Mindfulness at work protects against stress and burnout, study finds

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A new study has revealed that employees who are more mindful in the digital workplace are better protected against stress, anxiety and overload.

Researchers from the University of Nottingham's Schools of Psychology and Medicine analyzed survey data from 142 employees. The results have been published in *PLOS ONE.*

Ph.D. student Elizabeth Marsh from the School of Psychology led the mixed methods study and said, "As work is increasingly mediated by digital technology we wanted to find out the impact this is having on people's health and whether there are ways to mitigate this. We found that being mindfully and confidently digital should be considered important elements of living a healthy digital working life in the 21st century."

The participants in the study were surveyed about their experiences of the dark side effects of the digital workplace which were identified as; stress, overload, anxiety, fear of missing out and addiction and how these affected their health.

The results showed that more digitally confident workers were less likely to experience digital workplace anxiety, while those with higher mindfulness were better protected against all of the dark side effects. Data from 14 interviews also indicated ways that digital mindfulness can help protect well-being.

Dr. Alexa Spence, Associate Professor of Psychology adds, "Digital workplace technologies like e-mail, instant messaging and mobile devices have been shown to contribute to perceptions of stress by employees and employees may experience stress when having to adapt to a constantly evolving digital workplace which can lead to burnout and poorer health."

Mindfulness is defined as a state of consciousness that involves paying attention in the present moment intentionally and non-judgmentally. The study showed that employees who were more mindful were less exposed

to adverse impacts of the dark side of the digital workplace.

Professor of Digital Technology for Mental Health, Elvira Perez Vallejos said, "The research shows that organizations need to consider how to manage digital workplace hazards alongside other psychosocial and physical risks in the workplace. Helping employees foster [mindful awareness](#) when working digitally could really help overall well-being."

More information: Mindfully and confidently digital: a mixed methods study on personal resources to mitigate the dark side of digital working, *PLoS ONE* (2024). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0295631](#)

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