Better Ways To Work Together

A Playbook for Developing Personal and Organizational Resilience

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Within the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC), the primary mission of the National Insider Threat Task Force (NITTF) is to develop a Government-wide insider threat program for deterring, detecting, and mitigating insider threats, including the safeguarding of classified information from exploitation.

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Point of Contact

Suggested Citation

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Better Ways To Work Together

Counter-insider threat and security professionals increasingly recognize that preventing and managing the risks posed by an organization's trusted insiders requires a different way of thinking. They have come to understand that insider threat incidents always occur in a broader organizational context, and so it makes sense that everyone in the organization has a part to play in securing the workforce and workplace.

Building a safe and secure organizational environment means improving the well-being of organizations and their people. This playbook is part of a series, *Better Ways To Work Together,* designed to support one of the most critical tasks of the counter-insider threat mission. Each playbook addresses a topic that affects the healthy functioning of organizational relationships and shared workspaces. They are designed to help organizations build practical threat prevention initiatives that leaders at all levels can adopt to promote organizational well-being.

This playbook addresses resilience. Other playbooks in the series will help you understand important topics such as toxicity, critical thinking, and organizational culture that are just as critical to building a healthy, effective organization as they are to preventing insider threat incidents. We hope these playbooks will contribute to the efforts of counter-insider threat programs and their partners in building safe, secure, and better workplaces.

Resilience is the psychological quality that allows some people to be knocked down by the adversities of life and come back at least as strong as before. Rather than letting difficulties, traumatic events, or failure overcome them and drain their resolve, highly resilient people find a way to change course, emotionally heal, and continue moving toward their goals.

— Resilience, Psychology Today

**Part 1: Understanding the Role of Resilience in Organizations**

This Playbook

We designed the *Better Ways To Work Together* series to support counter-insider threat programs by offering practical solutions to improve the well-being of organizations and their people. In this playbook, we focus on how to foster individual and organizational resilience. It is intended for use by government or private sector counter-insider threat programs to facilitate prevention initiatives that engage leaders throughout their organizations in addressing resilience.

Insider threat prevention is most effective when everyone in an organization does their part. Consider using the materials in this playbook in partnership with other stakeholders in your organization, such as human resources, security, or information technology, to raise awareness about how resilience can alleviate the underlying causes of insider threat behavior. For example, selections from the playbook could be used in leadership training programs, security awareness campaigns, or even in team-building exercises.

With that in mind, we designed the materials to be accessible to a general audience—no previous knowledge of insider threat prevention is needed to make use of this playbook. The material can be used effectively by managers or individuals who want practical ideas for contributing to the well-being of their organization.

This playbook is organized in four parts.

- Part 1 describes the learning objectives of the resilience playbook; breaks down the shared responsibilities of organizations and individuals to keep workplaces safe, healthy, and productive; itemizes the best practices for organizations to promote resilience; and provides group training exercises based on those best practices.

- Part 2 provides group training scenarios based on those best practices.

- Part 3 presents a helpful infographic that summarizes key takeaways about resilience in the workplace.

- Part provides a library of helpful and practical resources to aid in a better understanding of resilience in organizations and broader communities; and resources for individuals who seek to build and better understand their own resilience.

Part 1: Understanding the Role of Resilience in Organizations
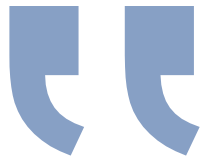
"**Resilience is an important characteristic in the context of work, now more than ever possibly. Nobody is a perfect employee, teammate, or leader—and everybody will at some point receive critical feedback or experience a failure at work…. Just keep in mind that resilience is also often required in the face of positive changes as well, such as a promotion, increased levels of responsibility, or even a desired career shift.**"

— 5 Top Reasons Resilience at Work Matters, Brent Gleeson

Part 1: Understanding the Role of Resilience in Organizations

Organizational Learning Objectives

Organizations define and reinforce behavioral norms and practices that set the tone for their culture and capacity for resilience. Resilient organizations are founded on a culture that fosters the well-being of its members. A written vision statement and a code of conduct are critical, but leaders at all levels must consistently demonstrate the importance of organizational values in their own work. This consistency of words and actions builds team member resilience by establishing clear expectations for responding to challenges and opportunities.

This playbook is designed to help you improve the culture of your organization and help you

- Understand the centrality of resilience for efficient organizational operations.

- Recognize the indicators of low resilience in your organization.

- Support open communication and reporting of concerns within your organization.

- Understand the importance of workforce education that includes skill building, not just training for compliance.

- Know how to develop standards and practices that promote healthy group relationships and outcomes.

Individual Learning Objectives

People are key to successful organizations, whether they are an organization's executive-level senior leaders, mid-level managers or first-line supervisors, or staff or volunteers. Engaged employees, business partners, and the broader community can all have an effect on how organizations work. This playbook is designed to help individuals improve their own resilience and to become better members of their organization and improve its culture. This playbook will help you

- Define terms and concepts that describe resilience and resilient individuals and organizations.

- Advocate for standards and practices that promote healthy group relationships and outcomes.

- Identify the tools to build and sustain resilient organizations and communities.

- Promote constructive participation within resilient organizations and communities.

The Importance of Resilience

Resilience has many definitions related to an organization's or an individual's ability to recover from or bounce back from adverse circumstances. Researchers define resilience as "a reaction to a perceived and/or real challenge. It describes a person's ability to

withstand that challenge and to move forward or be productive" (Hayes et al., 2020). Although some people may be inherently more optimistic and adaptable in response to adverse events, resilience is also a skill that can be developed and strengthened.

As an organizational quality, resilience is the ability of an organization to absorb shocks and successfully adapt to challenges. A resilient organization builds systems and practices to plan for and prepare for future risks and is adaptable to both chronic and acute stresses (Barasa et al., 2018). For an organization, disruptions can include natural disasters, economic downturns, unexpected growth, supply chain issues, workplace violence, mergers, or problems in workplace culture. Disruptions can occur quickly or be persistent and ongoing. Individuals feel, and must respond to, the impacts of organizational disruptions as part of their jobs, but they may also have their own stresses and disruptions (e.g., workplace bullying, home life stressors, job insecurity, workforce turnover, promotions). Change, both good and bad, is a constant in work and in life, and resilience is necessary to continue moving forward.

