CRISIS RESPONSE

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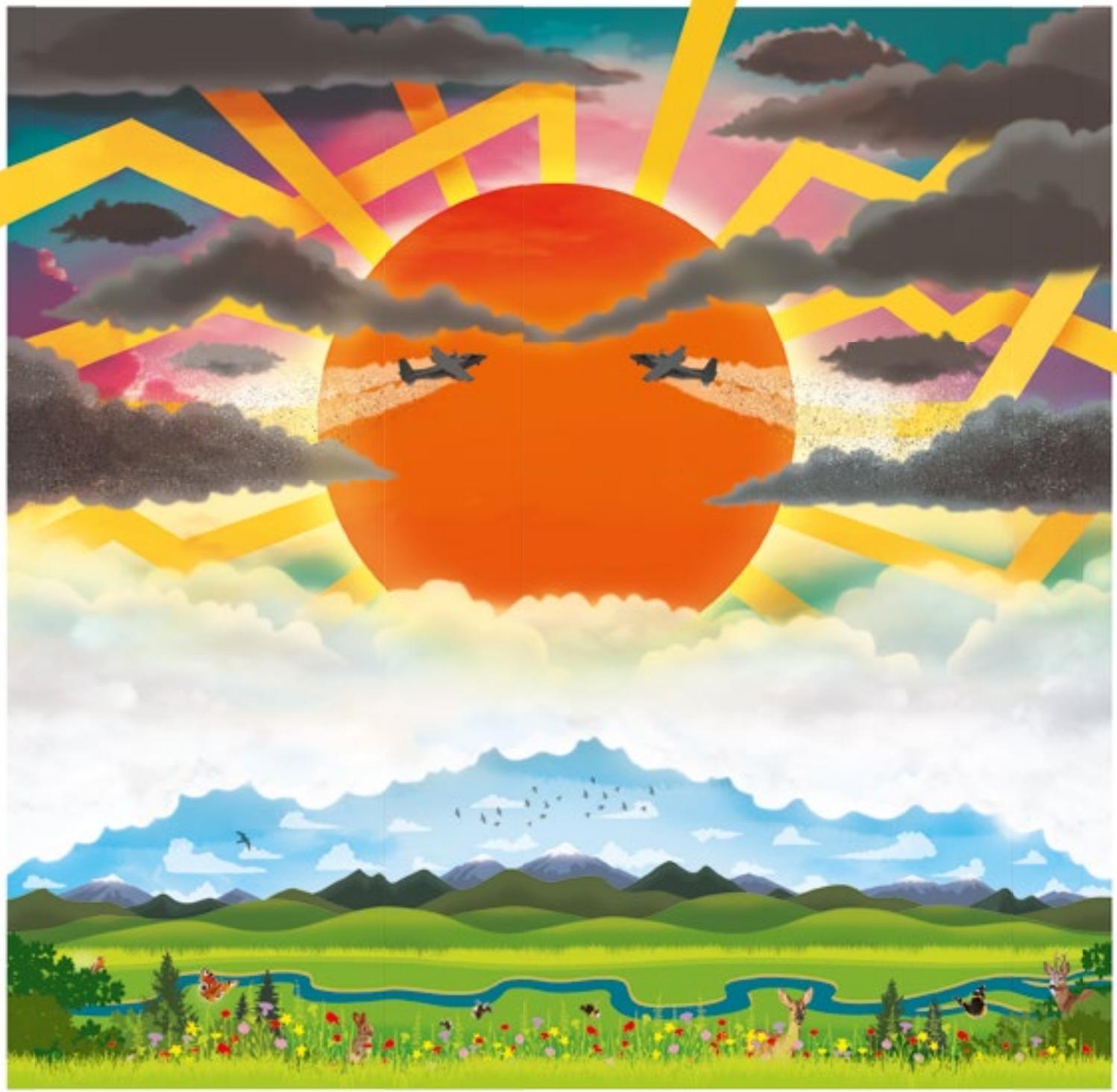

