

Working out **burnout**

Research Report

An in-depth study to get to the heart of what triggers burnout with professionals in UK businesses, identifying trends across family set-ups, industries and seniority of position, as well as offering key insights for employers on preventative approaches to burnout.

FULL RESULTS

April 2017

Introduction

It is astonishing to think that as many as three quarters (75%) of professionals aged 25-34 already feel worn out by the type of work and the environment in which they work in. And as many as 57% of all professionals feel that way.

The threat of burnout is real and immediate. It is not reserved for middle age or later life. In fact, last year in the UK, younger workers took more days off work due to stress than older workers (roughly 65% of 16-24 young workers compared to only 24% of older workers).

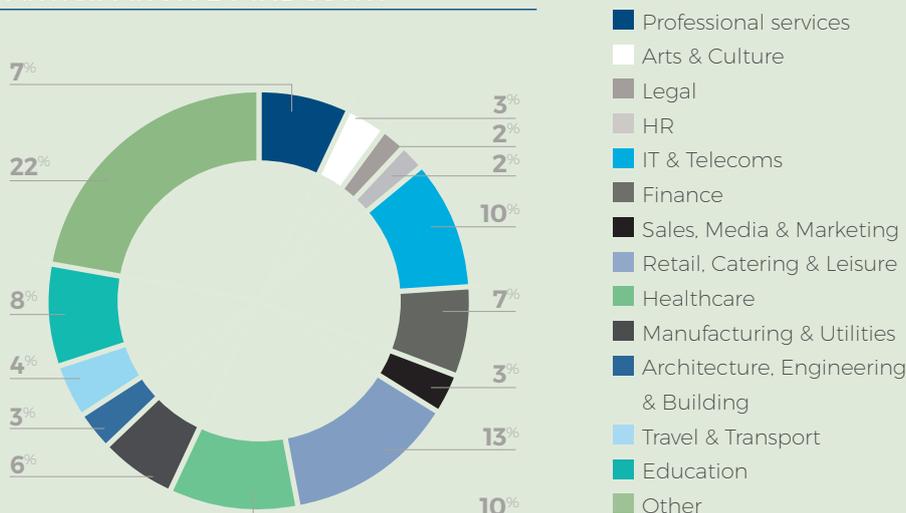
This paper sets out new research based evidence which challenges all types of professional organisations to prioritise the importance of the wellbeing issues experienced by their employees in the workplace and at home. The research highlights the very real impact on individual and organisational performance when the subjective wellbeing of an employee is poor, and the risk of burnout is high.

To underpin its focus on issues of wellbeing and supporting organisations to retain employees, Talking Talent commissioned this research from Censuswide, who spoke to a representative sample of professionals across a range of levels, ages, sectors and family circumstances.

Through this research Talking Talent wanted to explore the prevalence of burnout within **five** different working populations: **working mothers, working fathers, working parents, and men and women without children.** The research was designed to get to the heart of what triggers burnout within these populations, identifying trends across industries, seniority of position and age profiles.

Talking Talent's research provides key insights for employers to enable preventative approaches to burnout. Here, the results from approximately 1,300 professionals demonstrate just how critical this is.

PARTICIPATION BY INDUSTRY



75%

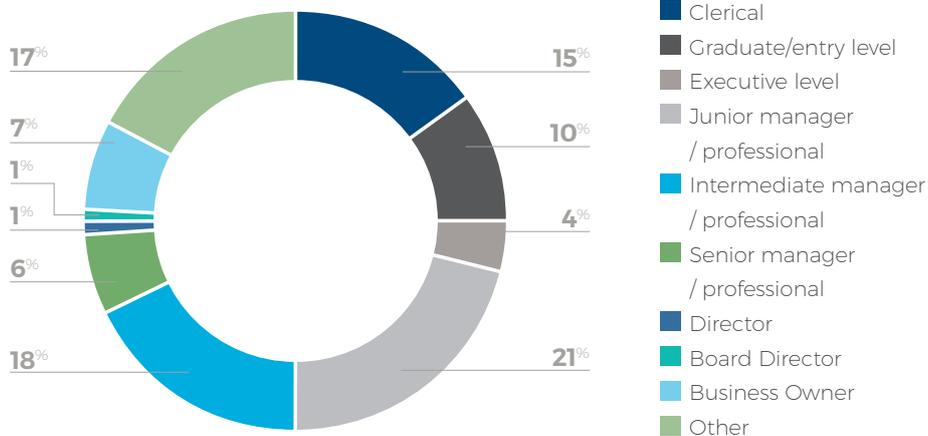
of professionals aged 25-34 already feel worn out by the type of work and the environment in which they work in.

The research highlights the very real impact on individual and organisational performance when the subjective wellbeing of an individual is poor, and the risk of burnout is high.

Research respondents included:

- 257 working mothers
- 298 working fathers
- 363 working women without children
- 369 working men without children

PARTICIPATION BY JOB LEVEL



The research looked at responses from these groups to understand how wellbeing issues, and attitudes to burnout specifically, differed. The research and analysis were broadly informed by the categorisation used within the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) which looks at burnout across three scales:

- **Emotional exhaustion** – where people feel emotionally overextended and exhausted by the work and the environment in which they work
- **Depersonalisation** – where people report having no feelings or negative, cynical feelings towards their co-workers or the recipients of the type of work they do
- **Personal accomplishment** – where people have a negative sense of their own abilities and confidence, and cannot see any worth in their own achievements in the work they undertake.

