

# Rethinking Burnout

Its the Workplace,  
Not the Worker





He Didn't Know He Was in Trouble Until It Was Too Late.



# Burnout Statistics

- 42% of Canadian professionals report feeling burnt out
- Burnout by generation:
  - Millennials (55%),
  - Gen Z (51%),
  - Gen X (32%),
  - Baby Boomers (24%)
- Top causes:
  - Heavy workloads due to understaffed teams (52%)
  - Lack of communication and managerial support (42%)
  - Missing tools and resources (39%)(Robert Half 2023).



# The High Cost of Ignoring Employee Burnout

- Increased Absenteeism and Turnover
- Decline in Productivity
- Lower Employee Morale
- Reduced Innovation
- Higher Error / Injury Rates
- Increased Conflict
- Frequent Complaints or Grievances
- Damage to Reputation

# Burnout Defined

An occupational phenomenon, defined as a “syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.”

(World Health Organization)

Burnout is related specifically to occupational settings.

# Burnout is generally characterized by three symptoms:

- Emotional exhaustion
- Cynicism
- A sense of personal inefficacy

(World Health Organization)



# How Do I Know I'm Burnt Out?





# 5 Stages of Burnout

Honeymoon Phase

Onset of Stress

Chronic Stress

Burnout

Habitual Burnout





# Honeymoon Phase



- Often occurs when starting a new job or taking on new responsibilities
- High energy, enthusiasm, and commitment
- Optimistic and motivated, eager to prove themselves
- May also set unrealistic expectations and take on too much
- Sets the stage for later burnout if not managed well

# Onset of Stress

- As stress begins to build, the initial excitement starts to fade
- Begin to feel overwhelmed by the workload, deadlines, or challenges
- Mild anxiety, fatigue, irritability, forgetfulness, and a drop in productivity
- Coping mechanisms start to wear down
- Stress becomes more noticeable



