

# Tip sheet

## Technology stress

In the past, office technology was limited to slow printers and simple programmes. Today, our work is intertwined with advanced computers and smartphones, all filled with numerous apps, tasks and constant software updates – which can be major stressors and difficult to keep pace with.



Modern technology in the workplace affects our mental wellbeing in two main ways: it makes it challenging to disconnect from our tech-heavy jobs, and it leads to frustration when things go wrong.

### Achieving tech-life balance

#### Take breaks

Regularly step away from your computer and move around. Physical activity releases endorphins, which improve mood and motivation. Consider walking during meetings with headphones on, giving you a break from your desk.

#### Engage in in-person interaction

Over-dependence on technology can lead to social disconnection. Try seeking out more in-person meetings or interactions that strengthen social bonds and give you a break from the screens.

#### Set boundaries

Make a deliberate effort to avoid checking work emails or taking calls outside of work hours. While sometimes overtime is necessary, regularly separating work and personal time can reduce tech-related stress.

#### Develop healthy tech habits at home

- Good sleep is essential for wellbeing, and technology can disrupt it. Set specific times to turn off devices in the evening before you go to bed and avoid using your phone first thing in the morning
- Having tech-free times (like during meals) can also be beneficial and influence how you manage technology at work
- Develop hobbies that take you away from the screen – such as art, sport or reading
- Avoid being distracted by your devices when interacting with someone; give them your full attention to show that you're actively listening.

### The role of employers in managing tech overload

Employers should look out for signs of tech overload, such as decreased productivity, unexplained absences and behavioural changes. Leaders should set and communicate boundaries with their teams about after-hours communication to ensure employees have time to disconnect.

## Coping with tech frustration

Frustration with malfunctioning technology is common, stemming from our expectation that tech should work flawlessly. Here are some tips to handle these feelings:

### Be prepared

Understand how your systems work and be mentally prepared for potential failures. Accepting that tech issues are inevitable can help you stay calm when problems arise.

### Invest in quality equipment

When possible, choose reliable software and hardware (or ask this of your manager). Investing in quality equipment can prevent daily frustrations caused by slow or unreliable tech.

### Back up your work regularly

Make it a habit to back up your work regularly to avoid losing important data. Using programmes that automatically save your work can also be helpful.

### Seek help when needed

If you encounter tech issues, try troubleshooting by searching online for solutions. If you can't resolve the problem, seek help from a trusted colleague or IT support.

### Ensure physical comfort

Physical discomfort can add to stress, so make sure your workstation is ergonomically set up.

## Manage stress

Taking short breaks for deep breathing or a walk can help manage overall stress, making it easier to deal with tech frustrations when they occur.

## Overcoming tech anxiety

Many people feel embarrassed about their struggles with technology. As tech evolves, it's normal to need help. If you frequently need assistance, it's important to discuss this with your manager. They can arrange additional IT support, request better equipment, or implement processes that rely less on technology to help you build confidence and competence with your tools.

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