



# BURNOUT: A NEW EPIDEMIC?



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# Burnout: A New Epidemic?

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**There are record numbers of working people signed off on long-term sick leave from stress and burnout**

A study conducted by the [TUC](#) found that 55% of workers reported that work had become more intense and demanding. In the same study, over 60% of those polled stated they felt exhausted at the end of most working days, with over 30% sharing they are spending more time outside contracted hours on core work activities.

This report suggests we are heading for what the TUC have coined as, “Burnt out Britain”. They say urgent action is needed (by the Government), and we’d include employers and business leaders, to spot the signs of burnout.

In the annual benchmark report by Mental Health UK, they state that 20% of workers need to take time off due to poor mental health caused by pressure or stress in the last year.

Brian Dow their CEO put it like this:

*“Simply put, this temperature test of the nation’s wellbeing suggests that the UK is rapidly becoming a burnt-out nation, and a worrying number of people are taking time off work due to poor mental health caused by stress,”*

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## WHAT IS BURNOUT?

Burnout is a syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that hasn't been successfully managed. It's characterised by three dimensions:

1. **Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion**
2. **Increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to work**
3. **Reduced professional efficacy**

While it's not classified as a medical condition, burnout can lead to more severe physical and mental issues.

## TEN COMMON SIGNS OF BURNOUT

### **Physical Exhaustion:**

Feeling constantly tired, drained, and lacking energy, even after adequate rest

### **Increased Absenteeism:**

Frequent sick days or unexplained absences

### **Emotional Drain:**

Experiencing emotional exhaustion, irritability and mood swings

### **Insomnia or Sleep Disturbances:**

Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep

### **Reduced Performance:**

A decline in work performance, productivity and attention to detail

### **Physical Symptoms:**

Headaches, muscle tension or gastrointestinal issues

### **Detachment:**

Feeling emotionally detached from work, colleagues or personal life

### **Loss of Interest:**

Decreased enthusiasm for tasks or hobbies

### **Cynicism:**

Developing a negative or cynical attitude towards work or others

### **Lack of Satisfaction:**

Feeling unfulfilled despite achievements

# Burnout in Numbers

These statistics highlight the urgent need to address burnout and promote workplace well-being. Employers and individuals alike must take proactive steps to mitigate the impact of chronic stress and prevent burnout



## Poor Management

82% of managers are untrained or 'accidental' (CMI, 2023)



## Going Sick

40% increase in long-term sick leave due to mental health issues, affecting over 400,000 individuals in the UK (ONS, 2023)



## Struggling Leaders

53% of leaders struggle with fostering effective collaboration in a hybrid environment



## Mistaken Identity

93% of workers identified symptoms of burnout, while 68% mistakenly identified anxiety symptoms as burnout (Mental Health UK Poll)



## High Stress

91% of UK adults experienced high or extreme levels of pressure or stress in the past year



## More Prone...

Women and young people reported feeling more prone to extreme stress and pressure at work



## More Time Off

20% of workers needed time off due to poor mental health caused by pressure or stress



## Stress<sup>2</sup>

The number of UK workers experiencing stress or burnout doubled in 2023 compared to the previous year



## Stress, Anxiety, Nerves

Over 2.5 million working-age people are now 'economically inactive' due to long-term sickness, with 53% citing depression, anxiety, or "bad nerves" as the reason



## Epidemic Proportions

A staggering 92% of UK employees admit to experiencing burnout or stress during their careers

### Sources:

<https://mentalhealth-uk.org/burnout/>  
<https://www.weightmans.com/media-centre/news>  
<https://www.hrgrapevine.com/content/article/>

<https://business.itn.co.uk/>  
[CIPD](#)



# IDEAS FOR MITIGATING BURNOUT

## TRAIN YOUR MANAGERS

In the Mental Health UK report, 43% of people stated that having supportive managers alleviated stress in the workplace. Not only is this empowering your managers and training them, it's also extending trust in them to know their people and do what's best for both the individual and the business. After all, it's their teams on the frontline

## COMP PEOPLE PROPERLY

Though a high salary is not the sole indicator of employee happiness, the cost of living crisis has taken a deep toll on everyone. This financial pressure acutely adds to mental health woes, especially with unemployment rates rising to over 4.3% (ONS data). Approach this subject with empathy and transparency, perhaps even offer courses on personal finance, debt management and investment

## PROMOTE WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Encourage employees to prioritise self-care and maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life. Offer flexible work schedules, remote work options, regular breaks and tools for remote collaboration

## DEFINE EXPECTATIONS CLEARLY

Set clear expectations for hybrid teams. Ensure everyone understands their roles, responsibilities and performance metrics. Clarity helps manage remote work effectively

## ADOPT A FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE

Provide flexible working options such as flex time, remote work, and hybrid arrangements. Empower employees to customise their work schedules to suit organisational and individual needs, reducing stress and enhancing job satisfaction

## ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Create a supportive workplace where employees feel valued and empowered. Prioritise open communication by actively listening to team members, providing regular feedback opportunities and honestly sharing company updates



# IDEAS FOR MITIGATING BURNOUT

## REGULAR CHECK-INS

Schedule regular one-on-one check-ins with team members. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss work progress, address concerns and offer support

## PROVIDE REMOTE WORK RESOURCES

Equip employees with the necessary tools and resources for remote work. This includes access to collaboration platforms, training and technical support

## PROMOTE TEAM BUILDING

Foster team cohesion through virtual team-building activities. Regular team events, even if held online, strengthen relationships and combat feelings of isolation

## RECOGNITION AND FEEDBACK

Acknowledge employees' efforts and achievements. Regularly provide positive feedback and recognise their contributions. Feeling appreciated boosts morale and prevents burnout

## EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Invest in continuous learning opportunities. Offering skill development programs and career growth prospects keeps employees engaged and motivated

## BALANCE COLLABORATION AND FOCUS TIME

Encourage a balance between collaborative work (meetings, brainstorming) and focused individual work. Too many meetings can lead to burnout, so optimise collaboration time



Intuitive Hybrid Workplace Software

[intheoffice.io](https://intheoffice.io)