Since 2020, the phrase "unprecedented times" has been a common refrain from news outlets and government leaders. Much of the workforce has experienced tumultuous change in where and how they work, making the need to develop the skills of resilience more urgent than ever. In 2020, a national study reported that only 19% of American workers are highly resilient (Hayes et al., 2020) and concluded that "people's personal level of resilience in the workplace is closely related to their immediate team leader and their organization's senior leaders" and that the important sources of resilience within an organization are "oneself, one's team leader, and one's senior leaders."

Individual and organizational resilience are critical resources for preventing and responding to negative workplace conditions and harmful behaviors, and they are closely linked. An organization's resilience is an expression of its culture, and providing a safe, stable, nurturing environment builds the resilience of its members (Brown et al., 2021). An organization can assess its overall resilience by evaluating how well policies and practices contribute to

- Training and sustaining of a resilient workforce.
- A culture of trust and support for individuals.
- Inclusivity, safety, and individual and group well-being
- Collaboration and empowerment.
- Services for responding to individual and group mental health needs.

Shared Responsibilities

Unresolved stressors in the workplace can be indicative of a toxic organizational culture, which can be a contributing factor to insider threat incidents, including workplace violence (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Interagency Security Committee, 2019; Shaw & Sellers, 2015). Organizations and individuals have the shared responsibility of making

work environments healthy and productive, which can contribute to organizational efforts to prevent the underlying behaviors and conditions that can make a workplace unsafe.

U.S. law requires private companies to provide a safe workplace. Specifically, the General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, requires employers "to provide their employees with a place of employment that is 'free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm'" (Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA], n.d.). Although OSHA regulations do not directly address workplace violence or stressful conditions such as toxicity or bullying, the OSHA website advises:

> An employer that has experienced acts of workplace violence, or becomes aware of threats, intimidation, or other indicators showing that the potential for violence in the workplace exists, would be on notice of the risk of workplace violence and should implement a workplace violence prevention program combined with engineering controls, administrative controls, and training.

To respond to these risks, The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends organizations adopt the *Total Worker Health®* approach to promoting worker safety, health, and well-being (2016). Rather than simply responding to individual-level risks, organizations should emphasize organizational changes to eliminate working conditions that threaten worker safety and to promote a culture of individual and group well-being.

Figure 1
Hierarchy of Controls Applied to NIOSH Total Worker Health®
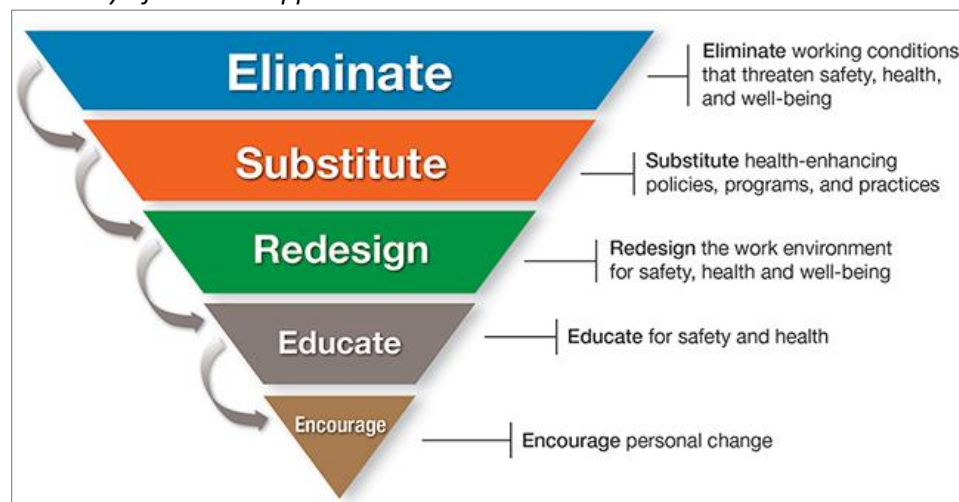
NIOSH (2016).

For Federal agencies, the Interagency Security Committee (ISC) has published guidelines for workplace violence prevention training (see **Table 1**). The goal of training is to ensure that employees know how to report incidents of violence, threats, harassment and intimidation, or other disruptive behaviors and to demonstrate that the agency is

committed to taking actions for their prevention (ISC, 2019). Resilience skills can be incorporated into these training guidelines to foster employee engagement in their prevention responsibilities and help leaders create a safe and secure organizational climate and culture.

Table 1

Guidelines Based on ISC Workplace Violence Prevention Training

Employee Training	Supervisor Training
■ Overview of the various aspects and types of bullying and violence in the workplace	■ Basic leadership skills, such as setting clear standards, addressing employee problems promptly, performance counseling, and disciplinary procedures
■ Symptoms and behaviors often associated with those who commit aggressive or violent actions	■ Ways to encourage employees to report incidents that made them feel threatened for any reason by anyone inside or outside the organization
■ Security hazards found in the agency's workplace	■ Skills in behaving compassionately and supportively towards employees who report incidents
■ The Department or Agency's workplace violence prevention policies and procedures	■ Skills in taking human resources actions and disciplinary actions
■ Reporting requirements and processes	■ Basic skills in handling crisis situations
■ Specialized training on how to create a positive work environment and develop effective teams	■ Basic emergency procedures
■ Escalation of subtle behaviors that could lead to violence	■ How to ensure that appropriate screening of pre-employment reference is completed
■ Training to improve awareness of cultural differences (e.g., diversity)	■ Bullying
■ Tips for protecting oneself and fellow coworkers from workplace violence	■ Confidentiality procedure awareness
■ Response plans, communication, and alarm procedures	■ Supervisory training in how to conduct a peaceful separation from service
■ Active Shooter Response Training – Run, Hide, Fight	

How Resilient Is Your Organization?

A resilient organization is prepared for an uncertain future and inspires trust in its employees. Leaders may not know how strong their organization is until their company experiences adversity. A 2021 study found that 70% of business leaders lack confidence that their organization can effectively pivot and respond to disruptive situations (Renjen, 2021).

Recognizing characteristics of a resilient organization is important as leaders work proactively to keep their employees and organization moving forward. These pillars of resilience can provide a temperature check regarding a company's ability to bounce back.

- **Operational resilience**: When faced with adversity, does your organization experience negative impacts on its people, data, technologies, facilities, supply chain, or ability to meet customer needs? Are you able to stay focused on growth? Is your leadership unified in its purpose?

