroll, and workforce management solutions for all people helps 50,000 organizations around the globe and across every industry anticipate and adapt to their employees' needs beyond just work. To learn more, visit ukg.com.

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