

BATTLING BURNOUT

As the pandemic continues, burnout—defined as chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed—is becoming a bigger factor in overall mental health.¹ In a recent survey, **75 percent of employees said they have experienced burnout at work**, with 40 percent of them saying they've experienced it during the pandemic.² On top of that, **four in five employees say they feel emotionally drained from their work, an early sign of burnout.**³ Battling burnout begins with understanding it's not a self-care issue, but rather an organizational problem. Check out some do's and don'ts that can help tackle burnout among your workforce.

A FEW DO'S AND DON'TS



☒ DON'T:

Don't attempt to tackle burnout with self-directed solutions alone, like wellness programs, mobile apps and EAPs, which are unlikely to address the root cause.

☑ DO:

Do recognize that battling burnout begins at the organizational level by changing aspects of company culture that contribute to burnout—like unrealistic work expectations, lack of support, insufficient rewards or benefits.⁴



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3 Taylor Adams, Madeline Reinert, Danielle Fritze, and Theresa Nguyen, *Mind the Workplace 2021*, Mental Health America, 2021.

4, 5, 8, 10 Jennifer Moss, "Beyond Burned Out," *Harvard Business Review*, Feb. 10, 2021.

6 Ashley Stahl, "What the Future of Work Means for our Mental Health," *Forbes*, Oct. 9, 2020.

7 Eagle Hill, "Webinar: Organizational Strategies for Battling Burnout during the COVID-19 Pandemic," Apr. 15, 2020.

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☒ DON'T:

Don't treat burnout like it's caused by a single factor.

☑ DO:

Do provide solutions that address the multiple causes of burnout (unsustainable workload, perceived lack of control, insufficient rewards for effort, lack of a supportive community, lack of fairness, mismatched values and skills).⁵



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☒ DON'T:

Don't foster a culture that rewards working excessively long hours.

☑ DO:

Do encourage productive employees to disconnect from their work when possible. Reward them with things like flexible work hours or PTO days for mental health.^{5, 6}



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☒ DON'T:

Don't underestimate the important role frontline managers can play supporting employees facing burnout.

☑ DO:

Do encourage frontline managers to communicate empathetically and support their staff by checking in regularly, beyond review time, and act on what they've heard—to help reduce employee burnout and improve well-being.^{7, 8}



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☒ DON'T:

Don't assume everyone understands burnout and its repercussions.

☑ DO:

Do educate leadership and managers about burnout, including its impact and how to spot and mitigate it. Drive employee awareness through things like internal campaigns, peer-to-peer outreach programs, safe-space discussions on burnout and creating an online employee mental health resource page.^{9,10}



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