

The Chief Sales Officer

Second Quarter 2022

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for Responding to
Social Disruption



Managing Revenue
and Compensation
during the Russian
Invasion of Ukraine



Assessing Long-term
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Sales Leader Spotlight

Leading During Disruption

With Denise O'Brien, Senior Vice
President of Sales at Aramark

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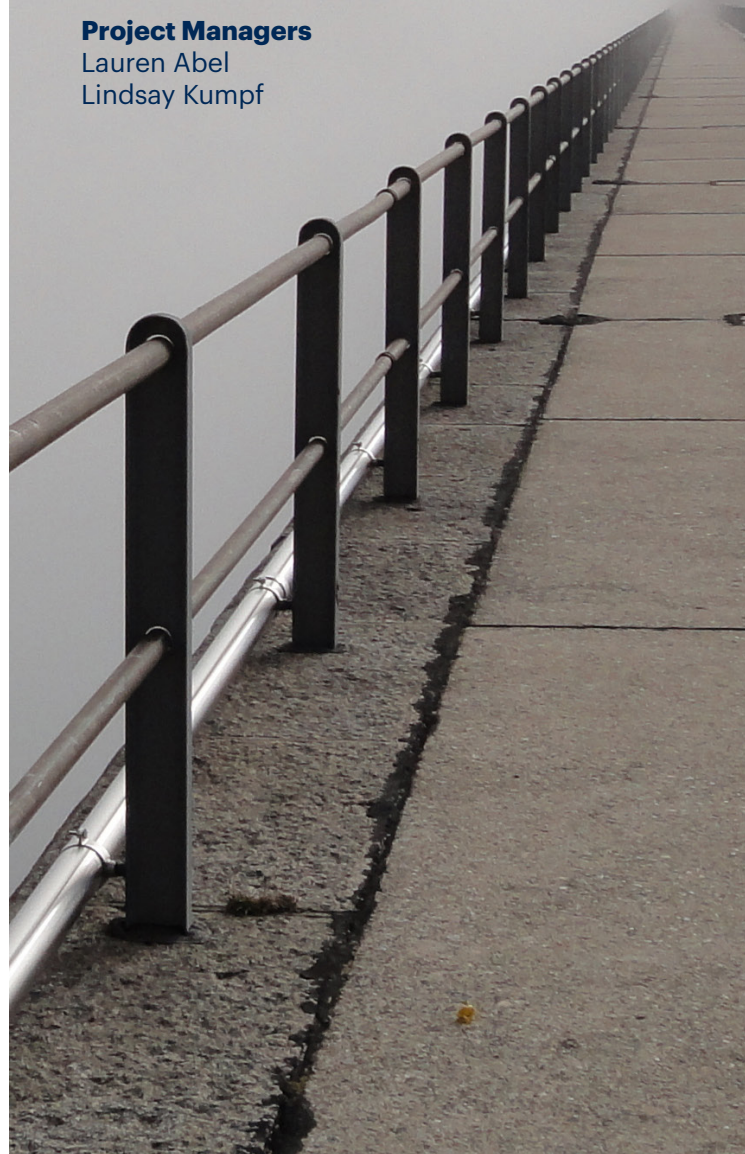
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Letter From the Editors

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has caused global upheaval, affecting the safety and security of countless people in the immediate area. First and foremost, it is the responsibility of CSOs and all leaders to do whatever is in their power to protect and support impacted colleagues.

Of course, neither the impacts nor a CSO's responsibilities end there. Individuals across the world have been emotionally affected, markets have shifted and geopolitical ties have been strained. Concurrently, CSOs are charged with protecting employee livelihoods and understanding how the organization's response affects both employees' sense of security and opinions about their employer.

In this issue we discuss leading a sales organization during disruption, whether that occurs as a result of the invasion, the pandemic, market disruption or social unrest. The pace of these events has been accelerating in recent years and shows no sign of slowing down. In this issue, we offer a variety of perspectives on leadership during these volatile times.

- **Taking a stand: Considerations for CSOs responding to social disruption.** As social and political upheaval continues, it may be tempting to lie low and focus on daily business activities. But is inaction and neutrality really a safe choice? **(p. 4)**
- **Managing sales revenue and compensation during the Russian invasion of Ukraine.** Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a crisis on an enormous scale. Many sales organizations are struggling to coordinate a response on multiple fronts. In this article, secondary to issues of safety and security, we turn to considerations of seller compensation, supply chain challenges and revenue protection. **(p. 9)**
- **Assessing the long-term implications of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.** With change coming fast and furious, how can sales leaders reasonably plan for an uncertain future? This article leverages Gartner's Ukraine scenario planning research to show how long-term scenario planning can help CSOs prepare for long-term business implications and build resiliency. **(p. 14)**

Our Leadership Spotlight features Denise O'Brien, senior vice president of sales at Aramark. She discusses how her sales organization successfully responded to the pandemic disruption and how Aramark engages with challenging social issues. **(p. 21)** Finally, in our Quant Corner, we investigate how the issues of social responsibility and ethics play into how candidates view potential employers. **(p. 24)**

Stay safe and stay well.