- **Reputational resilience**: Has your organization successfully responded to challenges of public perception when a crisis occurs? Have you maintained employees' trust? How well do you communicate with your employees? Do you publicly value your team's contributions and promote individual employees' initiative?

- **Financial resilience**: Does your organization have liquidity problems when a minor crisis occurs? Do you have sufficient income and assets to weather disruptions?

The Best Practices section that follows provides actionable ways to develop resilience for your organization and employees.

Best Practices for Increasing Resilience in the Workplace

Resilience represents a constellation of characteristics that protect individuals from the potential negative effect of stressors.
— Ivan T. Robertson and colleagues

Strong organizations and individuals recognize the importance of developing resilience skills for effectively responding to professional and personal adversity. Resilience is also a mindset for thriving as organizations navigate a changing and, at times, challenging environment. The five best practices described here detail resources, insights, strategies, and tools for developing and maintaining individual and organizational resilience.

1. Leaders Should be Trustworthy and Transparent with Employees About Responding to the Organization's Challenges

Background and Justification

The commitment to developing organizational resilience should begin at the top, and leaders should communicate transparently about problems the organization is facing. "Uncertainty creates anxiety, and anxiety torpedoes performance. Neutralize that anxiety with clear, ongoing communication. More words are better than less, and

even if you repeat yourself, you'll expand your influence. Let people know that you care about them." (Robison, 2022).

Leaders should also demonstrate that they are committed to resilience by discovering the underlying challenges employees are facing and providing appropriate and manageable solutions. "The need for resilience is a blaring alarm that something is fundamentally wrong that needs fixing. When managers notice their teams are on the edge of collapse, they should rush to address the underlying causes of that burnout, not sign their people up for dubious grit-building training." (Stillman, 2021)

Building trust with employees through listening and making decisions in their best interests builds resilience to help sustain the workforce through difficult times and can "also lead people to surprisingly positive outcomes as they emerge on the other side of a crisis" (Fisher et al., 2020).

Best Practice Implementation

Inspire trust by acknowledging uncertainty. Talk about adversity regarding local and large-scale stressful events. Create space for transparency and dialogue and admit when you do not have all the answers.

Do what you say you will do. Communicate to employees the actions you are taking to respond to adverse events or to prepare for them. Follow through on your commitments and keep employees up to date on the organization's progress.

Show confidence and trust in your employees. Tout individual successes in a public forum and give employees as much autonomy as possible to set their own schedules to achieve your shared goals.

Create opportunities for relationship building. Model a deeper sense of community and belonging by sharing some of your personal challenges or your vulnerabilities, and encouraging your senior leadership to do the same with their employees.

2. Leaders Should Establish an Environment that Promotes Employee Well-Being and Support Networks

Background and Justification

Given that personal well-being fosters resilience, promoting employees' well-being within their organization has become critically important. Organizations engaged in any emergency or challenging event has the ethical obligation to provide some form of organized psychological support to its employees. Research on trends in human resources shows that well-being offerings, including emotional, financial, social, and career wellness, are not just a benefit; they are an organization's opportunity to demonstrate how it values its members (Meister, 2022).

To help foster employee resilience, leaders and managers should develop and promote dependable support networks throughout the organization. Research shows that, for survivors of trauma, their resilience was strengthened most by their relationships and "how they interacted with family, their community, the spiritual community and the larger society" (Rope, 2021).

Best Practice Implementation

To foster well-being and resilience among the workforce, leaders and managers should

- Establish open-door policies that allow access to leadership.
- Encourage social interaction so that work relationships, especially across teams, are more relaxed.
- Encourage more informal, authentic, and frequent communication.
- Celebrate employees' life events and accomplishments outside of work to encourage them to be their authentic selves.

3. Team Leaders Should Cultivate Trust Among Team Members

Background and Justification

Employees often spend as many hours each week with coworkers as they do with their family members. Cultivating healthy relationships among team members is critical to helping workers build resilience in challenging circumstances. "Teams that 'team' well create a powerful learning environment in which team members ask one another questions, share information, seek help, talk about mistakes, and get feedback. They provide critical support for one another." (Davis, 2021).

People often function at their best within a team, but trusting others may not come easily to everyone. Managers should model trust and empathy in the way they treat employees and patiently encourage them to trust each other. "Leaders must assess the state of their teams, identify weak spots and then deliver strategies that will help team members break down barriers and build foundations of trust, transparency and self-awareness" (Ferrazzi et al., 2021).

Best Practice Implementation

- Provide psychological safety for your team. Create an atmosphere where all team members feel safe to have open, honest dialogue to solve challenges with one another without consequences.
- Meet with each team member once per week, one-on-one, to ask how they are doing, and actively listen to the answers.
- Commit to "co-elevating" the team as a whole by celebrating the team as a unit that works successfully to reach a goal.
- Model compassion and empathy for team members, encouraging them to genuinely care about others' well-being and the entire team's success.
- Encourage team members to ask for help.
- Build trust among team members to ask one another for help and to seek guidance from the larger organization for intractable problems.

4. Team Leaders Engage Team Members with Meaningful Work

Background and Justification

Research demonstrates that highly resilient employees enjoy their work and find purpose in in their organization. Managers should understand the tasks and projects their employees and teams love and excel at and provide opportunities that genuinely engage them. This also means giving workers the agency to approach their work flexibly. "One of the hallmarks of providing this autonomy is to standardize the ends, but individualize the means—focusing on outcomes, rather than on micromanaging how people get their work done" (Hayes et al., 2020).

In virtual or hybrid teams, employee autonomy over their project tasks is even more important. Remote employees should feel like they are contributing just as much value as onsite team members. "If you delegate a task that a virtual team member believes to be meaningless and unimportant, that team member is not likely to feel very confident or empowered to advance common goals. Our research finds that the more virtually a team operates, the more team members need a leader to empower them to complete the knowledge- and learning-oriented tasks that are so critical for team resilience." (Powell, 2021).

Best Practice Implementation

- Consistently reinforce that the team's individual and collective work is meaningful and contributes to the organization's mission.
- Help your team stay fully engaged in their work by encouraging them to focus as much as possible on tasks they love doing and at which they excel as well as tasks they love doing but must work at to do well.
- Cultivate resourcefulness. Encourage team members to band together to create new solutions and remain focused on outcomes during challenges.
- Create an environment that encourages team members' diverse perspectives in problem solving and that rewards collaborative, creative solutions.

