



**RE-ENTRY:**  
**CONSIDERATIONS FOR LEADERS**

**TiER1**  
PERFORMANCE

# PURPOSE

This guide was designed to support you in your role as a leader. As you continue to navigate new challenges for the first time, we've compiled some thoughts to help:

- Communicate and connect employees.
- Support leaders on the go.
- Prioritize health and safety.
- Enable new ways of working.

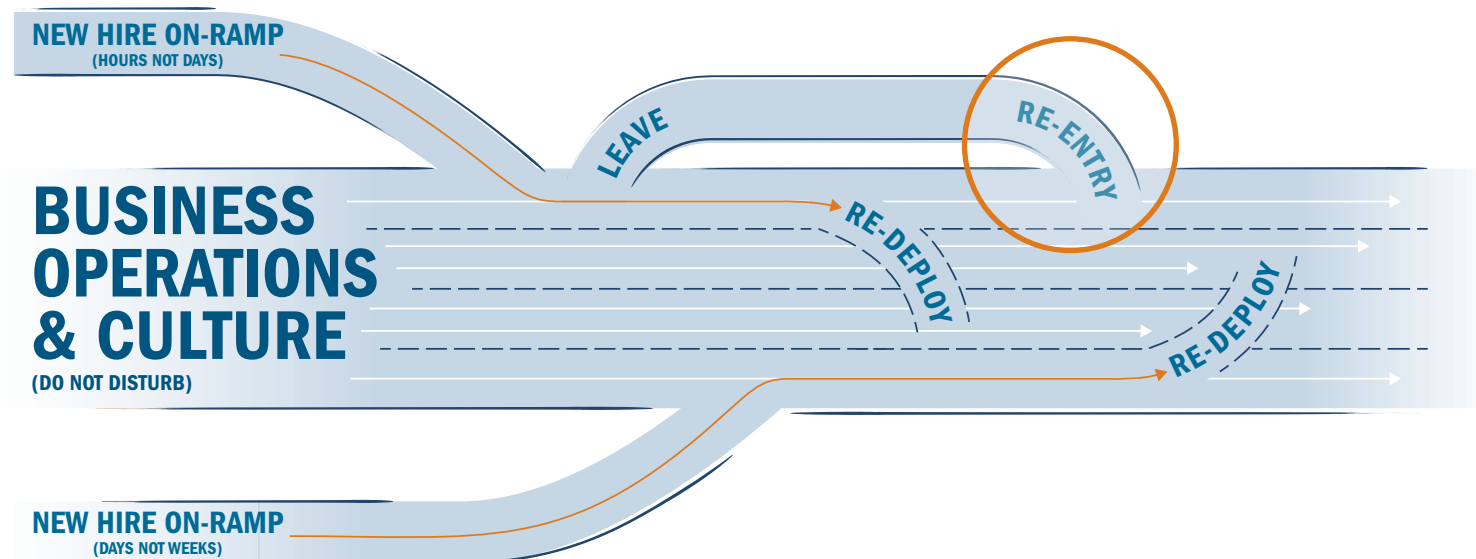
## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

For leaders running operations that require teams to be on the floor, it is critical to get the business running again. Even for teams that will be remaining virtual for all or a portion of their time, many of these same concepts can ensure connection and engagement. By focusing on the care of your team and ensuring they feel safe and supported, the transition back will go much smoother.

Depending on the industry, teams have seen a range of change:

- Rapidly onboarding new employees to meet increased demand
- Furloughing employees or temporarily flexing the workforce with the intent of bringing them back
- Teams shifting to virtual work and now returning onsite

When we think about re-entry in these contexts, it's clear that entering the organization at any phase requires careful consideration to not disrupt business operations and culture. The goal throughout re-entry is to maintain and strengthen trust and as a result, the organization's culture.



# SUCCESSFUL RE-ENTRY REQUIRES A PEOPLE-CENTRIC VIEW

People are at the center of everything we do. Re-entry is no different. To achieve successful re-entry, establish a consistent experience that prepares both employees and the organization to manage uncertainty, re-orient to the organization to feel safe and supported, and adapt to the new ways of work.



