

How Commercial Insurance Applications Affect Your Cover

When businesses purchase commercial insurance, they focus on limits, excesses and terms. Yet the application is important. Insurers use this information to assess risk, decide whether to offer cover, and set the premium and terms. Inaccurate or incomplete answers can create difficulties when a claim arises.

Why the Application Matters

An application may request details about a business's activities, turnover, premises, claims history and risk management practices. This information forms the basis of the insurer's underwriting assessment. Under the Insurance Act 2015, commercial policyholders have a duty to make a fair presentation of the risk before cover is placed, renewed or varied. This means disclosing every material circumstance the business knows or ought to know, or providing enough information to put a prudent insurer on notice that it should ask further questions. A circumstance is material if it would influence a prudent insurer's judgement when deciding whether to insure the risk and on what terms.

If a business breaches this duty and the insurer shows it would have acted differently with the correct information, the available remedy depends on the circumstances. For a deliberate or reckless breach, the insurer may avoid the policy and refuse claims. For other qualifying breaches, it may apply the terms it would have imposed, reduce a claim proportionately or avoid the policy if it would not have provided cover at all.

Common Application Errors

Several mistakes may increase the risk of a dispute over cover:

- **Incomplete descriptions of activities**—Vague or outdated wording may omit specialist services or operations the insurer has not assessed.
- **Undisclosed premises**—Businesses should report all locations where they operate, store property or

carry out work, including secondary or temporary sites.

- **Incorrectly named policyholders**—The application should identify the legal entities that own or operate the business and bear the risk. Listing only a trading name or the wrong group company may create gaps.

Applicants should seek clarification when a question is unclear rather than guess or leave it incomplete. They should also involve employees who understand the relevant operations, finances, property and risk management practices instead of relying on one person to complete the entire application. Keeping copies of submitted applications, correspondence and supporting records can help establish what was disclosed and when.

Give Renewals the Same Attention

A renewal is a new insurance contract, so businesses should not treat it as an automatic continuation of existing cover. Prefilled answers may no longer reflect current activities. Before each renewal, review every response and report changes involving services, turnover, ownership, premises, claims or corporate structure.

Businesses should also consider whether they have acquired new equipment, begun working with different materials, entered new markets, changed their supply chains, increased vehicle use or introduced new technology. Even changes that appear relatively minor may affect how an insurer assesses the risk.

Businesses should record significant operational changes throughout the year and discuss them with their insurance professional, particularly if the policy may need to be varied before renewal.

Conclusion

Contact the insurance professionals at MacKay Corporate Insurance Brokers for more information about completing commercial insurance applications, managing renewals and purchasing appropriate cover for your organisation.

Addressing Silent Burnout in the Workplace

Burnout is a state of chronic physical, mental and emotional exhaustion caused by prolonged stress. Mental Health UK's Burnout Report 2026 found that 91% of UK adults experienced high or extreme pressure or stress in the previous year. Among workers, 35% would not feel comfortable discussing it with a manager, allowing serious strain to remain hidden. Silent burnout describes employees who struggle but do not show the expected signs. They may remain productive and engaged while concealing exhaustion or distress. The problem may only become apparent at breaking point, potentially resulting in ill health, resignation or declining work quality.

Why Silent Burnout Is Easy to Miss

Managers may know to watch for missed deadlines, absence, disengagement or behavioural changes. However, employees experiencing silent burnout may show few obvious warning signs. Factors that can keep it hidden include:

- **Masking behaviour**—Employees may actively conceal stress and continue to appear composed.
- **Presenteeism**—An employee may be at work or logged in but not fully functioning because of poor health or well-being. They may perform well enough to avoid concern while quietly struggling.
- **Culture-driven silence**—Fear of appearing weak, worries about job security and poor relationships with managers may make speaking up feel risky.

Why Addressing Silent Burnout Matters

Burnout can affect well-being, attendance and retention. Mental Health UK found that 1 in 5 workers took time off because of poor mental health caused by stress in the previous year. Of those who took time off because of extreme pressure or stress, 27% received no support when they returned and only 17% had a formal return-to-work plan. The consequences can be significant when high performers burn out. They may hold valuable knowledge, client relationships and mentoring responsibilities, so an unexpected departure can be disruptive. Prolonged exhaustion may also affect judgement, concentration and work quality.

Signs to Watch For

No single behaviour proves an employee is experiencing burnout, but subtle changes may justify a sensitive conversation. Managers should watch for:

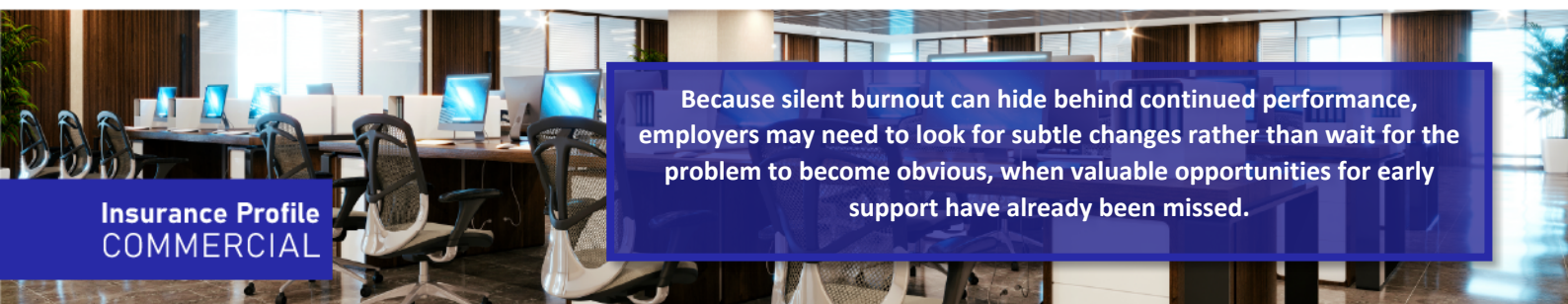
- A decline in work quality without corresponding complaints or visible frustration
- Reduced initiative from someone who previously went beyond what was required
- Unusually long hours without a corresponding increase in output
- Withdrawal from team events, mentoring or projects the employee previously enjoyed.

What Employers Can Do

Employers should consider organisation-wide safeguards that address the causes of burnout and make support easier to access:

- Train managers to check in without being intrusive. Conversations about workload, not just performance, can give employees an opportunity to speak before reaching breaking point. Managers should listen, respect confidentiality and avoid attempting to diagnose anyone.
- Address structural issues. Workload reviews, realistic staffing and clear boundaries around out-of-hours availability can tackle underlying causes instead of placing responsibility solely on employees to cope.
- Explain available support. Regularly communicate how employees can access employee assistance programmes, occupational health services and mental health resources, and reassure them that seeking help will not disadvantage them.
- Build psychological safety. Employees should be able to raise concerns without being viewed as less committed or capable. Managers can then review workloads, consider reasonable adjustments and signpost appropriate support.

Timely, accurate information about employee well-being is essential to an effective workplace risk management programme. For more guidance on managing burnout risks and supporting employees, contact us today.



Because silent burnout can hide behind continued performance, employers may need to look for subtle changes rather than wait for the problem to become obvious, when valuable opportunities for early support have already been missed.