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Battling Burnout: Theirs and Yours

Employee burnout is sabotaging most of today’s workforce, according to 95% of HR leaders who responded to a recent study by Kronos, Inc., of Chelmsford, MA. Nearly half said employee burnout is responsible for up to half of their annual turnover.

According to responders, the top three contributors to burnout were unfair compensation, unreasonable workload and too much overtime.

Ironically, even though these HR leaders are aware of the negative impacts of burnout on their workforce, they themselves are too busy to do anything about it. A fifth of the responders said that they had too many competing priorities to focus on fixing the issue. Interestingly, the study also revealed that organizations are more likely to invest in recruiting new employees than to work on retaining existing talent.

Three Tips for Beating Burnout

Dawn Roberts, owner of Dawn Roberts Consulting, in Houston, offers three tips for HR pros and managers for helping to battle burnout:

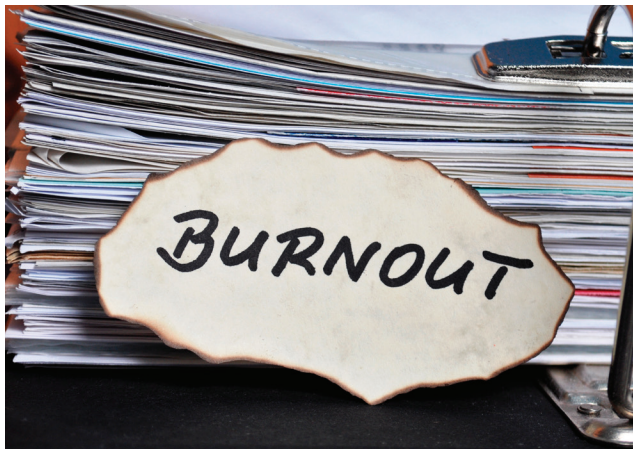
- Don’t equate time at the office to value. Time doesn’t matter. What matters is quality and delivery. “You can spend less time and deliver more if you prioritize effectively and are efficient. In fact, studies have shown that when you take time off, leave work on time regularly, and spend your spare time in different hobbies or enriching activities (including rest), you actually perform at a higher level and deliver higher quality work when you are at the office.”
- Focus on the things that you can control, especially things you are good at and enjoy doing. Roberts recommends making a list of these things and then doing more of them. Trying to fix things you can’t control, aren’t

good at or hate doing are sure to result in burnout and negativity, she says.

- Prioritize effectively, both in the office and out. “Every morning, write down the top three things you want to accomplish that day and follow through. Rank your activities based on value, time commitment, and deadline. Once you start completing high value activities, you’ll create positive momentum.”
- These steps to take can provide big benefits for both employees and HR professionals.

As Dan Schawbel, partner and research director for Future Workplace, in New York, says: “The biggest priority for business leaders in 2017 will be retaining employees in an ever-more-competitive talent marketplace.

“As the economy continues to improve, and employees have more job options, companies will have to provide more compensation, expand benefits and improve their employees’ experience. Managers should promote flexibility, and ensure that employees aren’t overworked, to prevent employee burnout.” ▲



For More Information:

Business News Daily: “Battling Burnout: 5 Ways to Keep Employees Energized”

<http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/9711-prevent-employee-burnout.html>

Forbes: “The Top Three Factors Driving Employee Burnout”

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/groupthink/2017/02/01/the-biggest-workplace-challenge-employee-burnout/#5e45b32560ae20046642>

Hot on the Inside

An HR/Marketing Alliance 2

Sometimes HR and Marketing seem at odds. But they should be coordinating messages.

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Forming an HR/Marketing Alliance

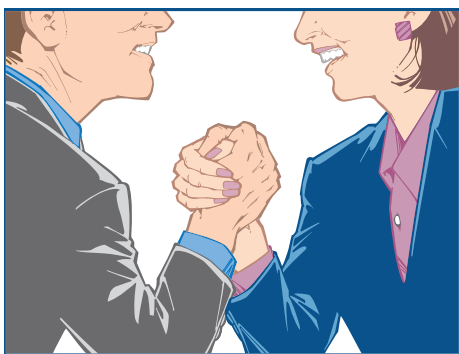
Every organization has both internal and external audiences that it communicates with. Ensuring that this communication is aligned is vital – you want to ensure that they are receiving a consistent brand message. And yet, in some organizations, there exists a great divide between the two functions responsible for these communication efforts — HR (internal) and marketing (external).

