

REIMAGINING RESILIENCY

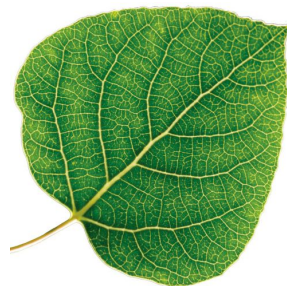


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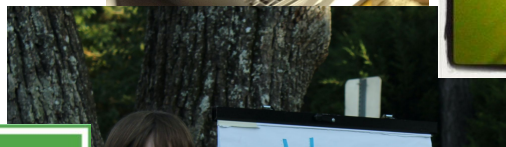
The Resiliency Audit

A tool for organizations seeking collective resilience





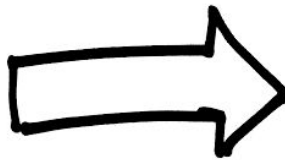
MASS
MISSISSIPPI ALUMNI & STUDENTS
FOR SUSTAINABILITY







(CreditChipolla/Shutterstock)



Sailing Hawks Consulting

Leading teams to new heights

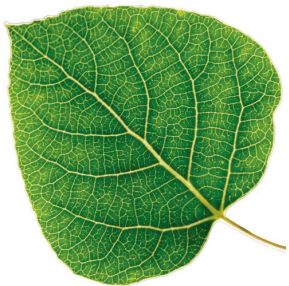


Our theory of change:

*The strength of our movement is in the
resilience of our teams.*



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Burn Out



75%

of workers have experienced burnout



67%

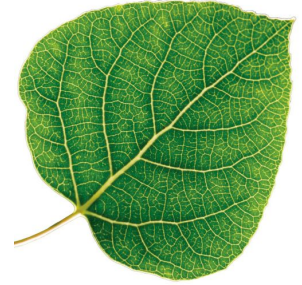
believe their burnout has worsened since
the COVID-19 pandemic



Even the
World Health
Organization
has recognized
burnout.



Definition: Burnout



Characterized by a deep exhaustion that can permeate all aspects of wellbeing, including physical, emotional, and mental health. This state is brought on by persistent, long-term stress and is often associated with one's job.



Physical symptoms of burnout



Fatigue



Changes in sleep and appetite



Lowered immune function



High blood pressure



Headaches



Dizziness



Gastrointestinal issues

Other common characteristics

Lack of motivation

Irritability

Overwhelm

Reduction in productivity

Decreased compassion and empathy for others

Primary Causes of Burnout

Persistent sense of urgency within an organization

Workload that consistently exceeds one's capacity

Not being adequately compensated for one's work

Not being recognized for one's accomplishments

Lack of support and/or clarity from supervisors

Not feeling aligned with the organization's mission or purpose

Not having a sense of community within the organization

Lack of autonomy in one's position

Sense of unfairness between employees

20%

The voluntary turnover rate for nonprofits.



150%

of the *annual* salary to replace a mid-level employee.



400%

of the *annual* salary to replace a high-level employee.



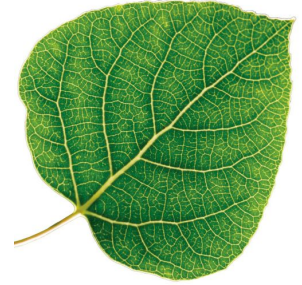


Reimagining resiliency



Definition: Resiliency

the practice of tuning into our strengths, limitations, and capacities, and accurately communicating them, in order to stay within an optimal level of engagement and stress tolerance.



Resiliency is *not* about staff learning how to cope with whatever their organization throws at them.

It's about their organization learning how to adapt and support their staff in this changing world.



50-70%

of how employees perceive their organization's climate (which includes mood) is attributable to the actions and behaviors of their leader.



It is up to leadership to support their staff and, most importantly, serve as a model for resiliency.





We envision a future where
your health is just as
important as your
organization's metrics and
deliverables.