5. Everyone in the Organization Must Make their Own Personal Well-Being a Priority

Background and Justification

In the past several years, mental health and well-being have become serious topics for the workforce, both personally and professionally. According to the World Health Organization, working more than 55 hours per week greatly increases the chance of heart attack and stroke (Pega et al, 2021). People are seeking remedies for burnout and fatigue. According to Gallup, the five elements of well-being include (Ratanjee, 2020):

1. Career: Liking your job.
2. Social: Having meaningful relationships.
3. Financial: Managing money well.
4. Physical: Having energy to get things done.
5. Community: Enjoying where you live.

For everyone in an organization to thrive and develop more resilience in response to challenges, they must also focus on their own well-being in each of the above five categories. The essence of self-care is to promote wellness and effective functioning; it is considered an ongoing, lifelong process that requires self-awareness and self-regulation to enhance the balance of our psychological, physical, and spiritual needs (Everly & Lating, 2017). "At the heart of self-care is your relationship and connection to self. As part of your job, it means that you're attuned to and understand what you need to be your most constructive, effective, and authentic self." (Su, 2017).

Best Practice Implementation

- To prioritize your own well-being and resilience, individuals should
- Be kind to your body and your mind by getting enough sleep, eating healthy, and exercising consistently. These classic habits boost your energy level and release endorphins that help you feel balanced, steady, and ready for what comes next.
- Express your worries through journaling. Get your stress out of your mind and onto the page. Naming your stressors will help you avoid catastrophizing events and cause stressful thoughts to lose their power, thus becoming more manageable.
- Spend some of your downtime taking walks in nature, engaging in meditation, and demonstrating self-compassion. The way you think about yourself greatly influences your psychological well-being.
- Cultivate joy in your life. To effectively avoid burnout, spend at least 20% of your day doing things that are invigorating and personally meaningful.
- Connect with positive family members, friends, and colleagues who make you feel like the best version of yourself.
- Assess your social circle and avoid the "energy vampires" who deplete you through negativity, criticism, or self-centered drama.
- It is important to know yourself; to be aware of your triggers and blind spots. Take these into consideration when you develop your self-care practices.

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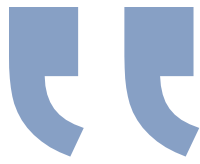
Real leadership is not about one's position in the hierarchy. It is about how we show up, especially in the face of adversity. Real leaders sense our interdependence in a deep and fundamental way, and it fills them with compassion. Values have next to nothing to do with a plaque in the lobby or a page on the website, and everything to do with our actions. People who are generous value generosity; people who are kind value kindness. It's pretty simple, really, and never more evident than in a crisis.

"

— **Pete Dignan, University of Colorado**

Part 2: Training Scenarios

The following training scenarios realistically represent how workplaces struggle with resilience. They are not intended to provide guidance on specific laws or regulations governing the workplace. Instead, each scenario should serve as a starting point for thinking about how individual and organizational resilience can help organizations more effectively navigate challenging situations. Consider using these scenarios as part of a counter-insider threat awareness campaign, as part of leadership training, or as a team-building exercise. These scenarios can be used flexibly based or to meet an organization's needs or training schedule—use one scenario in a single training session or use them all in an multi-session course.

Before using these scenarios or answering the team-building questions at the end, participants should familiarize themselves with the best practices presented in the previous section. Email or print the best practices for participants as read-ahead material. The best practices provide the concepts and tools needed to interpret the scenarios. Participants can refer to the best practices, other playbook materials, and their own experience as they consider each scenario.

For suggestions on how to facilitate group discussions on potentially sensitive topics, consider reviewing *The Leader's Conversation* by the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (2021). It provides strategies for conducting discussions in a safe environment to encourage participants to hear others' perspectives. This may be especially helpful if your organization uses these scenarios as part of its response to correct toxic work conditions or behaviors.

https://www.defenseculture.mil/Human-Relations-Toolkit/Key-Topics/#leaders-conversations

Background

PeoplePro is a well-established software firm based in Mountain View, California, that specializes in human resources management and has 500 employees. PeoplePro provides medium- and large-size organizations with business process automation and payroll services. The company's steady leadership, growth, and annual increases in revenue in the past 10 years have provided employees with a generous benefits package and tight-knit organizational culture without much employee turnover. Regional and national surveys consistently rate PeoplePro as a "best place to work."

Over the past 2 years, PeoplePro has invested in cloud technologies to remain competitive. To help with this market goal, 3 months ago, PeoplePro merged with a smaller start-up firm, VynYo. VynYo develops agile workforce technologies and API integrations to connect different cloud platforms for human resources management for small- to medium-size companies.

VynYo, with only 4 years in business, does not have the depth of employee benefits and other resources that PeoplePro does and, therefore, has experienced higher employee turnover. VynYo had a mix of regular employees and employees on short-term

contracts. VynYo provided regular workers with stock options, a free breakfast bar, and Friday office celebrations with ping pong tournaments and happy hour drinks. VynYo's culture was also tight knit but much less formal. Most of its employees are in their 20s and 30s and want to make a name for themselves in the tech industry.

VynYo was a woman-led, Denver-based firm that employed 150 software designers, engineers, and user experience architects who worked long hours and strongly believed they were the best at what they do. The company prided itself on its maverick approach to providing customers with cutting-edge workflow design unparalleled by competitive firms.

The newly merged company is PeopleProYo. However, this merger is not a guaranteed win. Many competitors produce similar human resources software solutions. There are chances the new company could falter and lose market share. Some similar mergers or acquisitions in the industry have failed when joined organizations could not overcome the stress that mergers create. In fact, the cultures of these two legacy companies have not blended well. Most employees feel like they have lost unique rewards (tangible and intangible) offered by their previous work lives.

Adding one successful organization to another successful organization does not always equal a single bigger successful organization for many possible reasons. The newly combined management team must ensure that resilience is the cornerstone of the new company.

Scenario One: Navigating a Merger of Different Organizational Cultures

Although PeoplePro's merger with VynYo has many growth benefits for the integrated company, the first 3 months have been rocky for leaders, managers, and employees. PeoplePro Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Jack Delaney retained the top job. VynYo CEO Amber Strahn received a generous compensation package and is part of the new executive team. PeopleProYo's leadership and managers have been working nonstop to transition the combined workforce into productive departments and teams.

