

Employees Struggling With Burnout? Here's How To Address This Organizational Issue

Chronic job stressors, environmental factors, and a looming recession can cause burnout across the corporate board. There are some ways that management can address this workplace threat.

Burnout can emerge from any number of factors or mismatches when it comes to human needs and job roles. Burnout factors can include lack of competence, belonging, and psychological safety. While many extraneous factors that contribute to burnout (such as a looming recession) are out of the control of leadership – some factors can be mitigated or addressed in the workplace.

It's a leader's job to meet their employees where they are and to maintain a consistent channel of communication. If you sense burnout is threatening your team or a staff member, it's time to take steps to address it.

Here's how you may be able to address burnout from a management standpoint.

Consider Job Realignment to Meet Employees' Needs

Improving an employees' alignment with their job and its functions can help to ease the stressors in the workplace.

This job realignment can be temporary such as working from home or flexing time during a challenging time. Or a job realignment can be long-term such as removing less effective tasks or projects off of an employee's plate permanently to lighten their mental load over time.

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Ensure that job realignment and rebalancing is well-communicated with employees. It should be as much their choice as it is yours to realign their workload. Employees should be assured that it is not their failing, but to ensure their continued success over time in the workplace. Don't underestimate the power of positive words and complimentary rhetoric in this time as your employee may be particularly sensitive as a result of impending burnout.

Provide Attainable Goals and Monitor from a Distance

Employees who are struggling with burnout do not need the stress of fancy performance plans or Knowledge, Performance Indicators (KPIs). Following a realignment, management should provide simple and attainable goals to allow for "wins". Lessening the mental load can allow for greater focus on a single project and better overall performance over time.

Once attainable goals have been provided, be sure to monitor your employee from a distance. Those who are struggling with burnout know they're capable but need the space to find that again. Micromanaging, constant check-ins, or the classic "how are you doing" may send the employee over the edge in terms of mental health. Ensure that the employee knows that you're there to support them and you have faith in their skills and ability.

Keep it Simple

In line with the previous advice about fancy KPIs, your employees don't need to feel as though the job realignment is overcomplicated. If an employee is mismatched in their job – rematching their role with who they are in that moment doesn't need to be complicated. As stated, this can be as simple as offering flex time or work-from-home days to allow for better work/life balance during a challenging time for an employee. Don't make it a big deal.

The best managers and leaders understand that if the work is done, to a high standard, and delivered on time – it doesn't really matter where or when the work is being completed.

Build in time to Assess and Reassess

Taking the time to assess and reassess the job rematch it's important. This gives both you and the employee time to ensure that the changes that have been made make sense. This also means that when a temporary solution or situation is in place, it can be removed when the employee is ready. Don't forget to communicate that changes may be temporary depending on the needs of the employees, but they can remain in place for as long as is needed to prevent burnout or mental health crises.

Are you worried about burnout as a manager?

Many leaders, CEOs, business owners and managers are feeling an increased worry around burnout. If you're sensing that your team is becoming disconnected or starting to disassociate with their roles it might be time to step in. A proper and sensitive response to burnout can mean loyalty, increased productivity, decreased turnover or work absences, and more. Burnout benefits nobody so be sure to keep a close eye on your staff to ensure that you're taking a proactive approach to burnout prevention. ♦