

## HRfocus News Briefs

### Employees Who Chase Perfection More Likely To Burn Out, Suffer From Anxiety, Study Says

Perfectionist employees offer the obvious benefits of setting lofty goals and working hard to achieve them, but they also are vulnerable to stress, anxiety and burnout, according to a study published July 31 in *Personality and Social Psychology Review*.

“Multidimensional Perfectionism and Burnout: A Meta-Analysis” analyzed the findings from 43 previous studies conducted over the past 20 years and found a link between “perfectionistic concerns” and anxiety and burnout.

Burnout is a psychosocial syndrome that is associated with motivational, performance and psychological difficulties, the study said. From an organizational perspective, burnout is associated with decreased motivation and poorer performance.

Andrew P. Hill, one of the report’s authors and an associate professor at York St. John University in the United Kingdom, told Bloomberg BNA Aug. 3 identifying perfectionists in the workplace is easy.

“We all know one and might be one ourselves,” he said. “Perfectionists are never satisfied, [think] things can always be better even when others think the job is done, and can’t rest till things are just right.” Moreover, Hill said, “they often have the feeling that nothing is ever right.”

He said employers can better manage perfectionist employees by setting flexible goals. “They need to be introduced to flexible goals and the notion of degrees of success,” Hill said.

Although perfectionists impose their own high expectations, Hill said, some environments generate even higher levels of stress for these employees.

“Environments that encourage unrealistic goal-setting or value perfection, those with high levels of ambiguity and low levels of control are likely to be particularly stressful for perfectionists,” he said. “In an imperfect world, the desire for perfection is very debilitating in any setting.”

### ‘Social Onboarding’ of New Hires Boosts Engagement and Retention, Webinar Told

Employers should use “social onboarding”—introducing new hires to all facets of the company via the latest technology—to engage them from the start, speakers told a July 31 webinar sponsored by SuccessFactors, a subsidiary of software provider SAP.

According to Luke Marson of HR consulting firm Hula Partners, 80 percent of employees decide whether to stay with their new employer within the first six months. “There are significant costs to re-recruiting employees, so you want to be sure that you are able to engage them early on,” he said.

Social onboarding encompasses more than just introducing the employee to the company and setting up an e-mail account, Marson said. It can include defining goals and objectives, offering training and development opportunities, and allowing for networking with new co-workers, Marson explained.

According to SuccessFactors, social onboarding connects new hires with the right people and relevant content, and allows them to be productive and contribute from day one.

At Triumph Foods LLC, social onboarding has been a “tremendous success” in engaging employees as soon as they come through the front door, Trudie Diaz-Farmer, compensation and benefits manager at the food exporter, told webinar attendees.

Diaz-Farmer asserted that the traditional onboarding process was complex and onerous. “That has all gone away now that we’ve taken it online,” she said.

Triumph Foods has also found that the quality and quantity of its applicants has improved, and people consider the company to be more cutting-edge now that it has streamlined the hiring process, she added.

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