Betsy Gregory-Hosler and Delainey Kirkwood



Taking a Stand: Considerations for CSOs Responding to Social Disruption

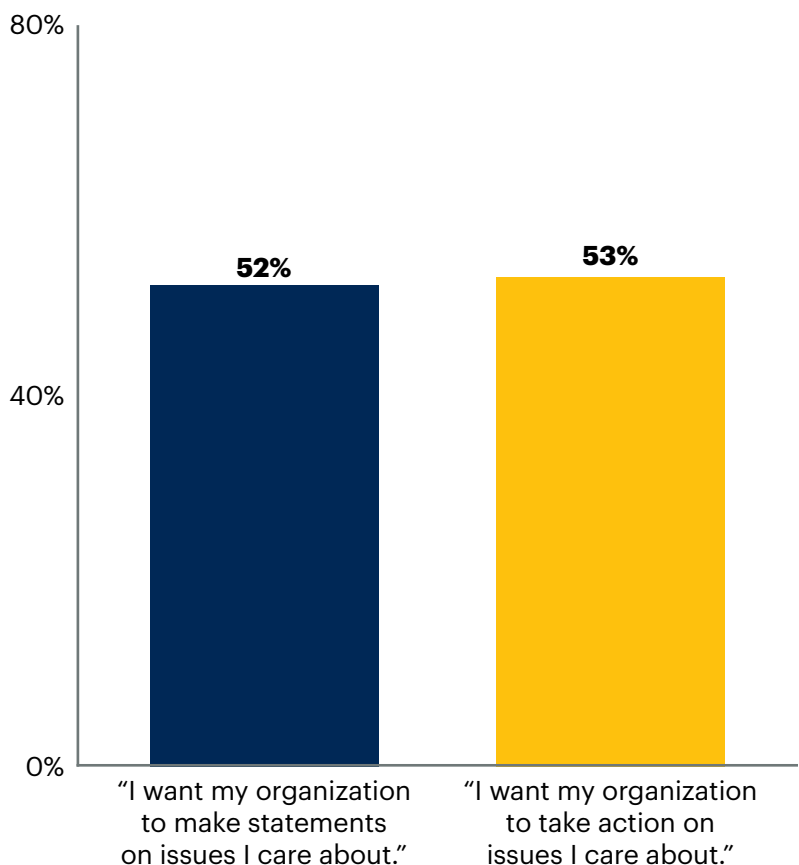
By Delainey Kirkwood



From COVID-19 to racial justice movements to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the world has seen an unprecedented degree of disruption in the past two years. As organizations' leaders have dealt with the business implications of these events, they have also had to contend with **increasing employee pressure** to take a stand on the social and political dimensions of these events.

Fifty-two percent of employees want their organization to make a statement about social and political issues they care about.¹ Moreover, the majority of employees want to work for organizations with a strong social and environmental conscience (65%) and more than half (53%) want their organizations to take action on the social and political issues they care about.²

Figure 1. Employee Expectations for Organizational Responses to Social Issues



n = 5,000 employees worldwide

Source: 2021 Gartner EVP Employee Survey

Additionally, employee sentiment aligns with customer sentiment today, with 70% of B2B buyers indicating that they check to see whether a company supports causes that they care about before purchasing from that company.³ Moreover, 74% of B2B buyers agree that compared to five years ago, they are more willing to boycott companies that don't do social good.⁴

In today's increasingly polarized political environment, leaders might consider neutrality or silence to be the safest course of action on major social and political issues, but employees and consumers view inaction as an intentional choice not to engage. For example, nearly one in five employees said they would leave their organization if it failed to take a stance on racial injustice.⁵

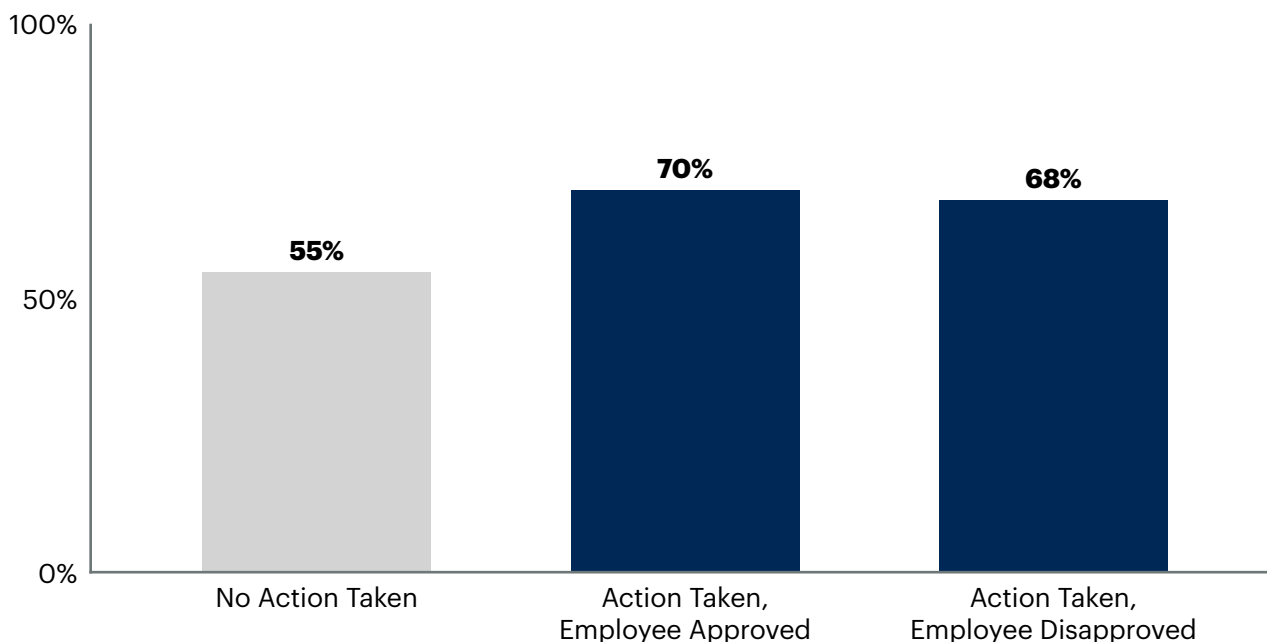
These sentiments present a unique challenge for sales leaders, as they oversee frontline staff who interface directly with customers.

As a major nexus between organizations and customers, sales people feel they need to both feel included in their organization's position on social and political issues and be able to convey it to customers if necessary.

Fortunately, our research shows employees care less about specific responses an organization makes to a societal issue, than the fact that the organization does respond. When their organization took an action on societal issues, 70% of employees felt included when they approved of the action and 68% of employees felt included even when they disapproved of the action taken.⁶ Only 55% of employees felt included when the organizations took no action. The risk of making an imperfect statement is lower than leaders may perceive – only 5% of employees are willing to leave their organizations if the organization's statement is **misaligned** with their personal values.^{6,7}

Figure 2. Degree to Which Employees Feel Included When Their Organization Takes Action on Societal Issues

Percentage of Employees



There is no statistically significant difference in feelings of inclusion between employees with no opinion and employees who disapprove of the action.

n = 5,000 employees worldwide

Source: 2021 Gartner EVP Employee Survey



How CSOs Can Take Action:

While an organization's overall response to a major social or political event will be shaped by a broad range of stakeholders, there are several key actions that CSOs can take to support that response.

