When Decisions Don't Go To Plan: Wellbeing & Burnout

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Background

- Causes of Burnout
  - Demands over Resources
  - Value Conflicts
- Areas of Worklife
  - Manageable Workload
  - Control
  - Reward
  - Community
  - Fairness
  - Values
- Positive Perspective
  - Work Engagement as Goal
- Workplace Civility & Respect

A Continuing Crisis in Worklife

- **Job Burnout**
  - Lost Productivity
  - Illness
  - Low Commitment

- **Workplace Incivility**
  - Withdrawal
    - Cynicism: Loss of Enthusiasm
    - Absences: Lost Time & Replacements
    - Turnover: Costs of Recruitment and Training
  - Performance Impact
    - Errors
    - Wasted Resources
Burnout to Engagement

- **Energy: Exhaustion to Vigor**
  - Physical
  - Emotional
  - Social

- **Involvement: Cynicism to Dedication**
  - Attention
  - Personal Contact
  - Commitment, Loyalty

- **Efficacy: Discouragement to Confidence**
  - Confidence in One’s Ability
  - Valuing the Importance of One’s Work
Engagement With Work

- Psychological relationships with work
  - Energy
  - Involvement
  - Effectiveness

- Continuum: Burnout To Engagement
Burnout v Engagement

- **Opposite Concepts**
  - Vigor v Exhaustion
  - Dedication v Cynicism/Depersonalization

- **Not Opposite**
  - Professional Efficacy
  - Absorption

- **Concept Issues**
  - Negative Wording of MBI Subscales Misses Positive Concepts
  - Construct Overlap (Cole et al 2012)
Early Indicators of Burnout

- Lack of Enthusiasm
- Cynicism
  - Narrow Focus
  - Growing Skepticism
- Weak Organizational Citizenship
  - Less Helping Coworkers
  - Less Volunteering for Extra-Role Tasks
- Egocentric Perspective
  - Low identification with the Workgroup
  - Increasing Focus on Self
Serious Indicators of Burnout

- **Chronic Exhaustion**
- **Cynicism**
  - Lost Hope
  - Obsessive Skepticism
- **Poor Social Connections**
  - Incivility & Disrespect towards Coworkers
  - Burnout Contagion
- **Egocentric Perspective**
  - Actively Antagonistic Towards Workgroup
  - Focus on Injustices Towards Oneself
Enhancing v Recovery

**Enhancing**
- Mod. to High Energy
- Dull to Supportive Workgroup
- Hope and an Open Mind
- Confidence

**Recovering**
- Low Energy
- Active Antagonism Among Colleagues
- Cynicism Closes the Mind
- Doubt
Distribution of Resilience Groups

Unit Distribution

- Resilient
- Dysfunctional
- Disengaged
- Non-Resilient
Perspectives from Resilience Groups

- Resource Gaps
  - Leadership Breakdowns
  - Lack of Team Perspective
  - Low Commitment and Efficacy
What Causes Burnout

DEMANDS
VALUE CONFLICTS
COMMUNITY BREAKDOWNS
Demands: Illegitimate Tasks*

- **Workload: Not Only a Matter of Quantity**
- **Unreasonable Tasks**
  - Outside of One’s Occupation Domain
  - Conflict with Status:
    - Beginner Assigned Expert’s Task
    - Expert Assigned Beginner’s Task
  - Unduly Restrictive Constraints
    - Excessive Paperwork or Monitoring
- **Unnecessary Tasks**
  - Make-work or Busy Work Projects
  - Poorly Organized Projects
- *Norbert Semmer and Colleagues

Legitimacy → Work Engagement
Value Conflicts

- **Valued Work is Engaging**
  - Increased Energy from Enjoyable Activities
  - Increased Involvement in Pursuing Important Activities
  - Increased Confidence from Doing Important Work Well

- **Employer Support for Valued Work Increases Engagement**

- **Value Conflicts with Employer Drive Burnout**
  - Emotional & Energy Drain of Managing Conflict
  - Reduced Resources Reduce Involvement

Legitimacy  
Values  
Work Engagement
Community Breakdowns

- **Supportive Communities Lead to Engagement**
  - Supportive Encounters are Invigorating
  - Good Working Relationships Involve People in Shared Action
  - Team Membership Increases the Resource Base

- **Community Breakdowns Lead to Burnout**
  - Incivility and Disrespect are Illegitimate Demands
  - They Prompt People to Withdraw their Involvement
  - They Detract Time & Energy away from the Mission

![Diagram showing relationships between Legitimacy, Values, Community, and Work Engagement]
Action Items