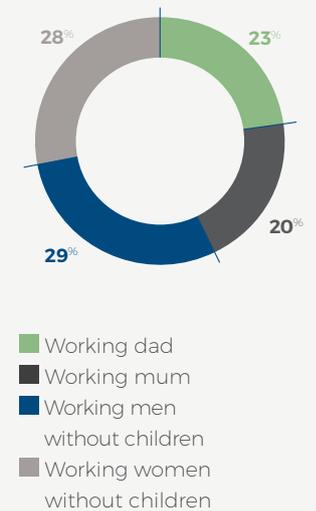
Burnout is an often-used phrase and there can be much variety around its definition and prevalence, which is why the MBI is so helpful. The context for this research appears to be an increased risk of social, emotional, psychological and physical distress as employees wrestle with more complex and stressful lives.

How well has society equipped its citizens with skills to respond to these pressures? A reluctance to show weakness, and a reliance on a 'Be Strong' attitude, or a form of 'Blitz Spirit' may work for brief periods of time. However, burnout is an inevitable risk of our relentless drive for more productivity, with no end to upheaval and change in sight. The reality of our 'always on' cultures makes mental and physical illness more likely and more apparent.

Are burnout myths busted or backed up by this research? Is burnout more likely for working parents? Does stress and the associated risk of burnout rise as workers rise through their organisation's hierarchy? Do a new generation of employees joining the workforce react differently to the challenge of stress? Which sectors are struggling most with these issues?

Organisations are starting to wrestle with these questions and to define who is accountable for answering them. Some organisations are starting to ask directly 'what can we do?' This research offers some insight into the issue of burnout and highlights where organisations might best focus their effort.

PARTICIPATION BY WORKING PARENT STATUS



What cannot be disputed is the rise in cases of social, emotional, psychological and physical distress as employees wrestle with increasingly complex and stressful lives.

1. Working parents welfare

Is burnout more likely and harder to handle if you have children? How does burnout differ for workers who are parents and those who are not? How are things different between mums and dads who are working?

1.i FROM WORN OUT TO BURNOUT

Almost three in five (57%) of all workers feel worn out by the type of work and the environment in which they work in. But this number rises to over two-thirds (67%) for working parents.

So, feeling worn out is a real challenge for more than half of us, but working parents are feeling it more than those who don't have children.

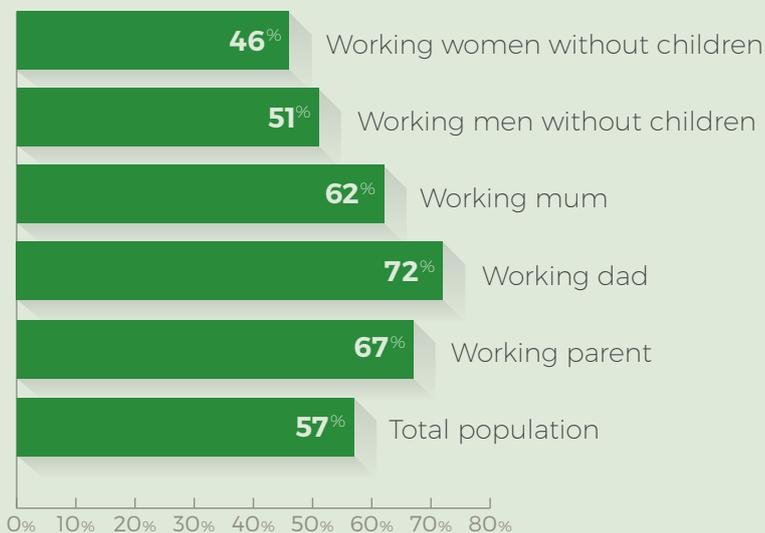
And this gap is wider for men at work. 72% of working dads claim to be physically and emotionally worn out by their work and working environment, compared to 51% of working men who do not have children.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) calls this **emotional exhaustion** – where people feel emotionally overextended and exhausted by the work and the environment in which they work.

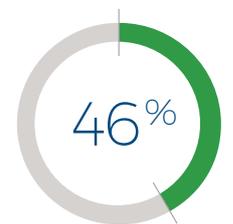
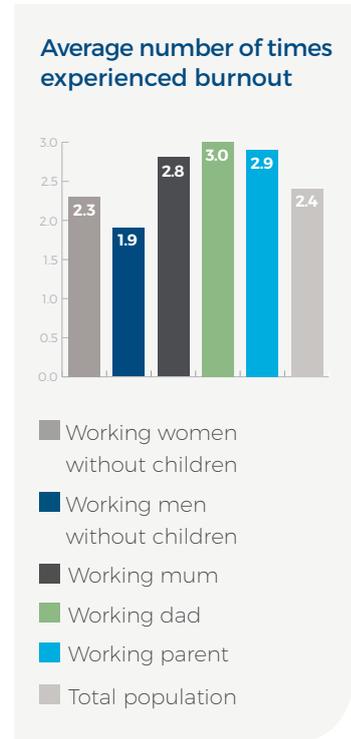
And how are parents expressing this feeling?