1. Pause and Audit Any Major Commercial Campaigns in Light of Current Events

CSOs should re-evaluate customer outreach in light of current events and ensure commercial messages are not perceived as insensitive, exploitative, or counter to the organization's stance. A poorly phrased message or ill-timed interaction can lead to reputational damage for the supplier organization. Suspending, pausing, or altering commercial activity and messaging is challenging and should reflect the company's values, as well as the regional and industry-specific context.

Chief sales officers should collaborate with their organization's marketing and communication leaders to evaluate the financial impact of alteration scenarios, and adjust or pause automated commercial messages that appear inappropriate, unempathetic, or ill-timed as deemed necessary. When assessing messaging, err on the side of caution and consider:

- Could the tone of the message be considered inappropriate or opportunistic?
- How or to what extent are our products or services connected to the events?
- Are competitors suspending or adjusting their commercial outreach?

Given the dynamic nature of contentious events, it is important to regularly revisit the decision to suspend commercial messages with cross-functional partners. Changes to commercial messaging should be proactively communicated to sellers directly from the head of sales.

2. Ensure Sales Activities and Incentives Align with the Organization's Statement

Employees and customers often respond positively to organizations that take action, but they also respond negatively when they feel the message or the action is inauthentic. An organization's actions, and by extension those of the sales organization, must be consistent with the organization's public statements and values.

For example, over 600 companies have announced they are voluntarily curtailing operations in Russia beyond what is required by international sanctions, in-line with widespread international condemnation of Russia's invasion.⁸ Yet there have also been recent instances in which organizations only ended commercial relationships after facing employee outcry and public condemnation.⁹ To ensure authenticity, sales leaders must *proactively* ensure commercial activity aligns with the organization's public statements.



3. Educate Sellers to Convey the Organization's Statement and Provide Tailored Messages to Customers

More so than many other parts of the organization, sellers frequently engage in live, direct interactions with customers where they may face complex questions on their organization's stances.

Chief sales officers should provide their sellers with resources to understand the company's public stance and communicate it to customers either in real-time, if necessary, or by referring them to centrally-provided messages. Sales leaders should collaborate with internal communications to provide sellers talking points and FAQ documents about the company's response. This will promote language alignment. Sales leaders might also consider directing frontline managers to run brief role-play conversations with their sellers to evaluate their ability to address customer questions and likely responses to the organization's statement.

¹ 2020 Gartner EVP Employee Survey; n=5,000 employees

² 2020 Gartner Reimagine HR Employee Survey

³ Me, My Life, My Wallet, KPMG

⁴ 2021 Gartner Corporate Social Impact Survey; n=3,000 audience members (including B2B and B2C customers, employees and community activists). The 2021 Gartner Corporate Social Impact Survey was conducted online in February 2021 and includes data from 3,000 consumers, B2B buyers, activists, and full-time employees from the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Australia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa and India. Respondents answered questions based on their experience with a particular company they had a preexisting relationship with (i.e., employees responded about their employer; B2B buyers and consumers responded about the company they considered purchasing from; activists responded about a company that has a local office/facility in their community).

⁵ 2020 Gartner Civic and Social Engagement in the Workplace Survey; n=4,000 employees

⁶ 2021 Gartner EVP Employee Survey; n=5,000 employees worldwide

⁷ 2020 Gartner Civic and Social Engagement in the Workplace Survey; n=2,453

⁸ Over 600 Companies Have Withdrawn from Russia - But Some Remain, Yale School of Management

⁹ McKinsey Ends Work With ICE Amid Furor Over Immigration Policy, The New York Times

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Managing Sales Revenue and Compensation During the Russian Invasion of Ukraine

By Mike Katz



After taking immediate action to safeguard employees, CSOs must turn to urgent organizational challenges and prepare for rapid market changes. Among these next steps, CSOs should address compensation, supply chain disruption, and revenue considerations.

CSOs now face new and stark commercial challenges stemming from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Although these practical challenges are not on the same level as immediate safety concerns, they are still business critical issues that must be addressed. Seemingly overnight,

businesses found themselves cut off from large markets, navigating newly established sanctions and facing a new slew of supply chain disruptions. Almost two years after the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, CSOs are facing a second "once in a lifetime" event.

Address Sales Compensation Disruptions to Protect Sellers' Financial and Emotional Well Being

To salespeople living in (or adjacent to) a military zone, compensation instability is synonymous with physical and psychological insecurity. Their critical priorities are things like food, shelter and possibly transportation — all things that cost money. Compensation instability can compound the stress and negative impact of lack of access to these critical priorities. In that light, sales leaders must prioritize sales compensation as part of their broader response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Responding to compensation disruption, in the simplest sense, means ensuring sellers are paid whatever they would have earned under normal market conditions. Organizations trying to achieve this outcome typically must manage both logistical or practical challenges around disbursing payment and making the necessary earnings adjustments.

To address potential logistical challenges, CSOs could consider pre-paying sellers directly impacted by the conflict for 3-6 months, to ensure they have the resources to stay safe and survive. Unfortunately, both economic sanctions and military activities on the ground can make the typical means of transferring and holding currency difficult, so CSOs should investigate alternative payment options, with an emphasis on getting cash into the hands of employees as quickly as possible. In extreme circumstances, some organizations are even stockpiling cash in conflict-adjacent areas to ensure rapid local availability.

Rapidly changing conditions during wartime also mean that windows of opportunity for transferring cash may appear quickly and without warning. Coordinate closely with internal finance and legal colleagues and be ready to move quickly when opportunities to disburse funds to employees emerge.

