



Adapting the Strategic Organization Design Workshop to Current Realities: Shifting to a Virtual Format

April 2020

It's clear the COVID-19 virus has disrupted just about everything, including CEO's Strategic Organization Design program. The decision to postpone the March session until June looks to have been optimistic. And the session in November is certainly threatened. Even if travel restrictions were lifted, the pent-up demand for work will likely make it difficult for many people to carve out four days to attend a session no matter how valuable that might be.

We are writing to gauge your interest in an alternative, virtual program that addresses the specific and unique needs of your organization as it emerges on the other side of this crisis. This course will cover most, but not all, of the content from our traditional program. We will cover the basic steps in a redesign process as well as many of the organization design choices that will be useful in real time. We will also provide some coaching and tailored feedback about your particular challenges and issues.

Borrowing from design thinking, we begin with, "What do our customers want?" As soon as some aspects of the current crisis abate, we assume:

1. Organizations will want to get back to work as quickly as possible
2. There is going to be a lot of pressure to re-design for cost, to leverage learnings from the disruption you have experienced and the innovative approaches that have been applied, to incorporate digital solutions, and to reset the organization to changing global dynamics.

We would like to deliver organizational design content in manner that is highly relevant to the recovery and go-forward processes in your organization. Our initial thoughts about how to proceed are as follows:

1. Have each participant define a real design challenge that needs to be addressed.
2. Offer a virtual version of the course that repeatedly cycles through problem definition, reflection, action planning, and feedback. The program will be offered in 8-10 manageable chunks of time (60 minutes to two hours) with the opportunity to apply learnings in between.

Here's How It Would Work

Instead of a four-day in-person workshop, the program will unfold over the course of six weeks.

- Prework: Defining the Organizational Design Challenge(s)
- Every Monday, for those six weeks, we will gather as a full cohort and address a key phase of the re-design process during a 90-minute virtual session.
- Following the virtual class session, you will have the week to plan or actually apply the tools and solutions and make progress on your challenge. During that time, faculty members would be available (on a limited basis), via email/text to answer questions.
- Every Friday we will conduct a 1-2 hour working/sharing session during which time participants present their progress, their successes and challenges and questions. These end-of-week sessions will be conducted in smaller cohort groups, based upon the nature of the participants' challenges. With input and suggestions from participants and the CEO faculty, this will give you a chance to think about options, dig into the content more deeply, and move projects forward.

Overview of the Course

Week	Monday	Focus Area/Topic	Friday (in small cohort groups)
1	90-minute virtual course session for full cohort	Defining challenges/ Clarifying strategy	90-minute share/ reflect
2	90-minute webinar	Laying the foundation	2-hour share/ reflect
3	1-hour webinar	Developing design criteria	1-hour share/ reflect
4	90-minute webinar	Designing to criteria (Part 1)	2-hour share/ reflect
5	90-minute webinar	Designing to criteria (Part 2)	2-hour share/ reflect
6	90-minute webinar	Capstone Webinar	

We know that this format will be of interest to some but not all of the people who are registered for the June and/or November session. Please know that if you prefer to attend our more traditional strategic organization design workshop, we are happy to move your registration to March, 2021.

For those of you who feel a pressing need and/or see the advantage of having this development experience during this period of recovery from COVID-19’s disruptive impacts, we hope that you will join us on this accommodation to the constraints we are all facing.

We would very much appreciate your ideas for how to make this approach work for you and your company and will try to incorporate them into the design of the program as we move forward. We know you are busy, but we hope you can respond quickly to the questions below by **April 20th**. We will determine interest and feasibility of doing this virtual version based on your interest and will confirm plans by early May.

Click [here](#) to take our short survey, or send an email to [Alice Mark](#) and respond to the survey questions below.

Please indicate:

- 1) Are you interested in participating in this adapted version of the course? Yes _____ No _____
 - a. If no, do you want us to transfer your registration to March, 2021? Yes _____ No _____
 - b. If yes, do you think you would like to have a small team attend? Yes _____ No _____

- 2) Do you already have some ideas and reactions to the proposed format described above?
 - a. If yes, please jot down your ideas below OR let us know if you would like to have a quick phone call to share your ideas.

Thank you!

Chris Worley, Beth Gunderson, and Sue Mohrman