In more-successful organizations these two groups do work closely together to ensure consistency of brand message.

Employees can be critical brand advocates, both during and after their tenure with an organization. But, they have to be armed with messages and information that can help them serve in this role and, importantly, these messages must be consistent with organizational marketing messages.

A Help in Hiring

“A partnership between marketing and human resources can have a massive impact on the hiring prospectus of a company,” says Brad Stultz, who oversees HR for approximately 200 employees of Totally Promotional, an online retailer in Coldwater, OH. “A company’s marketing team spends a great deal of time focusing on how to appeal to clientele through the creation of a company’s brand. Be-



ing able to communicate that brand and culture through your hiring efforts can lead to increased employment interest,” he says. As recruiting top talent becomes increasingly competitive, having the ability to market to potential candidates is important.

Rosie Cappos, a marketing coordinator with FreightCenter in Palm Harbor, FL, says “alliance” is a perfect way to describe the relationship between marketing and HR. “Essentially we are combining our powers and tackling many beasts together.” At FreightCenter, she says, HR handles internal communication and recruiting efforts, marketing handles external communication. But, she adds, “there is crossover. Sometimes marketing needs HR to send out a new standard operating procedure to the sales floor and that’s where HR becomes the messenger for us and communicates that to employees. On the contrary, sometimes HR needs social media posts and ads to be placed to help them with their acquisition efforts. We end up supplementing each other where we need it, and that’s most effectively done by remaining in constant contact.”

In fact, Aberdeen Group research has shown that 67% of best-in-class companies have an employer branding initiative involving marketing and other departments. In their report “Aligning Human Resources and Marketing to Strengthen Brand Experience,” they outline four critical steps to align these two functions:

- Create awareness externally and internally;
- Transition from onboarding trainings to ongoing workshops;
- Promote transparency at company-wide events;
- Transform former employees into brand advocates.

How close is the relationship between

Temporary Workers Can Be Special Events Savivors

Avoid being understaffed when planning and/or hosting special events. You can, and should, use the special skills of professional temporary staff for the increased workload generated by promotional, educational, recruiting, fund raising, commencements or other special events.

Temps can help with event-related tasks, and they also can help do the work of your regular staffers whose time is co-opted by the special events.

Even the most modest events involve a lot of work and organization. So if you have neither time nor event-organizing skills, consider bringing in project temps with event experience to create the ambiance you want. Remember, strategies for business special events are as critical to the creation of goodwill and the strengthening of business relationships as any other marketing tool, so do it up right.

One phone call gets the process started with a complimentary consultation at your office or ours. We’re real people here, and we’re here to help you.

HR and marketing in your organization? Chances are there are ample opportunities to strengthen that relationship to ensure alignment of messaging internally and externally. ▲

For More Information:

AMA: “Interesting Bedfellows: Why a Teaming of HR and Marketing Makes Sense”

<http://www.amanet.org/training/articles/Interesting-Bedfellows-Why-a-Teaming-of-HR-and-Marketing-Makes-Sense.aspx>

Aberdeen: “Aligning Human Resources and Marketing to Strengthen Brand Experience”

<http://www.aberdeenessentials.com/cmo-essentials/aligning-human-resources-and-marketing-to-strengthen-brand-experience/>

SHRM: “Fortune 500 Graded ‘C’ in Recruitment Marketing”

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/fortune-500-graded-recruitment-marketing.aspx>

Business Climate and Navigating Ethical Choices

How easy is it to fall down that slippery slope, from good intentions to poor choices that can wreck careers and lives? Regretfully, easier than you may think.

Most people like to think of themselves as ethical. Most businesses have published statements of their mission, vision and values. But sometimes, the business environment can pressure people to do the wrong thing.

Mark Chussil, a founder of Advanced Competitive Strategies, in Portland OR, says that you should keep your ethical standards in mind at all times. “Write a list of actions you *will not* take. Re-read it from time to time.”

Leaders Set Stage

In all organizations, senior leaders and management set the stage for behavioral expectations for everyone, through their missions, visions, and values. But most importantly, through their own actions.

“If management is unethical or unprofessional it should expect the same from its employees,” says Charles Krugel, a labor and employment lawyer in Chicago. “When you have control over someone’s livelihood, you have some control over their life,” he says. “Your employees look to you as the ultimate example of how to behave in the workplace. Whether you like it or not, when you own or operate a business, you’re a leader. So, be an effective leader. If you’re in a business that has policies, then adhere to those policies.”