**“We are calm and steady in our communication and ready for employees to come back.”**

**“Everyone is compliant, while feeling valued and safe. Today is an important moment in our organization as we support employees walk through the front door again.”**

**“We are delivering on our promises to our customers and employees, while establishing new ways of working.”**



**“I have mixed feelings about going back. I want to be sure I am safe and can keep my family safe, too. I feel informed.”**

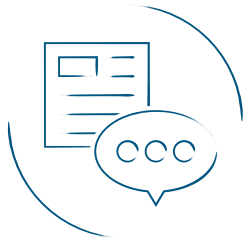
**“I feel supported because there are protocols in place and leaders care about me, my co-workers, and our families.”**

**“We have been through a lot together. I feel valued and am ready to contribute in new ways.”**



# AREAS OF IMPACT

Here are four opportunity areas for leaders to have significant impact in building culture.



## COMMUNICATIONS

**Transparency, authenticity, and frequency improve connection.**

Your employees are looking for direction and confidence. Remember to lead with empathy, compassion, and transparency. Address as many of the “knowns” as possible. Consider new forms of communication to increase connection.



## HEALTH & SAFETY

**Set the stage for safety, health, and mental wellness.**

In addition to reducing infection transmission at work and home, supporting both the physical health and mental wellness of employees is critical. Continue to ensure employees have opportunities for connection for coworkers who now have to eat lunch 6 feet apart or continue working virtually.



## LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

**The tone for teams is set by leaders.**

Consider providing your leaders with a playbook that provides the tools they need to engage their teams in new ways of working. Also include reflection tools for leaders to self-assess how they’re showing up and the tone they are setting.



## WAYS OF WORKING

**From adjusted routines to new guiding principles, empower new ways of working.**

Behavior change is hard. Support your people in adopting new norms, processes, and habits by approaching the change from the performer’s point of view. Create a comprehensive strategy to support leadership, communication, learning, and sustainment to ensure a smooth transition.

# COMMUNICATION FOR CONNECTION

Clear, consistent internal communication is more important than ever. Here are some people-centered communication considerations for workforce re-entry.

## BEFORE: SET THE TONE FOR A SAFE AND POSITIVE NEW NORM.

### 2-3 weeks prior to the change:

- Own the narrative. Seize your story and be transparent about current realities—including what you don't know. Paint a compelling picture of the future to provide the comfort your people need.
- Communicate frequently. Share weekly updates about steps that have been taken to prioritize your team's safety. Address their most important concerns about returning to work in as much detail as possible.
- Explore alternative communication channels. Consider providing updates and messages in easy to digest formats like webinars, podcasts or videos. Create a central hub on your intranet where employees find all the needed resources to prepare to return to work.
- Make it a conversation. Provide a hotline or central email for employees to address questions and concerns before coming back to work.

### A week prior to the change:

- Make it personal. Have managers or a team of leaders reach out with a call to associates to reinforce steps taken and address any questions they may have.
- If the change is re-entry, ensure a great first day back. Mail employees the necessary materials (masks, gloves, etc.) and provide details on new procedures. Make the expected safety habits clear and, if possible, provide opportunities for employees to practice before they walk through the door, ensuring clarity and comfort.



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## DURING: ESTABLISH A CLEAR PATH FORWARD.

Transitions come with many emotions and concerns. Make sure to be present and have resources to help your team navigate the new norm with ease. While always important, these practices set your people up to more effectively adapt to the change upon return.

