

# ENGAGE GOVERNANCE AND STAFF



As we start to emerge from the first wave of COVID-19, most hospitals fall into two groups:

- The first group was at least partially overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients, shortages of PPE and staff stress that tested systems and leadership like never before.
- The second was a provider who shut down revenue-producing operations, stocked up on supplies and urgently prepared for patients that never came. One hospital CEO described it as “I have never worked so hard to take care of such few patients.”

Empowerment and communication are foundational elements to any financial recovery. Here are our thoughts regarding your next steps:

## YOUR NEXT STEPS

While successful organizations are always listening to their staff, during times of transition and stress, take extraordinary measures to listen and respond more frequently and with more empathy and urgency than you typically do. Input from these Listening Posts should also roll up to a central repository / person to help identify broader trends and capture ongoing lessons learned.

There will not be a “Post-Covid” world for a long time, so the enhanced communication and alignment will need to continue into the future. Keep up these extraordinary measures even as you move into recovery.

- **Leader Rounding.** Conduct daily rounding at all levels of leadership in the areas affected by COVID-19 across all shifts and days of the week. A rule of thumb is that every front-line worker should see at least one senior leader every shift they work. Focus on listening, sharing information, and identifying problems to solve. For staff not directly involved in the COVID-19, it is also important to round with the same focus and goals. Do not forget to talk to those staff working remotely - even if "rounding" is done virtually.
- **Informal Leader Huddles.** Since not all leaders are managers in the organization, you have ideally already identified the well-connected, informal opinion leaders through an Organizational Network Analysis or similar analysis. (ONA measures connections and information flow between people in the organization and can highlight people who act as connectors, well-connected and poorly connected portions of the organization, along with potential bottlenecks and other characteristics.). If you have not done this work formally, you can quickly identify those leaders in a less formalized way. Take extra time to communicate with and listen to these leaders to achieve more leverage and multiply the effectiveness and reach of the communication efforts.
- **Social Media Monitors.** Even with all your efforts to gather information through internal channels, it is likely that there will be significant information circulating on social media. You should increase the time you spend monitoring social media for positive and negative information that you can incorporate into your problem resolution process.
- **Problem Resolution and Feedback.** Listening is necessary but insufficient. It is critical that you increase the speed and urgency of your efforts to resolve the problems that you identify and

communicate the resolution back to the staff. Ideally these issues and resolutions are tracked in the Crisis Action Center.

- **Board Communications.** Devote focused effort to recovering from the financial, strategic, and morale implications of the crisis. Begin that work immediately - even during the crisis - to provide clarity to your Board and to accelerate your recovery.

**Now is the time to proactively engage your Board** – even if you do not routinely do so. The speed and magnitude of change may bring about the need for rapid, strategic decisions. The outcome of your [Evaluation](#) will inform the nature of the conversations you will be having with your board but prepare them now for the wide range of potential scenarios. The earlier the Board is engaged in the process, the easier it will be to make an effective, potentially game-changing, decision.

The impact on the strategic initiatives developed as part of the Financial Turnaround planning should be identified early and refined as the crisis evolves. These implications – along with the lessons learned from the crisis and its effect on your environment – will be an important input into the new collective vision for how you will be successful moving forward.

It is important to gain agreement on a new Success Model given the new realities and the opportunities that emerged from the crisis. The process will be a focused, rapid reconstruction of the most recent strategic and operating plans that were made moot by the crisis.

New important initiatives will emerge from the new Success Model: some emphasizing rapid financial improvement; some expanding on positive lessons learned from the crisis; and some preparing for the likely next wave in the Winter. Accelerate your approach to designing and implementing these initiatives beyond your normal planning rhythm.

It is very important to cascade the new Success Model and Initiatives throughout the entire organization quickly to gain understanding and alignment with the staff and provide them a clear path forward.

## CONCLUSION

Your top priority is to know how much runway is available to solve the financial issues you face in the next several months. The length of that runway will inform how you engage your board and staff, but regardless of the message that emerges from your analysis, continue to engage them in extraordinary ways.

Galloway has developed a comprehensive work plan to accelerate your recovery based on conversations with leading healthcare executives and our experience leading financial turnarounds, customized for your situation.

Our thoughts on other related topics can be found on our website in the [INSIGHTS](#) section:

[Securing Cash Flow](#)

[Managing a Financial Turnaround](#)

[Leverage a Strong Balance Sheet](#)

[Preparing for the Next Wave](#)

## MEET OUR EXPERT

Galloway Consulting helps hospital groups, physicians, and payer/providers improve operations, outcomes, and profits so they can better serve their communities. Our healthcare team has mastered every aspect of the business.



**Mitchell Galloway** is the CEO and co-founder of Galloway Consulting and built his reputation by helping healthcare executives transform their organizations, often achieving landmark results on seemingly impossible timetables. Among the country's foremost authorities on organizational strategy, he takes the lead role with our clients, rapidly diagnosing the challenges they face and prescribing innovative, timely, and effective responses. Mitch has been in the healthcare business for his entire thirty-five-year career, starting his first consulting business 28 years ago. He has an MBA from

Emory University's Goizueta Business School, where he achieved the #1 class ranking and was recognized as the Outstanding Graduate Student in the field of Organization and Management. He has a Bachelor of Science in Health Systems from the Georgia Institute of Technology.