CSOs will also need to determine how to compensate sellers who may not be able to achieve their full earning potential due to the conflict. There are two key options CSOs should consider to ensure sellers are fairly compensated in these circumstances:

① Adjust Compensation in Response to Disrupted Markets

- **Pay** sellers based on results during another period (e.g., last quarter's achievement value or last year's value)
- **Pay** sellers the amount of their on-target earnings
- **Pay** sellers the average of a comparable group of sellers whose accounts were not disrupted

② Adjust Compensation in Adjacent Markets

- **Remove** quota and revenue credit from the compensation plans for specific impacted geographies or accounts
- **Pay** sellers as if distressed accounts achieved quota

Mitigate the Impact of Supply Chain Disruptions

In response to supply chain disruptions from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, CSOs must work with supply chain and logistics leaders to prioritize distribution of existing supply, assess individual account tolerance for delays, and communicate to sellers the engagement plan moving forward. Take the following actions and subsequent steps to mitigate damages you may be facing:

Prioritize accounts for service.

- ☐ **Triage** accounts for which inaction means long-term damage to revenue or customer relationships.
- ☐ **Prioritize** accounts to identify must-ship orders based on contractual obligations, strategic partnerships, and profitability mix.
- ☐ **Communicate** priority changes internally to ensure compliance.

Manage outlier demand for channel partners and distributors.

- ☐ **Identify** outlier purchases from channel partners as some partners may place heavy orders to preempt supply challenges.
- ☐ **Limit** quantities from channel partners with outsized demands unless there is a compelling argument otherwise.

Test limits of customer flexibility.

- ☐ **Collaborate** with regional and industry leaders to assess existing inventory and confirm what compromises in terms of quality and volume customers are willing to accept.

Support sellers frustrated by having nothing to sell.

- ☐ **Share** the indicators leadership is monitoring for signs of improvement.
- ☐ **Collaborate** with marketing to create talking points for sellers to share with customers.
- ☐ **Give sellers a sense of purpose** through internal projects and charitable work.
- ☐ **Work** with enablement to use downtime to help sellers build on important skills.

Realign Resources to Protect Revenue

A CSO's strategic imperative is to reanalyze target markets and accounts in the new political environment. Major elements of the economy have been significantly impacted by the war, with segments ranging from zero buying activity (e.g., companies impacted by sanctions) to expanding activity (e.g., natural resource suppliers outside the affected region). It is important to identify how rapidly-changing events are impacting existing segments and their potential for revenue. Organizations that undertake a holistic, segment-level analysis will be best positioned to strategically realign resources. To execute this analysis, follow these three steps:

1. Deprioritize affected segments.

- ☐ **Work through** the steps in the Target Segment Framework presented in Table 1.
- ☐ **Remove** deprioritized segments before beginning any individual account-level analysis.

2. Realign resources based on the value of these segments to the business.

- ☐ **Move resources** such as people and spend from low potential or impacted segments to focus on high potential segments.
- ☐ **Assess** any impact from outsourced sales support or BPO contracts in impacted areas and shift sourcing as needed.

3. Reevaluate segments frequently.

- ☐ **Re-evaluate** segments and overall go-to-market plans every two weeks during unstable times with standardized and objective decision criteria.
- ☐ **Make** decisions to downgrade and/or upgrade segments quickly.
- ☐ **Integrate** evaluation into a continuous segment update process that can be sustained.

Leverage the framework in Table 1 to reprioritize accounts and segments based on varying levels of impact severity on operations.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has demanded that CSOs take urgent action. After addressing urgent health, safety and stability concerns, immediately turn to protecting your organization and employees' livelihoods. Prompt attention to account segmentation, sales compensation and supply chain challenges will enable you to better position your organization to weather this and any upcoming events.

Table 1. Target Segment Framework

Target Variable	Analysis
Geography	Determine the severity of impacts by geography. For example, identify customers whose supply chains are impacted, such as German and Italian manufacturers affected by restricted Russian gas supply.
Vertical	Prioritize industries with lower impact or faster expected recovery, while deprioritizing those significantly impacted by the conflict. For example, food manufacturers are facing losses from shuttering Russian operations, new highs in grain prices, and limitations in passing price increases on to customers.
Company Size	Review business segments in groups (SMB, midmarket, enterprise). Regional or local businesses may have limited revenue lost to sanctions when compared to multinationals with substantial operations in Russia.
Forecast Growth Rate	Assess the buying power of segments to determine if sales and marketing efforts will yield results. For example, an organization with any Russian ownership or overweight exposure to the Russian market will see a plunge in credit ratings.
Segment Potential	Determine the impact on new purchasing vs. renewal/expansion across your target market. For example, based on the rise of fortunes in some sectors (e.g., natural resources), it may be more attractive to prospect accounts in this sector rather than expand in a sector on a downswing.

Source: Gartner

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Four Scenarios to Assess Long-term Sales Implications of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine

By Betsy Gregory-Hosler

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is a humanitarian catastrophe that is also leading to significant disruption for businesses worldwide. What are the long-term impacts for sales leaders and their organizations? This research provides CSOs with four potential scenarios to prepare now for long-term business effects.



What Is Scenario Planning?

Scenario planning is the creation of hypothetical future business scenarios designed to raise awareness of alternative futures and prepare companies for shifts in the business environment. The goal of scenario planning is not to be “right” about one of the future scenarios. The goal is to assess whether your organization is ready for whatever the future brings on a certain topic.