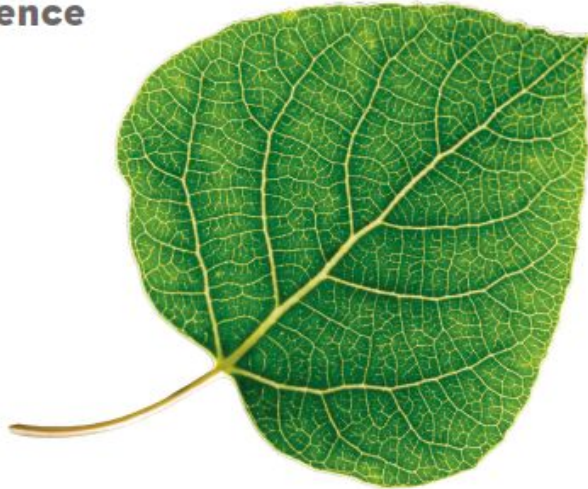
REIMAGINING RESILIENCY



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The Resiliency Audit

**A tool for organizations
seeking collective
resilience**



Our goal is to check the vitals of your organization in order to help you identify opportunities for improvement and promote long-term organizational effectiveness.

Step 1: Learn about resiliency

An Introduction to Resiliency

The first step in our journey is to learn what resiliency is.

There are many different definitions. Most of them revolve around the ability to adapt to hardship. For these definitions, resilience is defined by struggle. For instance, the American Psychological Association defines resiliency as "the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands."¹ The Mayo Clinic defines resilience simply as "the ability to adapt to difficult situations."² Psychology Today describes resilience as "the psychological quality that allows some people to be knocked down by the adversities of life and come back at least as strong as before."³

While these definitions are correct, they certainly don't make resiliency sound very fun.

There will always be challenging situations to overcome. However, we believe difficulty does not define a person, nor should it define resilience. If one defines their level of resilience by how much difficulty they can withstand, eventually they will break—either by their own doing or the doing of those in power around them.

A Practice of Tuning In

Resiliency, instead, should be centered in accepting and supporting your whole self, just as you are, right now. Thus, we define resilience as the practice of tuning into one's own strengths, limitations, and capacities, and accurately communicating them, in order to stay within an optimal level of engagement and stress tolerance. Resilience is not a trait you're born with, it's a skill that is practiced and learned.

This optimal level of stress tolerance is different for every person and can even change from day to day. Stress can be good. The proper amount of stress makes our muscles strong and releases endorphins that make us feel good. Stress can also make us more creative and help us overcome challenges with innovative solutions. But the important part is that most of the time, we are staying within our individual zones of stress tolerance.

Learning How to Adapt and Support Staff

Resiliency isn't about staff learning how to cope with whatever their organization throws at them. It's about their organization learning how to adapt and support their staff in this changing world. The way we've been operating doesn't work anymore. The rising incidence of burnout is evidence to that. Luckily, we are here to help you figure out what will work for your unique organization.

The opposite of resilience, burnout, is characterized by a deep exhaustion that can permeate all aspects of our wellbeing, including our physical, emotional, and mental health. This state is brought on by persistent, long-term stress, and can cause a decrease in cognitive ability, affecting one's decision-making skills, creativity, mental flexibility, and the comprehension of complex ideas.



Step 2: Find out where you're at by completing the Staff and Organizational Assessments

Staff Resiliency Assessment FOR STAFF

Please answer the questions below truthfully and to the best of your knowledge. This form will take 15 minutes or less to complete. If you're not quite sure which answer to choose, remember "first choice, best choice." This means go with your gut and pick the first answer that pops into your head. Please indicate if the following statements are true "Always," "Often," "Sometimes," "Rarely," or "Never."

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I feel connected to my organization's mission and vision.					
I have the power to create positive change in my position.					
I believe my organization uses effective strategies and tactics.					
I feel engaged during staff meetings.					
I feel I can be honest about my mental health with my supervisor.					
I can talk openly about burnout with my supervisor and colleagues.					
I am treated with empathy and respect by my supervisor and the leadership team.					
I feel that my colleagues and I are treated fairly.					
I feel a sense of community with my colleagues.					
At the end of the day I can go home and relax without thinking about work.					
At the end of the day I still have the energy to engage with tasks outside of work.					
Workplace stress does not affect my mental health.					
I know what is expected of me at work.					
My supervisor provides clear expectations.					
I trust leadership to communicate important information to staff.					
My organization values and practices transparency.					
I know my boundaries are respected.					
I am allowed to ask for help.					
My workload and my capacity match.					
The pace of work within the organization is sustainable for me.					
I have enough time during the workday to finish my work and meet my deadlines.					
At work, I am able to stay focused.					
At work, I am able to think clearly and comprehend complex ideas.					
I am excited to go to work in the morning.					
I am passionate about the work that I do.					
I feel happy at work.					
I do not get overwhelmed at work.					
My stress levels at work feel tolerable.					
My compensation accurately reflects my experience and the work I put in.					
I feel secure in my position.					
Do external circumstances (such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, or the current political climate) affect your feelings toward work? If so, briefly explain.					
Have there been any big shifts within the organization lately? If so, briefly explain.					
Has your level of productivity at work changed recently? If so, briefly explain.					

