Mia Baytop Russell,
Girvin Liggans

FIRED UP!

A GUIDE TO TRANSFORMING YOUR TEAM
FROM BURNOUT TO ENGAGEMENT

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DE GRUYTER

Advance Praise for *Fired Up! A guide to transforming your team from burnout to engagement*

Fired Up! *tackles in a very practical and inspiring way one of the most pressing challenges of our time. People have been disengaged, over-worked, and stressed for too long in the workplace. Now is the time to fire up our imaginations and energy to change the way we work and the way we think about work. Start the process with this book.*

–Stuart Crainer
Thinkers50 co-founder

This book is unique in that it provides an approach to organizational burnout with specific guidelines and solutions for making the organization function more efficiently for both managers and employees.

–Elissa Levine
Psychotherapist/Clinical Social Worker, Washington, D.C., USA

I believe this book contributes to a new understanding of burnout and how it is a huge concern in the workplace today. This book definitely stimulates the mind to the concern of burnout and I believe that it will be very useful in helping combat burnout for those that take the time to read it

–Kevin McCall
ADP Talent Management, Tucson, USA

The book will be appealing to managers, leaders and HR professionals who wish to become acquainted with the phenomenon of burnout and look for specific, well-validated methods for recognizing risks in the work environment. Furthermore, it provides practical advice and solutions on how to increase employees' motivation, vigor and commitment to the team and organization.

–Stela Salminen
University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Russell and Liggans provide a principle-based approach to leadership that delineates the factors which lead to the exhaustion and reduced effectiveness created by burnout. While thoroughly evidence-based, practical steps are given to move team members from burnout to active engagement. Fired Up! *is a foundational resource every leader will highly value.*

–Paul White, Ph.D.
Psychologist; President, *Appreciation at Work*; and best-selling author,
The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace

The greatest legacy anyone can leave behind is to positively impact the lives of others. Yes, whenever you add value to other people's lives, you are leaving footprints on the sands of time that live on . . .

<div align="right">– Emeasoba George</div>

To my employers, leaders, mentors, and colleagues, thank you for the many lessons about work. To my husband, family, and friends . . . thank you for your support during this project. And, to my children, may you find careers and roles that allow you to be *Fired Up!*

– Mia

For Thornton Liggans. *Hi, Dad!*

– Girvin

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We would like to express our deepest thanks to everyone who participated in our research in support of this project. We are especially grateful to our focus group participants, Candice Carter, LeGina Gray, Dr. Jesse Ketterman, Monica Lindsey, Shaketa Nichols, Dr. Lowanda Studevent, and Dr. Wendy Wesley. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to our reviewers – thank you for your substantive review: Sana Abuleil, Komita Carrington-Liggans, Viki Jackson, Aran Mottley, and Lisa Striggles. Because of your help, we are confident this book will help many leaders and managers across the globe.

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Preface

Before we dive into why we wrote this book, we want to simply say, *thank you*. Thank you for picking this up and flipping through its pages. And more importantly, thank you for your willingness and openness to consider new ideas. This book was born out of a joint exploration and learning experience in the Organizational Leadership (ORLD) doctoral program at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. We started the program the same year with very different backgrounds, interests, and worldviews. Mia Russell uses her expertise in financial education and capability to empower individuals, families, and communities through financial literacy and educational programs and has done so for decades. In the ORLD program, she drew connections between the role of work and quality of life for individuals and families. To this project, Mia brings extensive research in leadership, job characteristics, engagement, well-being, burnout, and turnover. She continues to develop her body of work in financial education, leadership, and the role of work in our lives given *that people spend most of their waking time at work in the pursuit of meaning while supporting their families*. An expert in environmental health and policy analysis, Girvin Liggans is dedicated to advancing public health and health equity. He has a keen interest in the intersection of science and public policy, as well as the drivers of ethical decision-making at the organizational level. To this project, Girvin brings research in organizational inclusion, human resource practices, decision analysis, and organizational commitment.

Throughout our doctoral program, we often debated . . . *well*, *everything* . . . but especially how and why to think about a variety of work-related factors from both an individual and organizational perspective, while also considering why it's important to delve into these concepts. Mia's argument was that the conversation should start with the people in the organization and Girvin asserted that organizations and institutions, made of people, were more often the place to start. This debate continues but it brings us back to how we got to this book. We have both personally experienced burnout and benefitted from being engaged in our work. But more importantly, we both know individuals that are, as described by American psychologist Barry Schwartz, essentially sleepwalking through their time at work.[1] We believe that individuals deserve to work in environments in which they can thrive and flourish. Reaching such an ideal work environment requires long-term motivation that's built upon purpose, autonomy, and mastery (credit to Daniel Pink) that spans the individual, team, and organization.[2] This book and our perspective on the topics are not only informed by personal experience but by the countless reports and studies on burnout, engagement, job characteristics, organizational behavior, organizational inclusion, human resource management, and teamwork. We know that work matters – for both individuals and organizations. But we also know how employees feel about their work and how they are impacted and treated at work matters equally. That being said, this is not unique to the

United States. Employees globally have long suffered from workplace stress and feelings of withdrawal; suffering that only accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the racial and social justice movements of 2019 and 2020 have shed a renewed light on these factors and amplified the need for positive change. The associated increase in remote work in some sectors and dramatic loss of jobs in others made way for the Great Reordering, Great Reshuffling, and Great Resignation of 2021, with employees rethinking how they want to live and work. As with other periods in history, major events can change the reality of work. Simply living through 2020 is such an event that informs our thinking. The mix of new and existing ideas about the nature of human beings in relation to work will continue to re-shape the nature and notion of work across all industries.

Our worldviews provide a unique perspective and contribution to this work. We acknowledge the challenge of generalizing results from existing research on human behavior to the global community.[3] As Joseph Henrich and his colleagues point out, much of what we know about human behavior and psychology comes from research and data drawn from western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) nations and that these subjects are particularly unusual when compared with the rest of the globe.[4] Not to mention the increased focus on knowledge workers globally. At the same time, we recognize the power and reach the underlying assumptions of this research has garnered. In many ways, it is these assumptions and ideas that are most important; particularly if they do not hold true across cultures and nations. It was Barry Schwartz who said, false ideas about human beings will not go away if people believe they are true, because if people believe they are true they create ways of living and institutions that are consistent with these false ideas.

Therefore, we recognize and draw valuable insight from existing research and considering individuals' lived experiences and call for the recognition of cultural contexts when shaping ideas around modern norms and aspirations of the ideal work environment. In many ways, this book is more than an extension of our research. We are confident you will benefit from our years of thinking, learning, and sometimes pontificating on leadership in organizations as well as our teaching of (and learning from) undergraduate and graduate students and direct experience with leaders and managers across a variety of agencies and firms. In this book, you will hear one voice but two perspectives that we hope will empower and equip you – to assess, acknowledge, and act. We hope by the end of these pages you will feel inspired to create a work environment that mitigates burnout, fosters engagement, and gets your team *Fired Up!* We'll share new research, statistics, and ideas that will help you build a positive and effective work environment for your team.

You can find us on LinkedIn. Please let us know what you think of the book – we would love to engage with you, and we would also love to hear about strategies you implement. Since we are researchers, we want to know about your experiences with the strategies – those that work and those that don't. So, let us end as we

started: *thank you.* We are here to learn, grow, and explore together with you. *Let's get Fired Up!*

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Introduction

Envision this . . . you are leading a team that is full of energy, enthusiasm, creativity, cooperation, and participation. *All the things you want to see* – your team has them. Team members enjoy working with one another and the nature of the work itself. Simply put, the team is a pleasure to engage with and they help you achieve organizational goals – on time and under budget. Sounds great – right?

Right. But it may not be your current reality.

As cliché as it may be, an organization's human resources are arguably its greatest asset. Your people's performance undoubtedly impacts and is impacted by changes within the work environment, and is, of course, essential to organizational success and longevity. Forward thinking organizations recognize this link and work proactively to address threats to employee engagement and well-being. One such threat is the global phenomenon: *burnout*. This book offers specific and practical strategies to assess work environments for factors that influence burnout and engagement, acknowledge findings and contexts, and act on what has been learned. It serves as a starting point for people leaders (*and those that work with people leaders*) to understand burnout and engagement while developing a plan of action. Inspired by the stories, anecdotes, and strategies included in the book, you will find support and tools for creating the environment that fosters engagement for your team.

Rather than offering a series of tips, we offer a framework and collection of interconnected principles and factors that can help you build a positive and effective work environment. As a busy leader, we know you may want to jump directly to a particular chapter, take a deep dive into burnout or explore specific strategies. However, we encourage you to read this book as it unfolds, as we have written and organized each chapter and section in a logical order grounded in adult learning theory with a focus on application and active learning strategies.

Here is what you can expect as you turn the pages. Chapter 1 explores why burnout matters. Chapter 2 delves into why we work and what motivates us to work. Chapter 3 describes the ideal work environment with a focus on current realities and what is within your span of control. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 offer a short history of burnout and engagement, respectively. These chapters also describe the characteristics of the work environment that influence burnout and engagement. Chapter 6 offers a framework for conceptualizing the characteristics of the ideal work environment related to burnout and work engagement. In chapters 7, 8, and 9, we review the three steps (assess, acknowledge, and act) to create conditions that shift your team from burnout to engagement. Finally, we wrap up the book with practical tips and strategies to take care of yourself in Chapter 10. Forms and tools are available in Appendices I through XI.

Throughout this book, you will notice text between two bold lines or within grey boxes which denote points of emphases, reflection questions, or anecdotes. We invite you to pause and reflect upon the content you see here.

While our idea for this book predated the global COVID-19 pandemic, our efforts to write it unfolded in the grips of it. Changes made by employers and employees to adapt to the pre- and post-pandemic environment have and will usher in new norms and expectations that are poised to impact immediate and long-term stress associated with the workplace. With an eye on the future, an anchor in the past, and acknowledgment of the present, we set out to offer a practical guide for leaders and managers to combat burnout and drive engagement. Considering the changes to the way we work that will likely outlive any remembrance of the COVID-19 pandemic, we conducted primary research to ensure the strategies provided are relevant and meaningful in this new context.

If you have read this far into the Introduction, then you are ready to make a comprehensive and meaningful contribution to your organization and the work life of those on your team. We know the process of learning and implementing the strategies outlined on the following pages may not be easy, but it's worth it. Your team is worth it and you are worth it. It takes time, energy, and effort to influence the time, energy, and effort of others. Be patient; there's a lot that you can do to positively impact your team. Congratulations on starting the work to build and maintain a *Fired Up!* team.

It takes time, energy, and effort to influence the time, energy, and effort of others.

Part I: **A stronghold**

Chapter 1
Burnout matters

Dear Stress, I would like a divorce. Please understand it is not you, it is me.

– Thomas E. Rojo Aubrey

Burnout as a global phenomenon

We all experience times of stress and difficulty throughout our lives, whether physical, mental, or emotional. However, with any luck, we experience ease and simplicity far more often. Since the average person spends approximately one-third of their waking hours at work – or more than 90,000 hours in total throughout their lifetime – chances are you've experienced some level of stress that is purely work-related. It is also likely that your work-related stress at one time or another might have been chronic, and over time, manifested slowly from feelings of frustration to anger and feeling unsupported to feelings of complete physical and emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and plain ol' ineffectiveness. If so, like many others, you have experienced *burnout* – the workplace phenomenon characterized by exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy resulting from chronic and unsuccessfully managed workplace stress.[1]

Taking a minute to zoom out and consider the global landscape, research conducted by Paychex, an American full-service human resource provider, shows the expansiveness of burnout.[2] As you can see in Figure 1.1, burnout is a global phenomenon that affects nearly every country and industry. Or in other words, burnout can affect anyone . . . anywhere . . . doing anything.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates nearly one in four adults across the globe will be affected by burnout at some point during their lives.[3] Considering burnout is tied to work, work hours help to establish the context. While many countries around the world are reported to have average working hours of between 40 to 44 hours per week, the WHO has found that 488 million people around the world put in work hours of 55 hours or more a week. You may not think a 55-hour work week is too bad but recent research found that working 50 hours or more increases the likelihood of burnout – and added to that, there is a substantial increase in the burnout experience, when employees work 60 or more hours per week. While some organizations commend being available, connected, and working outside of "normal" business hours, this can lead to overwork and long work hours. These long work hours provide a lens through which to view the decades of research on burnout that have identified several organizational risk factors across many occupations and countries, including heavy workload and lack of control, along with several consequences, including poor personal well-being and productivity.[4]

Industries with the highest employee burnout rate worldwide in 2019

Industry	Share
Hotel, Food Services, and Hospitality	80.3%
Manufacturing	77.4%
Medical and Health Care	76.8%
Education	76.1%
Construction	75.6%
Wholesale and Retail	75%
Transportation and Warehousing	75%
Marketing and Advertising	69.6%
Government and Public Administration	67.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	66%
Legal	65.2%
Finance and Insurance	65.2%
Telecommunications	65%
Information Services and Data Processing	64.4%
Technology	60.4%

Share of respondents

Figure 1.1: Burnout by Industry.
Source: Statista 2021

While burnout increases when employees work 50 or more hours per week, there is a substantial increase when they work 60+ hours weekly.

You can count the costs

In 2019, reigniting interest in the broader topic of employee well-being, the WHO redefined burnout as "a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed." They also revised the International Classification of Diseases – a handbook for doctors and health insurers – officially

recognizing burnout as a syndrome caused by an individual's work. The aforementioned 488 million people that put in 55 hours or more a week at work were estimated to be 35% more at risk of stroke compared to people who work 35 to 40 hours a week.[5] In the United States, about two-thirds of full-time workers experience burnout.[6] Excessive workplace stress may be instrumental in nearly 120,000 deaths each year.[7] Strikingly, as Jennifer Moss writes in the *Harvard Business Review,* burnout is estimated to cost employers and organizations upward of 34% of an employee's annual salary and approximately 20–50% of turnover can be attributed to burnout.[8] Globally, the cost burden of burnout is estimated at more than $300 billion per year. If we consider the economic impact of depression, given the debate over whether burnout is distinct from depression, the cost is even higher as depression (and anxiety) are estimated to cost the global economy $1 trillion dollars per year in lost productivity.[9]

Burnout is thought to cost the global economy upwards of $300 billion per year.

Far from being limited to the psychological conditions of stress and low job satisfaction, burnout can have social consequences such as marital problems and family conflicts and may lead to employee presenteeism, absenteeism, and turnover, while also leading to physical symptoms, such as fatigue, insomnia, substance abuse, a weakened immune system, heart disease, and an increased risk of suicide. Furthermore, and of particular interest to our discussion, burnout can be contagious and impact not only individuals but teams of individuals.

Nobody is immune to burnout

In today's complex, fast-paced, and demanding work environment, burnout is quite common, and no one is immune. As Heidi Hanna, chief energy officer of Synergy Brain Fitness, explained in a 2021 podcast, stress is what happens in the gap between demands and capacity (ability to cope).[10] While not inherently good or bad, she explains that the ability of stress to affect us depends largely on the type, intensity, and duration. We expand upon Hanna's straightforward framing of stress, and apply her definition to burnout, stating that it is what happens in the gap between job demands and capacity. It can manifest in individuals as feelings of exhaustion, negativity or cynicism, and a sense of professional ineffectiveness. So, just like stress, burnout also exists in the gap between demands and capacity, but it is what happens when specific work-related demands exceed our available energy, capacity, and resources, and the resulting stress is chronic and left unmanaged. In this way, when individuals experience burnout, they become emotionally and cognitively distanced from their work leading to deteriorated quality.[11] In a 2019 ComPsych Survey, 61% of workers reported a high level of stress that caused fatigue and feelings of not being in control.[12]

Burnout happens when specific work-related demands exceed our available energy, capacity, and resources, and the resulting stress is left unmanaged and becomes chronic.

Think of a stovetop pressure cooker, which works on a simple principle: trapping steam (Figure 1.2). A pressure cooker is essentially a sealed pot with a valve. You might wonder what cooking meat, stews, or lentils has to do with this, but we want to focus on the process rather than the tool. As the liquid inside heats up, it forms steam, which raises the pressure in the pot. With too much pressure, the pot will explode. This is where the release valve comes into play, as it controls the pressure inside the pot. The high pressure allows foods to cook much faster than using conventional methods. If we think about burnout along these lines, where the pot is our work environment, we are the food, the area inside the pot is our capacity, the heat represents the demands we face, and the valve represents our available resources, we begin to understand the ways in which our work environment and its elements collectively contribute to burnout. While unavoidable, it also becomes evident that the many contributory burnout factors can be managed. Of course, our choice of a pressure cooker may seem a bit counter-intuitive in that any cooking process involves heating food. The idea here is to get to a quality finished product using as little pressure (*think burnout*), as possible.
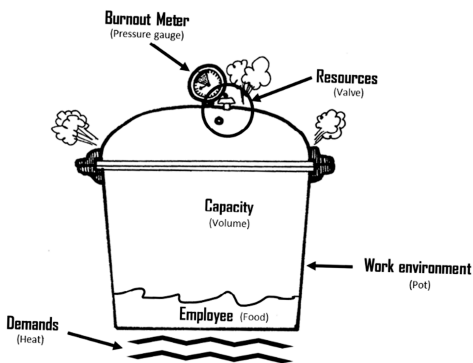
Figure 1.2: Burnout as a Pressure Cooker.

Burnout is an organizational problem

The 21st century workplace requires that we not only understand and recognize burnout but that we also work to overcome burnout for ourselves and within our teams. Increasingly fast-paced, complex, and demanding, our workplaces are characterized by a high use of technology, virtual and remote work options, and a high level of change. Such conditions make the modern workplace ripe with factors oft associated with burnout, namely excessive workloads, time pressures, lack of role

clarity, unfair treatment, and lack of communication and supervisory support. As will be discussed in later chapters, many of these factors or job demands, can lead to challenges, such as day-to-day frustrations, roadblocks, and unmet expectations that are risk factors of burnout, if not managed.[13] Studies continue to show that conditions within the workplace can wreak havoc on individuals.[14] Recent research indicates that:

– 60% of employees report an increase in work-related pressure over the past five years[15]
– 56% of employees experienced increased job demands[15]
– 66.4% of employees feel overextended by their workload[15]
– 38% of employees feel able to manage a healthy work-life balance[16]
– 70% of employees feel less likely to experience high burnout when they have enough time to do all their work[17]
– when treated unfairly, employees are 2.3 times more likely to experience burnout[18]

In the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic, *Harvard Business Review*'s 2021 study found that 89% of workers claimed their work life was getting worse, 85% believed that their well-being declined, and 62% of those struggling to manage their workload said they experienced burnout in the past three months.[18] Undoubtedly, burnout is an organizational problem.

> The workforce is a leader's greatest asset. Reflect on what Peter Drucker suggested: Consider each one on your team as your greatest opportunity.[19]

The casualties of burnout

When an individual experiences burnout, well-being and engagement are all too often the casualties. At work, well-being refers to the assessment of one's professional life – overall health and happiness at work – resulting from the interaction between the individual and the environment. Employee engagement, which refers to the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral energy an employee directs toward positive organizational outcomes, has received increased attention in recent decades.[20] Researchers have found a strong positive relationship between engagement and performance. In fact, they learned that engagement was more important than motivation for job performance.[21] The standing consensus is that engaged employees are simply more likely to be productive, interact positively with others, and stay with their current employer.[22] For these reasons, managers and leaders should prioritize employee engagement.

A more salient explanation of engagement might be that of a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption.

This description is more closely aligned to the characterization of burnout and engagement as opposites. In 1997, in their book titled *The Truth about Burnout*, Christina Maslach and Michael P. Leiter describe energy (vigor), involvement (dedication), and efficacy (absorption) – the three components of engagement – as direct opposites of the three dimensions of burnout.[23] When burnout begins, engagement fades and there is a corresponding shift from these three positive feelings to their negative counterparts as shown in Figure 1.3. Vigor turns into exhaustion, dedication into cynicism, and absorption turns into ineffectiveness. In this way, burnout affects morale and affect – both of which are important to many organizational outcomes.[24]
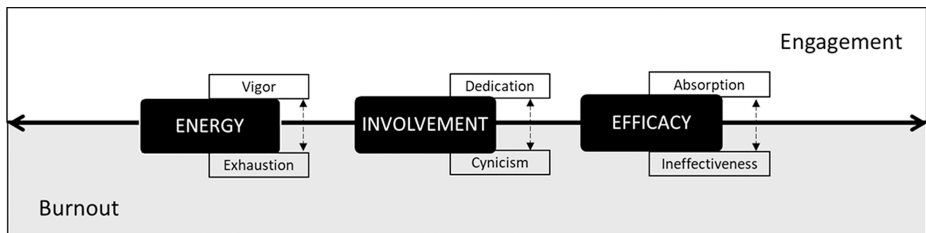
Figure 1.3: Energy, Involvement, and Efficacy: From Burnout to Engagement.

Those experiencing burnout will often feel weighed down by excessive job pressure as they stumble through exhaustion and cynicism related to work, while simultaneously walking under a cloud of self-doubt regarding their job performance and success in the workplace. But the image goes even further than just that, as the individual experiencing burnout is incapable of bringing their best self to work. There are specific – often observable – red flags for those beginning to feel a sense of burnout, and said red flags can be physical, emotional, behavioral, and even relational. These warnings include – but are not limited to – tension in the body, such as headaches and muscle aches, gastrointestinal issues, shortness of breath, restlessness, fatigue, irritability, anxiety, insomnia, anger issues, difficulties communicating, and even withdrawal from or avoiding interactions with others. Perhaps you have seen an employee that is present, but only in the physical sense – not fully contributing and lacking energy and enthusiasm. They may feel that the work they do does not matter and the organization does not care about them as an individual.

Of course, this type of behavior and these manifested feelings are concerning in and of themselves; however, there is a great concern in the sense that burnout is contagious and can travel quickly throughout an organization. It is thought to spread from person to person through a cognitive, either nonconscious or conscious, process of emotional contagion where people "catch" the emotions of others. Nonconscious emotional contagion is best thought of as individuals converging emotionally. Back in 2000, Arnold Bakker and Wilmer Schaufeli gave the example of individuals under stress perceiving symptoms of burnout in their colleagues and automatically taking

on those symptoms.[25] Conscious emotional contagion occurs via a process of tuning in to the emotions of others such as when a person attempts to imagine how they themselves would feel in the position of another and, consequently, experiences the same feelings. In short, the implications of even one individual exhibiting symptoms of burnout can be disruptive to your team.

Managing burnout requires leadership

We cannot escape the fact that work requires effort and that demands are simply part and parcel of that effort. Not to mention, people work long hours and have insufficient resources to effectively deal with work-related demands. This combined with the fact that no one is immune from burnout tells us that burnout is not always avoidable. Not only that, but since leaders have a great deal of control over the work environment and the ways in which work is assigned, managing burnout should not be seen as the sole responsibility of individual employees. Leaders have significant control over the many factors influencing the development of burnout, and with control comes responsibility.

Let's be clear, while burnout is not always avoidable and not necessarily leadership's fault, leaders have a responsibility to implement strategies that stop the spread of chronic stress and burnout. Returning to the pressure cooker analogy, failure to understand and adjust the cooking process according to the demands of the environments demonstrates a willingness to accept the most undesirable of outcomes: *outcomes that can wreak havoc on individuals and teams.* As we will discuss in later chapters, there are organizational factors, job-related factors, and personal factors to consider when addressing the causes and consequences of burnout. By understanding the relationships between these factors, your team, and the work environment, you can take steps to create a positive and effective work environment that fosters engagement and reciprocity and supports organizational core values, mission, and vision. To embrace this proactive approach, you must:

– *assess* the work environment
– *acknowledge* current realities and span of control
– *act* to mitigate burnout and drive engagement

Burnout, while not inevitable or avoidable, is not necessarily the fault of leadership.

Being ready and able to assess, acknowledge, and act first requires that you fully understand and pay attention to:
–   the role of work and the work environment in our lives
–   motivators of and expectations at work
–   the warning signs of burnout
–   the fundamental aspects of the work environment

By being knowledgeable and prepared to help mitigate burnout and foster engagement, you have the power to make an enormous, positive impact on your team and organization.

Proactive leaders embrace the Three A's:
Assess the work environment
Acknowledge current realities and span of control
Act upon burnout and engagement

Chapter 2
Why we work – in general and in organizations

Work gives you meaning and purpose, and life is empty without it. – Stephen Hawking

Wake, work, sleep, and repeat

Historically, work has held different meanings for cultures and societies around the world. For centuries, work was largely a manual and individualized endeavor considered essential to life, and for many, work was regarded as nothing but toil – a requirement for earning one's daily bread. This was the case unless, of course, your work was performed as part of punishment or servitude. Now that being said, a typical conversation on the evolution of work might begin with a description of individuals moving from hunting and gathering to farming, then the factory system, the industrial revolution, and finally, the information age. While true, this simplified linear description suggests that time periods had discrete starts and stops and ignores the fact that they coexist and are interrelated even in today's society. Aside from that, in each period, work often required the organization of labor, necessitating that a good portion of a person's day, and life for that matter, was spent working.

