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The Corporate Communicator



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Feeling Overwhelmed?

You are not alone! With so many stresses and changes this past year, it can be overwhelming! *Here are some coping strategies.*

Understand Your Triggers: What "stuff" causes you to feel overwhelmed? Once you understand your triggers, make the necessary plans to avoid or prepare for them. Start by developing an ideal response to scenarios such as, "If I am put into X situation, then I will respond by doing Y". Creating an ideal response, in advance, prepares you to cope with each situation when it happens.

Prioritize What Needs to be Done: Juggling various projects and multi-tasking can be the culprit for feeling overwhelmed. As you start to

feel overwhelmed, ask yourself, "What is my main priority?" By setting your priorities, creating an agenda and doing one thing at a time, you will have a better sense of direction for your day and feel less overwhelmed.

Call a Friend: When feeling overwhelmed, it is great to have someone willing to listen. This someone can be a counselor, a friend, or a coach. They may help provide support and/or a different perspective on the situation. Also, you may figure it out all by yourself as you talk through it.

Breathe: Breathing allows you to focus on the positive. Take the time to sit down, relax and/or meditate. Just inhale and exhale slowly and deliberately. Do this until you feel calm and better in control. It really works!

DISC and Halloween Costumes

For some, putting together a Halloween costume takes a lot of thought and preparation. For others, not so much. So, what does the DiSC profile have to say about your creepy yet cool costume?

If you are a strong D, you have a desire for control or dominance. A superhero character, like Wonder Woman, works for you as she exhibits power and strength. You might also dress up as a Monster, King, Queen or Soldier, because these demonstrate someone who enjoys being in charge.

If you are a strong I, you are a strong influencer and enjoy a funny and entertaining costume that you often whip together at the last minute! You will also enjoy telling people how you came up with the costume. You enjoy

having fun and will wear an outfit that flatters you, maybe even some glitz and glitter... if it grabs positive attention.

If you are a strong S, you are steady and enjoy stability. You have your "tried and true" costumes and don't like to stand out. However, because you enjoy being on a team, you are open to wearing a group themed costume. You are even willing to make the costumes if you are given enough direction and time, and people don't change things once you get started.

If you are a strong C, you are conscientious and will spend time planning your costume, down to the tiniest detail. You know that the perfect costume didn't appear overnight and you want it to be flawless. Some popular C costumes are detectives, scientists, or even Spock...if the C can get all the details right.

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What Are the Signs and Causes of Turnover?

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased turnover as more and more people are voluntarily leaving their positions. When an employee leaves your organization, it is costly as it requires time and money to find and train their replacement. It also hurts morale for the people “who are left.” For these and other reasons, it is critical for businesses to reduce their turnover rate.

Here are the early warning signs of voluntary departure and things to do to reduce their frequency.

Know your high turnover pockets – Monitor and analyze turnover data by department, division, and manager to pinpoint where turnover exists.

Major life changes – Employees who are experiencing major life changes often leave their current position. Develop trust

with your employees and encourage open communication. You will then learn what your people are experiencing and how to support them so they will stay.

Missed promotions – Employees disappointed about being passed over for promotions are more inclined to look elsewhere for advancement opportunities. Keep track of workers who have applied for promotions and check in with those who were not selected to ensure they feel appreciated.

Complaining and absenteeism – Take note of complaints, decreases in productivity, and callouts by employees. Find out who is most at risk for leaving and implement preventative measures.

Reduced communication – Employees who fail to answer calls or emails or those who miss deadlines might be considering a move. Their mind is elsewhere and their body may soon be gone as well!

How to Reduce Turnover

While some turnover is inevitable, here are six things that you can do to reduce it.

1. Communicate frequently, be accessible, and address employee concerns – Make it easy for employees to reach out and communicate with HR and also provide multiple means of contacting you. Listen to employees’ challenges, ask for solutions, and do your best to offer accommodations, when necessary.

2. Hold “stay” interviews rather than exit interviews. Don’t wait for an exit interview to find out why employees weren’t satisfied. Have frequent, honest, interviews during an employee’s career and make their suggested improvements when possible.

