

**COVID-19:**  
***reactivation plan***

***Design and Layout***

Marketing and Communication Department  
Management Solutions

***Photographs***

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# Introduction



On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern after detecting an outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 virus outside of China. The subsequent rapid expansion of the virus to various countries resulted in a pandemic declaration by WHO on 11 March 2020, calling on governments all over the world to take the necessary measures to stop its spread.

Since late March, nearly half of the world's population has suffered restricted freedom of movement to a greater or lesser extent. Furthermore, in order to mitigate the serious economic consequences of an unprecedented crisis, leading governments, central banks and supranational authorities have taken exceptional measures in tax, employment and monetary policy matters.

Under these circumstances, in early April 2020 Management Solutions published its "COVID-19: Proposals to ensure continued operations" Newsletter with the objective of presenting a general overview of the measures adopted by institutions to mitigate the impact on health and the economy derived from the pandemic, and to propose specific steps addressed to companies in order to facilitate their handling of the crisis and ensure continuity in their operations.

This past month, as the pandemic has stabilised and been alleviated in some regions, several countries have drawn up, or are in the midst of drawing up, action plans to gradually reduce their restrictions on the freedom of movement and allow a cautious and gradual return to activity.

Such plans should contemplate the possibility of new waves of infection, the intensity of which will depend on how much of the current population is now immune (amongst other factors).

Generally speaking, WHO's recommendations, specified by geographical location, indicate the need to meet certain prior conditioning factors before commencing the reactivation phase, such as a continued fall in new cases, recovery of the healthcare system in order to provide adequate assistance, and national capacity to test, trace and speedily isolate infected persons. Furthermore, it is requested that the population be duly informed and act responsibly in a continued manner.

At the same time as governments are launching reactivation plans, companies are also in the midst of defining their own return plans, adapted by geographical location, activity sector and capacity to implement the health & safety conditions

decreed by the government. In turn, given the potential reappearance of a possible outbreak, a corporate reactivation plan should be adaptable and sequential, allowing the measures to be re-evaluated at each phase.

Finally, the economic and social scenario facing the business sector will be totally different from the one existing prior to the crisis.

- ▶ From an economic and political point of view, economic agents will be facing an unprecedented drop in GDP and a rise in unemployment, a fall in prices, market volatility and a possible wave of M&As. In some cases, governments may act through price intervention in some sectors or by reinforcing local production, if considered strategic to ensure self-sufficiency in new crisis situations (such as healthcare, food and energy self-sufficiency).
- ▶ From a social point of view, all companies should reflect on which changes in the market, new customer behaviour and customer relations will be permanent, in order to adapt their strategy and value creation policy.
- ▶ In addition, risk management should be strengthened in order to adapt to new surroundings with a higher rate of default, illiquidity and debt moratoriums in vulnerable sectors.

The following sections seek to provide an overview of the general context in which a reactivation strategy would be deployed, offering specific action proposals for it to take place in an orderly and safe manner, taking into consideration factors such as the conditioning elements in terms of human, technological and physical resources, and the associated logistics.

## *General background of a reactivation stage*



## Introduction

During the first four months of this year, most countries have ordered control and prevention measures, to a greater or lesser extent, in order to be ready to respond to the COVID-19<sup>2</sup> pandemic. These measures include restrictions on the freedom of movement and distancing rules, as well as, in some cases, a halt in all non-essential economic activities. Along with these restrictions, economic and financial back-up measures have been implemented to help the economy and the most vulnerable groups. Depending on the severity of the pandemic nationwide, some countries are in the midst of establishing containment measures, whereas other governments and authorities (such as in Europe and the United States) are beginning to consider the lifting of such measures and are designing reactivation plans.

Such reactivation strategies, marked by uncertainty as to how the pandemic will evolve in the future, will decisively condition the effort and plans made by companies and other economic agents in order to adapt to the new scenario and thus circumvent the triggered economic crisis.

It is therefore essential for all companies to be aware of the governing principles of such reactivation strategies, as well as any potential measures that may be expected and the most likely scenarios that will arise.

## Objective and principles of reactivation strategies

The recovery plans that are currently being considered prioritise recommencement of social and economic activity while minimising the impact of such recommencement on public health and the healthcare system<sup>3</sup>.

For the achievement of this objective, the key to how these recovery strategies will be designed and evolve is how future infections will evolve. Consequently, until effective treatment or a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 is developed, the world's population will have to co-exist with its ensuing illness (COVID-19). This is why the development of any economic activity will

be conditioned by how spreading of the virus is controlled and the healthcare systems' capacity to treat all patients and protect the population.

Although there is great uncertainty as to how the pandemic will evolve, WHO foresees three possible scenarios<sup>4</sup>:

- ▶ A complete halt in transmission of the illness amongst the population.
- ▶ A recurrent epidemic in waves (to a greater or lesser extent).
- ▶ Continuous transmission amongst the population, albeit at a low scale.

Although the probability of each one of these scenarios is uncertain, based on the evidence available to date, WHO has established that the most likely scenario is a recurrent epidemic in waves, interspersed with periods during which transmission amongst the population occurs at a low (yet continuous) scale.

Each one of these scenarios entails a different level of severity and, consequently, has a different impact in terms of risk for public health and national healthcare systems. This is why recovery strategies have been designed taking various scenarios into account and the level of associated risks, in order to adapt and vary the severity of containment measures and, if necessary, the speed, degree and nature of any recovery measures depending on the resulting scenario<sup>5</sup>.

Given that the pandemic's future evolution is uncertain, reactivation strategies need to consider various phases for each scenario. The possibility would also exist to move forward or

<sup>2</sup>Management Solutions, 2020.

<sup>3</sup>As indicated, for example, in the framework developed by the European Commission and European Council: Joint European Roadmap towards lifting COVID-19 containment measures.

<sup>4</sup>WHO, 2020.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.



take a step back to an earlier phase depending on indicator performance. As will be seen below, some countries are already designing strategies further to this principle<sup>6</sup>.