Well, 51% of working parents admit they become irritable or impatient with their colleagues, clients or family members, compared to just 38% for workers who don't have children.

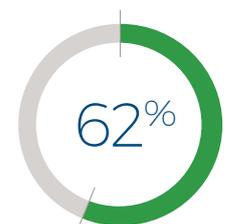
FEELING WORN OUT BY THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEY WORK



72%
of working dads claim to be physically and emotionally worn out by their work.



WORKING WOMEN WITHOUT CHILDREN FEELING WORN OUT



WORKING MUM FEELING WORN OUT

1.ii BACKED BY THE BOSS?

So the research suggests that the dual identity of being mum or dad, together with their role at work is placing particular strain on working parents and making burnout more likely. Why are working parents suffering more? What support do they feel they get from their boss, and how does that differ from professionals without children?

The most important context here is that nearly 50% of all workers do NOT feel they get enough support from employers.

Only 56% of working parents feel that their organisation recognises and actively supports them attending to their wellbeing. This is very similar to the proportion of professionals without children (55%) who feel that way. And the 58% of working parents who feel that their boss recognises and actively supports them attending to their wellbeing, matches 58% of professionals without children who feel the same.

Do non-parents expect more from their employers because parents already feel they are getting some support?

1.iii RANGE OF REACTIONS

How are working parents expressing or reacting to the strain and feeling worn out? Well, 69% of working parents (both men and women) noticed sleep and appetite changes brought on by stress.

The research does suggest that men and women are reacting differently to the strain of life as a working parent. Men appear to be showing the strain more day to day, but that doesn't mean women aren't feeling it too – perhaps they are just expressing themselves differently?

More men appear to need an alcoholic drink at the end of the day. 54% of working dads say they need an alcoholic drink at the end of the working day compared with 39% for working mums. And even fewer working women without children (27%) say they need a drink after work.

Almost 40% of working dads feel prescribed medication helps them. This number falls to 27% for dads who do not work.

And working dads are most likely to have trouble managing their emotions at work – 41% agree that this is difficult for them, compared to 29% of working mums and 26% of workers with no children.

This could be an example of what the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) labels **depersonalisation**, where people can experience negative, cynical feelings towards their co-workers.

So, men appear to be struggling more than women with the pressure of juggling work and family. Or are they just expressing this frustration differently?

58% of working mums report unexplained somatic systems such as headaches. For female professionals who don't have children this number is only 48%.

We can't prove that men have their hearts on their sleeve here and women are keeping control of their response... but it's possible.

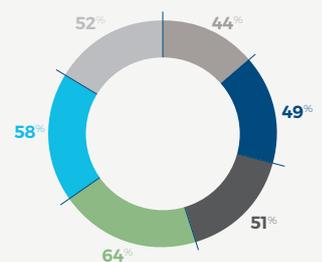
Nearly

50%

of all workers do NOT feel they get enough support from employers.

The cost in burnout and mental and physical illness can arrive later, when the reality of 'always on' cultures takes its toll.

It happens more and more that I talk about my work in a negative way



■ Working women without children
■ Working men without children
■ Working mum
■ Working dad
■ Working parent
■ Total population

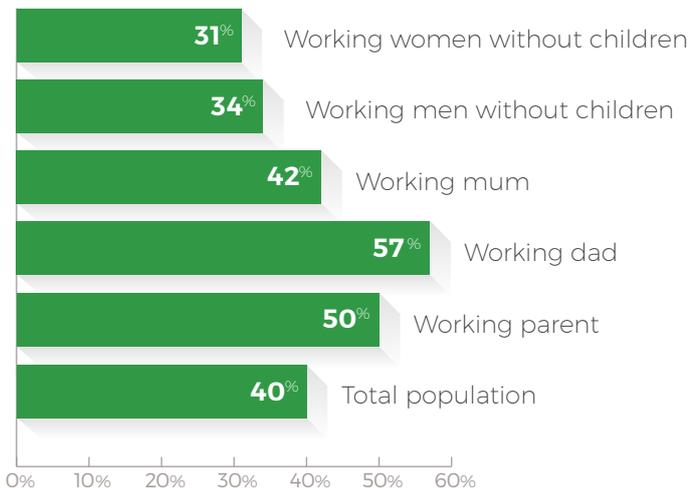
If women are more likely to be working part time, maybe they feel their employer has offered an important compromise already and they need to be seen to make that work. Are working mums adopting a mind-set that says: "I can't afford to burnout."

Is this an illustration of what Talking Talent describe as a reliance on a 'Be Strong' or a 'Blitz Spirit' attitude? This may work for brief periods of time, but the cost in burnout and mental and physical illness can arrive later, when the reality of 'always on' cultures takes its toll.

Certainly, more working dads (57%) worry that their job is hardening them emotionally. This compares to only 34% for working men who don't have children, 42% for working mums and 31% for female professionals workers without children.

More evidence then of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)'s concept of **depersonalisation**, with an absence of feeling or actively negative feelings coming through from these working dads in particular.

I WORRY THAT MY JOB IS HARDENING ME EMOTIONALLY



1.iv RISK TO RELATIONSHIPS

And what about relationships with those they work with? Well, more than half of working dads (54%) do NOT feel like building relationships with people they work with. For male professionals without children the number is only 41%, while working mums (46%) are also less keen than female professionals without children (38%).