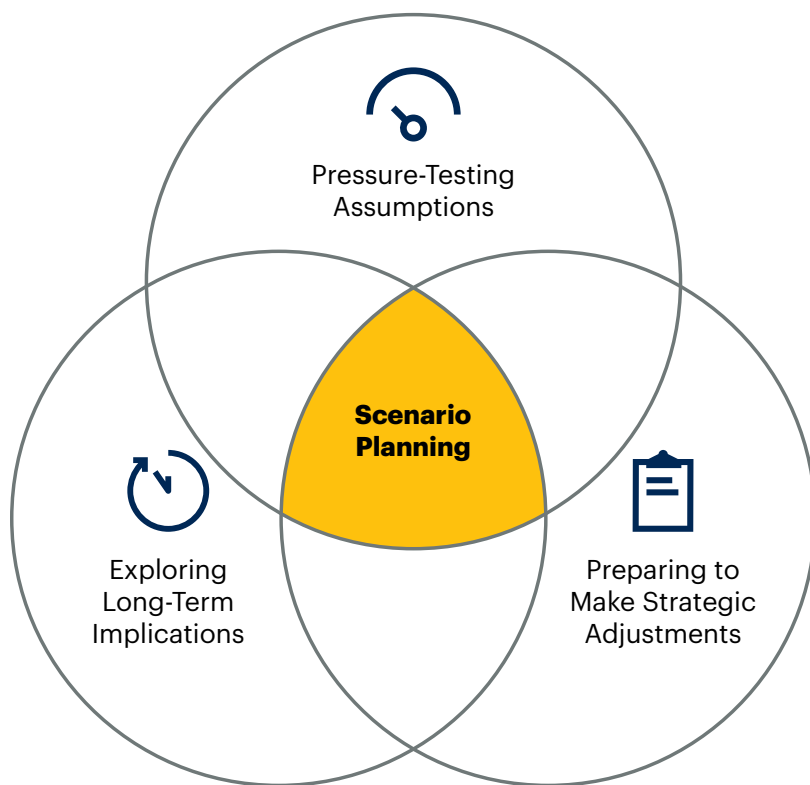
Building Scenarios

For this scenario exercise, we focused on a single issue:

How should executives and their organizations prepare now for potential long-term effects following the Russian invasion of Ukraine?

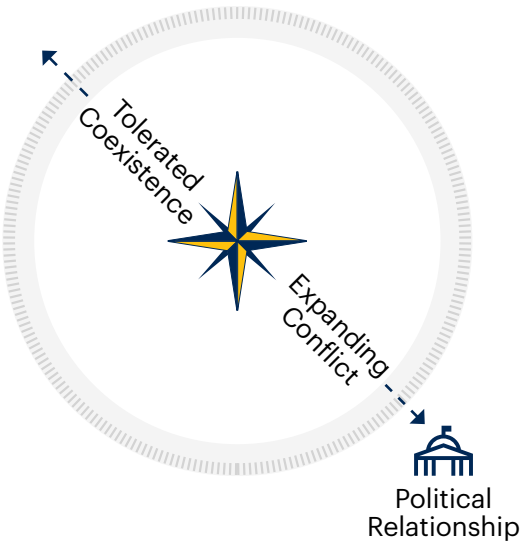
In order to establish relevant and compelling scenarios, we first identify the driving forces—and related assumptions—that (1) most directly affect the issue at hand and (2) are considered highly uncertain. For each force, we identify a range of potential end results and explore what will happen if either extreme eventuality takes place. In this example, we explored two such forces: Political Relationships and Business Exchanges.

Figure 1. Use Cases for Scenario Planning



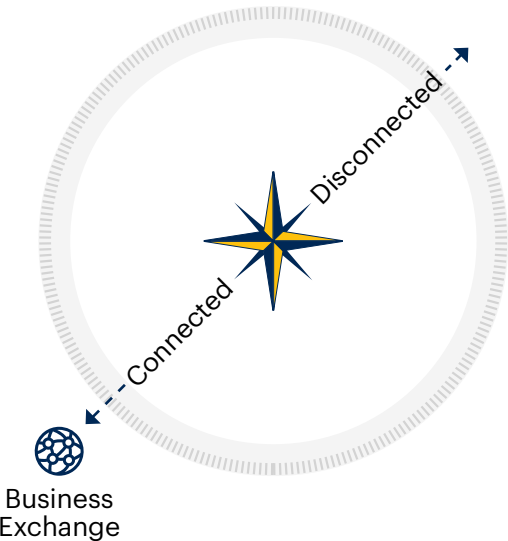
Source: Gartner

Political Relationships



What will political relationships look like in the future? In these scenarios, we assume a continued path toward a multipolar world--a global sociopolitical and economic environment that arises when powerful states emphasize competition over cooperation in building national infrastructure that is then extended into contested spheres of influence. The question is: what will this multipolar world look like? At one end of the range is a state of “tolerated co-existence” and the other is “expanding conflict.”

Business Exchange



What will business relationships look like? One potential end state is “connected” business exchange, with enterprises able to do business in different blocs in the multipolar world. Alternatively, in a “disconnected” world, enterprises would be restricted to operating within their own commercial bloc.



Four Plausible Scenarios

Mapping these potential results together, we considered each quadrant shown below in order to build a related scenario. For example, the circumstances described in “tolerated coexistence” and “disconnect” are considered together to establish the scenario titled: Worlds Apart.

Implications for Sales Leaders

Each long-term scenario points to a different set of potential challenges and implications for sales leaders.

Scenario 1: World Apart

Description: The world is functioning in different political and economic blocs. The power of autocratic states is growing. Each bloc is trying to avoid others as much as possible. Conflict is costly, in terms of human lives and finance.

Western business does not return to Russia. Other blocs also limit their business with each other. Every business is competing within the bloc in which they operate. While there is little direct threat to their independence, growth of the blocs is limited to the area in which they operate. Innovation is the key differentiator.

In this scenario, sales leaders should:

- Redesign their go-to-market strategy and sales force deployment to align with new geopolitical realities.
- Adjust revenue plans and sales forecasts to reflect new opportunities and losses in affected territories.
- Identify impacts from channel partners, affiliates or business processing outsourcing (BPO) contracts outside of the commercial bloc.
- Cancel or modify existing contracts in non-supported blocs.

Scenario 2: Weaponized Business

Description: The Russian invasion of Ukraine marks a political turning point. New conflicts arise and existing conflicts expand. New overt conflicts emerge in other parts of the world.

Businesses are highly aligned with the government(s) in the bloc in which the businesses operate. In addition to enterprises supporting matters of national security and defense, a new breed of business weaponry emerges—enterprises with high consumer impact (e.g., payments, entertainment, travel). The higher the impact, the more eligible for weaponization.

