



FROM THE QUARTERLY PARTNERWELL PULSE REPORT

People Leaders: We're Burnt Out, What Now?

Middle management sits in a uniquely challenging position, expected to execute strategy from senior leaders while supporting and motivating their team members. **It is not surprising that pressure and stress can add up**

Managers consistently report higher levels of stress and burnout compared to the employees they manage.¹ Studies show that an estimated 78% of middle managers are experiencing burnout.²

We often hear from our clients that balancing the demands of their roles with the complexity of people dynamics can be incredibly challenging. In the daily hustle of projects, deadlines, and emails, it is easy to get caught in the flow and stop slowing down to truly recognize and connect with their teams. Human beings are complicated, and providing meaningful support to everyone on a team is not always straightforward. It takes time, energy, and genuine interest to invest in people, not just as employees, but as individuals.

Recognition is one effective way to address manager burnout. *"Employees who strongly agree they get valuable feedback about their performance from the people they work with are 57% less likely to be burned out."*³

The need for recognition and connection does not stop at the frontline – it goes all the way up. People leaders also benefit deeply from being seen and acknowledged. Yet, as individuals move up the ladder, those conversations around growth, contribution, and support often become less frequent. There is a tendency to assume they do not need it. The truth is that we all do.

DO YOUR PART

Recognition, growth, and human connection are essential at every level. It is critical that leaders take time to recognize each other, and senior leaders recognize their direct reports.

Keep in mind that career growth and development conversations should continue regardless of tenure.

SHARE STORIES

Change can start with something simple: honesty. Talking about stress does not make you weak, it makes you human. And it just might give your team the permission they need to take care of themselves, too.

When leaders openly acknowledge their own stress, in a productive way, they can help reduce the stigma around mental health and burnout. This creates a culture of understanding, connection, and support, one where it's okay to say, *"I'm struggling too."*⁴

■ People Leaders: We're Burnt Out, What Now?

MAKE TIME FOR YOU

It's essential to prioritize self-care, even in the midst of a busy life. Think back to the familiar saying we hear every time we fly: "You must put on your own oxygen mask before helping others." The same principle applies here.

Taking time to move your body, get outdoors, sleep well, and spend meaningful time with quality friends and family is not just beneficial, it's crucial for your overall wellbeing.

Interested in learning how you can support your middle managers?

Reach out to the PartnerWell team:

partnerwell@tpgrp.com

MEET THE AUTHORS



Hayley Hughes MS, CN, LMHC CWPC

PartnerWell Practice Leader



Katie Hassall MBA, CWPC

Senior Strategic Account Manager

This material is to be used for informational purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should any of the materials be construed as professional or medical advice.

1. Clifton Jim, Harter, Jim. "Culture Shock: An Unstoppable Force Has Changed how We Work and Live. Gallup's Solution to the Biggest Leadership Issue of Our Time." Washington D.C., Gallup Press. 2023
2. Brower, T. (2023, January 29). Managers have major impact on mental health: How to lead for wellbeing. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tracybrower/2023/01/29/managers-have-major-impact-on-mental-health-how-to-lead-for-wellbeing/>
3. Gallup, & workhuman. (2024). The Human-Centered Workplace: Building Organizational Cultures That Thrive.
4. *Wu, A., Roemer, E. C., Kent, K. B., Ballard, D. W., & Goetzel, R. Z. (2021). Organizational best practices supporting mental health in the workplace. Journal of occupational and environmental medicine, 63(12), e925.