### **Evaluation of epidemiological risk and basis of reactivation plans**

Strategies to leave the COVID-19 crisis behind will be conditioned by how epidemiological risk is evaluated, based on medical variables. Some of these risk measurement variables, considered relevant by national and supranational authorities, are indicated below:<sup>7</sup>

- ▶ The level of spreading of the disease, which should be significantly reduced during a sustained period of time. This variable may be measured, for example, according to the number of new infections (total and proportional), the interpersonal transmission rate of the virus, the number of patients in intensive care, etc.
- ▶ The level and state of the healthcare system's capacity to effectively combat the pandemic, treat patients and continue with its regular activity. This state may be measured by the occupation rate of intensive care units, the number of available hospital beds (total and proportional to the population), the number of medical staff (total and proportional to the population), etc.
- ▶ Capacity to monitor and control infections, including the capacity to complete large-scale testing, and the capacity to identify and rapidly contain new cases and trace the contagion chain. This capacity may be measured by the number of available tests (total and proportional to the population), the degree of available information on interpersonal movement and contact, etc.

Furthermore, recovery strategies that are being generated in various countries usually present a series of common features and medical, economic and social criteria that determine resulting plans, to include the following:

- ▶ Reactivation plans would be gradually implemented, very often in phases, giving the authorities enough time to measure their effectiveness, as well as the impact of each new phase on public health, allowing actions to be corrected if necessary. Transition times between phases, under consideration, depend on medical criteria. One of the most popular ones is the two-week timeline<sup>8</sup>, based on a conservative estimate of how long the COVID-19 virus takes to incubate<sup>9,10,11</sup>.
- ▶ All measures will be implemented locally and regionally, and will gradually be extended nationwide and occasionally at a supranational level, based on the characteristics of each geographical region. The speed and efficacy of reactivation strategy implementation will differ in city and rural areas, depending on population density, the most common means of transport and, even, lifestyle; the possibility exists for regions to co-exist at different recovery programme phases, in the same country, over a certain period of time.
- ▶ Economic activity will be reactivated following different models and criteria when prioritising the opening of certain sectors and activities. Of interest amongst these models is reopening based on each sector's economic relevance and

<sup>6</sup> For example, South Africa, Spain or Switzerland.

<sup>7</sup> As indicated, for example, by WHO, or the European Commission and European Council.

<sup>8</sup> For example, this is the time that Spain is considering at present.

<sup>9</sup> WHO, 2020.

<sup>10</sup> European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020.



the needs it covers, the degree of personal contact involved in each activity, and the possibility of teleworking, employment by shifts or uninterrupted schedules to reduce interpersonal contact<sup>12</sup>.

- ▶ Groups and meetings of persons will be progressively allowed, depending on the social importance of such gatherings, as well as the number of persons convened and the contact required amongst them. These criteria will be used, for example, to prioritise the opening dates of schools and educational centres, shopping centres and, lastly, leisure establishments and activities, avoiding large-scale events.
- ▶ Likewise, the movement and travelling of persons will be progressively allowed, depending on the reason and need for each trip, gradually from a local level to nationwide and internationally.

As a result, and until effective treatment or a vaccine against the illness is found, reactivation of the economic and social activity is expected to be conditioned by a series of additional social distancing and hygienic measures and rules, such as limits on the number of persons who may convene, reduced capacity in public spaces, the need to use personal protective equipment (EPIs) in some cases (such as the use of face masks in public transport or at work), and imposing greater obligations on companies taking the form of employee distancing protocols and cleanliness criteria.

### **Specific measures and examples of reactivation strategies**

Plans to roll back pandemic containment measures will include a set of specific measures, in each country. The following are examples of such common or relevant measures:

- ▶ The capacity to obtain information on the pandemic's evolution, which is essential to monitor performance of the risk to which each country or region is exposed. This is why large-scale virus testing plans are foreseen, insofar as capacity allows, as has been the case in South Korea<sup>13</sup>, amongst other places. Such testing will prioritise population segments by vulnerability, working conditions or needs (for example, the testing of medical staff will be prioritised). Furthermore, data and information gathering systems used by public health institutions are expected to be bolstered, and national and supranational initiatives launched to share such information. Of interest is the EU's proposal to cooperate and share information among member states<sup>14</sup>.
- ▶ Due to this huge need for information, some of the most relevant measures that are being considered and established involve using technology, such as apps and geolocation techniques, in order to monitor personal movement and interpersonal contact. Such technologies

would help complement medical data and speed up the identification of infections and any persons in contact with an infected person, establishing quarantine periods and notifying potentially infected persons. These measures have been used and proven to be effective in South Korea<sup>15</sup>, China and Israel, to name a few. However, they have also triggered much objection and concern about data privacy and a State's controlling capacity. In the EU, the Commission has proposed a plan to lay down a framework contemplating these measures in Europe based on anonymised data<sup>16</sup>.

- ▶ Furthermore, in addition to many measures already adopted by national and supranational authorities<sup>17</sup>, more provisions directed at stimulating and protecting the economy and financial stability are expected, prioritising the protection of employment and considering those sectors hit particularly hard by the pandemic, such as food & drink and tourism, aviation and general transportation.
- ▶ Finally, measures to reinforce and strengthen healthcare systems are also expected.

In any case, the principle governing these global reactivation strategies is risk control through a gradual adaptation plan, as in South Africa, where a strategic and risk-based recovery framework is currently under consideration, at five levels<sup>18</sup>. Each one of these levels indicates what containment measures will remain in force, and which economic sectors may restart. Switzerland is another country that has announced a three-phase reactivation for progressive economic and social revitalisation<sup>19</sup>, where moving on to the next phase is conditioned to no significant increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases in the country. In France, the progressive lifting of its confinement has been proposed, by territory<sup>20</sup>. Finally, a similar approach has been taken in Spain<sup>21</sup>, where recovery has been structured into four phases, and in Italy<sup>22</sup>, which has announced a plan to move forward in three phases.

<sup>12</sup>European Commission and Council, 2020.

<sup>13</sup>Roy Choudhury, 2020.

<sup>14</sup>European Commission and Council, 2020.

<sup>15</sup>Roy Choudhury, 2020.

<sup>16</sup>European Commission, 2020.

<sup>17</sup>Management Solutions, 2020.

<sup>18</sup>Department of Health of the Republic of South Africa, 2020.

<sup>19</sup>De Montpellier, 2020.

<sup>20</sup>Gouvernement de la République Française, 2020.

<sup>21</sup>Gobierno de España. Presidencia del Gobierno, 2020.

<sup>22</sup>Governo Italiano, 2020.