In this scenario, sales leaders should:

- Develop a sales strategy focused on national or alliance interests, security concerns and products which, if removed from the market, have a significant citizen impact.
- Track product sales to ensure compliance with sanctions.
- Update contract terms to limit liability/obligation in the event of war.

Scenario 3: High Alert

Description: Geopolitically, increased instability leads to an increasing number of conflicts. In this new reality, business finds ways to return to Russia, and keep the lights on in other conflict areas too. Business must be on high alert, while keeping significant reserves in case write-offs are needed. Business maintains contingency plans for supply chains and operations in case it needs to withdraw from an area temporarily. Those agile businesses that can operate under the highest levels of uncertainty compete the best.

In this scenario, sales leaders should:

- Re-enter politically unstable areas with a digital-first sales strategy, leveraging revenue technology to streamline all phases of the sales cycle.
- Establish partnerships and alliances to meet local sales needs while providing flexibility.
- Update contracts and customer communications to acknowledge potential disruptions.
- Minimize customer uncertainty through contingency planning, for example, navigating supply chain disruptions by coordinating acceptable substitutions with agreement to return to the status quo when possible.

Scenario 4: Rebuild Bridges

Description: The Russian invasion becomes a wake-up call to the world. Other nations see the cost of geopolitical conflict as unbearable. This is the most optimistic scenario for business. Business returns to Russia and Russian businesses seek closer relationships to the West. Businesses compete globally. But this is not a world that is "back to normal." Businesses tread cautiously, as the basis for business is smaller and the volatility is higher than in the previous decades of globalization. Businesses compete again on a global scale, but they still rely on continued contingency planning.

In this scenario, sales leaders should:

- Reset the rules of sales engagement by managing expectations for market reentry and revision of contract terms.
- Re-establish sales partnerships.
- Rebuild customer relationships with a focus on empathy and understanding customer needs.
- Build confidence and trust through close partnerships and by repeatedly delivering "as promised."

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12 July 2022, 1:00 p.m. BST

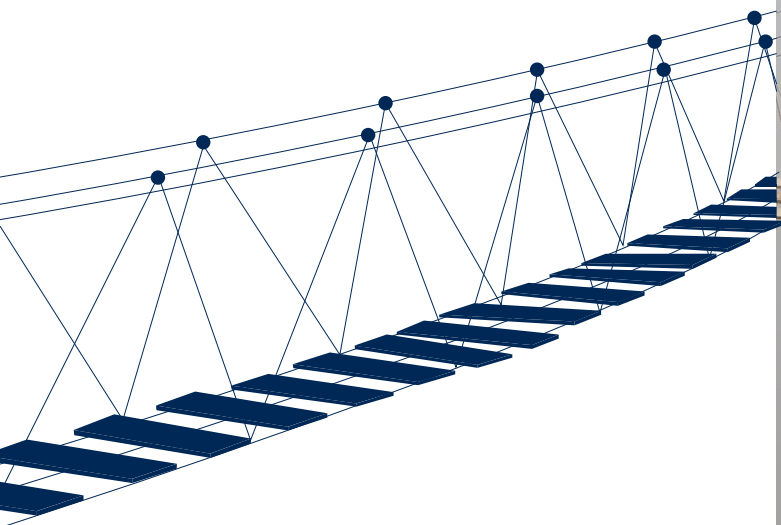
23 August 2022, 10:00 a.m. PST

Next Steps

In order to leverage the potential of long-term strategic planning, sales leaders should assess the robustness of their current portfolio of initiatives against each scenario and formulate a plan to respond to the scenarios if they materialize.

- **Assess** the vulnerability of current growth initiatives by considering how successful they are likely to be under each scenario. If the scenario should come to fruition, would the initiative be at high risk of failure, somewhat at risk, neutral, suitable for the scenario environment or very promising?
- **Create an action plan** for each initiative identified to be at risk in the pressure-testing exercise. The action plan should include any necessary adjustments to initiative strategy and goals, and actions needed should the scenario materialize.

The long-term effects of the Russian invasion of Ukraine are unclear. We expect over time that reality will shift between, and even back and forth across, multiple scenarios. We also expect the impact for various industries to be very different. The value in these scenarios is to provide some guidance on how you can stress-test your current strategies, and create new strategies, to deal with multiple potential realities.



Resources for Executives and Their Teams Amid Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

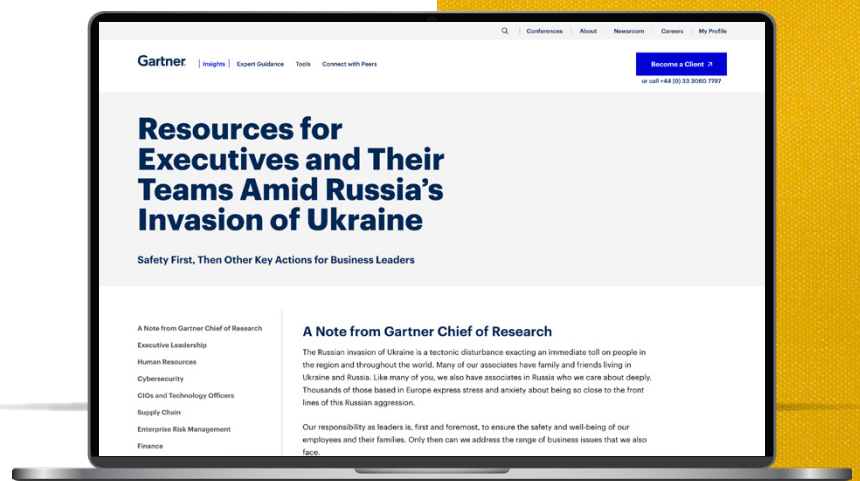
Safety first, then other key actions for business leaders

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Leadership Spotlight: **Leading During Disruption**

By Betsy Gregory-Hosler

An interview with Denise O'Brien, senior vice president, sales at Aramark. She discusses leading her sales organization through the digital transformation prompted by the pandemic and how Aramark engages with social disruption when it arises.



