

Hacking Burnout



51%

of cybersecurity professionals surveyed experienced extreme stress or burnout during the last 12 months.*

65%

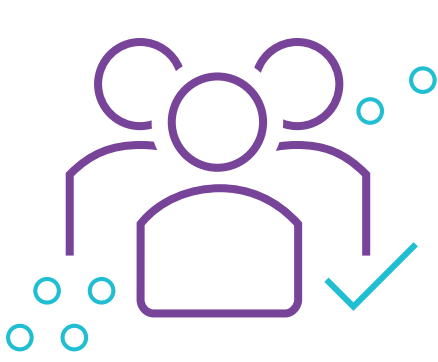
of those experiencing extreme stress considered leaving their job because of it.*



Use these best practices to help each other stay healthy and hack burnout in this high-stress occupation.



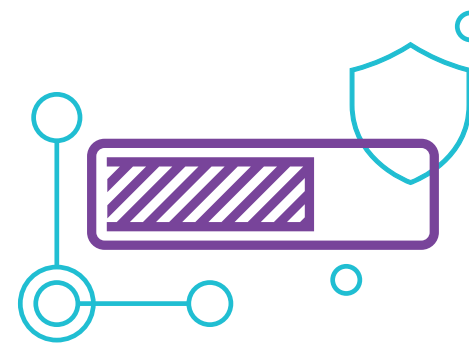
BEST PRACTICES FOR Infosec Managers



1

MAKE IT OK TO NOT BE OK.

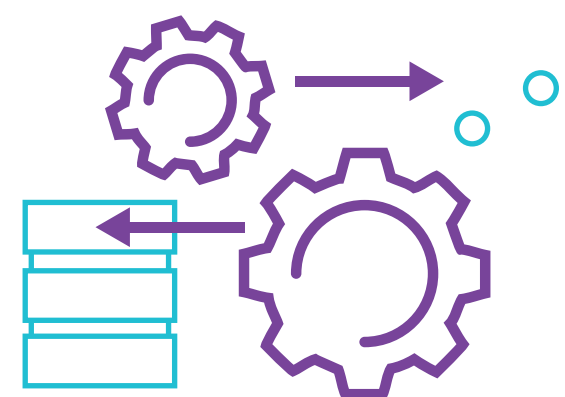
Acknowledge the stress of the security job. Be sure to talk about it in staff meetings and become proficient in the art of listening and presence when people need to talk.



2

COUNTER THE PHYSICAL EXHAUSTION.

Enforce vacations and consider work arrangements that allow for a periodic extra day of decompression time. Provide comp time after the extended intensity and pressure of incident response.



3

AUTOMATE AND DELEGATE.

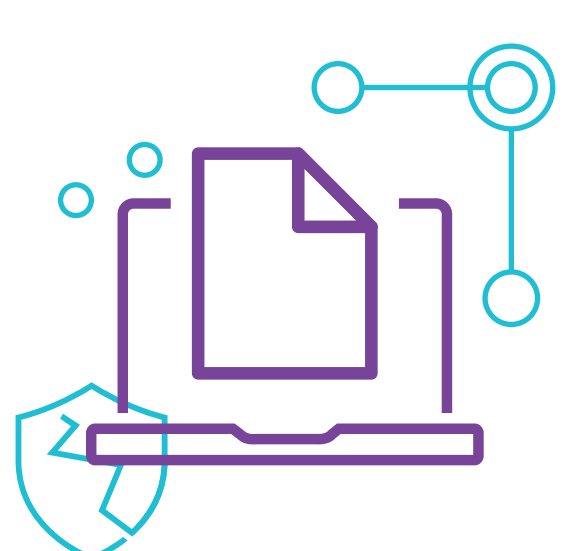
Remove barriers and seek improvements in workflow and handoffs between teams. Become a process improvement ninja and wherever possible, improve workflow and workload by automation.



4

PACE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TECHNOLOGY WITH TRAINING.

Technology implementation approaches need to be accompanied by sufficient training to ensure the technology is effective and both systems engineers, operations staff, and end-users are proficient before moving on to the next new thing. Otherwise, staff may be overwhelmed.



