

VOICE



Values Based Leadership



June 2024

Lead the Charge Spark a surge in workplace energy

As leaders, it's essential to inspire our teams and create an atmosphere that boosts productivity without relying solely on adrenaline-fueled bursts of energy.

This month, we explore practical strategies to sustain workplace energy, prevent energy drains, and adapt to the unique challenges of hybrid work.

Discover how to lead with vitality, ensuring your team stays motivated and engaged.

VOICE NOTES

We know sometimes time is short. Each of this month's articles in bite size form.

Renewable Energy

Harness Positive Energy Sources:

- Foster enthusiasm, collaboration, and innovation to fuel motivation and goal achievement.
- Combat negativity and stress to prevent morale and productivity drains.

Sustain Energy Levels:

- Promote healthy habits like breaks, hydration, and sleep to maintain daily energy reserves.
- Establish clear communication channels and align goals with company values to sustain motivation.

Recharge Strategies:

- Encourage physical activity, mindfulness practices, and social connections to rejuvenate body and mind.
- Recognise warning signs of energy depletion and address root causes to prevent burnout.

Navigate Energy Dynamics

- Listen to employees and address concerns to maintain a supportive work environment.
- Promote work-life balance through flexible working arrangements and respect for personal boundaries.

Fight or Flight : When too much isn't right

Prioritise Self-Care:

- Recognise the importance of maintaining personal well-being in a fast-paced work environment.
- Avoid over-reliance on adrenaline by setting boundaries, practicing stress reduction techniques, and prioritising sleep and exercise.

Address Adrenaline Dependency:

- Acknowledge the short-term benefits of adrenaline while understanding its long-term consequences on physical and mental health.
- Cultivate higher-order thinking skills essential for problem-solving and creativity by reducing chronic stress and overwork.

Foster a Culture of Well-being:

- Encourage employers to promote flexible working arrangements, provide resources for stress management, and support time off.
- Emphasise that true success encompasses both productivity and overall well-being, fostering a win-win environment for employees and employers alike.

Hybrid Energy : Plug in take charge

Define and Lead by Energy Management Principles:

Clearly articulate the importance of managing energy levels for both employers and employees, demonstrating this commitment through leadership actions and behaviours.

Establish Routines for Flexibility Boundaries:

Set clear boundaries around flexible work arrangements to prevent burnout, ensuring that employees know when to disconnect and recharge.

Invest in Balanced Tech Usage:

Provide the right technology tools and training to support productivity while also promoting healthy digital habits to prevent tech fatigue.

Foster Social Connectivity:

Encourage intentional interactions through virtual gatherings and occasional in-person meet-ups to maintain social capital and team energy.

Prioritize Well-being and Autonomy:

Promote physical and mental health practices, trust, and autonomy to empower employees to thrive in a hybrid work environment.

Juicers & Zappers

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Breaks

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Exercise

Flexibility

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Recognition

Healthy Snacks

S

Natural Light

Socialising

T

Clear Goals

Ergonomics

Meditation

Top Workplace Energy Boosts & Drains

Overwork

Stress

Commuting

Distractions

Negativity

Isolation

Poor Diet

Inactivity

Lack of Sleep

Micromanagement

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Renewable Energy

Energy..... It's not just about your bills.

ENERGY. It's everywhere. It's sustainable, it's renewable, it's found its way to our cars, it keeps our homes cosy, and allows businesses to do business...but look closer, it's everywhere in the workplace, in every one of your employees and colleagues. Keeping them charged, just like those cars, ensures they can go the distance.

Energy is the currency that fires productivity, creativity and collaboration. Understanding how it's flowing, how to harness it and manage it, is your key to maintaining high performance and employee well being.

Accentuate the Positive. There are 2 types of energy, one you want to hold onto, and the other that you need to learn to let go.

Positive Energy. Like the business turbo. It shows up in enthusiasm, collaboration and innovation. It is the food of motivation and gives the power to overcome challenges and achieve goals.

Negative Energy. Stress, negativity and burnout, the workplace dynamic killers. Negative energy undermines morale, productivity and wellbeing, and you end up with disengagement and staff turnover. Don't let it flatten the battery.

Power Surge! So your team are buzzing with energy, how do you hold onto it and maintain it?

