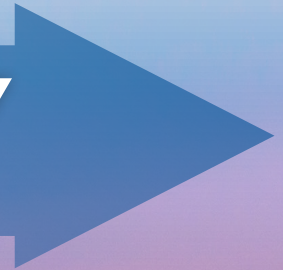


MARYLAND

**THE DAILY RECORD**

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MARYLAND  
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MARYLAND'S  
**TOP 100**  
**WOMEN**

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2021 HONOREES

Join us for our online awards celebration!

**May 13, 2021**  
**5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.**

**Tickets: \$55 plus tax**

**Purchase tickets  
online at**

**[thedailyrecord.com/top-100-women](http://thedailyrecord.com/top-100-women)**

**Your ticket includes:**

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- Video shout out messages from our sponsors congratulating our winners
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# BGE supports Marylanders and small businesses with pandemic recovery



The COVID-19 pandemic quickly impacted the health and safety of Marylanders in March of 2020, leading to state-mandated closures of businesses, schools, and other organizations to help mitigate the disease's toll in the state.

These decisions had a secondary impact of long-term harm to the economy, with many small businesses finding themselves barely surviving or even having to close permanently. In many cases, financial help from the federal government and other sources hasn't been enough.

BGE recognized an opportunity to expand the safety net, pledging \$15 million in COVID-19 relief and recovery assistance specifically for small businesses in central Maryland. The majority of the funds will be disbursed through the BGE Energizing Small Business Grant program, which provides qualifying businesses \$20,000 to help with pandemic-related costs.

"We recognize the vital role that small businesses play in driving the

Maryland economy. Now more than ever, job creators need a boost to help them recover from the pandemic's far-reaching impacts," said BGE CEO Carim Khouzami. "Our hope is that BGE's Energizing Small Business Grants will provide much-needed help to hundreds of small businesses in our community. This is part of a multi-layered plan to provide direct assistance to energy customers, area nonprofits, and government partners to help put Maryland back on its feet for

the long-term, as this public health crisis begins to lift."

The grants program is a multi-year commitment expected to run through at least 2023 as part of BGE's comprehensive Customer Relief and Energy Infrastructure Investment Plan, designed to help the state's businesses and residents recover from the economic hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Three application periods will occur each year the grants are available – in 2021, 2022, and 2023. The



first round of applications for 2021 have been reviewed and recipients will be announced at the end of April.

To apply during the next two periods this year (May 5 – June 16 and Sept. 1 – Oct. 13), businesses must apply online at [bge.helloalice.com](http://bge.helloalice.com) and meet the following criteria:

- For-profit business located within BGE's service area
  - Existing BGE electric and/or gas customer with good payment history
  - In good standing with the State of Maryland
  - Must have between 2-25 employees (full-time, part-time, contractors)
  - Maximum annual gross revenue of \$7 million
  - Demonstrated need of funding to support business and serve customers
- "Small businesses are the backbone of Maryland's economy and are job creators,

especially the historically underrepresented minority-owned and women-owned businesses," said Rodney Oddoye, BGE's senior vice president of Governmental and External Affairs. "An equitable economic recovery will benefit everyone, and it is our responsibility to be a leader in the effort to ensure that small businesses have access to extra financial resources so they do not get left behind."

While the Energizing Small Business Grants program supports businesses, both small businesses and small nonprofit organizations can also take advantage of BGE's Small Business Energy Solutions program. This program provides a complimentary on-site analysis of energy use and easy-to-follow recommendations on ways to save energy and money.

Participants can also

redeem incentives that cover up to 70% of the cost of qualifying upgrades to lighting and refrigeration controls and pay the remaining 30% of the cost over 12 monthly payments through a no-interest BGE Small Business Energy Advance.

St. Philip's Church, the oldest African American Lutheran church in North America, recently took advantage of the Small Business Energy Solutions program and will save \$2,400 in annual electric costs while reducing emissions after an LED lighting upgrade.

