

BURNOUT (A Quick Reference Table)

Causes*	Description	Actions to Take
Workload	The actual <i>amount</i> of work demands	Sometimes little can be done to reduce actual workload but there are strategies to help manage it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Managers can delegate tasks as long as they're aware of their employees' workloads when doing so ✓ Job analysis & redesign and the use of teams can help reduce individual workload through collaboration. <i>Note: when building teams, it is important to define specific goals & objectives, time-lines, and clear responsibilities at the onset.</i>
Role Ambiguity	The extent to which an employee is unclear about his/her roles and responsibilities	A lot can be done! This is the easiest contributing factor to improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Employee surveys can easily be used to identify if, where, and to what extent role ambiguity exists. Once identified, leadership can work with their teams and departments to collaboratively define and clarify what is expected from each employee. ✓ Charts, graphs, guidelines, and other visual cues help employees define their position and responsibilities, and can be easily updated
Control	The degree to which employees are involved making decisions and the latitude they have when engaged in decision-making	Organizational culture will have a great impact on the degree to which employees are empowered to make decisions, and culture is very hard to change. However, there are methods for increasing employee engagement. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Establishing and using employee task-forces to tackle organizational issues. For example, if role ambiguity is a problem in your organization, you could form an employee task force to interview managers and employees to write descriptions of specific positions, defining their functions, tasks, where they fit in on the org chart, etc. ✓ Formal employee engagement programs can have a huge impact on the extent to which employees feel engaged and empowered within their organizations.
Support	The extent to which employees feel supported by coworkers, bosses, and the organization	When support is the issue, it might indicate deeper (and harder to address) problems such as gaps in values or perceived unfairness. Support from one's boss has an effect on workload, and coworker support can influence cynicism and feelings of personal accomplishment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A strong way to encourage support is manager and staff training in communication and teambuilding, feedback techniques, and goal-setting. ✓ To increase leadership support, the external viewpoint of an executive coach will often give leaders a deeper understanding of their influence and effect on others, which is followed up with developmental plans. ✓ On or off-site teambuilding events can also significantly improve coworker support. ✓ Organizational support can be improved when employees feel heard by their company. This can be done using employee engagement or culture change interventions.

*Causes = the most significant contributing factors to burnout as identified in applied research.