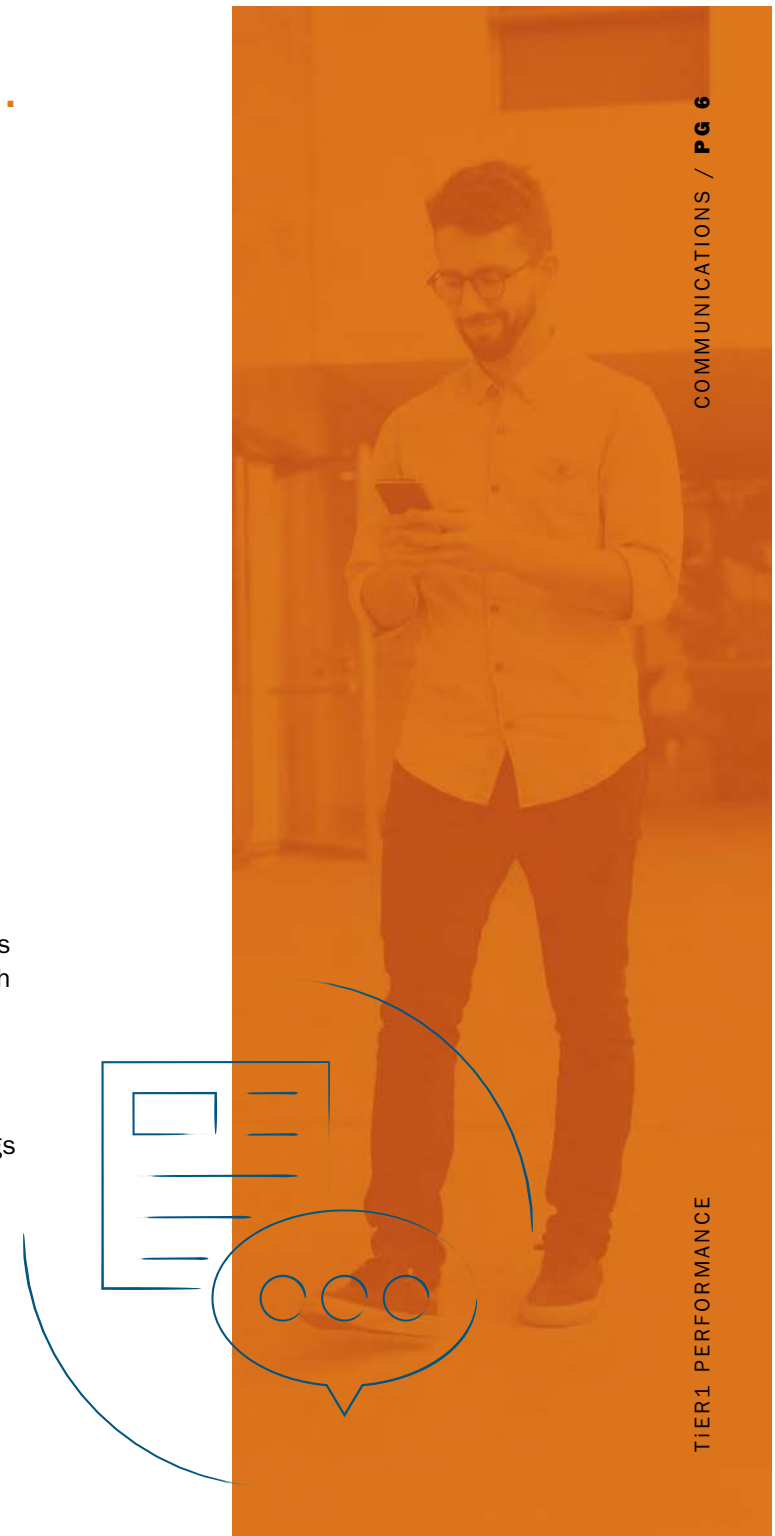
- Set leaders up for success. Create scenario guides that provide best practices to address commonly asked questions and issues so managers feel confident to guide employees through challenges that might surface.
- Be planful and present. Provide leaders with tools and talking points that provide clear direction, transparency, and frequent appreciation.
- Provide support—on and off the jobsite. Consider bringing in medical and local experts to facilitate Q&A sessions with your teams to understand the facts of how to stay educated and safe during this time. Share where employees can go for help through their manager, EAP, and other company resources.

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## ONGOING: SUSTAIN THE MOMENTUM.

While new ways of working may be established, there will still be issues that present themselves that will require ongoing communications to ensure that the progress continues. To turn the transition into an ongoing opportunity, consider these best practices:

- Maintain continuity. Take key points from the preparation steps you took at the beginning and continue communication efforts on anticipated changes. The consistent approach provides an expected platform that will help your team navigate future challenges and opportunities with greater ease.
- Keep communication channels open. The open communication created since the beginning should be maintained to provide voice and opportunity to all employees.
- Create the future playbook. Throughout the transition, capture your best practices and learnings so you can create the playbook for navigating future challenges that present themselves.



# LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

As you and your team return to the workplace and pave your new path forward, it is important to take inventory of your leadership principles, reflect on what may need to change to lead in this new environment, and understand how to better support your leaders along the way.

