

BUSINESS AS IT COULD BE
GUIDE TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR POST COVID-19 REOPENING & ONGOING RESILIENCY

INTRODUCTION:

Knowing that owners of small businesses in San Francisco are under great pressure to deal with the multiple impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, a group of San Francisco-based small business advocates (see bios below) involved in small business management consulting, education, policymaking, communications, and government agency administration have joined forces to help businesses navigate these trying times while also planning for a healthier, more sustainable, more resilient post-COVID future. The effort, called *Business As It Could Be*, is guided by the work of [The World As It Could Be Human Rights Education Program](#) (TWAICB), which brings attention to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and its continuing relevance to further equality, justice, and dignity for all people.

We believe that as challenging as it is right now for business owners, their employees, and the communities they serve, we have a rare opportunity to take steps to not only re-open safely, but also to proactively identify ways to position businesses to be more successful and viable over the long term, while also building a business environment that supports a more vibrant, healthier community for everyone.

BUSINESS AS IT COULD BE CONCEPT:

- Even before the COVID-19 crisis, the operating environment for small businesses was changing. High rents, changing consumer behavior, and competition from online retailers presented major challenges, as seen by the many and growing number of empty storefronts in commercial neighborhoods.
- COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place requirements severely impacted small business sales and growth, and—even with the planned re-opening of public activity—the way in which small businesses operate will have to evolve quickly meet the needs of maintaining public safety when people shop or go out for food and entertainment.
- While these conditions present major challenges, they also provide an opportunity to reset how businesses can thrive in what we now know is an ever-changing world.
- *Business As It Could Be* is a framework to help small business owners think and lead strategically, both in the short term (how to re-open following Shelter-in-Place) and in the long term, as they explore new opportunities to generate revenue and revitalize their respective communities.

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QUESTIONS TO GUIDE STRATEGIC THINKING AMID A QUICKLY-CHANGING ENVIRONMENT:

We have developed the following questions that are geared to helping business owners and leaders to think through next steps as they emerge from the crisis while also re-imagining their relevancy and sustainability over the long term:

1. What resources and funds do you need now to remain in business for another 6 months as you prepare for and initiate re-entry from the Shelter-in-Place requirements?
 - What are possible sources of these resources and funds?
2. What do you think your clients and customers need from you in order to continue to patronize your business?
3. What new policies and physical changes do you need to put into place to re-open safely and meet your customer's current needs?
 - What resources do you need to make this happen?
4. Are there things about your business you would want to change, even without the COVID-19 crisis?
 - What opportunity does the current situation present to support the implementation of these changes?
5. Are there new business model(s) or product innovations you can design and develop to change the way your business operates so you can implement the opportunities you identified above?
6. Who else is involved in supporting the successful, day-to-day operation of your business (e.g., suppliers) who can be called upon to support you as you reopen your business and retool for a stronger future?
 - What changes are needed from these entities, or what alternatives are needed to provide your ongoing supply requirements?
7. Are there opportunities to create more environmentally sustainable practices in your business and those of your suppliers as you consider your re-entry options?
8. How can your business demonstrate inclusivity?
9. What are possible new business opportunities for you that could arise from this situation?
10. What do you need to know more about in order to implement your ideas, such as regulations that relate to your ideas?
11. Do you know who to get help from? Who are your circles of support?

We recommend that business advocacy organizations help circulate the questions outlined above to their members, and to the extent possible, provide direct support in helping business owners think through their answers. We also suggest the following questions for business organization leaders, to help them speak to policymakers and funders about the needs of their constituents:

1. How are the businesses in your network uniquely affected by this situation?
2. What do you want policymakers and funders to know?

PARTICIPANTS IN BUSINESS AS IT COULD BE: (See Bios on following pages)

Mark Herbert
Heidi Pickman

Monika Hudson
Mark Quinn

Sandy Sohcot
Ken Stram

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Mark Herbert, Vice President, California, Small Business Majority

Mark Herbert directs Small Business Majority's operations throughout California. As Vice President, California, Mark oversees policy, outreach and development efforts across the state while also directing work on responsible small business lending issues nationwide. Mark was appointed to the California Small Business & Innovative Startups Recovery Working Group, which will advise and support the small business priorities of the Governor's Jobs and Economic Recovery Task Force.