But perhaps the clearest impact of all is on the relationships between working parents. 41% of working parents don't have enough energy for their family, friends and other activities after work. And 57% believe they are not being good enough parents or partners outside of work.

1.v RESPONDING TO DIFFERENT NEEDS

Either way - companies need to understand that parents have a different response to stress, compared with colleagues who do not have children. For example, 28% of working dads think that having more control over the work they do/having less work would enable them to attend to their own wellbeing better. And more working dads (27%) than professional males without children (22%) think that working from home would enable them to attend to their own wellbeing better.

54%

of working dads do NOT feel like building relationships with people they work with.

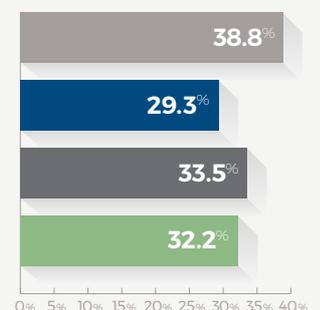
41%

of working parents DON'T have enough energy for their family, friends and other activities after work.

57%

believe they are not being good enough parents or partners outside of work.

I wouldn't feel comfortable reaching out to my employer if I was experiencing burnout



- Working women without children
- Working men without children
- Working mum
- Working dad

What about the response from workers worried about burning out?

Over a third (39%) of working women with no children wouldn't feel comfortable reaching out to their employer if they were experiencing a burnout. Almost three in ten (29%) women with children wouldn't feel comfortable reaching out for this support in the same situation.

What is the significance of this for employers? Well, certainly they must not rely on employees being able to self-diagnose symptoms in advance of burnout. Employers need to have processes and routines in place to enable and encourage employees to feel more comfortable coming forward.

If we're right in the assumption that mums especially do not want to risk any flexible arrangements that already exist at work, then this could be a further extension of that 'Be Strong' or a 'Blitz Spirit' attitude which Talking Talent warns about.

That is clearly a cultural challenge for employers to address. How can they evolve their working culture to give their people confidence that it is not a sign of weakness to start talking about the risk of burnout early enough to prevent it.

1.vi TIME IS MONEY

And what about the cost to employers in terms of attendance and productivity?

Over a quarter (27%) of working parents say that on average, seven or more days of their holiday actually went unused due to workload last year. More signs that this group feel the need to respond to any flexibility or understanding they believe their employer is showing them?

On the other hand, last year, approximately 46% UK workers took at least 1 day off work due to stress. Childless UK workers are much less likely to take days off work due to stress. Last year, over half of working mums and dads took at least one day off work due to stress.

As recently as February this year, the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) said that organisations must place wellbeing on a par with sickness in an effort to tackle the UK's spiralling sickness absence rate.

The IPPR estimated that 460,000 people transition from work to sickness and disability benefits a year, with employers paying £9bn a year for sick pay and associated costs. It calculated that the government spends an additional £14.5bn on support allowance. If sickness absence rates continued to spiral, the IPPR predicted that Britain's sickness benefits bill would rise to almost £17bn by the end of the decade.

And because mental ill-health is one of the leading causes of heightened sickness absence, tackling the increase in claims for mental health conditions must be a priority for policymakers and employers alike, the IPPR said.*

More than seven in ten (71%) workers have experienced burnout at least once in their lifetime, on average experiencing just over two periods of burnout (2.4) in their lifetime. And, as we have seen, this is more likely for working parents who experience burnout three (2.9) times in their lifetime, compared with workers without children who experience some burnout (2.1).

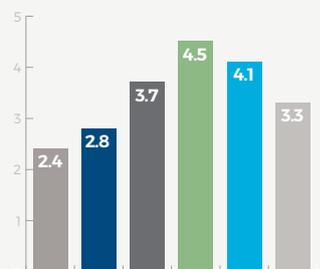
71%

(more than seven in ten) workers have experienced burnout at least once in their lifetime.

27%

(over a quarter) of working parents say that on average, seven or more days of their holiday actually went unused due to workload last year.

Average annual number of sick days due to stress



- Working women without children
- Working men without children
- Working mum
- Working dad
- Working parent
- Total population

* [REF: People Management 17/02/17]

2. Level pegging

At what stage of our careers are we feeling the pressure most? Where should companies look to identify the greatest burnout threat? The research shows clearly that senior managers are feeling the pinch more than other levels in a typical organisation hierarchy.

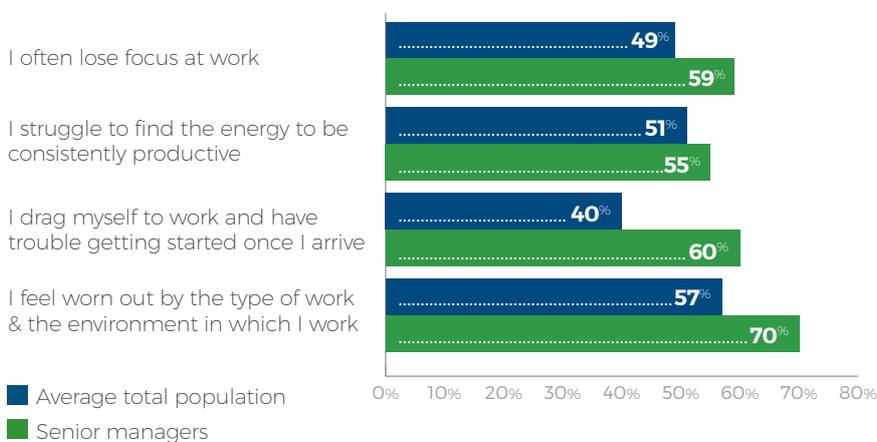
Some 70% of senior managers feel worn out by the type of work they do and the environment in which they work. Across all workers that number is only 57%.

