

The
MYTH
of
Employee **Burnout**



**Leadership Development
Program**

Leader's Guide



Table of Contents

About the program	3
How to use the forms	5
Sample Agenda	6
Lesson 1: Understanding Burnout	7
Personal Engagement Graph	9
Lesson 2: Finding The Root Cause(s)	10
Lesson 3: A Look In The Mirror	12
Lesson 4: The Business of Burnout – Part 1	14
Lesson 5: The Business of Burnout – Part 2	16
Lesson 6: The Business of Burnout – Part 3	18
Lesson 7: A Leader’s Role in Burnout – Part 1	20
Lesson 8: A Leader’s Role in Burnout – Part 2	22
The Last Word (final meeting)	24
Blank Meeting Agenda	26
About Matt Heller	27

Congratulations!

You have just taken the first step in preparing your teams to eliminate or overcome burnout in your facility!



Why is overcoming burnout important?

The performance of your employees is truly what determines your success. When they are burned out, unproductive, unmotivated and hard to work with, they have a negative impact on morale, teamwork, guest service and ultimately your bottom line.

How to use this program:

The program consists of three pieces:

- The Myth of Employee Burnout book (instructor and student)
- Leadership Development Program Leader's Guide (instructor)
- Leadership Development Program Participant Workbook (student)

When combined, these three pieces create a powerful resource of information, facilitated skill building and personal reflection that teaches leaders how to engage employees and overcome or eliminate burnout.

The book is used much like a textbook would be used in a college course... chapters are assigned then discussed at specific intervals. The workbook is for students to capture their thoughts and impressions of the material as a way to spur conversation when the group meets. Finally, the Leadership Development program walks the instructor through 8 pre-planned meetings to reinforce the content and build skills.

The 8 sessions are planned in a specific order to not only follow the book, but also to build on information as the program goes on. It might be tempting to jump to a certain section, but in doing so you risk trying to build a skill for which the student does not have the necessary background or context to fully understand it's meaning.

For each session, there is a pre-formatted agenda with the topic, questions for discussion and action items. The action items are critical! Without putting the information into practice, it is useless.

It is recommended for the meeting leaders to complete the readings and worksheets along with the participants to be able to guide the discussions from personal experience.

Because this program is highly interactive and discussion based, it is also important to establish a "safe zone" where ideas can be shared without the fear of repercussions.

On each form there is also a spot for Follow-Up and Recognition. These are left blank so the instructor can fill that in with timely information. For example, the follow-up section should be used for asking about the action items from the previous meeting or things that happened in the time between the meetings. This shows that they are important and there is accountability for completing the steps.

The recognition section should be used to specifically recognize a member of the team who did something outstanding recently. It could be something with them applying what they learned through this program, or anything else that deserves attention. Since recognition is such an important factor in overcoming or eliminating burnout, it should be practiced and reinforced at every opportunity.

Logistics

Also included on each agenda are logistics such as meeting leader, date, time, location, materials needed, etc. These are all critical components of the meeting that should not be left until the last minute.

It can also be a good idea to rotate the meeting leaders to give people the opportunity to run a meeting like this (as a development opportunity) but also to see how people deal with these situations. Different leaders have different styles, and it can be beneficial for the attendees to be exposed to those styles.

Timing

Since there are 8 meeting agendas, you can spread this program out over 8 weeks, or 8 months, depending on what works for your operation. Seasonal operators would benefit from the shorter interval, potentially even starting some of the sessions before the season starts. Many companies do leadership training with their seasonal leaders prior to opening day, so having some of this background early on would help set them up for success.

Accountability

The program, the book, and the workbook are great tools, but only when used to improve performance. Leaders have a tremendous impact on their staff, who have a tremendous impact on your business and bottom line. It is recommended that those going through this program are held accountable to the expectations of participation and performance, just as they should be for any other area of their responsibility.

Overcoming Burnout: How to use the forms



The following items will help prepare for your sessions:

Meeting leader: The meeting leader can rotate to different people within the team.

Date: Be conscience of other things going on in the operation that could negatively effect attendance or attentiveness. Try to keep it consistent week to week (or month to month).

Time: Same considerations as meeting date.

Location: The meeting space should be an appropriate size for the group, with chairs, tables, good lighting and minimal distractions. It should also be able to accommodate the activities taking place, for example if you need to show a video, power point or need a large open space for a group activity. The location can change from time to time for a change of scenery or as needs change.

Duration: Similar considerations as date and time. 30-60 minutes is generally good to present a topic, have some discussion and discuss follow-up. Whatever you say the duration is going to be, be sure to keep your meeting at or under that timeframe.

Materials needed: Pens, books, papers... anything that you need to run the meeting, or what participants will need to bring with them. This could be physical materials or ideas you have asked them to consider before the meeting happens.

Invitees: List of who will be expected to attend.