Healthy Habits. Encourage regular breaks, hydration, healthy eating and sufficient sleep. These are the foundations of energy and help maintain day to day energy.

Clear Communication. People love to know what's happening.. it's human nature. If open and transparent communication is the norm this reduces misunderstandings and conflicts that drain that energy away.

Goal Alignment. Team and individual goals must align to the company mission and values. This sense of purpose and motivation drive positive energy.

Don't let the drain limit your range

Ok, so sometimes the energy can dip, influenced by things like the business climate, emotions, long hours, health issues... the list goes on. How can you help your people recharge?

Physical Activity. Encourage employees to take part in physical activity... walking, stretching, maybe walking meetings, intra office competitions. All help to rejuvenate body and mind.

Mindfulness Practices. Meditation, deep breathing exercises or guided visualisation can help employees manage stress and restore mental clarity. As with everything these days, there's an app for that.

Social Connections. Create a supportive work environment where employees can connect with colleagues, share ideas and seek assistance when needed. Positive social interaction can give a powerful energy boost.

Avoid the Blackout

It's all very well us telling you what you should do, but how do you navigate the energy dynamics.

Recognise Warning Signs. Decreased motivation, increased conflict or absenteeism are all signs of energy depletion. Pick up on this and take action.

Get to the root of the issue. Identify and address the root causes of energy drains, whether they stem for work overload, poor communication, or lack of recognition. Speak and more importantly, listen to your people, it really is that simple.

Promote work life balance. Encourage work life balance, from offering flexible working, to promoting time off, and respecting those boundaries between work and personal life.

In embracing the dynamic of energy within the workplace, we not only fuel productivity but also cultivate a culture of resilience and vitality. By fostering positive energy, addressing challenges head-on, and promoting wellbeing, we empower our teams to navigate the ever-changing currents of work with vigour and purpose.

Together, you can harness the power of energy to propel you toward success, ensuring that the workplace remains vibrant hub of innovation and collaboration.

28 % of people feel full of energy at work.
Source : CIPD

24 % of people feel exhausted
Source : CIPD

Fight or Flight : When too much isn't right.

£ 28 b n

the cost of
burnout,
workplace
stress and
mental ill health
annually.

51 %

of long term
sick leave is
due to
depression,
stress or
anxiety.

55 %

feel their work is getting
more intense or
demanding.

Source : MHFA

Picture this: you're on a plane, listening to the safety instructions. They stress the importance of securing your own mask before assisting others. It's a simple reminder: help yourself before helping others. Yet, in daily life, how often do we truly act on this advice?

In today's fastpaced work environment, where the pressure to succeed is ever-present, many of us find ourselves pushing beyond our limits. We're not powered by genuine human energy, but rather by adrenaline – that primal fight or flight response that served our cave dwelling ancestors well but may not be as beneficial for us modern professionals.

Adrenaline, in small doses, can indeed provide a temporary boost – heightened focus, increased alertness, a surge of energy precisely when it's needed. But relying on it excessively to sustain productivity is like playing with fire. The consequences are far-reaching, impacting both physical and mental well-being.

One of the first casualties of an adrenaline-fuelled lifestyle is sleep. Prolonged periods of stress and overwork disrupt the body's natural rhythm, leading to a vicious cycle of insomnia and exhaustion.

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Added to this, while adrenaline may enhance short-term focus, it comes at the cost of higher-order thinking – the kind essential for problem-solving, decision-making, and creativity.

Consequently, professional growth is stunted as cognitive resources are depleted. But the toll isn't just mental. Chronic stress and overwork have been linked to a host of physical ailments, from hypertension to heart disease and weakened immunity, compromising long-term health.

Breaking free from this cycle of adrenaline dependency requires a shift in mindset.

Fight or Flight : When too much isn't right.

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Employers, too, have a role to play in fostering a culture of well-being. By promoting flexible working arrangements, encouraging time off, and providing resources for stress management, they can create an environment where employees feel valued and supported.

Ultimately, true success isn't measured solely by productivity but by overall well-being – both personal and professional. Just as the aeroplane safety demonstration reminds us, remember to secure your own mask first. Because when you take care of yourself, you're better equipped to care for others – and that's a win-win for everyone.

In a recent collaboration with one of our clients, we witnessed firsthand the detrimental impact of sustained reliance on adrenaline energy in the workplace. This constant drive to perform led to a cascade of negative effects on their wellbeing, including a persistent lack of energy, disrupted sleep patterns, and the feeling of being 'always on'.