3. Give honest praise – Providing feedback is just as important as receiving it. Doing so will contribute to an encouraging, positive work environment. Encouragement and recognition help employees feel respected, acknowledged, and motivated. Show your appreciation when someone does something right, even if it is a part of their job!

4. Present realistic job descriptions and hire the right people – Turnover is higher

among new hires because the actual job does not match the initial expectations and presentation. Provide realistic job descriptions. It is critical to hire employees that behaviorally and culturally fit their job. An outstanding candidate who doesn’t match the behaviors and culture of the organization won’t stay, simply because they are uncomfortable.

5. Implement behavioral interviewing to see how candidates react to potential situations. Share the challenges they will face and tell them about your workplace culture. Candidates, thankfully, often eliminate themselves if they feel they won’t fit.

6. Establish strong onboarding, mentoring, training, and advancement opportunities – If employees remain stagnant, they are more inclined to search for a position in which they can advance. To retain new hires, outline a clear career path and let them know how they can advance further and/or earn more responsibility. Help new hires make connections quickly and offer coaching and training opportunities to learn new skills and then give them tasks so they can practice these learnings. **Training is the glue that prevents turnover!!!**

Handling Workplace Disagreements

Disagreements in the workplace are inevitable. Working in teams promotes collaboration and joint efforts, but it also poses an opportunity for opposing perspectives and opinions. This is not always bad. It can lead to better ideas, methodologies, and opportunities. Follow the tips below to learn how to embrace disagreements and utilize them to your advantage.

Establish Boundaries. Boundaries need to be implemented from the start. Outline and let people know what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior when voicing opinions and ideas. For example, a boundary could be: "Talk to the person within 24 hours of feeling uncomfortable with what they said." By doing this, you not only encourage individuals to share their perspectives and feelings, but also minimizes the potential for ineffective conflict.

Be Direct and Give Rationale. If you beat around the bush, it is harder for people to understand your perspective. For example, if your department is

enforcing a new policy that has promising benefits, but you notice something that might be counterproductive, bring it up in a direct tone, utilizing examples of **how** the new policy poses potential difficulties and **why** it would be beneficial to investigate the issue further. By doing this, you're more convincing than if you simply state "I don't like this policy" or "I don't think the new policy is a good idea."

Be Committed. Having a different opinion before something is decided is helpful, *if you express it*. Your thoughts and opinions are as valid as anyone else's, so use your voice confidently. Even if it doesn't result in a different outcome, you'll feel better knowing that you had an opinion and that you shared it.

Be Accountable. Not following the decision, once it has been decided, can be alienating and divisive. Don't disrupt the peace and workings of the group by not going along with the decided program. You can't always get your way. Commit to the new normal. Hold yourself and others accountable, as that's what being a team player is all about!

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CC by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

Lately, I have been working many extra hours to complete a project, and it has been affecting my home life. I have been coming home three to four hours late, causing my family to get upset, and I've been missing out on time with my kids. Frankly, I am exhausted. What should I do?

—**Overworked**

Dear Overworked:

First, check on your own time management to be sure you are maximizing your time at work. If you are, reach out to your manager and let them know the negative impact that these extensive extra hours are having on your family and you. Your management should offer suggestions for improving your work-life balance and/or having others share the workload with you.

—**Dr. Mimi**

Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at www.HullOnline.com or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.

CC by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

One of my co-workers frequently shares her personal problems with me and other co-workers. A lot of her issues appear to arise from a distorted view of reality, and she is very negative. When we advise her to see certain problems from a different perspective, she gets defensive. Her daily woes often get in the way of our ability to work! How would you recommend handling this issue?

—**Bothered**

Dear Bothered:

You all need to focus on yourselves by protecting your time and emotional resources from this negative person. You have done all that you can by being compassionate and supportive. Tell her, "I think you need some fresh perspectives, which can be from other people and/or a professional." Then say you must return to work and go back to your work. You can also try wearing headphones for a visual cue to help discourage her efforts to connect.

—**Dr. Mimi**

Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at www.HullOnline.com or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.