Previously, Mark served as the organization's California Director, Project Manager and Outreach Manager in California where he developed strong relationships with small business owners and business organizations across the state. Prior to joining the organization more than six years ago, he worked for state and federal lawmakers where he directed business operations and built relationships with small business owners and key stakeholders as they pertained to public policy issues. An entrepreneur himself, Mark runs a small consulting business specializing in volunteer management and organizational capacity building. He also serves on the advisory boards for both the Northern California and the San Diego and Imperial Valley Small Business Development Centers networks, which oversee a total of 22 SBDCs in California, serves on Covered California's Marketing, Outreach and Enrollment Advisory Group and serves on the board for the California Association for Micro Enterprise Opportunity (CAMEO).

Monika Hudson, EdD, DM, Director of University of San Francisco's Gellert Family Business Center

Dr. Monika Hudson is an associate professor at the University of San Francisco and teaches entrepreneurship, organizational behavior and public administration on both the graduate and undergraduate levels. She directs USF's Gellert Family Business Center, which promotes and supports family firms in the SF Bay Area. Dr. Hudson's research interests include entrepreneurship (with a focus on family-owned enterprises), identity and behavior and the strategic enactment of the same within the private, public and nonprofit sectors.

Dr. Hudson received her undergraduate degrees from Northwestern University; her master of business administration from the University of San Francisco; her doctor of management from Case Western Reserve University, Ohio; and recently, her doctor of education from University of San Francisco. A 2017-18 Fulbright Scholar, she is currently conducting entrepreneurship research in Jinan, China; Cali, Colombia and other South American countries.

Heidi Pickman, Vice President, Programs and Policy, CAMEO

Heidi Pickman joined CAMEO in 2011 to develop and manage CAMEO's communication and advocacy activities and had increasingly taken on more responsibility. She continues to lead the communications and advocacy strategies, while adding programming and membership engagement to her portfolio. Before joining CAMEO, she directed earned media activities for two California ballot initiatives and campaigned successfully to include clean energy provisions in the economic stimulus package of 2009. In her former career as a radio journalist, she produced national public radio programs including *Weekend America* and *Marketplace Morning Report*. She has a B.A. and M.A. in Economics from Tufts University and a C. Phil. in Economics from UCLA.

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Mark Quinn, Senior Advisor, CAMEO

Mark Quinn has had a 40+ year career in public service supporting community economic development and small and microbusiness development. Currently, Mark serves as a Senior Advisor at CAMEO on an Intergovernmental Personnel Agreement on detail from his position with the SBA. Quinn has worked for the U.S. Small Business Administration in several capacities, both in San Francisco and Washington. He served as SBA District Director for 25 years, covering Northern California with responsibilities for oversight of SBA Lending totaling over \$1 Billion annually and the network of SBA resource partners including SCORE Chapters, Small Business Development Centers, Women Business Centers and SBA Microlenders. Quinn previously served in Washington as the SBA Deputy Associate Administrator for Entrepreneurial Development responsible for SBA's national Resource Partner oversight. Prior to SBA Quinn held positions at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Philadelphia and San Francisco as Regional Economist and Economic Development Specialist.

Sandy Sohcot, Director, The World As It Could Be Human Rights Education Program (TWAICB) and Principal, Sohcot Consulting

Sandy is Director of TWAICB, a program she originated at the Rex Foundation in 2006, during her 2001-2013 tenure there as Executive Director. Since 2014, TWAICB has been a program of the Alameda County Deputy Sheriffs' Activities League (DSAL). With an M.B.A. in finance, Sandy has worked on a managerial level since 1976, founding Sohcot Consulting in 1984. As Principal of Sohcot Consulting, Sandy provides planning, control and project management expertise to businesses and not-for-profit organizations across a wide range of industries and service sectors. Sandy has been an active participant in the small business and women's communities of San Francisco. She is past president of the San Francisco Small Business Network, Co-Founder of the Women's Leadership Alliance, and past president of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners. In July 1999, the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women honored Sandy with their *Women Who Make a Difference Award*. Sandy served as a Commissioner on the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, appointed by Mayor Gavin Newsom in March 2004, and completing her term in September 2008. Sandy holds a California Lifetime Teaching Credential.

Ken Stram, 2Bridge Communications

Ken Stram is the president and founder of 2Bridge Communications, a full-service strategic communications firm. Ken has more than 20 years of experience working with small businesses, including serving as the Associate Administrator for Field Operations at the U.S. Small Business Administration and creating the world's first small business and economic development program for the LGBTQ community. Learn more at www.2bridgepr.com.