***Independent Banker***

**Portfolio: Leadership at all Levels**

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**How to beat burnout**

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Among its many side effects, the COVID-19 pandemic has made us hyperconscious of worker safety. It has also helped shine a powerful spotlight on the broader issue of well-being in the workplace—and that’s a subject we can’t afford to ignore.

A recent study by Deloitte and research firm Workplace Intelligence found that one in three employees admit to significant fatigue and poor mental health, with executives overestimating how well their employees are doing and how supported they feel. In an additional report focusing on women in the workplace, Deloitte found that almost half of female workers feel burned out.

The leading causes of burnout include dealing with unclear expectations, and feeling overworked, underappreciated, or unsupported by a manager or team. Another cause is feeling the need to be constantly connected to work or on call. In the age of the iPhone and instant communication tools, lines between our work and personal lives have become increasingly blurred.

Symptoms of burnout can include self-doubt, disillusionment, depression or anxiety, trouble sleeping, headaches, digestive issues, and appetite changes. Look for outward signs in your team such as:

* Disengagement: Do they seem unavailable when you reach out?
* Decreased communication: Are they pulling back on the frequency and depth of communication?
* Loss of motivation: Are they contributing less often to group discussions?
* Little energy: Do they seem lethargic in their day-to-day roles?
* Negativity: Are they making increasingly cynical or negative comments?

To combat burnout, start by renewing your bank’s focus on well-being. Make time to talk about mental and physical health with your team. Take advantage of your health insurance provider’s wellness tools and make staff aware of them. Encourage your team to work reasonable hours, get enough sleep, take breaks, go on vacations and exercise. Tangible steps you might take include:

* Setting realistic goals
* Limiting after-hours emails
* Making breaks mandatory
* Setting up a weekly yoga or meditation class
* Bringing in a licensed massage therapist for a week
* Hosting meetings out of the office for a change of scenery
* Giving team members time to volunteer within the community
* Encouraging personal growth and career development
* Reminding staff to use their paid time off (and set a good example by taking yours)
* Showing appreciation for staff with handwritten notes or an employee appreciation week, with deliberate break time and fun activities

You might even consider giving each team member a special day for self-care each year. They can use it to get that long overdue annual physical, pursue a sporting goal or get out in nature. Whatever method you choose, find a way to let your team know that they are valued—and make sure to look after yourself too.

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[Sources:]

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2022 Deloitte & Workplace Intelligence survey: [The C-suite and workplace wellness | Deloitte Insights](https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/leadership/employee-wellness-in-the-corporate-workplace.html)