

### **Ways to deal with the emotional burnout of staff during the quarantine period**

The coronavirus pandemic is driving the need to make changes in the way companies operate. Now many employees are forced to work remotely. Remote work has a number of advantages, but in addition, it carries a number of disadvantages. Together with the general economic, social and epidemiological tensions in the country, this becomes a source of stress for employees. Constant stress can cause burnout.

Burnout can include feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion, increased mental distance from one's job, or negative/cynical feelings related to one's job — including reduced belief that the person is able to perform the job and produce good results [1]. Emotional burnout leads to a decrease in professional efficiency and effectiveness.

Some employees may independently distinguish and identify the problem of emotional burnout. Sometimes friends, family, or a personal counselor can give advice and point out the problem. However, there are also those who will not be able to understand what is happening to them. Accordingly, the problem will only get worse. In the future, this will negatively affect the quality of the fulfillment of the tasks.

In order to prevent a problem, it is important to take care of the employees throughout their professional life. Don't wait until burnout occurs. After all, it is much more difficult to get out of such a state than to prevent it.

The first thing to do is to develop not only professional skills, but also to teach the staff to be mentally healthy. Most likely, company leaders facilitate the organization with various trainings and meetings with coaches that will help staff to develop as specialists. Top managers must pay serious attention to mental health of their employees. It is also necessary to organize trainings which will help to determine the level of their mental health, invite psychologists for group or individual work with them. The main goal is to teach employees to independently recognize and determine their emotional state. After all, if the problem is identified in time, the likelihood of adverse consequences associated with it is much lower.

The second thing that can help to combat burnout is a reward system. The fact is that in a pandemic, human productivity decreases. This is not an axiom. Nevertheless, many are under constant stress due to the current situation, which prevents them from working at full strength. During this period of time, support is more important to them than ever, it is important for them to feel their own importance. Moreover, the incentive system based solely on the results of their work does not in any way contribute to the realization of their needs. Some rewards should exist simply because people matter, not just because they can do something.

Moreover, having switched to remote mode, they are not idle. They are actively trying to adapt to new conditions, spending a lot of strength and energy on it. The adaptation process by itself does not increase the volume of tasks completed by the employee. However, at the same time, the employee subconsciously still expects rewards for the efforts made. Whether it's a gift card, extra break time, some bonus paid vacation hours, or amazing snacks in the break room. All this will let a personal know that he/she has value whether or not creating monetary value [2].

In addition to all of the above, you need to show empathy in relation to the employees. This will help them feel better, as someone understands them. Showing empathy can also build trust. Thus, the staff will listen more to the recommendations of the manager and will not accept any changes with hostility.

The third method is closely related to the previous one; it also concerns the reward system. The problem is that some employees try to compensate for the decline in their productivity by assigning more tasks to themselves and not taking rest. They are even more worried about this. In this case, it is worth encouraging weekends, the initiative for the team to spend their leisure time together (even online, it is quite possible). This instills in subordinates a culture of self-care [3].

The fourth thing that will help to minimize stress and prevent burnout is the correct setting of tasks. It is better to give instructions and adjust the assignment as early as possible. You should try not to do this shortly before the deadline [2].

It is important to remember that while working remotely, an employee is more involved in solving everyday problems than if he was at the office at that time. Most likely, at this moment his children and other family members are at home, who in one way or another require attention. Accordingly, the employee is actually busy solving more tasks than before. Therefore, any change that disrupts the hard-to-work process of work negatively affects the emotional state of a person.

Another way to prevent burnout is to reduce the workload. A good manager should notice signs of emotional exhaustion of his subordinates. Sometimes, to solve this problem, you need to give them a break instead of rushing and assigning new tasks. Thus, the pressure on them decreases, there are fewer reasons to experience stress.

The fifth method is to develop and provide employees with clear guidelines and resources to help them organize their workflow remotely. Many of them, in theory, can come to this on their own. Nevertheless, this will happen through trial and errors, quarrels with loved ones and nervous breakdowns. This method introduces some specificity and certainty in the process of adaptation of subordinates.

It is important to understand that combating burnout is not only a task for employees who face it, but also for managers. The implementation of the methods proposed in this work does not require large expenditures of time and financial resources from the employer. However, it will give a positive effect on the emotional health and productivity of the staff.

**References:**

1. Burnout: Facing the damage of 'chronic workplace stress' (august 2, 2019). *MedicalNewsToday*. Retrieved from <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/325943#What-is-burnout>.
2. 7 Tips for Helping Employees That Are Burnt Out (September 11, 2019). *When I Work*. Retrieved from <https://wheniwork.com/blog/tips-for-employee-burnout>.
3. 15 Tips to Deal With Employee Burnout as a Manager or Business Owner. Retrieved from <https://www.moneycrashers.com/tips-deal-employee-burnout-manager-business/>.