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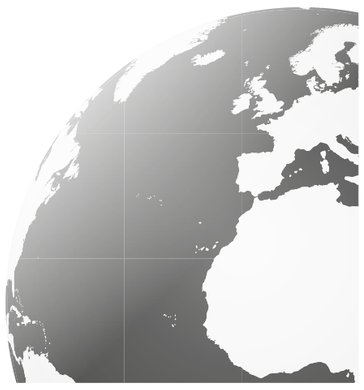

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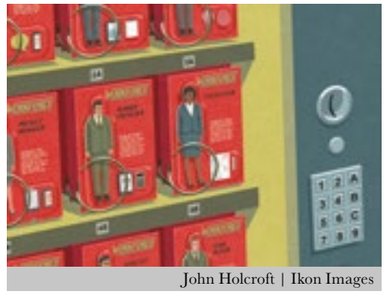
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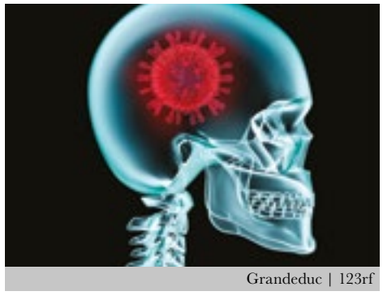
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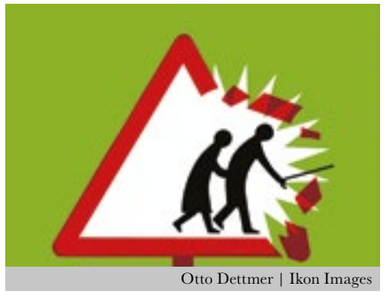
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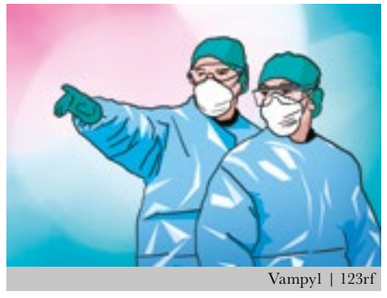
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comment

On top of the millions of deaths and protracted health consequences brought about by this pandemic, Covid-19 is a particularly cruel crisis in that it isolates and deprives people of the comfort they would normally derive from the affirming company of other human beings. As Lyndon Bird says on p8: "We are social animals. We need to get together to share thoughts, feelings, ideas, hopes, and sometimes complaints."

Of course, technology has helped with multiple ways of communicating that were unimaginable just a few years ago. But although many of today's virtual methods of communication are widely viewed as being here to stay, in some circumstances human contact is, quite simply, irreplaceable. Virtual interaction can never fully replicate the complex subtexts and nuanced cues when meeting another person face-to-face.

Words and body language are vital, as described in Jeannie Barr's exploration of communication and vocabulary used during emergencies. The choice of language and tone can be either helpful or detrimental in a crisis (p73).

On p64 Lina Kolesnikova examines how Covid-19 has disrupted working and shopping habits, as well as the ways we access healthcare and information. She says that the very essence of what we define as 'critical' infrastructure is being transformed. This brings new risks in terms of resilience and security, including in the areas of technology we have come to rely upon during Covid-19.

Design is another undervalued but essential piece in the jigsaw of humanitarian and emergency response disciplines. David Wales notes on p76: "As the meeting point between states and communities, public service agencies would greatly benefit from making design a standard approach."

The key lies in understanding people – their culture, fears, concerns, past experiences and predispositions. Michele Wucker calls this an individual's unique risk fingerprint (p44).

All of the above should be combined with a simple shift of focus onto the people dealing with – and affected by – a crisis, says Thomas Lahnthaler (p50). Because, above all, we must not forget that crisis management is about people.

Shining a spotlight on security culture

Nina Smith explains the pressing need for the aviation sector to embed a security culture across all its systems and workforces so that it becomes second nature to everyone working in the industry

The Covid-19 pandemic and its effects have inadvertently created a more widely recognised, new culture across society – one that prioritises public health, social distancing and travel restrictions – at least in the short term.