60% of senior managers say they drag themselves to work and have trouble getting started once they arrive – for all workers this number falls to 40%.

59% of senior managers report that they often lose focus at work. For all workers that's only true for 49% in total.

Some 70% of senior managers feel worn out by the type of work they do and the environment in which they work.

SENIOR MANAGERS' STATISTICS



2.i SQUEEZING THE MIDDLE

These numbers suggest that senior managers are the 'squeezed middle' of the corporate workplace and most likely to be worried about, or suffering from burnout. **So, how and why are our senior managers more at risk?**

More senior managers (57%) are troubled by unexplained somatic symptoms such as headaches, backaches or other physical complaints, than workers in general (50%). And 43% of senior managers do not think clearly at work, compared with 31% of all workers.

More than half (57%) of all workers overall have become more cynical in relation to their career plan and success in their organisation in recent years. In itself that's a number to concern responsible employers. But among senior managers as many as two-thirds (66%) feel this way. 59% of workers feel they work too hard, but for senior managers the number rises to 68%.

43%
of senior managers
do not think clearly
at work.

The pattern appears clearly. In a relentless drive for efficiency and productivity over recent years, our experience indicates that organisations have placed more and more pressure on their senior manager population.

That means more and more is expected of senior managers just at the same time as the chance for reward in the shape of career progression has contracted with cost cutting programmes, keeping the number of promotion opportunities at an absolute minimum.

There's no question that this looks like a recipe for what the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) defines as emotional exhaustion – where people feel emotionally overextended and exhausted by their work. And it makes it harder for employers to deliver an effective response, as cynicism builds that the balance between employer and employee is all one way.

Senior managers want from their employer, significantly more than other employees, is increased parental leave.

2.ii SUPPORT OPTIONS

In terms of getting enough support from their employer to prevent them burning out, 56% of senior managers say it's not enough, whereas only 49% of all workers have this concern.

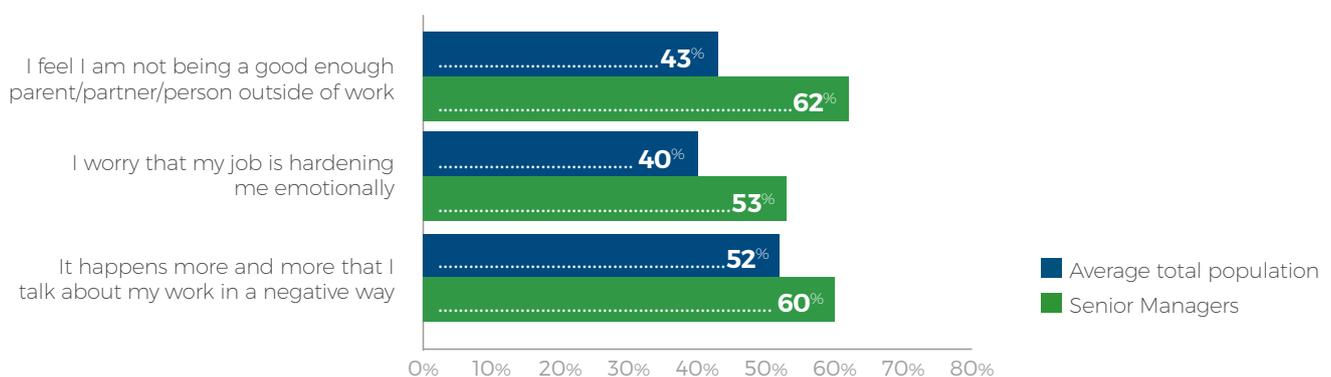
However, it's interesting that focusing on flexible working as an area for employers to improve is less important to senior managers (29%) than to workers overall (38%). So is working from home (14% of Senior Managers compared to 25% of all workers).

The one thing that senior managers want from their employer, significantly more than other employees, is increased parental leave (34% asked for that compared with 17% of workers in total). Over a quarter (26%) of working dads say that organisations could do better by increasing parental leave in pursuit of supporting the wellbeing of their staff.

Is this illustrating how many working parents are also senior managers, creating a double impact in terms of burn out?



SENIOR MANAGERS' STATISTICS



2.iii WORK LIFE UNBALANCED

And when it comes to life outside work there are significant differences for senior managers too.

70% of workers in total feel they have clear boundaries and a good level of balance between work and home. But for senior managers, only 60% feel that way.

40% of workers overall worry that their job is hardening them emotionally, but an even larger proportion of senior managers (53%) worry about that.

62% of them feel they are not being a good enough parent / partner / person outside of work. For workers overall this number falls considerably to 43%.

