

Tip sheet

Burnout

Burnout is the result of prolonged work-related stress — a state of physical or emotional exhaustion that also involves a sense of reduced accomplishment and loss of personal identity. It's a mixture of exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness. Signs of burnout include feeling emotionally drained, physically exhausted, overwhelmed, and helplessness and loss of performance. There is even risk of health problems like cardiovascular disease.

Burnout is not just exhaustion or job dissatisfaction. Overworked employees may be tired. They may hate their jobs. They may say they're 'burning out.' These people need a break.



Job burnout can result from various factors, including:

Lack of control

An inability to influence decisions that affect your job — such as your schedule, assignments, or workload — could lead to job burnout. So could a lack of the resources you need to do your work.

Unclear job expectations

If you're unclear about the degree of authority you have or what your supervisor or others expect from you, you're not likely to feel comfortable at work.

Difficult workplace dynamics

Perhaps you work with an office bully, or you feel undermined by colleagues or your boss micro-manages your work. This can contribute to job stress.

Extremes of activity

When a job is monotonous or chaotic, you need constant energy to remain focused — which can lead to fatigue and job burnout.

Lack of social support

If you feel isolated at work and in your personal life, you might feel more stressed.

Work-life imbalance

If your work takes up so much of your time and effort that you don't have the energy to spend time with your family and friends, you might burn out quickly.

Burnout symptoms

Symptoms of exhaustion

- Lack of motivation
- Irritability
- Fatigue
- Insomnia
- Memory issues
- Feeling hopeless
- Nervousness
- Headaches
- Irritability
- Change in appetite
- Trouble concentrating
- Cynicism
- Depression
- Increased illness
- Loss of energy.

Symptoms of cynicism and detachment

- Isolation
- Lack of enjoyment
- Apathy
- Impatience
- Being critical
- Feeling persecuted
- Hopelessness
- Negative attitude
- Excessive use of sarcasm
- Disillusionment with work
- Loss of job satisfaction
- Self-medication
- Dread of work.

Symptoms of ineffectiveness

- Loss of productivity
- Poor performance
- Missing deadlines
- Habitual complaining
- Missing work goals.

Here are some helpful tips

- Set boundaries on work and work hours
- Try to set goals for what must get done and what can wait.
- Take your tea and lunch breaks
- Use your annual leave
- If you're sick, stay home
- Open up and be honest about what's bothering you to help resolve the issue.
- Healthy diet
- Prioritise getting enough sleep (7-8 hours)
- Exercise
- Try a relaxing activity
- Mindfulness
- Schedule downtime and recovery into every day to reflect
- Make small changes e.g., use five-minute chunks to chat with a co-worker
- Fight perfectionism - people who set high personal achievement standards show lower rates of burnout, but fear-based perfectionism is linked to higher burnout
- Seek support.

Contact

0508 664 981
assistance@vitae.co.nz
www.vitae.co.nz