“I'm guilty of using busy as an excuse to not spend time on myself”

For decades, they had been operating on adrenaline, viewing it as a necessary fuel for both professional and personal success. However, through coaching, they came to recognise the drawbacks of this approach. Instead of sustainable energy, they were running on a high, continually topping up their reserves until they reached a breaking point.

“focussing on energy, was my breakthrough.”

Coaching provided them with the insight to identify this pattern and the tools to shift their mindset. They likened the experience to releasing air from a balloon – letting go of the artificial high and embracing their natural energy flow.

Recognising Burnout

- Feeling tired or drained most of the time
- Feeling helpless, trapped and/or defeated
- Feeling detached/alone in the world
- Having a cynical/negative outlook
- Self-doubt
- Procrastinating and taking longer to get things done
- Feeling overwhelmed

Source : Mental Health UK

“if anyone else had been treating me this way, it would be considered abuse”

This serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative potential of coaching. By guiding individuals to recognise and recalibrate their energy sources, we can help them achieve sustainable success and genuine fulfilment in both their professional and personal lives.

Hybrid & Energy: Plug in and take charge

It may be Marmite, but love it or hate it, hybrid working is here to stay, in whatever form. We also know that striking that balance is more art than science.

We also know that where flexibility meets productivity – that morning coffee is always within reach – but it's not quite the sustainable energy boost we had in mind.

As leaders essential to understand how hybrid impacts our energy – both for employer and employees.

Flexibility: Superpower or Kryptonite?

First off, let's talk flexibility. Hybrid work gives us the power to work when and where we're most productive. Need to pick up the kids from school? No problem. Want to start your day with a sunrise yoga session? Go for it. This kind of freedom can be a serious energy booster.

But beware—too much flexibility can turn into a tangled web of work-life confusion. Without clear boundaries, work can sneak into personal time. To prevent burnout, encourage your team to set work hours, take regular breaks, and for the love of all things holy, avoid after-hours emails. Balance is key.

Tech: Friend or Frenemy?

Our laptops, smartphones, and endless apps are

the lifelines of hybrid work. They keep us connected, productive, and, let's be honest, sane. When used wisely, tech can make us feel at the pinnacle of productivity.

However, tech overload is real. Ever felt drained after back-to-back Zoom meetings? Yeah, us too. Combat tech fatigue by encouraging your team to schedule "no meeting" times and disable those pesky non-essential notifications. Trust us, a little digital detox can do wonders for energy levels. Go dark.

Social Capital: Building virtual bridges.

Now, let's get social—virtually, of course. One major downside of hybrid work is the lack of those spontaneous office interactions. Remember the vending machine gossip? Those random coffee breaks? Corridor banter? They're the unsung heroes of social capital and energy boosters.

In the hybrid world, these moments need a bit more effort. Schedule virtual coffee breaks, happy hours, and even the occasional in-person meet-up when possible. A little face time (even if it's screen time) can go a long way in keeping your team connected and energised.

[Click here to read our recent LinkedIn article on social capital](#)

Wellbeing: The Ultimate Power Up.

Finally, let's talk wellbeing. Hybrid work gives employees the chance to create their perfect work environment—think plants, natural light, and maybe even a cat or two. A happy workspace can lead to a happier, more energetic team.

But let's not kid ourselves—working from home can also lead to some not-so-healthy habits. Encourage your team to prioritize their physical and mental health. Promote activities like yoga, meditation, and regular exercise. Remember, a healthy team is a high-energy team.

Trust

Trust is all important, without it you have nothing. 'Shirking from home' is not the attitude and maybe balance this with thoughts on office presenteeism. In a hybrid working world, trust is the cornerstone of productivity and morale. Micromanagement and checking up on productivity drains energy and stifles innovation, loosening the reins and empowering your team to work autonomously will boost their confidence and motivation. Let them do what they do wherever they are but be there for them when they need you.

Find the Sweet Spot

The secret sauce to making hybrid work? Balance. As leaders, your mission (should you choose to accept it) is to help your team find that sweet spot. By promoting flexibility, smart tech use, social connectivity, and overall wellbeing, you can make hybrid work and balance that energy drain and gain. [Trust us!](#)

