

# 'Homework': Executive Edition

## Rapidly Adapting to the 'New Normal' in Services & Solutions

Brief #1

*The rise of the COVID-19 pandemic came as an unforecastable event resulting in profound change implications across the social, political and economic spectrums for the world's population and businesses. This brief along with its follow-on series will offer you our perspective on how things will change for companies in the Services and Solutions business and the strategies you may need to consider implementing that differs from current practices and approaches.*



### Overview

The following is an overview of a series of briefs offered by the Executive Leadership Team at The Insight Group over the next several weeks. Our objective is to engage in the development of best practices within the new environment into which all firms have been thrust, embracing many of the unique challenges as well as opportunities the current situation poses. While there is a great deal of chaos and uncertainty in the present moment, we anticipate this disruption will lead to a “new normal” in the services and solutions industry, even after the current crisis has passed.

### What will be different for Service Businesses:

***Selling:*** Customers will expect that a major component of the sales cycle for services and solution selling will reduce in-person selling and move to remote selling. This will drive sales and sales support coverage models to rely less on geographic deployment considerations and more on expertise deployment. Selling support materials and tools will need to be completely re-engineered to support a remote sales call. Sales employees who relied on in-person selling techniques will need to be retrained in how to successfully run a sales call remotely. Sales management will have to evolve and develop techniques to manage, motivate and communicate with employees working remotely where less frequent personal contact occurs.

***Marketing:*** Service market offerings will have to be developed using remote techniques to collect information. Techniques for identifying and remotely interviewing and surveying customers to understand their service offering needs will become an important part of developing and maintaining service offerings.

***Service delivery:*** Much has already been done in service delivery to reduce the cost of delivery by moving to offshoring to reduce costs. We would expect that much of this will be re-examined to

understand the trade-offs of expense reduction and security of the service supply chain. Services local country component of delivery will increase but still be off customer premise. Service delivery will look to reduce the cost impact of localization by increasing the automation and artificial intelligence content of their offerings.

***HR and Talent Management:*** HR will be critical to leading organizational and people management changes while we are in an unsettled environment. Managing the change to a more remote employee base will involve establishing policies for implementation, determining employee eligibility for remote work, seeking new ways to recruit the right talent to meet the changing requirements of the service organization, and ensuring that the systems, tools and support processes are in place to enable remote employees will be fundamental to success. Implementing new automation, cognitive and artificial intelligence tools in HR will continue to improve the processes that will allow HR to focus on leading the change process.

***Leadership:*** Leaders of Services and Solution businesses will have to fully evaluate the implications of remote leadership and management to their organization. Will need to adapt their businesses models and offerings to accommodate change.

We will be exploring the segments above in follow-on briefs during the upcoming weeks. Look for the second brief in the series, ***Selling Services Solutions Remotely***, which will focus on remote services and solutions selling.

There is no doubt that the pandemic is tragic. It will result in step function changes in the Service industry for all geographies. Companies that quickly understand and accommodate change will find new avenues for growth and profitability.

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***The INSIGHT Group*** is a 'Best Practices' services consulting firm focused on helping product and service companies implement high-growth services strategies. Our partners represent a group of experienced executives that have held senior executive services business positions across multiple industries. INSIGHT has operated for more than 20 years utilizing a predominantly "virtual office" business model. For further information check our web site at [www.insight-group.com](http://www.insight-group.com).