Existing safety and security cultures are vital mitigation measures to keep the aviation system safe and secure. But the concept of security culture is not fully embedded in the sector in such a way that it could have prevented the pandemic from rattling its foundations. Security culture is not new, of course but, prior to Covid-19, it was arguably still in a phase of being built up, established and embedded – particularly when compared to safety culture, which has been ingrained in people's awareness for a much longer period.

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Being less tangible, the concept of security culture is somewhat more difficult to define than traditional physical security measures. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) offers the most widely used and recognised definition as: "A set of security-related norms, beliefs, values, attitudes and assumptions that are inherent in the daily operation of an organisation and are reflected by the actions and behaviours of all entities and personnel within the organisation." Security should be everyone's responsibility – from the ground up and the top down.

The key element from this definition and the overall concept is the idea that security must be everyone's responsibility and that it should not be seen as a burden or cost, but rather as a core value of an organisation, ingrained and present at every level, process and action.

While initially planned for 2020, ICAO announced 2021 as the Year of Security Culture, providing an apt focus on the topic during a critical time of recovery for the aviation sector.

Although the concept of security culture in general is less tangible than other more physical security measures, it is a critical mitigation measure as part of our overall aviation security ecosystem. There are very few security measures that run through an entire organisation in terms of who carries them out and who has responsibility, and the awareness created through a robust security culture within an organisation recruits the entire workforce to be alert to activity that may be unusual or even outright suspicious.

One need only look at the much more established culture of safety that has become ingrained within the aviation sector and has become second nature, to understand the great benefits from security culture becoming as mature a concept. It is right for us to aim for a similar level of understanding and acceptance of security behaviours and culture, based on the development of safety culture; this is an achievable target.

Regulatory frameworks are becoming a stronger foundation for security culture too, with the concept now well embedded at ICAO level, as well as within the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) standards and the common EU baseline regulation. This will aid the focus on the concept at a national level – guidance material and practical assistance such as training courses are available and are being further developed at a fast pace.

Not only can this protect the aviation sector overall from external threats, including acting as a deterrent to those with malicious intent, but it also protects the integrity of internal systems against the threat of insider activity. Whether intentional or accidental – without intent or awareness – insider activity refers to the enabling of a threat through the actions of our own workforce, one that has largely privileged access to the security systems and associated functions. Insider activity could be as innocent as an employee who has tolerated tailgating through an access-controlled door, or someone who shares too much information on social media. But it can also be more sinister, such as an employee who is exploited for their access during a time when many lives are being turned upside down or, in extreme cases, a disgruntled employee retaining critical access to the aviation security system.

The mitigation that a robust security culture offers to the aviation security ecosystem provides a constant that relies on sustained effort to achieve and maintain a standard where it carries maximum effectiveness. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a seismic impact on the sector, including its security culture. If we look closely at the definition of security culture mentioned above, and its component parts as illustrated in the graphic overleaf, it is clear that no aspect has been left untouched. Organisations have had to make fundamental changes to their structures, processes and operations. They have had to become masters of change management and have operated in crisis management mode for an extensive period, often with a smaller pool of resources than is ideal.

Masters of change management

Of course, every organisation had existing systems for managing those aspects, driven by national and international frameworks. For instance, the implementation of Security Management Systems (SeMS) across the UK's aviation industry over the past six years sees security culture as the bedrock and foundation of an effective SeMS. This is a framework of operating principles and guidance, which enables it to enhance security performance by proactively managing risks, threats, and areas where there are gaps and vulnerabilities that may have a negative effect on performance.

Our employees, the heart of security culture, have been placed under stress in their personal and work lives at a scale that has few parallels in recent history. They may have suffered illness themselves or in their family, undergone economic hardship and instability and have lived with severe personal restrictions governing their everyday lives. We must recognise that we cannot – and should not – simply expect the culture to return to its pre-Covid norms, values and assumptions.