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Internal Organization Resiliency Assessment FOR LEADERSHIP

This worksheet was designed to be filled out by the executive director, human resources staff, a member of the leadership team, or a member of the board of trustees—whomever has access to the relevant information. The purpose of this worksheet is to analyze the quantitative markers for resiliency within the organization, including paid time off, work hours, compensation, and other benefits. Answer the questions below as thoroughly as possible. Once you have completed each question, use the information in the Scoring Yourself section to assess the result.

Paid Time Off (PTO)

1. In total, how many employee vacation days have been taken compared to the number of vacation days offered?

2. In total, how many employee sick/wellness days have been taken compared to the number of sick/wellness days offered?

Work Hours

3. What is the average number of hours worked by staff weekly? If staff are salaried, how often do staff members exceed 40 hours per week?

Compensation

4. Is your employee compensation competitive compared to other industry nonprofits and does it reflect the cost of living in their location(s)? To find the answers to this question, some market research may be needed. Pay attention to what salaries similar organizations are offering. Take advantage of salary calculator tools at [Glassdoor](#) and [Salary.com](#). Research the [cost of living](#) where your employees are located.

5. Do employees receive merit-based raises at least yearly? If so, what range of percentage raises were given in the last 3 years? If not, why?

6. Do employees receive annual cost of living salary increases? If so, what percentage increases were given in the last 3 years? If not, why?

Other Benefits

7. What other employee benefits do you offer? Circle all that apply.

Wellness day	Nature days
Health benefits/Mental health benefits	Dental insurance
Vision insurance	Retirement account with matching contributions
Retirement account without matching contributions	Life insurance
Disability insurance	Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) or Health Savings Accounts (HSAs)
Paid medical leave	Unpaid medical leave
Gym or health club membership	Sabbatical program
Allowances for work-from-home equipment	Professional development allowances and mentoring
Reduce work week / 32-hour work week	Salary bonuses

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Step 3: Create a short and a long-term resiliency plan using the provided recommendations