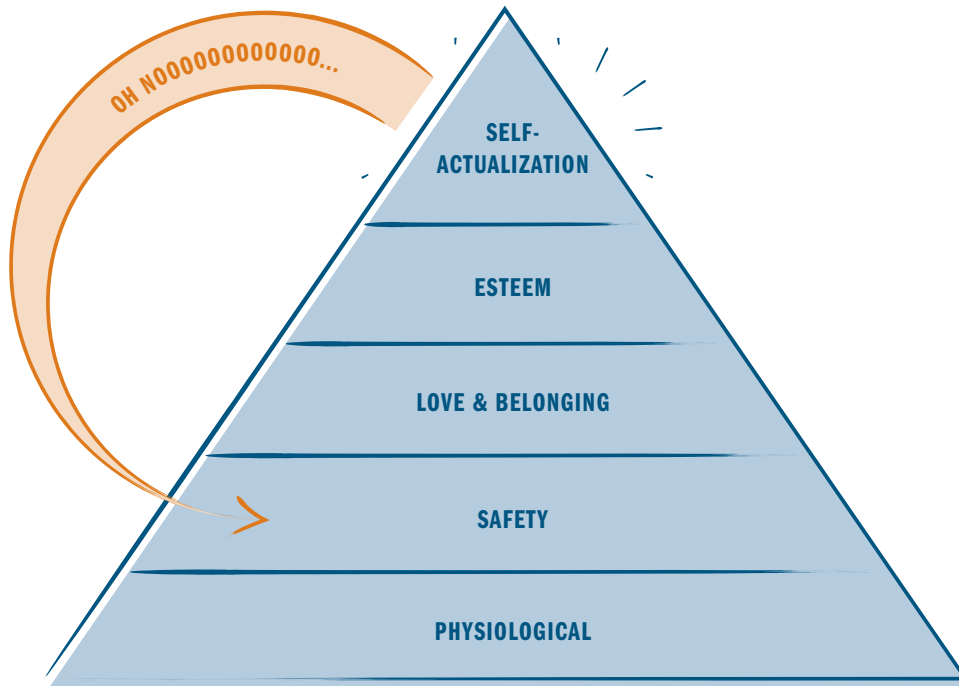
When facing challenging circumstances, provide your leaders with just-in-time support to encourage them, keep their mindset in a healthy place, and remind them of the impact they have on overall culture and the teams around them. This can be as simple as a one-pager anchored in your values that keeps exemplary leadership behaviors top of mind; or it can be more in-depth principles for guiding decisions or a comprehensive strategy for creating an environment that enables your team to be adaptive to constant change.

Here are some mindsets and behaviors you may want to consider emphasizing for your leaders. No need to cover them all; prioritize the ones that will have the most impact given your organization's unique circumstances.

MINDSET	BEHAVIOR	BENEFIT
Empower	Organize teams to discover and implement solutions.	Rapid problem solving
Delegate	Allow decision making at all levels, including the front line.	Faster decision making
Humility	Listen to your team.	People-centric focus
Focus on hearts and minds	Thank employees for specific actions.	Contagious, energizing positivity
Trust generously	Be reliable and show empathy and sincerity.	Earned respect
Recognize and reinforce	Identify safe behaviors and teamwork in real time.	Instilled pride and safety
Shared responsibility	Check your thinking with your team and peers.	Team buy-in and alignment
Appreciative inquiry	Question to understand and actively listen.	Root cause alignment
Present and available	Show up! Walk the floor and pitch in alongside your team.	Team integrity
Calm and steady	Pause, breathe, calm your state of mind. Communicate with your team regularly.	Trust and engagement
Zero tolerance	Ensure team has PPE, supplies, tools, resources to be safe. Reinforce stands and safe behaviors with coaching.	Safety and compliance
Walk the walk	Model safe behaviors.	Respect and integrity

# HEALTH & SAFETY

Managing stress, fatigue, and uncertainty is top of mind for many teams. As leaders, it is important to ensure both your mental health as well as the mental health of your team. Add in the complexity of infection prevention and personal safety, and it can feel daunting. If you think of Maslow's hierarchy, as a society, we've dropped down to a focus on safety.



Taking into account the impact this has mentally, you can lead with strength and confidence by engaging your rational brain over your emotional brain—and applying the infection prevention strategies that healthcare leaders have been using for years. (We asked the clinicians on our TIER1 Healthcare team, since infection prevention is one of their areas of deep expertise!)

Here are some considerations for ensuring health and safety for your employees.



