

# Better Workplace Virtual Conference

October 26–30, 2020

## Agenda

### Day 1 / October 26, 2020

#### 1:00 p.m. [Welcoming and Opening Remarks](#)

**Bryan Benjamin**, Vice-President,  
The Conference Board of Canada  
**Amanda Daoust**, Manager,  
The Conference Board of Canada

Join us as we welcome you to our first all-virtual Better Workplace Conference.

#### 1:25 p.m. [Keynote](#)

##### **Are You Prepared to Rethink How You Support Your People?**

**Stephane Grenier**, Founder and Lead Innovator,  
Mental Health Innovations  
**Steven Solomon**, Vice President, Client Management,  
Teladoc Health

Over the course of the last decade, an increasing amount of attention has been paid to workplace mental health. As business leaders and organizations began to take tangible steps towards improving how they support their people, the COVID-19 pandemic struck with little to no warning.

Workplace paradigms were disrupted overnight, requiring a complete reengineering of existing support systems and connection modalities.

Working remotely became the new norm and organizations were forced to rethink how to shape their workplaces for the future, as well as find innovative ways to hire, engage, retain, and support employees.

Throughout his entire career, Stephane has been a people leader. Over the course of the last 20 years, he has focussed exclusively on improving how organizations can better support employees struggling from mental health and/or life challenges. Now President of his own virtual company, Grenier brings tangible and pragmatic solutions to today's workplaces by blending lived accounts, riveting corporate case studies, leading-edge research and technology, all underpinned by passionate arguments.

#### 2:00 p.m. [Break](#)

#### 2:15 p.m. [Plenary Session](#)

##### **Strategy Execution: Paving a Path Toward Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplaces**

**Tiana Field-Ridley**, Implementation Specialist,  
Workplace Mental Health Opening Minds, Mental Health Commission of Canada  
**Pauline Meunier**, Training and Delivery Specialist,  
Mental Health Commission of Canada  
**Steven R. Sproule**, Manager of Health, Benefits and Retirement, Husky Energy  
**Julia Tahardi**, Disability Management Consultant,  
Health and Wellness Department, Hydro One

The evidence is mounting: Organizations must develop a mental health strategy for their employees. Even though the tools, resources, and guidelines exist to help deliver strategies, many organizations still struggle to find a way forward. For some organizations, the pandemic has forced a reset in corporate mental health initiatives. Others have found the need to push forward even more.

# Agenda

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## Day 1 / October 26, 2020 (cont'd)

The Mental Health Commission of Canada has trained hundreds of thousands of Canadians through The Working Mind and Mental Health First Aid programs. For years, they were delivered by thousands of qualified trainers to 5,000+ communities and 14,000+ organizations. And for the first time in our history, these courses are available virtually. While training is instrumental to help change the conversation, equip employees with positive coping mechanisms, and enhance healthy behaviours, it's only the beginning.

In this session we will discuss:

- Scalable efforts that are proven to reduce stigma, increase resilience, and enhance healthy and safe cultures within an organization
- How the Mental Health Commission is helping organizations implement a mental health strategy—from audits, to evaluations, to sustaining momentum
- Real-life journeys that organizations are taking to change the mental health dialogue within their workforce

2:45 p.m. [Break](#)

3:00 p.m. [Concurrent Session A1](#)

### **Before Things Go South: Monitoring New-normal Workplace Culture**

**Zorianna Hyworon**, President & CEO  
Wellness Checkpoint

**Eric Pfeiffer**, Senior Health Management  
Consultant Manulife

Organizations are being tested right now on how well they're adapting strategies, approaches, and policies to reflect current realities. And it's up to the leaders to help their organizations face adversity. How can you be sure your workforce is thriving?

In this session, Zorianna Hyworon, CEO and founder of InfoTech Inc., will provide practical take-aways on how leaders can monitor workplace culture during organizational change and uncertainty. She will explain how our "new normal" could impact work environments, and show how leaders can use data, metrics, and insights to inform policies and detect signs of workplace risks before they happen. Building on her experience working with multinational companies, Zorianna will unpack case studies and offer tools and solutions for leaders to bring back to their organizations.

