

LIFE & STYLE

Companies Offer Creative Solutions to Worker Burnout During the Pandemic

From surprise days off to 30-hour workweeks, managers are devising ways to help employees; 'How are you really, really doing?'



PHOTO: MARK MATCHO

By [Chip Cutter](#)

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A few months into the pandemic, Nick Popoff let his guard down in an all-hands video call and said aloud what many had been experiencing: He felt burned out.

Some weeks, the engineering director at ticketing company Eventbrite Inc. didn't leave his house for days, he said. Slack notifications buzzed constantly. He missed seeing friends and colleagues in person. Even a hike with his wife through northern California's redwoods, didn't leave him sufficiently recharged.

"Work burnout is insidious. It's not just like a red light that comes on," Mr. Popoff says. "It's something that very slowly starts to happen, and that's how it can catch people by surprise."

After Mr. Popoff shared his experience in the meeting, colleagues came forward, saying that they, too, felt exhausted by work, and life, in a pandemic. Mr. Popoff began leading "recognizing burnout" sessions for other employees, giving staffers a forum to voice their feelings, and to hear advice from mental health professionals about how to cope.

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