> Work has long relied on the organization of labor to achieve common goals: Starting from simple cooperation with workers completing discrete tasks to the specialized workers within the modern, post-industrial revolution world of work.

Today, the concept of working to earn a living is the shared reality of most and a primary reason for the debate about earning a "living wage" and "dignity of work" that are common today. Whether the focus is on living to work or working to live, both concepts are interdependent and cannot happen without the other. For most people living just about anywhere on the planet, a significant amount of the day involves some level of work, be it for themselves or paid employment, to earn a living, for fun or simply personal achievement. With all the attention toward the centrality of work, it is easy to assume, that by and large, we are all working more than ever. But that is not at all the case. According to 2021 data from Clockify, average working hours have declined significantly since the Industrial Revolution.[1] Although most Americans are now well accustomed to the concept of a 40-hour work week, they work an average of 47 hours a week, which is still some 20 hours less than the average work week in the 19th century. For other developed countries, the average work hours fell from 3,000 hours per year, in 1870, to between 1,500 and 2,000 hours per year by 1990 and remains there today. This should be tempered with a clear understanding that in poorer countries workers tend to work more, often a lot more, by comparison. Just

consider the difference of 1,084 average work hours between Myanmar (2,438 hours per year) and Germany (1,354 hours per year) in 2017.

Division of labor and productivity

Western scholarship on the modern workplace frequently starts at the scientific study of work with Adam Smith and his manual labor focused book, *The Wealth of Nations.*[2] Published in 1776, a time of industry proliferation and factory work, the book describes the separation of work processes. Each task performed by a separate person or group of people could increase productivity or get the most out of each employee as measured by the rate of output per unit of input. Known as the division of labor, this concept and its focus on productivity became central to shaping the "specialization of work" that persists today. Moreover, thoughts around division of labor served as the predecessor to the more efficiency focused and highly bureaucratic management theories of Max Weber, a German sociologist, and Frederick Taylor, an American mechanical engineer, that influenced generations of business leaders and politicians well into the 20th century.[3] In fact, scientific management, heavily associated with Taylor and Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, serves as the framework for management today.[4] Developed during the industrial revolution, scientific management was heavily focused on the manufacturing sector. While the types and size of various job sectors has continued to evolve, as of 2020, manufacturing remains dominant standing as the fifth largest employment sector in the United States.

While much attention and authority has been given to theorists and industrialists from the 19th and 20th centuries for shaping the modern, post-industrial revolution world of work, it ultimately rests upon earlier and longstanding ideas about differences between manual or service workers and intellectual or knowledge workers. These ideas stretch back through medieval times, and even the ancient world. But more specifically, this concept explores the question of who should belong to each group and why. What serfdom and feudalism, slavery and colonialism, and communism and capitalism each have in common is social class and hierarchy – ideas and concepts that have long existed but proliferated in the post-industrial and information ages. The terms *white-collar* and *blue-collar* have long been used to distinguish between knowledge and manual workers.

> *People might not get all they work for in this world, but they must certainly work for all they get.*
> – Frederick Douglass

Also, consider the context this has set for the larger ongoing societal discussions of systematic inequalities, racial injustice, and socioeconomic strife that have dominated recent headlines and will continue to shape world events for decades – a broader debate related to but outside the scope of this book. Evidently, the predominant thinking and focus of the early industrial and post-industrial era was on

productivity rather than people. Said another way, the goal was to maximize the productivity of the human resource.

Everyone wants meaningful work

Late into the 19th century, many business owners believed that a hungry worker was a good worker. Like Smith before them, they believed that people only worked for incentives (i.e., money). Supervisors didn't encourage overwork because they believed that if employees made too much money, they would splurge or be reckless. This mentality remains prevalent in many parts of the world. Consider, for example, the disproportionately low wages paid to U.S. workers in the service sector as compared to their corporate executives. Like the robber barons of old, today's corporate executives seldom consider themselves in such thinking about what motivates and should apply to the masses.

While work still provides one's daily bread, it is also regarded as a major opportunity for people to find purpose, meaning, and happiness in their lives. Years of research have shown that there's so much more to employee motivation than just compensation. Just as people do not strive to simply exist and often seek to find meaning and purpose, people don't always approach their work as solely a means to meet basic needs. Finding meaning and satisfaction in work are two important motivational factors among the many intangible incentives that push people out of the bed each day.[5]

What gets you up and going in the morning?

Other personal incentives of work include:
– contributing to the social and economic welfare of society
– working to eradicate a wicked ill
– focusing on issues that you care about
– defining or redefining identity
– creating common bonds, social connections, and other relational interactions

Fortunately, worker motivation has enjoyed a long history of study and a more nuanced focus on what motivates us to work now persists. Many business leaders have done what Neal Chalofsky, associate professor emeritus at George Washington University, calls reframing the way we think of the workplace from a space where we go to do our work to a space filled with relationships built on values of care, support, collaboration, and commitment.[6] In recent decades, many organizations

have established and accepted the importance of individual passion, motivation, and engagement as key factors in improving competitiveness and profit.

He who loves his work never labors. – Jim Stovall

Organizations need motivated employees

What is more expensive than motivating your people to work? Not motivating them. Why? Because motivation and worker productivity are intimately connected. As a leader, you are surely juggling many things all day. You need – and want – a motivated and engaged team to get the job done. And you likely think about how to effectively motivate your team and drive productivity, especially in these changing and complex times. Your awareness and desire are good news. But what exactly is motivation?

Motivation refers to the energy that one extends toward certain goals. The word itself comes from the Latin word "movere," which means to move and involves choice. Essentially, motivation is a state-of-mind, filled with energy and enthusiasm, which drives a person to work in a certain way to achieve desired goals. It is a force which pushes a person to work with a high level of commitment and focus even if circumstances appear to be working against them. Common definitions reference energy, choice, and duration. These definitions speak to intrinsic (driven by internal rewards) or extrinsic (driven by external rewards) behavior as described in Figure 2.1.

Three widely accepted definitions of motivation are as follows:
– Energy-based: Work motivation is a set of energetic forces that originates within to influence the form, direction, intensity, and duration of work-related behavior.[7] Motivation might come from energy from your environment, or it may help you initiate work behaviors and determine its force.
– Choice-based: Motivation refers to a voluntary selection and process of choosing between alternatives.[8] Employees have the choice to work or not, or to work hard or not. This choice is not about oppression or coercion. Rather, it is about the freedom that individuals have at work; there are indeed alternatives. Motivation cannot occur without choice. Otherwise, it is a mandate or directive.
– Combination of choice, energy, and duration: Work motivation is a psychological process that influences choices about certain work behaviors (what to pursue), its intensity (how much effort to put forth), and its duration (for how long).

Motivation is a huge field of study from which several theories have emerged to provide insight into what will motivate people. Some of the most famous and well-established motivation theories are described in Table 2.1. While every theory inherently has limitations, each continue to be relevant in today's workplace. Our key takeaways from the prevailing theories and studies on motivation are that:

1) there is no obvious proxy for motivation – work motivation is a complex psychological process and, the fact is, people are motivated differently
2) there is a need for both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, and
3) long-term motivation at work heavily depends upon an individual having purpose, mastery, and autonomy.
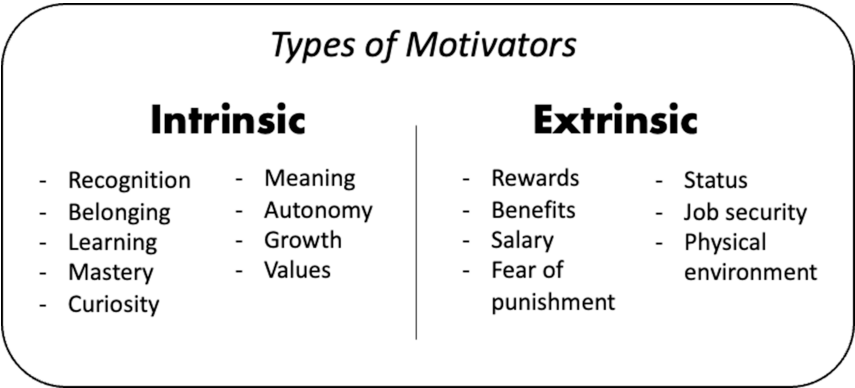
Figure 2.1: Types of Motivators.

Table 2.1: Motivational Theories.

Theory	Year	By	Concept
A Theory of Human Motivation[9]	1943	Abraham Maslow	Represented as a five-level pyramid suggesting that you incrementally climb the levels: *Physiological* (satisfaction of basic physical needs such as air, food, and clothing), *Safety and Security* (feeling safe and secure intangibly and tangibly), *Belongingness and Social* (feeling loved and valued), Esteem (desire to feel good about one's self), and *Self-actualization* (fulfillment and living up to one's potential).
Herzberg's Two Factor Theory[10]	1959	Frederick Herzberg	There are two types of workplace factors: Hygiene (or extrinsic) and Motivational (or intrinsic). *Hygiene* factors are essential for work motivation. While these factors do not lead to positive long-term satisfaction, without them dissatisfaction can arise. Factors include pay, company policies, benefits, physical working conditions, status, interpersonal relations, and job security. *Motivational* factors, also called satisfiers, are inherent to work and lead to satisfaction. Factors include recognition, sense of achievement, growth and promotional opportunities, responsibility, and meaningfulness of work.

Table 2.1 (continued)

Theory	Year	By	Concept
Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation[11]	1964	Victor Vroom	This three-part theory (expectancy, instrumentality, and valence) emphasizes individual factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience, abilities, and the need for organizations to align rewards directly to the desired performance and to ensure that the rewards provided are both deserved and wanted. *Expectancy* is the belief that your effort will lead to your desired end. This factor is different for everyone, as it depends on personal self-confidence, past experiences, and effort required to reach your goal. *Instrumentality* is the belief that you will get a reward for meeting expectations. *Valence* is how much you value the expected reward.
McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y[12]	1960	Douglas McGregor	Theory X and Theory Y describe distinctly different perspectives about how and why employees work. *Theory X*, or the traditional view of the workforce, posits that workers are inherently lazy, self-centered, and lacking ambition requiring a strong, top-down management style. *Theory Y* offers a view that workers are inherently motivated and eager to accept responsibility, which leads management to create a productive work environment with positive rewards and reinforcement.
McClelland's Theory of Needs[13]	1960s	David McClelland	Specific needs of an individual are acquired, shaped over time, and driven by three important aspects (achievement, affiliation, and power) that break down what needs are and how they must be approached. *Achievement* is the need to accomplish and demonstrate competence. *Affiliation* is the need for love, belonging, and social acceptance. *Power* is defined as a need for control of one's work or the work of others.
Self-Determination Theory of Motivation[14]	1985	Edward Deci and Richard Ryan	Intrinsic motivation and high-quality performance are encouraged by satisfying three basic psychological needs of employees: relatedness, competence, autonomy. *Relatedness* is the feeling of being cared for and having a strong sense of belonging. *Competence* is the feeling of effective and experienced growth. *Autonomy* is feeling in charge of personal actions, style, and choices.

Motivating the masses

While many of the theories regarding motivation emerged in a time where manual labor or blue-collar work dominated, they remain relevant and important to our current era where knowledge workers persist – those who work primarily with information or develop and use knowledge in the workplace.[15] According to Forbes, knowledge workers represent nearly one billion workers globally.[16] In our research, most leaders and human resource managers say that they want their teams and organizations to be full of people that want to get up each day and arrive in the office with enthusiasm and dedication – making a valuable contribution. However, in the book, *Why We Work*, Barry Schwartz suggests that most people are sleepwalking through their days, putting little energy into their work. He asserts that effects such as stress, anxiety, lack of motivation to deal with constant change, feelings of change fatigue, and even demotivation are weighing on us and that we want, dare we say *demand*, more from our work.[17] This appears to line up with the evidence that suggests there is wide variation among leaders and human resource professionals regarding their knowledge and understanding of how to tap into their teams' intrinsic and extrinsic motivators.

How do you inspire your team?

Employees entering the workforce today expect an organization to create a culture of value demonstrated by adequate pay, opportunities for pay raises, rewards for loyalty and independence, as well as forgiveness when they take risks and make mistakes. Our research shows that employees are motivated when organizations communicate effectively and provide opportunities to learn and grow. Employees need time to recharge, rest, and relax in a way that allows them to separate their work life from their home life. They value vacation time, work-life balance, time for leisure, and the freedom to have a family and maintain personal relationships. It is evident that the carrot and stick model of employee motivation simply does not work.

The work environment influences motivation – inspiring people, driving mission, and creating opportunities for meaningful work.

Motivating workers is hard. Knowledge workers are unique and do not solely respond to traditional incentives. They have the freedom – and desire – to move between jobs because they can apply their skills to a multitude of positions and places. They long for meaningful work, ways to contribute, and opportunities to explore, experiment, and learn; or in other words, they seek a feeling of purpose and not solely financial compensation for their work. Without this purpose, Dan Cable – professor of organizational behavior at the London Business School and author of *Alive at Work* – suggests motivation wanes.[18] It is imperative that leaders tap into the intrinsic motivation of knowledge

workers. It has been argued that in the traditional workforce, manual workers are expected to serve the workplace while knowledge workers expect the workplace to serve them. However, when it is all said and done, every worker, whether manual or knowledge, will appreciate being respected, empowered, and rewarded. The key difference here is that knowledge workers demand this from their organizations.[19] This is a demand that Ik Muo, lecturer at Olabisi Onabanjo University in Nigeria, says organizations are obliged to recognize if competitive superiority is a goal in this knowledge economy.[20] In this way, the success and survival of every business depends on the performance of its knowledge workforce.

What is more expensive than motivating your people at work? Not motivating them.

If you believe that your organization needs you and your leadership to meet its mission or to be successful, then you should start by agreeing that supporting an individual's drive to find dignity, purpose, and meaning from an organizational standpoint is not merely a kind gesture, nor should it only be characterized as "the right thing to do." Rather, you must consider this as imperative because everyone's well-being is directly related to organizational success. It is prudent for you, as a leader, to provide an environment that supports, inspires, and motivates employees. David Frick, senior advisor to the Defense Intelligence Agency's acquisition professional explains, fewer and fewer people, whether unskilled laborers or highly educated knowledge workers, are seeing themselves as *subordinates* and rather as *associates* in achieving organizational goals, even in relatively low-level positions.[21] You have the power to create a positive and effective work environment and provide meaning and purpose for each person on your team. While many leaders neglect the soft side of work, you are reading this book because you understand your role and responsibility. You are well on your way to redefining what work feels like and how it is experienced by your team.

> *You need to be aware of what others are doing, applaud their efforts, acknowledge their successes, and encourage them in their pursuits. When we all help one another, everybody wins.*
>
> – Jim Stovall

Chapter 3
Your work environment and well-being

Our environment, the world in which we live and work, is a mirror of our attitudes and expectations.
– Earl Nightingale

Let us agree that Neal Chalofsky was correct in pointing out that workers today strive for meaning *in the work* they do and *in the place* they work. Personal satisfaction, meaning, and enrichment derived from one's work is a significant part of overall well-being.[1] Given the amount of time we spend at work and the ever-changing nature of our jobs and the workplace, it is no wonder that our work life is affecting our health, happiness, and prosperity – our *well-being*. The fact is our working lives create a mutual reliance between us and our organization.[2] Each is essential to the value and prosperity of the other. Maximizing rewards and minimizing costs is a fundamental component of the relationship and we – both individuals and the organization – have clear expectations of one another.[3] Just as the organization rewards adherence to specific requirements and policies with compensation and other extrinsic motivators, we look for fair and equitable treatment and opportunities to perform and be productive. At the end of the day, both sides are looking for a good fit, between the individual, the job, and the organization. And good fit, as it were, has signs. Good fit flourishes where congruence or alignment of individual attitudes, values, beliefs, and motivations of those within the organization take root. In fact, research by Gallup between 2016 and 2019 of over 24,000 employees shows that when employees have a natural fit for the role, they tend to work more efficiently and sustain higher performance for longer time periods. This leads to more positive daily work experiences.

In the real world, it's at times hard to identify good fit, while other times it hits you hard. Mia offers an illustrative example of understanding good fit and finding congruence – or lack thereof – from early in her career. She had embarked upon a new career and role with enthusiasm but soon realized that her expectations were not met. Looking to her leadership for support proved not to be fruitful and left her feeling abandoned and jaded. She felt that the organization's mission and vision seemed to only appear on paper and was not operationalized within the organization as a whole. It turned out that she didn't agree with the organizational philosophy or her leaders' approach. She was in a culture of overwork – bringing work home daily – if not physically and literally, then emotionally. Detachment from work proved challenging for Mia. In fact, she started thinking about the importance of doing work that matters and the degree to which her current role aligned with her own personal values. She felt consistently overwhelmed and excessively stressed such that she discussed how she felt with her physician. Despite her initial passion and hopes for this new role, a period of meaningful soul-searching led her to leave the organization, which was a hard decision to make, since this was supposed to be an ideal opportunity for her. Instead, Mia's work was negatively impacting her health, well-being, and happiness. She neglected to examine or identify important aspects about work, namely what you do, how you do it, and with whom you do it *matters*.

Beyond ensuring a good fit, organizations are ethically responsible to create work environments where people can achieve their full potential and thrive. We thrive when we experience personal growth through feeling energized and alive (i.e., vitality) and by having a sense of continually learning and applying knowledge.[4] Vitality and learning are both impacted by how organizations shape and design their working environments. Since the burden of shaping the work environment falls largely upon the organization, the ability of employees to achieve their potential and thrive at work is tied to the organization's ability and willingness to act. To support thriving in this regard, organizations need to act in a manner that goes above and beyond simply offering a safe work environment, fair pay, and reasonable work expectations. Rather, what is required is a clear focus on employee engagement and well-being. Highly reciprocal and additive, leaders must care about shaping a work environment that can foster both employee engagement and well-being.[5] But what exactly does the work environment encompass?

The surroundings tell the story

Simply put, our surroundings while working makes up the work environment. In 2012, Farhan Mehboob and Niaz Bhutto described the work environment as involving all the aspects that act and react on an individual's body and mind in the workplace.[6] They explain that the work environment consists of the many physical, psychological, and social aspects that make up a given working condition. The following are all considered as part of the work environment: physical environment (e.g., ambient noise and lighting, equipment, temperature), mental aspects (e.g., fatigue, boredom, monotony), fundamentals of the job itself (e.g., workload, tasks, complexity), organizational features (e.g., culture, history), and even social interactions (e.g., industry setting, interpersonal relationships).

> The work environment consists of the many physical, psychological, and social aspects that make up the working condition:
> – Physical environment (e.g., ambient noise and lighting, equipment, temperature)
> – Mental aspects (e.g., fatigue, boredom, monotony)
> – Fundamentals of the job itself (e.g., workload, tasks, complexity)
> – Organizational features (e.g., culture, history)
> – Social interactions (e.g., industry setting, interpersonal relationships)

In 2000, Gouzali Saydam best summarized the work environment as the entire work infrastructure that is around employees who are doing the work that can affect the work itself.[7] The large body of research, including our own in organizational development, bears this out. Regardless of whether an organization is creating a product or delivering a service, we have found that the work itself always exists within

interactions between the team, processes, equipment, and the physical environment. Each of these varied interactions can play a role in supporting or detracting from an individual's perception, attitude, and willingness and ability to perform well. These fundamental interactions along with your behaviors and the organizations' culture and policies have consistently been shown to influence performance. More importantly, these are factors that organizations have enormous control over. Positive social interactions among team members can lead to increased morale and productivity yet something as simple as poor lighting can lead to poor performance. Poor lighting can also cause negative moods and depression among employees. Yet, natural lighting promotes calm and peaceful moods. In fact, a recent Gallup survey of over 24,000 employees shows that employees would consider changing jobs for a window office and other natural light.[8] When poor lighting is compounded with lack of proper equipment or manager support, the problem worsens.

You have control over many organizational work factors.

A focus on what is positive and effective

Organizations often introduce interventions and initiatives to create the ideal work environment. While the ideal work environment is often difficult to define and can be a proverbial moving target, organizations can strive to create work environments that foster positive feelings about employees' entire work infrastructure. Work environments that strive for harmonious relationships between the physical, psychological, and social aspects of work have been characterized as *positive work environments*. In 2020, Zohra Saleem, Zhou Shenbei, and Ayez Muhammad Hanif described the positive work environment as supportive, providing transparent and open communication, permitting work-life balance, offering training and development, providing recognition for hard work, and cultivating strong team spirit among its employees.[9] It is crucial that employees feel cared for and supported by their organization and management because supportive management helps create an atmosphere of trust and safety where employees can experiment and fail without retribution. Trust is a predominate and foundational factor in supportive and high-quality relationships between leaders and their team. Through research and practice, Girvin has found that when trust exists, managers and leaders are willing to delegate tasks and empower employees with more autonomy and control over decision-making. It is this type of atmosphere that enhances employee engagement.

> *Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships.*
> — Stephen R. Covey

The concept of a positive work environment is exemplified in what the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) – the world's largest human resource professional society – describes as the effective work environment. According to SHRM, effective workplaces recognize that employees are an organization's greatest resource and make a critical difference in an organization's ability to not just survive, but to also thrive.[10] To be truly effective, a workplace – its design, practices, and policies – must benefit both the organization and its employees. SHRM found that when an organization takes this approach to employee development and management, it has employees who are highly engaged, satisfied and intend to stay with the organization.

Through its National Study on the Changing Workplace, SHRM identified important components that characterize an effective workplace. These are job challenges and learning opportunities; job autonomy; supervisor task support; climate of respect and trust; satisfaction with earnings, benefits, and opportunities for advancement; and work-life fit, including workplace flexibility. SHRM found that employees in effective workplaces are more likely to have:

- greater work engagement in their jobs
- higher levels of job satisfaction
- stronger intentions to remain with their employers
- less negative and stressful spillover from job to home and vice versa
- better overall mental health and well-being

The same employees are also more likely to indicate being in excellent overall physical health, have lower general stress levels, and fewer minor health problems, sleep problems, and indicators of depression. These factors all support a connection between the work environment, engagement, and well-being.

While both SHRM and Zohra Saleem and colleagues identify the aspects of the work environment that must be present, they do not mention what needs to be absent. Researchers have addressed this gap by describing the conditions under which employees do not thrive or flourish at work – two important predictors of work engagement.[11] Research has shown that employees do not thrive or flourish under the following conditions:[12]

- unfair treatment at work
- unmanageable workload
- lack of role clarity
- lack of communication and support from their manager
- unreasonable time pressure
- lack of the social and emotional benefits of work (provision for self, family, meaningful daily activity, pride, identity, occupy time/busyness, and socialization)[13]

Thriving, which is considered to be a source of competitive advantage, refers to a psychological state in which an employee experiences learning and vitality.[14]

> Vitality – feeling energized and alive. Learning – the acquisition and utilization of skills and knowledge to build capability and confidence.

Employees are actively engaged in their work when they have a high level of vitality and put in extra effort to utilize their skills and knowledge in the workplace.

On the other hand, flourishing refers to an employee's perception of feeling good (emotional well-being) and functioning well (psychological and social well-being) in the workplace, attained through positive experiences and the efficient management of job-related factors.[15]

> Emotional well-being at work incorporates three elements: 1) job satisfaction; 2) positive emotions (e.g., joy, interest, and gratitude); and 3) negative emotions (e.g., sadness, boredom, and anxiety). Psychological well-being at work includes autonomy, engagement, mastery, meaning, personal growth, positive relationships, and purpose. Social well-being at work includes the following aspects: actualization (the belief in one's organization, team, and colleagues' potential); coherence (the belief that one's organization and social relations at work are both meaningful and comprehensible); contribution (the belief that one's daily work tasks add value to one's team, department, and organization); integration (the belief that one experiences a sense of communal connectedness and belongingness); mental health continuum (range between mental health and mental illness); and social acceptance (the acceptance of the diversity of colleagues).[16]

> What does your ideal team and work environment look like?

In brief, it can be argued that the ideal work environment is one that is positive and effective and promotes thriving and flourishing (Table 3.1). As we discuss at length in later chapters, the characteristics of the work environment can be arranged according to the levels at which they emerge or hold most relevance.

The ideal work environment is one that is POSITIVE and EFFECTIVE and promotes THRIVING and FLOURISHING

Table 3.1: Characteristics of the Work Environment.

