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# avoiding burnout

**IN AN ERA WHEN ORGANISATIONS** are seeking to squeeze more productivity out of less resources, they often fail to take into account the difference motivated employees can make.

Replacing good staff can be very difficult. It is a great shame for both the employer and employee when an excellent member of the team is lost to an organisation due to burnout. Employee burnout is not a temporary situation after a difficult week. It is a physical, emotional, and mental state of exhaustion caused by a demanding environment and/or an inability or desire to meet those demands. In this article I will look at the symptoms of burnout and the different methods employers and employees can use to avoid it. So how do you know if you, a loved one, or someone who reports to you is suffering from burnout? Here are the early warning signs.

1. Chronic fatigue - exhaustion, tiredness, a sense of being physically run down.
2. Anger at those making demands.
3. Self-criticism for putting up with the demands.
4. Cynicism, negativity, and irritability.
5. A sense of being besieged.
6. Exploding easily at seemingly inconsequential things.
7. Frequent headaches and gastrointestinal disturbances.
8. Weight loss or gain.
9. Sleeplessness and depression.
10. Shortness of breath.
11. Suspiciousness.
12. Feelings of helplessness.
13. Increased degree of risk taking.

Following are a number of ways that employers can help reduce employee burnout:

- Allow employees to talk freely with one another.
- Reduce personal conflicts on the job.
- Give employees adequate control over how they do their job.
- Talk openly with employees.
- Support employees' efforts.
- Maintain current levels of employees' benefits.
- Recognise and reward employees for their accomplishments and contributions.

Employees too, can contribute to preventing the experience of personal burnout. Here are a few suggestions to reduce the threat of burnout:

1. Laugh! Medical studies show that laughing reduces stress and helps your immune system. Laughter releases endorphins into the brain, helping to reduce stress hormones.
2. Close your eyes, breathe deeply and slowly count backwards from 10.
3. Plan a transition activity between work and home.
4. Have a hot bath, spa or sauna.
5. Have a massage.
6. Have a facial or some sort of pampering after work.
7. Have a night out with your friends.
8. Exercise. People who exercise regularly, eat well, and have a good social life generally cope with workplace stress. Exercise releases tension, assists in the processing of vitamins and minerals and releases endorphins, making you feel better.
9. Be rational. Ask yourself, what's making me feel this way? How likely is it that this will happen? What's the worst possible outcome of this situation? How does this outcome affect things in the big picture?
10. If you're working on a computer, give your eyes a break. Look away from the screen every five minutes or get up and walk around every 30 minutes.
11. Leave work at work.
12. Have a shower and change your clothes as soon as you get home.
13. Plan after-work activities with your family or friends.
14. Change your attitude and be more optimistic.
15. If mornings are rushed and stressful, get up earlier so you have more time.
16. Prioritise.
17. Decorate your work area with things you like.
18. Leave the office for your lunch break.
19. Be thankful you have a job at all!

Most of these are fairly basic tips but they are fundamental and often overlooked. If you have any further questions or need advice, please feel free to contact Event Recruitment on (02) 9279 2019 [info@eventrecruitment.com.au](mailto:info@eventrecruitment.com.au), [www.eventrecruitment.com.au](http://www.eventrecruitment.com.au)