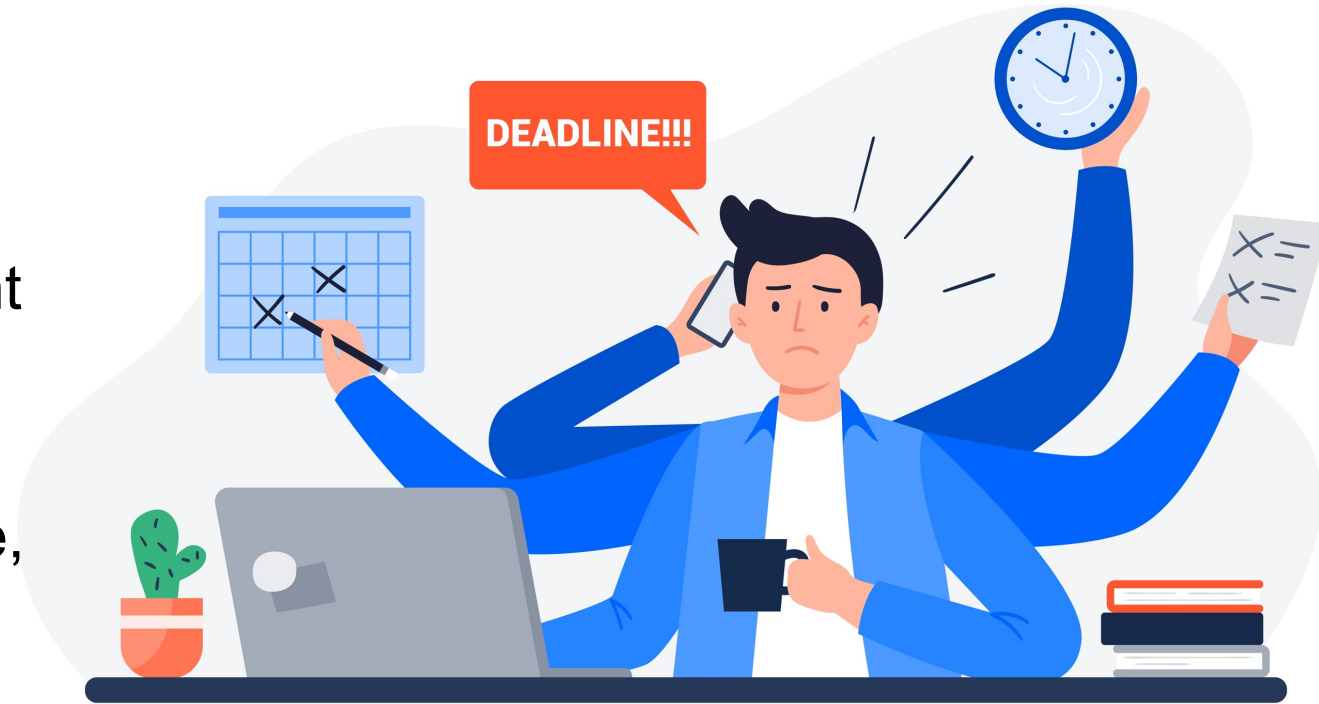
# Chronic Stress

- Stress becomes more persistent and harder to manage
- Experience more frequent stress reactions and feel they are constantly under pressure
- Symptoms intensify, including chronic exhaustion, increased cynicism, frustration
- Sense of being ineffective or unappreciated at work
- Personal relationships may suffer
- Sleep problems become more common



# Burnout

- Experience physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion
- Significant decrease in motivation and productivity
- A sense of hopelessness or detachment from work
- Emotional numbness, detachment from colleagues, decreased job performance, and feelings of failure or inadequacy
- Physical symptoms like headaches or gastrointestinal issues may also be present





# Habitual Burnout

- If burnout is not addressed, can become a chronic condition
- Prolonged and severe mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion
- May experience ongoing depression, anxiety, and a pervasive sense of defeat
- May begin to affect all areas of life, including health and personal relationships
- May require professional intervention to recover



# Individual Factors That Lead to Burnout

- Perfectionism
- Being a High Performer
- Inability to Say No
- Trying to Be Everything to Everybody
- Strong Identification with Work
- Poor Coping Skills
- Not Asking for Help



# We Can't Rationalize Burnout Away

- "I just need to push through"
- "Everyone feels this way"
- "I don't have time to take a break"
- "I'm still getting things done, so I'm fine"
- "I'll feel better when this project is over"
- "I can handle this on my own"
- "Taking time off would be selfish or weak"
- "It's just a rough patch"

# Steps to Recover from Burnout

- Acknowledge the Burnout
- Talk to Your Employer
- Set Boundaries
- Delegate or Reorganize Tasks
- Prioritize Self-Care
- Seek Professional Help
- Take Time Off
- Gradual Return to Work



# **Burnout Reflects Your Workplace, Not Your Employees**

The responsibility for managing burnout has shifted  
away from employees and toward employers

(MOSS, 2019)

# Workplace Factors for Occupational Burnout

- Unfair Treatment at Work
- Unmanageable Workload
- Lack of Role Clarity
- Lack of Communication and Support from Manager
- Unreasonable Time Pressure

(Gallup 2019)



# Frederick Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory

Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by two different sets of factors:

- **Motivators** (recognition, responsibility, opportunities for growth, meaningful work)
- **Hygiene Factors** (salary, job security, working conditions, and company policies)

If hygiene factors are poor, employees may feel dissatisfied, leading to burnout. If motivators are lacking, employees may not feel engaged, which can also result in burnout.



# The Impact of "Pebbles" in the Workplace



- Christina Maslach's "**Pebbles**": Tiny, irritating, and incremental challenges that can wear employees down over time.
- Good hygiene practices may go unnoticed, but bad hygiene creates major distractions.
- Small issues can affect employees' morale.
- Burnout occurs when small, expected elements of daily work life are missing or removed.



# Ways Leaders Can Prevent Employee Burnout

- Promote Work-Life Balance
- Manage Employee Workload Effectively
- Provide Clear Role Expectations
- Provide Supportive Leadership Practices
- Promote Positive Workplace Culture
- Recognize and Reward Efforts
- Encourage Professional Development





# Burnout is Preventable

# Questions





# MSABC Mental Health and Wellness

- Mental Health and Wellness Training
- Mental Health and Wellness Consultation and Coaching
- Information & Resources

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