Type of Work Environment	Characteristics of the Work Environment
Positive work environment	Transparent and open communication, work-life balance, training and development, recognition for hard work and strong team spirit
Effective work environment	Appropriate job challenges and learning opportunities, job autonomy, supervisor task support, climate of respect and trust, satisfaction with earnings, benefits, and opportunities for advancement, and work-life fit, including workplace flexibility
Thriving/flourishing work environment	Fair treatment at work, manageable workload, role clarity, effective communication, management support, and reasonable time pressure/expectations

It is evident that the physical, psychological, and social aspects of work that encourage a positive and effective work environment are many and varied. In a desire to understand and explore these aspects of the work environment, researchers have paid close attention to, and developed theories to explain, the ways in which the work environment can impact stress and engagement. One of the leading theories is the Job Demands-Resource (JD-R) theory. JD-R theory describes job characteristics as the physical, psychological, and social aspects of the work environment that can be classified in two main categories: job demands and job resources.[17] Job characteristics trigger two processes: an energetic or health impairment process and a motivational process. While there are meaningful and unique variations in all jobs, both demands and resources can be found in almost every role and organization. JD-R is in line with the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory that suggests the well-being of an individual is dependent on the maintenance or gain of resources.[18] Therefore, we understand that job demands and job resources are two key aspects of the work environment.

Drawing from systems theory (how interrelated and interdependent processes influence one another) and the social-ecological model (how dynamic interrelationships influence one another and broader contexts) we separate the workplace into three levels and then organize the characteristics of the ideal work environment according to these levels (Table 3.2).[19] These three levels are as follows:
– organizational level – aspects of the work environment specific to operations, including policies and practices, which are not related to the specific job or role
– job-related level – aspects of the work environment that are specific to a job or role
– personal level – aspects of our lives that are shaped by the work environment, including perceptions, emotions, and attitudes about ourselves.

Table 3.2: Characteristics of the Ideal Work Environment by the Three Aspects (Levels) of the Workplace.

Aspects (levels) of the Workplace	Characteristics of the Ideal Work Environment
Organizational aspects	Open communication Recognition Care and Support Opportunities to advance Learning opportunity Climate of respect Fair treatment
Job-related aspects	Job autonomy Job challenge Task support Reasonable time pressure Role clarity Manageable workload Flexibility
Personal aspects	Work-life fit Work-life balance Satisfaction with earnings and benefits Provisions for self and family Meaningful daily activity Pride, identity, busyness, socialization

Key characteristics of the work environment

Job demands

> What challenging and hindering demands are you currently managing?

Job demands are the aspects of the work environment and job that cost energy, like unmanageable workload, complexity, and conflict. Physical workload, time pressure, working with others, and shift work have been characterized as job demands.[20] Job demands can be either positive (challenging) or negative (hindrance) demands. Challenging demands typically produce positive outcomes and energy, whereas hindrance demands require a great deal of effort and leads to the health impairment process, drains energy, and increases burnout.[21] Workload and complexity are job demands that can provide the type of challenge that supports individual performance while conflicts are job demands that hinder or undermine performance.[22] In fact, an unmanageable workload is one of the strongest predictors of burnout.

Negative job demands are the aspects of the work environment and job that cost energy, like unmanageable workload, complexity, and conflict

Job resources

Job resources – which includes feedback, rewards, job control, participation, job security, and supervisor support – are aspects of the work environment that help individuals deal with job demands, achieve goals, and stimulate personal growth and development.[23] In 2004, Arnold Bakker and colleagues defined job resources as physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects that reduce job demands and the associated psychological costs. Characterized as initiating a motivational process, job resources have been found to increase work engagement, organizational commitment, and retention.[24] In these ways, job resources can help an employee better manage their workload, facilitate personal and professional goals, foster engagement, and encourage health-supporting activities.[25] Job resources are the aspects of the work environment that help individuals deal with job demands, achieve their goals, and stimulate personal growth and development.

Job resources are the aspects of the work environment that help individuals deal with job demands, achieve their goals, and stimulate personal growth and development and include feedback, rewards, job control, participation, job security, and supervisor support.

There are several reasons why job resources are important. First and foremost, job resources are necessary for employees to be effective and motivated in their roles and with their work. As a leader, it is your responsibility to support your team as they seek to innovate and problem solve, on time, and under budget. When a work environment is supported by job resources, employees experience less stress, fewer absences, and higher organizational commitment. Finally, job resources help to buffer against high job demands. That is, they can lower the damaging impact of demands on employee mental health and well-being. Research suggests that this buffering effect is particularly critical in high demands situations. The buffering effect is important because it is not always possible to reduce all job demands to make them tolerable. Some demands can be an inherent part of the job and removing them would fundamentally change the role. In these situations, the work can be made more manageable by ensuring employees have access to adequate job resources. The good news is that when employees have adequate job resources, they have a lower incidence of burnout.

What job resources do you have access to that can help you buffer against job demands?

Organizational support

Organizational support – a subset of job resources commonly measured in the scholarly literature as perceived organizational support – is defined as the extent to which employees feel the organization values their work contributions and cares for their well-being.[26] Central to preventing burnout, organizational support is strongly driven by effective leadership, favorable human resources (HR) practices, desirable job conditions and fairness.[27] Employees pay particular attention to practices the organization has considerable discretion over, as opposed to organizational practices imposed by external constraints, such as government regulations or market competition. Leaders can improve organizational support by instituting supportive policies and HR practices, as well as offering help and demonstrating care and consideration.[28] Employees often respond to such actions with behaviors leaders see as favorable. Over time, the continual exchange of benefits can give rise to trust, reducing the need for constant vigilance over one's expectations.

> *Trust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviors of another.* – Denise Rousseau

According to the principles of social exchange theory or the reciprocal nature of relationships many positive outcomes emerge when employees know, feel, and experience the organization doing good for all stakeholders. When organizations make a positive contribution to society, positive outcomes such as profitability, performance, innovation, and sustainability emerge. These positive practices foster positive emotions, which can affect others through social contagion processes. Furthermore, when employees experience positive emotions, they exhibit more helping and extra-role (going above and beyond) behaviors. This positive affect is transformational and helps improve both, individual and team, performance and productivity.

How might your habits, communication, and management style cause or mitigate burnout?

The dynamic work environment

Earlier in this chapter, we introduced the idea that organizations are ethically responsible to create work environments where people can thrive and flourish. But the key elements of the work environment (job demands, job resources, and organizational support) are not static or stagnant. They interact with and are experienced through the current realities within the organization and the span of control exercised by leadership. It is pivotal to emphasize that the key elements of the work environment overlap with both our current realities and span of control (Figure 3.1). This means that in addition to assessing the work environment, you will need to further examine and have a

clear understanding of the current realities within the organization and your span of control prior to developing an appropriate plan of action. Current realities encompass overarching external and internal conditions, often outside your immediate control, while your span of control is focused on the internal activities, functions, people, and resources you have a direct (or indirect) impact on or control over.
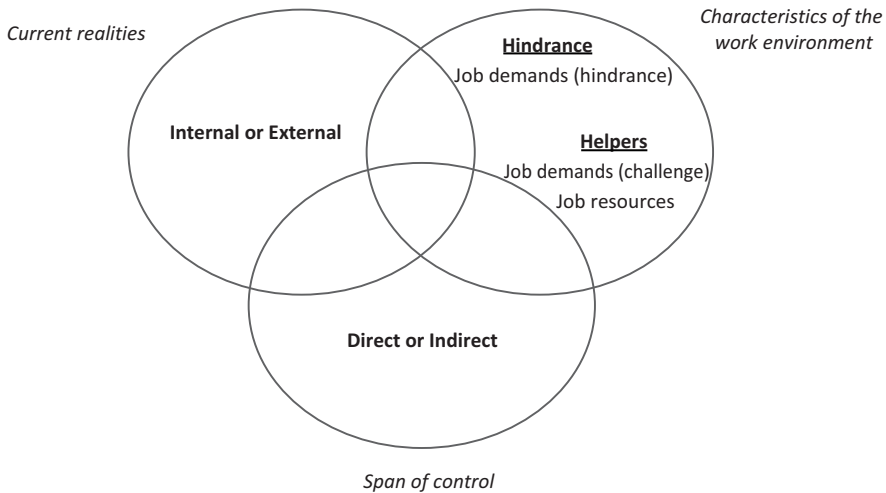
Figure 3.1: The Intersection of Current Realities, Characteristics of the Work Environment, and Span of Control.

Current realities

Undoubtedly, we live and work in a world that is often referred to as VUCA – volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. This often drives the external and internal conditions of an organization and varies across industries and time. And this context sets the stage and provides a lens through which to see the characteristics of the work environment. As you will see in Chapter 7, acknowledgment of the current realities of an organization is essential to addressing specific work characteristics impacting burnout and engagement. In the ever-changing workplace of the 21st century, it is unrealistic to believe a simple list will encompass every possible workplace stressor across every role and industry, so it is up to you to consider what organization and industry specific considerations you should keep in mind. A few specific realities to consider within your own organization follow.

Negative conditions may already exist. What we know is that a positive work environment is essential for engagement and well-being. However, a discussion of the positive workplace and job characteristics would be incomplete without mentioning what constitutes a negative work environment. If a positive work environment is one

in which the design, practices, and policies benefit both the organization and its employees, then the negative environment reflects the opposite. However, this is not to convey that there is a continuum. The absence of a positive work environment does not mean that the presence of a negative environment and vice versa. Rather, there are job characteristics that contribute to the creation of a negative work environment. This can include team conflict, excessive work travel, unreasonable time demands, lack of trust in management, and role ambiguity. Such factors can overshadow any positive efforts that you have implemented or instituted within the organization. Three timely examples are toxic leadership, discrimination and harassment, and the lack of diversity and inclusion. Leaders can exert control over the work environment but there are certain factors that can undermine even your best efforts. You can try to address all the job demands that you want but negative situations have the power to sabotage these efforts.

Let's start with toxic leadership, which is characterized by behavior that harms people. Behavior that clinical psychologist, Karen Wilson-Starks[29] explained poisons enthusiasm, creativity, autonomy, and innovative expression. Toxic leadership tends to erode morale, motivation, and self-esteem. This type of leadership lends itself to group think in the most devastating way in which agreeing with the boss is what brings reward and thinking differently or disagreeing with the boss leads to punishment. Research by Jean Lipman-Blumen of Claremont Graduate University found toxic leaders display behaviors ranging from undermining, demeaning, seducing, marginalizing, intimidating, demoralizing, disenfranchising, and incapacitating to imprisoning, torturing, and terrorizing their employees.[30] Bottomline, do not be a toxic leader!

> *In a toxic leadership environment, 'yes' people are rewarded and are promoted to leadership roles, while people who more fully engage their mental resources, critical thinking, and questioning skills are shut out from decision-making and positions of influence.*
>
> – Dr. Karen Wilson-Starks

Equally important, discrimination is another negative condition that harms employees. For your team to bring their whole selves to work, you need to create environments free of discrimination –either covert or subtle – which has been linked to mental and physical health challenges. Although widely discussed and explored now, there is a relatively short history of fostering diversity in the U.S. workforce. Beginning in the 1960s, early efforts, including federal laws prohibiting workplace discrimination, focused on increasing representation of groups who had historically suffered from indirect and direct discrimination within the society and in the workplace employment, namely women and racial minority groups. These early efforts expanded ensuring the representation of individuals with different attributes such as race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status in the workplace and then evolved into ensuring every group is treated fairly within an inclusive work environment.[31] And yet, both indirect and direct discrimination

remain a concern. Indirect discrimination occurs when individuals are treated equally in equal circumstances but under unequal social conditions. Essentially, the rules apply to everyone in the same way, but some are affected more negatively than others, thus pointing to a lack of equitability in this regard. This is the case when one group serves as the basis for whom institutionalized rules are formed but then these rules are applied to all other groups, including those of different races or ethnic backgrounds. In the book, *Diversity: Gender, Color, and Culture*, Philomena Essed provides an example of a company cafeteria that failed to consider the dietary needs of its Muslim employees.[32] The company was not consciously discriminating based on race or religion, yet unequal social conditions were created. Certainly, this is not an environment in which you would enjoy working and the research supports this. On the other hand, direct discrimination involves unequal treatment in equal circumstances under unequal social conditions. Think of the infamous "no blacks allowed" signage of the 1960s versus a sign that simply reads, "members only." Simply stated, *your perception of reality may not be the actual truth*. Your belief that discrimination does not exist in your organization does not mean there is an absence of actual discrimination.

U.S. federal laws prohibiting workplace discrimination are enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). As a federal agency, the EEOC works to ensure employees are protected from discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, and genetic information (including family medical history) as well as from retaliation for filing a claim of discrimination.

Has anyone on your team been conflicted, challenged, or harmed by any specific organizational or leadership policy or practice?

Indeed, valuing and engaging diverse individuals in your organization is required to unleash the full potential of your team. Feelings of belonging and acceptance for each person's unique characteristics effects self-esteem and positively influences organizational performance.[33] Diversity, in all its respects, provides the increased opportunity for creativity, innovation, and higher quality output.[34] And yet, these positive outcomes can only be achieved when organizations expand their understanding of diversity and embrace equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Equity is the fair and just treatment of all members of the organization. Inclusion is the degree to which an employee can fully participate in all aspects of organizational work, feels valued and a sense of belonging. Accessibility refers to employees having equitable access regardless of ability and experience. Workplaces that champion diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) are more likely to attract, hire, and retain high performing employees and as a result, improve their bottom lines. Our research into DEIA has shown the important role of social exchange and trust in leadership to individuals' commitment to their organization. You can address the entirety of your teams' needs by developing

good working relationships and favorably impacting the factors that foster motivation and organizational goal achievement. Good working relationships also have a reciprocal effect – they provide a chance for intellectual, economic, and social progress that can benefit all involved.

Inclusion can inspire ideas, increase innovation, and improve performance.

Technology is pervasive. The pursuit of improved productivity and efficiency has long dominated the conversation over the role of technology in organizations. From personal gadgets that automate our lives to workplace equipment and software, we are constantly creating and innovating products to do things simpler and faster. Innovation in mobile technology, in particular, has blurred the lines between home and work. *Just because your team can be reached 24/7 doesn't mean you should contact them 24/7.* Our increased reliance on technology has been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. This not only shapes new behaviors, but also shapes attitudes, expectations, and our overall work experience. Managers and leaders must understand the role, influence, and availability of technology in their workplace and ensure the work environment can adjust to changes in attitudes and expectations.

Just because your team can be reached 24/7 doesn't mean you should contact them 24/7.

We are working in teams. In many organizations, the basic work unit is structured around the team rather than the individual – with individuals working collectively to produce a good or a service for internal or external stakeholders.[35] It remains commonplace for the scope and complexity of tasks and projects to exceed the capability of a single individual. Teams often emerge to shoulder such existing and burgeoning requirements. The team concept becomes important to the discussion of burnout and engagement because peers, coworkers, and colleagues provide an essential level of emotional support for one another. Peers often understand the stress of a job better than management. When you create an environment where teamwork thrives, people help one another, have someone to listen to, and in general, have more fun and peer support as they drive towards common goals.[36]

We agree with the often-repeated quote from Steve Jobs, "*Great things in business are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people.*" Accordingly, researchers have strived to understand and enhance human performance in team settings.

Every discussion of teams should start with the distinction that *every team is made up of groups but not every group is a team.* Gareth Jones and Jennifer George, authors of *Contemporary Management*, define a group as two or more people who interact with each other to accomplish certain goals.[37] Conversely, a team can be defined as any

formal group, of at least two individuals, collectively responsible for organizational tasks that work dynamically, interdependently, and adaptively together to accomplish a specific goal or objective. We prefer the concise definition of Eric Sundstrom and colleagues that describes teams as "interdependent collections of individuals who share responsibility for specific outcomes for their organizations."[38]

Of course, teams are more than collections of individuals and teamwork is more than the aggregate of their individual behaviors. Moreover, there are key differences between group members and team members. This has been the consensus for quite some time. In fact, in 1980, Frank Bass asserted that we cannot simply label a group of individuals as a "team" and expect that they will perform as such.[39] Instead, characteristics that distinguish teams from groups include the following: multiple sources of information, task interdependencies, coordination among members, common goals, specialized member roles and responsibilities, task-relevant knowledge, intensive communication, and adaptive strategies to help respond to change. In brief, a group can be distinguished from a team by the interdependency with which teams work together and the existence of an overarching goal or objective. Consider, for instance, a group of engineers within a firm that interact on project updates, time schedules, and company strategic planning. Each engineer is focused on completing and submitting their own projects and have no true dependency on others in the group. While certainly a group, they would not be considered a team. Group dynamics is frequently discussed in Girvin's courses at Johns Hopkins University. One of his students expressed the difference between a group and team this way: *If a group had the option to add a new member, they may choose to add a high-performing individual, even if they don't bring a new or needed skill set to the table. The team, on the other hand, would identify a gap in team expertise and seek to gain talent to improve the overall effectiveness of the team.*

> One cannot simply label a group of individuals as a "team" and expect that they will perform as one. A group exists when two or more individuals think of and assess themselves collectively as having shared attributes that distinguish them (as a group) from other groups. Characteristics that distinguish teams from groups include the following: multiple sources of information, task interdependencies, coordination among members, common and valued goals, specialized member roles and responsibilities, task-relevant knowledge, intensive communication, and adaptive strategies to help respond to change.

According to J. Richard Hackman, Edgar Pierce Professor of Social and Organizational Psychology at Harvard University, teams are successful when they have a compelling purpose, are organized with the right people, have adequate organizational support, have clarity of conduct, and conform to organizational norms.[40] Benefits of an effective team include greater productivity, more effective use of resources, better decisions and problem-solving, better-quality products and services, greater innovation, and increased creativity.

Yet, beware the dysfunctional team as it can be challenged with making needed decisions and meeting objectives. In contrast to high-functioning teams, the dysfunctional team may waste time and work on issues that don't align with priorities. Patrick Lencioni – author of *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* – describes the root causes of team dysfunction as lack of cohesion and politics.[41] The good news is that Lencioni also tells us that dysfunction can be identified and cured if leaders attend to these areas: 1) trust, 2) conflict, 3) commitment, 4) accountability, and 5) results.

Work is increasingly virtual. In a major review of the academic research on virtual teams, Luis L. Martins, associate professor of management at Georgia Tech, and his associates conclude that, with rare exceptions, all organizational teams are virtual to some extent.[42] We have moved away from working with people who are in our visual proximity to working with people around the globe. In fact, virtual teams are often formed to overcome geographical or temporal separations. This point is illustrated by the idea that you want the *best talent* available not the best talent in your area. The term "virtual team" is used to cover a wide range of activities and forms of technology-supported work.[43] Most importantly, virtual teams are comprised of members who are in more than one physical location. The prevalence of virtual teams continues to increase and there's a high likelihood that it's here to stay. There are four categories of virtual teams:

1. teleworkers: a single individual managing a team at one location
2. remote team: a single individual managing a team distributed across multiple locations
3. matrixed teleworkers: multiple individuals managing a team at one location
4. matrixed remote teams: multiple individuals managing a team across multiple locations

Potential benefits of the virtual team: flexibility, reduced time-to-market, agility in performing cross-functional projects.
Potential drawbacks of the virtual team: organizational and cultural barriers, technology and videoconferencing fatigue, employee mistrust, communication break downs, conflicts, power struggles, and manager discomfort with the virtual team model.

Identity and culture are important to employees. Positive and negative work environments are just as much about the individual as they are about the group. Demographic characteristics such as gender, race, and even group affiliations (e.g., veteran status) is a means for individuals to self-categorize themselves into groups. Leaders must recognize that many individuals define their self-concept by their multiple selves or "social identities." Son K. Lam and others have defined social identities as the individual's belongingness to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to [their] group membership.[44] Depending on the social context, an individual may be compelled to think, feel, behave, or

even interpret situations based on group affiliation. Strong identities among individuals can greatly unify people and impact organizational pride, identity, and stability. However, strong identity expressed in the wrong way can contribute to barriers between groups and may lead to exclusion and intolerance. Thus, the work environment and being part of a group help to shape identity and the culture of the organization.

Widely studied in relation to employee and organizational outcomes, organizational culture refers to the set of key values, assumptions, understandings, and norms that are shared by members of an organization and taught to new members as needed. Organizational culture encompasses the shared values, assumptions, understandings, and norms that are encouraged, discouraged, accepted, or rejected by members of an organization. A good culture is intentional and can unleash tremendous energy toward a shared purpose and foster an organization's capacity to thrive. It requires intentional daily maintenance from every member of the organization and requires intervention early on when problems arise. Building a culture where employees can thrive takes time and requires repeated and persistent actions. It has been argued that organizational culture may be the critical key that managers can use to direct the course of their firms. The prevailing theory has been that organizational culture influences employee behavior because individuals behave in ways that are consistent with their values, and organizational culture is a set of shared values. Brian Gregory, of Northern Arizona University, and colleagues explain that the culture of an organization should encourage employees to behave in ways that are consistent with its culture.[45] However, research suggests organizational culture is not the key driver of employee behavior. Rather, organizational culture has an indirect impact on employee behavior, commitment, and performance and that work motivation and job satisfaction have a greater impact on employee performance.

Organizational culture encompasses the shared values, assumptions, understandings, and norms that are encouraged, discouraged, accepted, or rejected by members of an organization. A good culture is intentional and can unleash tremendous energy toward a shared purpose and foster an organization's capacity to thrive. It requires intentional daily maintenance from every member of the organization and requires intervention early on when problems arise.

Organizational culture and efforts to prevent and combat burnout depend on the actions of everyone in the workplace.

All organizations have a work environment and culture. As a leader, it is important that you shape and control it as best you can. You will be responsible for the positive or negative behaviors that spring forth from the social conditions and the culture you oversee. Bottomline, organizational culture and leadership matter in creating and sustaining work environments.[46]

High-functioning organizations should address red flags before they become bigger problems.

Technology issues. Consider how technology has changed our workplace on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the onset of the pandemic, many have found themselves performing tasks at home that were once reserved for the office – a trend that had already been increasing over the past decade. But excessive use of technology does have a downside. In fact, research from Stanford and the University of California, Los Angeles, has shown that video calls are more physically and mentally challenging (consider trying out the Stanford Zoom Exhaustion & Fatigue Scale).[47] Depending on your organization, field, or sector, you may call it *telework, working from home, remote work, or virtual work.* Regardless of its title, remote and virtual work continue to modify the way individuals interact, their job autonomy, and work hours. Instead of the work environment being one where all individuals share the same physical proximity and interactions in the office and in meetings, telework and other virtual interactions remove the physical proximity which impacts everyone on the team. Interestingly, even virtual work is varied. You may have one individual working away from the team or group, have everyone working offsite, or the interesting but overlooked situation where the entire office is onsite, but everything is still conducted virtually. In this latter situation, physical proximity – while possible – is made irrelevant. Shifts in structure are accompanied by changes in practices, logistics, and technology requiring individuals to be both vigilant and flexible to meet organizational needs and expectations. Needs and expectations that are now shaped by the ability to navigate the pros and cons of:

– video conferencing and other web-based platforms
– alerts, texts, emails
– social media
– limited down time *in life*
– faster turnaround times
– work schedule (duration/timing)
– access to employees outside of traditional hours

Change fatigue is real. We know that in life change is constant. What must be emphasized now is that the work environment and the nature of our work has and continues to change. Changes in the workplace are only magnified by the fact that the past few decades have seen a steady increase in the levels of negative stressors experienced at work. According to Gallup's 2019 Global Emotions Report, which examined data from 143 countries, there is a global crisis of workplace stress with over a third of people saying they experience "a lot of stress."[48] The world has changed a lot, and this was data from 2019. Looking back to 2020 and 2021, we know we are living in a VUCA (as a reminder . . . volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) world. Stress is serious and we know that COVID-19 exacerbated what

many felt and experienced. It's a bit cliché, but the old adage of pressure can burst pipes or create diamonds is fitting. Wait, fitting . . . and pipes, get it? Too funny.

Anyway, negative stress is the pressure you want to avoid. While change is an unavoidable part of our working lives, change fatigue can bring about increased stress, reduced confidence, uncertainty, and fear. Sometimes, for you and your team alike, the change may seem to be too much. The rules of the game – policies, processes, and procedures – may change as soon as you learn them. Your team wants – and needs – a sense of consistency to help reduce the overwhelming feeling to keep up and stay on the same page with others. If change is managed properly, with and for employees, many problems can be stopped in their tracks. You should work to reduce the uncertainty through periods of change by engaging in bounded optimism. Said another way, you should have hope for the future while remaining grounded in the current realities of present challenges. Bounded optimism coupled with early and frequent communication before, during, and after any major change can put the brakes on potential problems. If your organization, like many others, is facing regular change, remember that your team needs effective and regular communication, increased transparency, and opportunities to participate in the process. In this context, our communication, whether written or verbal, is important and essential to reducing anxiety and creating assurance and calm for your team.

> *Change is constant – it will always exist and will often throw a wrinkle in our plans – but when there are capacity issues paired with the compounding effect of consistent and complex change, your team may begin to experience change fatigue.*

Capacity differs between people. The degree to which your team can cope with demands within the work environment will vary between individuals and their capacity. The greater their capacity, the better chance there is to avoid the negative effects of stress. In dealing with stress, we need to take stock of current capacity and manage demands before they become overwhelming and chronic. This very personal factor is an important driver of how, when, and why burnout might show up differently. As leaders, you can help your team and colleagues identify and address job demands, job resources, and organizational support. Consider again the pressure cooker analogy. Recall that we are the food, the water is our work environment, the area inside the pot is our capacity, the heat represents the demands we face, and the valve is our available resources. All things being equal, when the volume increases the pressure decreases and vice versa. As a result, the greater the capacity, more demands can be tolerated.