## *Proposals to draw up a return plan*



## **Regulatory framework and action principles**

As a starting point, and before delving into a definition of specific action proposals, all companies need to consider both the existing legal framework and the need to constantly liaise with their local healthcare authorities. Furthermore, all companies should define an internal set of principles, under the legal framework, serving as an initial premise when examining various action proposals included in their strategy, which will prevail throughout the recovery process.

Under this regulatory framework, all companies should not only take into account any publications or press releases related to the pandemic issued by international authorities, such as WHO, but should also mainly analyse and fulfil all state as well as regional and local regulations.

Consequently, all companies should examine how such regulatory framework impacts their strategy, to particularly include the following basic fields of action (healthcare, employment and economic):

- ▶ **Healthcare management:** in order to embark on a path to resumed on-site activity it is critical to guarantee personal health and protection at the work place (reinforcing occupational health check-ups, establishing social distancing measures, minimum safety measures at job stations, regulations for serological testing and test availability, etc.).
- ▶ **Labour-related:** basic government measures seeking to protect employment against the objective sizing required to cover demand in this new context (e.g. rules on collective dismissal proceedings (whether or not temporary), recoverable remunerated leave or shorter working hours, amongst others).
- ▶ **Economic scope:** all companies should consider how their business will be affected by the measures announced to fight the economic impact (moratorium in the payment of mortgage debt, public aid, facility lines for small and medium enterprises, liquidity injections, etc.).

Another relevant information channel for companies will be communications with the healthcare authorities. Here, of importance is a relationship model that allows each company to continuously liaise with such authorities in order to guarantee that the plan is deployed in the terms and conditions agreed, and to gradually adjust it when new measures and/or recommendations come to light that may be relevant to corporate activity.

Finally, given the risks existing when designing and implementing a reactivation strategy, as well as the possible existence of multiple and (occasionally) contradictory objective– e.g. protecting health vs. greater employment protection by returning to full-time activity, Management should define a framework with fundamental (and prioritised) values around which the plan will be managed and implemented. Likewise, criteria should be established with which to set such principles in terms of reputation, health, safety, cost/benefit ratio, process criticality, etc.

These principles should be consolidated in a guide and used as a reference in decision-making.

Some examples of these possible reactivation values or principles are shown below:

- ▶ First and foremost, to guarantee occupational health and safety.
- ▶ To scrupulously fulfil current regulations and ensure full compliance with all legal terms for reactivation, providing adequate conditions to do so.
- ▶ To ensure continued operations and guarantee the resilience of critical processes.
- ▶ To encourage empathetic employee leadership, offering an objective and fair response to all petitions and concerns, and analysing individual circumstances.
- ▶ To promote transparency and an open culture in decision-making.

## Drafting a reactivation plan

The first step to design a reactivation plan is to consider the possible scenarios that may appear and their consequent impact, thereby defining strategies to simultaneously use on-site models and teleworking. Furthermore, horizontal action plans are necessary, i.e. ensuring that adequate means and logistics are in place to implement the strategy defined, whilst adequately governing the process.

Consequently, a reactivation plan will be arranged around three cornerstones:

- ▶ **Governance framework:** a review of the governance defined for the initial phase in the pandemic, in order to incorporate a strategic and operative view for the reactivation, establishing coordination channels to ensure that the plan is put into practice.
- ▶ **Progressive recovery impact and strategies:** detailed definition of the reactivation strategy, based on its various components (geographies - considering epidemiological criteria; products and services - considering demand; and processes - considering operation in the remote-work mode). Three types of analysis will be sequentially carried out in this regard:
  - Drawing up scenarios under different hypotheses, evaluating any associated impact and considering any risks arising during the process.
  - Prioritisation of processes, services and geographical areas, for consideration in the recovery phases.
  - Definition of a reactivation strategy per se, for each

process and geographical area unit, following the prioritisation completed in the previous step.

- ▶ **Horizontal action plans:** drawing up action plans for the return of employees, in order to ensure that all human, material, technical and logistic resources are available, guaranteeing that the recovery process plan is adequately implemented and minimising any potential risks that may arise during the process.

### Governance model

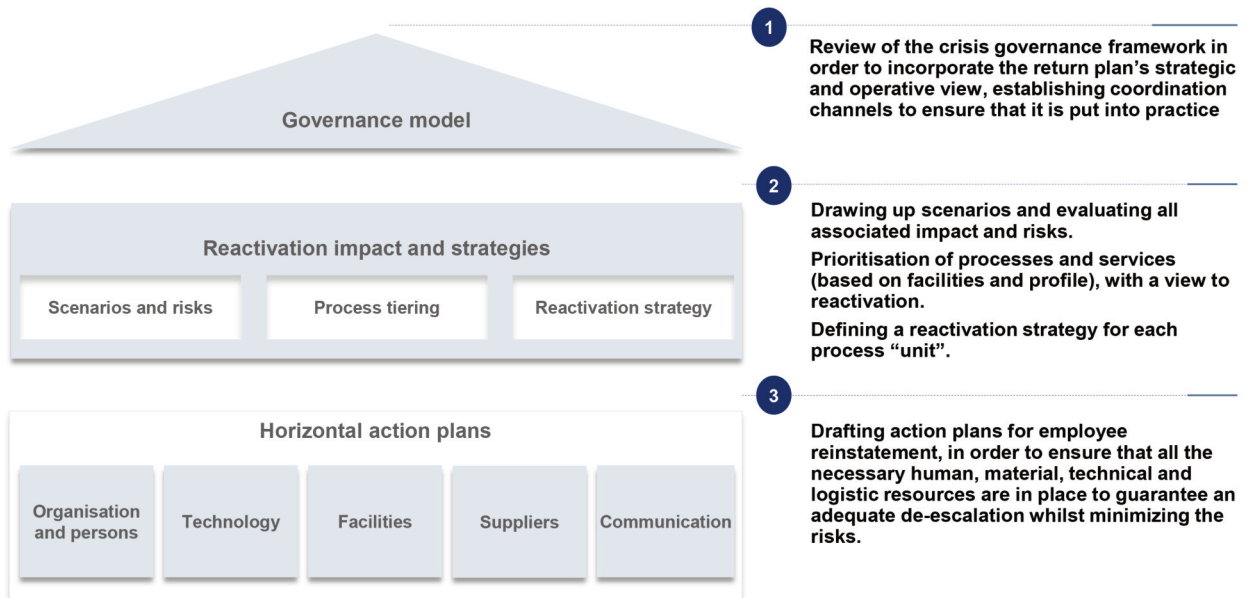
Any reactivation plan should begin by reviewing the governance framework defined at the start of the crisis, in order to include the return plan's strategic and operative view, establishing coordination channels to ensure that the plan is adequately applied throughout the company.