As aviation activities restart, it is therefore critical that the needs of its workforce are understood, so that they can be supported in their contributions to a robust security culture to the best of their ability. For each entity, this may mean that the building blocks of its security culture need to be closely reviewed and an assessment made of how best to proceed in the short, medium and long term (undertaking a gap analysis). For all employees, at all levels, those needs will have changed over the period of the pandemic.

So, does it matter more now, as we are nearing the restart of meaningful activity in the sector? Arguably, security culture has always been important, but given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is critical that restart activities are built upon the best security culture foundation that we can put in place, in order to offer robust mitigation. It is vital that it is not now diminished as a concept simply because it is seen as a challenge too far.

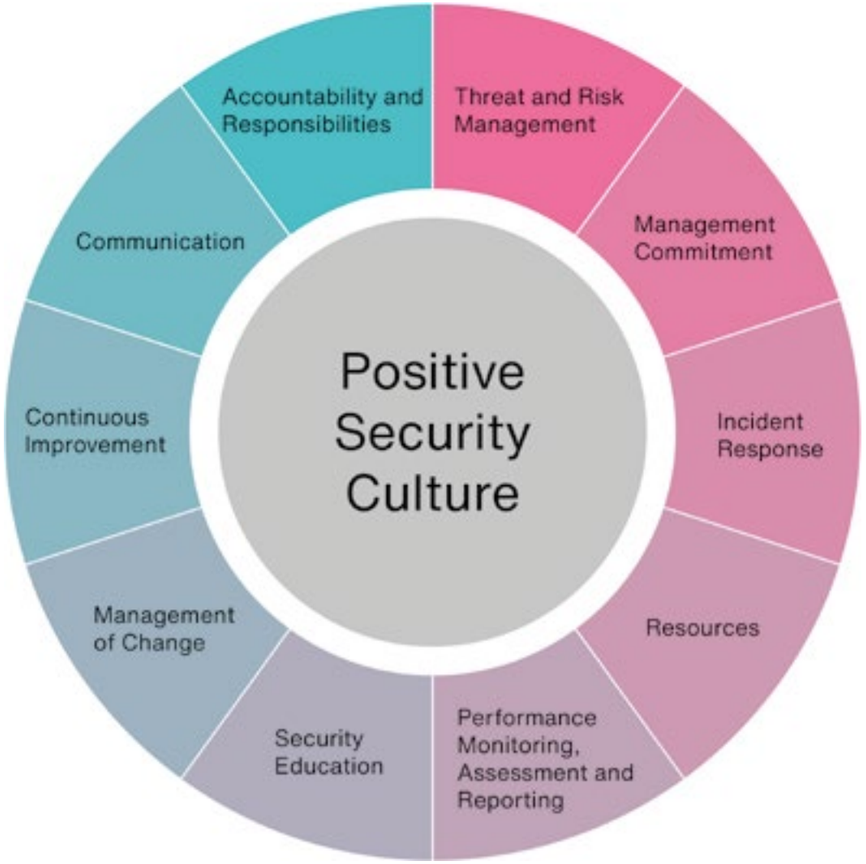
Although the concept of security culture in general is less tangible than other more physical security measures, it is a critical mitigation measure as part of our overall aviation security ecosystem

Invariably, we should be looking closely at the building blocks of what motivates our workforce and supports them to perform well when discussing security culture. This will allow them to contribute to a positive culture of security. It might be argued that the workforce should simply be able to turn up to work motivated and ready to perform, but this is simply not the reality of human nature and such an attitude would lead to a gap between expectation and reality.

Ultimately, performance relies on a workforce being motivated, with the capability, ie knowledge, skills and proficiency; supported by the right accountability or environment, ie structure, processes and policies.

Workforce capability can be supported through the right training, both initial and recurrent, including ensuring that during the restart of aviation activities, returning or new personnel are accommodated in accordance with their needs. This may include additional training for new public health processes, which integrate with security processes and have not previously been required on a large scale. Creating the right work environment is somewhat more of a challenging area at present, with significant changes taking place to accommodate public health measures, which themselves are still changing continually.

