

Just in case

2nd Quarter 2020 Manager Newsletter



Building culture during tough times

During tough times, teams may run in survival mode. This can make it harder to innovate, collaborate and maintain quality.

To learn more, [click here...](#)



Helping your staff cope with burnout and fatigue during COVID-19

COVID-19 is creating a lot of stress for people. And if you and your team are essential workers, you know about stress. Essential workers not only have the pressures that come with their jobs, but now they have to deal with the health risks of simply going to work.

Here are some ways to help your staff cope...



Leading through change

Change is constant. But what happens when the change is big? What happens when the future feels uncertain? And how do you support and guide your staff when there is no "business as usual"?

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Building culture during tough times

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During tough times, teams may run in survival mode. This can make it harder to innovate, collaborate and maintain quality.

As a leader, you set the tone for success through adversity. Even if you're working remotely for the first time ever or you and your team feel under-equipped, it's all about communicating openly to find better solutions. And you get there by helping others be:

- **Fearless.** It's natural to be scared when times get tough. As a leader, it's important to keep an air of calm. Reassure team members when they get scared, too.
- **Genuine.** Honest dialogue can be a building block for positive change. It doesn't matter if you're talking to employees face-to-face, over the phone or through the latest software application. Being genuine creates opportunities for continuous improvement.
- **Caring.** If you build a genuine foundation, caring adds the warmth that helps your team feel at home while they're working.

- **Growing.** Keep your team engaged. Provide opportunities to grow skills and work on new and exciting projects.
- **Attentive.** Practice active listening with internal and external customers and your team. You'll be able to be more proactive. And thinking ahead leads to better products and a better culture.

Employees want to be valued for their skills, their experience and all of the above qualities they bring to their jobs every day. A culture that values employees as much as customers generates trust, sparks creativity and brings out the best in everyone.

Resources for Living®

Helping your staff cope with burnout and fatigue during COVID-19



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COVID-19 is creating a lot of stress for people. And if you and your team are essential workers, you know about stress. Essential workers not only have the pressures that come with their jobs, but now they have to deal with the health risks of simply going to work.

When stress isn't kept in check, it can lead to burnout — a state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion. And this can lead to performance issues, low productivity, absences and turnover. But there are things you can do to support your staff through this tough time and keep your business going.

What is burnout?

Burnout is a little different from stress. When people are stressed, they feel like they have “too much” to handle. Employees under stress may feel overwhelmed and work extra hard to meet the demands of their work.

But if the stress lasts a long time or is too intense, it can lead to burnout. Burnout feels like “too little” — too little energy, emotions or desire. A burnt-out employee may seem:

- Detached
- Unmotivated
- Exhausted
- Unfocused
- Uncaring

What causes burnout?^{1,2}

Burnout comes from stress that goes unchecked. Risk factors include:

- **Lifestyle** — working too much, lack of supportive relationships, poor sleep and poor self-care
- **Work circumstances** — unmanageable workload, little control over work, lack of recognition and unclear expectations
- **Personality** — perfectionism, negativity, need for control and judgment of others

Some of your staff may be used to managing their stress through activities like spending time with friends or going to the gym. For these people, COVID-19 is not only causing stress, it has also taken away their methods to cope. So what can you do?

Reversing burnout

If you recognize potential burnout in your staff, it's important to help. Talk to your employees about how they're doing. Show care and concern. And offer support. This might include:

- Making sure your workers are taking their breaks
- Managing by walking around
- Encouraging self-care and healthy habits
- Letting employees know you care
- Prioritizing work tasks
- Reminding your staff about their mental health and wellness benefits

And don't forget to role model these skills yourself. If you practice self-care and stress management, it's easier for your staff to follow suit.

You and your staff are helping us all get through this pandemic. But you still have limits. Make your mental and physical health a priority, recognize concerns and remember that you're not alone.

¹Scott, Elizabeth. [Job factors that contribute to employee burnout](#). Very Well Mind. Accessed April 2020.

²Scott, Elizabeth. [Traits and attitudes that increase burnout risk](#). Very Well Mind. Accessed April 2020.

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Leading through change

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Change is constant. But what happens when the change is big? What happens when the future feels uncertain? And how do you support and guide your staff when there is no “business as usual”?

Understand employee reactions

During times of change, it’s normal for employees to wonder, “What’s going to happen to me?” People don’t like what they don’t know. It makes them feel unsafe. And this can lead to feelings of anger and distrust.

If your employees are feeling uncertain, afraid and angry because of workplace changes, you may see:

- Poor work performance
- Increased mistakes
- Increased absenteeism or tardiness
- Low morale

Your reaction

Your ability to manage during tough times is impacted by your own reaction. It’s hard to encourage others when you’re feeling discouraged. So be honest about how you feel. Ask yourself:

- How am I affected right now?
- What is helping me get through this?
- Who can I go to for support?
- What will help me lead right now?

Helping others

It’s easy to feel hopeless during difficult times. There’s so much that feels outside of your control. But you don’t have to “solve” the problem to support your staff. Instead:

- Show empathy
- Stay visible
- Provide updated and accurate information
- Be as transparent as possible about workplace decisions

And remind your staff about their benefits, including services to help with emotional and financial stress. Even employees who lose their positions may have access to these services.

Change is hard. But you and your team will get through this. And you might come out stronger on the other side.

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