People travel with baggage. Baggage is a figurative term that often refers to an emotional state. However, in this context, we refer to baggage as holding on to memories of negative incidents, feelings, and experiences; simply put, *baggage is the figurative weight on one's shoulders*. At times, this baggage transforms an individual's personality, needs, goals, and aspirations – even if just for the short-term.

Whether currently or in the past, individuals on your team may have a heavy load that they are trying to manage across all domains of life. They may struggle to balance home-life and work-life, thus suffering from capacity issues. Rumination, continually going over a thought or a problem in one's mind, may persist and lead to fatigue. Undoubtedly, life happens outside of work, and as such, leaders are unlikely to understand the entirety of their team members' lives and struggles. That being said, your team, individually and collectively, wants to perform at their best, and regret when life outside the scope of work influences their ability to do so. While you don't have any control over your team members' lives outside of work, knowing what's going on in their lives and keeping your eyes and ears open for any potential work concerns can help you prepare if their work begins to suffer.

Span of control

Being a leader or manager is an important job and is a job in which you are required to control, encourage, lead, motivate, organize, plan, and train members of your team. Your ability to drive team performance – arguably one of the most critical parts of your job – can result in the organization's success or failure. But you do not have control over everything in the organization that affects your team. You have a specific span of control, which is defined as the scope of activities, functions, people, and resources for which an individual is responsible. Span of control emphasizes authority, the power vested in a leader or manager to make decisions and use resources, and the ability to exercise it. By power, we mean what Max Weber defined as the ability to control others, events, or resources; to make happen what one wants to happen despite obstacles, resistance, or opposition.[49] Your ability to exercise your span of control, directly or indirectly, is dependent upon the politics, policies, and processes that shape it and your position in the hierarchy or chain of command.

We describe the interaction between current realities and span of control using the metaphor of a sailing ship, with the span of control being the sail and the winds and ocean being our current realities. We need to constantly take from what we know of the past and read present conditions to predict and respond to the changing winds and seas to navigate correctly and most efficiently to our destination. As Jim Rohn, the late American entrepreneur, author, and motivational speaker, said, "*It's not the blowing of the wind (that determines your destination) but the setting of the sail.*" Thus, span of control stands as a foundation of your ability to address the characteristics of the work environment (job demands, job resources, and organizational support) related to burnout and engagement in a timely and meaningful manner.

As a leader, you should be acutely aware of the responsibility and influence you have in the organization – be it as a people leader, project leader, manager, HR professional, consultant, or even CEO. This includes the degree to which you can

make a direct or indirect impact on the ebb and flow of job demands and resources. There is an inevitable intersection between the work environment, your span of control, and the context of current realities inside and outside the organization. In the end, span of control will be demonstrated by the influence and decision-making you have within the various levels of the workplace – organizational, job-related, and personal.

> Reflecting upon this chapter through the lens of Burnout as a Pressure Cooker analogy in Figure 1.2, we can now understand that even before any heat (demands) is applied or any pressure builds, the spices and seasoning used on the food and the amount of water (current realities) will impact the quality and ability of the food to respond to conditions within the pot (work environment). The degree to which you can actively monitor and control everything (span of control) will directly impact the cooking process.

Part II: **A trench and the oasis**

Chapter 4
Burnout – the making of a concept

Burnout exists because we've made rest a reward rather than a right. – Juliet C. Obodo

Emerging as a social problem, rather than a scholarly construct, burnout was pragmatically shaped. In 1974, psychologist Herbert J. Freudenberger was the first to describe burnout. Initially described as *staff burnout*, he defined this phenomenon as failing, wearing out, or becoming exhausted due to excessive demands on energy or resources.[1] In 1976, Christina Maslach, an American social psychologist, wrote a seminal article entitled "Burned Out" with a focus on health among social service professionals.[2] The modern and leading definition was proposed by Maslach, Susan Jackson, and Michael P. Leiter in 1986 as the experience of exhaustion coupled with cynical behaviors and doubt about performance ability. Over the next four decades, Maslach and her colleagues continued to explore burnout and expanded their research into nearly every field and country around the globe. Later, Maslach and Leiter expanded the definition of burnout as a crisis in one's relationship with work, in general, and not necessarily as a crisis in one's relationship with people in the workplace. The researchers went on to further describe burnout as the result of prolonged interpersonal stressors at work due to overwhelming exhaustion, feelings of cynicism and detachment from the job, and a sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment. Indeed, from the very beginning, burnout and its opposite engagement, have been an issue of energy, involvement, and efficacy (refer to Figure 1.3).

This puts the 2019 WHO classification of burnout as a workplace phenomenon into greater context. As refined by Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter, burnout results from unsuccessfully managed chronic workplace stress characterized by exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy. Although we know employees in social work, emergency response, design, business development and sales, retail, medicine, law, and other careers with large workloads seem to experience burnout more than others, burnout can be found in every industry. In fact, as we write this amid the COVID-19 pandemic, burnout is on the rise, with an estimated 28% increase in levels of burnout among U.S. employees during 2020.[3] This level of burnout poses a danger to performance, success, and your bottom line and threatens to linger long into the transition toward a post-COVID-19 world.

The three dimensions of burnout

Today, the concept of burnout is not only well-established in psychosocial and organizational research across different job sectors and socioeconomic groups but is also an extremely well-known and popular metaphor in the global work context.[4]

Widely characterized as a three-dimensional construct of exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy (refer to Figure 1.3), burnout represents an individual and organizational challenge that needs to be intentionally mitigated. Exhaustion refers to the draining of emotional resources, feelings of tiredness, and chronic fatigue resulting from work overload and excessive psychological demands. Chronic exhaustion can lead to cynicism, which leads to a tendency to dehumanize others through callous and uncaring attitudes and behaviors. Distancing is an immediate reaction to exhaustion. As employees detach themselves emotionally and cognitively from their work, they are less involved with or responsive to the needs of others or the demands of their jobs. When employees face overwhelming workplace demands and develop cynicism, their professional efficacy – or sense of accomplishment – can begin to erode, and they may begin to experience a loss of competence, confidence, and productivity, while also negatively evaluating their past and present work accomplishments. Reduced professional efficacy covers both the social and nonsocial aspects of job and career accomplishments. When efficacy is compromised, employees may experience a loss of competence, confidence, and productivity as well as negatively evaluate their past and present accomplishments. In short, burnout looks a lot like being weighed down by excessive job pressure, stumbling through exhaustion and cynicism about work, while at the same time walking under a cloud of self-doubt about job performance and success. We know this sounds bleak, but we're not done yet – we promise there's good news coming.

Consider the leadership perspective related to burnout from our research collected during the COVID-19 pandemic. A people leader, LeGina, shared that burnout set in early in the pandemic, around April 2020, after she had to furlough half of her 40-person medical office team. Work had slowed but hadn't halted leaving the remaining team to pick up the slack. The employees expressed concerns of exhaustion. Although no one spoke to burnout explicitly she knew there were rumblings, so she took stock of issues and opportunities. She acknowledged that it would be her issue to deal with if burnout spread throughout her team. She proactively thought of ways to increase job resources and organizational support by implementing flexible scheduling, improving work tasks and role design, allowing for greater autonomy, and making more opportunities for development available, specifically through cross-training. LeGina recognized that burnout was her *problem* but not her *fault*. She looked for opportunities to show appreciation and demonstrate care – simple gestures such as bringing lunch in or organizing team-building activities were well-received. She also took advantage of simple yet meaningful opportunities to thank and celebrate her team members both publicly and privately. She randomly gave her team personalized thank you notes and small gifts of appreciation.

LeGina recognized that burnout was her *problem* but not her *fault*.

What burnout is not

Making it clear what burnout is not may help to clarify what burnout actually is. Burnout is not in your head; it is not just emotional or physical exhaustion. Burnout is not due to a resiliency deficit. It is not the equivalent of feeling anxious, frustrated, or overwhelmed. It is not merely fatigue, depression, or anger, yet these could all be symptoms of burnout. Most importantly, burnout is not something you should expect your team to just "get over."

The causes and consequences of burnout

Most employees will experience burnout at one time or another in their career. Decades of research on burnout have identified several factors – organizational, job-related, and personal – that cause and are a consequence of burnout. Six of these factors include workload, control, reward, community, fairness, and values. Fairness, in particular, influences a wide range of work outcomes including burnout. There is extensive evidence showing that low appraisals of organizational fairness – a person's evaluation of the quality of interpersonal treatment received from supervisors and coworkers – are predictive of job dissatisfaction and burnout. Excessive workload and time pressure, poor relationships with colleagues, lack of resources and personal control, role ambiguity and role conflict, poor opportunities for promotion, lack of support, and lack of participation in decision-making are primary job-related characteristics that lead to burnout. Table 4.1 provides a snapshot of some causes and consequences from over a decade's worth of research.[5]

Table 4.1: Causes and Consequences of Burnout.

Workplace Factors	Cause or Consequence
Type of work (discipline) and personal characteristics (age and marital status)	Cause
Lack of direction, job pressures, personal work management issues	Cause
External environments, work mandates, career overload	Cause
Systems, work unit climate, individual needs and values	Cause
Over-commitment, continuous multitasking, overwork	Cause
Working within multiple systems, reporting structure, paperwork/administrative management, heavy workload	Cause
Late night meetings and demanding job responsibilities	Cause
Irregular hours, intense job assignments	Cause
Committee meetings, multisite settings, stress	Cause
Unfair treatment at work, unmanageable workload, lack of role clarity, lack of communication and support from management, unreasonable time pressure	Cause

Table 4.1 (continued)

Workplace Factors	Cause or Consequence
Travel demands and long work hours	Cause
Employee stress and low job satisfaction	Consequence
Stress and high employee turnover	Consequence
Poor retention rates	Consequence

Researchers point to several organizational factors that foster burnout such as the absence of fairness, lack of community and conflicting personal values. You've likely heard that having friends at work is important for employee morale and retention. Similarly, the research shows that having poor relationships with colleagues, managers, and leaders can lead to burnout. People quit their managers not their jobs. Outcomes such as high levels of sick leave, increased presenteeism and absenteeism, mental health problems, and low morale occur when employees lack a healthy work environment free from physical and emotional sickness and stress. This is just more evidence supporting the research finding that *people quit people.* Burnout is also facilitated when organizations offer their employees poor opportunities for promotion, a lack of autonomy, and meaningless or insignificant job roles.[6] And, when burnout is left unchecked, it can lead to performance problems and high employee turnover. The costs of turnover, which include recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and training new staff, mount up quickly. Gallup found that employees experiencing burnout are half as likely to discuss performance goals with their manager. Estimates from decades of research by Wayne Cascio, a distinguished university professor and the Robert H. Reynolds Chair in Global Leadership at the University of Colorado-Denver, and colleagues suggest these turnover costs can range from 90% to 200% of the average annual salary.[7]

People quit their managers not their jobs.

Research indicates that burnout exists when employees experience deficits in several important areas including lack of resources, lack of support, and lack of participation in decision-making. In terms of specific job or job-role factors, lack of personal control over an individual's work and insufficient rewards have been found to foster burnout. Job dependent aspects, such as a heavy workload, excessive work demands, role ambiguity, and role conflict were also identified as contributors of burnout. Burnout has also been found to result from factors such as lack of direction, job pressures, job performance measures, salary disparities, self-induced stress, lack of support, unequal recognition, insufficient pay raises, reporting difficulties, and excessive extra-role obligations. More recent time-centered research has found

that time management and excessive time pressure, especially when employees are already over-committed, have a significant impact on employees experiencing burnout. Table 4.2 shows identified causes of burnout that align with the characteristics of the work environment described in Chapter 3.

What signs of burnout have you noticed on your team?

Table 4.2: Work Environment Characteristics that Influence Burnout.

Aspects (levels) of the Workplace	Characteristics of Work Environment	Burnout Causes
Organizational aspect	Open communication and recognition Care and support Opportunities to advance Learning opportunities Climate of respect Fair treatment	Conflicts with cooperation Lack of appreciation Lack of supervisor support Physical environment Reduced access to technology
Job-related aspects	Job autonomy Job challenge Task support Reasonable time pressure Role clarity Manageable workload Flexibility	Time pressure/tight deadlines Lack of autonomy Role ambiguity Physical workload Shiftwork/work schedule
Personal aspects	Work-life fit Work-life balance Satisfaction with earnings and benefits Provisions for self and family Meaningful daily activity Pride, identity, busyness, socialization	Stress Anxiety Lack of motivation

While often considered positive, employees with high levels of work motivation are actually in greater danger of experiencing burnout.[8] Being highly motivated and intensely connected with work may lead to an inability to detach and disconnect. This is one path towards burnout. Many researchers have linked careers where employees consistently demonstrate selflessness, work long hours, and go above and beyond as a cause of burnout. Of course, these traits are in high demand in many occupations and organizations – and perhaps, these are the unspoken things you look for when recruiting for various roles.

What every leader and manager needs to know

Most employees will experience burnout at one time or another in their career. The research is clear: *experiencing a positive work environment is crucial for employees and for organizations that wish to avoid the many negative outcomes of burnout*. Leaders have an essential role and responsibility in creating environments where their teams can flourish. While we focus on the organizational and job-related factors in this book that you – as leaders – can change – it is also necessary to acknowledge that personal factors, such as work-life imbalances, are sometimes prevalent among employees experiencing burnout.

> Findings from our research with employees actively experiencing burnout reveal:
> – emotionally draining work experiences
> – lack of appropriate rewards for their contributions
> – lack of open and transparent communication
> – unclear job responsibilities
> – feeling that their leader doesn't value their contributions
> – feeling that their organization doesn't care about their well-being
> – limited opportunities to share opinions and participate in decision-making
> – lack of recognition and growth opportunities

As we wrote earlier, burnout is a clear problem of overwork and increased employer expectations that is your problem to solve. You can help your team by setting clear expectations and being transparent in your communication. These steps can help reduce ambiguity and uncertainty amongst your team. Clearly you want a well-functioning team that solves problems and designs innovative solutions, without drama and unnecessary conflict. Burnout has the potential to adversely affect employee work quality and quantity. Specifically, burnout has been associated with low productivity, low effectiveness, jeopardized client relationships, and deteriorated service.

So, what next?

As a modern epidemic of widespread concern across nearly all countries and industries, the recent WHO classification has reignited interest in overall employee well-being. Taking a more comprehensive view (organizational, job-related, and personal levels) of your organization's work environment and how it may foster burnout is a necessary step. But organizational dynamics are complicated and often shaped by social, political, and economic factors as well as the information, tools, and resources to combat a given problem. In the coming chapters we will uncover how to identify, overcome, and steer clear of burnout by addressing key factors that impact individuals and teams.

Chapter 5
Work engagement

Environments that support their employees in the right way will naturally foster employee en-
gagement.
– Aaron Tucker

A most desirable state

Which is better, living to work or loving to work? Or perhaps the better question is: Which is better, enjoying your work or not enjoying your work? We would be shocked if, all things being equal, anyone preferred the latter. Finding enjoyment in an activity is a great motivator to continue engaging in it. So, it is no surprise that enjoyment is at the core of what organizational researchers have characterized as work engagement. Why is work engagement an important concept? Because engaged employees lead to improved productivity and increased business performance.[1] In addition to fostering positive connections and a commitment to work, this makes the nurturing of engaged employees paramount for organizations.

According to two leading researchers in work and organizational psychology, Wilmar B. Schaufeli and Arnold Bakker, work engagement can be defined as an emotional-motivational state where employees feel energetic (vigor), committed and enthusiastic (dedication), and are completely immersed in their work activities (absorption) (refer to Figure 1.3).[2] Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy, mental resilience, and effort while working, as well as persistence in the face of difficulties. Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Absorption is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulty disconnecting from work.

With this definition of work engagement in mind, what exactly does it look like in the workplace? How can you identify it? In researching the topic, we asked just that and heard stories in return that brought smiles to our participants' faces. The word cloud, displayed as Figure 5.1, shows the words used when asked, "What does engagement look like?"

Size matters in this visual. The larger the word appears in the cloud, the more frequently it was used in our conversations. For example, motivated, willing, and positive were used quite often. What has become clear to us is that leaders are excited to work with an engaged team focused on a common purpose. Likewise, the team members we heard from confirmed the same sentiment, stating that they are inspired by and excited to work with engaged team members.
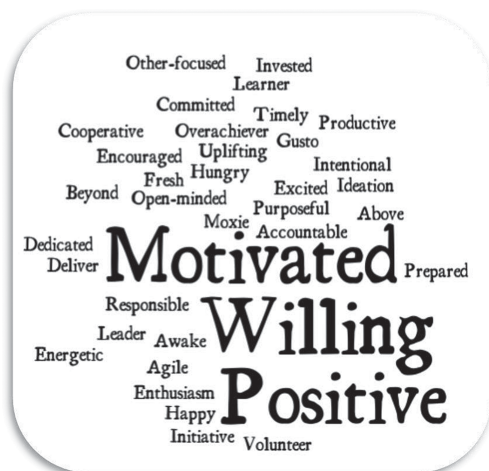
Figure 5.1: Perceptions of Engagement.

Now, let's turn to you. Ask yourself, "What does engagement look like?" Perhaps you used some of the same words you see in the word cloud. Which words resonate with you most? What other words come to mind? When was the last time you felt truly engaged at work?

What does being engaged "look" like to you? Your team?

How long did that last? More importantly, can you point to the things that drive you to be engaged or disengaged from your work? Moreover, why does it even matter? Can you pinpoint the things that really make you feel engaged or recognize those things that make you feel disengaged? Hmmm . . . pause for a moment and really reflect on these questions. What if you could be more engaged? What if you could create a team that is more engaged?

In 1997, Christina Maslach and Michael P. Leiter extended their burnout research to include lack of engagement in one's work. Engagement was understood to be the direct opposite of burnout; however, psychologist Wilmar Schaufeli and colleagues argued that burnout and engagement were distinctly different but not necessarily mutually exclusive.[3] It is possible for burnout and work engagement to both exist on a continuum as opposites, but also for one to exist without the other, in which the absence of one does not necessitate the presence of the other. The key takeaway of this idea is that if, as a leader, you are concerned with worker productivity you should feel obliged to not only pay a good deal of attention to preventing burnout but also to the promotion of work engagement. As a bona fide global phenomenon that impacts the individual and organizational experience, which, in turn, negatively affects worker productivity, then by extension, burnout influences organizational success. Engaged

employees are less likely to experience burnout and more likely to be attached to and satisfied with their organizations. Having highly engaged employees is essential to productivity, making it an indispensable condition for organizational success, as engaged employees have high levels of energy, enthusiasm, and positive attitudes. They are more likely to take initiative, are willing to develop their skills and abilities, and feel proud of their work.[4] All this is to say that you want engaged employees on your team. Our research bears this out. In Figure 5.2, you can see what engaged employees have told us about their common work experiences and organizations.

What our research shows about engaged employees

Organization has consistent policies and practices	Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion	Provides training	Open and transparent communication
Opportunities for career advancement	Clear reporting structure	Freedom to manage and structure work	Manageable workload
Can act on values and interests	Can share opinions and perspectives	Have opportunities for professional growth and development	Likely to receive recognition
Good working relationships with peers, manager	Leaders value contributions	Organization cares about my well-being	Have control and autonomy

Figure 5.2: Engaged Employee Statements about Their Work Experiences and Organizations.

The causes and consequences of work engagement

According to TecHR, organizations that invest in the well-being and energy of their employees see increased profit – up to four times as much – and more than 20% gains in productivity and innovation.[5] Work engagement was found to be positively associated with individual morale, task performance, extra-role performance and organizational performance, and the evidence was most robust in relation to task performance. Research by James Harter and colleagues suggest the following causes of work engagement: clarity of expectations and basic materials and equipment being provided; feelings of contribution to the organization; feeling a sense of belonging to something beyond oneself; and feeling as though there are opportunities to discuss progress and growth.[6]

So, we know that work engagement is an organizational competitive advantage. Employees with better work-life experiences – particularly in terms of higher levels of control, reward, recognition, and value fit – have been found to be more engaged.[7]

Table 5.1 shows what research suggests are some causes of work engagement (alongside those for burnout) that align with the characteristics of the ideal work environment described in Chapter 3.

Table 5.1: Work Environment Characteristics That Influence Burnout and Work Engagement.

Aspects (levels) of the Workplace	Characteristics of the Ideal Work Environment	Burnout Causes	Engagement (*Team Engagement*) Causes
Organizational aspect	Open communication Recognition Care and support Opportunities to advance Learning opportunity Climate of respect Fair treatment	Conflicts with cooperation Lack of appreciation Lack of supervisor support Physical environment Reduced access to technology	Organizational support Supervisory support Job security Opportunities for development/training Reward and recognition Supervisor support Distributive justice Procedural justice Feedback from others Participation in decision-making (*Supportive team climate*)
Job-related aspects	Job autonomy Job challenge Task support Reasonable time pressure Role clarity Manageable workload Flexibility	Time pressure/ tight deadlines Lack of autonomy Role ambiguity Physical workload Shiftwork/work schedule	Basic equipment and materials provided Flexibility Clarity of expectations Autonomy Task identity Skill variety Task significance Job/performance feedback (*Teamwork and coordination*)
Personal aspects	Work-life fit Work-life balance Satisfaction with earnings and benefits Provisions for self and family Meaningful daily activity Pride, identity, busyness, socialization	Stress Anxiety Lack of motivation	Feeling of contribution Sense of belonging Feeling there are opportunities to grow

An essential focus for organizations

Unlike job satisfaction – the sense of contentment one feels as a direct result of being employed in a specific job – that stretches back to the 1930s, work engagement – the emotional investment and enthusiasm for work characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption – first emerged in the late 1990s within the organizational psychology and business literature. Research in the decades that followed linked work engagement to several important organizational outcomes, such as retention, job performance, morale, productivity, reduced absenteeism, and decreased workplace injury. Organizations have since made work engagement an essential area of focus. Since job satisfaction is based on an individual's appraisal of their job or job experiences, it follows that job satisfaction can be a cause and effect of work engagement.

> Work engagement is not the same as job satisfaction or simply being happy – satisfaction and happiness do not set the bar high enough.[8]

Many of us believe that job satisfaction is about being content, while engagement is about the emotional commitment an individual has that drives them to perform to the best of their abilities in the aim of achieving organizational goals. A disengaged workforce is costly; therefore, understanding causes and consequences of engagement is important. Research conducted by Catherine Bailey and colleagues identified several factors that serve as causes of engagement: psychological states, job design, leadership, organizational and team factors, and organizational interventions.[9] Leaders directly influence work engagement through three pathways: 1) emotional contagion, 2) social exchange, and 3) role modeling. Similar to our discussion of burnout, the emotional contagion of work engagement works both ways. According to Gallup research, employees that are *actively disengaged*, or those who act out their unhappiness, also have the capacity to spread their unhappiness to their colleagues.[10]

From an individual focus to your team's work engagement

Much of the focus on work engagement has been at the individual level but when working to overcome burnout, teamwork should be illuminated.[11] We know that work engagement can be contagious. When people work together and support one another to advance common goals, the workload is lighter, challenges seem smaller and the work, simply put, is more fun. As such, team engagement cannot be ignored. To ignore this aspect of work engagement would be problematic, particularly given the importance of teams in achieving organizational goals as well as employee health, well-being, and overall productivity. As we stated earlier, working in a team has specificities that distinguish it from working alone. Team members need to coordinate and synchronize their actions, and every member has a critical role for collective

action. Consequently, the success of a team is dependent on the way team members interact with each other to accomplish the work. Like individual-level work engagement, work engagement at the team level, or *team engagement* is multidimensional and characterized by emotional and cognitive dimensions. This includes team vigor, team dedication, and team absorption. These collective states of team qualities originate in members' attitudes, values, beliefs, and motivation and are classified as emergent states – constructs that characterize properties of the team that are typically dynamic in nature and vary as a function of team context, inputs, processes, interactions, and outcomes. Indeed, it should not then be surprising that team social resources (supportive team climate, teamwork, and coordination) have been described as potential causes of team engagement (refer to Table 5.1). So, unlike individual-level work engagement, team engagement does not depend only on job resources and is largely a function of members interacting with other members and their task.

Many hands make light work. – John Heyward

Team success is dependent on the way team members interact with each other to accomplish the work – another reason why engagement matters.