The green energy project at St. Philip's Lutheran Church aligns with its environmental mission, according to its energetic young pastor, Louis R. Tillman, IV. That mission includes supporting a clean and healthy life for its community.

The LED lighting project

brings many benefits to the church:

- Return on their investment of less than three years, with a projected cost savings of approximately \$2,400 annually.
- Reduced carbon footprint – LED bulbs use less energy and last longer so less waste goes to landfills.
- Lower electric bills – which free up funds for some of the church's community initiatives, like a community garden to help fill the gap when food boxes run dry and need-based scholarships for 30 college students this school year.
- Crime deterrence – as the bright lights discourage trespassing.

BGE's comprehensive efforts to support Marylanders during the COVID-19 pandemic also include a \$1.5 million contribution to the Fuel Fund of Maryland in addition to annual customer-funded support, \$1 million in funding to county-administered business pandemic relief funds and extending flexible payment arrangement plans to help qualifying customers maintain their electric and gas service. The Energizing Small Business Grants program and all nonprofit contributions are made using shareholder dollars and are not reflected in customer bills.



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# Management Style – The Necessity of Communication and Flexibility in Challenging Times



**By Robert Wells, Principal at Miles & Stockbridge**

**I**n these unprecedented and challenging times, it can be difficult to hold on to the comfort we have been afforded in our reliance on certain universally accepted norms. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us all to reconsider and re-evaluate aspects of our lives and society that, just a short year ago, we would have considered unquestionable. From our ability to freely enjoy holiday celebrations with our families and loved ones to enjoying the near-absolute freedom to cross international, or even interstate, borders, with

virtually no conditions, most of us took relief in believing that certain norms would remain unchanged, and therefore little thought or consideration was required on our part. While COVID-19 has altered that perspective and completely disrupted many of our comforting ideals of these indisputable norms, one constant that has not changed—and, in fact, has become more solidified—is the necessity of effective leadership to navigate organizations through difficult times. Now, more than ever before in their careers,

managers must effectively communicate with their teams and exhibit significant flexibility in order for their organizations to thrive as we move rapidly toward the post-pandemic world.

The ability of leaders to effectively communicate, both to their teams and customers, is the most critical element in the success or failure of any effort to navigate a crisis. There is no doubt that it is vital for leaders to rapidly identify dangerous situations and to act in ways that show a degree of comforting command and control. However, in his study of the most successful and unsuccessful responses

to public emergencies, noted political scientist Arjen Boin has found that ultimately effective crisis leadership requires leaders to craft and deliver a narrative that helps clarify the problem and unite people in a way that creates consensus.

There are several things that should be considered to ensure that you are communicating effectively as a manager/leader. First, be sure to focus on essential information. Communication has changed dramatically even over the past 10 years, so leaders should assume that their audiences are literally being bombarded with

information from multiple sources. As a leader trying to navigate your organization through this crisis, you should be sure to focus your communications on providing the information that matters most in articulating and explaining the organization's positions, and that is most important to building the necessary organizational consensus for your actions. Also, managers should be sure to communicate broadly and repeatedly. Effective leaders appreciate that their audiences receive information in a variety of ways, so they adapt their communications to be sure that their messages are heard by everyone throughout the organization. From a practical standpoint, this approach may mean moving beyond the typical manager press release-like announcements to an approach that involves employing multiple media formats, including regularly scheduled virtual conference calls or town hall meetings, or internal video posts. Effective managers also should take the initiative to proactively provide information that addresses questions or concerns that are likely already on the minds of their teams. This technique requires managers to be thoughtful and collaborative so that they are just as familiar with the issues that keep their audiences up at night as they are with their own concerns. Finally, effective leaders are able to communicate in ways

that demonstrate their own vulnerabilities—managers should not be afraid to be transparent about the things that they simply do not know. In addition, managers can demonstrate vulnerability by explaining how the situation is affecting them personally. Both the transparency to acknowledge that you may not have all the answers and to share that you too are being affected—in a relatable way—helps to build trust throughout organizations in challenging times.

