



HOW TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR TEAM ABOUT BURNOUT



Introduction



Work-life balance/burnout was one of the top 5 reasons cited in exit interviews as influencing a decision to leave.

As a manager, acknowledge that burnout exists and help prevent it on your team before it happens. Or, if team members are already feeling burned out, empower them to regain balance.

Recognize the Signs of Burnout

While not everyone experiences burnout in the same way, there are common symptoms of burnout to look out for:



Physical symptoms such as feelings of exhaustion, loss of productivity, headaches, loss of appetite, inconsistent sleep habits



Mental Symptoms such as constant worry and anxiety, inability to focus clearly, chronic stress



Emotional symptoms such as irritability, lack of interest or motivation, decreased sense of accomplishment, feelings of hopelessness at work

Encourage Team Members to Talk About Their Burnout



Make it a norm to talk about stress with your team – normalize talking about different challenges and obstacles people are facing as a team. This will help build trust and make the team more comfortable with talking about challenges



Use your 1:1s to address your team members' wellbeing – schedule time for each individual and try to understand what they are going through. During this time, it's also helpful to clarify how their individual work relates to larger team and company goals allowing them to see how their work fits into the bigger picture.



Understand the root cause of burnout by asking questions, like "Do you feel that your current workload is reasonable", "Have you determined a start and stop time for your working day?" Your team members may find it difficult to open up about their struggles at work – especially to their managers.

- Take a "listen to learn" approach – burnout is rarely solved with quick fixes, it should be a two-way conversation.
- Some sentence starters to help approach a conversation with humble curiosity and invite a deeper conversation are:

"Help me understand..." "Walk me through that...", "Tell me more/say more about that...", "I'm wondering...."



Tips for Helping Your Team Deal with Burnout

Show Compassion and Empathy



Show compassion and empathy if your team does open up about feeling overwhelmed or stressed and be prepared to advocate for them:

- ✓ Protect their time if your team suffers from a heavy workload. If someone approaches you to see if your team can take on a new project, push back or say no.
- ✓ Offer more flexible schedules – If your team is burned out from personal matters, give them the time and space to address those needs without having to worry about being online from 9am-5pm.
- ✓ Pay attention to not just what people say, but how they say it. Do they respond excitedly or sigh and seem unenthusiastic? Use what you learn to tweak how you manage and support the person.

Set and Stick to Boundaries



Take a step back and observe your own behaviors, make sure they're respectful of the boundaries you set for your team.

- ✓ Next time you're tempted to hit 'send' on a quick note in the evening, wait until the morning or use the [schedule feature on Slack](#)

Think About What's Best for Your Team



Practice empathy by asking yourself – what's best for the team?

- ✓ The answer may vary by individual. Some team members may benefit from time off to unplug. Others might need to clarify work priorities or have something taken off of their plate.

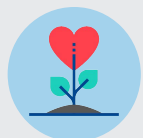
Provide Access to Relevant Resources



Connect your team members with resources on wellness programs.

- ✓ All team members have access to a 24/7 Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Through the EAP, you can access confidential counseling and advice on a wide range of personal or work related issues. You can find information on EAP programs available by country on the [Global Benefits Page](#).
- ✓ Encourage them to contact their HRBP for further help or support.

Take Care of Your Own Wellbeing



- ✓ Take care of your own mental and physical wellbeing – set a positive example to prioritize health at work.
- ✓ Take time off – Team members may not feel comfortable asking for time off if you as a manager never take a sick day or a vacation. Be sure to actually unplug, close your email, and silence notifications. For the sake of your own health, take advantage of your time off.