

Wellbeing Literacy Bite #1

Identifying & addressing burnout Strategies for Leaders



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What is burnout?

Burnout is a critical issue that can quietly undermine your team's performance and wellbeing. It's a state of emotional, mental, & physical exhaustion caused by prolonged & unmanaged work stress. If left unchecked, burnout can lead to disengagement, reduced productivity, & increased turnover. Key indicators include: Persistent fatigue, even after rest/ growing cynicism or detachment from work/ a noticeable drop in performance & enthusiasm.

Why does it happen?

Burnout often results from a combination of excessive work demands, insufficient control, and lack of recognition. However, it's not just the job; personal factors like perfectionism or a lack of support at home can contribute. As a leader, understanding these triggers is crucial to creating a balanced & supportive work environment.

6 warning signs to spot burnout in your team

1 Decline in Energy & Motivation

Notice if someone who was once enthusiastic is now consistently low-energy or unmotivated.

2 Increased Absenteeism or Isolation

Employees may take more sick days or withdraw from team interactions.

3 Cynicism or Disengagement

Watch for a shift in attitude - previously engaged employees might become increasingly negative or detached.

4 Drop in Productivity

Tasks that were once completed efficiently may now be delayed or done with less care.

5 Physical Complaints

Employees might frequently mention headache, back pain, or other physical symptoms related to stress.

6 Emotional Withdrawal

Employees might start avoiding social interactions or become less communicative.

Not every employee will exhibit all these signs, but if you see a pattern, it's essential to take action before burnout sets in.

Preventing burnout your roles as a leader

1 Conduct Regular Check-ins

Create a culture of open communication where employees feel comfortable discussing their workload & stress levels.

2 Psychosocial Risk Assessment

Proactively identify & manage psychosocial hazards in the workplace that could contribute to burnout.

3 Promote Work-Life Balance

Encourage your team to take breaks, use their vacation time, and disconnect after work hours.

4 Recognise & Reward Effort

Acknowledge your team's hard work. Feeling valued can significantly reduce burnout risk.

5 Encourage Professional Development

Invest in your team's growth, helping them find meaning and purpose in their roles.

6 If burnout is already present

Offer Access to Support Services:

encourage EAP awareness & use.

Facilitate Time Off:

encourage time off & support employees when they take it.

Adjust Workloads:

reassign tasks or offer flexible working arrangements.

Provide External resources:

Lifeline (13 11 14) / Beyond Blue (1300 224 636)

As a leader, your approach to burnout can make all the difference. By staying vigilant and proactive, you can help your team navigate stress, maintain their well-being, and continue to thrive.