Avoiding Insurance Industry Burnout! You’re worth it!

Sponsored By:

More Than Just Insurance.

Plymouth Rock assurance
Avoiding Insurance Industry Burnout!
You are Worth IT!

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Christine M. Sullivan, CIC

- Certified Insurance Counselor
- Full licensed Broker in all lines of insurance
- 27 years experience in Insurance Agency Operations Management
- 32 years experience in the insurance industry
- Operational Manager of three different insurance agencies
- Other areas of expertise: Training programs for New producers, new managers and account managers, leadership development, time management, process and procedure development, E&O management, Personal and Commercial Lines department restructures, Agency management software migrations, Five Star designation certification experience, development of Client Relationship/Internal Sales and Claim Management programs.

♣ I have been you....
Avoiding Insurance Industry Burnout! You are Worth IT!

• Better Balance in Life and in Business
  • Role Evaluation
  • Right Seat on the Right Bus
• Client Relationships and WOWs
  • Self-Management/Self Accountability
• Daily Self-Reflection
Sound Familiar??

➢ “Do you have a minute?”
  ✔ Everyday…several times per day
➢ “I just don’t have the time.”
➢ “I’m too busy.”
➢ “How am I ever going to find the time to do this?”
➢ “I wish there were more days in the week or hours in the day.”
➢ “Can someone give me a volume control for him/her….a MUTE button?”
➢ “This week was the worst EVER”!

Sound Familiar??
What is Burnout?

**Two important definitions of burnout are:**

- "A state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long term involvement in emotionally demanding situations." – Ayala Pines and Elliot Aronson.

- "A state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward." – Herbert J. Freudenberger.

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Key Symptoms of Burnout?

- Overall attitude is negative and critical
- Dreading going into work, and wanting to leave once you're there.
- Having low energy, and little interest at work.
- Having trouble sleeping.
- Being absent from work a lot.
- Having feelings of emptiness.
- Experiencing physical complaints such as headaches, illness, or backache.
- Being irritated easily by team members or clients.
- Having thoughts that your work doesn't have meaning or make a difference.
- Pulling away emotionally from your colleagues or clients.
- Feeling that your work and contribution goes unrecognized.
- Blaming others for your mistakes.
- Thinking of quitting work, or changing roles.
Stress Versus Burnout?

- **Stress**
  - Short term
  - Caused by feeling that work is out of control
  - Possible for several days
    - Project related with strict deadlines
    - When situation subsides the stress typically does.

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Stress Versus Burnout?

- **Burnout**
  - Longer period
  - Believing work is meaningless
  - Feeling of not doing what you are passionate about
    - Changes made that are not beneficial to the team
    - **EX:**
      - Losing a Key management person or mentor
      - Workload is unbearable- never being able to breathe.
  - Result: going through motions versus engagement
Causes of Burnout

**Most Common:**
- Lack of autonomy
  - Lack of control over YOUR work
  - NEVER having enough time to finish tasks or projects

2nd **common cause**
- YOUR Values are NOT in alignment with:
  - Values, Standards and Expectations within Employers

**Other causes include:**
- Having unclear goals or job expectations.
- Working in a dysfunctional team or organization.
- Experiencing an excessive workload.
- Having little or no support from your management team or company.
- Lacking recognition for your work.
- Having monotonous or low-stimulation work.
Avoiding Stress

- Organize your desk – make everyone’s life less stressful.
- Never leave the office for the day without knowing what the next day’s priorities are. (use your red folder).
- Strive for more proactivity – make it happen
- Avoid Office Gossip, don’t enable it
- Building longer, stronger relationships with the **Right People**…more often… are motivators!
Avoiding Burnout
Finding Purpose

Finding Purpose in your work

- 75/25 concept
  - Are you the RIGHT SEAT on the RIGHT BUS?
  - Are you just working for a paycheck?
  - Do you have any passion for what you are doing?
  - Look deeper at what YOU do EVERY day…
  - How does YOUR work positively influence others and make their lives better?
  - How could you add more meaning to
Avoiding Burnout

Avoid Overcommitting

- Develop and Commit to Service Standards
- Buy yourself time when you can – simply ask
- Assign goal dates and due dates – prioritize by these.
- Exercise integrity at the moment of choice
- Under promise and overachieve.
Avoiding Burnout
Avoid Procrastination

Avoid procrastination with decision making

- Making tough decisions aren’t easy but once they are made the stress begins to subside
- Do not avoid difficult conversations
  - Educate yourself on Assertive, Tactful communication and enhance those skills.
  - It isn’t what you say, often times it is HOW you say it that makes all the difference.
  - Good OPEN CONFLICT is Healthy and ACTUALLY relieves stress if handling correctly
Avoiding Burnout
Execute Decision Effectively

