

Burnout and self-employment

Juggling the stresses of being an employer and an employee



What is burnout?

Burnout is a state of complete mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion. It negatively impacts wellbeing, potentially leading to increased stress, anxiety and other long-term health issues, which can affect you, your family and your ability to function effectively.



Have you noticed any of these signs of burnout?

- 1) You've lost sight of what's important
- 2) You're dancing to someone else's tune
- 3) You're working long hours
- 4) You feel overwhelmed
- 5) You've been making mistakes
- 6) You're running on empty
- 7) You're neglecting your own wellbeing
- 8) You don't recognise yourself
- 9) You're suffering from anxiety
- 10) You dream of quitting

“ Being self-employed can feel like living on a rollercoaster. It can be demanding, overwhelming, and exhausting. ”

John, Delicatessen owner

“ Yeah, you're your own boss, but you can be kind of a terrible one. ”

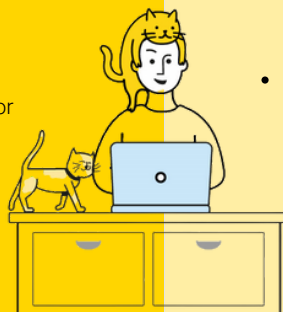
Sarah, Florist



Statements are for illustrative purposes to provide examples of challenges that could be experienced.

Managing your employee self

- Identify your pain points: Take time to think about the things that stress you out the most and work out a plan to reduce their impact.
- Know when to stop: Working long hours is not productive, or healthy; it's worth setting specific work hours and trying to stick to them.
- Revamp your workspace: Maybe increase lighting, invest in an ergonomic chair and add some personal touches.
- Prioritise self-care: Make time for exercise, healthy eating, and other activities that help to relax and recharge, so you can recover from being rundown.
- Seek support: look at the support services provided with insurance policies or other arrangements you have in place, reach out to friends, family, or a mental health professional for support if you're struggling.
- Practice mindfulness: Incorporate mindfulness techniques, such as deep breathing, meditation, or yoga, into the daily routine to help reduce stress and improve mental clarity.



Managing your employer self

- Is there anyone you can lean on for advice and ideas: so that you can arrive at a well thought through decision?
- Record your workload over a week or month: and set some time aside to analyse any themes that jump out at you. Can you re-organise your workload?
- Actively connect with other people in your local and national networks.
- Ensure that you're getting professional advice from a financial adviser to help you to manage your business finances and avoid hefty bills like tax payments. Take time to consider whether you're able to cope with the demands of financial insecurities, and whether self-employment is actually for you.
- Take stock periodically and identify the different roles that you're playing in your business. Which do you love, hate or feel indifferent about? Which can you upskill in, and which do you need to outsource because you find it most challenging?
- Take time to identify what support systems that you do have in place, and where you are lacking.

Remember, if you're struggling, don't be afraid to ask for help.

[Find out more about our support for burnout](#)