Here's an illustration with an example from our research: *A strategy team has been struggling with low levels of team engagement, classified by low motivation to work, low levels of persistence, and low pride in their work, in a context of diminished sales volume, constant conflicts between team members, a lack of feedback and aggressive and deprecating comments from the leader. The same team's level of engagement may start to increase when one of those elements change, such as a new leader who is capable of clear goal setting and who tends to display an energetic mood, a boost in sales, better management of the conflicts, and so on. These changes in team engagement are not directly dependent on objective events, but rather on the changes those events bring to the interaction between team members.*

It is assumed that every team member is influenced by what is happening to and within the team in a similar way. That each team member will have similar perceptions about their collective degree of work engagement. When assessing their collective energy and involvement, team members will consider the behavior of all team members and how they all interact during team processes. Therefore, every member is assessing a common observable experience and not how they, individually, feel. As such, team members base their judgement on the same cues and, thus, are likely to display a common understanding of what they perceive. Consequently, using individual levels of engagement to compute team engagement would be misleading. Each member makes a different contribution to the collective level of team engagement and consequently influences task and team performance, collective positive emotion, and efficacy beliefs.

> *Janai, a member of a small and highly dispersed team, expressed excitement when describing a new sales promotion. She identified a market opportunity and was able to garner organizational buy-in to launch. She considered herself committed and absorbed in her work. Many colleagues on her team hadn't yet heard the details, as she discussed it, but were absently looking at their phones and tablets. She was trying to stay excited and motivated, but it was apparent that their collective energy and dedication was not very high. This is an example of what Kozlowski and Klein defined as "convergent emergence" where individual work engagement levels do not necessarily transform to the team level. Or, in other words, the perceptions of team engagement from the lower units (individuals) to the higher unit (the team) is not an additive effect.*

So, what next?

Equipped with a clear understanding of its definition, what it looks like in practice, and some of the key causes and consequences, it's evident that nurturing work engagement is a most desirable state for any organization. Not only do engaged employees perform well at the individual and team level, but engaged employees increase business performance. When engaged, an employee is physically involved, cognitively vigilant, and emotionally connected. In contrast, when disengaged, employees are withdrawn physically, cognitively, or emotionally from their work. As we mentioned, leaders and team members alike desire working relationships with engaged employees. Let's apply what we have explored thus far and consider how we might shift from burnout to engagement.

Part III: **Minding the gap**

Chapter 6
Shifting from burnout to engagement

As a leader, you have the potential to create a fire – a passion – in others, but to do this, first, we have to create a spark.

– Denise Wilkerson

So far, we have discussed why burnout matters, why we work, and what motivates us to work. We also described the work environment and how it can influence burnout, work engagement, and well-being. In the preceding chapters, we reviewed a short history of burnout and engagement and discussed the characteristics of the work environment that serve as their causes. Collectively, these chapters make an argument: *in our work environments, burnout is an issue and engagement is a need.* Interestingly, both burnout and engagement are phenomena that represent opposite elements impacted by the work environment: energy, involvement, and efficacy. The implication in this regard is that we can move between burnout and engagement by influencing the energy, involvement, and efficacy of individuals and teams. What is our mechanism of influence? It is the job characteristics over which we have control.

It is worth mentioning that there are several notable and widely used scales and assessments available to measure burnout and engagement. Two well-established assessments are the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9). However, rather than start with a hefty discussion of assessments, we focus on a three-step process to use the job characteristics you have control over to impact energy, involvement, and efficacy – individually and collectively on your team – to move through or around burnout and towards engagement. In fact, engagement serves as the spark that will get your team to a state where everyone is excited to contribute that we refer to as *Fired Up!*

Considering the Burnout as a Pressure Cooker analogy in Figure 1.2, assessments represent the pressure gauge or "burnout meter," allowing us to determine the current amount of pressure or degree to which burnout exists within the work environment.

The Organization-Job-Personal (OJP) framework

Before we explore the three-step process and building a plan for taking your team from burnout to engagement, let's begin with the framework that serves as the foundation of our thinking. Drawing from systems theory and the social-ecological model we have organized the workplace into three levels (organizational, job-related, and personal) and developed the *Organization-Job-Personal (OJP) Framework* (Figure 6.1). The *OJP Framework* illustrates the characteristics of the ideal work environment that relate to burnout and work engagement at three distinct
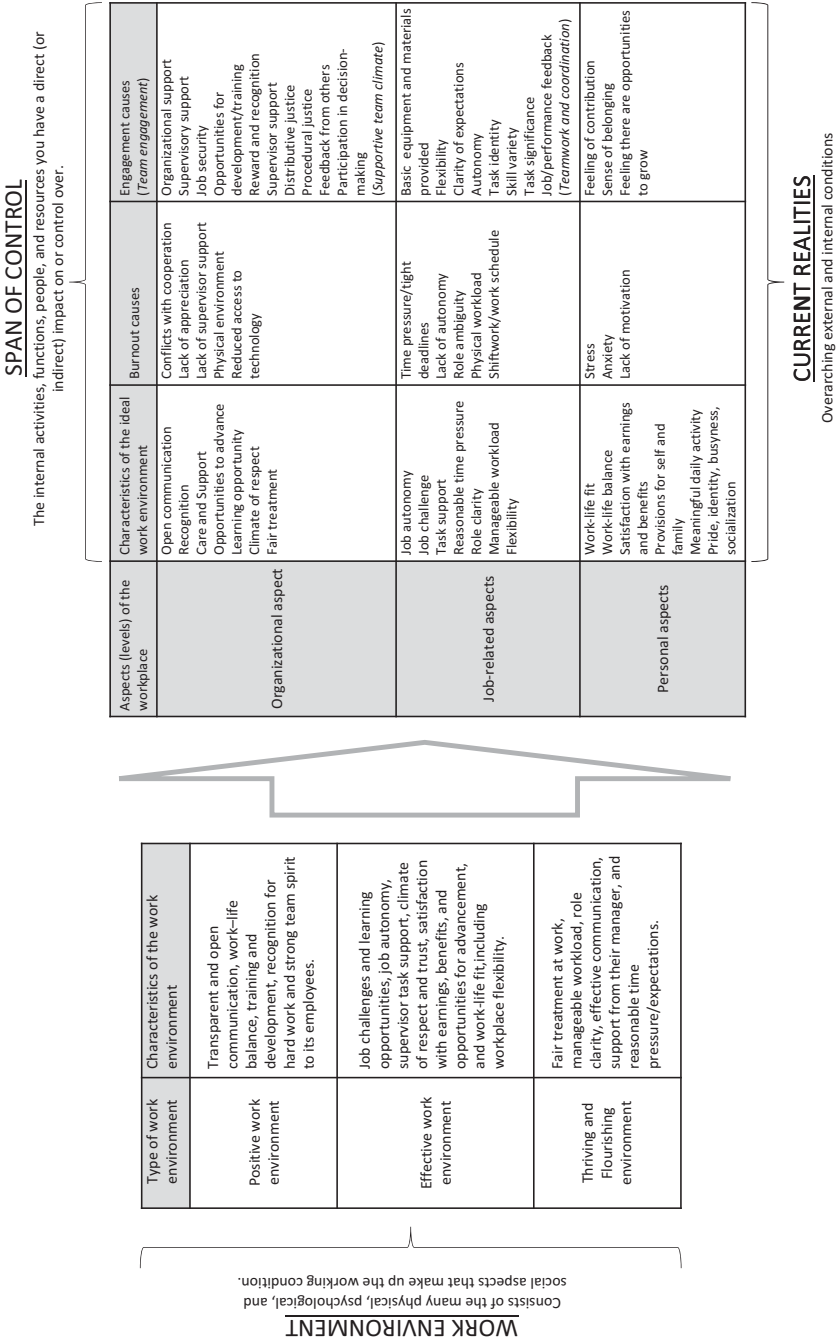
SPAN OF CONTROL

The internal activities, functions, people, and resources you have a direct (or indirect) impact on or control over.

Aspects (levels) of the workplace	Characteristics of the ideal work environment	Burnout causes	Engagement causes (*Team engagement*)
Organizational aspect	Open communication Recognition Care and Support Opportunities to advance Learning opportunity Climate of respect Fair treatment	Conflicts with cooperation Lack of appreciation Lack of supervisor support Physical environment Reduced access to technology	Organizational support Supervisory support Job security Opportunities for development/training Reward and recognition Supervisor support Distributive justice Procedural justice Feedback from others Participation in decision-making (*Supportive team climate*)
Job-related aspects	Job autonomy Job challenge Task support Reasonable time pressure Role clarity Manageable workload Flexibility	Time pressure/tight deadlines Lack of autonomy Role ambiguity Physical workload Shiftwork/work schedule	Basic equipment and materials provided Flexibility Clarity of expectations Autonomy Task identity Skill variety Task significance Job/performance feedback (*Teamwork and coordination*)
Personal aspects	Work-life fit Work-life balance Satisfaction with earnings and benefits Provisions for self and family Meaningful daily activity Pride, identity, busyness, socialization	Stress Anxiety Lack of motivation	Feeling of contribution Sense of belonging Feeling there are opportunities to grow

CURRENT REALITIES

Overarching external and internal conditions

Type of work environment	Characteristics of the work environment
Positive work environment	Transparent and open communication, work-life balance, training and development, recognition for hard work and strong team spirit to its employees.
Effective work environment	Job challenges and learning opportunities, job autonomy, supervisor task support, climate of respect and trust, satisfaction with earnings, benefits, and opportunities for advancement, and work-life fit, including workplace flexibility.
Thriving and Flourishing environment	Fair treatment at work, manageable workload, role clarity, effective communication, support from their manager, and reasonable time pressure/expectations.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Consists of the many physical, psychological, and social aspects that make up the working condition.

Figure 6.1: Organization-Job-Personal Framework.

levels of the workplace. The *OJP Framework* is a useful tool in identifying and planning how best to address and act upon characteristics of the work environment at each level to address energy, involvement, and efficacy.

A climate of trust and respect is essential to both individuals and teams. In many ways it is the delicate glue binding the ideal work environment to employee energy, involvement, and efficacy (Figure 6.2) Trust is foundational to relationships. In fact, trust has been repeatedly found to affect organizational commitment and performance. Not only does trust influence and help to explain the relationship between leadership and engagement it also helps to explain the relationship between fairness and work engagement. Trust in organizations, in particular, has been found to fully explain the relationship between trust in coworkers and organizational commitment and between trust in coworkers and performance. Frederick Stander and colleagues described organizational trust as a sense of confidence in and support towards one's employer and a conviction that the organization has their best interest at heart.[1] Consistent with social exchange theory discussed in Chapter 3, it is thought that when employees have trust in their organization, they will invest energy and effort to ensure that organizational objectives and goals are attained. In brief, fomenting trust in the organization should be the sought-after norm.

Trust is foundational to relationships. In fact, trust has been repeatedly found to affect organizational commitment and performance.

Interactions within a work environment are varied and complex, but it's also important to recognize the ways component parts intersect, interact, and provide a foundation for determining where and which strategies support conditions that help prevent or overcome burnout and foster engagement over time. Not only can we anticipate where change or direct action may be needed and most effective, but depending on the issue or characteristic of the work environment being addressed, we can also see that an intervention may require simultaneous efforts at the organizational, job-related, and personal levels.

> *The glue that holds all relationships together including the relationship between the leader and the led is trust, and trust is based on integrity.*
> — Brian Tracy

Let us be clear here, there is "no one size fits all" approach. That said, we know that to reduce the likelihood of burnout, we must ensure manageable job demands while maximizing job resources within a climate of trust and respect. Every member of a team differentially experiences, manages, and tolerates factors in the work environment. Understanding the context, team, and organizational dynamics, as well as current and emerging trends are all very important as you build an action plan to help your team avoid, overcome, and recover from burnout. While we don't offer magic tricks, we offer tools to help you think about the work environment and take
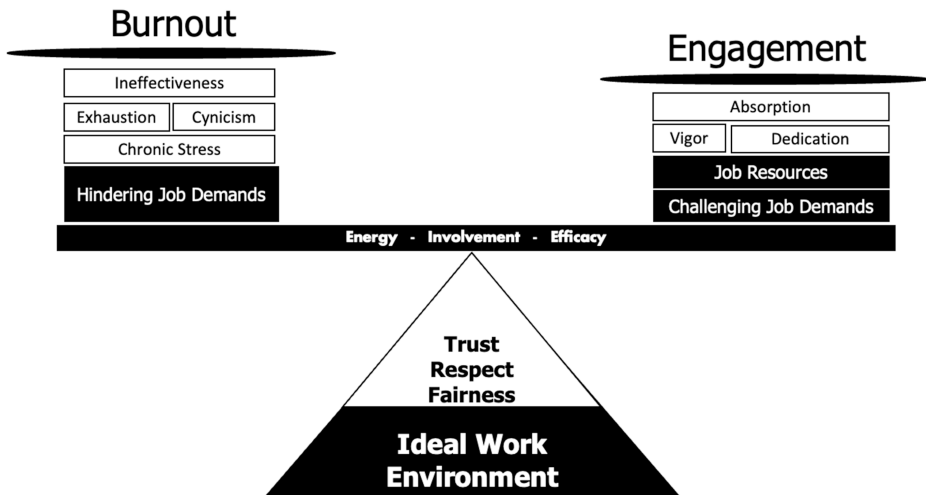
Figure 6.2: Trust, Respect and Fairness in Relation to Job Demands and Resources in the Ideal Work Environment.

action to improve it. In short, the *OJP framework* offers a vantage point and way to compartmentalize the work environment.

Three steps

Now that we've shared the underlying framework, let's walk through the three-step process you will embark on in the next few chapters to create the conditions to shift from burnout to engagement:
–   *Step 1 – assess the work environment*
–   *Step 2 – acknowledge current realities and span of control*
–   *Step 3 – act* to mitigate burnout and drive engagement

In the first step, you are asked to *assess* the work environment, in which you estimate the presence of specific characteristics of the work environment related to burnout and engagement within your team. The second step requires that you *acknowledge* the current realities – internal and external to the work environment – and your span of control. Finally, you will build a plan of *action* with strategies to improve the work environment at the organizational, job-related, and personal levels. Addressing each level will help ensure your team has the appropriate balance of demands and resources. The overarching goal is to reduce the negative aspects of the work environment while simultaneously increasing the positive aspects.

There will always be demands and challenges, but in simple terms, moving from burnout to engagement involves changing your team's energy, involvement, and efficacy (refer to Figure 1.3). We address these three areas, and move from burnout to engagement, by ensuring a climate of trust, respect, and fairness, reducing hindering job demands, and increasing challenging job demands and job resources. Stated in the context of our burnout as a pressure cooker analogy in Figure 1.2, we strive to reduce the heat and improve the size and function of the valve.

As you prepare to explore the three steps in chapters 7–9 it is important to:

1. Consider the organization. How would you describe the physical environment? Is the working environment pleasant? Is the workspace inviting, clean, and comfortable? Is there adequate lighting? When your team works in a comfortable environment, they will feel good about being there – and they will get more done. What's the current context? Is there a considerable amount of change occurring now that is of concern to your team? Are there leadership changes? Are rules, policies, and/or practices changing?
2. Consider the job (role). Are the right people assigned to the right tasks? Are the tasks and employees aligned properly? Are you leveraging the strengths of each team member? Is it possible to reassign tasks or redesign roles to spread work across the team – more evenly or more appropriately?
3. Consider the person. How well do you know your team? Knowing your team will help you understand what they need to feel engaged and to remain engaged by their work. A one size fits all approach won't work. It is necessary to tailor your approach based on each individual team member's unique needs. Each team member manages stress and stressors differently. A stressor for one might be an inconvenience but for another it could be an enabler.
4. Consider the team. How about your team's workflow, process, or procedures? Are there bottlenecks or cogs in the process? Are there significant stress points? During 1:1 meetings and other communication, listen for any underlying issues. Anytime you have an opportunity to connect – whether just for a few minutes after a meeting or during a performance review – use the time wisely. Feedback is a gift – and should be shared formally and informally. Tap into your team's passions. Strive to help your team connect with the purpose of their work and know that their contribution is meaningful.
5. Consider what's bothering you. Listen to yourself; your intuition is powerful. What is front of mind for you? How are you personally feeling about work? What is challenging you? It's fair to assume that your team could be experiencing similar feelings.

We know . . . we know . . . the caution sign is a bit obnoxious, but we needed to get your attention. We've shared a lot thus far, so let's recap.

Chapter 1 explored why burnout matters. Chapter 2 delved into why we work and what motivates us to work. Chapter 3 described elements of the ideal work environment with a focus on current realities and what is within your span of control. Chapters 4 and 5 offered a short history of burnout and engagement, respectively.

While Chapter 6 opened with a discussion of how youcan build a plan to take your team from burnout to *Fired Up*!, it would be derelict not to pause and make absolutely clear that *without high-quality relationships built on trust, respect, and fair treatment much of what we will offer on the coming pages may fall on deaf ears and be of no avail*. Said another way, we see high-quality relationships built on trust, respect, and fairness as essential and without which your best efforts may not succeed.

Indeed, by making it to this point you have done the work to build a solid foundation. We celebrate your efforts. (*You obviously haven't fallen victim to the Dunning–Kruger effect.*).[2] If you are intent on turning the page, and we trust you are, then again, we celebrate what you are doing doing and will continue to do. Although framed as three simple steps, the next part will take time, energy, and effort . . . so just remember you and your team are worth it. Let's go!

Chapter 7
Step 1 – Assess

It is what we already know that often prevents us from learning. – Claude Bernard

Chances are you already have ideas, dreams, and goals about engagement and success for your team as well as thoughts and ideas about why certain conditions and circumstances exist among your team and within the work environment. By now, you've likely thought about aspects that you might classify as good and others you might classify as bad. Let's start by assessing the work environment for indicators of burnout and engagement.

The first step is to assess the specific characteristics of the work environment that are helping (challenging job demands, job resources, and organizational supports) or hindering (hindering job demands) your team in each of the three levels of the work environment (organizational, job-related, and personal). This requires us to:

1) *Complete assessments.* This Work Environment Assessment (Figure 7.1) will help you uncover factors and indicators of burnout and engagement. You and each member of your team should take the 20-item assessment by circling one of the four responses (*Always, Frequently, Sometimes, or Rarely*) for each statement (item) listed on the form.

2) *Collect the assessments.* Gather all completed assessments – yours and your teams.

3) *Suspend judgement.* It's easy to wrongly overestimate our knowledge of what is actually occurring – this is a type of bias referred to as the Dunning-Kruger effect. Keeping this in mind, and before reviewing the data, be sure to suspend your judgement and try not to lean into any decisions you have already made. You likely have more contextual and organizational knowledge and will have different perspectives about what is occurring.

While your knowledge is essential to your role, you'll achieve the best results in this process if you approach the data review and analysis process with an open mind.

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4) *Carefully review the data.* Complete the Leader Assessment Analysis Form (Figure 7.2) to get a comprehensive view of perceptions, risk factors, and potential concerns for your team. By completing this form, you will be able to compare your data to the aggregated data from your team and will, ultimately, be able to identify the big issues you want to address. Use the following prompts to complete the form:

Column A: Items from Assessment. This column contains each item from the Work Environment Assessment and is presented in the same order.

Work Environment Assessment

Instructions: As you read each statement and consider your work experience, circle the appropriate response: *Always, Frequently, Sometimes,* or *Rarely*

1.	My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
2.	My organization consistently implements policies and practices.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
3.	My organization considers fairness and equity when instituting policies and practices.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
4.	My organization builds trust through open and transparent communication.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
5.	My organization provides proper training for all employees.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
6.	My organization provides opportunities for career advancement and professional development.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
7.	I have support from my manager/leader to complete work tasks.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
8.	I understand what is expected of me.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
9.	I have the freedom to manage and structure my work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
10.	My workload ismanageable.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
11.	I have adequate equipment, materials, and resources to be effective at work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
12.	I use a variety of skills and abilities to complete my work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
13.	I have the opportunity to participate in decision-making.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
14.	I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
15.	I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
16.	I am invited to share my opinions and perspectives.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
17.	I have opportunities to learn and grow.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
18.	I am excited about my work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
19.	I have positive interactions and relationships with colleagues.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
20.	I feel that my organization cares about my well-being.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely

Figure 7.1: Work Environment Assessment Form.

Column B: My Rating. Use this column to transfer your personal responses from your Work Environment Assessment. Write the answer in using A for *Always*, F for *Frequently*, S for *Sometimes*, and R for *Rarely*.

Columns C through F: Always – Rarely. Starting with Column C, looking at your team assessments, add all *Always* responses for each item and enter them here. This step allows you to aggregate the results from your team. You'll repeat this process in the next 3 columns: *Frequently* (Column D), *Sometimes* (Column E), and *Rarely* (Column F).

Column G: Top 3. Looking at the data you have organized thus far, pay close attention to the significant concerns, or those items where most of your team agrees and responds in a similar fashion. For example, if more than 50% of your team responds using *Always, Frequently*, *Sometimes*, or *Rarely*. Any item that has a single response of 50% or more should be marked by placing a checkmark in the Top 3 column.

Column H: Current Reality. Jot down any notes about current realities that may be influencing your team with a focus on the highest response categories.

Leadership Assessment Analysis Form

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Items from Assessment	My Rating	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Top 3	Current Reality
1. My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
2. My organization consistently implements policies and practices.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
3. My organization considers fairness and equity when instituting policies and practices.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
4. My organization builds trust through open and transparent communication.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
5. My organization provides proper training for all employees.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
6. My organization provides opportunities for career advancement and professional development.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
7. I have support from my manager/leader to complete work tasks.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
8. I understand what is expected of me.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
9. I have the freedom to manage and structure my work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
10. My workload is manageable.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
11. I have adequate equipment, materials, and resources to be effective at work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
12. I use a variety of skills and abilities to complete my work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
13. I have the opportunity to participate in decision-making.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
14. I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
15. I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
16. I am invited to share my opinions and perspectives.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
17. I have opportunities to learn and grow.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
18. I am excited about my work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
19. I have positive interactions and relationships with colleagues.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
20. I feel that my organization cares about my well-being.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		

Figure 7.2: Leadership Analysis Assessment Form.

To illustrate this process, let's meet Kevin. He leads a team of ten (10). As you can see in Figure 7.3, in Column B, My Rating, Kevin rated the first four items as follows: A (*Always*), F (*Frequently*), S (*Sometimes*), and A (*Always*). Then, in Columns C, D, E, and F, Kevin added all response types for each item answered by his team. Looking at the first row, in the Leader Assessment Analysis Form (Figure 7.2), for the item, *My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions*, you see that Kevin has received 10 responses from his team. Of the received responses, 7 reported Always, 1 reported Frequently, and 2 responded Sometimes. No members responded Rarely. After reviewing the aggregated responses for Kevin's team in Columns C, D, E, and F, Kevin identified which items were selected most often, exceed 5 (greater than 50%) to indicate *majority consensus*. Kevin places a checkmark in Column G to indicate that his team identified both *My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions* and *My workload is manageable* as one of the Top 3 for the *Always* category the Rarely category, respectively. Finally, Kevin used the last column, Column H, to jot down notes about anything internally or externally related to the highest response categories that could be affecting his teams' perceptions. Revisiting Kevin's process, you know his team had majority consensus, Always and Rarely for the following items, respectively: *My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions; My workload is manageable.* Drawing from Kevin's deep organizational and contextual knowledge, he thought of recent changes or experiences that might lead to his team responding positively to *My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions*. He jotted down the recent salary audit and that the organization was very transparent during the process. These organizational actions may be helping his team feel they are appropriately rewarded. For the item *My workload is manageable,* in which most of his team responded *Rarely*, Kevin thinks a logical reason his team may feel their workload is unmanageable is due to the four recent resignations. While Kevin is a supportive leader that intentionally considers his teams' interests, skills, and strengths, these resignations have exponentially increased the workload of the remaining team.

Leadership Assessment Analysis Form

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	Items from Assessment	My Rating	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Top 3	Current Reality
1.	My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions.	A	7	1	2	0	⊘	Salary audit; transparency
2.	My organization consistently implements policies and practices.	F	5	1	2	2		
3.	My organization builds trust through open and transparent communication.	S	3	3	3	1		
4.	My workload is manageable.	A	2	1	1	6	⊘	4 resignations
6.	My organization opportunities for career advancement and professional development.							
7.	I have support from my manager/leader to complete work tasks.	——	——	——	——	——		
8.	I understand what is expected of me.	——	——	——	——	——		
9.	I have the freedom to manage and structure my work.	——	——	——	——	——		
10.	My workload is manageable.	——	——	——	——	——		
11.	I have adequate equipment, materials, and resources to be effective at work.	——	——	——	——	——		
12.	I use a variety of skills and abilities to complete my work.	——	——	——	——	——		
13.	I have the opportunity to participate in decision-making.	——	——	——	——	——		
14.	I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	——	——	——	——	——		
15.	I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.	——	——	——	——	——		
16.	I am invited to share my opinions and perspectives.	——	——	——	——	——		
17.	I have opportunities to learn and grow.	——	——	——	——	——		
18.	I am excited about my work.	——	——	——	——	——		
19.	I have positive interactions and relationships with colleagues.	——	——	——	——	——		
20.	I feel that my organization cares about my well-being.	——	——	——	——	——		

Figure 7.3: Sample Leader Assessment Analysis Form.

