



HOW TO REDUCE MENTAL WORKLOAD AT WORK?



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Initially reserved for the private sphere, the subject of mental stress has emerged in companies as a psychosocial risk. Although these PSR are increasingly being dealt with in organisations, their consequences are often serious: disengagement, fatigue, anxiety, insomnia, burnout, etc.

Taking into account mental overload at work is therefore :

- **Identify the symptoms and measure the burden borne by employees in their professional context.**
- **Correct the sources of stress by restoring meaning to the work, by accepting a rethink of processes, by rebuilding trust between the organisation and the individuals who make it up.**
- **Supporting people through training, communication and listening.**

Today, the means are at our disposal to improve the quality of life at work: it is up to us to seize them!

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The causes of mental overload at work are very varied, but clearly identified: management failure, loss of meaning, lack of visibility... and the consequences are terrible for people, but also for organisations. Identifying these areas of tension and correcting them puts the organisation and the individual in a "win-win" relationship.

Lionel Pasco - CEO of Perfony

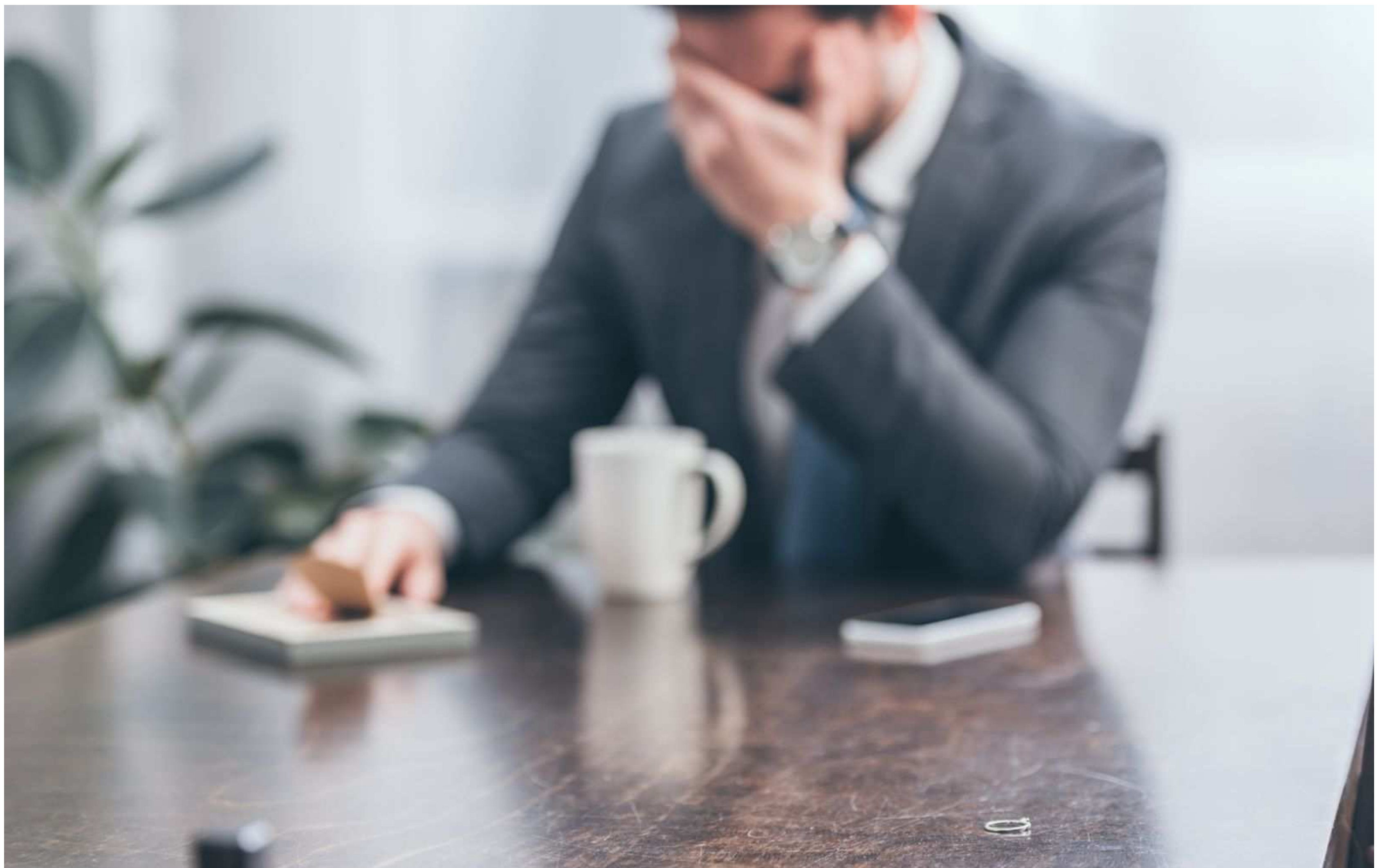




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Mental workload at work: definition and issues for companies



Mental workload at work refers to all the mental operations performed by a worker during his or her professional activity. The efforts of concentration, comprehension, adaptation, attention and meticulousness, task accomplishment, information processing, etc. are all elements that can increase the mental load of an individual at work.