Motivation itself is quite an intrinsic concept, but it can be influenced positively or negatively by what we ask our employees to do in their roles and within the environment created for them, as well as external factors. Of course, it is also a highly personal concept and will vary between individuals, though



The component parts of a security culture
SeMS team | CAA

common areas do exist and can be exploited.

The theory of job design suggests that creating roles which, through their very nature include motivational aspects, can be of benefit here. This would include building in task variety, feedback processes, an element of autonomy for the job holder and creating recognition of the importance of the tasks that the individual performs, thus creating context. It may not always be possible to review job roles to allow them to support motivation more naturally, but it should be considered where this opportunity presents itself, particularly at this moment in time.

The working environment is equally as important – the basic building blocks that allow our workforce to concentrate on their roles include, but are not limited to, a positive working environment, job security, good employer-workforce relations and a living wage. From these basic principles, we also need to consider recognition of our workforce as professionals, marking achievement, creating responsibility and providing opportunities for growth in order to increase motivation.

These are all even greater challenges in the current climate, but they should not be considered as optional extras. Rather, they should be viewed as integral parts in supporting the performance of employees, ultimately allowing them to become key players in rebuilding and maintaining a robust and positive security culture.

As with any crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic presents an opportunity. It is a chance for us to stop, reflect, assess, learn and move forward in an even more resilient manner than before. Taking the learning from a crisis allows us to retain the positive developments that emerged from having to work so very differently. This can be the case with security culture – we can use this opportunity, not to return to what we had in place before the early months of 2020 in terms of processes, values and assumptions, but to recognise the effects on the culture within the sector and use this to build a more robust security culture going forwards. It is an opportunity to utilise further the integration of security culture at the heart of what we do, continue to embed it in organisations from top to bottom and benefit from the increased mitigation it will then offer. This is a significant demand to make of a sector that has been heavily affected by the pandemic, but not challenging ourselves to take this golden opportunity will leave us at risk of not fully integrating security culture into restart activities, and therefore not gaining its full mitigating effects. CRJ

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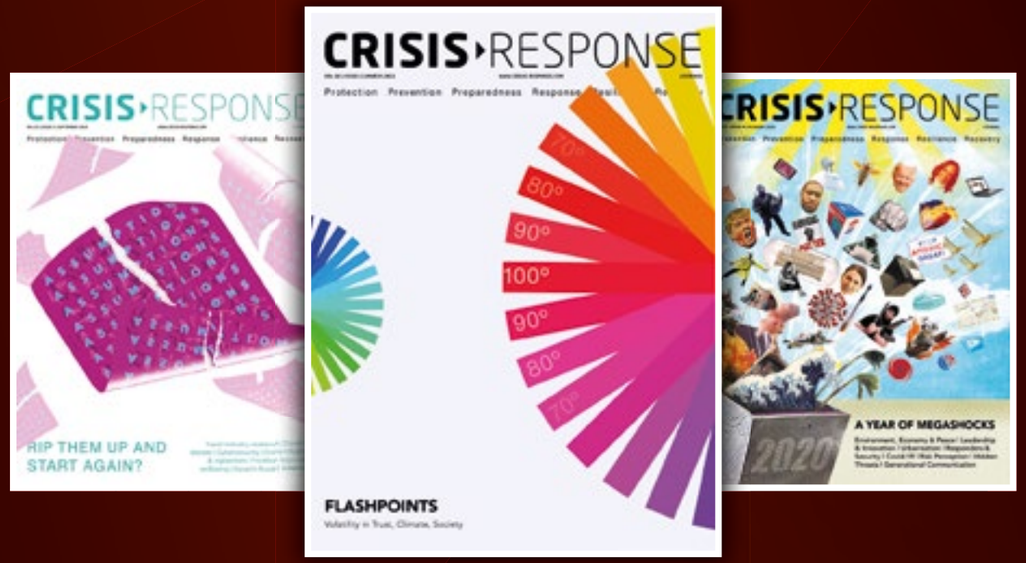