- Link Tasks to Mission
  - Listen: Understand Employees’ View of Tasks
  - Action: Describe Links of Tasks with Mission

- Link Tasks to Values
  - Listen: Understand Employees’ Professional Values
  - Action: Describe Mission in Terms of Values

- Enhance Workplace Communities
  - Listen: Attend to Signs of Harmony & Discord
  - Action: Actively Develop Civil, Respectful Work Groups
Improving the Social Environment

- Civility & Respect as Core Values
- Problem Solving Framework
  - Relationships as Topic of Conversation
  - Identify Shortcoming of Present Situation
  - Identify Goal Behaviors
  - Introduce & Practice Desired Behaviors
  - Bias towards Action
- Leadership Capacities
  - Assuring Psychological Safety
  - Connecting with Team Members
  - Assuring Shared Workplace Culture
Major Intervention: CREW

- Veterans Health (USA): Organizational Development
  - Veterans Health Administration
  - Implementation at 1000+ Settings
  - Impact: Widespread Improvement in Civility
  - Consequences
    - Greater Civility
    - Reduced Absences
    - Fewer Complaints

Enhancing Workplace Communities

- Intervention: 8 CREW Groups (N=252)
- Control: 26 Units No CREW (N=874)

- Five Hospitals in Canada
- Hypothesis:
  - Improvement for CREW
  - Steady for Control
  - Maintained Gains for CREW

CREW Process

- Assessment
- Commitment
  - People
  - Values
- Training
  - Skills
  - Enthusiasm
- Implementation
  - Civility Sessions
  - Mentoring
- Evaluation
Impact on Civility

![Graph showing the impact on civility between control units and CREW units before and after intervention.](image)
Impact on Civility

![Graph showing the impact of CREW units on workgroup civility compared to control units. The graph indicates a significant increase in civility scores for CREW units after implementation, with a noticeable improvement compared to control units that remained relatively stable.](image-url)
Active Ingredients

- The CREW Community
  - Dialogue Among CREW Leaders Across the Country
  - Knowledge Sharing: Timely, Relevant, and Fun
- Mentoring
  - Companions
  - Training and Follow-up
- Evaluation
  - Contrasting Before and After
- The Toolkit
  - Training Manual
  - Resource for Sessions
What Employers Can Do

- Managing Demands & Building Resources
  - Legitimate Tasks
  - Control
  - Reward
  - Community
  - Fairness

- Supporting Core Values:
  - Clear Organizational Values
  - Clear Professional and Personal Values
  - Capacity to Accommodate Diverse Perspectives

- Building Resilient Teams
  - Shared Sense Making
  - Civility & Respect
Challenges to Taking Action

- **Values**
  - Leaders’ commitment to Respect as a Core Value
  - Policies that make workplace civility a priority
- **Time Pressure**
  - Relationship Development Diverts Time from Services
- **Finances**
  - Costs of Consulting Services
  - Short Term Horizon for Payback
- **Credibility**
  - Is there Confidence that Civility issues are Solvable Problems?
- **People**
  - Will Employees Participate?
  - Does the Organization have Capable Facilitators?
- **Power**
  - Are Incivility and Disrespect Integral to Organizational Status & Power?
  - Will First Line Managers Actively Support an Initiative?

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Dialogue Three

- **Force Field Analysis**
  - What Pushes Towards Taking Action?
  - What Pushes Against Taking Action?

- **Authority**
  - Who Makes the Decision to Take Action?
  - Who Covers the Cost?

- **Participants**
  - Why Would Team Members Participate?
  - Why Would Team Members Avoid Participation?
  - How Could you Influence the Decision to Participate?
Conclusion

- **Stress & Burnout Reduce Workforce Capacity**
  - Sub-Optimal Energy, Involvement, Confidence
  - Weak Teamwork
  - Lower Attendance, Retention, Attractiveness
- **Employers Can Make A Difference**
  - Workflow Management
  - Recovery: Workplace Health Initiatives
  - Workgroup Resiliency
    - Civility & Respect
    - Shared Sense of Mission

Workplace Psychological Health

- Legitimate Tasks
- Shared Values
- Resilient Community
Conclusion

- Preventing and Alleviating Burnout
  - Core Issues
    - Legitimacy: Making Sense of Demands
    - Values: Linking Individual & Organizational Vision
    - Community: Belonging vs Isolation
  - Intervention: Workgroups Can Improve
  - Impact: Downstream Impact on Psychological Connections with Work

- More Information:
  - www.workengagement.com
  - http://cord.acadiau.ca
References


www.workengagement.com
Contact Information

- To enhance the quality of work life, through collaborative relationships, helping people to fulfill their potential.

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