As a result, it may be necessary to create a new specific "Return Panel", to be incorporated into the governance model to handle the global crisis; another option is to ensure that the existing governance model incorporates this view in order for the reactivation plan to be implemented in a coordinated way.

In either case (a specific panel or integration into existing panels), a series of basic functions have been identified (which may change depending on the type of company):

- ▶ To put forward recovery scenarios, based on healthcare, business and economic variables.
- ▶ To evaluate the risks inherent to each potential reactivation strategy.

Figure 1: reactivation plan components



Source: Management Solutions.

- ▶ To define a reactivation strategy (determining the on-site/on-line combination applicable at each phase).
- ▶ To define strategies for “go-back” contingencies derived from healthcare instructions or internal outbreaks.
- ▶ To coordinate the necessary action plans with horizontal panels, for the strategy established at each phase.
- ▶ To receive feedback from horizontal and operational panels in order to adjust or redirect the reactivation strategy.
- ▶ To keep the Crisis Committee informed about activity development and performance of the reactivation strategy at all times.

This is why prior spreading of the virus will be considered, as well as the healthcare system’s capacity by geographical area, the regulatory and political framework, and the economic-financial scenario (e.g. debt moratorium and public aid).

When estimating the impact on demand, the performance of main client segments should be taken as a reference, not only based on their current situation but also on likely future scenarios, given that this will directly condition the company’s own reactivation.

In addition, further to the scenarios raised, the company’s forecasts and predictive models should be adjusted (e.g. default, provisions model, balance sheet estimates or liquidity management).

Finally, both the impact on the company derived from new scenarios, and any potential risks that may arise throughout the development process of the reactivation plan itself, should be evaluated. These risks include the following: new outbreaks and possible “steps back”, infections amongst the employees themselves, civil liability claims based on reduced occupational health, a breach of current employment or healthcare regulations, reputational risk derived from inadequately handling the recovery or a halt in critical processes and services.

### Evaluation of scenarios and definition of return strategies

In order to establish the most adequate reactivation strategy, possible business scenarios need to be evaluated, as well as any associated impact and risks; the company’s processes and services should also be prioritised according to a series of defined variables (e.g. criticality, teleworking during the crisis, rate of new cases by geographical area, etc.).

### Generation of scenarios and risk evaluation

Companies are recommended to present new business scenarios –impact on production and demand and their activity’s potential for recovery– under different hypotheses based on the length of each phase established by the government to contain the virus, and the post-recovery market situation expected.

### Prioritised processes

The main action, used to execute all recovery strategies, involves classifying and prioritising the company’s processes and services according to various criteria; amongst these, it is recommended to at least analyse each geographical area - considering epidemiological criteria, process or service

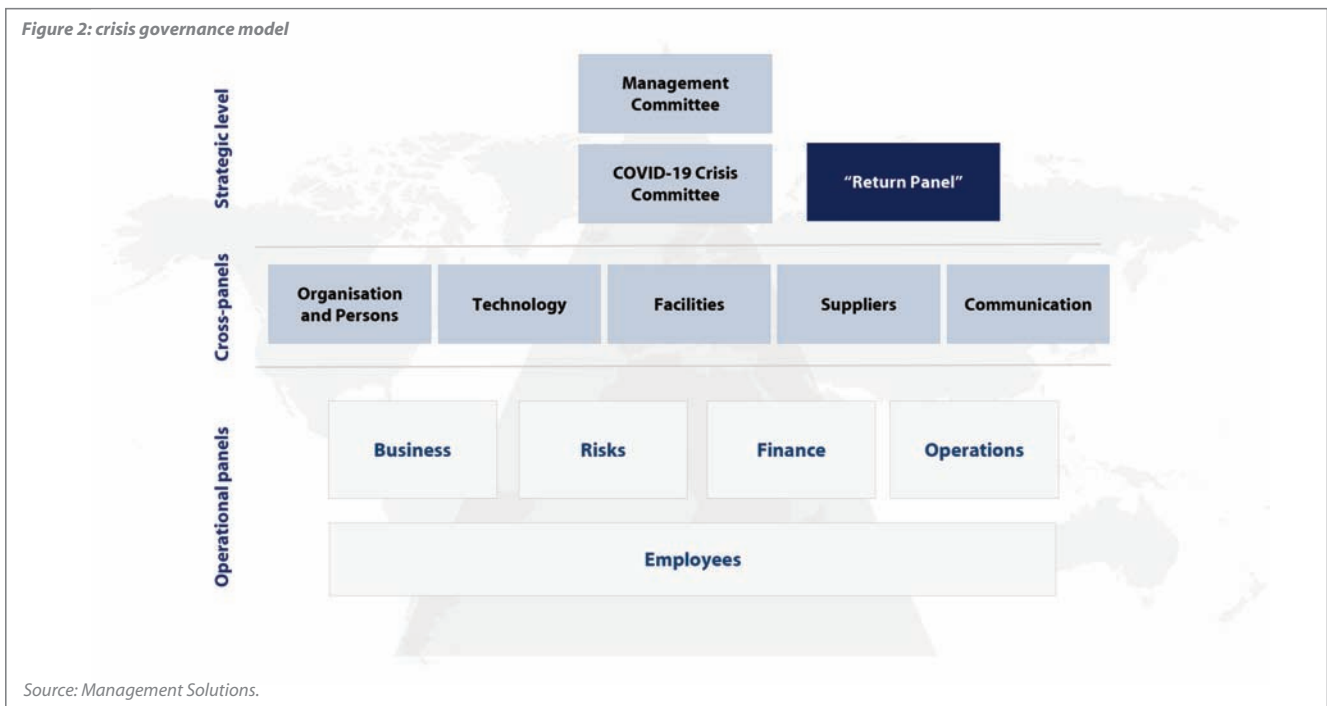
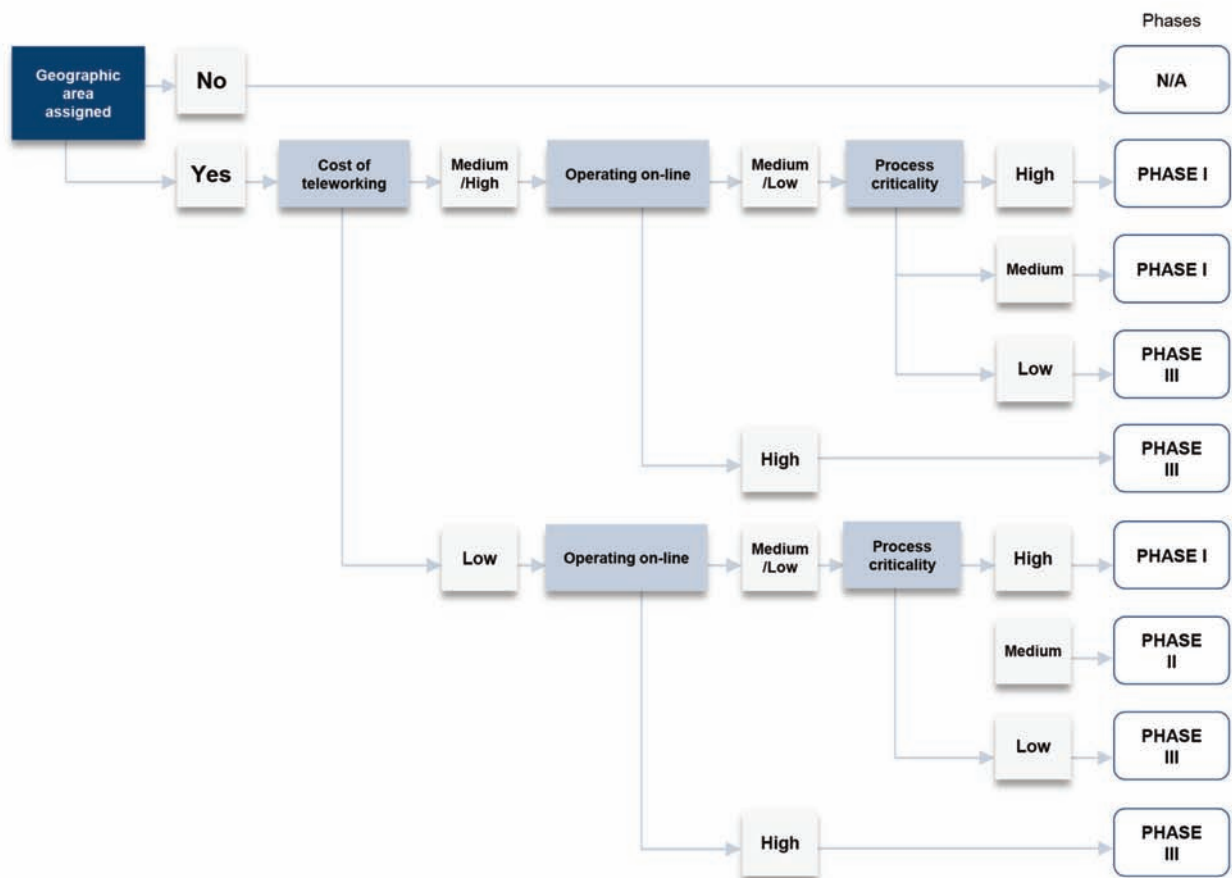