We can also mention the psychological pressures linked to the demands of deadlines, speed, quality of execution, the management of relations with colleagues and third parties, among others, which generate a mental stress of mental load.

Well-being at work and the preservation of mental health in the workplace have become major issues for companies and trade unions. The consequences of an excessive mental load at work manifest themselves in various ways depending on the individual, ranging from absenteeism to burn-out, the outcomes of which are sometimes dramatic. Preventing and dealing with suffering at work therefore begins with identifying stressful situations.

How can we measure mental health at work?



Many validated and recognised assessment tools help to diagnose a pathology relating to mental health at work. These tools differ in presentation and content depending on the field of activity. They take the form of questionnaires designed to reflect the level of psychological and organisational constraints that an individual may face in the course of his or her activity, as well as the urgency of remedying them.

These assessment scales are formulated in a standardised manner using numerically measurable items or indicators. Among these various supports, we can mention

- the CPO questionnaire on psychosocial and organisational constraints in the care environment
- the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS);
- the Maslach Burn Out Inventory test, to diagnose burn-out;
- the Karasek questionnaire to measure occupational stress;
- the Siegrist questionnaire to assess the effort/reward imbalance and non-recognition at work, which are factors in ill-being.

Note: the Karasek and Siegrist questionnaires are the most commonly used to identify risk situations.

Understanding the causes of mental workload at work



Mental workload is generated by interactions between individuals, whether organisational or social. It is materialised by the quantity and complexity of information to be managed, processed according to our emotional state and the time we have to examine it. When one of the above parameters is no longer manageable, the mental load becomes a constraint. There is also a mismatch between the objectives to be achieved and the means used, a permanent over-investment that leads to professional overwork.

Work ends up invading personal life, to the point where disconnection from work is no longer possible. Yet mental workload can be a source of motivation and productivity when it is intelligently shared and optimised in a team. However, mental workload is often perceived as dangerous, as it can damage the health of employees when it becomes too intense to bear. It can be temporary or permanent.

MENTAL OVERLOAD: SYMPTOMS AND RISKS FOR EMPLOYEES AND THE COMPANY

Situations of mental overload exhaust those who suffer from them. The symptoms of mental overload and stress manifest themselves through several phenomena, which vary according to the individual.

Risks to employees

The impact of work overload on health can manifest itself differently for each individual. The factors that make this apparent are not necessarily immediately obvious. However, the repetition of certain behaviour or phenomena should alert the management team:

- It is a question of a drop in vigilance at the level of the tasks, the repetition of basic errors, irritability or instability... ;
- In terms of reduced performance, the employee is less efficient. They may even become negligent in the organisation and management of their daily tasks;
- They make repeated mistakes. The repetition of even small mistakes is a sign of an existing problem that the manager should deal with urgently;
- The consequences of work overload also take a toll on the body. The consequences of overwork also affect the body. Physical signs such as fatigue and weight loss are real indications of the fragility of the employee's health;
- Mood instability indicates a real problem: irritability or susceptibility to the slightest remark, unpleasant behaviour towards the professional environment, etc.

Risks for the company

The risks for the company take various forms:

- a drop in employee performance and a reduction in productivity due to the deterioration in the quality of the work provided, mistakes made, loss of new markets;
- an increase in absenteeism, accidents at work and occupational illnesses
- higher turnover due to employee departures or absenteeism;
- degraded social relations impacted by a bad atmosphere, internal violence and/or conflicts within a work group, by the emergence of social movements.

Psychosocial risks in companies: what are we talking about?



In 2011, the Ministry of Labour, via the Collac report, defined psychosocial risks as "risks to mental, physical and social health, caused by employment conditions and organisational and relational factors likely to interact with mental functioning".

This scourge has been raging for some years in companies as well as in administrations. It includes three main factors:

- stress induced by an overload of work, a lack of autonomy, a lack of means;
- violence within the company, such as harassment (moral or sexual) or conflicts between colleagues and/or hierarchy
- violence outside the company in the form of threats, aggression or insults.

All employers are obliged to assess the risks, including psychosocial risks, and to take all measures to protect the physical and mental health of their employees. (Article L. 4121-1 of the French Labour Code). Preventive measures exist to detect and reduce an incipient or worrying situation of emotions at work.