## PROCESS AND ENVIRONMENT

CONSIDERATION	SHORT-TERM / PERMANENT	ACTION PLAN
Emergency operations plan or state pandemic plan (if required)		
Infection prevention and control practices		
Social distancing policies (tape/plexiglass/non-permanent wall fixtures)		
Required PPE and mask-wearing policies		
Clothes/shoe change requirements		
Hand hygiene and handwashing stations		
Workstation cleaning and sanitizing		
Staggered breaks and lunch protocol		
Shift change protocol		
Employee health and safety policy revisions		
Employee self-screening protocol		
Symptomatic employee(s) protocol		
Return to work protocol (after COVID-19 diagnosis)		

**Process and Environment cont.**

CONSIDERATION	SHORT-TERM / PERMANENT	ACTION PLAN
Travel screening process		
Visitor policy and/or protocol		
Entrance and exit plans to building and work areas		
New or updated signage requirements		
Engineering controls (e.g., airborne infection isolation rooms)		
After-action reporting (what worked, what didn't, what improvements are required?)		

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## COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING

CONSIDERATION	SHORT-TERM / PERMANENT	ACTION PLAN
Communication to leaders		
Communication to employees		
Pre-return training		
First day back training		
Job aids and just-in-time training		
Mental health conversation and resources		

## Communication and Training cont.

CONSIDERATION	SHORT-TERM / PERMANENT	ACTION PLAN
Union communication and compliance needs		
Ongoing education on PPE		
Reinforcement of new policies		
Reinforcement of infection prevention and control practices		

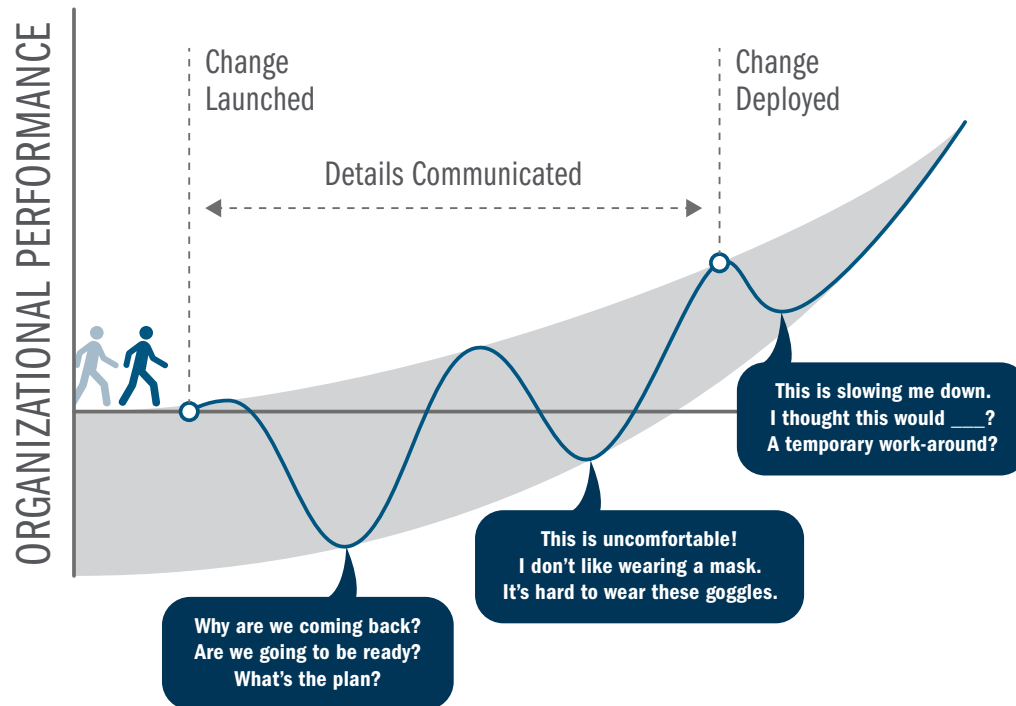
## ADMINISTRATIVE

CONSIDERATION	SHORT-TERM / PERMANENT	ACTION PLAN
Adequate PPE supplies and equipment		
Creating additional roles (e.g., isolation coordinator, disinfection team)		
Just-in-time fit testing		
Employee assistance program (EAP)		

# WAYS OF WORKING

Now that you have your new policies and procedures identified and communicated, how do you support the behavior change that is needed to empower and sustain new ways of working?