The biggest problem for PeopleProYo is a clash of different organizational cultures. PeoplePro's generous benefits package is now available to all employees, but the benefits are not matched to the needs of legacy VynYo's younger workforce. Many former VynYo employees are especially upset about fewer vacation days and the loss of their breakfast bar and weekly office parties. The former VinYo people are also chafing over the new corporate structure with more layers of management; they complain that everything takes longer because every new solution or change has to go through more levels of approval. Some high performers have quit, and others are threatening to leave for other fast-paced start-ups. Several former PeoplePro employees think their new coworkers have bad attitudes and are ruining their easygoing organizational culture. The merged company's executive team wants to show unity and provide a model for its

combined workforce to be resilient and ride out the restructuring discomfort caused by the merger.

Team-Building Discussion: Working in small groups, discuss and make notes regarding your answers to the following questions. Be prepared to report your answers to the group when the facilitator calls time.

- In what ways does this situation represent a resilience problem or an opportunity to build resilience in the organization?

- What harm might happen in the future if the stress brought on by the merger gets out of hand?

- What can managers at the new combined company do to create a culture of resilience? Using the Best Practices guide in the playbook, identify which specific strategies and actions they should take.

Scenario Two: Building Trust With New Managers and Teams

In addition to building a new overall organizational culture, the company tasked managers from PeoplePro and VynYo with leading reorganized teams of with employees from both companies who work hybrid work schedules. Some VynYo employees relocated to the PeoplePro home office in Mountain View, while others work remotely following the closure of the Denver office. Darren Walters, a former PeoplePro team lead, is now the manager of a software engineering team with members from both companies. During Darren's initial team meetings and one-on-one meetings with employees, he laid out new oversight processes for developing projects and meeting performance goals. He emphasized the need for employees to combine their expertise and work together to continue creating breakthrough technologies. But team meetings often broke down into shouting matches. A former VynYo engineer, Sarah Jones, asked why she needed to be entrenched in bureaucracy when she had the most industry expertise to deliver software. Leonard, a former PeoplePro engineer, shot back saying that Sarah may know a lot about one piece of software, but she did not understand the bigger picture of how that technology fit into the new company's growth.

The team's main project was 2 weeks behind schedule. People were not reaching out for help when they needed a particular team member's expertise. When engineers or designers were stuck on a problem, they stayed stuck rather than productively communicating to find a solution. The sniping and arguing at team meetings made it hard for anyone to admit there was a problem with their part of the project.

Darren understood that his talented team members must somehow come together – and quickly. He needed his employees to learn to trust him and one another.

Team-Building Discussion: Working in small groups, discuss and make notes regarding your answers to the following questions. Be prepared to report your answers to the group when the facilitator calls time.

- In what ways does Darren's challenge in managing his new team illustrate a lack of resilience in the team?

- If tense moments like Sarah and Leonard's argument are occurring across other teams, what may happen to the newly merged company?

- What can Darren do to foster resilience in his team? Using the Best Practices guide in the playbook, identify which specific strategies and actions they should take.

Scenario Three: Varying Understandings of Personal Well-being

While the larger company looks for ways to promote corporate resilience, the Human Resources and Learning and Development leaders are identifying ways to help individual employees who are experiencing a lot of stress. Myra Dabrowska from Learning and Development was lead on a company-wide survey to gather input on a new benefits program. Most former VynYo employees are in their 20s and 30s, and many PeoplePro employees are between 35 and 60. Employees are at different stages in their personal and professional lives. Some are adjusting to new jobs, cities, managers, products, schedules, organizational structures, multi-generational project teams, and other changes.

Employees from both legacy companies have been calling in sick much more than before the merger. Many good employees have left the blended company. The employees who moved from Denver still eat lunch together rather than with the Mountain View employees. Remote employees act detached from daily operations, missing meetings and responding to emails very slowly. Looking forward to year-end performance reviews in a few months, Myra is afraid of how employees will respond to feedback from their new managers.

Myra understands that, in addition to the policies, benefits, and wellness programs that she and her Human Resources colleagues are trying to build for the heterogeneous workforce, each employee will have to develop ways to manage stress and be productive. She thinks that everyone who sticks with the company through the merger deserves help and guidance developing the individual resilience that will ultimately make the company stronger.

Team-Building Discussion: Working in small groups, discuss and make notes regarding your answers to the following questions. Be prepared to report your answers to the group when the facilitator calls time.

- In what ways do the employees' behavior and actions demonstrate that they need to build individual resilience to be successful in the newly merged company?

- What results may occur for individual employees and the company following performance reviews if nothing changes before then?

- What suggestions can Myra make for employees to develop individual resilience?

What workplace culture improvements would help build resilience across the organization? Using the Best Practices guide in the playbook, identify which specific strategies and actions individuals should take.

People in distress often feel disempowered, even helpless. Thus, one of the best things you can do as a [leader] is to empower them. One of the most effective ways to empower people is to give them information—knowledge about what happened to them, why it happened, and what reactions are common versus those that are not.

— George S. Everly and Jeffrey M. Lating

Part 3: Resilience Infographic

The infographic presented on the following pages describes characteristics of resilient employees, leaders, and organizations. Developing resilience is critical to withstanding and overcoming personal and organizational challenges. Use the infographic as part of a counter-insider threat awareness campaign or leadership training or to start a discussion about resilience in your organization. Consider printing the infographic and posting it to an employee bulletin board or including it in training slides or your organization's newsletter. The Resilience Infographic is available in digital and printable poster formats.

https://opa.mil/research-analysis/personnel-security/insider-threat/better-ways-to-work-together

Working Together
Building an Infrastructure for Workplace Resilience

Resilience = Our ability to cope and persevere in times of stress and to bounce back following adversity.

Grit TOUGHNESS Mental Fortitude FLEXIBILITY

Four Types of Resilience

MIND:
Your mind remains calm and centered through uncertainty, challenges, and adversity.[1]

BODY:
You have the stamina and strength to perform physical work, exercise regularly, and recover from illness, accidents, or other physical challenges.[3]

EMOTIONAL IQ:
You recognize your feelings, empathize with others, make sound decisions, and pick yourself up after a setback.[2]

ORGANIZATIONAL:
Your organization responds quickly to and recovers from adverse situations like workplace upheaval, family emergencies, and other challenges to the workforce.

