



March 1, 2021 Quick Quiz Results

Supporting each other through the pandemic



Total Responses = 64

Are you a...

- Healthcare Provider
- Healthcare Supplier
- Other

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Response Type	How would you rate your own personal morale at this time on a scale of (1) extremely low to (100) very high?	How would you rate the morale of your team overall at this time on a scale of (1) extremely low to (100) very high?
Healthcare Providers	77	71
Healthcare Suppliers	76	68
Other	63	48
TOTAL	75	68



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What is the best thing providers can do for suppliers to offer support as we continue to navigate this crisis?

Suppliers said Communication from Trading Partners is critical:

Keep open lines of communication and transparency while putting our collective patients first.
Open, honest dialogue. Continue to focus on solving real problems in healthcare
100% clarity on priorities.
Communicate
communication.
Communicate more frequently on the status of projects Offer vaccine appts for front line medical salespeople deemed "essential".
Continued transparency and communication
clear communication about what they can or cannot do given the restraints of a current climate.
Increase communication back to Pre-Covid levels.
Communication - proactive, be on time, inform us of problems in advance
Show faces on Zoom calls in an effort to still try to develop some type of personal relationship
Communication...as a supplier it's most helpful if we can get an early indication from providers about their elective procedure trends a few weeks out, so we can plan product supply accordingly.



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What is the best thing providers can do for suppliers to offer support as we continue to navigate this crisis?

And more from suppliers on the importance of communications from Trading Partners:

Work towards meeting in-person again. I'm sure this is high on everyone's list but is critical to help all of us feel connected and engaged.
Communication and Collaboration
Be as responsive as before the Wuhan Flu epidemic.
Be positive and keep looking at what is going right, where we are making a difference--a glass half full mindset and attitude
Continue to be open to meetings or some types of engagement that maintain some degree of normalcy
Conduct virtual strategy session providing an overview of health system , current status and future focus. Opportunity to focus on the future and provide way for collaboration
Continue to find way to connect (in person or virtually) to help facilitate business transactions like we did pre-Covid
Take time to connect on a personal level. Seek to understand the others' position. Be understanding that all businesses are navigating challenges.



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Suppliers would also like to see providers be creative and thoughtful in their work together:

We need to focus on strategies that build partnerships and not transactional "price chain"
Flexibility and support. Think "beyond" the contract.
Offer flexibility with delivery schedules
Understand the challenges, going from face to face to virtual misses a lot of the personal connection. It's important, and I hope to work to get a healthy balance of both face-to-face and virtual meetings in the future.
Patience with your suppliers who are struggling with our own supply constraints.
There is a full spectrum of feelings and impacts of COVID on peoples lives. It is important to show empathy and patience while being honest and timely with communication. We can support one another by removing unnecessary stress.

And suppliers would like support from providers on operational issues:

Work to keep their accounts current. With the pandemic, we have seen an increase in AR due to personnel challenges within our customer base. In addition, increased communication regarding their strategic plan for 2021 and beyond.
Help move project forward. Everything has been stalled.
manufacturers can continue to focus on supply health and unplanned needs. Partner on opportunities to improve our mutual business performance



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Providers also mentioned the importance of communication:

It is even more important to respond timely during this new normal and provide full transparency in regards product disruptions and savings opportunities.

Continue to be transparent and collaborative. Be patient with us during misunderstandings and continue to communicate on the phone/video!

Improve transparency regarding their supply chain and product pipeline

Continue to be supportive and ensure products are available as needed; communication and transparency are imperative and efforts on both sides have to remain strong

Timely & transparent communications. Present options & well thought out plans.

Do what you say you are going to do. What we have to accomplish requires the alignment of a great number of moving parts. Over promising and underdelivering is not something we can sustain...and not something that will be forgotten.

And stressed the importance of flexibility:

Be agile in terms of how they engage and work with providers on solutions in the current environment.

Be patient with us on projects and priorities. Every day is presenting new challenges and is pulling away priorities. There is a lot of clean-up and re-prioritizing happening right now.

Stop asking to meet; we are all just catching up and trying to get back to some normal. Many don't know how some things are "performing" since Covid interrupted us.

Be patient and start bringing supplies back to the US.

Simply be collaborative, attentive and willingness to be flexible.

Creative thinking. Falling back into the thought process that at some point we are all going back to the way it was done in the past is a recipe for failure. Look at what positives came from this and leverage those going forward.



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Providers would like suppliers to be aware of economic concerns:

transparency and economic relief during volume downturn
Price reductions to reduce operating expenses so providers can continue their mission.
Think about how virtual sales can lead to efficiencies that can be passed on the customer

And mentioned the importance of a supportive relationship:

Be real and not be opportunists.
Consistent supply, the backorder work and communication is absolutely causing daily disruptions and putting more stress on team and clinical staff.
Be prepared on zoom calls. Send reports out ahead of time so we can review data before call. Do more with scorecards and QBR's.
be proactive and consistent. Customer service from one supplier to the next is different and causes challenges and frustration.
Be there when we need each other.
Let us do our jobs and manage our activity to support our clinical staff and their patients. Produce the product we need in the quantities that we need them.



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What are suppliers doing today to support providers as we navigate this crisis?