First, it's important to understand the emotional stress that employees experience throughout change. At TiER1, we've found across organizations, employees actually experience what we call "a triple dip" when it comes to performance throughout a change. If we can address their needs throughout this journey, we can lessen the decrease in performance and set them up to do their best work.

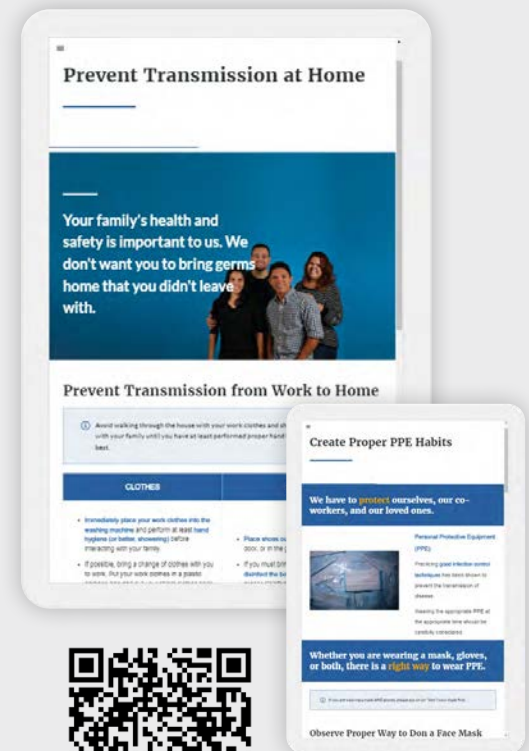


The best part about supporting employees throughout the change journey is that it is an opportunity to build into your culture. Be creative and communicate in a way that is true to your culture. Consider sending PPE to employees still at home so that they have a chance to practice new protocols prior to being back onsite. (You could even create your own handwashing song.)

Once you get through the initial change, you'll want to consider building the environment that enables your people to be ready and prepared for constant change. This ultimately sets your people to be adaptable and prepared for the uncertainty ahead.

## INSPIRATION

Here's an example of a simple Rise course that could be customized for your employees. (Open the camera on your mobile device and hover over the QR code to launch sample course.)



Give it a try! ↷

# WE'RE HERE TO HELP

First, thanks for your role in leading through crisis, change, and uncertainty. We appreciate the way that leaders are showing up to empower change, innovation, and community.

The ideas in this guide are a high-level collection of perspectives from conversations with clients across many industries. If you'd like to connect with a consultant to talk about the unique challenges you're facing at your organization, we'd love to chat.

Every day we partner with organizations to activate strategies through people. As the need to adapt and evolve strategies heightens, your people remain your greatest asset in activating them.

**Want to learn more? Let's talk!**

**HELLO@TIER1PERFORMANCE.COM**

**859-415-1000**

# WE ACTIVATE YOUR STRATEGIES THROUGH *people*

Strategy is only as valuable as the activation behind it: how it shows up, how work gets done, how your employees own it, and how your customers experience it.

## HOW WE *activate* STRATEGY



### Consult

Identify and align on performance factors needed for activation.

In addition to driving clarity around the desired future state, we partner to understand how the unique dynamics of your organization (culture, leadership, roles, systems, etc.) intersect and influence each other to create opportunities and overcome barriers for successful strategy activation.



### Design

Create the performance experience and everything needed to sustain it.

We deliver the plan and detail needed for your people to be empowered and aligned around your strategy: outlining key training, communication, performance support tools, technology, and associated timelines in a clearly articulated blueprint, journey map, or experience design.



### Build

Activate strategy through engaging, results-focused deliverables.

From custom technology to high-volume communication and training, our studio teams of instructional designers, software developers, designers, copywriters, and videographers create engaging deliverables that allow your people to have what they need when they need it—boom, strategy activated.

## CUSTOM SOLUTIONS THAT *activate* STRATEGY

Every organization has different strategic priorities—and therefore different needs. We custom-craft the solution that is right for you.

SYSTEMS ADOPTION · DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION · EXPERIENCE DESIGN · CHANGE STRATEGY · ONBOARDING · SALES ENABLEMENT  
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT · TALENT DEVELOPMENT · CUSTOM PORTALS · CULTURE · CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

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