



As we approach the winter months, post summer holiday sunshine, surrounded by germs and hurtling towards the end of the calendar year, resilience can take a hit. This article describes what we mean by resilience and how you can develop and maintain it.

**What is resilience?** Resilience is often described as bounce back-ability, i.e. the ability to adapt, recover and return to a stable state when faced with challenging circumstances. Resilience can be developed with the right awareness and focus.

**The importance of resilience in the workplace** - Constant change, at pace, and setbacks are inevitable in life let alone business. We need our teams to cope with challenges without undue stress or a poor impact on their health and wellbeing. Leaders and team members who have resilience can keep their eye on the longer-term goal whilst navigating today's obstacles. They are better able to problem solve, applying learning from past situations and a growth mindset that underlies their belief that they will be able to find effective solutions. Resilience leads to a positive outlook that motivates and generates confidence in others to persevere. Resilient leaders have high emotional intelligence; they're able to manage their own emotions and recognise/ support others' emotions which enhances morale. Resilient leaders are transparent without causing panic, engendering trust, and followership.

**How do you develop resilience?** The Centre for Creative Leadership outlines 8 Steps to becoming more resilient:

1. Accept change – find ways to become more comfortable with change and ambiguity; take charge of how you view adversity
2. Be a continuous learner – learn new skills, gain new understanding, and apply these during times of change
3. Take charge – of your own career and development
4. Find your sense of purpose – this will help you assess setbacks within a broader perspective
5. Pay attention to self-identity – form your identity aside from your job
6. Cultivate relationships – develop and nurture a broad network of personal and professional relationships
7. Reflect – to foster learning, new perspectives and a degree of self-awareness. Be self-compassionate in your reflections. Consider journaling to objectively assess situations and to practise gratitude
8. Skills shift – reframe how you see yourself. Make sure you complete an up-to-date audit of your current strengths, skills, talents, interests, and attributes

**Energy is another essential element of resilience.** Tony Schwartz, The Energy Project, says "It's not how many hours you put in – *how much energy you are able to invest* determines how productive you are." The four types of energy are Physical, Emotional, Mental and Spiritual. To support good levels of energy, and therefore resilience and productivity, consider how you can:

- take care of your spiritual wellbeing (n.b. referred to as a state of harmony & balance in one's inner self). This may relate to your sense of purpose in life, beliefs, or values
- manage your own resistance to situations
- stay fully present
- get enough sleep
- prioritise exercise
- play brain games
- control your emotions
- enhance social connections

**Finally...** Resilience is like a parachute, don't expect it to be in perfect working order when you really need it, if you invest little time in maintaining it!

## The Manager's Role

Managers need to lead by example when it comes to resilience.

Your team will be unsettled if you look like you are approaching burnout, are unable to regulate your emotions, seem defeated or panicky in the face of adversity.

Consider your personal support network to help you and your energy levels before they deplete. Who:

- inspires you with fresh ideas, motivates you to make a difference, or validates your work?
- listens to you vent, encourages you to get back on track?
- allows you to be completely yourself?
- challenges you to be a better you and helps you work out what you'd like to do and how to get there?
- Supports you at a senior level and is influential on your behalf?
- offers guidance, advice, resources to develop you?
- connects you to others in your profession/ industry and helps broaden your network?
- encourages your health and wellbeing, ensuring you take care of yourself?