Denise O'Brien

Denise O'Brien currently serves as the Senior Vice President, Sales. O'Brien is charged with partnering with the market-facing business to support and drive Sales Enablement, Enterprise Sales, B2B Marketing and Sales Analytics. Her time at Aramark has included leading the Business Dining East Region as RVP and serving as VP, Global Sales Enablement and VP, Business Development. Denise launched Aramark's first Women's Employee Resource Group and was recognized for "Top Line Growth" and "Most Engaged Employee." She is a graduate of Cornell University.

You have a professional background in hospitality preceding your move to sales. How did you come to be a sales leader?

I really got bitten by the sales bug during my first opportunity to partner with a sales leader. Sales is all about solving problems. It's about navigating where the client has a pain point. It is so much fun to figure out how we can help a client solve their problems. My deep passion is enabling our teams to understand why the client comes first and how we can support whatever their specific goals are. When we put the client first, sales is deeply connected to hospitality. Once I got exposed to that, I couldn't go back.

Of the many disruptions impacting the business world in recent years, which has had the largest impact on your sales organization and how have you managed that?

Aramark covers 10 different industry spaces, each of which experiences a disruption very differently. How a particular disruption impacts higher education is very different from the same disruption in healthcare. So from that perspective, each industry will have its own experience.

From my perspective, the biggest and most all-encompassing disruption was the inability to meet with people face-to-face during the pandemic. Many of the products and services that we provide are service and hospitality-oriented and the vast majority are connected to food. Our sales processes relied heavily on being in-person with clients to demonstrate the impact of our services. Suddenly, we didn't have anyone in-person. We were moving from those personal, productive business relationships to remote relationships, and we had to be able to demonstrate those products and services via Microsoft Teams calls.

How did you identify which changes needed to take place when face-to-face meetings were no longer an option?

You have to trust the Field. The Field knows what their clients and prospects need. In our corporate environment, we've got to enable them to deliver what they need at any given moment. It's about respect and trust for the frontline and empowering them to make the right decisions.

We had to really shift gears to support virtual presentations. If we couldn't be in-person with you to show you how our services might impact your work day or your students' education, we had to take a different approach. We had Production lead



live streams where the prospect receives a box in the mail, for example, and an Aramark chef guides them through preparing a meal. I would argue that this type of engagement is a sales experience. It is creating a different level of connectivity through the screen, which accelerates the sales process.

When the pandemic hit, Aramark demonstrated remarkable agility when some of your industries—like business dining—were heavily impacted. Could you discuss how you accomplished that?

Some parts of our business had to reinvent themselves to identify new opportunities where our skill sets and qualities could be applied. For example, our sports and entertainment sector dropped significantly because, for example, Major League Baseball wasn't operating. That business refocused on other types of experience selling and won. We recently won a partnership with an amusement park company, for example. We had never run large scale amusement parks before, but we had obviously run hotels and leisure, so we now have the ability to provide the service in the new venue.

The approach was prompted by our leadership who has tremendous respect for and trust in the Field and in customized experiences. There are elements that Aramark scales across the company, like our purchasing power and the sales community training, but the actual execution has to differ significantly for each client. We joke that if you've been to one Aramark account...you've been to one Aramark account. The sales organization is connected to individual environments in a very customized way. We have to be slow enough to hear what the client is saying, but fast enough to apply the best practices that we can lift and shift from other areas. That is what is critical.

What are the most important elements of navigating a sales organization through a major disruption and transformation like this one?

First it's having trust in the Field, but also backing up our sellers with the sales training and development that we launched during the pandemic. We train our sales organization to have freedom within a framework, but the framework had to be restated. We had to remember the basics to give them confidence to be able to execute. They can sell in their differentiated ways, while still doing those sales motions in a deliberate way.

You have to have a safety zone. When you implement a sales approach, it's important to allow the Field to try it out. Then you can go back and make subtle adjustments. The Field has to know that you heard their input.

How do you give them confidence? Is it communication? Providing what sellers need?

I think it is those things and then repeating them to show them that you have their back and they can rely on you.

Gartner research has shown that employees frequently expect their employers to make a statement on social issues as they arise. Has this been your experience?

Yes, I think that is important. The appropriate reactions will vary based on events, of course. For example, we don't have business in Ukraine, but we do have business in surrounding areas. So our perspective is less political, but is one of caring. We have to ask - how can we help people in those situations?

Is there a risk to responding?

It's often riskier to take no action. In the absence of communication, people make up their own facts. That is much more dangerous. Our business is about taking care of people. It is about hospitality and providing a customized experience. I can't imagine any situation where

we couldn't address a situation from that vantage point. It's not about something being right or wrong. It's about how we can affect and support the clients in that geography or space because whatever it is, it is happening. For us, it wouldn't be right not to address the issue at all.

For example, in the higher education business, when small, vocal student groups protest about a topic that is important to them, even when based on information that may either be misleading or even false, we reach out to engage with the students. Our outreach is both to engage and to share the facts, and this has resulted in new relationships and connections. We want to hear what the students and our employee groups want to say, and we want to share factual information, showing both our authenticity and caring about those we serve. That is our approach to any of these situations, regardless of the topic.

What is your biggest sales challenge this year?

Maintaining our momentum. We had a tremendous sales year last year, but people are physically and mentally tired. There is a lot of fatigue from the pandemic and the need to maintain agility while increasing volume. The labor market challenges and inflation are all headwinds on our ability to deliver.

We had Employee Appreciation Day yesterday. Our messaging focused on mental health and acknowledging the challenges everyone is facing. The activities got great feedback from the Field because people were so happy that we were discussing mental health openly. We are making it clear that it's ok to say that you're not ok.





Quant Corner Corporate Action (or Inaction) Impacts Employer Appeal

By Esther Liu and Betsy Gregory-Hosler

In a tight labor market, employers must use every tool at their disposal to ensure a strong and tailored employee value proposition. Gartner research has identified the key attributes that employees cite as most important to them when accepting a job. These attributes include over 30 individual items across five categories: rewards, opportunity, people, work and the organization.

