

PSYCHOLOGY OF WORK AND ORGANIZATIONS

Psychology of work and organization

Engagement

Please complete the questionnaire thinking about your experience as a student — Work Well-being Survey (UWES)©

Below you will find a series of **17 statements** related to feelings about what you do. Please read each statement carefully and decide whether you have ever experienced these feelings toward your work. If you have never experienced them, write 0 in the space following the statement. If you have experienced these feelings, indicate how often by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes their frequency.

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	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

1. _____ At my work, I feel bursting with energy* *(VI1)*
2. _____ I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose *(DE1)*
3. _____ Time flies when I'm working *(AB1)*
4. _____ At my job, I feel strong and vigorous *(VI2)**
5. _____ I am enthusiastic about my job *(DE2)**
6. _____ When I am working, I forget everything else around me *(AB2)*
7. _____ My job inspires me *(DE3)**
8. _____ When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work *(VI3)**
9. _____ I feel happy when I am working intensely *(AB3)**
10. _____ I am proud on the work that I do *(DE4)**
11. _____ I am immersed in my work *(AB4)**
12. _____ I can continue working for very long periods at a time *(VI4)*
13. _____ To me, my job is challenging *(DE5)*
14. _____ I get carried away when I'm working *(AB5)**
15. _____ At my job, I am very resilient, mentally *(VI5)*
16. _____ It is difficult to detach myself from my job *(AB6)*
17. _____ At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well *(VI6)*

Think of a student-related experience (e.g., studying for an exam, working on a group project, participating in class, volunteering) when you felt truly engaged, motivated, and full of energy

- **What common elements** did you identify in your experiences of feeling highly engaged?
- **What makes an experience engaging**, as opposed to simply exhausting or stressful?

Never (0) | Sometimes (1) | Once a month or less (2) | Sometimes a month (3) | Once a week (4) | Sometimes a week (5) | Every day (6)

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- A crucial theme in today's world is the expectation for individuals to invest, dedicate, and engage fully in their work.
- The degree and quality of this investment can vary greatly among individuals, influenced by numerous factors such as personal life, personality traits, health, and contextual circumstances.
- How do we navigate the delicate balance between engagement and dependency? How can we distinguish between healthy, supportive work environments and those that are overly demanding?

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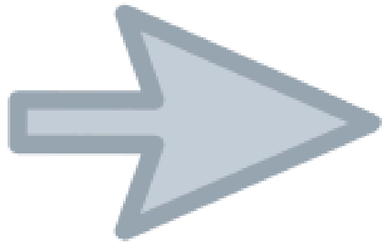
BURNOUT

(Maslach e Leiter)



Engagement

1. A recent construct, formally introduced in the early 2000s;
2. Engagement is the positive opposite of burnout;
3. While burnout is defined by dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization/cynicism, and reduced perceived efficacy at work, engagement consists of three parallel opposite dimensions: energy/vigor, involvement, and absorption.

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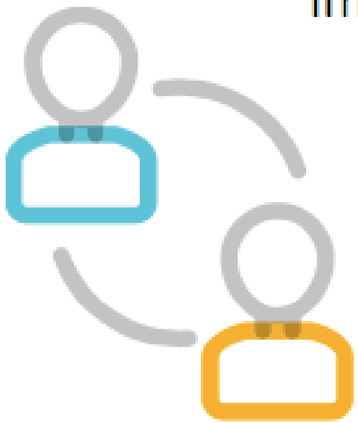
Engagement is a key term; it may be the most frequently invoked word in managerial discourse

It can become a rhetorical and manipulative device that tends to emphasize the importance of individual commitment over that of the entire organization.



The risk is that individual responsibilities and contradictions occurring at the organizational and group level are shifted onto individuals.

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Why is this a relevant issue for us today?

