

**Making working life, a well life.**

# Beating Burnout.

**What the evidence tells us  
and how to build a case for  
investment.**

**well\_lab**  
*at work*



**well\_lab**  
*at work*

**Enabling the right kind of change  
for sustained workplace wellbeing.**



**Leading global  
health research fund**



**Masters of using  
behavioural  
innovation practices to  
solve complex  
problems**

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# What is Burnout?

**WHO define Burnout** as resulting from **chronic workplace stress** that has not been successfully managed.

***Burnout is characterized by:***

- feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion
  - increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job
  - and reduced professional efficacy
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# Why is burnout so hard to tackle?

- Through working with leading scientists, we know the biggest challenge with burnout is that there is **no one-size-fits-all solution**.
- To have lasting impact, it needs an approach that **reshapes the organisation** and **equips individuals to be more resilient**.



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# **3 Evidence-Based Approaches and 2 things you can do today**

# 1. Burnout measurement is key

Name	Summary	How well focused on burnout? 0 - 5	Supporting Evidence? 0 - 5	Ready to use? 0 - 5	Individual or org measures?	Link to business metrics?	All settings?	Trends/ predictive?
<b>Maslach Burnout Inventory</b>	The best known burnout measure used extensively in research studies and by others. Breadth of its use allows comparability between studies and organisations. Considered gold standard by some but not without criticisms since its release in 1981 – both conceptually and practically. Has developed over time and addressed criticisms. Well packaged for off the peg use by non-experts.	5	5	5	Individual/ aggregate symptoms	×	Specific and general tools	Trends but limited by maximum survey frequency
<b>Maslach Burnout Toolkit</b>	Development of the Maslach Burnout Inventory - by addition of a complementary survey on the workplace – Areas of Worklife Survey - and likely causes of burnout. Materials packaged for online or paper survey with automated analysis and reporting to organisation and individuals and good supporting information.	5	5	5	Individual/ aggregate symptoms/ Org factors	×	Specific and general tools	Trends but limited by maximum survey frequency
<b>Oldenburg Burnout Inventory</b>	Research quality instrument that uses a two-dimension measure of burnout (exhaustion and work disengagement). Well validated (Germany) but not packaged or supported for use in workplace, so more suitable for research studies or those organisations with research expertise (as with Copenhagen Burnout Inventory). Over-shadowed by dominance of MBI.	5	5	3	Individual/ aggregate symptoms	×	Yes	Trends but limited by maximum survey frequency
<b>Copenhagen Burnout Inventory</b>	Research quality instrument developed to address criticism of MBI that has no positively worded survey items. Well validated (Denmark) but not packaged or supported for use in workplace, so more suitable for research studies or those organisations with research expertise (as with Oldenburg Burnout Inventory). Over-shadowed by dominance of MBI.	5	5	3	Individual/ aggregate symptoms	×	Yes	Trends but limited by maximum survey frequency, some predictive ability found

## 2. Put a cost to burnout

- affects up to **79% of workers**
- leads to disengaged employees, which **costs employers 34% of their annual salary** as a result
- is responsible for **20% - 50% of employee turnover**
- costs organizations **£87-£262 billion a year**, a rate comparable to cancer
- For **every £1 spent** by employers on mental health interventions they **get £5 back** in reduced absence, presenteeism and staff turnover



*Sources:* <https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/press-releases/articles/poor-mental-health-costs-uk-employers-up-to-pound-45-billion-a-year.html>, <https://www.hrreview.co.uk/hr-news/wellbeing-news/companies-increasing-wellbeing-spending-due-to-covid-19/126188>, <https://www.westfieldhealth.com/docs/marketing/covid-19/divided-together-report-hr-edition.pdf>, <https://reba.global/content/research-a-quarter-of-businesses-now-spend-over-150-per-head-on-employee-wellbeing>

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# 3. Focus on the organisation, not just the individual

## **Individual Causes**

- *Personal predispositions and character, such as perfectionism, and positive affect*
- *Personal situations, such as the stress we experience, the support networks we have created for ourselves, or the type of job we are in*
- *Personal coping and regulation mechanisms, such as how well we are able to self-regulate our emotions and process them*

## **Team-Level Causes**

- *Underlying team structures, such as the size of the team, how they collaborate, and how they get things done*
- *Atmosphere created within the team, such as the degree to which people communicate openly and are able to take risks*

## **Organizational Causes**

- *Level of transparency in the organization, such as how readily leadership shares salient information with employees*
- *Organizational structures, such as vacation time and other benefits and role clarity*

## Burnout From an Organizational Perspective

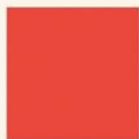
Instead of pressuring already-stressed individuals to fix themselves, true wellness requires organization-level interventions.

Stanford **SOCIAL**  
**INNOVATION** Review  
*Informing and inspiring leaders of social change*





# Change the conversation on burnout & wellbeing



1980 - 2000

**HEALTH & SAFETY  
AT WORK**

*as a legal  
requirement*



2000 - 2020

**EMPLOYEE  
WELLBEING**

*as a brand  
differentiator*



2020 - 2040

**EMPLOYEE  
HEALTH**

*as core to  
business resilience*

## Start small today: empower and experiment with your teams



This short 5 minute video (URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mOTFiThCo&t=1s>) shows how we worked with NHS ambulance drivers to set up a “wellbeing lab” where they had the time and decision-making power to identify pain points, prioritise wellbeing territories to explore, design solutions for their context based on evidence-based best practice, and run 3 pilots.

The Well\_Lab service offer is designed around including and empowering workers by creating a systemic process to allow employees to continuously identify the root causes of poor wellbeing and propose experiments to quickly try and find solutions, thereby creating buy-in and building a proactive system of continuous improvement.



**Learn more at**

[www.well-lab.co.uk](http://www.well-lab.co.uk)

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*at work*