Highly resilient managers and employees are

31% More productive.

78% Less likely to leave their organization.

Organizations with a highly resilient workforce have

42% Higher annual return on assets.

60% Higher 5-year revenue growth.[4]

Resilience was "word of the year" in 2020 and 2021, but[5,6]

Only **19%** U.S. employees are highly resilient and fully engaged at work.[7]

Almost **90%** Employees are vulnerable to high levels of stress and burnout.[8]

Strategies for Helping Employees Build Resilience at Work

- Projects that align with team members' strengths and interests[7]
- Personal agency for how employees get their work done[7]
- Flexible work schedules and reasonable workloads[8]
- Worker trust in team leaders and senior leadership[7]
- Opportunities for employees to identify and solve workplace problems[8]
- Manager support of team members' personal needs[8]
- Work culture that encourages supportive relationships[8]
- A comprehensive Employee Assistance Program to help workers overcome challenges[10]

Resilient individuals:

- Are connected to a support network
- Are flexible in their thinking and actions
- Are willing to think creatively and try something new
- Understand the current reality and are willing to face it
- Plan proactively, not reactively
- Communicate, collaborate, and problem-solve effectively
- Learn new skills and knowledge to overcome obstacles[11]

Resilient organizations:

- Flexibly balance short- and long-term priorities
- Adapt to adversity with the help of versatile employees
- Collaborate effectively to share knowledge and make decisions
- Build trust through strong communication and transparency
- Responsibly meet the needs of stakeholders[12]

[1] Mojtahedi, D. (2021, March 25). Mental toughness can help you cope with challenging events like the pandemic—here's how to cope with it. The Conversation. https://theconversation.com/mental-toughness-can-help-you-cope-with-challenging-events-like-the-pandemic-heres-how-to-cultivate-it-155186

[2] Abdel-Fattah, H. M. (2020, April 21). Emotional intelligence and emotional stability in crises. Journal of Psychiatry and Psychiatric Disorders 4, 56–62. https://doi.org/10.31579/2578-8868/127

[3] Hurley, K. (2020, December 11). What is resilience? Your guide to facing life's challenges, adversities, and crises. Everyday Health. https://www.everydayhealth.com/wellness/resilience/

[4] Jeannotte, A., E. Eatough, E. & Kellerman, G. R. (2020). Resilience in an age of uncertainty. BetterUp. https://grow.betterup.com/resources/resilience-in-an-age-of-uncertainty

[5] Huffington, A. (2020, December 4). And the word of the year is… "resilience." LinkedIn. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/word-year-resilience-arianna-huffington

[6] Robinson, B. (2020, December 6). Why the word for 2021 is 'resilience' and how it affects mental health. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/bryanrobinson/2020/12/06/why-the-word-for-2021-is-resilience-and-how-it-affects-mental-health

[7] Hayes, M., Chumney, F., & Buckingham, M. (2020). Workplace resilience study: Full research report. ADP Research Institute. https://www.adpri.org/assets/workplace-resilience-study/

[8] Derler, A. (2021, September 1). When vacations aren't enough: The employee burnout epidemic. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/visier/2021/09/01/when-vacations-arent-enough-the-employee-burnout-epidemic

[9] Kelly, E. L., L. F. Berkman, L. D. Kubzansky, & M. Lovejoy. (2021, October 12). 7 strategies to improve your employees' health and well-being. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2021/10/7-strategies-to-improve-your-employees-health-and-well-being

[10] Sampson, K. S. (2021, March 22). EAP offers free, confidential services for employee resilience. U.S. Army. https://www.army.mil/article/244522/eap_offers_free_confidential_services_for_employee_resilience

[11] Vahidi, P. (2021, February 4). How to bend, but not break: 7 traits of resilient people. Thrive Global. https://thriveglobal.com/stories/how-to-bend-but-not-break/

[12] Renjen, P. (2021, January 25). Building the resilient organization. Deloitte Insights.

Part 4: Resource Library

"
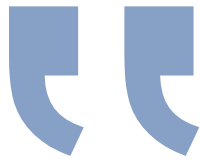
No matter what the circumstances, we are always able to begin again in a new moment. This is what we mean by resilience. No matter what happens, we can learn to use challenges as opportunities to grow, increase our awareness, and learn methods for making future challenges more tolerable.

"

— **Sharon Salzberg**

Developing Resilience for Organizations

The following resources are provided to help leaders at all levels learn about various kinds of resilience and apply useful strategies to build resilience throughout their organization. These resources support and expand on key concepts presented in previous parts of this playbook. They can be used for self-study or group training, published on your organization's intranet or in employee newsletters, or highlighted in awareness campaigns. The materials are intended to be accessible to broad audiences with different levels of expertise. Text in *italics* is quoted from resource.

Organizational Resilience and Climbing Mount Everest

From the article "Building Organizational Resilience":

Researchers have identified three broad approaches to getting work done, and what they've learned can help managers respond more effectively to highly changeable environments.

Routines: Make work predictable and more efficient.

Heuristics: Rules of thumb that speed up decision-making processes and provide guideline to prioritize the use of resources.

Improvisation: Spontaneous and creative efforts to solve problems and take advantage of new opportunities.

Suarez, F. F., & Montes, J. S. (2020, November-December). Building organizational resilience. *Harvard Business Review Magazine*. https://hbr.org/2020/11/building-organizational-resilience

Building Resilience for the Long-Term

From the article "Building Resilience: Helping Workers Handle Stress for the Long Haul":

As a manager, you can explain to your workers that resilience training means learning how to deal with challenges and setbacks in a different way than they may have learned before. Becoming resilient, experts say, doesn't just help you get through a stressful time, but can also empower you to learn how to stay resilient for the long haul, and in the process experience personal growth and improve your life.

Doheny, K. (2021, January 12). *Building resilience: Helping workers handle stress for the long haul*. SHRM. https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/people-managers/pages/building-resilient-workers-.aspx

Organizational Resilience Lessons From Microsoft

From the article "Case Study: Mapping Organizational Resilience":

Experts at Microsoft identified seven principles of resilience for organizational leaders.

