

Combating Burnout and Creating Career Paths in HR

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HR Forum

Today's HR . . . Not Your Parent's Personnel Dept.



Great HR Teams are Essential to Our Business Operations!

- Top-notch HR teams focus on overall culture, staffing, policy, fairness, etc.
- They are thought to be conscientious “people persons.”
- They desire to create and maintain a better workplace for others.
- They provide support to every aspect of the business.
- But . . . Who is taking care of HR and making sure they have the technical and emotional support they need to effectively lead the charge?

HR Professionals are Stressed! What's Up?

- Per SHRM (2023), 62% of HR professionals were considering quitting.
- **This is alarming because we need them! We need you!**
- Survey data noted reasons such as:
 - 41%-Lack of career progression
 - 39%-Desire for a better work-life balance
 - 31%-Feel underpaid
 - 25%-Lack of effective leadership
 - 19%-Want a more fulfilling job and/or enhanced knowledge
 - 17%-Noted insufficient training to adequately do their jobs



Surveys are Great, but What are Our People Saying. . .

- Too many duties—responsible for “it all”
- No real down time
- Lack of prioritization of projects by the business
- No room for growth (pigeon-holed)
- Not enough time to enhance skillset and keep up with changes
- Don’t have a voice/seat at the business table
- Lack of recognition and support
- The pressure of constantly putting out fires for others
- Work – Life Balance
- **Burnout**

What is “Burnout”?



The WHO has defined “burnout” as:

“A syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.”

Stated another way, employee burnout is “a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress—where a worker has reached their limits mentally, emotionally, and physically.”

Is the "Burnout Excuse" Real? Uh . . . YES

A recent Deloitte survey found that:

- 77% of respondents have experienced burnout in their current jobs.
- 91% said unmanageable stress or frustration impacts their work quality.
- 83% expressed concerns about the toll burnout takes on their relationships.
- Nearly 70% believe their employers are not doing enough to prevent or alleviate burnout.

If not addressed, the ramifications of stress-related burnout can have serious consequences for both employees and employers.

How do you begin to combat burnout on the job?

First, take time to think about what is really getting you down.

For example, are you experiencing pressure due to:

- Competing priorities, lack of training or constant interruptions?
- Lack of communication or adequate feedback from leaders?
- The work-life balance is off, and your personal time isn't valued?
- Workloads are not being evenly distributed amongst staff?
- Your tendency to get immersed in the negativity of "HR drama"?
- A decline in health?



Determining your path to avoid burnout . . .

After you've determined the main sources of frustration, you can start to develop a path to dig out. But to do this, you must focus on you and what will get you to a better place.



Recognize and Communicate that You Need Support

Are you missing deadlines, unable to prioritize tasks, working excess hours, or unable to focus?

- Be transparent with leaders and communicate the issues.
- Be clear as you define the problem and offer suggestions.
 - Can others help to review work or be cross-trained to help?
 - Can a temporary worker be hired?
 - Are there systems that could be used to automate routine tasks?



Establish Boundaries and Stick to Them

- Everyone else's "problems" don't have to involve you.
- If a leader has the tools to handle a situation, let them.
- Be clear when something is out of your wheel-house, or it should go elsewhere.
- Don't have a full "open door" policy. Schedule appointments with time limits and include block time for you to be able to work without interruption.



Focus on your positive mental health

- What gets you in focus, in a positive head space, or eases pressure?
- Schedule “me” time that is just for you. Stick to it. Schedule it.
 - Examples: Meditation, Walking, Gardening, Exercising, Crafting
- Think about a life or job coach.
- Establish personal goals to work towards.
- Utilize your EAP if you want to talk to someone.



Be the Master of Your Work-Life Balance

- Food for thought: Do you work extra on your own accord? Stop it!
- Line up your priorities? Ex: Family/Self, Work, Religion, Health, etc.
- Help to create a culture where after work hours are respected.
- Would flexibility in hours or location benefit you?
- Missing important outside events = Resentment
- TAKE YOUR VACATION AND PTO . . . and make it known that your phone will be off.



Be Positive!

- This is easier said than done sometimes.
- While the positives outweigh the negatives in HR, difficult tasks and hard conversations can weigh you down.
- Remember, it's business, not personal.
- Be fair, polite, pleasant and lend praise/thanks when it is due.
- Your positive spirit and approach will be contagious and uplifting! And remember . . .



Quick Assignment:

Do you have those days where you wish someone who understands what you're going through could give you a few lines of encouragement or a pep talk of sorts?

1. Grab a card from the middle of the table.
2. Write a quick note of encouragement to an unnamed HR peer who needs a reminder of how important their work is to others and/or the need to take care of themselves.
3. Ready, set, go . . . You only have a few minutes.
4. Wait for next instruction.



Navigating Your Career Path

What do you want professionally?

If you like what you do, you still need to grow and add value to reach your maximum salary potential. Don't remain stagnant.

You can add value and solidify your seat at the table by:

- Keeping up with changes in your area of expertise
- Enhancing your skillset
- Working in symmetry with the rest of the HR team

Are you ready to expand your horizons?

Consider:

- Another job in the company where you could expand your knowledge
- Another HR job that uses fresh ideas and out of the box thinking
- A new role within the company that needs to be stood up



Quick Tips to Enhance Your HR Career Path:

1. You need to be seen and present to be recognized.
2. HR partners with business units. Learn how they operate and understand their goals and challenges to anticipate needs.
3. As you gain expertise within those units, offer your business opinion on matters when appropriate. You have a different perspective.
4. You don't have to go "up the ladder" to be promoted or have job growth.

Quick Tips to Enhance Your HR Career Path

5. Don't simply focus on the tactical. Think strategically, especially if the Company has a multi-year strategic plan or vision.
6. When you are “at the table,” be concise in thought and have an opinion. Be sure to listen to new information so you can adjust as necessary.
7. Do not engage in HR drama or gossip. Engage in a reality-based leadership approach that exudes confidence, credibility and positivity.
8. Get outside your comfort zone. Be that person to volunteer for a new task or to be moved to a new area if you're needed there. And then . . . shine!

You are awesome! Don't forget it!

