



CONNECTION DURING COVID-19 AND BEYOND



by RACHEL WIEST
Manager of International Business Operations

Rachel Wiest has devoted a large amount of her career to elevating public health and serving communities both locally and abroad. She studied Public Health and earned an MS in Health Services Administration from Regis University. Prior to joining the iS team, Rachel worked in hospitals, clinics, and other public health settings where she contributed to policy, reform, and quality of healthcare delivery systems in underserved communities. Rachel currently serves as the Manager of International Business Operations at INNOVATIVE SKINCARE where she utilizes her unique background to engage and support businesses on a global scale.

Much of our [iS CLINICAL](#) global success is rooted in the fact that we have long-standing and deep relationships with our global partners. By nature, business requires that we connect in creative ways and utilize many forms of virtual communication.

With over 24 time zones in the world, connecting with our global partners and their teams can be challenging, but the time and energy that we put into being virtually present with our global partners surpass any physical distance between us. This proves that relationships are truly borderless, and that success is not necessarily rooted in physical time spent, but rather in the quality and consistency of time spent, be that in person or virtually.

While these relationships have been virtually cultivated over many years, it is never too late to take your face-to-face interactions to the next level and to begin to connect in alternative ways.

Here are a few strategies to help you navigate digital connection during COVID-19 and beyond.

Lead with a genuine interest in one's well-being and leave business at the door. For now.

I had been pursuing a new partner for the past eight months and before COVID-19 hit, we were closer than ever to reaching an agreement. Rather than sending an email pushing execution of a contract, I simply emailed and asked after him, his wife, three daughters, his staff and his business and made no mention of our business dealings. He responded five minutes later thanking me for my concern and he initiated a conversation regarding the next steps of our business relationship!

The next time you reach out to a partner or prospect, focus on investing in that relationship through personal connections. You may be surprised what this will do to help reinforce brand loyalty and business building, all while practicing social distancing!

Lend your skill sets to those around you and help your partners and prospects plan for the future with you.

If there is one thing that is certain, it's that people are making or will soon be making plans for the future of their businesses. Those plans are either going to be made with you or without you, and now is the time to lend your expertise to help your relationships create results today and strategies for the future.

- Whenever possible, try to connect with your partners via Facetime, Zoom, or WhatsApp! These platforms allow you to hear tone when on a call and read body language and facial expressions. When listening to your partner's needs, these nonverbal cues will allow you additional insights on how you can support your clients personally and professionally. Keep in mind that it is OK to pivot from the strategies you may have used prior to COVID-19. What our partners and prospects need now are fresh insights and creative solutions.

- Explore new ways to engage your partners and prospects through your own out-of-the-box thinking. Some individuals and businesses are struggling to stay positive and to move forward. Help your accounts to get unstuck and motivated by coming to the table with digital business strategies, education initiatives and new sales ideas. Serve your accounts in a new way and help them envision a new way forward.

At the end of the day there will be a new business-as-usual model and it will likely continue to include a virtual approach to doing business. When our partners and prospects sat down at the beginning of the year to map out their 2020 business plan, it did not include COVID-19. Now is the time to adapt and to help your accounts to plan for an even better digital future.