Communication is key:

Continuous supply of clinically effective products, education, determining the "why" and then offloading some of their risk while focusing on solving some large problems in healthcare. Listening.
Participate in industry meetings and calls.
Being accessible, organized & proactive in responsiveness
be as available and helpful as possible.
Being extremely responsive. Helping connect them to resources within the organization to address concerns. Ensure support (products/services) to support revenue generating procedures.
Listening and supporting wherever we can. Attempted some virtual team building events to help raise the morale, and beginning to think about some face-to-face meetings in the 2nd half of this year.
Maintaining strong communications

Communicate as much as possible trying to do live phone calls vs. text/email to make it personal
Be available and responsive.
Continued Transparency and communication
Asking questions, being respectful of their time and priorities. We are adjusting the content of our communication to customers to try to align it with their expressed areas of need.
Keeping meetings short and to the point and making sure every product discussion has a strong economic value proposition
Communicate Highly on needs / Experience.
Communicate as clearly and often as possible.



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What are suppliers doing today to support providers as we navigate this crisis?

Suppliers are working to reduce friction in trading partner relationships:

Providing saving and revenue generating options and making the process remarkably easy
Very focused on service levels and exploring revenue / profit improvement opportunities
Offering flexibility in meeting contract commitments Providing in-person staff education on our products when needed
Provide "A+" level support services as needs change.
Supply guarantees for those customers who are committed to our platform.



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What are suppliers doing today to support providers as we navigate this crisis?

And suppliers are supporting trading partners in many other ways:

Staying glass half full. Being negative steals way to much energy and time. Every challenge creates an opportunity and am trying to lead with that mindset every day.
Being responsive, empathetic, forward thinking and leading with a positive mindset
Training and Education
Education, education, education
Predictive category risk reporting Measuring and scoring supplier performance - on time fill rate, lead time, quality
Being completely transparent and providing assistance in securing products for long-term needs.
Programs. Incentives.
Willing to assist and invest in improving their operation.
Focus on supply continuity.
make myself available 24/7 to help wherever possible



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What are providers doing today to support suppliers as we navigate this crisis?

Communication is a key focus:

Try to keep communication flowing, even with all of the conflicting priorities.
QBR's with key partners to promote open communication
Responding to emails in a timely matter
Communicate often.
Requiring that everyone be seen on Zoom/Skype, etc. calls. Sending agendas/reports out ahead of meetings. Sending follow ups.
Communication of our needs and appreciation of all efforts and support; working closely as a team ensures things go right as navigate this crisis
Communicate as clearly and often as possible.
Be open and transparent.
Ongoing communications & feedback
Trying to be as transparent as possible with our needs and feedback.
The most effective thing in my mind is transparency and consistency. Similar to how I responded in number 4...we as behaving as we have said we would behave.
Conducting frequent QBRs and we also hold an annual Supplier Summit which we held just last week virtually.



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What are providers doing today to support suppliers as we navigate this crisis?

Providers are working to reduce friction in relationships with trading partners:

Offering flexibility on how we work with trading partners, being responsive given we aren't located in an easy to connect location as previously before COVID.
Continuing to purchase good and services and paying invoices on time.
Paying invoices
Confirming when trading partner representatives are necessary and then making that access possible.
keeping up connection points and energy into the relationship



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And lots of great comments and insight from SMI members:

I believe this is largely a result of each entity determining its own future state (complete teleworking, some hybrid or return to the office). I sincerely hope that we will eventually have a hybrid approach (some days in the office and some teleworking) to bring some balance back to our work/life rather than being physically separated from colleagues and trading partner representatives. We need socialization to more effectively perform our work.
I am so happy to see this topic on the quick quiz. Coming off of this crisis is a whole new mental and morale drain. There is now so much clean-up in addition to all of the pre-COVID projects popping back up. It is a challenge to stay on top of everything.
It is a lonely world out there for our reps. Their worlds have been turned upside down with no customer interaction. They are adjusting but there is much uncertainty on what the "new normal" will be.
The Ides of March are upon us!
This year has commanded learning how to deal with unprecedented challenges and
More break out groups on large calls.

More a question - what will the future state of Supply Chain offices look like for large IDNs? What are Supply Chain leaders feeling on all virtual meetings and do they look forward to a more regular cadance with suppliers in a face-to-face environment?
The pandemic has virtually erased the idea of face-to-face interaction. While virtual meetings are cost-effective, they leave much to be desired and do not yeild results as well as F2F.
Stay positive and focused on each activity/requests; continuous communication, keeping your team informed and involved helps with productivity and morale
COVID has created a new relationship management environment which requires a new skill set. Education on Virtual Selling. Virtual Relationship Management. Delivering a concise message and data between trading partners.
Excited for vaccines. Work from home is tough to measure and manage.
As an industry, we "talk" transparency all the time, and many suppliers need to improve. Transparency should lead to "improvement" not "penalties" (which should come as a last resort).



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More great comments and insight from SMI members:

Hoping with the number of COVID cases dropping significantly and that there are three vaccines approved hopefully we are seeing light at the end of the tunnel
This entire experience has been quite taxing on my team. What started as a relative novelty a year ago (Zoom calls, etc.) has evolved into a way of life for us. All of us need to have personal interaction to feel fulfilled in our daily activities....that is one of the most satisfying things about our roles. With a complete absence of this for a year now, it gets harder to help them stay engaged and feel satisfied with their roles. As a manager of people we try to find creative ways to keep the team connected across the country, but nothing can replace a hug, handshake, or simply being across the table from customers and friends.
In times like these, isolation can exacerbate stress. There is a real opportunity for enhanced relationships between trading partners, but it has to be genuine and with the interests of both parties front and center.
Words matter...change the lens and it is amazing how your outlook and attitude
We all need to use the market changes as an opportunity to pull costs out of the system
Thanks for conducting these anonymously.
Hoping that we can all get vaccinated and back to our Pre-Covid business relationships