



## Prevent Job Burnout

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If you feel you're on the verge of stressing too much because of your job, take a step back. You might be burning out. Before it becomes full-blown, take these steps to avoid burnout:

**Find time to play.** Even if it means forcing yourself. People on the verge of burnout usually are spending less time with family and friends. They have trouble getting away from the workplace. If you can't take a few days off, even just one day in a relaxing environment with no computers, faxes, e-mails, phone calls or any thoughts of work can help renew you.

**Get physical.** You've heard it over and over again, but take heed. You need to work physical activities into your day. And while you're exercising, focus on something else besides work; otherwise you'll just create more stress.

**Set realistic objectives.** Much of stress stems from feeling overwhelmed. If you're feeling snowed under at work, sit down with a boss and prioritize your projects. Categorize them and then attack. Don't work for perfection; work for good enough.

**Use your support network.** Everyone needs people inside and outside of work to turn to for support, encouragement and candid feedback. Most important are those folks who laugh with, not at, you and are true friends.

**Keep your options open within the company.** People who burn out usually feel they have no way out of a situation. Update your resume and be prepared to talk about your accomplishments in the past five years and what you can contribute to the organization. Determine areas within the company that you may contribute to.

**Leave if you have to.** Much stress comes from worrying about problems at work and potential job loss. If there really is no sign that a situation will change, leave. Be prepared ahead of time. Check out classified ads and on-line job hunting sites periodically to see what employers are looking for in your field. Network, and have an action plan.