Senior managers are the worst offenders (with the exception of board directors) when it comes to leaving holiday unused due to work load. They average 5.4 days' holiday unused compared with 9.1 for board directors and 3.1 overall.

No surprise perhaps that they are also more likely to have lost contact with many friends / family members due to work and stress. 22% raised this as an issue compared with only 17% for employees overall.

2.iv MILLENIAL MAKE UP

Entry level graduates (79%) appear to be better than their colleagues (70%) at setting clear boundaries and a good level of balance between work and home. As you might expect, more graduates (60%) feel very energetic than all workers (50%).

But graduates are more sensitive than other colleagues about the balance of give and take between them and their employer. 66% felt that in their work they give a lot but get little in return, compared with 60% for all workers.

Perhaps no surprise then that better rewards are more important to graduates (58%) than to workers overall (42%).

Also, not a surprise that they are more likely to think about different careers. More graduates (57%) disagree that 'this is the only type of work I can imagine myself doing', than workers overall (52%).

But working still takes its toll, even for entry level workers. Almost three in five (57%) graduate workers feel worn out by the type of work and the environment in which they work in.

Senior managers average 5.4 days' holiday unused

70%

of workers in total feel they have clear boundaries and a good level of balance between work and home. But for Senior Managers, only 59% feel that way.

Almost three in five (57%) graduate workers feel worn out by the type of work and the environment in which they work in.

2.v COPING STRATEGIES

Graduates are not as good as their colleagues at coping with stress. For example, 38% admit that stress makes them feel burnout i.e. mentally, physically exhausted, compared to 30% for employees overall. And our research suggests they are more likely to report feeling unwell due to stress than workers in total (25% compared to 16%).

However, consistent with their higher energy levels perhaps, Graduates are also more likely than their colleagues to respond to stress by just 'getting on with it' (51% compared to 43%). These are warning signs that responsible employers need to respond to.

And they are less likely to feel comfortable reaching out to their employer when experiencing burnout (42% said they wouldn't comfortable with this, compared with 33% for all employees).

This starts to look like another example of the that 'Be Strong' or 'Blitz Spirit' attitude which we identified earlier when looking at working parents' response.

For different reasons, perhaps, graduates also appear more reluctant to raise these issues with employers. Perhaps they think it will be career limiting at a time when they are 100% focused on making a good impression and securing their forward career path.

So, again, employers cannot rely on employees self-diagnosing symptoms in advance of burnout. Employers need to have processes and routines in place to enable and encourage employees to feel more comfortable coming forward.

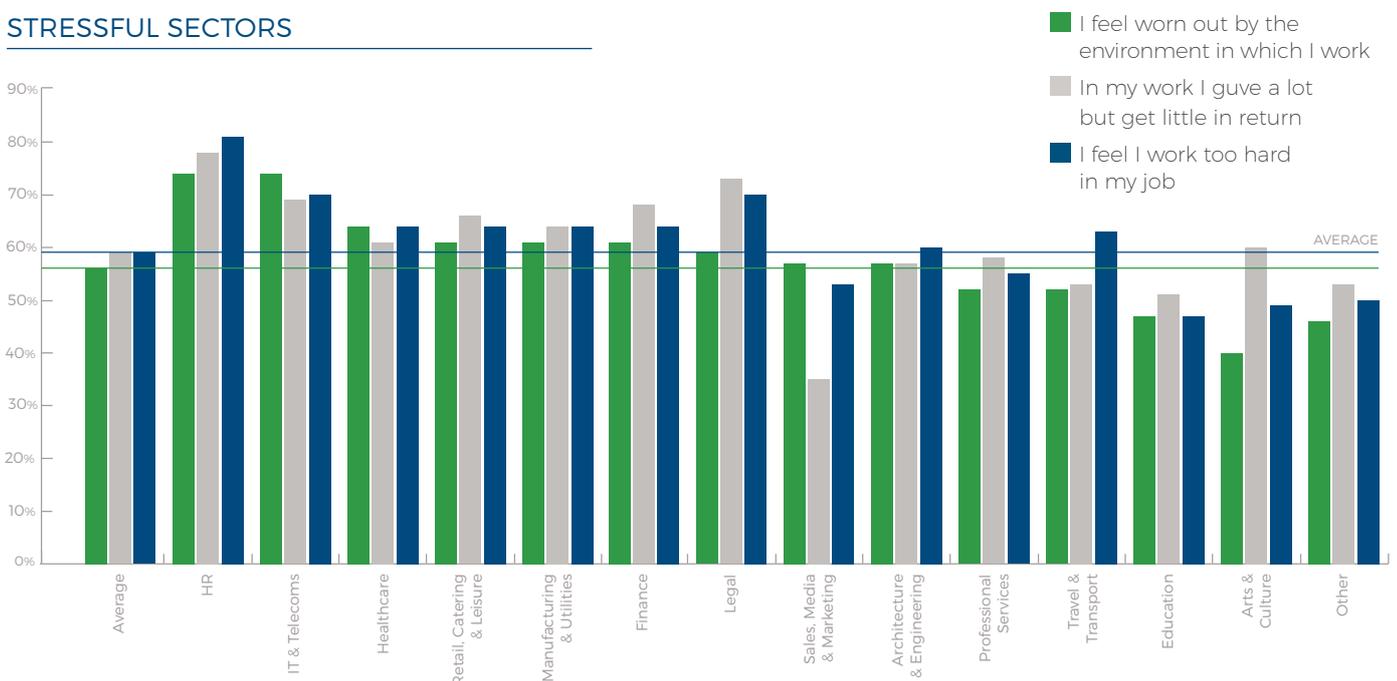
Just as with working parents, that could be a cultural challenge for employers to address. How can they evolve their working culture to give their people confidence that it is not a sign of weakness to start talking about the risk of burnout? And do so early enough to prevent it?