Figure 3: reactivation strategy illustrated



Source: Management Solutions.

criticality, the level of adaptation and performance of the teleworking model, the model's degree of safety or stability (e.g. in terms of technological safety) and all associated costs.

In order to uphold the prioritised processes and services, and to guarantee the necessary resources to carry out various phases in the plan, it will be necessary to evaluate the capacities required by each horizontal cornerstone (organisation and persons, technology, facilities, suppliers and communication), as will be analysed in later sections.

**Strategy definition**

Once the foregoing issues have been evaluated (scenarios, risks and prioritisation), companies will be in a position to choose the best reactivation strategy for them by defining a set of lines of action, the outcome of which will be presented as a roadmap. These lines of action should thoroughly examine the following, amongst other issues:

- ▶ Reactivation phases and times.

- ▶ Working model (on-site, remotely or a combination of both).
- ▶ Flexible action and execution plans in a possible go-back scenario.
- ▶ Post-reactivation environment (approach to the pre-crisis situation vs. evaluation towards a to-be model).

The roadmap agreed upon should also gather the measures agreed for each cross-plan, in order to ensure that the necessary action is taken for adequate organisation and logistics, and to guarantee that the necessary resources are in place.

Finally, in order to guarantee adequate control of the strategy defined, reporting to the crisis governance committees is recommended, in order to supervise and continuously evaluate the plan throughout the reactivation process.

## Horizontal reactivation plans

The aim of horizontal plans is to ensure that the human, technological and material resources available are sufficient to achieve any defined reactivation strategy, providing both an internal and external communication flow to adequately inform of any steps taken.

The units covered by various horizontal action plans are described below.

### Organisation and persons

A reactivation strategy requires an adequate combination of remote and on-site work. To do this, companies must constantly monitor their staff's state of health and degree of performance, depending on the work plan established.

The following lines of action in this area are as follows:

- ▶ An initial evaluation of the entire staff's state of health. In general, this will involve completing questionnaires drawn up by the company's occupational medicine service. Such questionnaires will identify any risk factors, such as a prior COVID-19 diagnosis, if symptoms have become evident in the last 14 days, if the employee was in contact with anyone in either of the foregoing situations, or if the employee is subject to risk factors (vulnerable groups). These health data will be gathered in strict compliance with local data protection regulations.
- ▶ Implementing methodologies in order to continuously evaluate individual health, such as a daily record of no symptoms or taking of an employee's temperature, and the company's request for and completion of serological tests.

Furthermore, a process must be defined to obtain such health data depending on the source:

- medical centres;
- the company itself; or
- the employee's home.