1. Tackle the causes and consequences of systemic vulnerability.
2. Convene and participate in broad coalitions with a bias for action.
3. Contribute a "resilience toolbox" of open tools and technologies.
4. Understand the links between people, practices, and outcomes.
5. Democratize expert workflows and real-world evidence development.
6. Build trust through transparency and value-sensitive design.
7. Design for transformation at the mesoscale of activity.

Microsoft. (2021, May 20). *Case study: Mapping organizational resilience*. https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/group/societal-resilience/articles/case-study-mapping-organizational-resilience/

Characteristics of Resilient Organizations

From the article "Building the Resilient Organization: 2021 Deloitte Global Resilience Report":

We identified five attributes of resilient organizations that enable and promote nimble strategies, adaptive cultures, and the implementation and effective use of advanced technology. Businesses that can bounce back from unexpected challenges typically are: prepared, adaptable, collaborative, trustworthy, and responsible.

Deloitte. (2021). *Building the resilient organization: 2021 Deloitte global resilience report*. https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/insights/articles/US114083_Global-resilience-and-disruption/2021-Resilience-Report.pdf

Building a "Gritty" Organization Through Your Employees and Teams

From the article "Organizational Grit":

For leaders, building a gritty culture begins with selecting and developing gritty individuals. What should organizations look for? The two critical components of grit are passion and perseverance. Passion comes from intrinsic interest in your craft and from a sense of purpose—the conviction that your work is meaningful and helps others. Perseverance takes the form of resilience in the face of adversity as well as unwavering devotion to continuous improvement.

Gritty teams collectively have the same traits that gritty individuals do: a desire to work hard, learn, and improve; resilience in the face of setbacks; and a strong sense of priorities and purpose.

Lee, T. H., & Duckworth, A. L. (2018, September-October). Organizational grit. *Harvard Business Review Magazine*. https://hbr.org/2018/09/organizational-grit

Revisit and Lean Into Organizational Values To Build a More Resilient Organization

From the article "How to Cultivate a Values-Based Culture and Improve Business Resiliency":

To attract quality job candidates and build organizational longevity and resilience, leaders should revisit and promote the organization's values. A values-based culture is

…a living, breathing culture of shared core values among all employees. It has clear ground rules for establishing a foundation and guiding principles for decision-making, but it also inspires a sense of community among all employees. Management and leadership set an example by leaning into their firm's values and living them at every moment at work... Personal values of individuals align with those of the firm, motivating the company into action.

Historically, values-based or purpose-driven cultures remain more stable and agile over time because they work from day one to build employee commitment to the firm.

Lee, E. (2021, March 30). How to cultivate a values-based culture and improve business resiliency. *Architect*. https://www.architectmagazine.com/practice/how-to-cultivate-a-values-based-culture-and-improve-business-resiliency_o

A Collaborative Workplace Game To Build Resilience

"Deadlines and Deliverables" is a card game that simulates real-life stressful situations and challenges employees to work together to overcome those situations with resilience strategies.

Welcome to Deadlines and Deliverables, a game of teamwork, cooperation, and tight deadlines! You are an employee who works for a very busy organization. You have many tasks to accomplish, but like everybody else, you face daily work-related and personal challenges that can sometimes make it difficult to succeed. If you can't get your work done, you'll stress and both you and your organization will suffer. The good news is that you are not alone – you have a team who can help you! The bad news is that they have their own mix of challenges, strengths, and tasks to accomplish. Only by communicating and working together can you all succeed! You are encouraged to communicate, plan, and strategize throughout the game!

The purposes of the game are to

- *Help build a more resilient and productive workforce by teaching resilience concepts and techniques*
- *Help build teamwork, cooperation and communication skills through a cooperative learn-by-doing game*
- *Be fun for anyone to play at any time!*

The Threat Lab. (2020). *Deadlines and deliverables*. Defense Personnel and Security Research Center. https://www.cdse.edu/Portals/124/Documents/jobaids/insider/Deadlines_and_Deliverables_Game.pdf?ver=VV9dbE11DVnZAZ3AfqLF_w%3d%3d

A Review Article on Organizational Resilience With Applications to Healthcare Systems

From the article "What is resilience and how can it be nurtured? A systematic review of empirical literature on organizational resilience":

Two cultural practices are identified as key to organizational resilience. First is the organizations attitude towards everyday and acute challenges. The ability of leaders and other staff to view challenges from an opportunistic perspective is important for resilience. Resilient organizations consider challenges as learning opportunities and used these experiences to develop capabilities that improve their resilience.

Second, resilient organizations support creativity and innovation…. A creative climate is thought to be imperative for providing a conducive environment for organizational adaptation and transformation in the face of challenges. Resilient organizations nurtured creativity by providing time and resources for experimentation, rewarded innovation, tolerance for failure, and an atmosphere in which employees felt safe to share new ideas.

Barasa, E., Mbau, R., & Gilson, L. (2018). What is resilience and how can it be nurtured? A systematic review of empirical literature on organizational resilience. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management, 7*(6), 491. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6015506/pdf/ijhpm-7-491.pdf

Responding to Traumatic Events

From the book: *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Psychological First Aid*

The importance of providing support to someone in emergent distress is self-evident. Whether it's responding to the attacks of September 11, 2001, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the psychological effects of Ebola in Texas in 2014, the terrorist attacks in San Bernardino and Paris in 2015 and Brussels in 2016, or responding to the emotional consequences of a devastating house fire or medical crisis, there is most commonly a compelling desire to help those in distress. What may be less evident is how to provide such assistance, especially when a person is in psychological distress. In this book, we describe the development and guidelines for implementation of a model for providing psychological support to a person in acute psychological distress. We call this psychological first aid (PFA).

Everly, G. S., & Lating, J. M. (2017). The Johns Hopkins Guide to Psychological First Aid. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Developing Resilience in Individuals

The following resources are provided to help individuals learn more about resilience at work and apply strategies to increase resilience in their professional and personal lives. These resources support and expand on key concepts presented in previous parts of this playbook. They can be used for self-study, personal growth, or discussion with colleagues. The materials are intended to be accessible to broad audiences with different levels of expertise.

Doing Things Differently Through Resilience

From the article "Seven Things Resilient Employees Do Differently":

The economy, the way people want to live and work, and a whole host of other factors are changing the way work gets done. Some companies are adapting right along with the changes, but many are having difficulties. Coping with today's stressors on the job requires a different set of strategies and skills, which is why resilience is so important.