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- Intensification
- Totalizing involvement
- Permanent urgency
- Breaking down of borders
- Permanent adaptability
- Dominance of action

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characteristics of falling in love
total dedication, emotional dependence, level of emotional mobilization

Replacement of the ego ideal with the organizational ideal

Narcissistic contract

emotions are allowed but only positive ones

increasingly attractive rewards

spiral of increasingly demands

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- People with strong internalized ideal images
- Have a drive for self-actualization and personal success,
- Along with a willingness to invest their energies in work





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[The Little Prince] As he arrived on the planet,
he respectfully greeted the man: "Good morning. Why are you turning off the lamp?"
"It's my duty," replied the lamplighter. "Good morning."
"What is your duty?"
"It's to turn off my lamp. Good evening." And he turned it back on.
"And now why are you turning it back on?"
"It's my duty."
"I don't understand," said the Little Prince.
"There's nothing to understand," said the man. "A duty is a duty. Good morning."
And he turned off the lamp. Then he wiped his forehead with a checkered handkerchief.
"I have a terrible job. Once it was reasonable. I would light it in the morning and turn it off in the evening, and I had the rest of the day to rest and the rest of the night to sleep."
"And then the duty changed?" "The duty hasn't changed," said the lamplighter.
"That's the tragedy. The planet has been spinning faster and faster each year, but the duty hasn't been changed!"
"And so?" said the Little Prince.
"And so, now that it makes a complete turn every minute, I don't have a single second to rest. I light it and turn it off once a minute!" [...]
"It's not funny at all."



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Functional Stupidity



Hypothesis at the basis of our actions (assumptions)

The causes of our actions (why we do what we do)

The consequences of our actions (which is the impact on me and others)

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Workaholic is a term coined in **1971** (Oates) to describe a *compulsive behavior toward work, similar to that of an alcoholic toward alcohol*;

There is no universally accepted definition. It is often described as the **cleanest of addictions**, a respectable addiction, a well-dressed addiction;

Some general characteristics include: **illogical and excessive involvement in work**, **lack of balance** between personal life and work, and a f**eeling of having no other choice**.



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It's something I can't do without. I'm very tired, I like my job, but I'm really devastated. I'm angry at my organization. I feel like they're blackmailing me in a certain sense. The managers say that we are very good and that we need to rest, but then in reality my phone continues to ring even on my days of rest. I'm always here even on my days rest, I can't not answer, I feel guilty if I don't.

And it also seems to me that they listen to me more than to everyone else, it's as if implicitly they were saying that mine is the right way to behave, that what I do is right, that always being here is correct. It's not that there are material rewards, but from an emotional and relational point of view, when we have meetings, if I say something then it's basically right, if V. says the same thing it's not right. It's as if they trusted me. But why? because I'm good or because I do the things that they want?

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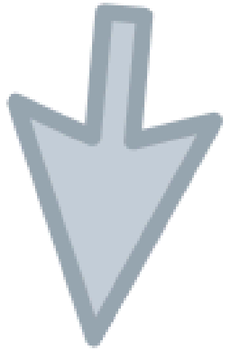
Workhaolism



High number of hours at work

exceeding formal job demands

motivation to work driven by factors other than money

difficult physically detaching from work

Engagement



It is not driven by a genuine passion for work, but by an avoidance of the guilt that arises when one is not working.

Authentic enthusiasm, fully engaged in work activities, shares its values, identifies with it, and is capable of taking distance from the workplace

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completion of work

Alternating work periods involve long times of not working followed by bursts of intense activity, frantic actions, and a search for a strong adrenaline rush. People often put off commitments, then work non-stop. This tendency to procrastinate comes from feeling unable to handle tasks (avoidance)

High tendency to start and complete tasks, continuous and compulsive work, engaging in multiple activities at the same time, maintaining high standards, valuing tasks even if they are far off in time (ongoing priorities), and gaining significant visibility and recognition

A slow, methodical, and reflective way of working, a fear of mediocrity in their actions, difficulty distinguishing between what is complete and what is not (they never feel that a task is finished), challenges in working in groups, and a tendency to prolong the ending

Continual search for stimulation, easily bored, takes on big challenges, unable to relax without strong excitement, enjoys having fun, engages in high-risk activities. There is a high tendency to start tasks but a low ability to complete them

start of work

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- **Work Life**: The workaholic tends to isolate her/himself, avoiding interactions with colleagues and preferring to work alone. This behavior can lead to a loss of control and a decline in performance standards.
- **Relationships**: Work addiction creates emotional distance from loved ones. Workaholics struggle to communicate and perceive non-work-related connections as threatening.
- **Family Life**: Initially, dedication to work is viewed positively by the family. However, as the boundary between work and personal life blurs, the family begins to feel neglected, while the workaholic experiences increasing loneliness.
- **Physical and Mental Health**: Work addiction is associated with harmful lifestyles, sleep disorders, anxiety, depression, and physical issues such as pain and burnout. Studies have shown links between compulsive work and various health disorders.



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