



IRBM shares their experience on developing and maintaining business continuity plans during the COVID19 outbreak

As the world is coming to terms with the terrific speed of the COVID19 pandemic and how it can dramatically change people, societies and even nations; our hearts go out to the many people who have been affected by this unprecedented event and we commend the brave people working on the front line to contain the virus.

When the virus started to spread in Italy, many organizations and individuals did not really know how to handle the outbreak. It has only been due to the strict and rapid adoption of WHO and national measures together with the highly collaborative and supportive environment at IRBM that we have been able to cope with the impact of the virus. We believe that a culture of mutual collaboration is of utmost importance in overcoming this difficult situation, and as such hope to help other organizations around the globe facing the unique and rapidly changing landscape by sharing what we have learned and implemented:

1. Safety of all employees needs to be the highest priority for the company;
2. Create a COVID19 Prevention Team incorporating representatives from all divisions of the company including Human Resources and Environmental Health & Safety. The COVID19 Prevention Team needs to be highly motivated and fully committed to tackling the outbreak. The Team has to be flexible enough to develop and adopt internal measures to contain the virus in parallel with the implementation of national and international measures. Above all the team needs to **be collaborative** with the rest of the organization;
3. The COVID19 Prevention Team must monitor and apply all directives from Public Authorities and **be ready** to update the company's action plans when changes occur. The Team is tasked with making sure that the company adopts all the necessary measures to prevent and contain COVID19 spread, to share them with the employees, to control the correct application of these measures and to be the reference point for all employees and collaborators;
4. The COVID19 Prevention Team must be empowered to take immediate action to protect employees and ensure their safety. This includes the power to deny access to anyone, employee or external visitor, wishing to enter the company's buildings regardless of that person's seniority within the organization or the importance of the visitor. The Team must also have the authority to tell employees to stay at home if they pose a risk or even potential risk of infection;
5. The Team must be tasked with the adoption of a COVID19 Prevention Plan in compliance with the highest restrictions specified by the WHO and in accordance with national measures and the measures agreed among

companies within the business sector;

6. The Team must vigilantly monitor the situation and the guidance provided by the WHO and other Public Authorities and **be ready** to adapt the plan immediately as required;
7. The whole organization needs to make sure that all corporate and Public Authority measures, communications, up-dates are provided only from one official source - we suggest creating a specific mail (covid19@....);
8. Mandate all employees to immediately inform the Team in case of flu, cold or any flu-like symptoms and **be prepared** to allow that individual to remain at home as a prevention measure;
9. Verify that all employees can safely work at the minimum distance from one another as specified by the WHO (currently 1m) and direct your employees to always maintain this distance or greater;
10. Adopt a COVID19 Entry Form with specific restrictions, including temperature monitoring (if authorized by the national Authority) to allow only the safe access to company facilities by external staff;
11. Smart-working is fundamental to the business, be sure your IT SYSTEM is enabled to work in a remote mode. Systems should be tested for burden demand;
12. We highly recommend that all meetings are held using video or teleconferencing whether with external collaborators or internal staff;
13. Encourage regular online meetings between employees to help foster a collaborative and supportive environment;
14. Analyse and if necessary, modify your supply chain to ensure the procurement of reagents and materials;
15. Foresee extraordinary expenses out of the annual budgets;
16. Be sure that all employees understand that at no time are they permitted to assemble in even small groups in any areas of the company. For this reason, **be ready** to close the cafeteria, lunch area, relax area and other similar places;
17. Be sure that you communicate effectively and your employees are always fully aware of your measures;
18. **Be ready** to support your employees with their work and family needs.