The following items will help prepare the meeting content:

Define Your Topic

- What do you want them to know?
- What do you want them to do?
- What do you want them to feel?
- What gap in knowledge or skill are you trying to address?
- What should they be doing that they are not?

Define Your Resource

- This could be a video from YouTube, a podcast, a blog post or a movie clip
 - Make sure it emphasizes your main topic
- If possible, allow employees to read/view before the session to generate discussion

Plan Your Questions

- Think about your topic and what you want people to take away from the training
- Use open-ended questions to generate discussion
 - An open-ended question cannot be answered with a yes or no
 - Example: What is the most challenging experience you have had with a guest?

Determine Action Item

- Assign one thing you would like your staff to try this week/month
- Be flexible enough to take suggestions based on discussion
- Let them know how/when you will follow-up
- FOLLOW-UP!



Meeting Leader Jeff McNamara

Learning Meeting Details

Date: *6/23/16* Time: *8:00 am* Location: *Training Room* Duration: *30 min.*

Materials needed: *Flip charts, markers* Invitees: *Rides Section 3 Sups*

Follow-up: *Ask about action steps – who did them? What was their experience? (left blank on sheet – to be filled out before the meeting)*

Recognition: *Positive recognition for something good that happened since the last meeting. (left blank on sheet – to be filled out before the meeting)*

Meeting topic: *Area of discussion for that meeting*

Resource: *Pages in book, video or article*

Notes:

Mostly pre-populated with notes from the book, but also room for you to include things you want to talk about, i.e., incidents that supported or detracted from the weeks' lesson.

Questions for discussion:

Mostly pre-populated with questions found at the end of the chapters, but also with room to add your own before the meeting or add more as the discussion goes on.

Assignment: *What's next? Specific steps that can be taken to turn ideas into action*

Pre-populated with suggestions, but there is also room for you to assign different action items as needed.



Meeting Leader _____

Learning Meeting Details

Date: Time: Location: Duration:
Materials needed: Invitees:

Follow-up:

Recognition:

Meeting topic: Understanding Burnout

Reading: The MYTH of Employee Burnout - Pages 11-22

- Our own engagement level influences the behaviors and habits that lead to burnout.
- Burnout doesn't happen overnight. In order to address and eliminate the burnout behaviors we see when they occur, we have to look for the influences that created the habits in the first place

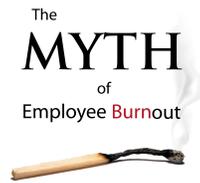
Questions for discussion:

- What do we typically think causes burnout?
- When does burnout generally start to show? In us? In our employees?
- What have we tried in the past to overcome burnout? Has it worked?

Assignment: Start Tracking Engagement

1. On page 5 of the Myth of Employee Burnout Participant Workbook, record your current engagement level. Revisit this at each meeting, comparing your level of engagement to that of your employees.
2. Read chapter 3, complete page 6 in the Myth of Employee Burnout Participant Workbook.

Participant Worksheet



Lesson 1:
Understanding Burnout

Reading:
Forward, Chapters 1 & 2 - pp 11-22

Based on the reading for this lesson, answer the questions below and be ready to discuss in class.

What is the “myth” of employee burnout?

How much effort should we expect from our employees?

How could a leaders’ engagement level impact burnout?

How long does it take for burnout to set in?

Assignment: Start Tracking Engagement

1. On page 5 of the Myth of Employee Burnout Participant Workbook, record your current engagement level. Revisit this at each meeting, comparing your level of engagement to that of your employees.
2. Read chapter 3, complete page 6 in The Myth of Employee Burnout Participant Workbook.

My Engagement Level: Each week, rate your personal engagement level (1 = low, 6 = high.) Compare this to the engagement level of your employees.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
	Date:							
6								
5								
4								
3								
2								
1								

Document your reasoning for the engagement rating above	
Week 1	
Week 2	
Week 3	
Week 4	
Week 5	
Week 6	
Week 7	
Week 8	



Meeting Leader _____

Learning Meeting Details

Date: Time: Location: Duration:

Materials needed: Invitees:

Follow-up:

Recognition:

Meeting topic: Finding the root causes of burnout

Resource: The MYTH of Employee Burnout – chapter 3 - pp 23-30

- **Burnout:** *fatigue, frustration, or apathy resulting from prolonged stress, overwork, or intense activity.* –Dictionary.com

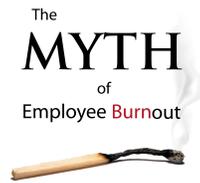
Questions for discussion:

- What do fatigue, frustration, and apathy look like In your world?
- What are your “burnout behaviors?”
- What causes stress among your employees?
- How do they define overwork?
- What is your version of intense activity, and how much is too much?
- How do you remove (or minimize) these factors from the workplace?
- What is your current engagement level?