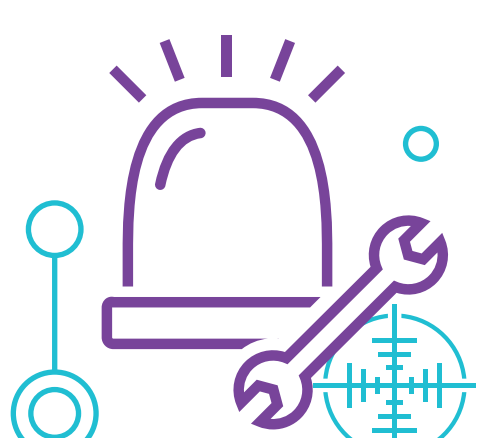
5

CONSIDER ADOPTING RESILIENCE-BUILDING TECHNIQUES.

Career development strategies can utilize the SOC (Security Operations Centre) as a learning assignment with the understanding that rotations of the SOC team are expected as part of stress management and career growth. After the intensity of an extended incident, arrange for a debrief that not only includes the “post-mortem” assessment but a stress assessment for the team to build empathy and awareness.



BEST PRACTICES FOR Cybersecurity Professionals



1

RECOGNIZE THE WARNING SIGNALS OF BURNOUT.

Physical and emotional exhaustion, a sense of ineffectiveness and detachment from the job, or cynicism.



2

KNOW & CARE FOR YOURSELF.

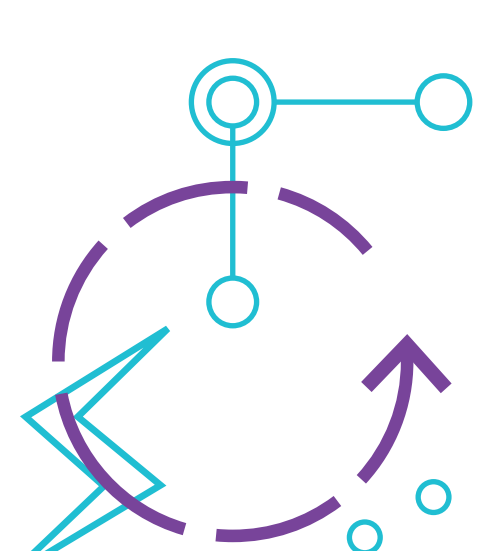
Know what makes life most meaningful to you and ensure you set boundaries around your many obligations to make space for those priorities every week. Know your why.



3

REMEMBER THAT YOUR WORTH IS NOT TIED TO YOUR PERFORMANCE.

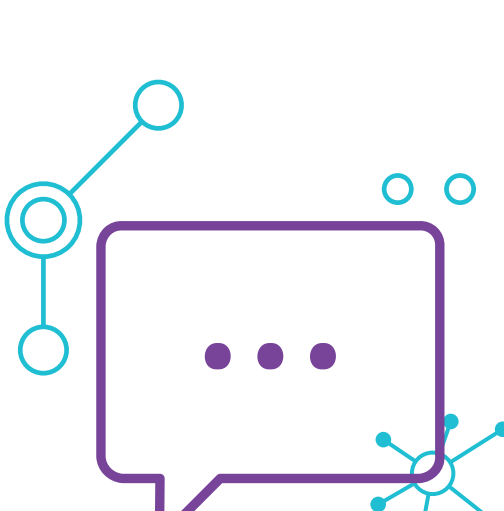
Many of us struggle with personalizing our productivity, recognition (or lack thereof), and achievement to our intrinsic worth.



4

FIND THE PRACTICES (TOOLS, HABITS, HOBBIES) THAT HELP YOU RESET.

Use them as preventative measures: singing, dancing, connecting to nature, watching the sunrise – whatever feeds your spirit, do that for yourself each day.



5

TALK IT OUT.

Realize that you’re not alone. Talk to your manager, team members and if needed health professionals. Skilled coaches and mental health professionals can be immensely helpful in navigating this challenge and the benefits are significant.

* Source: VMware 2021 Global Incident Response Threat Report.