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BUSINESS LEADERS – THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN...

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In my insurance career of now over 20 years, I have seen many changes; the creation of accountable health networks, the reinvigoration of HSAs/HRAs/FSAs, and the industry change from a world full of stacks of paper and walls of filing cabinets to an electronic-based world with HRIS systems and member's medical data all at the member's fingertips. Needless to say, things have changed an enormous amount for the industry and employers over the last 20 years. As I look back over my career, I realize that the change we are facing today will be one of the largest we have ever encountered.

The change coming is not a push for more data, though that is a continued need. This is a push for equality, doing what's right, and ensuring that your organization is more transparent. This is a time when the janitor and the CEO all have an important voice in the conversation. We must understand that everything that we think we know about our world, what we teach in schools, how we treat each other, and even how we see one another has been shaped by a mindset that is rooted in a way of thinking that has been passed down through the years and is systemically wrong. We don't just see the hurt on the news, we feel it in our communities.

This is also a time when we face a pandemic with COVID-19 - scary, to say the least. It's something that we kind of understand, but don't fully have a grasp on. As we entered into 2020, it was business as usual. It is now

almost the end of July, my daughter turned four, and we have been sheltered in place for over four months. We keep hearing that we are entering a "new normal." I think it is time that we try instead to operate in the abnormal. "Normal" is what lead us to where we are today.

What exactly is it that you do? Why are you doing it? Who are you doing it for? Employees are now not only asking employers about the why, but holding them accountable for the answers.

The businesses that will come out of this and thrive will be those that are open and honest about "the why." Simon Sinek has a [great book](#) and [TedX Talk](#) about digging into "the why" behind your business. What exactly is it that you do? Why are you doing it? Who are you doing it for? Employees are now not only asking employers about the why, but holding them accountable for the answers.

It is time for businesses to take a step back and consider their mission as a whole, as well as the individual parts. Are you doing what is right for your business? What about for your employees, or even the community? This is what it is going to take to succeed and thrive as a business in our "new normal." This is a time to look inward and emote outward, and nothing should be off the table.

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Our world is crying for re-invention and challenges to the status quo. This isn't something that our government is going to legislate, or that your neighbor is responsible for. Businesses and other organizations are the ones that can and should make the change.

I work with some amazing people, and I am very proud to be at Parker, Smith & Feek. Like any company, we stumble - but we always learn from it. I appreciate the leadership I have; they give me the space to be who I am and

reinforce "the why" behind what we do. My coworkers and I consistently hear that "we are not in insurance; we are a people organization." If all businesses think this way, we can start to heal and truly recognize that we hold the answers for our "new normal." Let's make it something that we all can be proud of.