MITIGATING

BURNOUT

GROUP FOUR

TRAINING WORKBOOK

How to recognize the causes, effects and warning signs of burnout in your organization. A manager's guide to protect your employees from this workplace threat.

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Texas State University

Our Mission

A group of classmates, united during their final course of the Applied Arts program at Texas State, determined Burnout as a major issue affecting the workplace. We hope to improve the workforce by reducing the effects of burnout on individuals and organizations through education, prevention and proposing potential solutions.
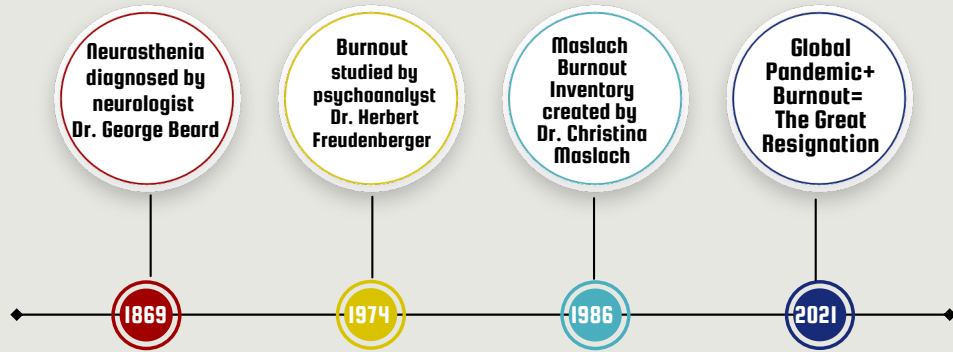
Our Team

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World Health Organization Definition: Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. Burnout refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life.

Neurasthenia diagnosed by neurologist Dr. George Beard — **1869**

Burnout studied by psychoanalyst Dr. Herbert Freudenberger — **1974**

Maslach Burnout Inventory created by Dr. Christina Maslach — **1986**

Global Pandemic+ Burnout= The Great Resignation — **2021**

1

It is characterized by three dimensions: feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;

Exhaustion

2

increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job;

Cynicism

3

and reduced professional efficacy.

Inefficacy

Dr. Herbert Freudenberger (1926-1999) German-born American Psychoanalyst who introduced the concept of burnout in 1974 when he published "Staff Burn-out" in the *Journal of Social Issues*. He recognized that those experiencing burnout were not lazy, but on the contrary, were dedicated and committed to their patients' wellbeing to the point of utter exhaustion.

Maslach Burnout Inventory

"The burnout of individual workers often says more about the workplace conditions than it does about the person"
Dr. Christina Maslach

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) created by Dr. Christina Maslach in 1986 has been adopted internationally to measure levels of burnout. It is available in over 50 languages. The questionnaire is adapted to five different workplace categories, with questions worded differently to relate to medical personnel, human services, educators, college students and other occupations in general. Find the Maslach Burnout Toolkit for your workplace by scanning this QR code
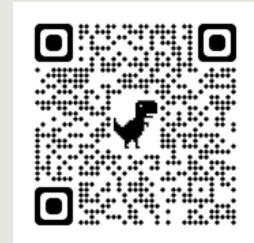
Sample MBI Question

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
I doubt the significance of my work					

MULTIDIMENSIONAL VIEW OF
BURNOUT

Cynicism

Inefficacy

Exhaustion

Burnout 2.0
Poem from a remote worker

Believing in my purpose, and wanting it to thrive
I pushed beyond my limits, I even earned a prize
Work and home-life boundaries became thinner, barely there
With advanced remote technology giving 24/7 care
At first it was fulfilling, but as the days wore on
I stared back at my zoom-bound self, stifling a yawn
Stuck in virtual meetings which could have been emails
I started to feel distant, detaching from the rails
Less autonomy, more demand
Pandemic lends a crushing hand
Everyday there's more bad news
Job mandates chipping at my values
Exhausted, discouraged, unproductive
So much to be done but I have nothing left to give
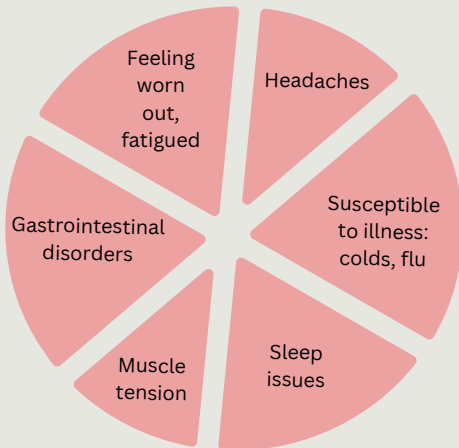--by A. Frouman