Guiding Employees

What can organizations do to help guide employees toward sound, ethical choices and what role can HR leaders play in the process?

For most organizations, the Mission, Vision and Values statements (MVV) serve as an important starting point. But that presumes that these statements are

an accurate reflection of the leadership’s priorities and that the organization’s leaders are committed to supporting the statements through their actions. Here are some steps that HR can take, along with the senior leadership team, to ensure that this is the case:

- Review the Mission, Vision and Values statements regularly to ensure they are in fact a reflection of the direction leadership wishes the company to take and the actions they wish employees to exhibit. This is often done as part of the annual strategic planning process.
- Ensure that there is alignment between the MVV and corporate policies and practices. Disconnects not only lead to confusion, but can undermine the validity of the MVV.
- Work with senior leaders and other management staff to ensure that they both understand the MVV and are committed to exhibiting these actions in their own behaviors.
- Incorporate these expectations into the hiring and evaluation process.
- Hold leaders and others accountable to the MVV – if employees begin to see that adhering to stated values doesn’t really matter, they will stop adhering to these stated values.

Importance of the MVV

The Mission, Vision and Values statements must be more than pretty documents framed and displayed on boardroom walls and tucked into employee handbooks. They should express the very real expectations of the organization. When senior leaders’ actions uphold these statements, with what they say and do, the power of the MVV will spread



through the organization and guide employees in making daily decisions. When they don’t, the MVV documents can become more pieces of wasted paper destined for the shredder. ▲

For More Information:

Harvard Business Review: “Keep a List of Unethical Things You’ll Never Do”

<https://hbr.org/2016/05/keep-a-list-of-unethical-things-youll-never-do>

Harvard Business Review: “When Tough Performance Goals Lead to Cheating”

<https://hbr.org/2016/09/when-tough-performance-goals-lead-to-cheating>

Harvard Business Review: “Why It’s So Hard to Train Someone to Make an Ethical Decision”

<https://hbr.org/2017/01/why-its-so-hard-to-train-someone-to-make-an-ethical-decision>

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Engaging Senior-Level Female Employees

According to Boston Consulting Group's (BCG) research, some of the world's largest companies are struggling with lower-than-average engagement among their senior-level female workers. Understanding what's important to these employees can help develop and retain a strong and diverse leadership team.

BCG found that the best-performing companies showed no gender gap in engagement levels. At lower-performing companies, however, the picture was very different. Senior women in these organizations were less engaged than their male counterparts.

What Senior-Level Women Want

Research showed seven areas of focus to better engage senior-level female employees, in order of importance:

- Appreciation;
- Work-life balance;
- Cooperation and good relations with colleagues;
- Mentorship, sponsorship and a strong relationship with managers;
- Compensation and promotion opportunities;
- Job attributes;

■ Company objectives and aspirations. "The key to engaging and retaining senior-level female employees is magnetic leadership," says Roberta Matuson, president of Matuson Consulting, in Brookline, MA. "Women, in particular, have a difficult time balancing the needs of work and their personal lives. When an employee finds that rare boss who provides the flexibility needed to excel in one's career and personal life, they know better than to look elsewhere. Simply put, they stick around."

APQC, a best-practices firm in Houston, surveyed a thousand professionals last year to gain insight into the modern work experience and the future of work. The survey covered everything from preferred office designs to the flexibility and mobility employees need and how they build trusted relationships. Not surprisingly, some of the biggest gender differences in the survey related to work/life balance. The data suggests that women currently feel they have less flexibility at work than their male colleagues, and they desire more.

Lauren Trees, principal research lead with APQC says, "Based on these results, giving women more flexibility to custom-

ize their working hours, to work from home on occasion as schedules demand, and to make other changes to improve their perceived work/life balance may help boost female retention."

She also recommends that "female employees have opportunities to get away from the noise and chaos of open-plan offices, as well as limiting meetings and social interactions and blocking time on their calendars for tasks that require deep concentration or quiet reflection. Recognizing that different environments and activities drive productivity differently in men and women might help organizations boost engagement and retention of both groups." ▲



For More Information:

Fast Company: "6 Ways to Get Women Into Leadership Positions and Keep Them There"

<https://www.fastcompany.com/3042405/strong-female-lead/6-ways-to-get-women-into-leadership-positions-and-keep-them-there>

Forbes: "The Secret to Engaged Employees, Especially Women and Millennials"

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/womensmedia/2015/08/04/the-secret-to-engaged-employees-especially-women-and-millennials/#5db6a56e30f1>