**CHART Virtual Training Forum (VTF) – Notes on Best Practices**

*Note: Updated information and resources gathered since these VTF notes were taken can be found on* [*CHART’s COVID-19 Resource Page*](https://www.chart.org/training-tools-and-resources/covid-19-resources.html)

**Furloughs & Layoffs Maintaining Contact with Furloughed Employees**

Wednesday, April 1, 2020

**Communications**

* **Emails and Mobile Numbers -** Make sure you have personal email addresses and mobile phone numbers before people are furloughed. For many companies, this is built into their payroll, LMS or other platforms, but others noted that they found out that long-term employees may not have updated contact info recently
* Team Member Facebook Page – Make sure the administrator of this page is not someone also being furloughed
* WhatsApp Threads – some companies are creating threads for each location so they can all stay in touch with each other. It helps increase transparency as visible to all
* Without coming across as self-congratulatory, make sure your employees know about the things you are doing to try and help them.
* Tone – be careful to strike the right tone. Humor is great most of the time, but in some case can appear tone-deaf when dealing with employees who are suffering through difficult times.
* Be conscious of communications between managers and furloughed employees to make sure they are not getting negative

**Professional Development & Employment**

* Provide employees information on free continuing education opportunities. If they are not working now, it is a great time for them to increase their skills to help them advance more quickly when they return to work.
  + AHLA is offering free online classes that are usually up to $700
  + NRA is offering free courses, ServSafe and educational Webinars
  + See list of other free resources on [CHART’s COVID-19 Resource Page](https://www.chart.org/training-tools-and-resources/covid-19-resources.html)
* Allow them to continue to submit for tuition reimbursement while furloughed
* Help them find temp work. Share lists of places that are hiring (supermarkets, Amazon, food delivery apps, assisted living homes, etc.). Offer to write a letter of recommendation.

**Shifting Mood**

* Although many found most furloughed employees very understanding, as they could see the empty dining rooms and hotels and understood there was no business, hard feelings can arise based around how decisions were made on who was furloughed and who was not.
* Remaining employees have a little bit of survivor’s guilt
* As situation gets worse and more drawn out, furloughed employees are likely to get less understanding if their situation is desperate