Symptoms and Prevention of Burnout

Exhaustion

Symptoms and Effects

- Feeling worn out, fatigued
- Headaches
- Susceptible to illness: colds, flu
- Sleep issues
- Muscle tension
- Gastrointestinal disorders

Prevention Strategies

Reduce stress
through stress management interventions

Self-Compassion
show empathy, love, concern acceptance toward self in difficult moments

Mindfulness meditation
focus full attention on present moments, feelings, sensations without judgement

Cynicism

Symptoms and Effects

- Irritability, anger, hostility
- Withdrawal
- Relationship problems, conflict
- Absenteeism
- Loss of idealism
- Negative or inappropriate attitudes toward others

Prevention Strategies

Build a sense of community
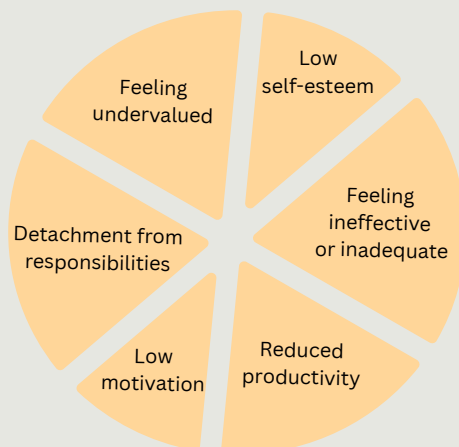share ideas and receive support when needed

Compassion to Others
show empathy, love, concern acceptance toward others in difficult moments

Improve relationships
prevent conflict and give without expecting reciprocal actions

Inefficacy

Symptoms and Effects

- Feeling undervalued
- Low self-esteem
- Feeling ineffective or inadequate
- Reduced productivity
- Low motivation
- Detachment from responsibilities

Prevention Strategies

Increase self-esteem
use compassion toward self and others

Change method of work
gain autonomy

Advocate for organizational change
be vocal about suggestions and concerns join a union

ZOOM FATIGUE

Being on **video meetings** requires workers to *surface act*– display socially accepted mannerisms even when it is the opposite of how they are feeling, Prolonged surface acting adds to emotional exhaustion and also contributes towards workers deciding to quit.

Worker surveys reveal that ***camera autonomy*** can help reduce the stress of a heavy video meeting load. The ability to choose to turn the camera on to show capability and confidence or turn it off when they need a break makes a difference in the stress level of the meetings.

Consider using a **variety** of platforms to connect with your remote team to prevent zoom fatigue!

stressful
tiring fatigue
dread
ugh hate unfair
hide
frustrated
exhaustion
deep-concern
annoyed
draining
uncomfortable
surveilled

78% of workers surveyed had a negative view of video meetings

Workers Without Borders

Powered by high-speed internet, employees from Helsinki to Austin to the United Arab Emirates interact across time zones, languages and currencies 24/7 making burnout a global phenomenon.

FINANCIAL EFFECTS OF BURNOUT

Organizations across the United States are feeling the harsh effects of burnout on their financials. Executives fear the thought of losing employees, employees fear where they are headed and how it will affect their families. Burnout within an organization never just affects one person financially, it affects multiple at a time. With burnout rising more and more in today's world many businesses face possible layoffs due to massive dips within revenue. This causes economic issues for businesses everywhere for both employers and employees. Fully remote workers are now experiencing more burnout than on-site workers. The fear of layoffs only creates more burnout for the employees as they often take their work stresses home with them, not knowing what tomorrow at work may bring.

DROP IN ↓ REVENUE

LONG HOURS

LAYOFFS

BILLS TO PAY

ON THE RISE

TRAINING PROGRAMS

Having proper training can prevent burnout from occurring in the first place and can reduce the amount of burnout that occurs within an organization. Organizations that lack positive training programs loose many employees due to lack of organization, time management skills, polite mannerisms, professionality, and a solid reputation. These are all attributes that employees new and existing look for within a company and or practice. Without these characteristics employees will begin to see the instability of the organization and leave thus affecting the organizations profit which in thus effects their clients, their reputation, and the companies revenue. Therefore, training programs are so important no matter what organization a new employee may end up at. Having proper training can prevent and help fix a multitude of problems that an organization could potentially have or is currently having in the past, present and future.