3:00 p.m. [Concurrent Session A2](#)

### **Taking Action: Meeting the Growing Demand for Healthcare, Virtually**

**Steven Solomon**, Vice President, Client Management,  
Teladoc Health

**Vanessa Lycos**, Vice President, Group Product and  
Marketing, Empire Life

**Marcel Qualizza**, Assistant Director, HR Strategies  
BC Pension Corporation

How can you best support your employees from the point of recognizing a problem to providing accessible, quality healthcare? Thankfully, there are now many virtual options—something that's more important now than ever before.

Comprehensive virtual care is designed to treat the whole person—from general medical, to mental health, to complex care needs. In this session, hear how leading Canadian employers are harnessing the power of virtual care to drive greater convenience, outcomes, and value.

# Agenda

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## Day 2 / October 27, 2020

1:25 p.m. [Opening Remarks](#)

1:30 p.m. [Keynote](#)

### **How to Recognize and Confront Anti-black Racism in the Workplace**

**Camille Dundas**, Co-founder and Editor-in-Chief, ByBlacks.com

The global pandemic and the worldwide Black Lives Matter protests have sparked renewed discussion about how to achieve inclusion and belonging for Black employees in this 'new normal'. This virtual session is for corporate executives who want to go beyond public statements and root out racism from their hiring practices and workplace cultures.

With a combination of education awareness and practical discussions, this session will help leaders better appreciate and understand the range of Black experiences in the workplace and its impact on their mental well-being. This armchair discussion will touch on key topics such as:

- The secret racist history of Canada. Spoiler: we had slavery too!
- How can HR support employees who experience racism in the workplace?
- When good people do bad things: why all of us have biases and how to recognize them.
- What do I do now? Things you can do today to help make your workplace a safer space for everyone.
- Action steps leaders can take to support colleagues in allyship.

2:15 p.m. [Break](#)

2:45 p.m. [Concurrent Session B1](#)

### **Digitization and the Future of Work**

Moderator:

**Harry Sharma**, Director, Innovation and Technology, The Conference Board of Canada

Panellists:

**Ken Doyle**, Executive Director, Tech Access Canada  
**Zafer Sonmez**, Research Associate, The Conference Board of Canada

COVID-19 has expedited the adoption of digital technologies. Automation technologies will see greater adoption as a result. The two together will alter some key fundamentals of the Canadian economy. On the one hand, it will lead to productivity increases, but on the other, it will require recalibration of skills for one in 5 Canadian workers. This session presents findings of The Conference Board of Canada's latest research on the Impact of Technology on Canada's Local Economies." The presentation will be followed by a discussion among panellists on potential next steps, roles for stakeholders, and private sector involvement.

2:45 p.m. [Concurrent Session B2](#)

### **Mental Health: From Technological Innovation To Human Progress**

**Charmaine Alexander**, Senior Advisor, Disability Management, Desjardins

Mental health accounts for 30% of disability cases in Canada, but 70% of costs. And the situation may well get worse after the pandemic. Businesses and insurers must make a concerted effort to innovate across the board from prevention to treatment. But what kind of innovation are we talking about? Up until now, psychological health has been largely unreceptive to technology, but it has recently taken a giant leap forward thanks to artificial intelligence. Now it's at the heart of a lucrative market where the need to sell sometimes takes precedence over the will to cure. With this in mind, real innovation – the kind that can prevent illness and ensure a safe work environment – may come from elsewhere. This presentation will give you a behind-the-scenes look at new technologies and into the heart of organizations, where the future of mental health is unfolding.

3:30 p.m. [Adjourn](#)

# Agenda

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## Day 3 / October 28, 2020

1:25 p.m. [Opening Remarks](#)

1:30 p.m. [Keynote](#)

### **Social Connections Matter! The Employee Experience in a Post-covid Era**

**Bill Howatt**, Chief of Research, Workforce Productivity, The Conference Board of Canada

COVID-19 has changed how work is being done and how employees interact. A [recent study](#) conducted by The Conference Board of Canada and Mental Health Commission of Canada found the quality of employees' social connections matter in predicting how well they cope through difficult times.