Davis, P. (2014, October 2). Seven things resilient employees do differently. *Psychology Today*. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/pressure-proof/201410/seven-things-resilient-employees-do-differently

The Importance of Resilience To Prevent Insider Threat

From the presentation from the Center for Development of Security Excellence (CDSE) "Personal Resilience in Insider Threat Programs: Hardening the Target":

This presentation from insider threat experts focuses on the importance of prioritizing individual well-being to develop employee resilience and mitigate insider threats.

- *Poor sleep means poor decision making, mistakes, and hyper focus on one problem area such as loneliness, debt, and physical ailments*

- *When we are struggling, we are more self-focused, withdrawn, and antagonistic; a self-centered mindset starts with distancing oneself, then insecurity, then fear, then anxiety, then frustration, and then anger, which potentially ends in violence*

- *Well balanced means more flexible, creative, adjusted to life's difficulties/daily frustrations, more loving, forgiving, and sociable.*

Soto, R. D. (2020, January 16). *Personal resilience in insider threat programs: hardening the target*. CDSE. https://www.cdse.edu/Training/Webinars-and-Conferences/Webinar-Archive/Personal-Resilience-and-Insider-Threat-Hardening-the-Target/

Self-Compassion Is a Path Toward Resilience and a Growth Mindset

From the article "How Self-Compassion Can Help You Cope with Adversity: 3 Steps to Improve Your Resilience":

Unfortunately, because self-esteem is based on an external assessment of our worth, it can desert us when we most need it—when we fail. We are left with feelings of inadequacy and self-judgment.

With self-compassion, you value yourself not because you've judged yourself positively and others negatively but because you're intrinsically deserving of care and concern like everyone else. Where self-esteem leaves us powerless and distraught, self-compassion is at the heart of empowerment, learning, and inner strength.

Hart, H. (2019, September 3). *How self-compassion can help you cope with adversity: 3 steps to improve your resilience*. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/hannahart/2019/09/03/how-self-compassion-can-help-you-cope-with-adversity-3-steps-to-improve-your-resilience/?sh=6f9a39847825

Resilience Is Not Only Surviving, but Thriving

From the article "Resilience in the Age of Global Crises: How Can We Cultivate It?":

If we take a definition of resilience as… being able to survive adversity, then I would suggest that that is a definition that… is incomplete. However, if we change that definition just slightly to say that resilience is not about getting through adversity but thriving because of adversity, that… makes a big paradigm shift, and what we're actually expecting then from resilience is more than just coping.

Cohut, M. (2021, March 5). Resilience in the age of global crises: How can we cultivate it? *Medical News Today*. https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/resilience-in-the-age-of-global-crises-how-can-we-cultivate-it

Nurturing Your Resilience Through Personal and Professional Connections

From the article "The Secret to Building Resilience":

We can nurture and build our resilience through a wide variety of interactions with people in our personal and professional lives. These interactions can help us to shift or push back on work demands and alter the magnitude of the challenge we're facing. They can help crystalize the meaningful purpose in what we are doing or help us see a path forward to overcome a setback — these are the kinds of interactions that motivate us to persist. People in our support systems can provide empathy or simply help us laugh and bolster our resilience by shifting perspective and reminding us we are not alone in the fight.

Cross, R., Dillon, K., & Greenburg, D. (2021, January 29). The secret to building resilience. *Harvard Business Review*. https://hbr.org/2021/01/the-secret-to-building-resilience

How To Build Your Emotional Resilience

From the article "How to Regulate Your Emotions Without Suppressing Them":

When it comes to regulating difficult emotions, there are two ways most people respond: They act out or they suppress. If you act out with a strong emotion like anger, you will most likely create undesirable consequences in your relationships, your work, and even your play. The ripple effects of acting out usually provoke more anger around you, which leads to more difficulty. The consequences of suppressing those big emotions can be even more dangerous.

What many people aren't aware of is that there's another way to regulate our emotions: Feel the feeling in real time.

Cullen, M. (2020, January 30). How to regulate your emotions without suppressing them. *Greater Good Magazine*. https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_regulate_your_emotions_without_suppressing_them

Resilience Helps Us Cultivate Our Best Life

From the article "Resilience Isn't Just Being Tough: It's a Skill You Can Develop. Here's How I Did It":

Our habit is to view challenging situations as if something is wrong; that we are a victim and we have a problem. What if instead of a problem, we perceive stress as a signal to call on our resourcefulness, our intelligence, care, and courage? Resilience grows when we become intentional about bringing our best to difficult life seasons.

Petrow, S. (2017, August 30). Resilience isn't just being tough: it's a skill you can develop. Here's how I did it. *The Washington Post*. https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/resilience-isnt-just-being-tough-its-a-skill-you-can-develop-heres-how-i-did-it/2017/08/29/9d077a1e-881f-11e7-a50f-e0d4e6ec070a_story.html

The Importance of Psychological Capital in Resilience

From the article "Psycap 101: Your Guide to Increasing Psychological Capital":

Psychological Capital [or PsyCap] is defined as an individual's positive psychological state of development… The concept of PsyCap has become even more relevant with recent findings in the area of neuroplasticity. Since our brain is malleable, PsyCap can be developed and strengthened. Further, PsyCap can be managed and assessed.

Ohlin, B. (2020, December 10). Psycap 101: Your guide to increasing psychological capital. *Positive Psychology*. https://positivepsychology.com/psychological-capital-psycap/

Finding Your Why at Work (or Ikigai in Japanese)

From the article "'Ikigai' is the Future of Work":

This Japanese philosophy of "ikigai" provides a fresh perspective on the future of work.

Ikigai is centered around the why of life—giving meaning to what one does and how one lives. This philosophy focuses on four broad areas to help derive meaning—all of which apply to both our personal and working lives. It asks us to find a sweet spot where what you love, what you're good at, what the world needs, and what you can get paid for all meet.

Identifying your ikigai is just the beginning. Identifying and achieving are two separate things. It is a lifelong journey to identify and then fulfill one's ikigai. Resilience in this context means staying focused on the long-term goal. It also means having the strength and fortitude to get up and try again after you fall.

Lee, C. (2021, October 1). "Ikigai" is the future of work. *Workflow Quarterly*. https://www.servicenow.com/workflow/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/wfq-q3-resilience-10.1.21.pdf

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