RELECTIONS OF REMOTE WORK DURING COVID-19
Success Stories and Lessons Learned from Maryland Businesses

Session 1 4.29.20
WEBINAR FAQ

- Select Computer or Phone Audio
- The Questions window can be used for both technical issues and Q & A. Also Q&A at end of presentation
- All sessions will be recorded and will be available post-webinar at CommuterChoiceMaryland.com
- Slide decks will also be available at the Commuter Choice Maryland website
POLL #1

How many days a week did you work remotely before COVID-19?

A. 1 Day a week
B. 2 Days a week
C. 3 or more days a week
D. On an as needed basis
E. N/A my workplace does not offer remote work as option
WHAT IS COMMUTER CHOICE MARYLAND?

- COMMUTER CHOICE MARYLAND is the Maryland Department of Transportation’s Travel Demand Management Program
  - Promotes alternative options to driving alone to work such as public transportation, ridesharing (vanpooling & carpooling) walking, biking, remote work (teleworking), and flexible work schedules
  - Helps reduce congestion, conserve energy, protect the environment and facilitate economic opportunity
COMMUTER PROGRAM SERVICES

Transportation Options
- Serve as a resource for transportation options such as Guaranteed Ride Home, transit, vanpool, carpool, biking and walking, flexible work schedules and telework

Information
- Online and printed information on available resources on transportation options

Outreach
- Outreach to commuters at events to increase their knowledge and comfort level with using transportation options

Visit: CommuterChoiceMaryland.com to learn more
Employer Program Services

Employer Assistance
- Provide ongoing assistance to employers in implementing commuter benefits programs and taking advantage of the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit

Webinar & Information
- Deliver webinars, provide toolkits, targeted materials to help employers with communications and implementing a commuter benefits program

Marketing Materials
- Provide marketing materials and information on employee commute options

Visit: CommuterChoiceMaryland.com to learn more
Free Business Toolkits

Available at: CommuterChoiceMaryland.com
What topics would be of interest to you for future webinar sessions?

A. How to plan & implement a Commuter Benefits Program
B. Best practices from Maryland businesses
C. Business Tax Credits- MD Commuter Tax Credit
D. How to use available Toolkits
E. Other
Odessa L. Phillip, PE

• President and CEO of Assedo Consulting

• Over 20 years of experience

• Expert at bringing together state and local stakeholders, politicians agency officials, special interest groups and communities affected by projects in various phases of development

• In 2012 founded Assedo Consulting, LLC a certified African-American woman-owned business enterprise (MBE/WBE).
A Small Business Owner’s Reflections on Teleworking during COVID-19

Odessa L. Phillip, PE
President & CEO – Assedo Consulting, LLC

Wednesday, April 29, 2020
Presentation for Commuter Choice Maryland
Company Overview

Planning and public outreach for projects in the planning, design and construction phases of development

Established in 2012
African-American Woman-owned firm

Sectors
• Transportation
• Utilities
• Environment
• Parks & Open Space

Services
• Public Outreach and Education
• Planning and GIS Services
• Branding and Marketing


We take public outreach personally.
Our Team...
Small but Mighty


We take public outreach personally.
Adapting to COVID-19 as a Small Business
EVERYTHING changed overnight
Who is Essential? What will we do?
Are we ready for this? Where to work with the kids at home?
When will this end? How will this change the future?
Most important quality for successful and indefinite telework:

COLLABORATIVE COMPANY CULTURE
Key Elements in Hand

- Telework Policy (Benefit)
  - One telework day a week
  - Eligibility after 90 days
- Flexible Working Schedules
  - 7:00 am – 9:00 am start time
  - 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm end time
- Laptops for full team
- Portable VOIP phone system
- Cloud-based file storage
- Client Relationships
- Essential Project Work
Did you already have a telework policy in place?
What we had in place

• Core values that were agreed upon by each member of the team
  • **Quality FIRST**
    • Flexibility & Fun
    • Integrity & Innovation
    • Respect & Responsiveness
    • Stewardship & Sustainability
    • Teamwork & Trust

• Company Mission (or guiding principle)
  ENGAGE. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

We take public outreach personally.
Necessary Changes

**Internal Pivot**
- Planned with management team
- Determined message and strategy
- Expanded Telework to 5 days/week

**External Pivot**
- Communicated our plan to clients
- Increased availability to clients
  - More phone calls / emails
  - Frequent schedule updates
- Showed compassion

**STAY CONSISTENT TO OUR BRAND**


We take public outreach personally.
• Met with Management Team
• Assessed Company Workload
• Developed Financial Plan
• Shared work plan with Team
• Managed HR Needs
• Prepared to Execute
External Plan

- Communicate with clients that we remain open
- Help clients assess their public facing needs
- Develop client messages
- Maintain our brand awareness
- Increase social presence
- Plan for future work (proposals, presentations, interviews)
Other Critical Commitments

- Maintain employee morale
- Sustain client and team connections
- Understand the financial climate
- Maintain work quality
- Adjust to shifts in work demand
- Provide seamless technology infrastructure
Assedo Consulting is still here for you.

We know that many small businesses are going through tough times but we are still here serving you, only from a virtual space. We have modified our work schedules and are now working from home to practice social distancing, and we appreciate all who are ensuring that we stay operational.

If you are able, please make sure the economic engine of America is getting critical payments for work done on your behalf! If you would like more information during uncertain times, please rely on reputable sources like the CDC and WHO for ways you and your community can stay safe. Click these links below:

https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

Governor Hogan also provides regular updates on his website https://governor.maryland.gov/
Improve / Sustain Employee Morale

- Be honest and transparent
- Express concern but clearly articulate plans for short, mid, and long term
- Check-in regularly with everyone on the team
- Provide updates when known
- Be patient, listen and offer grace
- Build in time for fun up front!
  - Daily “coffee” or “water cooler” meetings
  - Virtual Happy Hours
  - Team Scavenger Hunt
Are you having company sponsored fun time?
We Are!

ASSEDO BUNCH


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Focus on Work Quality

- Maintain some sense of “normalcy”
- Identify daily and weekly tasks, roles & responsibilities and deadlines
- Meet with team members regularly
- Establish a quality review process
- Communicate MORE
  - Verify client expectations
  - Make calls and participate in meetings
  - Use video conferencing
  - Share planned approach
  - Build on existing trust
- Be FULLY present
Seamlessly Integrate Technology

- Computers
  - Portability (laptops)
  - Connectivity (Internet)
  - File Structure
- Phones
  - VOIP System
  - Cell Service
- Programs
  - Microsoft Teams
  - SharePoint
The New Normal?

If we must do this indefinitely, we will need to:

• Search for Virtual Platforms to support client needs
• Maintain productivity while creating healthy work/life boundaries
• Support employees’ mental health
• Identify ways to help employees shine (promotional opportunities)
• Encourage networking outside of internal team
Are you taking regular breaks?
Telework Tips

- Establish consistent working protocols
  - Use daily to-do lists
  - Share daily tasks with others
  - Schedule meetings with project teams
- Use technology effectively
  - Revisit use of email
    - Frequency of checking
  - Incorporate instant messages vs email
  - Avoid social media until breaks
- Consider ergonomics and physical setup
- Schedule regular breaks into the day
- Communicate more frequently
- Increase intermittent deliverables
Would you want to telework every day?

P O L L
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www.AssedoLLC.com


We take public outreach personally.
Questions?

Please type your questions in the question window.
Thank You!

We Are Always Here to Help!

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