- ▶ A high degree of involvement on the part of the occupational medicine service in order to conduct a case-by-case review of actual or potential infections, beyond the company's guidelines, thus providing the employee with more accurate instructions further to healthcare criteria based on his/her personal and family situation.
- ▶ Establishing a decision-making process in order to reinstate various groups into the on-site model at each phase, following previously prioritised processes and the criteria to exclude employee groups, where the following will prevail:
  - prior conditions;
  - the worker's age;
  - his/her personal situation (e.g. dependent persons under his/her care); or
  - commuting means available.
- ▶ Fixing an organisational strategy that the company will follow during the recovery process, in order to reduce any risks related to on-site activity. This should include the possibility of flexible working hours, alternate work days or uninterrupted schedules to guarantee workers' health through physical and temporal distancing.
- ▶ Handling of any potential staff inequalities as a result of the organisational strategy (employee groups requested to return to on-site work over those working remotely), consequently liaising and negotiating with the workers' representatives.





- ▶ Monitoring and managing any exceptions or incidents that may arise as the workforce is reinstated (e.g. due to employee concerns, difficulties in making it compatible with family commitments, etc.).
- ▶ Defining and reviewing organisational sizing strategies at each phase of the return process. During execution of the plan, companies should consider measures previously taken, such as temporary or permanent collective dismissal proceedings, or flexible employment contracts and working hours in order to adapt to the recovery situation at the time.
- ▶ Reviewing internal policies and procedures related to occupational health and performance (trips, commuting, off-site training, etc.), in order to adjust them to the current

situation in which remote and on-site employment co-exist, resulting in new protocols and good practice guides.

- ▶ Finally, companies should review their insurance coverage (to particularly include health and civil liability policies), in order to adapt to the current circumstances.

### Technology

A technology plan should determine which requirements are linked to specific solutions for return plan management and process back-up stability, as well as system and process requirements to support the new business management needs.

Consequently, the following lines of action should be followed:

- ▶ Stabilisation of the teleworking model, rendering it compatible with on-site work, by:
  - defining stabilisation and resilience measures in communications and the necessary technological and data infrastructures;
  - reinforcing equipment and communication safety, through teleworking protocols; and
  - reviewing the technological reactivation strategy, contemplating the possibility of frequent changes being made to the work model.
- ▶ Adaptation of systems and processes derived from changes in regulatory requirements and/or management needs, as a consequence of the pandemic (customisation, new developments) and governmental measures, such as debt moratorium and recovery processes and the impact of the latter on the organization in solvency and liquidity terms.

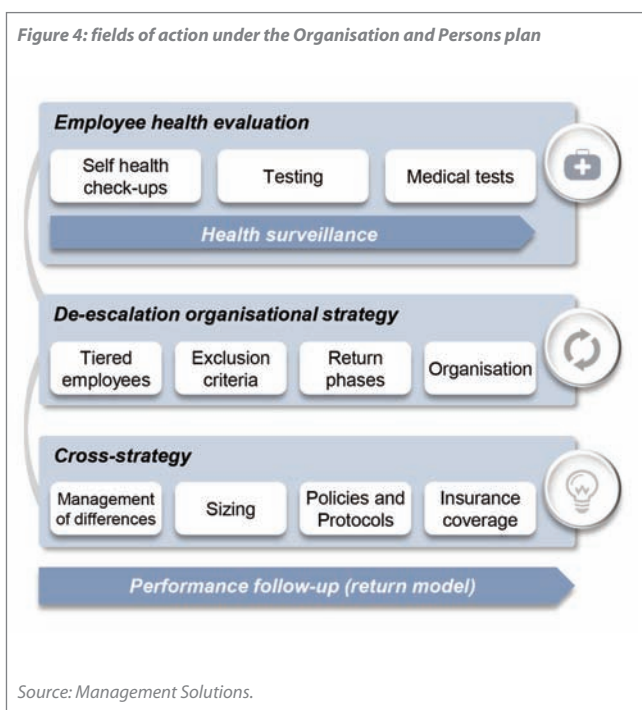




Figure 5: areas of action of the Technology plan

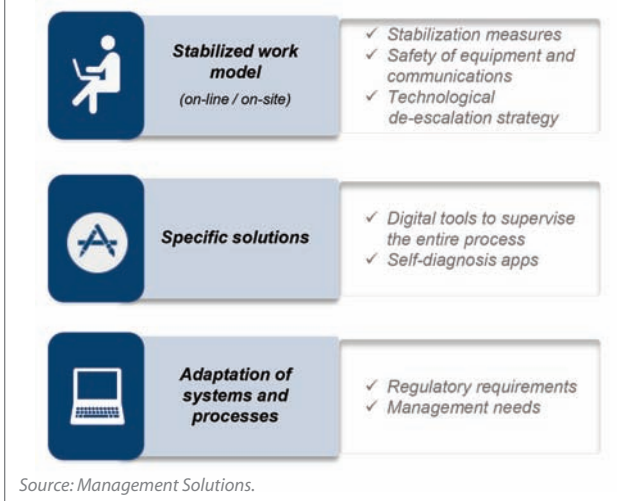
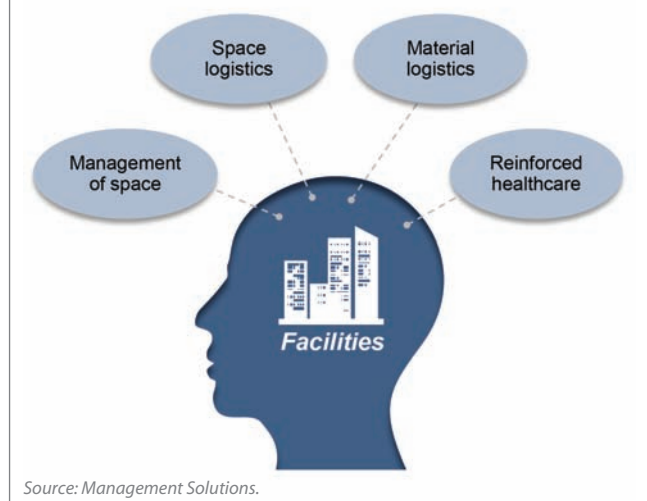


Figure 6: areas of action of the Facilities plan



- ▶ Deployment of specific solutions and apps (belonging to the company or third parties) in order to formalise and facilitate employee self-diagnosis, offering the company real-time information on its workers' health, providing employee guides of conduct and speedily issuing instructions and circulars, establishing "passports" to authorise employee access depending on current health, automatic alert functions for employees in close contact with another infected worker, geolocation functions upon self-diagnosis, etc.

## Facilities

The management of space in terms of safety and health measures is essential to enable a return to on-site work. Consequently, the facilities plan should guarantee the management of space in terms of safety and comply with health measures decreed by the authorities, in addition to those deemed adequate by the company's Management.