Finally, graduates also experience different consequences from burnout. They are more likely than their colleagues to lose confidence (48% compared to 43%), and to go into debt (27% compared to 21%).

Graduates (79%) appear to be better than their colleagues (69%) at setting clear boundaries and a good level of balance between work and home.

Graduates are not as good as their colleagues at coping with stress.

STRESSFUL SECTORS



3. Stressful sectors

Although more than half of all workers (57%) are feeling more worn out by the type of work and the environment in which they work, for HR and IT & Telecoms workers (both 74%) that feeling is even more pronounced. Almost two-thirds (64%) of healthcare workers also feel worn out by the type of work and the environment in which they work in.

Perhaps surprisingly, that feeling is less severe for workers in Education at 47%.

A similar picture emerged when workers were asked whether they have to 'drag themselves to work and have trouble getting started once they arrive'. 40% of workers overall complained about this, but for HR (52%) and IT & Telecoms (59%) more workers experienced this feeling and they were joined by Legal workers (50%). Again, in Education less workers felt this way – just 29% recognised this complaint.

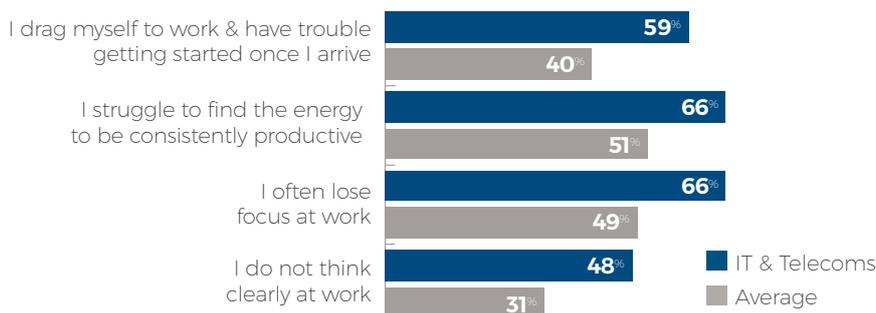
And it's the same pattern again, when workers were asked whether they 'struggle to find the energy to be consistently productive'. 52% of workers overall complained about this, but for HR (70%) and IT & Telecoms (66%) more workers experienced this feeling. And yet again, in Education less workers felt this way – just 44% recognised this complaint.

3.i SORTING OUT THE SYMPTOMS

When we look at physical symptoms of stress we see the same again. 50% of employees overall were troubled by unexplained somatic symptoms such as headaches, backaches or other physical complaints. More of those working in HR (63%) and IT & Telecoms (62%) experienced these symptoms, while they were less evident in Education (40%).

And what about the proportion of employees who complained that they 'do not think clearly at work'? Well, 31% of all employees complained about this, but for HR the number rose to more than twice that at 63%, for IT & Telecoms it rises to 48%, while in Education only 23% suffered from this complaint. And more than one-third (39%) of healthcare workers feel like they often lose focus at work.

IT & TELECOMMS



The pattern is clear and consistent. HR together with IT & Telecoms are feeling more stress in relation to burnout. While workers in other sectors, such as Education, are less impacted.

HR

I drag myself to work & have trouble getting started once I arrive



I struggle to find the energy to be consistently productive



I often lose focus at work



I do not think clearly at work



■ HR
■ Average

3.ii CAREER CALL

So, what's the impact of these findings when workers are asked to think about their career plan and success in their organisation over recent years?

57% of all employees say they have become more cynical – not an encouraging result for their employers. But worse for HR employees where 78% were more cynical, and for IT & Telecoms (69%). In Education, those who felt cynical about their career plan and success fell to 50%.

The pattern is clear and consistent. HR together with IT & Telecoms are feeling more stress in relation to burnout. While workers in other sectors, such as Education, are less impacted, it seems.

Last year, 78% UK workers in the HR industry took at least one day off work due to stress, compared to 33% UK workers in the Travel & Transport industry.

3.iii EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYERS

When we start to look at expectations of employers, the picture continues but some other points of interest emerge too.

For example, two thirds of both Legal (67%) and Finance (65%) workers agree that their organisations recognise and actively support them attending to their wellbeing. For workers overall this number falls to 55%.

In addition, when asked whether their 'boss recognises and actively supports them to attend to their own wellbeing', Legal (63%) and Finance (62%) both outperform workers overall (58%).

Are these early signs of the impact of actions by responsible employers in these sectors? It's not possible to be certain about that. Either way, the evidence of this research overall demonstrates that there is much more to be done.