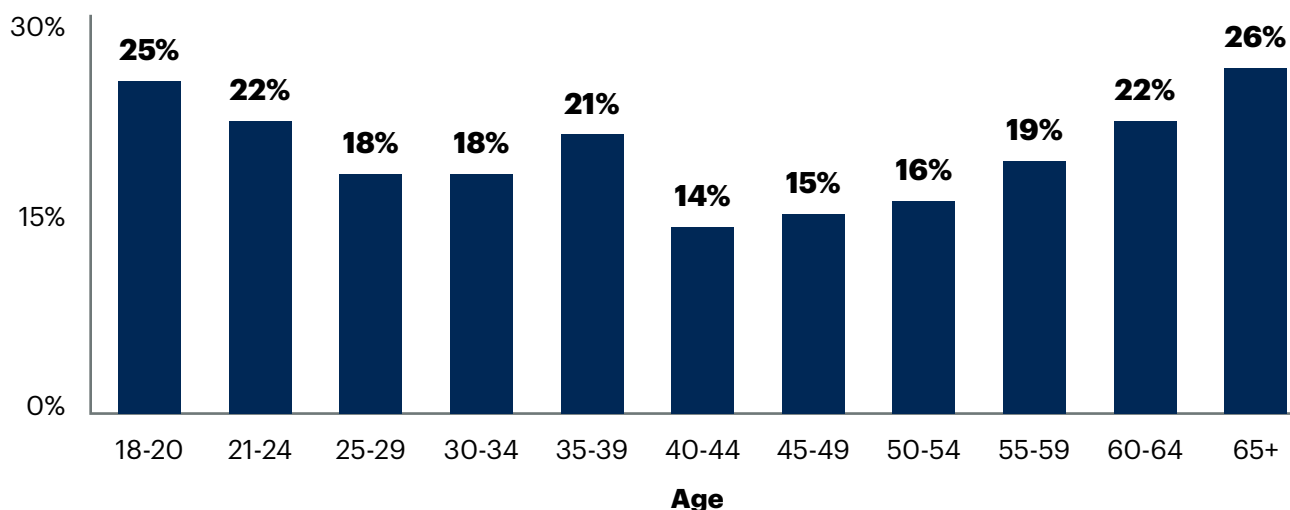
Our 2020 data show that younger sellers—your potential future hires—are more likely than most of their colleagues to identify social

responsibility and ethics among the most important employer attributes.

- While ethics is in the top 10 most important employer attributes for all sales employees, it ranks among the top five for 23% of 18-24 year-olds. This is about five percentage points higher than most sellers between 25 and 59.
- Among a subset of Gen Z sellers (ages 21-24), 11 percent selected social responsibility among their top five, twice the rate of older sellers (ages 45-59).

Figure 1. Young Sellers Place Greater Priority on Ethics

Percentage Ranking Ethics Among the Top Five Employer Attributes

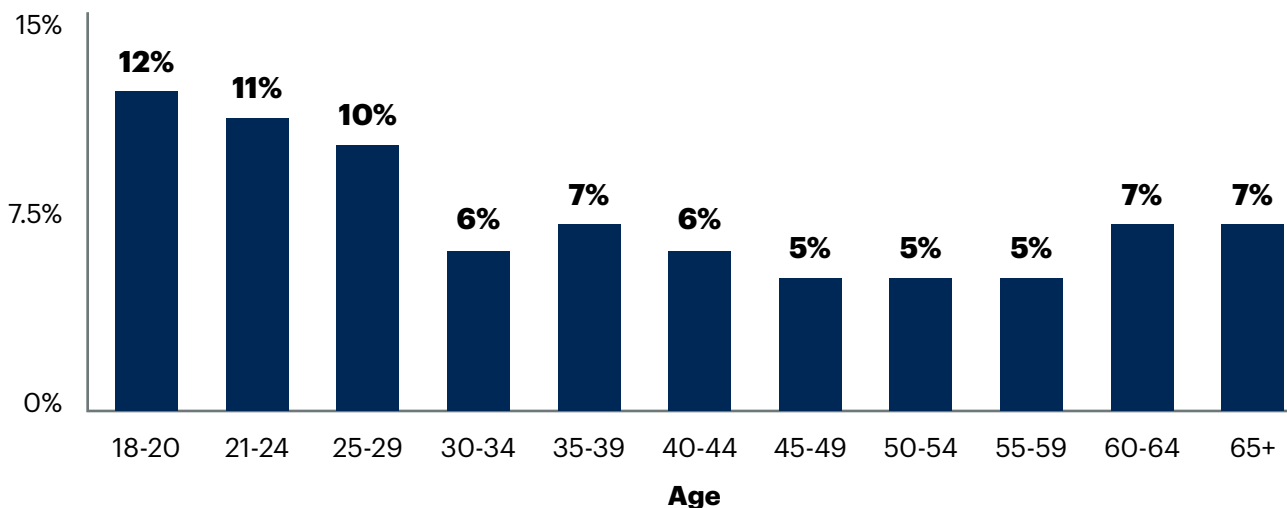


n = 6,028

Source: Gartner Unified Benchmarking Platform (Jan-Dec 2020)

Figure 2. Young Sellers Place Greater Priority on Social Responsibility

Percentage Ranking Social Responsibility Among the Top Five Employer Attributes



n = 6,028

Source: Gartner Unified Benchmarking Platform (Jan-Dec 2020)

While these percentages may seem small, with over 30 factors to select from, the fact that the factors are selected for the top five is a strong statement. In addition, these sellers chose ethics and social responsibility over other critical factors like great employer recognition, industry,

product brand awareness and empowerment. Therefore, as sales leaders weigh how, or whether, to respond to social or political events, they need to consider not only employee and customer opinion, but how that action or inaction will affect their appeal to future employees.

These sellers chose ethics and social responsibility over other critical factors like great employer recognition, industry, product brand awareness and empowerment.

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