



# Reopening and Reconnecting Your Club Post- Covid

Greater Southwest Chapter

Club Management Association of America

May 14, 2020

# There's A Lot of Uncertainty



Pandemic will end, but when?



Many things that have changed will quickly return to normal.



Some things may never go back to the way they were.



Which ones? When? What?

# A Need to Plan...

*"In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable."*

**Dwight D. Eisenhower**





## Staged Opening:

- Quarantine
- Phase I
- Phase II

“Shutting down was hard but opening up is going to be harder.”

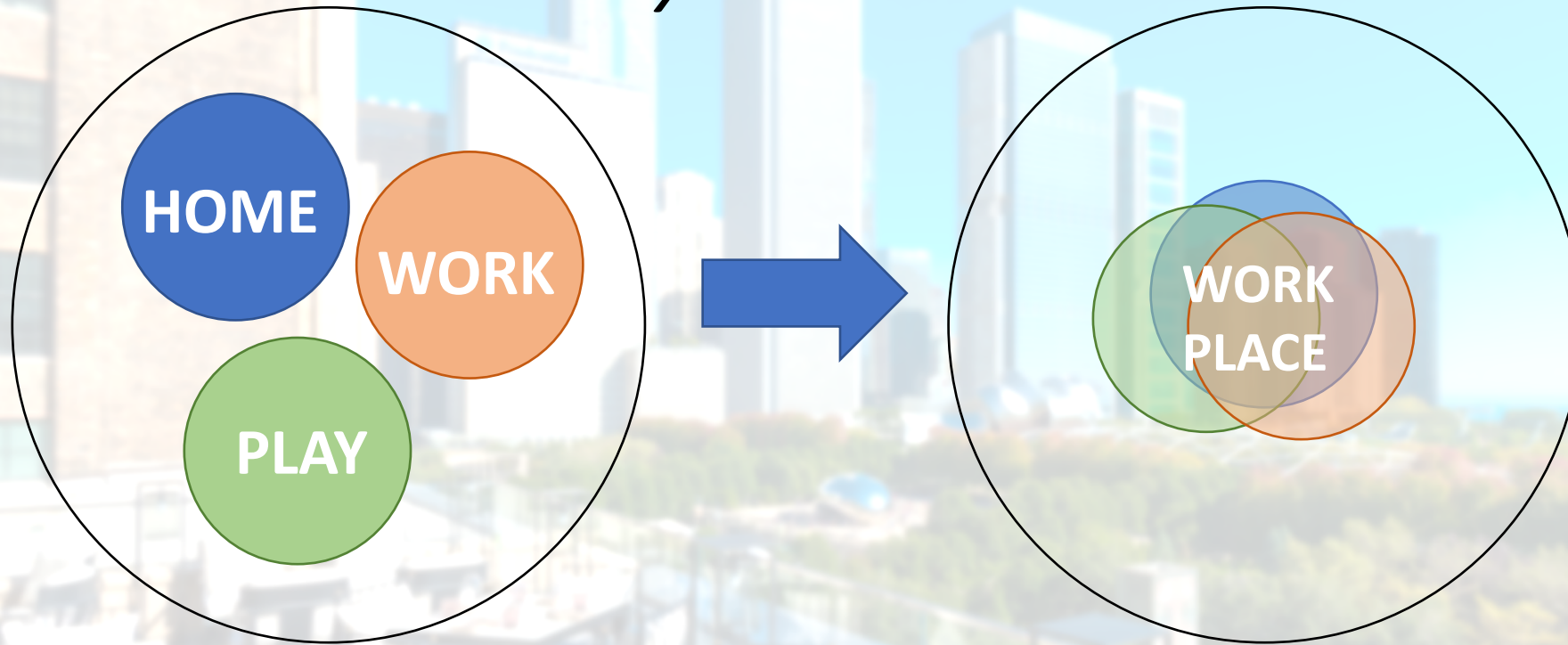
Rich Lesser, CEO  
Boston Consulting Group