When ignored and undealt with, the psychosocial factor of isolation can increase the risk for employees' mental harm and erode their mental health. As organizations adjust and adapt to the new normal, they must consider the importance of meaningful social connections for supporting employee's mental health and job fulfillment.

In this session, Dr. Howatt will:

- Explore the relationship between the psychosocial factor of isolation and employees' psychological health and safety in the workplace.
- Review the links between social connections gaps and mental health.
- Discuss how to measure employees' perceived isolation and loneliness in the workplace.
- Define actions employers can take to support employees in building healthy and safe social connections.

2:15 p.m. [Break](#)

2:45 p.m. [Concurrent Session C1](#)

### **Tools to Support Employee Build Resilience**

**Aida Begovic**, Director Workplace Wellbeing from Shoppers Drug Mart

**Angel Enrique**, PhD, Digital Health Scientist from SilverCloud Health

As employees return to work, join Aida Begovic (Director Workplace Wellbeing from Shoppers Drug Mart) along with Angel Enrique, PhD, Digital Health Scientist from SilverCloud Health to learn about how employers can better support their employees mental health. Their chat will walk you through some tools that are available in market to better to support your employees. Angel Enrique will talk about how digital mental health programs can support individuals to promote and maintain a positive mental health and wellbeing. He will talk through different ways users can make the most out of the platform and provide examples of free tools you can use to support those dealing with stress and help build resilience.

2:45 p.m. [Concurrent Session C2](#)

### **Emergence Leadership: Pausing, Planning and Preparing for 2021**

**Jill Birch**, Keynote speaker; leadership and team development facilitator; Author, Researcher

The next phase of the pandemic will throw out leadership challenges like we've never seen. Economic realities will begin to bite. Social distancing will create cultural wedges in the workplace. New competencies will be needed and along with them, practices to help navigate what's ahead. Relational leadership is a new way to think about how we lead that is meant for these times. As a relational leader, you'll harness emergent, dynamic and co-created energy that will help you see the big picture faster, accelerating performance. In this presentation, we'll explore how pausing, planning and preparing will keep you moving with agility and confidence. You'll leave the session armed with the 7 key questions to ask of yourself as you prepare for a turbulent 2021.

Participants will learn:

- How to make the leap onto relational leadership's seven stepping stones
- How to harness multiple perspectives to ignite commitment, trust and accountability
- How to develop pause, plan and prepare, enabling you to find more room to maneuver and attain much needed breathing space

3:30 p.m. [Adjourn](#)

# Agenda

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## Day 4 / October 29, 2020

1:25 p.m. [Opening Remarks](#)

1:30 p.m. [Keynote](#)

### **Change Has Changed: Supporting Talent in a World of Perpetual Change**

**Liane Davey**, Ph.D, Author, Keynote Speaker

Leaders have always been expected to manage change. But this is different. Change has changed. Reality is shifting daily, if not hourly, and there are no orderly phases or playbooks to get us through. In these unprecedented times, even the best employees will struggle to stay productive. While we can't stop the current tsunami, we do have the power to create calm within the storm.

In this virtual session, Liane Davey equips leaders with the tools needed to deliver even in the midst of chaos. With the right mindset and language, leaders will be able to surface and move through resistance and drama rather than getting stuck in it. Most importantly, Davey will share strategies you need right now, so you have the energy, patience, and endurance to be there for your employees throughout this ordeal.

2:15 p.m. [Break](#)

2:45 p.m. [Concurrent Session D1](#)

### **Returning After Workplace Injury or Illness – What are the Impacts of COVID-19?**

**Samira Jarjoura**, Vice President, Sales & Consulting, ReedGroup Canada

**Melissa O'Dell-Reinhardt**, Paralegal, ReedGroup Canada

**Nicole Desautels**, Workers' Compensation Case Manager, ReedGroup Canada

In this session, REED GROUP will discuss the implications the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the return-to-work process and its impacts on Canadian employers and their employees. Engage in this discussion that explores how employers can adjust their return-to-work processes in the 'new normal' and walk away with practical tips and ideas on how to navigate this landscape as we consider the future of work.

