



Deployment: WFH

Each workday, a member of our vacated Washington office writes a letter to colleagues working from home, a tradition that has spread to several Brunswick offices. These notes often combine inspiration, philosophy and humor with favorite books, recipes and TV shows. Reprinted here is a contribution, penned in April, from a colleague for whom lockdown once meant month after month in a submarine. In a 37-year career with the US Navy, Mike Rogers rose to the rank of Four-Star Admiral, ultimately serving as Commander of the US Cyber Command, leading teams that stopped the most destructive cybercriminals in the world, from North Korean hackers to Russian saboteurs. He served as Director of the National Security Agency, the largest US intelligence agency, and as Chief of the Central Security Service. Now a Senior Advisor in Brunswick's Washington, DC office, Admiral Rogers offers counsel on cyber security, privacy, geopolitics, technology, intelligence, crisis management and the challenges of leading large organizations in a democratic society in the digital age.

A retired Four-Star Admiral, accustomed to long confinements at sea, offered counsel in April on how to navigate the tough times ahead.

HARD TO BELIEVE WE WERE ALL LAST IN THE office on Thursday, 12 March—six weeks ago.

By now, we've all created a new normal for ourselves—a routine that tries to account for eating, living, loving, working, exercising, worshipping and everything else we do in life—but all in one place. That one fixed location—our home—was never built or designed for all of us together all of the time.

For me that means taking on new chores around the house and spending more time with my wife and children than I have in 35 years of marriage or 32 years as a father. While that has been challenging at times, it has also been very fulfilling. Our two adult sons opted to come home and quarantine with us rather than lock down in one-bedroom apartments in NYC and Chicago. For the first time in almost 15

years we are an in-residence family again, all getting along well. Their presence makes me happy and my wife and I, after a marriage spent more apart than together, are finding that we actually enjoy each other's company.

For me, a lifetime of extended deployments away from home in the confined spaces of a destroyer, submarine or aircraft carrier for months at a time is finally paying off. Even conservative projections for the duration of this lockdown pale next to 110 consecutive days at sea on combat deployment. I find this situation very much in line with that set of experiences—but with the good fortune to do it with family, alcohol, cable and the internet! I can even get in a car and go to a grocery store.

We are all going through this new journey with a high degree of uncertainty (how long will it last?) and perhaps some level of anxiety (how bad will things get—for us as individuals, for Brunswick and for the broader world we are a part of?). We worry about our health and the health of those we love, the well-being of parents and children, our own financial and mental well-being if this gets even worse and what the future holds—for ourselves, our families, our company and for our nation and the broader world. Such concerns are normal, healthy and appropriate. Pondering them doesn't mean something is wrong with you. Just try to maintain perspective.

I wanted to share two observations and one request with you. They are shaped in no small part by having spent almost four decades in an organization (the US Navy and, by extension, the broader Department of Defense) that focused first and foremost on preparedness for, and performance in, crisis—crises that lasted for days, weeks and months (sadly even years in the case of Iraq and Afghanistan) without interruption or let up. That provided periods of extreme excitement but even longer periods of boredom. Days and weeks spent at a high level of readiness for action but also, if truth be told, often just spent waiting—waiting for something to happen or someone (us, or the enemy) to just make a decision and do something. I learned a lot from that set of experiences; about the nature of crisis and how individuals, teams and organizations deal with crisis and how to lead in crisis—particularly crises of extended duration.

Observation number one is that we are now in the toughest part of this crisis—maintaining our focus, discipline and well-being in the face of high uncertainty, increasing boredom and continual frustration. In the beginning of a crisis there is normally a certain amount of adrenaline, excitement

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"Crisis tends to bring out true character," says Brunswick Senior Advisor Mike Rogers, a retired Four Star Admiral. "Character is reflected in the choices we make and the way we treat each other."

and stress to keep us focused and on our guard. But that becomes tougher as anxiety, boredom and frustration set in. And that is where we are now in the COVID-19 journey. You see it in the increased protests about the lockdowns and in unsafe practices by individuals with respect to social distancing and isolation. So many times in my uniformed career I watched organizations and teams come together in crisis and perform magnificently initially and yet find it very difficult to continue to do so over time. We each need to sustain a healthy lifestyle in this situation and to continue to make smart choices and not lose our focus because we are bored or frustrated with the current situation, which is likely to last for some unknown period of time versus ending next week.

The second observation is that crisis tends to bring out true character and commitment—in individuals and in organizations. Character is reflected in the choices we make and the way we treat each other. Commitment is reflected in the fact that we are there for each other and for our work. I want to thank all of you as individuals and our company leadership for the character and commitment I have seen on display over the past six weeks. I hope you take pride in being part of a company that has character and is committed—to us as individuals and to the work. And that you work with individuals who have displayed high character and commitment in the midst of all this. Trust me, I have been part of or seen teams where that was not the case and it is something very sad and frustrating to be a part of.

My request is that we all look out for people having challenges dealing with this situation—particularly those alone or in poor health. I draw strength from my family and my friends and each of us needs a source of strength in these tough times. Going it alone is not a recipe for success in extended periods of stress, uncertainty or anxiety. Let's all look for and reach out to those needing help in finding or sustaining that strength in the face of this uncertainty.

In closing, stay healthy, well in mind and body, and positive in outlook. And remember, the one thing we do know for sure in the face of all this uncertainty is that COVID-19 and the physical isolation we find ourselves in now will not last forever. One day in the not too distant future we will find ourselves once again talking across cubicles, speaking so loudly on cell phones that much of the whole office can hear the conversation, working collaboratively in conference rooms, and laughing and eating together in the break room. That will be a great day for each of us! ♦