# Changes Likely to Stick

- COVID-19 will have broad implications on consumer behavior
  - Slower pace of life
  - Focus on individual and family wellbeing
  - Smaller social circles
  - Remote work likely to become the norm for many people
  - Demand for personalized content quickly
  - Increased online use
  - Increased focus on food safety and hygiene
  - Disposable product acceptance – “clean over green”
- Effective leaders must understand and innovate their way through these changes

# *Lines Between Home, Work and Play Have Blurred*



*Club Programs and Facilities Must Mimic Multifunctional Home Life*

# Covid Will Accelerate Established Trends

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- Macro trends remain intact
  - Demand for broad-based member experiences
- Watchwords remain
  - Community
  - Casual
  - Family
  - Fun
  - Fitness
- Heightened for 2020
  - Simplicity
  - Sanctuary



Pre-Opening:  
Getting From  
Here to  
There





# Refresh Your Strategy to Reset

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## Clubs Made Many Mistakes in 2007 – 2010 Meltdown

- Cutting initiation fees and (sometimes) dues
- Eliminating general manager/mid-level staff to “save” money
- Chasing non-member activities
- Cutting services/going on defense
- Cost over value

## Vital to Act in Concert with Mission – Vision - Values

- Understand real drivers of member experience
- Reaffirm and pursue aspirations
- Stay true to your Values/No compromise
  - Quality
  - Consistency
  - Value
- Protect you brand

# Financial Refresh

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- A Phased Approach
  - Phase I: Summer 2020:
    - A member-focused club/limited guests
    - Few, if any, group events
    - Additional costs of operations: testing, protective gear, cleaning agents, reception/entry monitoring, disposable menus, cutlery, to-go containers, etc.
  - Phase II: Fall/Winter 2020-21 (assuming no major return of covid-19)
    - Expanding operations
    - Mid-size events
    - Some guests

# Opening Checklist



**Prepare your Buildings** – Deep cleaning and pre-opening inspections.



**Train and Equip the Staff** – Create safety/sanitation protocols and clarify with staff, provide protective gear, establish management and employee communication.



**Control Access** – Sign-in for alerts/contact tracing, control entries/visible reception, monitor shipping/receiving.



**Create Social Distancing Plan** – Decrease density in dining and social spaces, modify office layout and staffing policies. Spacious seating.



**Reduce Touch Points and Increase Cleaning** – Open doors, frequent/regular cleaning of common areas.



**Communicate for Staff and Member Confidence** – Win back members and allay staff fears with effective communications. Listen and survey regularly.

# Adapt Your Facilities

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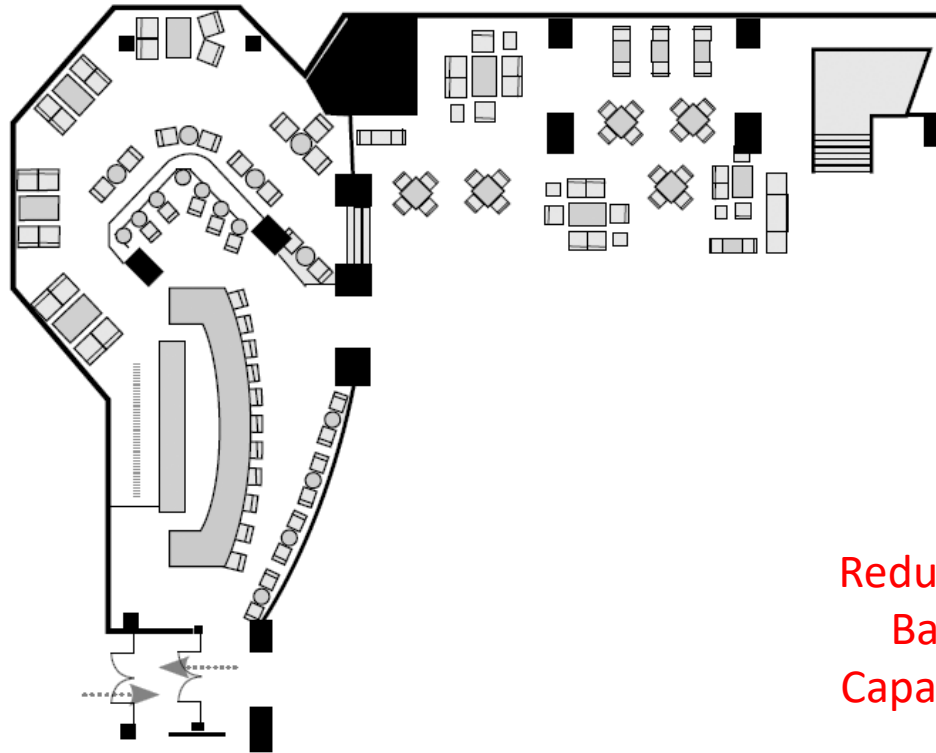