The lines of action to be taken in relation to facilities revolve around the following four pillars:

- ▶ Management of the necessary space based on prioritised processes and services, covering:
  - Central Services buildings;
  - sales offices and premises; and
  - common areas in any set of buildings, such as meeting rooms, dining rooms, lifts, toilets, car sharing, etc.
- ▶ Evaluation and determination of the necessary safety measures to lay out the space through:
  - physical distancing;
  - reduced capacity;
  - access control;

- greater ventilation; and
- deactivation of non-essential shared areas (e.g. dining rooms). In addition, if necessary, companies may require that space be reassigned or adjusted.

- ▶ Verification of adequate logistic chains in order to provide employees with all the necessary quality material (gloves, hydroalcoholic sanitizers, face masks, face screens, protective eyeglasses, etc.) in order to fulfil healthcare measures.
- ▶ Reinforcement of healthcare measures, focusing on the review of protocols for the regular cleaning and disinfection of facilities, to particularly include common areas.

## Suppliers

In order to prioritise employee protection, companies should approach supplier reinstatement with the same stringency and care taken with their own workers.

The following lines of action (among others) should be taken, in relation to suppliers:

- ▶ Defining a detailed plan for supplier reinstatement, focusing on:
  - the prioritisation of critical processes and services, whether or not provided on the premises;
  - a review of any new needs arising further to action taken in the return plan;
  - the selection of new critical suppliers (healthcare material, cleaning, transportation, etc.); and
  - an analysis of possible breaks in the value chain, identifying the causes and possible solutions.

- ▶ Communication to suppliers of the organization’s return plan so that they may understand its impact on their activities, requesting the supplier’s own return plan for analysis. Furthermore, any compulsory healthcare and safety measures should be coordinated with suppliers, particularly when this involves contact with company employees.
- ▶ Continuous supervision of supply chain stability and Service Level Agreements (SLAs), defining steps to take in any potential incidents.
- ▶ Finally, the company must monitor its suppliers’ solvency and liquidity in order to guarantee service continuity and, in certain cases, support solvent providers with specific liquidity problems by taking action such as advancing payments.

### Communication

In the current crisis, establishing an appropriate communication strategy with employees and the market is the key to infuse trust and adequately manage all phases of the return plan.

In order to achieve the foregoing, a horizontal plan should establish various lines of action for internal (employee) and external (market and authorities) communication, such as the ones described below:

### Internal communication

- ▶ Circulation of the complete return plan, to include: phases established, health & safety measures, and any other cross-actions contemplated.
- ▶ Development of a continuous communication plan in order to ensure employee peace of mind, issuing memos on the surrounding situation and the company, and any progress made in the return plan itself.
- ▶ Defining indicators to measure compliance with healthcare protocols, drawing up a model for incident escalation and specifically focusing on those related to health.

### External communication

- ▶ Establishing a communication channel for constant contact with the authorities, to particularly include healthcare institutions and the regulators of each organization’s business sector.
- ▶ Establishing a customer communication strategy that ensures transparency and focuses on explaining the organization’s reactivation strategy (e.g. new on-site channels that are being enabled) as well as the special protection and hygiene measures adopted, in order to provide a feeling of security in consumers towards the organization’s products and services.



Figure 7: areas of action of the Suppliers plan



Source: Management Solutions.

- ▶ Defining a communication strategy to guarantee transparency, defining communication channels (social network communication, media presence) and the contents communicated.
- ▶ Establishing transparent communication, of market value, such as memos, news, CSR measures adopted, etc.
- ▶ Informing clients of all measures adopted through the reactivation plan, of interest to them, to include the current status of any services provided or safety measures established.

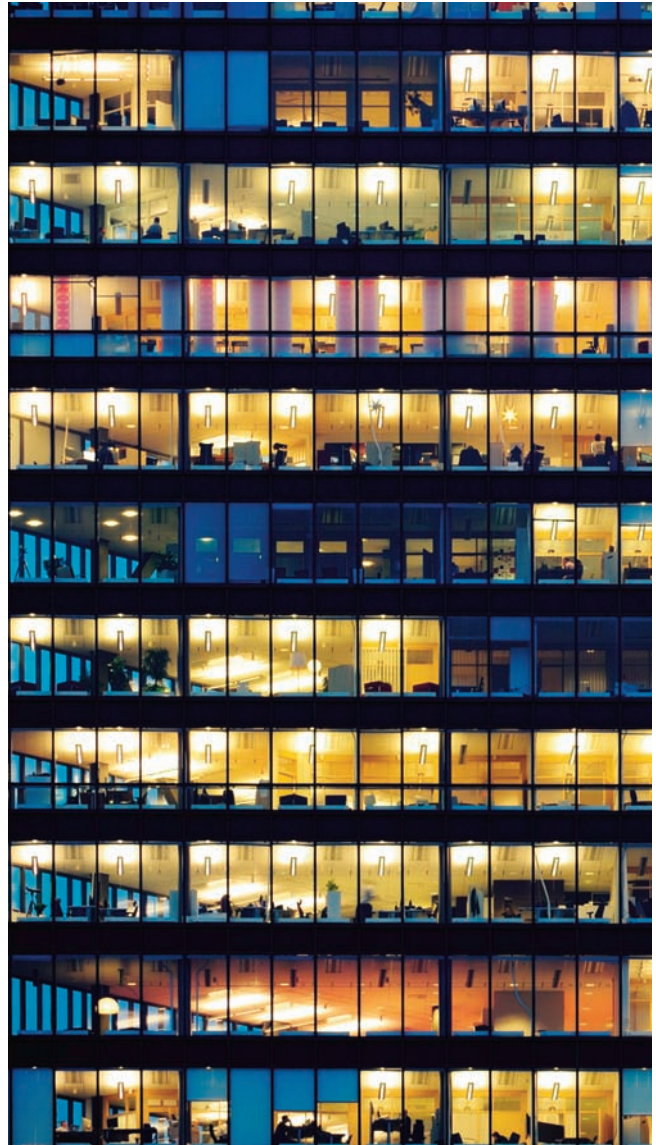
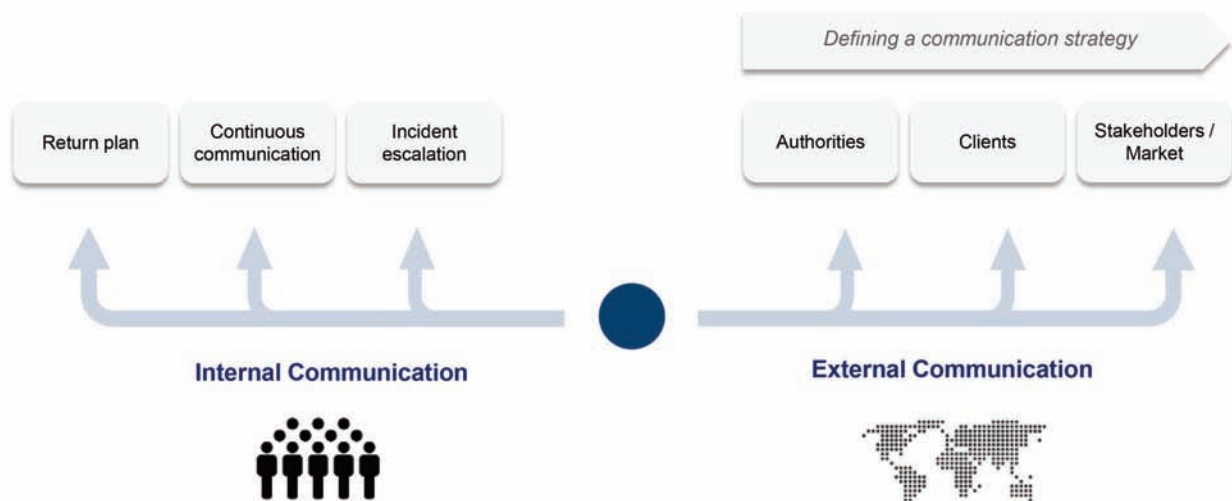


