Sustaining Peak Performance Without Burning Out

Corps Staff Professional Development: May 2025 Edition

May is Mental Health Awareness Month – a time to focus on your own well-being and the well-being of those around you. Mental health can be just as important as physical health. In high-demand environments like yours, taking care of your mental wellness helps ensure that you can continue to serve efficiently.

What is Burnout?

Burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged and excessive stress. It often results in reduced performance, feelings of cynicism or detachment, and a sense of ineffectiveness or lack of accomplishment.

Achieving and maintaining peak performance is essential for success in any field. However, it is equally important to avoid burnout, which can significantly impact your well-being and productivity. This Staff Professional Development outlines strategies for maintaining peak performance, avoiding burnout, and recovering if burnout occurs. Also included are techniques and links to resources for further learning.

Strategies for Avoiding Burnout

Source for this section: MedicalNewsToday

Recognize and Respond to Stress

- Identify stress signals. Pay attention to physical and emotional signs of stress, such as headaches, tense muscles, increased fatigue, mood changes, or irritability.
- Practice stress-relieving activities. Engage in activities like walking or journaling to manage stress.

Set Boundaries

- Set personal limits. Establish clear boundaries to manage workload and prevent burnout.
- It's ok to ask for help if you need it.

Develop a Work-Life Balance

- Balance activities to the best of your ability. Ensure you have time for personal activities beyond work to stay motivated and energized.

Prioritize Self-Care

- Have balanced meals. Nutrition is important. Eat meals with a mix of protein, healthy fats, and complex carbs to stabilize energy levels.
- Get enough sleep, about 7–9 hours per night.
- Exercise regularly, even light stretching or walks during lunch breaks.
- Do something you enjoy, such as painting, reading, listening to music, dancing, or hanging out with friends.
- Practice mindfulness or meditation to reduce stress and increase focus.

Strategies and Techniques for Maintaining Peak Performance

Sources for this section: Forbes, BetterUp, Persistence Psych, and Success Advice

Manage Your Energy

- Identify what depletes your energy by tracking your energy levels throughout the day and noting activities or foods that affect your energy.
- Exercising regularly is important. Physical activity boosts energy and helps maintain peak performance.
- Go outside. Getting natural light can improve energy levels. Try to get at least 20 minutes outside daily.

Have a Healthy Daily Schedule

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day to maintain a steady pace.
- Organize your tasks. Use a calendar to manage deadlines and prioritize tasks.
- Be mindful of your energy and personal time. If something doesn't align with your goals or your schedule, you may consider declining or rescheduling.

Focus on One Task at a Time

- Monotasking! Avoid multitasking when possible and concentrate on completing one task at a time to improve productivity and energy.

Develop a Peak Performance Mindset

- Set clear goals. Define what peak performance means to you and set achievable goals.
- Practice mindfulness by incorporating mindfulness techniques to stay focused and reduce stress.
- Remember to **CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESSES**!

Track Energy Levels

- Energy management. Write down your daily activities and how they affect your energy.

Exercise in Nature

- Physical activity. Regular exercise, especially outdoors, can boost energy and performance.

Techniques for Dealing with Burnout

Source for this section: Cleveland Clinic

Admit You Are Burned Out

- Self-evaluation. Recognize the signs of burnout and acknowledge the need for change.

Put Distance Between Yourself and Stressors

- Take breaks! Consider taking a mental health day or a leave of absence if necessary.

Seek Professional Help

- Consider therapy. Consult a therapist to address burnout and related issues.

While we recognize that May is Mental Health Awareness Month, let's remember that supporting mental wellness is a year-round priority. Whether it's taking a moment to check in someone, using your mental health resources, or simply being kind to yourself during busy days, every small action matters. Let's continue fostering a community where it's okay to ask for help, where balance is encouraged, and where everyone feels seen and supported. Together, let's create a healthier world by prioritizing and proactively supporting mental health.

Crisis Resources:

- Text **HELLO** to **741741** to connect with a Crisis Text Line counselor, available 24/7.
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**: call or text 988 to connect with a trained crisis counselor, available 24/7. You can also chat online at 988lifeline.org.

Additional Training(s) and/or Resource(s)

The Anti-Burnout Club

Burnout Workshop and Workbook. The Anti-Burnout Club offers a free workshop and workbook designed to help individuals recognize, manage, and prevent burnout. Led by Bex Spiller, a TEDx speaker and expert in stress and resilience, this resource provides tools and strategies for preventing burnout and improving well-being.

Peak Performance Masterclass

The Peak Performance Playbook for Leaders webinar by INTOO is designed for senior leaders aiming to achieve sustained high-impact performance without burnout. This free session, led by Executive Coach Eric Reiners, combines insights from neuroscience and sports science to help leaders stay focused, agile, and resilient in fast-paced environments. Participants will learn strategies to maximize energy, reach optimal efficiency, and stay motivated.

Peak Performance Method by Julia Arndt

The Peak Performance Method by Julia Arndt is a comprehensive training program designed to help individuals and organizations achieve sustained peak performance. It combines productivity, mindfulness, and leadership tools with neuroscience research on emotion regulation, habit-building, and change management. The training focuses on three dimensions: Basic Needs, Work, and Personal Development, offering strategies to manage stress, improve efficiency, and develop critical leadership skills. Participants learn to build resilience, set boundaries, and create powerful routines to thrive both professionally and personally.

** Any costs associated with further training(s) and/or resource(s) will be the responsibility of specific Corps organizations and will not be paid for by GulfCorps and/or TCN.*