Throughout this pandemic and in the foreseeable future, we will continue to hear messages about the need for professional flexibility. Flexibility is often talked about in business circles to focus on workforce management issues, including the availability of remote working environments. To be clear, flexibility in managing working locations will continue to be a pressing issue for managers. Recent data from a report prepared by the IT security firm Tessian showed that only 11 percent of employees said they wanted to work exclusively from their offices post-pandemic, with the remaining 89 percent favoring some degree of a partial remote environment. Significantly, 35 percent of employees indicated they would not work for a company without flexible working options.

Undoubtedly managers will need to take full consideration of this dynamic attitude toward working environments and, to the extent possible, remain



flexible in their approach to ensure they remain winners in the talent wars. However, beyond simply taking a flexible view of work sites, effective managers will have to continue to exercise significant flexibility in their overall styles and approaches to best serve their organizations. Many managers will need to stretch beyond their own comfort zones (generational or otherwise) to embrace communication styles and techniques that they may have previously actively avoided in order to be sure that they are effectively connecting with staff and customers to

achieve the organization's goals. This willingness and ability to demonstrate personal and organizational flexibility will be invaluable in the post-pandemic world.

As Charles Darwin said in 1809, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change." Darwin's observation remains useful to us in this post-pandemic world, and that ability to adapt and survive lies within the individual managers and leaders of our business organizations.

# SAVE THE DATE!



## MARYLAND THE DAILY RECORD

### MARYLAND'S TOP 100 WOMEN

May 15, 2021

Maryland's Top 100 Women recognizes high-achieving Maryland women who are making an impact through their leadership, community service and mentoring. Three-time winners are inducted into the Circle of Excellence.

### Leadership in Law

June 17, 2021

Leadership in Law recognizes Maryland's legal professionals – lawyers and judges – whose dedication to their occupation and to their communities is outstanding. This event also honors up-and-coming lawyers through the Generation JD award and identifies exemplary careers through the Lifetime Achievement Award.

### Health Care HEROES

June 24, 2021

Health Care Heroes will be honoring those organizations and individuals that have made an impact on the quality of health care within Maryland. Categories include: Advancements in Health Care, Community Outreach, Health Education Hero, Lifetime Achievement, Mid-Level Provider of the Year, Nurse of the Year, Physician of the Year, Volunteer of the Year and Workplace Wellness Program.

### INFLUENTIAL MARYLANDERS

July 29th, 2021

Influential Marylanders honors individuals who have made a significant impact in their field and are influential leaders for their organization. Honorees are selected by The Daily Record's editors for significant contributions in their field. Three-time winners are inducted into the Circle of Influence.

### VIP LIST VERY IMPORTANT PROFESSIONALS

September 23, 2021

The VIP list recognizes Maryland's leaders who are 40 years old or younger based on their professional accomplishments, community service and a commitment to inspiring change. They are selected by an outside panel of judges, including previous winners and business leaders.



October 4, 2021

The Daily Record readers nominated, voted for and support these outstanding organizations.



November 2, 2021

Most Admired CEO honors talented business CEOs and nonprofit leaders whose leadership and vision are admired by those around them. Three-time winners are inducted into the Circle of Influence.



December 7, 2021

Leading Women celebrates women who are age 40 or younger for the tremendous accomplishments they have made so far in their careers. They are selected based on professional community involvement and a commitment to inspiring change.



December 13, 2021

The Icon Honors award recognizes Maryland business leaders over the age of 60 for their notable success and demonstration of strong leadership both within and outside of their chosen field.



April, 2022

The Women's Leadership Summit will convene Top 100 Women, Leading Women and Maryland's network of women professionals to learn about important topics facing women in business today, give back to the community and create mentoring relationships.

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For more information, call 443.524.8100 or email [events@TheDailyRecord.com](mailto:events@TheDailyRecord.com)