- Difficult decisions can be hard to execute.
  - Structure a Plan
  - Communicate with the Team
  - Follow through
  - Hold YOURSELF and others accountable for their role and actions in the decision.
Avoiding Burnout  
Perfection isn’t the Answer

- Don’t sacrifice the good for the perfect
- Learn the 80/20 Rule…
  - The important thing to understand is that in your life
  - 20% of the activities you do
  - account for the majority (80%) of your happiness and success.
Avoiding Burnout

Work /Life Balance

- Balance your scale daily, weekly
- We all need time away from work no matter how much we love it.
- Take time to periodically “Sharpen YOUR SAW”…
- Take time for YOU
Sharpening the Saw

The Whole Person
Balance is Key

➢ It’s all about BALANCE…
  ➢ The decisions YOU make and the choices YOU make.
  ➢ YOU determine your own success as a person, professional, parent, etc.
  ➢ Self-reflection at the end of each day, how did you do today?
  ➢ YOU need to be strict with yourself and with allowing others to negatively influence your day or week.
  ➢ It’s YOUR life…
Avoiding Burnout
Worry and Regret

- Don’t worry about what hasn’t happened \textit{YET}
- Ask yourself, did I do something wrong? If the answer is NO let it GO! It’s not YOU it may just be a bad day for THEM!
- If the answer is yes, look for a SOLUTION to learn from.
- Reflect daily, carry 3 positives forward
- How can you win tomorrow?
- Then let the day go! Know when to let it go!
- Tomorrow is a new day.
Use it...or Lose it!

➢ Time is a NON-RENEWABLE, NON-RECYCLABLE resource.

➢ You choose where you spend your time & how much time you give to things.

➢ If you do not have time, it is because you don’t make it available for what you need it for.
Key Time Wasters

- Switch – Tasking
- Working on the wrong things at the wrong times – not knowing the priority
- Too many people involved in the same process
- Spending time looking for files, mail, etc.
- Co-workers/Management trying to figure out YOUR System in your absence.
- Negativity and Office Politics/Gossip
WOW Tips:

• Strive to be advocates for our Clients

• Client advocates are consistently “wowed”, not because obvious needs are met but because we offered solutions to problems they don’t even know they have”. 
WOW Tips:

• The best of the best anticipate problems before they surface and prepare ahead! These are moments people rarely forget!

• It’s the service we are NOT obligated to give that people value most.

• The little things are more impactful on clients and retention than the big things.

• It’s a combination of many small, impressive moments that add up to very powerful “wows” and loyal customers.

• Make sure you know what really matters to your clients and then act on it. (Expectations)
WOW Tips:

- “Sales without customer service is like stuffing money into a pocket full of holes” – David Tooman
- Meeting expectations is not long enough to build “wows”.
- The rules have changed.
- Clients compare you to not only your direct competition but to EVERY service provider there is out there.
- We need to benchmark against the very best agencies and communicate VALUE to our clients that may not exist now.
- Why are our competitors so awesome?
  - YOU need to now, because others (they may be your clients) already do.
WOW Tips:

- It’s simple…
  - Always give people more than what they expect.
  - Clients want to feel appreciated, loved, and treated with dignity and respect. – Human nature
  - To really Wow our clients, WE must FEEL a sense of WOW. To accomplish this we lead with passion and spirit in whatever role we play.
  - Believe in what you do or are selling.
  - We need to learn how to read people and respond quickly.
WOW Tips:

• The only way to get a “wow” out of an error is to correct it in such a way that the client is almost glad it happened.

• We can’t completely eliminate and avoid mistakes but we can learn from them.
WOW Tips:

Reliability:  Well done is better than well said!

- Trust is the foundation in any relationship and key factor in Wowing clients

- Excellence is not an act, but a HABIT.

- The real secret in wowing customers in the long run is to shift the emphasis from detection to prevention.

- Proactive versus reactive wins almost every time, the hard part is finding the time!

- Giving them peace of mind!
Client Relationship Builders
➢ To better service our clients in Claim Situations WE ALL should:

☐ Use this time to SHINE and Be Patient!

☐ To the Client this is an urgent matter and a problem they look to us to help them solve.

☐ Explain Next steps

☐ Communication that we are here for them
Client Relationship Builders

- Promise to check back in with them and DELIVER!
- Call them back
- Great way to build relationships and create raving fans.
- Watch for WOW factors as a residual effect for all of your patience and hard work.
- They won’t forget what you’ve done for them.
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Another way to better service our clients…BE PROACTIVE

Account Managers will:
- Review all accounts in a proactive manner
- Reviewing all coverages and policies to look for
- Missing coverages
- Gaps in coverage