Figure 8: areas of action of the Communication plan



## *Final thoughts*



A common thought is that the management of any recovery process, both for governments and for society in general, entails greater risks and significantly higher management difficulty. Its success will largely depend on citizenry maturity and the responsibility of economic agents, in addition to the scientific community's effort to find a cure, when gradually recovering the freedom of movement.

Each company's reactivation strategy will specifically be targeted at the types of products or services it provides and the level of risk officially perceived for such activity (depending on its exposure to social contact).

Furthermore, the rate of this recovery will depend on how demand responds (including adaptation to new client expectations). In this sense, companies should consider taking action to reactivate demand, reviewing their promotion and pricing strategies and funding solvent clients experiencing liquidity difficulties.

The challenges facing companies in this phase are very relevant, insofar as employee safety should be guaranteed, as well as continued operations and financial stability (of the company and its value chain), whilst also meeting new regulatory requirements, restrictions or policies that could impact the business plan and trigger new changes.

In addition, aside from adequately handling the transition, all organisations should visualise the features of their new environment, in order to adapt to likely significant changes, e.g. how healthcare is perceived, activity development and household consumer use, digital use, etc.) which, as a consequence of the pandemic, may be here to stay.

Some of the main issues to be reviewed by each company, in order to ensure an adequate transformation of their business model in line with this future environment (even after the pandemic is under control), are the following:

#### **Organisation and persons:**

- ▶ All companies should evaluate teleworking in terms of productivity and costs, benefits for each employee and society in general. Based on this evaluation, they should reflect on the conditions in which work should be completed remotely in order to be effective (recommended weekly deadlines, physical surroundings, technological capabilities, employment framework, performance control mechanisms, etc.).
- ▶ Furthermore, all companies should evaluate their future sizing in accordance with demand expectations in a post-pandemic scenario, as well as changes observed in processes and policies (greater flexibility, review of their remuneration and social benefits model, management of employee self-sufficiency) as a result of its management.



**Technology:**

- ▶ All companies should update their project portfolio priorities in order to face a nearly inevitable budgetary restriction; as part of such prioritisation, new criteria should be taken into account (project objectives to encourage resilience or improve efficiency, alignment with new and more difficult surroundings, impact on teleworking, etc.).
- ▶ When prioritising investments, it is particularly relevant to evaluate one's technological architecture in order to adapt to surroundings offering new client preferences in its relationship model (promotion and optimisation of on-line channels and digital business model), new telematic work modes and the risk of potential new epidemics.
- ▶ A technological infrastructure's resilience in a possible new crisis, pandemic or other situation may make a company revisit its technical contingency plans and, by extension, its business continuity plans.

**Facilities:**

- ▶ All companies should review their current model and how it adapts to new working surroundings, and be ready to face new possible crises or outbreaks, weighing up the pros and cons of concentrating employees in corporate buildings, existing back-up facilities or the spatial redistribution of critical processes to avoid coinciding in the same building.

**Supplier relations:**

- ▶ All companies should reassess their outsourcing strategy, following the lessons learnt during the crisis (geographical proximity, internalisation of value chain components, identification of new critical suppliers, etc.).

- ▶ Likewise, supplier resilience should be revised; this may result in new requirements in order to adapt their business continuity plans with a view to becoming certified company suppliers.
- ▶ The lessons learnt from this pandemic may lead to cataloguing as critical some formerly non-critical suppliers (such as cleaning services and healthcare material suppliers).
- ▶ Finally, our new economic scenario will make it necessary to identify new cost reduction measures, which will possibly entail contractual renegotiation and a search for alternative suppliers.

**And finally Communication:**

- ▶ All companies should stay in touch with the relevant authorities regarding the lessons learnt to handle new healthcare crises, as a result of current events, as well as any prevention and contingency measures that need to be permanent.
- ▶ Consequently, depending on new social perceptions resulting from the pandemic, all companies should proceed to review their profile in ESG (environmental, social and governance) matters in order to ensure that they are aligned with expectations in this new environment.



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**Soledad Díaz-Noriega**

Partner at Management Solutions  
*soledad.diaz-noriega@msspain.com*

**Xavier Martínez Reina**

Partner at Management Solutions  
*xavier.martinez.reina@msspain.com*

**Estefanía Espinar García-Dorado**

Manager at Management Solutions  
*estefania.espinar@msspain.com*

**Álvaro García Alarcón**

Supervisor at Management Solutions  
*Alvaro.Garcia.Alarcon@msspain.com*

**Daniel Ramos García**

Supervisor at Management Solutions  
*daniel.ramos.garcia@msspain.com*



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