## Adapt Your Physical Plant to New Member-Focused Environment

- Controlled access points
- Kitchen circulation
- Social distance dining rooms
- No bar seating
- Wi-Fi Cafés/Remote work
- Potential self-service bar
- Repurpose function spaces
- Spacious outdoor seating areas
- Takeout foods/pre-packaged foods

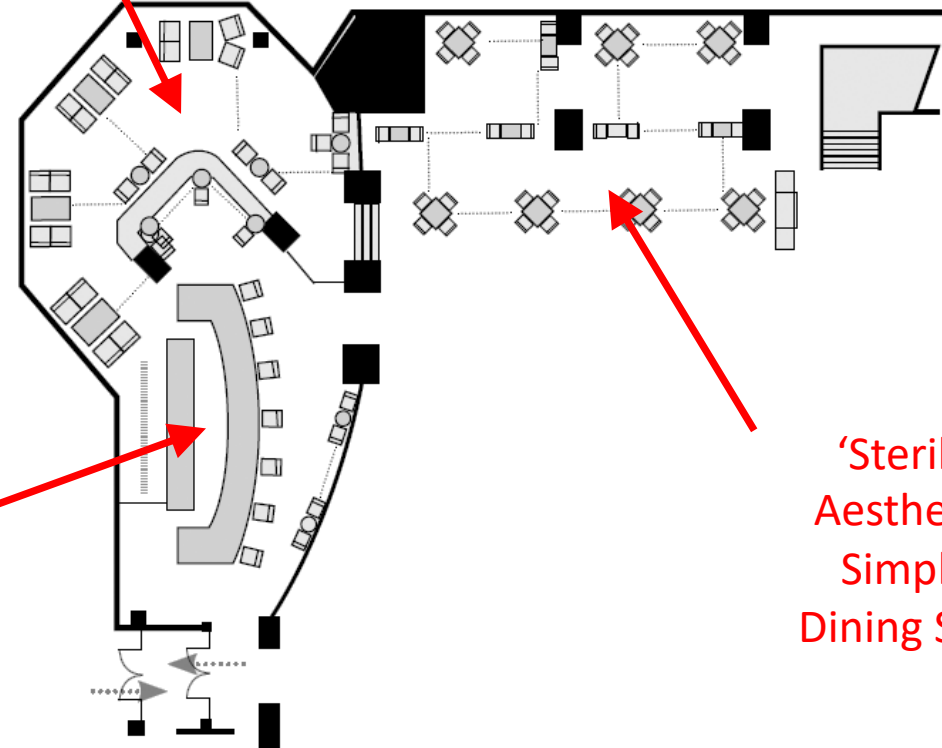


## BEFORE COVID



Limited  
Lounge  
Seating

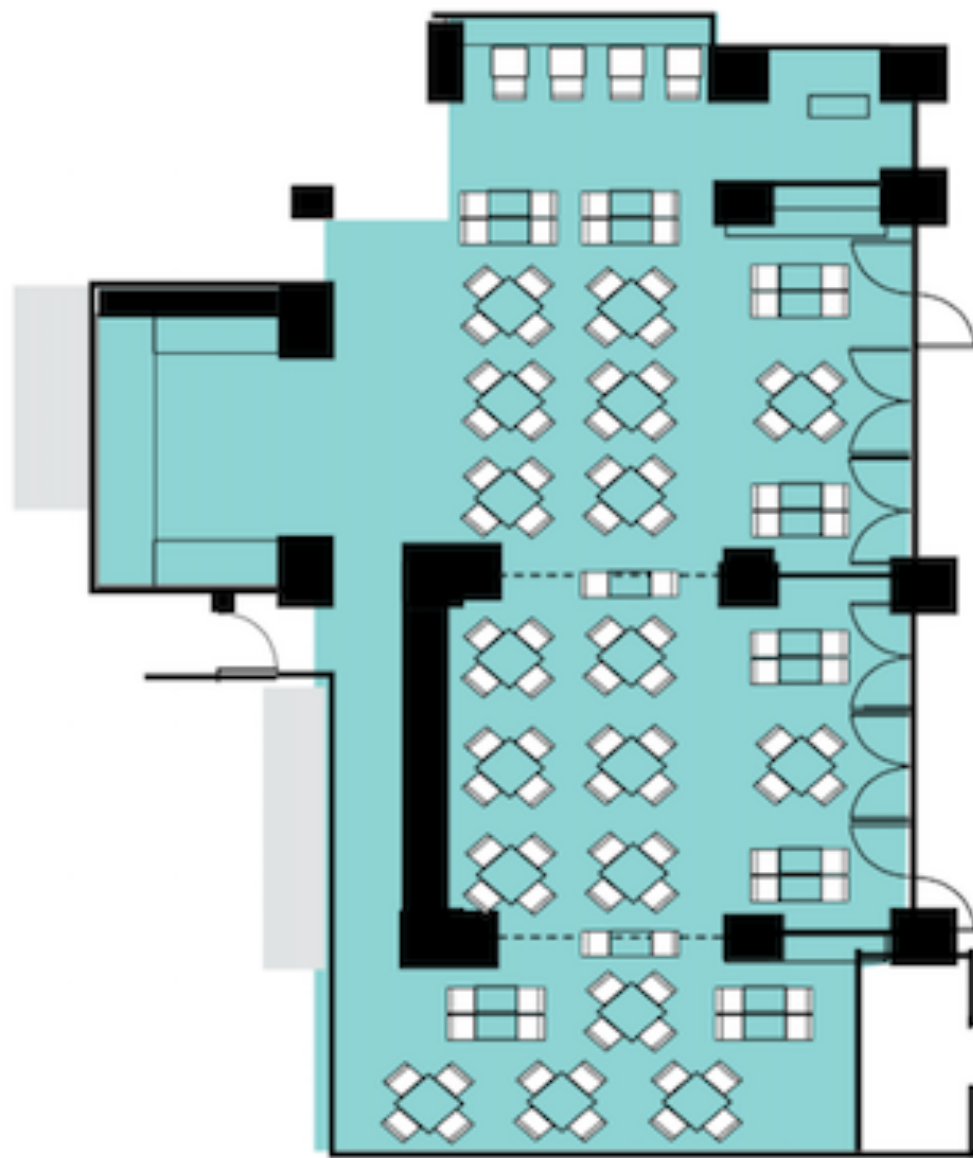
## AFTER COVID



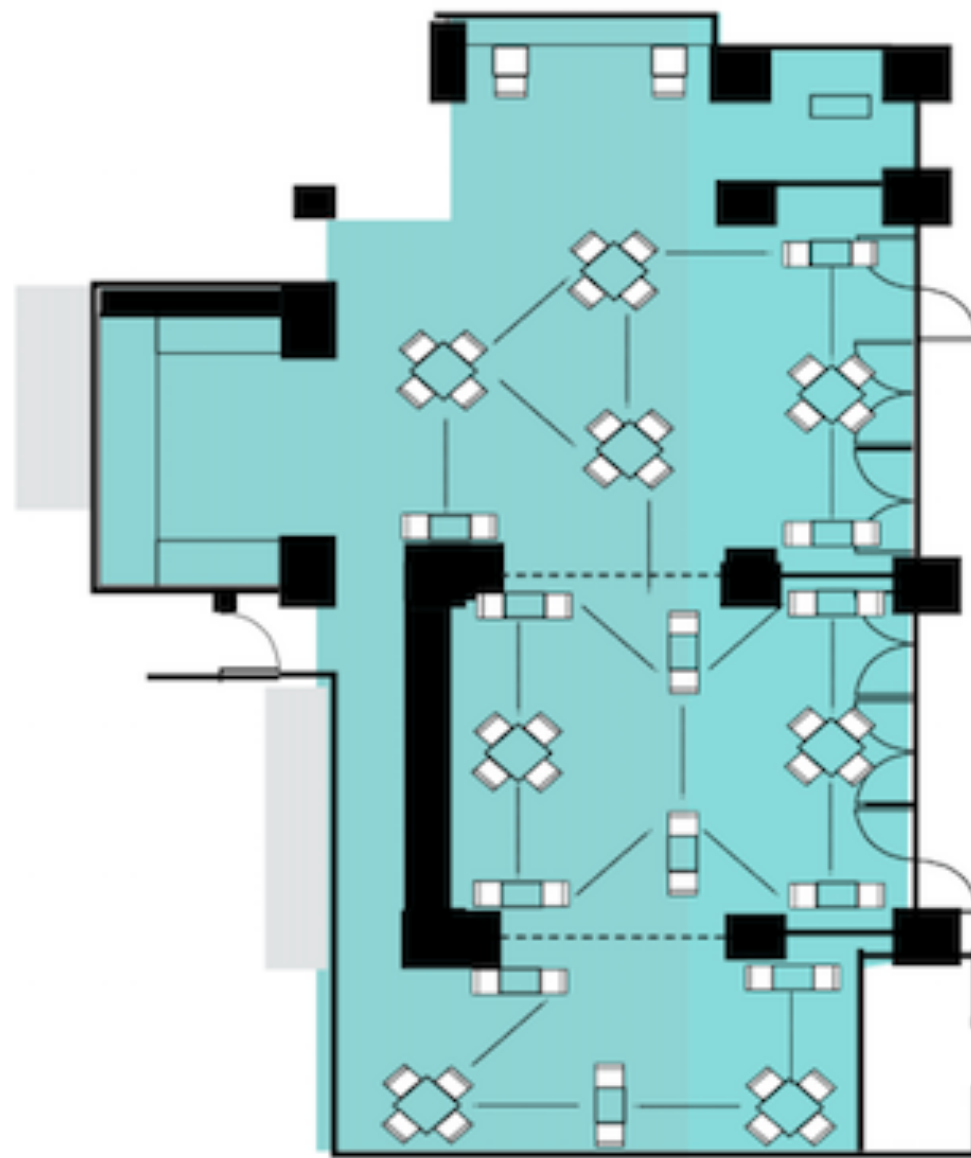
Reduced  
Bar  
Capacity

'Sterilized'  
Aesthetics in  
Simplified  
Dining Seating

Current Layout: 116 Seats



Phase I Social Distancing: 62 Seats



# Policy Refresh

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- Opportunity to rethink some policies:
  - Electronic devices – increased demand to be connected at all times
  - Reservations – requirement to limit on-site numbers could finally get members to make reservations and adopt tee times
  - Work from home means more casual dress
  - Cut back on the giveaways – locker room amenities, snacks, beverages, etc.
  - Guest policy – clarify who can be on property and when
  - Communications – let everyone know what to expect

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# Reopening 2020

# Three-Dimensional Chess

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*“Know what you are doing before you do it.”*

Andrew Cuomo  
Governor of New York

# Safe Place Status

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- Critical to protect your safe space status
  - Wherever you are operating, be extremely vigilant
  - If you are in doubt that the Club can do it safely, err to the side of caution and defer
  - If there is a problem, fix it immediately at all costs
  - Visible floor management to strictly enforce social distancing, reservations-only and related health rules!