All employees, regardless of their hierarchical status, profession, gender or age, are likely to be exposed to psychosocial risks. These PSRs may result from the activity itself or from the organisation and/or the atmosphere in the workplace.

HOW TO PREVENT MENTAL OVERLOAD AT WORK?

Good management practices directly influence the mental load of the teams. The satisfaction of all leads to better productivity. Everyone in the company will benefit from this.

Good management initiatives to adopt include

- Knowing how to spot the first signs such as changes in the person's behaviour (altered alertness, irritability, violence, isolation).
- Give the person room to manoeuvre and more autonomy in making decisions and carrying out tasks.
- Take into account the real workload by setting up moments of exchange and intervention with the team to discuss problems collectively and review the organisation if necessary.
- Encourage mutual help and support when needed. Providing feedback or bringing in a second person to support can be solutions.
- Give employees back control of their time and limit disruptive situations. Too many meetings or calls prevent good concentration and calm progress in the work.
- Know how to communicate transparently and establish a relationship of trust.
- Recognise the work done, the efforts made, the difficulties encountered, etc.
- Learn to delegate. Indeed, the last point on which the manager must work is that of his own mental health. Subjected to numerous objectives, he or she must also take care to protect his or her colleagues from the pressure that he or she is under!

Solutions to balance the workload



The solutions for balancing mental workload at work include several levels of adjustment in team management. Delegating part of the responsibilities is one of the most effective ways to reduce the workload and find a healthy balance between professional and personal life. Moreover, the ability to delegate is also a recognition of the expertise of other employees and a sign of trust.

Some experts also talk about the ability to recognise suffering due to work overload. This awareness allows the urgency of the situation to be recognised and the need for appropriate solutions to be put in place quickly. It is possible to use new technologies to lighten the workload through organisational tools.

Moreover, the success of your work must be based on the organisation of tasks with a feasible schedule. This also means setting physical and time limits. A tool like Perfony fits perfectly into this approach.

Not working during lunch breaks, not extending your working day, taking breaks, not checking your work emails at home: these reflexes help you feel better and therefore increase your productivity. The solutions for reducing the workload consist in rediscovering the satisfaction produced by successful and efficient work.



Can a technological tool help to reduce mental workload in companies?

Digital transformation and digital tools are now capable of reducing the mental load in working life. They help to improve the moral and physical health of employees and managers alike.

The organisation of work is being transformed through the use of tools such as project management software and sometimes complementary applications. These tools allow, for example, to plan, organise and manage the work of a team from A to Z.

They also help to define objectives and priority tasks. As a result, deadlines are better met without rushing projects through.

Effective project management software can also be used as a collaboration tool, with a manager coordinating everyone's tasks, sharing feedback, etc. It provides an overall view of the project and helps the team to work together more effectively. It provides an overall view of the work so that tasks are fairly distributed and each team member is aware of each other's requirements and responsibilities.

Tools such as Perfony software can reduce the mental load of employees and reduce PSR at work. Perfony is based on a number of features that will allow managers to make things happen in a concrete way. For example, it offers to group and centralise tasks to be done. This helps to avoid oversights and to better distribute workloads.

At a glance, managers can see the remaining tasks. The KPI's allow them to monitor the work done and not to increase the workload of already overworked employees. In addition, Perfony encourages managers to adjust their work schedule to give more time to the employees who need it most.

Today, a tool like Perfony is one of the main solutions for reducing mental workload at work. With it, a management team can quickly act on employee satisfaction and help increase their productivity.

This tool makes it possible to clearly see the progress of a project according to the work done by each person. It offers a more playful view of teamwork, focusing on the progress and completion of the project. By giving meaning and direction to their daily tasks, it generally helps to boost motivation and involvement.

WHY USE PERFONY?



- Easily create your action plans
- Visualise the progress of your actions and those of your teams
- Reduce the mental burden of monitoring decisions
- Measure the impact and results of your action plans
- Manage your action plans directly during your meetings
- Manage the progress of your progress plans easily
- Identify and share improvement plans with your teams
- Gain mobility with MS Teams Mobile and M365 integration
- Simplify your project management with a modern tool

[Request a demo](#)

Contact

Perfony is a French publisher, born from the meeting of the management consulting and IT worlds, which has set itself the ambitious project of bringing the principles of operational excellence within everyone's reach.

To this end, it proposes a simple tool that improves the efficiency of teamwork:

- follow-up of action plans,
- traceability of decisions,
- production of meeting minutes,
- compliance with quality requirements...

Perfony is the solution that helps you achieve operational excellence.



perfony

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