

When the going gets tough make sure your best people don't get going

The importance of resilience for the individual and organisation

Good employees are the lifeblood of any organisation and by recognising their abilities and looking after their wellbeing organisations can keep hold of their best people and avoid high levels of staff turnover which wastes money, time and resources.

Resilience is the ability of an individual to cope with stress and to come back from adversity or difficulty. It's the way in which we can see our way through our problems and the realisation of how they fit into the overall scheme of things. Resilience is available to us all providing we take care of ourselves in order to do it. You could think of it in terms of our own internal fuel tank; sometimes it gets a bit low and needs topping up; sometimes it's got the wrong type of fuel in it and sometimes we've been running on empty for too long.

By looking after our minds and physical condition, and by breaking up the day with other activities, we can embrace resilience. The way in which we each achieve it will differ; for some it will be reading a book or taking part in a sporting activity; some will prefer to sit quietly alone; whereas others will want to go out with friends. It's a case of knowing what you respond to best. Whatever we do, we need to replenish the energy we used coping with stress or change.

It's widely accepted that unhappy or unmotivated staff will work at around 70% and spend time avoiding work. On the other hand those who are keen and feel that there is trust within the organisation will not only work at 100%, they will actively look for more work and suggest process improvements because they feel they will be taken seriously.

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It's important for the leaders of an organisation to be clear about their role in developing people and recognise the responsibility they have for people's lives in terms of health and wellbeing. It can sound like a soft option but it makes hard-nosed business sense because it saves money. You only have to think about the amount of time and money involved when people take time off work through stress or the cost of making and remaking decisions because people aren't thinking clearly. All of that creates a huge amount of internal waste that no one accounts for.

So from the organisation's point of view, the ability to have resilience for your staff results in a more trusting relationship that then speeds the flow of information and reduces time wasted.

Peter Mayes is an Accredited Coach with the Association for Coaching and a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development).

He began his consultancy in 1997 after working within large organisations as a senior manager and trainer. He specialises in helping medium to large sized organisations in manufacturing and service industries focusing on issues with their key people and teams. He also works with individuals who are taking the next step in their career. With a proven track record Peter's unique mix of operational improvement productivity based experiences and people based development allows him to see things from a business and personal perspective.

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From Possibility to Reality