# Medical Task Force

- Involve staff and members in planning
  - Establish and review policies and procedures
  - Establish balance between desire for normal operations and what is safe
  - Communicate Committee's role to the membership and employees to build confidence in club safety
- Compliance and Execution
  - Certified Sanitation Officer
  - Daily compliance



# Job #1: Staff Comfort and Confidence

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- You can't get the member experience right if you don't first make the staff secure
  - Review your staff locker and break rooms
  - Plans and policies for personal protective equipment
  - Secure ample inventory of cleaning chemicals
  - Train and retrain cleaning staff
  - Establish and continually reinforce social distancing measures
  - Staff communications plan
  - Signage on hand-washing, illness, etc.



# Summer 2020

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- **SAFETY FIRST!**
- Reservations for all activities
- Dining: Crawl, Walk, Run
  - Continue Takeout
  - Use your outside spaces!
  - Start with a few nights of meals
  - Reduce seating/Smaller dining rooms
  - High-end casual focus
  - Then (eventually) full service
- Follow guidelines for modified golf, limited fitness traffic, USTA tennis guidelines, etc.
- Work with local officials as much as possible to secure permission for safe use, especially pools.



# The 2020 Season

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- Full orientation
- Clearly lay out Vision and Mission with reopening buy-in
- Develop “elevator speech” on the how’s/why’s for policies/operations
- Tour of club – clarity on staff/member access/egress, deliveries, etc.
- Review policies and role play challenging situations
  - Someone is sick
  - Member upset about seating, service protocols, rules
- Mock service
  - Work out kinks
  - First employee role play, then invite key members for practice

A 3D rendered image showing two grey, stylized human-like figures standing on a light grey surface. They are holding a large, cylindrical connector that is half blue and half red. A blue cable is plugged into the blue side of the connector, and a red cable is plugged into the red side. The figures are positioned on either side of the connector, appearing to be in the process of connecting or disconnecting the cables. The background is a solid, light grey color.

# Reconnecting

# Communicate Your Advantages

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- When economic activity returns, clubs will be a first choice
- Mission is to make members feel as comfortable and safe at the club as they do in their own home.
  - Safe and secure environment
  - Staycation back in force
  - Emphasize your “third place”/”trusted place” status
    - Private member enclave
    - Knowledgeable, caring staff
    - Medical officer
    - Controlled access
    - Limited F&B volume compared to commercial establishments
- Stress these features to prospects and to new members who may be thinking of resigning

# Research Your Way Out of the Crisis

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- Reconnect with members.
- Show you care.
- Short, targeted survey
  - Members
  - Staff
- How to make them comfortable?
- How to win them back?
- Quantify demand
  - Will they be in the area? (seasonal club)
  - Will they be going to the office? (City club)



# Communications Strategy

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- Well thought-out and executed communications plan
  - Staff
  - Members
  - Vendors
- Continual reinforcement of privilege to operate
- Multi-channel: email, texts, video, posters, displays
- Advance notice of what to expect this summer
- Policies on entrances, guests, vendors



# Fiddler's Elbow Country Club



450 Views

Michael Nyerges

May 1 at 10:20 PM · 🌐

Protecting Our Fiddler's Family #safetyfirst #family

<https://www.facebook.com/100032813206528/posts/231654667938305/?d=n>

# Continue the Virtual Club

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- Use internet to maintain engagement with existing and potential members during irregular operating period
  - Video messaging
  - Virtual tours
  - Chef livestreams cooking tutorials
  - Golf Professional sends video golf tips
  - Fitness instructors livestream workout classes
  - On-line bridge
  - Educational opportunities
  - Online meetings
  - Webcast the annual meeting



# Summing Up

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- Use innovative thinking to identify new ways to make your club a vehicle for post COVID-19 life
- Manage to 2020 realities
- Research and experiment to identify longer-term shifts in member sentiment and behaviors
- Refresh your plans and reset for the new and different future
  - Stay true to your core
  - Don't let short-term actions undermine principles