Burnout: How to Spot It and Take Action

Strategies for sustaining a culture of wellbeing
Burnout

“A syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed”

World Health Organization
How does it look?

- Tired/Exhausted
- Checked out/Mentally distant
- Unmotivated
How does it feel?

• I’m drowning.
• I’m letting people down.
• I can never keep up.
• Hopeless
Solution

- Reframe
- Prevent
- Respond
Reframe.
Reframe.

Individual vs Organizational issue

“While workforce wellbeing programs have exploded, we’ve now learned something new: Productivity creates wellbeing, not the other way around. So rather than push people to work more and lavish them with benefits, it’s time to simply and make work easier.”

- Josh Bersin

• Stop framing wellbeing as primarily an individual problem.
• Change the system – your organization.
• Simplify to make it easier for people to do their jobs.
What is one process or thing in your organization that can be simplified to make your job easier?
Prevent.

Make work meaningful, purposeful, and possible

- Meaningful work
- Hands-on management
- Positive work environment
- Flexible
- Trust
- Wellbeing
Prevent.

Get rid of “hustle culture”

Hustle culture is toxic!
• Counterproductive
• Breeds unhealthy competition
• It affects mental and physical well-being
• It neglects work-life balance
Prevent.
Shift the culture to wellbeing

Wellbeing increases productivity!
• Focus time
• Reduce, shorten, eliminate meetings
• Pause late-night emails until the morning
• Encourage asking for help
• Listen
Prevent.
Create a Culture of Coaching

• Move from being a boss to a coach
• Self-awareness
• Start meetings with a question
• Don’t forget to have fun
Mental Health Continuum

**HEALTHY**
Normal Functioning
- Normal mood fluctuations.
- Takes things in stride.
- Consistent performance.
- Normal sleep patterns.
- Physically and socially active. Usual self-confidence
- Comfortable with others.

**REACTING**
Common & Reversible Distress
- Irritable/impatient.
- Nervousness, sadness, increased worrying.
- Procrastination, forgetfulness. Trouble sleeping (more often in falling asleep). Lowered energy. Difficulty in relaxing. Intrusive thoughts.
- Decreased social activity.

**INJURED**
Significant Functional Impairment
- Anger, anxiety. Lingering sadness, tearfulness, hopelessness, worthlessness.
- Preoccupation. Decreased performance in academics or at work. Significantly disturbed sleep (falling asleep and staying asleep).
- Avoidance of social situations, withdrawal.

**ILL**
Clinical Disorder. Severe & Persistent Functional Impairment.
Where are you right now?

**HEALTHY**
- stay focused and present
- break problems down into bite-sized tasks
- deep breathing
- nurture your support system

**REACTING**
- recognize limits, take breaks
- get rest, food, exercise
- reduce barriers to support
- identify and resolve problems early

**INJURED**
- ask for help, talk to someone
- check-in with yourself, notice signs of distress
- prioritize self-care
- stay connected, don’t withdraw socially

**ILL**
- seek help and consultation, allow support from others
- follow care recommendations
- know resources and how to access them
Respond
Put in place mental health supports

- EAP
- Talk about mental health
- Train supervisors and managers
- Practice mindfulness
Takeaways

• Burnout can be eliminated.
• Productivity matters.
• Organization’s responsibility.
• Culture must change.
• Start small and start today.
It starts with you...

What’s one small action you can commit to?
QUESTIONS or COMMENTS
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