

BURNOUT BUSTING STRATEGIES

Burnout will not only reduce your productivity at work but, if left unchecked could eventually threaten your job, your relationships and even your health says the managing director of the Professional Assignments Group (PAG) Lawrence Wordon.

He says if constant stress has you feeling physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted, you are probably suffering from burnout. “But if you’re able to recognise the signs and symptoms of an impending burnout, you can take steps to prevent it.”

“Some stress is good. It is the elixir that makes us perform and improve on our previous best effort. It is the way we deal with stress and not stress itself that can result in burnout. Stress should be managed and should never be allowed to get out of hand. The goal in treating stress is not to eliminate it but to manage it to your advantage. In order to manage stress correctly, we need to acknowledge that proper amounts of it are needed to motivate us to excel in our performance,” he says.

Burnout occurs when you feel overwhelmed and unable to meet constant demands. As the stress continues, you begin to lose the interest and motivation that led you to take on your job in the first place. Burnout reduces your productivity and saps your energy, leaving you feeling increasingly hopeless, powerless, cynical and resentful.

“Because burnout doesn’t happen overnight – and it’s difficult to fight once you’re in the middle of it –the earlier you recognise it the better your chances of avoiding it,” he says.

Wordon recommends the following tips to help avoid burnout:

Clarify your job description. Ask your supervisor for an updated description of your job duties and responsibilities. You may then be able to point out that some of the things you are expected to do are not part of your job description and gain a little leverage by showing that you’ve been putting in work over and above the parameters of your job.

Keep your boss in the loop. Always keep your supervisor informed of progress and always highlight problem areas or concerns about workload before they become critical.

Request a transfer. If your workplace is large enough, you might be able to escape a toxic environment by transferring to another department or geographic location.

Ask for new duties. If you’ve been doing the same work for a long time, ask to try something new.

Take time off. If burnout seems inevitable, take a break from work, Go on holiday and use the time to recharge your batteries and take perspective. Regular weekend getaways will also help relieve office pressures.