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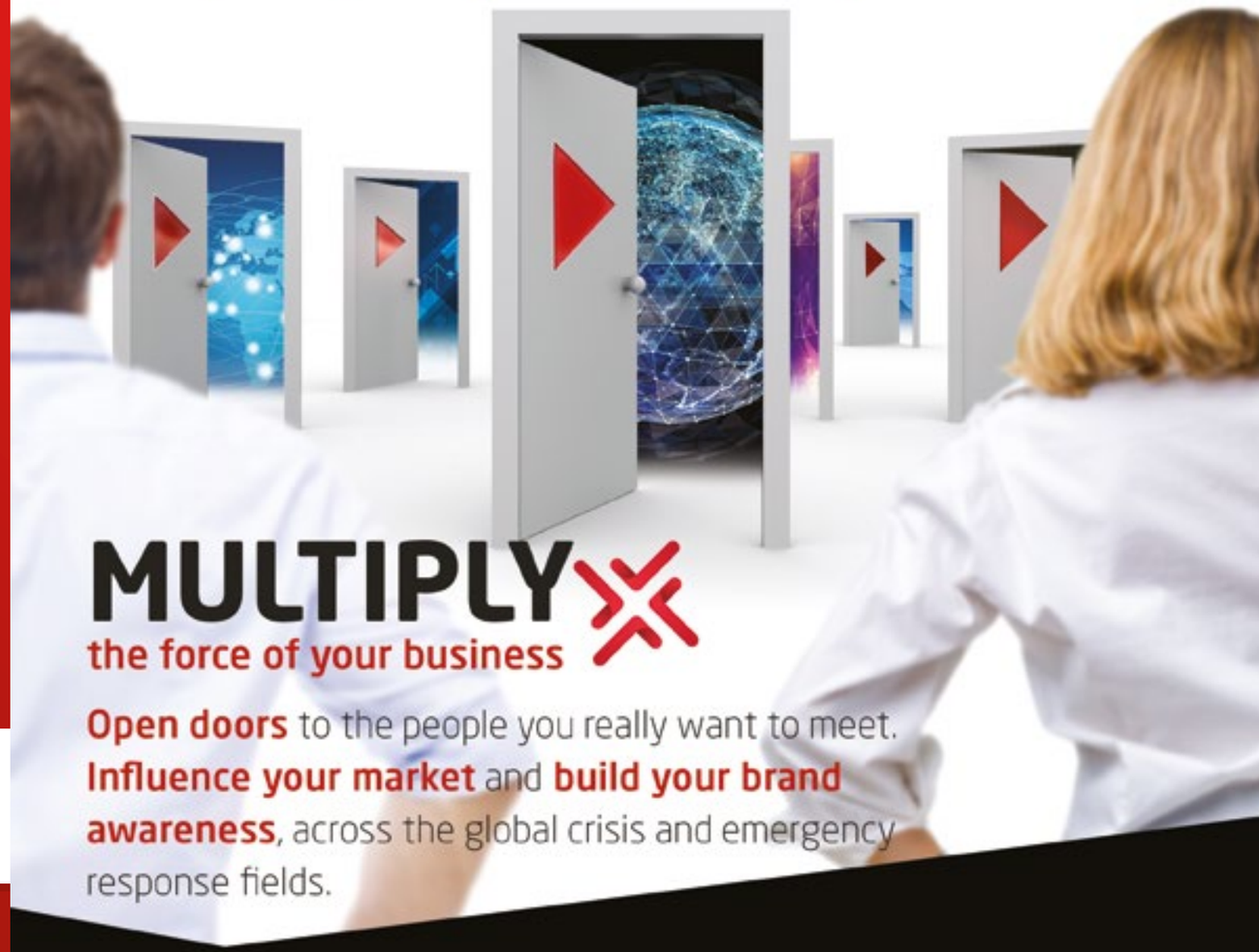

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