EMPLOYEE RESIGNATIONS

WORK LOAD & POTENTIAL DROP IN REVENUE

With employee resignations occurring due to burnout, organizations are leaving their employees to tend to more and more loads of work. Gaining more work then causes those employees to start the burnout process and as a result can make them leave their workplace. The cycle repeats itself until there is nothing left, revenue is down, employment is down, and employers are left possibly filing for bankruptcy. A study done by MetLife in 2022, shows that statistically less than 80 percent of employees wanted to stay at the company they were working at for a full years' time.

REPUTATION

Organizational Reputations consist of multiple attributes, like most things some attributes are good, and some are bad. When discussing the reputation of an organization it can tend to be a touchy subject in the aspect that many people's opinions go both ways and are often judged based off of personal experiences or friends/family experiences.

GOOD

WHICH WILL IT BE?

Job insecurity can create burnout quickly for employees. If a company is known to have issues within itself, the employees will start to believe it upon seeing even the littlest things go wrong. Job insecurity is linked to massive problems within the workplace causing employees to view their jobs as pointless, mass layoffs due to less work being completed correctly and drop in revenue due to employees not giving maximum effort.

Employees tend to want an organization that can prosper, grow, and bring out the best in themselves. Future employees tend to want to work for an organization that offers the best financial possibilities and a healthy working environment.

BAD

Company Prevention Methods

There are many methods in which companies can practice to ease burnout among workers. Most of them include hiring supervisors with healthy management styles and providing ample training to them.

Some Characteristics of Healthy Management

- Setting attainable goals
- Providing support
- Adapt to individuals' needs
- Limit over time/ over working
- Be inclusive
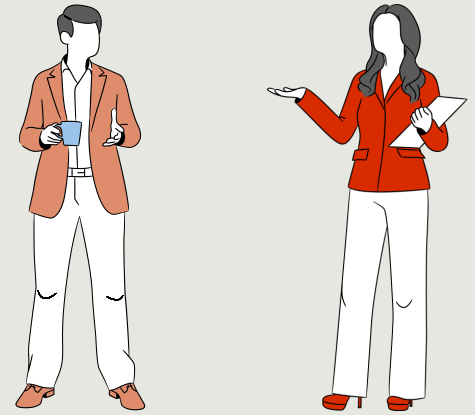
Characteristic	Symptoms Experienced If Not Implemented	Method in Practice
Setting Attainable Goals	Exhaustion, doubts of capabilities and skills, high levels of stress	Assess the worker's abilities when deciding responsibilities
Providing Support	Dread, numbness	Hiring extra personnel when needed, occasional check-ins with workers, being available for conversations
Limit Over Time/ Over Work	Exhaustion	Don't allow workers to stay late or volunteer for multiple projects

Company Prevention Methods

Characteristic	Symptoms Experiences If Not Implemented	Method in Practice
Adapting to Individuals' Needs	Sense of not belonging, emotional drainage, feeling unimportant	Creating routines/ structure, allowing individual worktime
Inclusivity	Isolation, sense of not belonging, physical drainage	Awareness of cultural differences, ensure ADA compliance

Additional Consideration

There are certain populations that are more susceptible to burnout and should be evaluated more frequently for signs. These are younger generations and those diagnosed with mental health disorders.

21% of adult American have a mental health disorder

73% of the workforce are younger generations*

Of 1,000 workers surveyed

12% of younger generations** were diagnosed with depression or anxiety

*Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z
** Millennials and Generation Z

Treatments for Burnout

There are ways to prevent burnout that include finding a more manageable work-life balance, but there is also a focus to treat workers with burnout that has already created an unbalance in an employee's life. The benefits to recognizing and treating burnout can have positive effects on the overall organizations that employees work for.

Treatments include different approaches including devoting focus to treating burnout as a mental disorder through psychiatric treatment.Treatment of burnout also includes focusing on the ways burnout affects the human soul through spiritual therapy. Another therapeutic approach to treating burnout syndrome includes improving one's overall health though activities that involve exercise, healthy diet, and practicing self-care.

There are ways to prevent burnout that include finding a more manageable work-life balance, but there is also a focus to treat workers with burnout that has already created an unbalance in an employee's life. The benefits to recognizing and treating burnout can have positive effects on the overall organizations that employees work for. Therefore, it is important to explore the ways in which effective treatment can reverse the effects of burnout. Treatments include different approaches including devoting focus to treating burnout as a mental disorder through psychiatric treatment.

