

## ROMANCE, GERMANIC, AND OTHER LANGUAGES

DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-311-8-14>

### POSTCOVID BURNOUT SYNDROME AMONG ENGLISH RESEARCHERS: SOLUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER IMPROVEMENTS

### СИНДРОМ ПОСТКОВІДНОГО ВИГОРАННЯ З-ПОМІЖ АНГЛІЙСЬКИХ ДОСЛІДНИКІВ: ПРОПОЗИЦІЇ ВІД РОБОТОДАВЦІВ

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Remote English-language teaching during the COVID-19 lockdown caused rapid changes not only in the contemporary educational process, but also among English-language researchers, who were forced to broaden practical orientation of their researches through the intensification of self-education, mainly in IT sphere (Koliasa, Lelet at al., 2021). Rapid transition from E-learning to fully E-Learning process, the implementation of distance EdTech for remote English-language teaching during the Covid-19 lockdown for a rather long period of time, stress, anxiety and mental

disorders that appeared as a result of disability of coping with constant cognitive dissonance served as a trigger to a postCOVID burnout, or in medical terminology, “a long COVID”, a kind of a side effect of COVID-19 (Babelyuk, Koliasa, 2020; 2021).

It goes without saying that preventing postCOVID burnout is a better strategy than waiting to treat it after it becomes a serious problem. The personal, social, and organizational costs of burnout can be considerable in terms of physical health, psychological well-being, and work performance, so it does not make sense to incur those before taking any kind of ameliorative action. That’s why it’s reasonable to elicit effective ways of prevention postCOVID burnout syndrome from 1) an individual perspective, 2) specialists recommendations, and 3) the employer improvements. But before we start discussing possible ways of overcoming postCOVID burnout syndrome among English researchers it is worth outlining some general aspects of the analysed phenomena.

A primary prevention strategy, in which steps are taken to minimize the risk of postCOVID burnout before it happens, is a more rational and prudent approach. The second important step in this process is special building engagement, where people who are engaged with their work are better able to cope with the challenges they encounter during COVID lockdown, and thus are more likely to recover from stress. In other words, building an engaged workforce, before there are major problems, is a great primary-prevention strategy. It’s worth stressing that when people are focused on *how to make things better*, rather than just wallowing in *what’s wrong*, they are more likely to commit to some constructive changes in the workplace. In the article “12 Ways Managers Can Reduce Employee Stress and Burnout” (2022), which was published by Michigan State University there is a list of steps employers can make to help prevent burnout of their employees.

Another crucial statement for diminishing postCOVID burnout syndrome of employees is that organizational intervention is more productive than individual intervention. If improvements can be made in job conditions that affect a lot of employees, then those interventions can have a much larger impact (Leiter, Maslach, 2014). For example, policies about work hours can have a wide-ranging effect that make changes in the organizational culture or climate. It is important to recognize that people rarely work in total isolation from others – instead, they are embedded within one or more social networks (Maslach, 2017).

Speaking about a supportive and engaging environment for English researchers through the prism of overcoming postCOVID burnout syndrome

the employer can be the chair of the department, or the rector of the educational institution and the following steps should be done to prevent the postCOVID burnout syndrome:

**To hold walking meetings** by getting out of the university or classes and getting active by implementing walking meetings. Matthew Ellis, an HR technician at the Berkeley County School District, shared his walking meeting guidelines with the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM). Ellis' bimonthly 20-minute walking meetings have an agenda, which typically includes any current challenges and potential solutions, updates on projects and tasks, coaching and employee recognition. These meetings are best when used for small groups of English researchers (a supervisor and his/her postgraduate students). While activity itself can eliminate stress, it's also important to make sure walking meetings are productive, just like any other meeting.

**To promote work/wife balance** means that educational managers must live out a healthy work/life balance to promote it within the organization. This means managers must also ensure they allow time for exercise, family and self-care. Work/life balance can also be supported at an organizational level. For example, offer flexible scheduling to accommodate individual schedules of English researchers.

**Monitor Workloads and Scheduling** presupposes that the chair of the department should assure all the members of the department that they are not being tasked with unreasonable workloads or prolonged rigorous schedules. While workloads may spike on some occasions, they can't be expected to sustain heavy workloads and demanding schedules. For example, high turnover in a department can indicate a problem with workload or scheduling.

**Provide Work From Home Options** not only during COVID lockdown, but on a regular basis. By the way, working from home isn't a new concept, but educational managers can help eliminate stigma and ensure fair application of policy by making it a practice. This saves time and money commuting, and demonstrates organizational trust. The option to work remotely can also help eliminate the stress of time management for English researchers trying to juggle necessary medical appointments or for working parents or caregivers trying to coordinate care.

**Prioritize Workplace Wellness** presupposes within the workplace, offering a quiet space for English researchers to unplug, meditate, pray or relax for a few minutes can help manage stress. Even investing in a few aesthetics for the department, like inviting chairs, plants or new pictures can help establish a less stressful environment.

*Create Goals and Career Paths* means an evolving English-language researchers into technological landscape, helping them obtain new skills and adapt to a dynamic market, which will help them grow their advancement opportunities, inside the department, university and outside it. Encouraging English-language researchers to view stressful situations as a challenge, rather than a threat, can help them rise to the occasion. By setting clear goals together with all the members of the department, not only with the educational managers ensure English researchers know what to expect, and boost their engagement.

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