This session will explore the following questions:

- What are the impacts of COVID-19 as it relates to return-to-work and claim management process?
- How can employers better support their employees in their return from a workplace injury and/or illness?
- What are other key considerations as we look to the future of work and how can employers navigate them?

2:45 p.m. [Concurrent Session D2](#)

### **Social and Emotional Skills In a Digital Era**

**Jamelle Lindo**, Emotional Intelligence Leadership Coach, Paradigm People Development Inc.

As leaders and professionals, we have suddenly found ourselves in the midst of a completely unprecedented pandemic, which has accelerated our transition to digital workspaces and remote technology systems. In this new world, we are more physically distant than ever, yet our need for connection and collaboration has never been greater. Leaders all around the world have been tasked with the challenge of connecting their people virtually and establishing new inroads to digital transformation. To achieve success, leaders will have to understand how to leverage emotional intelligence in a virtual space, which is even more challenging than leveraging these critical leadership skills face-to-face. This session will outline what emotional intelligence is, why it matters today more than ever, and how leaders and professionals can leverage this skill in digital landscapes to cultivate more effective team collaboration.

3:30 p.m. [Adjourn](#)

# Agenda

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## Day 5 / October 30, 2020

1:25 p.m. [Opening Remarks](#)

1:30 p.m. [Plenary Session](#)

### **Reimagining our Workplaces: The Leader's Most Sacred Trust**

Moderator:

**Jill Birch**, Keynote speaker; leadership and team development facilitator; Author, Researcher

Speakers:

**Diane Brisebois**, President & CEO of Retail Council of Canada

**Wes Hall**, Executive Chairman, KSS Group of Companies  
**Kunal Gupta**, CEO, Polar Inc.

A key insight into workplaces doing well during the pandemic is how quickly they were able to pivot. Developing capabilities to transform ways of working together means embracing new ways to learn, to empower and generate a culture of trust. This means understanding how change has changed and acquiring new skills to become ever more innovative and agile. How leaders respond in the coming months will make the crucial difference in this time of fragility.

This panel discussion will explore the experiences of three leaders who will share their perspectives and lessons learned during the pandemic, how their leadership has changed and how they are supporting equity, diversity and inclusion to foster greater collaboration. Our panel will look not only at best, but next practices, sharing advice to support your leadership in the development of stronger, connective workplaces.

2:15 p.m. [Break](#)

2:45 p.m. [Keynote](#)

### **THINK DO SAY: The Organizational Operating System to Create Better Workplaces**

**Ron Tite**, Purpose-Driven Leadership and Marketing Expert, Founder of Church+State content marketing agency

Contrary to popular belief, there's no seasonality to leadership. While inputs and outputs may change in response to different cultural trends, varied economic indicators, or even (once a century), the societal effects of a global pandemic, the operating system that governs them shouldn't change.

What creates better workplaces has very little to do with foosball tables, holiday parties, or Wednesday afternoon Zoom Trivia Challenges where Mary is almost guaranteed to begin on mute. Interestingly, what helps create better workplaces is the same organizational operating system that creates better-performing organizations and better-performing people.

After all, organizations don't deliver results, growth, or even great culture. People do. And it's those people who need to be access and be running the same operating system. Better workplaces are created when the organization and its people align what they think, what they do, and what they say.

We are grounded by our purpose (the THINK part). We are defined by our actions (the DO part). And both are adopted by our colleagues, clients, and partners through our communications (the SAY part).

To create better workplaces, we should probably create amazing learning places, right? Done. This humorous and insightful session will have you laughing and learning whether you're in your office or in your home. Just make your bed, okay?

3:00 p.m. [Closing Remarks](#)