Assignment: Observe employees

1. Watch for physical signs of fatigue and frustration. Try to identify the things causing prolonged stress. Define intense activity in your department. Think about ways to minimize those factors in your area.
2. Read chapter 4, complete page 7 in the Myth of Employee Burnout Participant Workbook.

Participant Worksheet



Lesson 2:
Finding the Root Cause(s)

Reading:
Chapter 3 – pp 23-30

My engagement level this week: _____ (1-6; plot this value on the chart on page 5.)

Based on the reading for this lesson, answer the questions below and be ready to discuss in class.

What is the definition of burnout?

What do fatigue, frustration, and apathy look like In your world? What are your “burnout behaviors?”

What causes stress among your employees?

How do they define overwork?

What is your version of intense activity, and how much is too much?

Assignment: Observe employees

1. Watch for physical signs of fatigue and frustration. Try to identify the things causing prolonged stress. Define intense activity in your department. Think about ways to minimize those factors in your area.
2. Read chapter 4, complete page 7 in the Myth of Employee Burnout Participant Workbook.



Meeting Leader _____

Learning Meeting Details

Date: Time: Location: Duration:

Materials needed: Invitees:

Follow-up:

Recognition:

Meeting topic: Finding the root causes of burnout – A look in the mirror - pp 31-35

Resource: The MYTH of Employee Burnout – chapter 4

- We may not be as self-aware as we think we are. When it comes to whether or not you think you are the cause of your employees' burnout, do not take your own word for it. Ask your employees, peers, managers, and coworkers for their input.

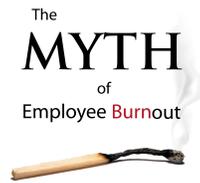
Questions for discussion:

- What are you doing that would cause prolonged stress, overwork, and intense activity among your employees?
- How could you change the way you influence your staff to eliminate some of the stress, overwork, and intense activity?
- What is your current engagement level?

Assignment: Take note of things you might be doing to cause burnout

1. Inventory your actions and interactions with employees. How many of those actions could, if repeated, cause an employee to lose motivation? Examine what you can do differently.
2. Read the Recruiting, Hiring and Training portions of chapter 5 (pp 36-54), complete page 8 of the Myth of Employee Burnout Participant Workbook.

Participant Worksheet



Lesson 3:

A Look In The Mirror

Reading:

Chapter 4 – pp 31-35

My engagement level this week: _____ (1-6; plot this value on the chart on page 5.)

Based on the reading for this lesson, answer the questions below and be ready to discuss in class.

Who has the single greatest influence on the environment your employees occupy while at work?

Why do we think that other (outside) influences play a greater role in employee burnout than we do?

What are you doing that would cause prolonged stress, overwork and intense activity among your employees?

How could you change the way you influence your staff to eliminate some of the stress, overwork and intense activity?

Assignment: Take note of things you might be doing to cause burnout

1. Inventory your actions and interactions with employees. How many of those actions could, if repeated, cause an employee to lose motivation? Examine what you can do differently.
2. Read the Recruiting, Hiring and Training portions of chapter 5 (pp 36-54), complete page 8 of the Myth of Employee Burnout Participant Workbook.

About Matt Heller

Matt Heller has spent almost 30 years in the amusement/theme park industry. Starting as a ride operator at Canobie Lake Park just out of high school, Matt has enjoyed a robust career around the industry with leadership positions at Canobie, Knott's Camp Snoopy, Valleyfair and Smiles Entertainment Center. Pulling from his previous leadership experience, in 2003 Matt joined Universal Orlando Resort as the Senior Trainer of Leadership Development. Matt has also served on the IAAPA Education Committee, and as the Chair of the IAAPA Human Resources Committee from 2009-2012.



In 2011, Matt reduced his role at Universal to pursue additional independent training and consulting opportunities. He created Performance Optimist Consulting, and now helps leaders across the world make sure they are getting the most out of themselves and their teams. He does this through one-on-one coaching, interactive keynotes and customized training sessions.

As a trainer and facilitator, Matt has developed a proven track record for being able to relate to any audience and give them solid tools they can use immediately. His engaging presentations not only captivate the learner's attention, but also encourage them to get involved and participate.

In 2013, Matt released his first book, *The Myth of Employee Burnout*. In it, he describes his quest to find out why employees start off strong but eventually lose motivation. The book includes strategies for leaders to keep employees engaged and motivated throughout the entire "employee lifecycle".

In 2014, Matt partnered with fellow facilitator and theme park fan Scott Brown to create LESSONS IN FUN. This immersive business building workshop helps leaders identify and adapt best practices to help improve their leadership ability and business performance.



matt@performanceoptimist.com

www.performanceoptimist.com

Twitter: [@PrfrmnceOptmst](https://twitter.com/PrfrmnceOptmst)

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/mattheller](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mattheller)

407-435-8084