5) *Interpret data.* Once you've collected and organized the data on the Leader Assessment Analysis Form, interpret what you have found. What are the top 3 items identified for each response category – *Always*, *Frequently*, *Sometimes*, and *Rarely*?

Next, drawing from the Top 3 in each response category – *Always*, *Frequently*, *Sometimes*, and *Rarely* – on the Leadership Analysis Assessment Form, refer to the following prompt to complete Boxes 1 and 2 of the Acknowledge – Guiding Questions Table (Figure 7.4).

Box 1. What are the identified helpers and hindrances from Step 1 - Assess? Helpers are the items with majority of responses as *Always* and hindrances are the items with majority of responses as *Rarely*. Take note of whether these are direct or indirect issues.		Box 2. Which warning signs have you identified in Step 1 – Assess? Potential warning signs are the items with majority of responses as *Frequently* or *Sometimes*?
Helpers	Hindrances	
Box 3. What is your current reality? What internal and external factors need to be considered?		**Box 4.** Of these identified work environment issues, what do I have control over (span of control)?

Figure 7.4: Acknowledge – Guiding Questions Table.

Box 1. Based on what you learned from the Leader Assessment Analysis Form in Step 1 – Assess, write down your Top 3 helpers and hindrances.
– *Helpers:* Consider the item with the majority consensus reported as Always. These items will give you a good idea of what's working in the work environment and among your team. We often focus on what is not working well and of course, there will always be a need to stop doing or changing things, but we want you to consider ways to leverage your helpers and in fact, do more of that which helps.
– *Hindrances:* Factors that are challenges for your team are characterized as hindrances and have the majority consensus reported as Rarely. These items may give you a good idea of the most pressing concerns with the environment.

Box 2. Again, based on what you learned from the Leader Assessment Analysis Form in Step 1 – Assess, write down your Top 3 warning signs.
a. *Warning Signs:* We've covered the Always and Rarely responses above; now let's look at the other categories. For the other response categories, "Frequently" and "Sometimes," a majority consensus may serve as a warning sign that a potential issue may be brewing. It is important to pay attention to these warning signs – they can help you get ahead of potential challenges.

Bringing it all together

In this chapter, you assessed perceptions of the work environment that help and hinder your team and now have an idea about what may require attention regarding burnout and engagement. You also learned about certain factors that you may need to keep your eye on – we call these *warning signs*. With this information and given the importance of and value associated with transparency and effective communication, we recommend that you share some of what you have found. Let's move onto the next step, which is acknowledging your current realities and span of control to gear up for your plan of action.

> *Returning to the Burnout as a Pressure Cooker analogy in Figure 1.2, our assessment tool represents a determination of the type and amount of heat being applied (demands) and functioning and strength of the valve (resources).*
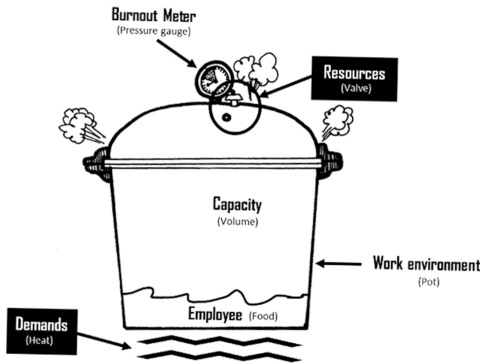
Chapter 8
Step 2 – Acknowledge

Control what you can, acknowledge what you cannot. – Jim Stovall

You've got a good idea of the positive and negative issues of the work environment affecting your team, we can now identify and assess your current realities and factor in your span of control. Combined, this information will equip you with the necessary tools and knowledge to make informed decisions that support your team in the long run.

Refer to the following prompts to complete Box 3 and 4 in the Acknowledge – Guiding Questions Table (Figure 7.4):

Box 3. Thinking about Box 1 and 2, identify the internal and external influencers you might need to consider. What current realities are affecting your teams' work environment? What is the current context? Is there a significant amount of change occurring now that has your team on edge? Are there leadership or policy and/or practice changes?

Current realities can be vast and touch many aspects at the organizational, job-related, and personal level. These may include (for more examples, see Chapter 3):
–   Negative situations (e.g., toxic leadership, harassment, lack of diversity, and inclusion)
–   Challenging team dynamics
–   Gig workers and independent contractors
–   Virtual, remote, and hybrid team collaboration
–   Team identity and culture misalignment
–   Technology issues
–   Change fatigue
–   Conflicting personal values
–   Personal challenges (baggage) of employees
–   Organizational politics
–   Individual and team capacity issues

Box 4. Based on what you've listed in Boxes 1–3, what falls under your span of control? Do you have direct or indirect control? *Note: As you think about issues that are outside of your span of control, jot them down, too. Perhaps you have an idea that you may be able to develop, process, and pitch to an influencer or decision maker when and as appropriate. It is imperative to your success to have ideas and projects on the ready when opportunities arise.*

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Factors	Current Reality	Potential Strategy	Span of Control	OJP Level	Timeframe	Involvement: RACI	Cost	Other/Notes
Helpers				☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
				☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
Hindrances				☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
				☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
Warning Signs				☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
				☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
				☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		

Figure 8.1: OJP Strategy Chart**.**

Ideating strategies

The next step is to identify and evaluate potential ideas and strategies that can help you creatively and strategically address the area(s) of focus – ultimately, causes or consequences of burnout and engagement on your team. In the Assess step, you identified your Top 3 helpers, hindrances, and warning signs. At this point, we'd like to introduce you to the OJP Strategy Chart (Figure 8.1). Completing this chart lays the foundation for your action plan. Use the following prompts to complete each column:

Column A: Factors. Add your Top 3 helpers, hindrances, and warning signs into the respective areas. As a reminder, in the Assess step you identified three items with the highest number of responses for each column *Always*, *Frequently*, *Sometimes*, and *Rarely*.

Column B: Current Reality. Begin with the current reality you have already associated with each Top 3 issue.

Column C: Proposed Strategy. Using the OJP Potential Strategies and Solutions Chart (Appendix VI), identify and list potential strategies that can be used to address the Top 3 identified issues in each category. *Using the OJP Potential Strategies and Solutions Chart – first locate the work environment issue that you are trying to address then review the potential strategies organized by organizational, job-related, and personal aspects. For ease, the items are listed in the same order of the Work Environment Assessment.* For example, Kevin's team identified an unmanageable workload as a hindrance so he looked at #10, "My workload is manageable," for strategies that he could potentially implement.

Column D: Span of Control. Make note of your span of control in regard to each strategy. Can you implement or execute the strategy without approvals from leadership? Do you need buy-in from another agency, department, or line of business? Consider whether you have direct, indirect, or no control over the execution of the strategy.

Column E: OJP Level. Identify the level of the work environment that the issue is related to. It's important to consider interdependencies and how whatever you act on in one of the OJP levels buttresses or enhances actions at another level.

Column F: Timeframe. Identify the timeframe associated with the strategy. What influence will you need to exert? We suggest you consider the timeframe and influence in terms of quick wins, medium-term strategies, and long hauls (see Appendix VII for more).

> *Quick wins* are strategies you can employ in the near future without involving others. They are easy to implement, do not require higher levels of approval, and are easy to explain. Think of a quick win as how you build momentum. For example, you can ensure a team member has the needed resources and materials to be effective and productive in their job/role.

Medium-term strategies may require social capital and buy-in from others. Look for synergy and consider others that care about the issue. For example, you can refine the job description to be in full alignment with a current role's given responsibilities and demands.

Long hauls will take the most time and effort. These strategies may be more complex and may require executive level sponsorship or a separate budget. These may be highly significant to your business as they often build internal capacity. You may need to use your internal and external network to achieve *long hauls*. Stay in tune with the market; you may get ideas from what other organizations/industries are doing. For example, you can create a new job description and/or classification given the results of a job audit.

Column G: Involvement (RACI). Involvement: Who else needs to be involved? Consider using the RACI (responsible, accountable, consulted, informed) or other responsibility frameworks to help identify key roles for major tasks. Consider the most effective ways to keep your team and other stakeholders informed, engaged, and supportive.

Column H: Costs. Identify costs associated and resources available. Consider risks associated with the strategy.

Column I: Other/Notes. You can use the final column to jot down notes. Consider how the identified strategy support other strategies listed on the form.

Let's revisit Kevin's team and complete a portion of the OJP Strategy Chart in Figure 8.2. Based on responses to the Work Environment Assessment, Kevin identified *My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions* and *My workload is manageable*, as helpers and hindrances respectively. You'll see that we start with these (Figure 8.2). Next, Kevin identified what current realities may be associated with each issue. Then he looked at the OJP Potential Strategies and Solutions Chart and identified some strategies that can help address the identified issues.

Synergy and leverage are your friends. Some strategies can be applied to multiple issues. Consider whether and how the selected strategies will support or enhance other strategies that you plan to execute.

Thinking about strategies that can address each work environment level, he made note of his span of control for the strategy and identified the level of the work environment that the issue is related to. Kevin also thought about how much time it might take to execute the strategy. Finally, he considered who else needed to be involved and what costs might be associated with executing and operationalizing the strategy. Your evaluation will help you discover whether – and how well – the specified strategies will work for your team and organization.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Factors	Current Reality	Potential Strategy	Span of Control	OJP Level	Timeframe	Involvement: RACI	Costs	Other/Notes
Helpers								
Appropriate rewards for contributions	Recent job audit; clear and transparent communication about the process	Maintain transparent communication	X Direct X Indirect X None	X Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	X QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R X A ☐ C ☐ I	None	Much of communication was organization wide but I will ensure I keep lines open with my team
Hindrances								
Unmanageable workload	4 recent resignations	Declare "Meeting-free Fridays"	X Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational X Job-Related ☐ Personal	X QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	X R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I	None	Work with admin to start rescheduling meetings that occur on Friday; let peers know that we will take this approach
Warning Signs								

Figure 8.2: OJP Strategy Chart Example.

OJP potential strategies and solutions

As mentioned earlier, drawing from findings in our research and best practices, the *OJP Potential Strategies and Solutions Chart* offers many ideas for your consideration. [For illustration, we include one set of strategies (Figure 8.3) from the full *OJP Potential Strategies and Solutions Chart* found in Appendix VI.] We do not assert that this list is exhaustive, nor do we assume that all the strategies will work for you and your team. However, if these strategies don't fit your industry, discipline, or the specific roles on your team, be creative. You can use the *OJP Potential Strategies and Solutions Chart* as a starting point for inspiration and to get you thinking about what will work best for your team and organization.

Regardless of how you decide which strategies to employ, the most important issue is that you focus your awareness and attention on the identified issues. For that reason, you will find the strategies listed in the same order of the Work Environment Assessment. For example, and listed in Figure 8.3, the first set of strategies and solutions are associated with the first item on the assessment: *My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions*. Let's use this item as an example: thinking back to what you know now, you may have classified " . . . provides appropriate rewards for my contributions." as a helper, hindrance, or warning sign. In other words, most of your team indicated that your organization makes this provision always (classified as a helper), frequently or sometimes (classified as a warning sign), or rarely (classified as a hindrance). If your team thinks this is a helper, you want to keep doing what you're doing. You can also look for ideas or new approaches in the *OJP Potential Strategies and Solutions Chart*. Just know . . . there may not be a need for a strategy, but you have options here. On the other hand, if your team thinks this is a hindrance, we don't think this is up for debate. You can draw from the chart and consider one or more strategies listed. And, if this is more of a warning sign, you will likely look at the list of potential strategies differently. To return to our pressure cooker analogy, you want to address issues before pressure builds so you might consider simple strategies that over time reduce the pressure or you may want to hit it hard and directly to take any and all air out of the situation. Regardless, *there's no one right way*. You approached the assessment in a logical and evidenced-based way, so you also want to approach solutions in a similar fashion. Do what's best for your team . . . listen to your team and your own intuition.

Needless to say, whether you are looking for ideas to keep helpers, reduce hindrances, and guard against warning signs, we hope these strategies – or modifications thereof – are easy for you to implement and hope that they may spark ideas that are worthy of trying in your organization.

Now that you've filled in each column in Figure 8.1. and identified potential strategies to address your helpers, hindrances, and warning signs, what's next? What strategies do we start with? You guessed it, there is no one *right* way but

1. My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contribution.	
Implied meaning	There is a fair, equitable, and timely system in place where people are acknowledged for their performance in intrinsic and extrinsic ways.

Strategies		
	– Provide adequate, timely, and consistent feedback – Provide regular feedback via performance appraisals for both team and individuals – Communicate appreciation for contributions, including effort and dedication – Provide opportunities for your team to be noticed and recognized by others – Spend time with your team, both individually and collectively, to identify the degree to which intrinsic or extrinsic rewards are more enriching – Ensure your organization has a systematic performance appraisal system that you fully understand – Allow employees some input in determining pay raises – Ensure your team understands and takes advantage of all financial (stock purchase plans, etc.) and nonfinancial benefits (tuition benefits, professional development opportunities, etc.) – Celebrate opportunities to demonstrate care and concerns like coffee/lunch/dinner with team lead or executives, free day off, compensatory time – Provide public recognition along with a connection to organizational objectives and outcomes	– Encourage your team to complete self-evaluations of their performance and in relationship to their measurable objectives/outcomes – Monitor job/role responsibilities to ensure team member is appropriately (based on actual responsibilities and expectations) paid – Consider promoting pay transparency to reduce overestimation of others' pay – Understand the resources (salary, merit increases, RSUs, etc.) that you have available and distribute rewards judiciously and consistently during appraisals and when compensating extra-role contributions – Provide employees with rewards (pay, incentives, stretch assignments) based on unique skills and interests – Celebrate all (big and small) wins with small tokens of appreciation (thank you notes, candy, flowers, remote coffee chats) – In your 1:1 meetings, listen for opportunities to recognize or reward your team members – Utilize company-wide recognition such as employee of the month incentives (special parking space, communication on intranet, press release, etc.)

Figure 8.3: OJP Potential Strategies and Solutions Chart.

generally, let's consider the strategies that meet most of your criteria. We suggest that you begin with the strategy that is directly in your span of control, job-related, a quick win, one that you have full responsibility and authority to execute, and of low cost (or at least you have available budget).

> Generally speaking, consider implementing the strategies that meet most of the following criteria: direct span of control, job-related, a quick win, fall under your responsibility, and the numbers work.

Bringing it all together

You started this chapter by identifying and assessing your current realities and span of control. In the *OJP Strategy Chart* you identified strategies and used the criteria in the chart to evaluate the degree to which the specified strategies meet your needs. The exercises in this chapter are designed to help you clearly see what's inside and outside of your control and identify what will have the most impact for your team and where you should start. Drawing from your identified strategies, let's move on to the last and final step – Act, so you can build your Fired Up! action plan.

> Returning to the Burnout as a Pressure Cooker analogy in Figure 1.2, Acknowledgment is about considering the size and condition of the pot. It is about recognizing the spices and seasoning used on the food as well as the amount of water in the pot (type and number of current realities), the size, and by extension the volume (capacity) of the pot, and the degree to which you can actively monitor and control the cooking process (span of control). The cooker needs open space for the steam so that it can create pressure, making the amount of water relative to the size of the pot important. Too little water and it cannot create enough steam. Too much water can dilute the food or cause the pressure in the cooker to build to dangerous levels. In fact, a pressure cooker guideline is to never allow the amount of water inside the cooker to go beyond the two-thirds full line.

Chapter 9
Step 3 – Act

The best way to predict the future is to create it. – Abraham Lincoln

By now we have demonstrated that sustained effort through work helps shape our identity and relationships. It builds confidence and self-esteem, and gives us meaning, purpose and financial reward. Plainly speaking, work is a defining part of life that can provide immense opportunities to leverage individual strengths and skills that positively contribute to an organization, field, industry, and society. While these opportunities can be motivating, the effort required and the organizational response to it can also generate negative feelings.

Negative feelings stemming from lack of control, uncertain expectations, and work-life imbalances drain energy and burden personal and professional resources. These feelings are accompanied by distress, reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation, and dysfunctional attitudes and behaviors at work that can sabotage *your* workforce and endanger *your* organizational success.

So, now that you have assessed and acknowledged factors in the work environment, you are equipped with the information needed to create the positive, effective, and thriving work environment. Let's get cooking – harkening back to the Burnout as a Pressure Cooker analogy in Figure 1.2, this step is analogous with beginning and staying actively engaged in the cooking process. You are ready to define and design your *Fired Up! action plan*. Let's revisit what you did in Step 1 – Assess and Step 2 - Acknowledge before jumping to the discussion of executing your plan of action.

In *Step 1 (Assess)*, you assessed stressors and other aspects of the work environment that were helping and hindering your team. You also identified potential warning signs.

In *Step 2 (Acknowledge)*, you considered internal and external factors influencing your team and organization. You considered what control you have and what types of issues you might be able to meaningfully influence. You also identified strategies that will help improve your work environment, by mitigating burnout and fostering engagement.

Brick by brick, build a plan

Remember that this is an iterative process. Some *strategies will work, others won't. It is important that you try different strategies for the benefit of your team*. That being said, in the final step, Act, you will bring forward the identified strategies, from Step 2, that met most of your criteria and build out your *Fired Up! action plan*. Use the following prompts to complete each section of the *Fired Up! Action Plan* (Figure 9.1):

A	Identified Strategy: _____		
B	Success Metric(s): _____		

C	D	E	F
Specific Actions	Dependencies (pre)	Dependencies (post)	Monitoring/Controlling

Figure 9.1: Fired Up! Action Plan.

Section A: Identified Strategy. In this section, carry forward the strategy(ies) that appear most feasible from the OJP Strategy Chart. Use this space to describe the strategy in detail – this added detail will be helpful when you return to the table or if you need a description on the ready when you are recruiting others to help you. *Recall that you evaluated at least five factors, including the span of control, OJP level, timeframe, involvement, and cost. Based on your evaluation and looking at all of the strategies that might address a particular issue, bring forward the strategies that are most feasible. You know your organization and team – we suggest you execute or implement strategies that you consider highly probable of success.*

Section B: Success Metric(s). Here, consider your key performance indicators. What is the intended outcome of executing this strategy? How will you know that you are successful? Certainly, we can agree that you will want to see your strategy successfully executed but what else is important? And, when do you expect to see the desired outcome? Use this space to define your success metrics.

Column C: Specific Actions. List the specific actions that will help you implement the strategy and drive towards solutions. *No step, action, or activity is too small.* Be as detailed as possible as you consider what needs to occur to advance your strategy. Consider using a Gantt chart to manage multiple actions.

Columns D – E: Dependencies (pre- and post). As you think of specific actions to take, there will certainly be dependencies associated with those actions. Consider what needs to happen before and after each action. Thinking about the sequencing of each action will also help you think about timeframes.

Column F: Monitoring/Controlling. The goal is to ensure your desired outcome is realized. Consider how you will reduce errors, overcome challenges, and take corrective action. What are your indicators for progress, falling off-track, and getting back on track? How do you know if your efforts are working? Might you need to make adjustments based on new risks or changes?

Consider these guiding questions as you complete Figure 9.1:
–   What effect does the identified strategy have on the targeted problem/issue?
–   How impactful is the identified strategy?
–   Is the strategy feasible?
–   What are the effects of this strategy on different groups in the organization?
–   Are there any unintended consequences associated with implementing this strategy?
–   Do the relevant stakeholders support your approach?
–   What expected obstacles or barriers might you need to prepare to overcome?
–   What needs to occur for your strategy to be successful and achieve the desired outcome(s)?

Keep the proverbial "Rome wasn't built in a day" in mind – big change starts with small, simple, and modest steps. The most important thing to remember is that you can start wherever you are now.

Don't belittle your small actions, they accumulate into a huge pile and help you ignite fire.

Returning to our example, Kevin was ready to hit the ground running and has started to complete the *Fired Up! Action Plan* form. From Figure 8.2, you may recall that Kevin identified *My workload is manageable* as a hindrance that he could do something about directly, quickly, and without cost. Using the table in Figure 8.3, *OJP Potential Strategies and Solutions Chart*, he identified Meeting-free Fridays as a strategy to employ. As shown in Figure 9.2, Kevin identified establishing boundaries as the success metric to support his team. He also identified specific actions, including having his administrative assistant reschedule any meetings for the team that were previously scheduled on a Friday and having his team block Fridays on their calendars.

There are dependencies for the first action that includes informing his admin of this change and then confirming that all meetings have been adjusted. Kevin also recognizes that it's possible for things to encroach on Fridays and is working on creating some criteria that his admin can use to determine if scheduling on Friday would be an acceptable option. As for the action of having his team block Fridays, the single largest monitoring/controlling issue is holding the team accountable. Kevin will ask his administrative assistant to keep an eye on the team's calendars and will also check-in on how well the team is protecting Friday during monthly meetings. He also plans to ask the team to share their success strategies to inspire others to manage and protect their time better.

A	**Identified Strategy:** Declare meeting-free Fridays		
B	**Success Metric(s):** Establish new boundaries that provides the needed space, time, and support for team		

C	D	E	F
Specific Actions	Dependencies (pre)	Dependencies (post)	Monitoring/Controlling
Have admin reschedule currently scheduled meetings on Friday	Email admin with request	Confirm meetings have been rescheduled	Create list of criteria for meeting that must meet on Friday
Have team block Fridays on calendar (note as "busy")	Team needs to have access to computer	N/A	During monthly team meetings, ask team about success strategies
Check in during 1:1 meeting to make sure Friday is protected	1:1 agenda addition	N/A	Provide support when team member isn't effectively protecting Fridays

Figure 9.2: Fired Up! Action Plan Example.

Assess, acknowledge, act, and repeat

Once you've completed the action plan and execute your strategies, you will need to continuously monitor progress and adjust as necessary. Keep in mind that this is an iterative process intended to drive your team towards being *Fired Up!* – full of engagement and enthusiasm. Even when your desired outcomes are achieved, consider a post-execution review. During that phase, reflect on the three-step process (Assess, Acknowledge, and Act) and the degree to which the process worked according to plan.

If you reflect on the three steps and find that you needed to garner buy-in from unexpected stakeholders, take note. Perhaps you learn that you have allies in other parts of the organization that are pursuing similar efforts – how might you leverage and support one another? And, certainly, you may find that strategies you knew would be sure-fire fixes flopped. Again, take note. Once again, this is an iterative

process. In taking responsibility for creating a positive, effective work environment where your team can thrive, these reflections and lessons learned will help you ensure the greatest possible benefits. Lean into the control and influence you have over demands, resources, and support that comprise the work environment.

Given that burnout is such a big issue, doing this won't be easy. It will take time, persistence, perseverance, and influence, but your team is worth it and they need your help. As always, your leadership challenge is to create an environment for your team to be energized, feel personally valued, and have validation for their work. You will need to continually review, reassess, and refine your plan. You will always need to evaluate and monitor the work environment. By doing so, you will be poised to identify warning signs and implement new strategies when appropriate. Consider the following strategies whenever striving to keep your team *Fired Up!*:

Lead by example. Hold yourself and every member of your team accountable. Failing to do so will foster distrust, disengagement, and even withdrawal. These, of course, are counter-productive to your goal.

Leverage individual strengths. Consistently evaluate strengths and roles. Make sure your team has the right types of roles and responsibilities. Leverage their interests, skills, strengths, and talents to help them find happiness in their job and work.

Invest in personal relationships. Facilitate team building opportunities and experiences to ensure the team knows one another. Take the time to help team members understand goals, objectives and nuances of the role, team, and organization. The level of employee engagement in your workplace has a lot to do with how your employees relate to one another. Set up opportunities for them to connect on things outside of work and foster personal relationships. You don't have to go far or break the bank to do so. Plan an on-site happy hour, game night or dinner. Be inclusive and thoughtful about any events you plan. As you engage your team, consider the strategies that demonstrate the *why* and *how* in regard to increasing resources and organizational support while reducing demands. Some ideas include implementing a team recognition program, facilitating frequent team building activities, using the first five minutes of a team meeting for a personal check-in, focusing on small (or big) wins; doing something unexpected for the team; and offering compliments/ praise even for the expected.

Invest in professional development. These opportunities can be broader, company-wide programs, or smaller tailored initiatives that vary by team and individual. Use employee feedback from 1:1 meetings to identify development opportunities. Support your team by co-creating a learning and growth development plan. Providing opportunities for learning, growth, and professional development help to retain talent, especially high potential talent. Based on principles of reciprocity, when

your team members' feel valued, they contribute more to the organization. Some estimates suggest when team members feel like they are making career advancements, they are 20% more likely to hold the same job in a year.[1]

Invest in efficiency. Unnecessary tasks slow down processes and can waste valuable resources. It's also incredibly frustrating for employees. Tedious extra steps prompt employees to function on cruise control, which essentially means they're not engaging with their work. While certain tasks can't be eliminated, you should operate with the mindset of optimizing processes and implementing resources that enable employees to be successful in their roles. Carefully analyze each team's processes and look for ways to smooth out operations for long-term success.