3.iv MEANINGFUL WORK

Employees in the Legal sector are not short of meaning, direction and purpose though. At work 77% of them experience this, compared to 67% of all employees. And at home 83% of Legal professionals felt that way, compared to 73% of all professionals.

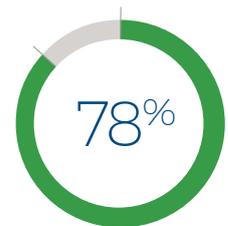
Individuals who lead a 'good and full life', which holds personal meaning and purpose, make time to reflect on their lives and work. They make sure they use their time to do things they consider to be truly important, in a way which feels fundamental for them. That gives them a sense of perspective about life's challenges and blessings, and makes them feel grateful for what they have. We also know that employees who have a sense of purpose and find meaning in their work feel more engaged.

In the context of our research, where the respondents reference a lack satisfaction in their work and lives, employers should take note. Employers need to consider showing more interest in what 'personal' meaning their staff have and need, in order to feel 'well' in their work.

31%

of all employees complained that they 'do not think clearly at work', but for HR the number rose to more than twice that at

63%



**OF HR PROFESSIONALS
TOOK AT LEAST 1 DAY
OFF SICK**

Overall 60% of workers felt that they gave a lot in their work, but got little in return. But for Legal workers as many as 73% felt that to be true. And for Finance 67% felt the same.

Managers need to be encouraged to take time to understand the motivations and drivers that make their people tick and connect with their work. If they do it can be really helpful in limiting the risk of employees 'checking out' at work and becoming disengaged and stressed. It's the difference between getting what colleagues need to thrive, rather than just survive. At the level of survival only, the risk of stress and burnout is high.

Going back to working parents for example, the gap between achievement and a sense of satisfaction is greatest for working dads. 63% experience a lack of satisfaction with their achievements, compared to 43% for working mums.

Here again there is a direct link to one of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)'s three characteristics of burnout. The MBI focuses on personal accomplishment – where people have a negative sense of their own abilities and confidence.

And, looking at our research, it's interesting that less Legal employees (43%) experience a 'lack of satisfaction with their achievements' than employees overall (51%), and in particular than Finance workers (59%) and IT & Telecoms colleagues (68%).

But that doesn't mean that Legal and Finance employees have a clean bill of health. Overall 60% of workers felt that they gave a lot in their work, but got little in return. But for Legal workers as many as 73% felt that to be true. And for Finance 67% felt the same.

3.v HARD WORK

So, when we consider how hard employees in different sectors feel they are working, it should not surprise us that more Legal workers (70%) and Finance workers (64%) feel they 'work too hard in their job' than across employees overall (59%). In light of other results, again we see that 81% of those working in HR feel they work too hard, and 70% of IT & Telecoms workers feel the same. By comparison on 47% of education workers feel that way.

But their hard work is translating in to job satisfaction. 58% of all workers felt that their overall level of job satisfaction was high. In Legal roles 77% of people felt that way and in HR 82% said the same.

3.vi PROBLEM SOLVING

Turning to what is expected of organisations to mitigate the risk of burnout – neither Legal nor HR workers think financial rewards are the answer. 39% of all employees thought organisation should pay employees more, but only 27% of Legal workers and only 30% of HR workers thought this.

Legal employees want more from their line manager (40% compared with 28% for all workers), and HR workers want increased parental leave (33% compared with 17% for all workers). Parental leave was also more important for employees in IT & Telecoms (27%) and Finance (26%), than for workers overall (17%).

What about the increased use of technology making it more difficult to switch off when you're not in the office? 24% of workers overall were bothered by this, but while it might not surprise us to find that it's more of a problem to Legal employees (37%), it is also interesting to see that as many as one third of IT & Telecoms workers (33%) are also struggling with this too!

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(70%)

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(59%)

Individuals who lead a 'good and full life', which holds personal meaning and purpose, make time to reflect on their lives and work.

Conclusion

Talking Talent believes that organisations need to take a much more proactive stance to support the wellbeing of their employees, as they respond to increased ambiguity. Whether is due to economic instability, political upheaval (such as BREXIT), or changes led by your employer, old certainties can no longer be relied on.

What's the risk to employers? Well, this research shows that almost a half (49%) of workers often lose focus at work. So, the advantages to employers of addressing the issue are clear.

Although organisations and leaders cannot fix employees wellbeing, they can facilitate the conditions in which individuals can learn to manage their own wellbeing better. That might be through modelling compassionate leadership, or through a greater understanding of the way in which wellbeing issues show up in the workplace.

Our work coaching women and working parents provides a rich base of experience through which issues of wellbeing and the risk of burnout are increasingly apparent. We believe that the stakes here are high. Unless organisations are brave enough to address the holistic picture in relation to wellbeing, then they risk undermining any positive momentum they might have achieved through inclusion, diversity and gender, or through cultural and leadership development.

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“We are all facing an unprecedented pace of change as modern life continues to travel at breakneck speed. So, adopting and adapting are crucial qualities for commercial success. All types of organisations need to place new importance on the all-around wellbeing of their people, by investing in workplace initiatives such as coaching and other forms of support. This research can really help us better understand a new source of competitive advantage. People really are the most valuable asset for any organisation.”

Sally Evans, Diversity & Inclusion and Employee Wellbeing Consultant at PwC



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