Recommendations for Increased Staff Resiliency

CATEGORY	TERM	RECOMMENDATIONS	EXPLANATION, IF APPLICABLE
Employee Benefits	Long-term	As part of your benefits package, make sure to provide: • Adequate vacation and sick/leaves days • Health benefits that include liberal behavior health benefits Also provide one or more of the following: • Nature to days • Professional development allowances and mentoring • Gym or health club membership • Subsidized program • Allowances for work-from-home and/or ergonomic equipment	Nature to days are optional paid time off that employees can use to get outside to support their mental health and take advantage of the healing nature of, well, nature.
	Salary	• Ensure salaries are competitive and market-based. Ideally the salaries you offer should be considered a "thriving wage." • Give yearly merit-based salary increases • Give yearly accurate cost-of-living increases • Provide salary bonuses when possible • Implement a salary transparency policy	The "minimum wage" is the lowest amount that an employer can legally pay their employees. The federal minimum wage is \$7.25 an hour. There is no city in the United States where the federal minimum wage is considered enough to live.¹ A "thriving wage" is defined as the minimum amount an individual must be paid to meet their basic needs, like food and shelter, but not much else. MIT created a living wage calculator that can be used to determine the living wage by location. That can be found https://livingwage.mit.edu/. But we are aiming for a "thriving wage." While still an emerging concept, the thriving wage can be thought of as the amount needed to not only live, but flourish, in a given area. This includes the amount of money needed to take part in travel, hobbies, and the other things that make life exciting and worthwhile. Every human should be paid a thriving wage no matter their job function. Unfortunately, there is not a thriving wage calculator.² We hope there will be in the future, but in the meantime, here is a partial article from a company that implemented their own thriving wage.
Collective Culture these are recommendations that are implemented on an organization-wide basis	Short-term	• Ensure employees have the ability to take frequent breaks • Allow for flexible schedules to accommodate a variety of needs • Calibrate resources publicly • Provide opportunities for staff connection and community building during work hours • Reduce interruptions • If you have staff that come into an office, make sure to create an environment conducive to stress reduction and productivity. This can be accomplished by reducing unnecessary noise, using natural light, and incorporating natural elements, like plants, in offices.	A flexible schedule usually refers to allowing employees to choose their daily start and end times, within reason. This helps accommodate people with children that need to be picked up from school or folks with disabilities that have frequent doctors appointments. There are endless benefits to a flexible schedule. Giving your employees the right to work when and where they want is huge when it comes to long-term resilience. Trust and safety are the foundational elements of resilient teams. To build this, teams must spend time getting to know each other. By providing opportunities to do so during work hours, you are investing in the longevity of your teams. With instant messenger platforms like Slack and constant emails being the norm, interruptions are common in the workplace. However, a University of California study found that it can take 23 minutes to get back on task after an interruption.³ This is a huge time suck and a stressor that can be easily avoided by creating policies aimed at reducing interruptions. Some policy ideas include only allowing instant messaging during certain times of day or experimenting with a "no-email Friday" or a "no-Slack Friday." Learning what works best for your staff and enforcing it will be key.
	Long-term	• Designate a "resiliency leader" or a resiliency working group, that individual staff members can check in with on a weekly or monthly basis regarding their resiliency levels. Leadership can check in with that person or group and work with them to keep tabs on the resiliency "temperature" of the organization and implement changes as needed. The resiliency leader or working group must be compensated for additional responsibilities or have something taken off their plate to offset the additional work. • Pilot a reduced work week	A reduced work week is when employees work 80% of their normal hours, but keep 100% of their salary. Employees typically work Monday through Thursday and then enjoy a three-day weekend. This may sound like a lark to some employers, but bear us out. Companies that have piloted a reduced work week have seen an increase in productivity and employee well-being, providing even more competitive to give it a shot. A recent pilot of 70 companies in the UK has shown very promising results. According to Bloomberg, "Nearly all of the participating UK organizations (95%) said they'd likely keep four-day schedules after the pilot. In November 2022, almost half (48%) said that productivity had improved, while 48% said it has remained stable."⁴ And BBC News stated, "the organization that is running the UK pilot, says that 78% of employees are happier and less stressed with a reduced work week. Employee retention and a competitive edge when hiring are also advantages of utilizing a reduced work week."
Leadership Culture these are recommendations that are implemented and utilized by leadership	Short-term	• Never question when an employee needs time off. • Ensure an employee's capacity and their workload correspond as closely as possible. • Provide realistic and clear expectations. • Ensure frequent communication and transparency. • Take neuroscience seriously. • Keep employees informed of internal change. • Ensure performance expectations and metrics are within an employee's control. • Ensure autonomy within staff positions. • Trust employee expertise and don't micromanage. • Make sure employees have the resources they need and the decision-making power to achieve their goals. • Provide regular opportunities for staff to give their supervisors feedback, perhaps during staff reviews. • Check in on staff stress levels. If staff are overwhelmed, prioritize and take things off their plate. • Never ask your staff to "do more with less." • Provide special accommodations to employees with disabilities, including mental health disabilities. • Practice empathy and active listening. • Make sure the values of your organization are reflected internally.	Remember that your staff are people, not robots. Brains need time to rest after a stressful meeting or an unfavorable outcome. They also need about 25 minutes to get back on task after an interruption, as we've already seen. Our brains also need downtime throughout the day. High-order thinking, which includes concept creation, big picture thinking, problem solving, and brainstorming, takes more energy and can't be sustained indefinitely. Our brains need breaks to operate optimally. Active listening is a term coined by Carl Rogers and Richard Farson which means to listen to understand, not to respond. Many times when we are in a conversation, especially a heated one, we're already developing a response in our heads while the other person is still speaking. While active listening, we challenge ourselves not to do that, and instead, tap into our empathy and seek to understand the other person's point of view. Accommodations for staff with disabilities may include flexible work schedules, extended work deadlines, or a smaller scope of work. If your mission is to promote the health and longevity of your local ecosystem, make sure you are doing the same for your staff.
	Long-term	• Provide emotional intelligence training to supervisors within the organization.	Daniel Goleman, who coined the term emotional intelligence, has an emotional intelligence course , but do some research and find a training that would fit best for your staff.



Step 4: Implement your plans



Step 5: Give us your feedback



Resiliency is a
collective
responsibility.



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