Invest in flexibility. Autonomy along with flexible and remote work opportunities help increase work engagement. This kind of flexibility caters to the elusive work-life balance employees crave. Your team needs your help balancing work responsibilities with personal commitments.[2] Give your team the ability to adjust their work schedules to accommodate personal life, such as after-school pick-up, exercise, volunteerism activities, and passion projects.

Invest in communication. Companies with leaders that communicate with transparency and timeliness have teams with higher levels of trust and engagement. Consistent and clear communication specifically about the organizational vision and the reasons behind decisions help support a positive and effective work environment.

Invest in recognition. Recognize people, efforts, and results. People like to know their hard work is noticed and appreciated. Employees value recognition from their immediate managers (even more than their peers). Train your managers to praise and reward their employees for a job well done. Identify your best performers. Look for opportunities to promote those who have room to grow. If a promotion isn't available, identify stretch assignments or other challenging tasks or projects they can work on to grow within their current role. Engaged employees will go the extra mile.

Invest in continuous improvement. Feedback is a gift. Employees crave feedback, and it influences their level of engagement. Meaningful and substantive feedback helps your team have clear expectations, know what to do, and improve.

Invest in community. Employees want to know they work for a company that cares about making a positive contribution to society. Many corporations foster cultures of volunteerism and philanthropy. Volunteering unites employees toward a larger purpose, offering an opportunity to connect on a deeper level.[3] Provide opportunities for your team to interact with stakeholders. Dan Cable tells us that instilling a sense of purpose works best when employees can engage with people that are affected by their work.[4] Offer a "Volunteer Day" or paid time off so employees can donate their time to a cause they're passionate about.

Invest in continued motivation. Share your vision or a high-level view of the project scope and, more importantly, the reason the project was created. If your team can understand the vision and business value, they will become much more engaged in their work. In fact, your employees will become motivated and enthusiastic about delivering value to the organization as a whole.

Take advantage of these strategies to optimize your teams' well-being and generate capacity and capability to cope with, adapt to, and recover from stress at work. Start with whatever is most easily accomplished and build from there. Consistency and continuous improvement beat a one-time investment of time and attention any day.

Keep the flame burning

Even as milestones are achieved and optimal conditions for an engaged workforce are reached, it will become clear, if it was not already, that this is not a one and done process. Ever changing conditions and personnel will demand that you adapt and monitor for warning signs and suboptimal conditions. Your work won't be over. Once you get your team *Fired Up!* you must keep the flame burning by consistently monitoring the work environment so you can adequately and timely intervene. You will need to continue managing job demands to minimize hindrances while supporting job resources and organizational support. The proper balance is essential and context is key. Your team seeks challenging opportunities that support individual performance and stimulate personal development in an environment where they can perform, connect, and grow.[5] All this to say – we want you to hold a deep conviction that managing the energy, involvement and efficacy of your team is a continuing responsibility.

Bringing it all together

Now that we've discussed the three steps – assess, acknowledge, and act – to move your team towards being *Fired Up!*, you are equipped to identify factors in the work environment that need to be addressed, substantiate your findings, brainstorm ideas that can reduce the space between chronic stressors and an individual's ability to cope (capacity), and justify the viability of your ideas. Regardless of whether burnout currently exists within your team, organizational conditions constantly change, and work demands are ever present. Prepare and get started working towards creating a more positive and effective work environment; comprised of an appropriate balance of job demands, job resources, and organizational support that help to mitigate and prevent burnout while promoting engagement. Importantly, celebrate the success along the way.

Chapter 10
Self-audit, self-care, and self-compassion

Self-care is essential to combating burnout. – Asa Don Brown

This book has been designed to help you be a better leader, and to help you identify ways to create a positive and effective work environment for your team. But how do you manage and work to reduce factors that lead to burnout among your team if you are experiencing burnout? Perhaps you've read this entire book and had an *aha* moment in which you realized, "Wait, I have burnout." You're the one feeling exhausted, ineffective, unaccomplished, stressed, and cynical. Maybe you aren't sleepwalking, but instead feel as though no matter how hard you work, you can never keep up with the demands of your role. Or perhaps while you are trying to inspire others, you lack inspiration and are beginning to question your professional situation. "*Am I in the right job? The right company? The right career? I used to feel passionate about my work but now I dread Monday and can't wait until Friday. Will I ever feel excited about my work again?*" *If you have these, or similar thoughts, this is not surprising – and you are not alone. Recent research from Gallup shows that 32% of managers report experiencing burnout as compared with 27% of individual contributors.*

Remember that burnout is progressive. People typically start with one or two symptoms, and it usually builds from there. Your organization's culture may encourage overwork and lead you to feel overwhelmed. This can make it tough to manage your own stress and will eventually lead to your personal burnout. But how can you, help the members of your team handle *their* feelings of stress, burnout, or disengagement while you are simultaneously feeling emotionally and physically burned out, yourself. Moreover, you may begin to feel less motivated if it seems as though nothing you do matters in the grand scheme of things. Since burnout happens gradually, you might not immediately notice symptoms. But once it takes hold, it can affect your ability to function across all aspects of life.

You are armed with tons of knowledge and skills to help you overcome burnout for your team – and for yourself. You have the power to make changes today, even if those changes don't happen right away. Essentially, taking care of your well-being is crucial and can't be put on hold until you get your team engaged. It is reasonable to experience challenges when managing your well-being and supporting your team. The flight attendants' advice in telling us to put on our own oxygen masks before helping others regardless of who we are traveling with can be directly applied to this idea.

Peggy Swarbrick and Jay Yudof suggest that wellness is about being aware of ourselves as whole people. Their holistic model considers wellness in eight dimensions: 1) emotional, 2) environmental, 3) financial, 4) intellectual, 5) occupational, 6) physical,

7) social, and 8) spiritual.[1] Swarbrick and Yudof suggest that we need to be fueled/filled in each of these areas to be comprehensively well. Each of these dimensions can affect your overall quality of life because wellness directly relates to how long and how well we live. You are not only a leader, but you are an employee, a friend, child, sibling, spouse, parent, colleague, community member and more. Together these roles are impacted by your wellness and well-being.

> *An organization is the long-extended shadow of its leader.* – Ralph Waldo

Many successful, goal-oriented leaders tend to work hard or outwork others – but not in a manner that is sustainable. As we have discussed, especially in terms of the personal aspects in the OJP Framework, for long-term success and motivation, you need to care for yourself personally and professionally. You need optimal energy to be productive and effective. In the same way that you are assessing, acknowledging, and acting to create a positive and effective work environment for your team, you can embrace that same approach to focus on *you*. Let's refuel and dispel the myth that *no matter what you do, it won't make a difference.* Here are five tips to help you focus on your own needs:

– *Assess yourself.* Complete the organizational, job-related, and personal (OJP) assessments in Chapter 7. Like your employees, these assessments can help identify changes you can make. We often give good advice to others. As you reflect on your answers, consider what advice you might give to someone else given the same results and try to take that sage advice.

– *Care for your whole self.* Work hard, rest well, and recharge the way you need to. Consider the *8 Dimensions of Wellness* framework to explore contributing factors or sources of stress in your life. Pay attention to your body's physical and emotional needs. Commit to self-care on a regular basis to help reduce stress and create a better balance. Focus on an *approach* goal in which you do something pleasurable, rather than an *avoidance* goal – not checking your email. Do something interesting and schedule restorative experiences. Consider taking long (3 to 4 day) weekends quarterly. Studies show you get a much greater benefit from regularly taking three- and four-day weekends. By all means, take all your vacation. In 2018, American workers wasted an estimated 768 million vacation days.[2] It takes giving yourself permission to shift your mindset around what is a priority and a commitment to establishing healthy coping mechanisms to combat stress.

– *Prioritize your work and set boundaries.* Some things just must get done, but others can wait until you have the requisite time and energy. Decide which tasks are less important and set them aside. Delegate what you can. Share responsibilities with colleagues and team members to give them stretch opportunities or opportunities to showcase skills and talents that others need to see. Set limits on the time you give to others and be selective about accepting commitments. Be self-compassionate and honor what is important to you.

- *Pursue development opportunities.* Does your organization offer tuition benefits? Pursue those educational and career goals about which you've been thinking. Want to further develop some skills that you have recently gained? Consider skills-based volunteerism. Can you support a local nonprofit or community organization? Become involved in activities that expose you to organizations and leaders that you want to have exposure to and learn from.
- *Take control of the way you work.* Focus on the meaning you derive from work and challenge your assumptions about the way your work life *has* to be and what you *have* to do. Whatever it is, it can likely wait until tomorrow. Rest and recharge for a new day. Embrace prioritizing work-life balance as a part of your burnout recovery. Test your perceived limits to discover what could improve in your situation.

Support tools

Implementing these tips can be quick but changes will take time. The first step to managing your own burnout is changing your perspective about what is and must be. It's never too late or too early to address your burnout – you can start now – but remember that the best cure is prevention. Our research has found that balance and boundary-setting techniques are effective for preventing burnout. While each of our experiences are unique, employees tell us that the most efficient recovery tools are acts of self-care. Here are a few examples:

- Be thankful. Start a gratitude journal and stay focused on that which is good in your life.
- Dance. Dance. Dance. Like no one is watching and no one cares. Shake it all off.
- Exercise. Take a walk, hop on your bike, play hopscotch, roller skate or roller blade. It doesn't matter what it is, just do it.
- Listen – or play – music. Music can bring a smile to your face and tears to your eyes. Pick up your spirits and feed your soul with music.
- Practice breathing. Deep breathing can calm you and can quiet your mind.
- Practice mindfulness. Be present where you are. It will be okay. Take a moment to center yourself. In the words of Gail Lynne Goodwin, if you can't change the situation, you can change the way you think about it.
- Prepare and/or eat a nice meal. Let it nourish you and please your palette. Pay attention to color and variety on your plate before you begin eating.
- Rest. Take a nap or simply rest your eyes and mind. Even five minutes helps.
- Set boundaries. Respect yourself, your dreams, and desires. Say no and be okay with it. This is a form of self-compassion.

– Share yourself. Be kind to others. Find ways to share acts of kindness. It doesn't have to be a big deal – anything that you can do to help others creates a win-win scenario.
– Talk and visit with friends. We are social beings, and we need one another.
– Take a spa day. Soak in a quiet bubble bath at home, get a manicure, pedicure, or facial. Or schedule an appointment with a massage therapist.
– Try a new hobby. What's your fancy? Try, try, and try again.
– Volunteer. Find an opportunity to contribute your time or your talents. Consider special skills that you can offer to a local nonprofit or community organization.
– Write your "*done*" list. You are surely used to creating a to-do list but let's reframe this idea. Celebrate what you have done – whatever it is and no matter how big or small it may be.

Self-care boosts your personal resources and through the buffering effect, by extension, helps reduce the demands of life. The last thing you may want to do is take a physical or mental break to recharge, but you may need to. There are many ideas offered in this chapter but if you need another challenge, take a look at our *Fired Up!* Self-Care BINGO (Figure 10.1). Challenge yourself – or share with friends and create a small competition – to get BINGO or fill the card first. We've also included a blank version, Create-your-own BINGO card (Figure 10.2), so you can build a personalized challenge with activities and ideas that better resonate with you (you might consider using the blank version to design a BINGO team building activity). Taking small steps today will yield big benefits tomorrow. Overcome or avoid burnout and experience a more hopeful future. Here's to YOU!

B	I	N	G	O
Try a new exercise	Find a new hobby	Rest	Create an approach goal	Make a self-care date
Practice mindfulness	Try a new herbal tea	Take a nap	Explore a new area	Find a skill-based volunteer activity
Share a compliment with a friend or colleague	Listen to music that makes you smile	FREE SPACE	Learn something new	Schedule a restorative experience
Visit with a friend or colleague	Do something pleasurable	Plan a long weekend away	Write your "done" list	Schedule time off
Engage in a volunteer activity	Take a walk	Take a stretch break	Find a mentee	Set a new goal

Figure 10.1: Self-Care BINGO Card.

B	I	N	G	O
		FREE SPACE		

Figure 10.2: Create-Your-Own BINGO Card.

Afterword

We like to end as we began – thanking you for your commitment to improving and enhancing the work environment for your team. We told you that we wrote this book because we believe leaders and organizations have a role in addressing burnout at work. We told you that we've personally had experience with burnout. This book has been a journey for us – like we hope it has been for you, we have continued to learn and lean into experiences that foster engagement. We have been honest with ourselves about the work that we want to pursue, explore, and avoid (perhaps, most importantly). We've gained clarity on that which adds value – and that which doesn't. We've reexamined and reprioritized work. In fact, during the ideation phase of this book, Mia decided to pursue work that is more aligned with her interests and passions.

We also shared that we were inspired to write this book years prior to the global COVID-19 pandemic and our efforts to write it in support of everyone's new normal unfolded in the midst of it. *The research is clear:* employees have suffered from workplace stress, burnout, and lack of engagement across the globe for decades. Living through the global pandemic, everywhere we looked, everything we read was a reminder: *workplace pressures were building.* Nothing has quite informed our thinking like living and working in 2020 and 2021. This fact is not lost on us; in fact, it inspires us. We saw burnout as a chokehold on our teams and in our organizations. So, again, we wrote this book for you – to help you overcome burnout, foster engagement, and empower your team by leading with empathy through a culture of trust, respect, and fairness.

With these imperatives in mind as well as an eye on the future, an anchor in the past, and acknowledgment of the present, we wrote *Fired Up!* to be a practical guide for you to combat burnout and drive engagement within your team and organization. We've shared a lot of research, statistics, ideas, and anecdotes about burnout. In fact, you *just* may consider yourself somewhat of a burnout scholar – if so, *you're welcome!* And, if you don't profess to know everything there is to know about burnout, we are confident that you can understand, identify, and evaluate indicators, causes, and consequences of burnout. This burnout knowledge is longlasting and will benefit you in ways that we cannot fully articulate, and you cannot quite imagine today. Rest assured, this newfound knowledge is powerful and will equip you to take your team from burnout to engagement.

Work *matters*. Burnout *matters*. How you use your influence and control on behalf of your team *matters*. How you treat your team *matters*. We have encouraged you to do a lot of work here – for your team and yourself – and we hope you trust us by now. It all *matters*.

Stay curious, solve big problems, and have fun!

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Appendix I
The Organization-Job-Personal (OJP) framework

SPAN OF CONTROL
The internal activities, functions, people, and resources you have a direct (or indirect) impacton or control over.

Aspects (levels) of the workplace	Characteristics of the ideal work environment	Burnout causes	Engagement causes (*Team engagement*)
Organizational aspect	Open communication Recognition Care and Support Opportunities to advance Learning opportunity Climate of respect Fair treatment	Conflicts with cooperation Lack of appreciation Lack of supervisor support Physical environment Reduced access to technology	Organizational support Supervisory support Job security Opportunities for development/training Reward and recognition Supervisor support Distributive justice Procedural justice Feedback from others Participation in decision-making (*Supportive team climate*)
Job-related aspects	Job autonomy Job challenge Task support Reasonable time pressure Role clarity Manage able workload Flexibility	Time pressure/tight deadlines Lack of autonomy Role ambiguity Physical workload Shiftwork/work schedule	Basic equipment and materials provided Flexibility Clarity of expectations Autonomy Taskidentity Skillvariety Task significance Job/performance feedback (*Teamwork and coordination*)
Personal aspects	Work-life fit Work-life balance Satisfaction with earnings and benefits Provisions for self and family Meaningful daily activity Pride, identity, busyness, socialization	Stress Anxiety Lackofmotivation	Feeling of contribution Sense of belonging Feeling there are opportunities togrow

CURRENT REALITIES
Overarching external and internal conditions

Type of work environment	Characteristics of the work environment
Positive work environment	Transparent and open communication, work–life balance, training and development, recognition for hard work and strong team spirit to its employees.
Effective work environment	Job challenges and learning opportunities, job autonomy, supervisor task support, climate of respect and trust, satisfaction with earnings, benefits, and opportunities for advancement, and work-life fit,including workplace flexibility.
Thriving and Flourishing environment	Fair treatment at work, manageable workload, role clarity, effective communication, support from their manager, and reasonable time pressure/expectations.

WORK ENVIRONMENT
Consists of the many physical, psychological, and social aspects that make up the working condition.

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Appendix II
Work environment assessment

Instructions: As you read each statement and consider your work experience, circle the appropriate response: *Always, Frequently, Sometimes,* or *Rarely*

1.	My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
2.	My organization consistently implements policies and practices.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
3.	My organization considers fairness and equity when instituting policies and practices.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
4.	My organization builds trust through open and transparent communication.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
5.	My organization provides proper training for all employees.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
6.	My organization provides opportunities for career advancement and professional development.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
7.	I have support from my manager/leader to complete work tasks.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
8.	I understand what is expected of me.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
9.	I have the freedom to manage and structure my work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
10.	My workload is manageable.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
11.	I have adequate equipment, materials, and resources to be effective at work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
12.	I use a variety of skills and abilities to complete my work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
13.	I have the opportunity to participate in decision-making.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
14.	I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
15.	I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
16.	I am invited to share my opinions and perspectives.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
17.	I have opportunities to learn and grow.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
18.	I am excited about my work.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
19.	I have positive interactions and relationships with colleagues.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
20.	I feel that my organization cares about my well-being.	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely

Appendix III
Leader assessment analysis form

Items from Assessment	My Rating	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Top 3	Current Reality
1. My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contributions.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
2. My organization consistently implements policies and practices.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
3. My organization considers fairness and equity when instituting policies and practices.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
4. My organization builds trust through open and transparent communication.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
5. My organization provides proper training for all employees.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
6. My organization provides opportunities for career advancement and professional development.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
7. I have support from my manager/leader to complete work tasks.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
8. I understand what is expected of me.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
9. I have the freedom to manage and structure my work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
10. My workload is manageable.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
11. I have adequate equipment, materials, and resources to be effective at work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
12. I use a variety of skills and abilities to complete my work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
13. I have the opportunity to participate in decision-making.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
14. I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
15. I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
16. I am invited to share my opinions and perspectives.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
17. I have opportunities to learn and grow.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
18. I am excited about my work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
19. I have positive interactions and relationships with colleagues.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		
20. I feel that my organization cares about my well-being.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____		

Appendix IV
Acknowledge – guiding questions table

Box 1. What are the identified helpers and hindrances from Step 1 –Assess? Helpers are the items with majority of responses as *Always* and hindrances are the items with majority of responses as *Rarely*. Take note of whether these are direct or indirect issues.		Box 2. Which warning signs have you identified in Step 1 – Assess? Potential warning signs are the items with majority of responses as *Frequently* or *Sometimes*?
<u>Helpers</u>	<u>Hindrances</u>	
Box 3. What is your current reality? What internal and external factors need to be considered?		**Box 4.** Of these identified work environment issues, what do I have control over (span of control)?

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Appendix V
OJP strategy chart

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Factors	Current Reality	Potential Strategy	Span of Control	OJP Level	Timeframe	Involvement: RACI	Cost	Other/Notes
Helpers								
			☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
			☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
Hindrances								
			☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
			☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
Warning Signs								
			☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
			☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		
			☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ None	☐ Organizational ☐ Job-Related ☐ Personal	☐ QW ☐ MS ☐ LH	☐ R ☐ A ☐ C ☐ I		

Appendix VI
OJP potential strategies and solutions chart

1. My organization provides appropriate rewards for my contribution.	
Implied meaning	There is a fair, equitable, and timely system in place where people are acknowledged for their performance in intrinsic and extrinsic ways.

Strategies	– Provide adequate, timely, and consistent feedback. – Provide regular feedback via performance appraisals for both team and individuals. – Communicate appreciation for employee effort and dedication. – Provide opportunities for your team to be noticed and recognized by others. – Spend time with your team, both individually and collectively, to identify the degree to which intrinsic or extrinsic rewards are more enriching. – Ensure your organization has a systematic performance appraisal system that you fully understand. – Allow employees some input in determining pay raises. – Ensure your team understands and takes advantage of all financial (stock purchase plans, etc.) and nonfinancial benefits (tuition benefits, professional development opportunities, etc.). – Celebrate with coffee/lunch/dinner with team lead or executives, free day off, compensatory time. – Provide public recognition along with a connection to organizational objectives and outcomes. – Allow your team to create their own job titles highlighting their work and contributions.	– Encourage your team to complete self-evaluations of their performance and in relationship to their measurable objectives/outcomes. – Monitor job/role responsibilities to ensure team members are appropriately (based on actual responsibilities and expectations) paid. – Consider promoting pay transparency to reduce overestimation of others' pay. – Understand the resources (salary, merit increases, RSUs, etc.) that you have available and distribute rewards judiciously and consistently during appraisals and when compensating extra-role contributions. – Provide employees with rewards (pay, incentives, stretch assignments) based on unique skills and interests. – Celebrate all (big and small) wins with tokens of appreciation (thank you notes, candy, flowers, remote coffee chats). – In your 1:1 meetings, listen for opportunities to recognize or reward your team members. – Utilize company-wide recognition such as employee of the month incentives (special parking space, communication on intranet, press release, etc.).

2. My organization consistently implements policies and practices.

Implied meaning	The organization successfully introduces equitable and unambiguous policies and practices that are easy for employees to understand and follow as well as a clear protocol should they have questions or need assistance complying.
Strategies	– Prioritize policies and practices that improve workplace conditions. – Implement policies and practices that foster a culture of support, empathy, and belongingness. – Communicate policies and practices openly, especially during times of change, along with clear explanations and rationale. – Engage team members in the development of policies and programs that help mitigate burnout and support employee work engagement.	– Implement Paid Time Off (PTO) policies that encourage use of leave. – Conduct annual work environment surveys to understand how employees perceive work conditions (including but not limited to job demands, job resources, organizational support, and work/role challenges). – Ensure systems and practices are in place to enable workers to raise concerns about any conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities. – Create a complaint and grievance process to enhance organizational performance.

3. My organization considers fairness and equity when instituting policies and practices.

Implied meaning	There is a framework or process to ensure that policies and practices do not intentionally or unintentionally have a negative impact on individual or groups of employees.

Strategies	– Keep diversity, equity, inclusion, and access at the forefront of decisions. – Intentionally design human resource practices and efforts for organizational inclusion. – Implement Paid Time Off (PTO) policies that encourage use of leave and PTO rather than incentivizing not taking time off. – Implement selective hiring practices that focuses on recruiting the right person for the job, regardless of the effort required. – Be sure to consider the unintentional consequences of new/changed policies and practices. – Implement policies and practices that foster a culture of support, empathy, and belongingess. – Ensure systems and practices are in place to enable workers to raise concerns about any conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities.	– Have open discussions with employees to understand how organizational inclusion efforts are perceived and how they think these efforts are impacting others, specifically and collectively. – Communicate policies and practices openly, especially during times of change, along with clear explanations and rationale. – Carry out all processes consistently across the organization. – Engage team members in the development of policies and programs that help mitigate burnout and support employee work engagement. – Prioritize policies and practices that improve workplace conditions.

4. My organization builds trust through open and transparent communication.

Implied meaning	Management and leadership intentionally and consistently provide important and needed information, without misrepresentation or inaccuracies, to ensure that employees are well-informed and equipped to make the best decisions in their role and for their career.

Strategies	– Share sufficient and unambiguous information in a way that reinforces the intended message. – Train leaders and managers in effective communication skills. – Prioritize frequent communication, especially during times of change. – Provide opportunities for anonymous feedback if you are unsure that your team feels comfortable expressing themselves without repercussion. – Explain role expectations and the impact of the employees' work on broader processes.	– Institute a biweekly 1:1 meeting to provide time for your team to talk with you individually about any concerns or issues. – Given the significant role of nonverbal communication, use multiple methods to stay connected. If you typically use conference calls, try videoconferencing tools to see one another occasionally; however, be sure to use technology as a helper not a hindrance. – Proactively share information, ask questions, and invite your team to candidly share their opinions.

5. My organization provides proper training for all employees.

Implied meaning	There is access to training and development that equip employees with the requisite skills to perform successfully in their role.

Strategies	– Ensure individual team members are adequately trained for jobs/tasks and pending changes/trends. – Offer organizational support and training prior to the start of employment that reinforces goals and objectives, codes of conduct and expectations. – Identify and recommend learning opportunities (coaching, change management, problem solving, technical knowledge, etc.) as well as ongoing self-development opportunities to help your team develop and sharpen skills. – Identify training and professional development opportunities for your leaders/managers to help facilitate engagement.	– Provide professional development opportunities, such as stretch assignments and challenging projects for skill and confidence development. – Explore training and development that can help team members develop new skills to improve success in their current role and strengthen the organization. – Make sure each team member receives enough training for them to be competent in their roles; where a change in structure or roles occurs, or retraining is required, use the performance review process as a positive opportunity for workers to have renewed input to the way they complete their work.

6. My organization provides opportunities for career advancement and professional development.

Implied meaning	The provision of opportunities and intentional efforts that help build skills and confidence that will advance one's career.