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Psychiatric Approach

If negative thoughts at work are keeping workers from being able to cope, there are psychiatric therapies that can help treat these symptoms. Using psychology is a scientific approach to study behavior and what happens in the minds of people who have burnout.

Spiritual Therapy

Another form of therapy for burnout is spiritual therapy which is focused on treating a person's mind, body, and soul by paying close attention to a person's beliefs, faith, and values to approach areas of stress or conflict in the workplace.

Diet and Exercise

Because burnout can affect a person mentally and physically, eating well and having good exercise habits and reduce the risks for many diseases. Healthy diet and exercise habits will also have an important positive effect when using good eating and exercise to treat burnout.

Psychiatric Approach for Treating Burnout

Counseling

Professional counseling provided to individuals with burnout can be applied using various techniques. Research has shown that offering counseling to workers with psychological burnout improved productivity and engagement when addressing underlying mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety.

For employees that do not wish to go to counseling for burnout, there are some other ways to improve mental health outside of therapy.

Behavioral Therapy

Behavioral therapy builds on a person's self-esteem and helps them develop a more confident thought process by reinforcing positive behavioral changes. One type of behavior therapy is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) which practices the use of positive thinking to help treat burnout. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is an effective treatment for people who are experiencing burnout and it can be provided as one-on-one therapy, in groups, or alongside other types of help like career counseling or working with employers.

Pharmacotherapy

Many approaches to treatment of burnout with medication are like treating the symptoms of depression and anxiety. Medical treatments are not usually used to treat burnout. However, they are sometimes used to address the problems that sometimes accompany it, such as depression.

Many of the symptoms associated with a patient who experiences depression or anxiety are like the symptoms of burnout syndrome. Symptoms that are treated with medication include depressed mood, loss of interest, loss of energy, reduced attention and concentration, sleep disturbance, reduced appetite, feelings of worthlessness and guilt, loss of self-confidence, negative cognitions about the future, and suicidal thoughts

Spiritual Therapy for Burnout

Meditation

Using mindfulness as a technique to bring awareness to symptoms of burnout can be practiced using meditation. All that is needed for mediation is a quiet place where one can close the eyes and focus on breath control and relaxation. Meditation is a useful and practical skill to help release mental stress and tension that has built up in one's body. Meditation is a simple treatment for anyone to try and it helps people become better aware of their own thoughts and emotions.

Holistic Therapy

Holistic medicine can take several approaches to treating the whole self to relieve symptoms of burnout. The holistic approach is based on treating the body, the mind, and a person's energy. The purpose of holistic therapy for burnout would be to look at the whole person, not just their mental or physical needs. The understanding of the relationship between the body and mind is a good way to manage obstacles that are causing burnout in the workplace.

Exploration of Spiritual Core

Many people believe in things bigger than themselves, and the power of hope. Spiritual core also can involve a person's involvement with a community they find their connections with. Burnout can make a person question who they are and wonder about their purpose in life. This is a way of exploring one's spiritual core which is explores themes of personal reflection on love, compassion, life, and self-truth. Getting in touch with one's spiritual core can include practicing gratitude, meditation, doing loved activities, and opening one's heart to positivity.

Using Diet and Exercise to Treat Burnout

Exercise

Regular physical activity is important to your overall health. With exercise a person can manage weight, reduce the risk of disease, and build strength to have the ability to do everyday tasks. Endurance and brain function can also be improved through having a regular exercise routine. Workers are more likely to work more efficiently and have more energy to get through their work responsibilities if they practice daily exercises.

Diet

Burnout can cause mental exhaustion, and there are a variety of foods that are a healthy choice to combat the symptoms of mental stress that accompanies burnout. Some healthy choices include dark leafy greens, omega-3 rich foods like fish, nuts, citrus fruits, berries, and dark chocolate. Epidemiologic studies show that people who eat whole foods instead of processed foods have less risk of developing depressed mood or burnout adhering to a Mediterranean diet that is rich in vegetables and fish, and this study showed 30% lower risk of developing symptoms of depression.

Self-Care

Self-care can be the practice of looking after one's health by exploring information and making decisions that empower individuals to take responsibility for their own well-being and can be done collaboratively with a medical professional or health care provider. There are many strategies that one can have for a plan of action to self-care. Many of the treatments mentioned before can apply to the concept of self-care such as eating healthy, getting exercise, and spiritual or social activities. Self-care can also include reading a book, spending time with friends or support person, and asking for help. One effective form of self-care for a worker who is experiencing burnout out might be to plan a trip or outing to go someplace they have never been to before.

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