Strategies	– Encourage team members to create personal development plans based on their desired career outcomes. – Empower your team to make meaningful contributions and think of ways to do their job better and more efficiently. – Support professional organization and association memberships and meetings. – Explore training and development that can help team members strengthen current skills and develop new skills. – Ensure individual team members are adequately trained for daily jobs/ tasks and pending changes/trends. – Empower employees to pursue challenging or stretch assignments that help the business. – Review the learning and development function within your organization; embed ongoing mentoring, coaching. – Have quarterly meetings to discuss opportunities for the upward career progression.	– Identify and recommend learning opportunities (coaching, change management, problem solving, technical knowledge, etc.) to help your team develop and sharpen their skills. – Provide professional development opportunities, such as stretch assignments and challenging projects for skill and confidence development. – Identify training and professional development opportunities for your leaders/managers to help facilitate engagement. – Encourage the team to leverage individual strengths and provide/ seek opportunities for members to explore interests and leverage skills for advancement opportunity. – Encourage each team member to embrace test and learn strategies to improve their work. – In your 1:1 meetings, make time to discuss professional development (such as training and cross- training).

7. I have support from my manager/leader to complete work tasks.

Implied meaning	Leaders and managers consistently help their team cope with work stressors and capacity management supporting organizational success and employee well-being.

Strategies	– Listen to and encourage your team. – Prioritize your team by making time to develop and prepare them. – Offer employees' assistance or help them identify specific tasks they need help with. – Enable employees to engage in meaningful work through diverse and high-quality relationships at work and with the community. – Set actionable goals, objectives, and rewards proportionately so your team can trust that you will support them when/as needed. – Train employees to be supportive and cultivate a supportive work environment by modeling this behavior. – Develop a culture of vulnerability, openness and authenticity.	– Use team meetings as a time to share and celebrate successes and help your team feel supported as they learn to work together. – Recognize team contributions. – Be friendly and considerate. – Promote well-being. – Stay abreast of human resource management related trends and updates. – Check in with employees to ensure they have the resources they need to be effective at work. – Ensure that teams are resourced with the specialization needed to complete the project.

8. I understand what is expected of me.

Implied meaning	Team members have clear expectations along with sufficient context and information to successfully perform.

Strategies	– Carefully design and articulate roles and job characteristics. – In your 1:1 meetings, provide feedback on what's working well and where opportunities for improvement exist. – Consider the office design and how the design supports a positive and effective work environment. – Intentionally design human resource practices and efforts for organizational inclusion. – Set SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound) goals and help team members identify how their role supports team and organizational objectives. – Increase openness and transparency so that employees understand why and how changes will occur and the impact of said changes. – Regularly discuss responsibilities, performance goals, and priorities.	– Provide sufficient context about roles, expectations, etc., to help your team make meaning of what needs to be done, why, and by when. – Ensure management structures across the organization and reporting lines within work teams are clear. – Model feedback seeking behavior. – Provide clear and regularly updated position descriptions and expectations. – Ensure that job descriptions are up to date, and create a team charter to define everyone's roles and responsibilities. – Have open/transparent conversations, especially during times of change to ensure clear expectations. – Set reasonable deadlines with team member input. – Ensure individual employee expectations are clear and aligned with team and organizational goals.

9. I have the freedom to manage and structure my work.

Implied meaning	Team members have the ability to consider, plan, and prioritize major aspects of their work, including how and when work is performed, value and interest alignment, resolution of competing demands, and time management to reduce demands, stressors, and pressure.

Strategies

– Provide autonomy, or at minimum ask for input, on work schedule, deliverables, and timeline.
– Encourage your team to embrace strategies work prioritization and ask your team to share updates to all projects with this in mind.
– Empower your team to modify deliverables or make other adjustments, such as deprioritizing projects and skipping meetings when/as appropriate.
– Ask your team to share opinions candidly and offer recommendations to improve workflow, team arrangements, work environment, etc.
– Serve as a connector and help your team know the right/best parties to engage with internally and externally.
– Allow teams to structure workload according to individual/collective strengths, interests, and skills and supporting self-guided decision on when and how to complete their work, manage their workload given time demands.

– Regularly discuss what *should* be done rather than what *could* be done.
– Allow your team to design their own workspaces.
– Give options and welcome input, both publicly and privately.
– Provide an opportunity for the team to participate in decision-making and the space to candidly share opinions.
– Consider equity and availability in work from home options.
– Be mindful of all team members calendars, especially when teams span time zones.
– Allow teams to leverage individual strengths, talents, skills, and interests for the greater good of the team.
– Provide resources for teams to self-manage workload. Support self-managed work teams that are responsible and accountable for all or most aspects of making a product and/or delivering a service. Be willing to release control of self-management team supporting tasks (i.e., workflow, leave and absence management, personality issues/team conflict, training of new members) and technical tasks.

10. My workload is manageable.

Implied meaning	Work, in general, and tasks, specifically, do not cause excessive physical or mental strain and can be performed within available (real or perceived) time available.	
Strategies	– Empower your team to decide when and how to complete their work and manage tasks, projects, and workload. – Provide an opportunity for the team to participate in decision-making and the space to share opinions candidly. – Allow team to structure workload according to individual/collective strengths and skills. – Be an early advocate for your team and help them manage increasingly heavy workloads.	– Be mindful of the emotionally taxing work that your team may be managing. – When work needs to be realigned, consider stretch assignments for other team members. – Encourage management strategies such as "Meeting-less" Fridays or skipping meetings when unnecessary.

11. I have adequate equipment, materials, and resources to be effective at work.

Implied meaning	Each team member is provided resources, including physical, environment, material, funding support, human capital, etc., that have a significant effect on behavior, attitudes, perceptions, and productivity.	
Strategies	– Audit your environment. Ensure proper and suitable lighting, air quality, noise control, and temperature at workspace and surrounding areas. – Ensure team members have all required training, tools, and materials to do their job. – Create productive space(s) for team meetings and discussions. – Provide spaces for privacy, when employees need it, such as a personal workspace.	– Ensure that teams are adequately resourced with the specialization needed to complete the project. – Consider the degree to which the workspace and office design support the ideal work environment. – Provide quiet, comfortable workspaces where employees can be fully absorbed into work and inviting spaces that foster collaboration.

12. I use a variety of skills and abilities to complete my work.

Implied meaning	Speaking to skill and task variety, employees perform best when variety exists (even when tasks appear standard and similar). Employees want to perform a wide range of tasks and employ flexibility when drawing on various skills and talents.	
Strategies	– Provide opportunities to be creative and to use/develop their unique skills. – Provide opportunities to engage in more meaningful work projects/assignments. – Create and support small groups and teams to take on important, prominent assignments.	– Combine tasks to form new and larger modules/bodies of work. – Ensure that individual team members understand all tasks required to do their job. – Allow team to leverage individual strengths to ensure all tasks are completed appropriately.

13. I have the opportunity to participate in decision-making.

Implied meaning	Participative decision-making is the extent to which employers allow or encourage employees to share or participate in organizational decision-making.	
Strategies	– Discuss plans and changes with your team before making decisions, where possible. – Conder that often those closest to the work have valuable input on process and practice changes. – Provide opportunities for your team to provide input into how the changes will the operationalized. – Use open communication during times of change, including clear rationale.	– Plan annual strategy sessions with your team and measure progress against goals in quarterly meetings. – Develop and maintain a working environment where workers are consulted and can provide feedback on changes impacting their job tasks. – Encourage feedback and participation from all employees that will be affected by any organizational change.

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14. I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.

Implied meaning	Your team wants to contribute and find meaning at/in work with a desire to believe/ perceive that their job exerts a positive impact on others.

Strategies	– Help your team members identify and inventory their interests, passions, strengths, skills, and talents. There are several assessments that can help with this, such as VIA Character, PrinciplesYou, and StrengthsFinder (more information can be found on the Resources page of the Appendix). – Encourage continuous learning and self-development. Provide the opportunity for employees to be in roles that play to their interests, passions, strengths, skills, and talents. – Encourage your team to lean into and build upon their personal strengths by looking for ways to add value to other projects or stretch assignments. – Offer tangible and material benefits, such as bonuses or time off, when objectives and goals are met and/or exceeded.	– Identify tasks/work that your team performs that drive measurable outcomes. Share in descriptive ways that, and how, your team contributes to organizational outcomes. – Be available to measure and discuss progress. Course-correct, celebrate, recognize, and learn together. – Create shared activities, such as volunteer or community outreach activities, to allow team to interact in meaningful ways. – Create a sense of belonging and bigger impact by working on community-based projects or partnering with not-for-profit organizations.

15. I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.

Implied meaning	Public and/or private specific acknowledgments for performance in a fair and timely manner.

Strategies

- Offer recognition bounteously and communicate it widely – consider the public awareness campaign, *see something, say something.*
- Start a recognition revival and inspire others to offer recognition and acknowledgments when appropriate.
- Stay abreast of projects and programs your team is working on so you can provide immediate feedback and acknowledgment of progress and contributions.
- Showcase individual and team accomplishments internally (e.g., intranet) and externally (e.g., social media or external campaigns).
- Help your team connect to the greater body of work to reinforce how their role and specific efforts impact organizational objectives and outcomes.
- Create a supportive culture and promote strong social networks where employees demonstrate care.
- Offer various forms of individual and team incentives, such as performance-based rewards, profit sharing, stock ownership, etc.
- Plan team-building and social activities including lunch and learns, TED talks, themed days, recognition events, and other personal or life celebrations.

- During regular 1:1 check-ins or meetings, help your team members focus on the importance of their role.
- Review accomplishments over the past month, quarter, or year during 1:1 meetings.
- Measure and improve team and individual performance through frequent feedback based on organizational goals and managing objectives linked to strategies.
- Foster creativity, enthusiasm, and innovation. Engage diverse teams and charge them with hosting innovation labs to allow team members to enhance the ways in which they do their work.
- Be creative and find unusual yet remarkable recognition opportunities such as naming a product or service, joining a podcast to share organizational updates, being a model or providing a voice over in a commercial.
- Celebrate team successes, provide public praise, and consider surprising your team with something unexpected.

16. I am invited to share my opinions and perspectives.

Implied meaning	Team members are asked to provide input and share insight on decisions and plans that relate to their work as well as the greater organization.

| Strategies | – Develop and maintain a working environment where workers are consulted and can provide feedback on changes impacting their job tasks and responsibilities.
– Discuss plans and changes with team members before making decisions.
– Allow your team the opportunity to have voice and provide input into how changes will the operationalized.
– Provide opportunities for anonymous feedback if you are unsure that your team feels comfortable expressing themselves without repercussion.
– Provide timely feedback on your teams' ideas – advocating for feasible ideas and challenging impractical ones. | – Use frequent communication especially during times of change, including clear explanations of the reasons for decisions.
– Offer town halls and other open forums to share information with your team and to invite Q&A.
– Plan annual strategy sessions with your team and measure progress against shared goals in quarterly meetings.
– Seek input on creation, changes, improvements, and retirement of processes and practices.
– Proactively share information, initiate open dialogue, and ask for employees' input. |

17. I have opportunities to learn and grow.

Implied meaning	Opportunities exist for team members to develop new skills and gain new knowledge and experiences that support career goals.
Strategies	– Review the learning and development function within your organization. – Embed ongoing self-development opportunities (i.e., mentoring, coaching). – Identify team members with leadership and mentorship skills that might be interested in mentoring junior team members. – Encourage team members to make meaningful contributions and think of ways to do their job better and more efficiently. – Empower employees to solve problems at work and pursue challenging job demands that help the business. – Have quarterly professional development meetings to discuss career opportunities and goals. – Facilitate opportunities for your team to explore interests and leverage skills that support their goals. – Develop programs targeting high-potential talent to best support their growth and development – personally and professionally. – Assist employees to identify, grow, and leverage their natural strengths at work. – Support lifelong learning with a focus on building capabilities for the future. – Encourage continuous learning and self-development.

18. I am excited about my work.

Implied meaning	Team members are enthusiastic and optimistic about what they do, how they do it, and how it helps the team, department, and larger organization.

Strategies

- Facilitate opportunities for your team to see how their contributions affect the organization, stakeholders, etc.
- Allow your team to share ideas and offer input about the types of projects to take on and/or the work they want to do.
- Create an exchange platform where team members can serve as subject-matter experts (SMEs) and moderate communication and exchange of ideas and thoughts.
- Showcase individual and team accomplishments internally (e.g., intranet) and externally (e.g., social media or external campaigns).
- Establish a community or special workgroup focused on work that drives your team.
- Create visiting opportunities to other companies, community organizations, or with other stakeholders to see how your team's work comes to life.
- Provide stretch opportunities or assignments that advances the work that your team is working on.
- Provide opportunities for your team to engage with end users or stakeholders see the benefit of their work.
- Create an experimental safe zone unleashing creativity, learning and innovation.
- Help employees discover how their role and daily tasks contribute to the organizational mission.

- Create opportunities for your team to engage with end users or stakeholders to learn how to improve on products, services, or processes.
- Provide advising and mentoring resources.
- Provide public recognition along with a connection to organizational objectives and outcomes.
- Utilize company-wide recognition such as employee of the month incentives (special parking space, communication on intranet, press release, etc.).
- Ensure your team has the right tools and opportunities to be successful in their roles.
- Develop passion in your team by acknowledging it when you see it.
- Provide opportunities for your team to share successes.
- Encourage your team to take advantages of opportunities to learn, grow, and develop.
- Try to appeal to each person, individually, on your team.
- Provide the opportunity for employees to be in roles that play to their interests, passions, strengths, skills, and talents.
- Find ways to personalize your team's work.

19. I have positive interactions and relationships with colleagues.

Implied meaning	Team members are well-connected and behave with one another in a way that is mutually respectful and demonstrates value for each other's opinions and ideas.

Strategies	
– Foster workplace friendships by offering time and space to discuss nonwork topics such as time for socializing at the start of meetings, whether in-person or connected virtually.	– Find time to share project specific team meet-ups to help your team feel supported as they learn to work together.
– Use team meetings as a time to share and celebrate successes.	– Provide systems for conflict resolution and ensure all employees are aware of them.
– Encourage team members to contribute during meetings (assign specific meeting tasks to ensure involvement).	– Ensure that teams are adequately resourced with the specialization needed to complete projects.
– Schedule regular team bonding and appreciation events such as social events, community volunteerism, trivia hour, happy hour, talent shows, etc.	– Organize/coordinate community outreach or volunteer events to help build a sense of community within the team.
– Facilitate opportunities for team members to develop friendships and build a sense of community.	– Identify peer partners or establish a buddy program for new hires and team entrants to foster culture meaning making.
– Develop a culture of trust that supports vulnerability, openness, and authenticity by enabling meaningful work and fostering high-quality connections and relationships at work.	– Demonstrate consistent care/ concern for all individuals.
– Encourage greater collaboration amongst your team and with others that may be able to offer a meaningful contribution to the work or team.	– Avoid special favors. Treat all employees equally regardless of personal feelings.
– Plan team meet-ups to help your team feel supported as they learn to work together.	– Model helpfulness and teach your team to search for opportunities to be helpful to one another.
– Create a team charter to define everyone's roles and responsibilities and how these roles relate to the overarching team objectives.	

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20. I feel that my organization cares about my well-being.

Implied meaning	Leaders and organizations demonstrate care and concern for all aspects of working life including how and when work is performed, the quality and safety of the work environment, perceptions about work and its significance – overall an employee's safety, health, satisfaction, and engagement at work.

Strategies	– Be an empathetic manager and leader – check in with your team on their job satisfaction, well-being, and burnout. – Offer special days/times (reset days, mental health days, self-care days) where time is allocated for your team to recharge, rest, and reenergize. – Include well-being days or promote well-being days as an alternative for "sick" days. – Encourage your team to use their paid time off. – Empower team to take time for themselves and encourage them to prioritize self-care. – Encourage your team to change their scenery and eat away from their desks. Consider instituting meditation and mindfulness practice sessions during the day. – Coordinate health and well-being programs or sessions during team meetings/on-site events. – Provide resources for team members and ensure they are aware of organizational offerings, including the employee assistance program and stress management resources. – Train your team to be *burnout risk managers*. Conduct training that teaches them about the signs and symptoms of work stress and how to provide support. – Consider Mental Health First Aid training to equip your team with the knowledge and skills to know what to look for. You can find more information on this training at https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/.	– Be mindful of all team members calendars, especially when teams span time zones. – Schedule meetings when your team is most productive. – Limit back-to-back meetings and the length of the meetings. – Plan project specific team meet-ups to help your team feel supported as they learn to work together. – Help your team create boundaries. Discourage emails during nonwork hours and during PTO. – Encourage your team to embrace satisficing or using decision-making frameworks with a focus on good enough. – Strategically and judicially provide flexible and/or work from home opportunities to enhance work-life balance/integration. – Offer remote or virtual mindfulness workshops, happy hours, coffee chats, and support/resource group events. – Organize outreach or volunteer events to help build community within the team. – Create peer partner, mentoring, or buddy programs to help acclimate new employees to the organization. – Start meetings with a personal check-in. Ask how your team is feeling and how they are doing (in general and with respective to work).

(continued)

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20. I feel that my organization cares about my well-being.

– Develop a *Motivational Minute* or *Motivational Monday* newsletter or other communication with strategies and best practices for staying motivated and caring for your team's mental health.
– Enable and support job crafting and job design by allowing your team to identify resources such as autonomy, job control, job variety, and personal growth possibilities that foster better well-being at work and after work.
– Get to know your team so you can meaningfully consider individual/family needs and values when assigning roles and scheduling meetings.
– Be considerate of personal obligations. Limit meetings at the end of your team's workday.
– Respect how your team contributes to your priorities and goals. Ask them to check their obligations and limit assigning new commitments.

– Identify peer partners or establish a buddy program for new hires and team entrants to foster culture meaning making.
– Schedule regular team bonding and appreciation events such as social events, community volunteerism, trivia hour, happy hour, talent shows, etc.
– Celebrate all (big and small) wins with tokens of appreciation (thank you notes, candy, flowers, remote coffee chats).
– Develop a formal offboarding process and conduct exit interviews when employees leave the team or organization.

Appendix VII
Timeframe

	Quick wins	Medium-term Strategies	Long Hauls
Definition OR Description	*Quick wins* are strategies you can employ in the near future without involving others. They are easy to implement, do not require higher levels of approval, and are easy to explain.	*Medium-term strategies* may require social capital and buy-in from others. Look for synergy and consider others that care about this issue.	*Long hauls* will take the most time and effort. These strategies may be more complex and may require executive level sponsorship or a separate budget. These may be highly significant to your business as they often build internal capacity. You may need to use your internal and external network. Stay abreast of the market – you may get ideas from what other organizations/industries are doing.
Organizational	During team meetings, provide an opportunity for social time to facilitate team members getting to know one another.	Ensure clear and effective communication about organizational changes, including restructuring, layoffs, downsizing, and budget shifts.	Institute a volunteer or community outreach effort that helps your team and others across the organization have an increased sense of belonging, feelings of contribution, and feel a part of something bigger than themselves, their work, and their respective teams.
Job-Related	Ensure team members have the needed resources and materials to be effective and productive in the job/role.	Refine job descriptions to be in full alignment with current roles/responsibilities.	Create a new job description and/or classification given the results of a job audit.

(continued)

	Quick wins	Medium-term Strategies	Long Hauls
Personal	Institute quarterly career conversations where you support your team member in their development plans.	Support flexibility needs of your team by advocating for increased eligibility to work from home.	During your regularly scheduled 1:1 meetings, spend time getting to know what's on your direct reports' mind. If there is a lot of organizational change occurring, allow them to share their feelings and emotional state. Are they experiencing resentment, presenteeism, absenteeism, or withdrawal cognitions? It will take time to build trust and create a safe space for them to freely share but it is worth it. While you may not be able to allay concerns about job safety or security, you can help provide a psychological safety net.

Appendix VIII
Fired Up! Action Plan

Identified Strategy: _____

_____

Success Metric(s): _____

_____

Specific Actions	Dependencies (pre)	Dependencies (post)	Monitoring/Controlling

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Appendix IX
Self-care BINGO card

B	I	N	G	O
Try a new exercise	Find a new hobby	Rest	Create an approach goal	Make a self-care date
Practice mindfulness	Try a new herbal tea	Take a nap	Explore a new area	Find a skill-based volunteer activity
Share a compliment with a friend or colleague	Listen to music that makes you smile	FREE SPACE	Learn something new	Schedule a restorative experience
Visit with a friend or colleague	Do something pleasurable	Plan a long weekend away	Write your "done" list	Schedule time off
Engage in a volunteer activity	Take a walk	Take a stretch break	Find a mentee	Set a new goal

Appendix X
Create-Your-Own BINGO card

B	I	N	G	O
		FREE SPACE		

Appendix XI
Guiding questions for training and facilitation

For those looking to assist leaders with moving through the three step (*Assess, Acknowledge,* and *Act*) process outlined in this book, we offer some guiding questions in creating your roadmap should it be helpful. These reflective questions can be used to level set, or if we keep the idea of a roadmap going, gas up the car before hitting the road. Questions are also offered that can help leaders make sense signs along the way. We have organized these questions into categories to help leaders examine their personal beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions and think about what they can do to address specific concerns and issues. Think about what they can do to address specific concerns and issues. As mentioned elsewhere in the book, these questions are simply a starting point:

Leader as Employee
- What does burnout and engagement mean to you?
- Thinking about motivation and inspiration at work, what gets you up and excited? How do you inspire your team with those qualities?
- What does being engaged "look" like to you? Your team?
- When is the last time you felt truly engaged at work? Have you asked your team about their perceived levels of engagement?
- Can you point to those things that drive you to be engaged or disengaged from your work?
- What does your ideal team and work environment look like? How would you expect to experience that ideal work environment?

Leader as Manager
- What specific steps can you take to get to know everyone on your team?
- What control and influence do you have over the work environment?
- How can you manage the work environment and support your team to reduce burnout?
- How can you manage the work environment and support your team to foster engagement?
- Given the importance of trust, respect, and fairness in the work environment, what might you do to better support your team?
- How much support and autonomy in decision-making are you receiving from your leadership?
- What opportunities do you have to improve the work environment?
- How can you manage the work environment and support your team as they manage increasing amounts of stress because of work pressure?

- How can you support your team through difficult and challenging work expectations, lack of work-life balance, and loss of motivation?
- What is the current capacity of your team?
- How can you embrace flexibility in meaningful and relevant ways?
- What can you do to keep your team motivated and inspired?
- What types of volunteerism, passion projects, or other activities can help your team find meaning?
- What is working well within and for your team?
- What have you already done – or have you seen – that has had a positive impact on the work environment and your teams' motivation?
- Are there specific job demands or job resources creating conflict?
- Are there specific job demands that seem to be creating an issue for my team (or any specific team member)?
- What job resources are evident within the organization and team? Are there any specific job resources that an individual (team) has requested, needs, or would like to have?
- Has any specific *organizational policy or practice* created conflict, challenge, or harm for your team?
- Are there opportunities for growth and challenge that is available – or lacking – among my team?
- What internal and external opportunities exist for professional development?
- Is your team exhibiting symptoms of burnout? What signs have you noticed?
- Have you talked with your team about their workload and other demands? How are they feeling about their work and workload?
- What resources are available within your organization to help employees manage stress?
- What concerns have been raised by your team members?
- What external trends or changes are affecting your team?
- What have you uncovered that is helping your work environment and teams' efforts? What might be hindering?
- Are there more pressing issues or employee matters that require your attention now?

Appendix XII
Resources

Burnout assessment/instrument

    The Maslach Burnout Inventory, or MBI, is a well-established survey that identifies burnout. The MBI is available through MindGarden at https://www.mindgarden.com/117-maslach-burnout-inventory-mbi

Mental health training

    Consider Mental Health First Aid training to equip your team with the knowledge and skills to know what to look for. You can find more information on this training at: https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/

Strengths assessments

    VIA Institute on Character offers the VIA Character Strengths Survey available at: https://viacharacter.org. This free, online tool measures and assess character strengths and their application.

    CliftonStrengths, offered by Gallup, is an online tool designed to help you understand your talents and maximize your potential. The current version, CliftonStrengths 34 is available at: https://store.gallup.com/p/en-us/10003/cliftonstrengths-34

    PrinciplesYou helps you gain the self-awareness and other awareness critical to making good decisions and getting things done. You can find your personality archetypes and take the assessment at: https://principlesyou.com/assessments/pdp)

Wellness in 8 Dimensions (Resource Booklet)

    Learn more about the 8 Dimensions of Wellness with this resource booklet and daily plan available at: https://www.center4healthandsdc.org/uploads/7/1/1/4/71142589/wellness_in_8_dimensions_booklet_with_daily_plan.pdf

Work engagement assessement/instrument

    There are multiple versions of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale. The original scale is available free, online at: https://www.wilmarschaufeli.nl/publications/Schaufeli/Test%20Manuals/Test_manual_UWES_English.pdf. There are several academic publications that have used the shorter, 9-item scale available online as well.

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Further reading

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