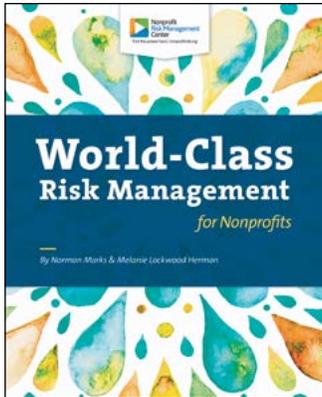


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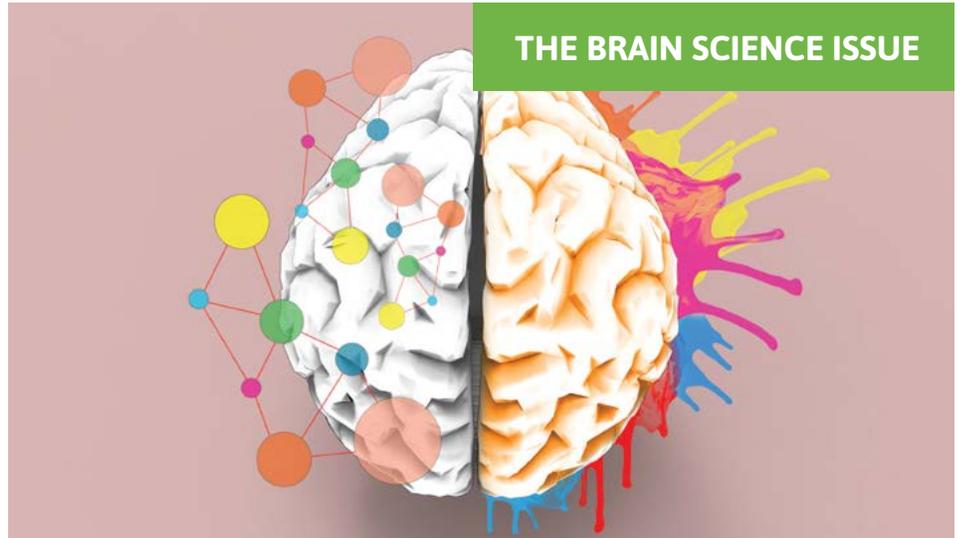
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THE BRAIN SCIENCE ISSUE



Don't Be Dispassionate: How to Use Emotional Impulses to Make Better Decisions

By Glenn Mott

"Heuristic / you risked it." —Hank Lazer
Recently, I had an opportunity to read a special issue of the *Harvard Business Review* called "The Brain Science Behind Business"—a compilation of previously published articles about neuroscience. Reading these articles got me thinking about the role of heuristics in risk management.

Heuristics refers to a set of rules we develop through experience that help us assess risk and make decisions. Common terms for a heuristic will be familiar to all: rules of thumb, an educated guess, or listening to your gut. Recent discoveries in the field of neuroscience offer new insights

into heuristics, and the imperfect methods that help us understand the mechanics of problem solving. Significantly, these discoveries are helping us understand the role of emotions in risk assessment.

Deliberation vs. Intuition

How does a heuristic best serve us in our decision-making process, and what is the value of listening to subjective emotions, against dispassionate reason? Can we optimize instinct in decision-making, and could intuition outperform deliberation? Debate in the scientific community is ongoing, but there are ways heuristic techniques are already used in risk

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“A mounting body of neurological evidence suggests that emotional impulses should not be ignored.”

management that enter into this dialogue between business and science.

Internally-directed Learning

Over the past decade neuroscientists have made exciting discoveries into the brain's “default network”—a class of cognition that controls introspection, with the ability to envision alternatives based on one's past experience. One discovery is that even during periods of unfocused down time, the brain is spending considerable energy processing existing knowledge. Our learning is never truly at rest. These self-generated thoughts can be a source of creative insights that facilitate unique solutions to ongoing problems.

When you engage in unfocused activity, you are not detached from the default network in the brain. This discovery, something artists and scientists have recognized throughout history (the muse responsible for inspiration, or Eureka! moments), has led more companies (particularly tech firms) to encourage unfocused free time as a valuable and underutilized factor in generating breakthrough innovations.

You may have experienced the default network when you've found the solution to a difficult problem only when you stepped away from the desk, or while taking a morning shower, walking your dog, reading a novel, or daydreaming at the beach. The question is, how do we unlock the default network, and tap into the “affect network” (automatic and endocrine responses that the brain interprets as emotions)? Or simply put, what is the role of heuristics in decision-making?

Learning from Hunches

As Adam Waytz and Malia Mason, authors of one of the *HBR* articles write in “Your Brain at Work,” new approaches to neuroscience are revealing, “A hunch is not some mystical sixth sense. It's a real neurological response that manifests itself physically.” Heuristics are tools and approaches ingrained in the neurological response to our physical reality. It's how you are able to sometimes fly by the seat of your pants and still land on your feet. “Leaders tend to push away feelings in making decisions because they think it's best to be dispassionate. But a mounting body of neurological evidence suggests that emotional impulses should not be ignored. The ‘affect network’ fast-tracks decision making and helps us process information that may include too many variables. . . . So hunches are extremely useful in helping us bypass complex and laborious analysis. Should we always trust them? Absolutely not,” say Waytz and Mason.

Hunches tend to be binary (a positive or negative hunch, rarely neutral) even if they are sometimes experienced as vague and amorphous impulses. Leaders who espouse the value of positive thinking at all costs, over naysayers in their organization, may do so at their peril. The *HBR* authors don't suggest leaders be guided by doubt and anxiety, but listening to doubt, evaluating fears instead of avoiding them, can generate better outcomes, “. . . the neuroscience of emotion shows us that although hunches are fallible, it's worth exploring them more than we do. Particularly in situations involving risk, negative gut feelings can

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prevent leaders from making overconfident or overly optimistic decisions.”

Leaders who are over reliant on metrics may believe these tools detach them from an emotional response, pushing away their feelings when making important decisions because they believe it's best to be dispassionate. This can lead to an over reliance on information gathering, and to overriding their own experience. Information may be knowledge, and knowledge may be power, but information is not intelligence. It's not even learning.

Cultivating Institutional Knowledge

We still believe there is a need to pursue analytics using proven tools of risk assessment, and that these tools are enhanced by self-discovery. The *HBR* literature backs up NRMCM's philosophy that risk assessment isn't a product, rather it's an adaptive process, a continuing journey of best practices, best understood through a healthy alchemy of doubt, mission, and experience. NRMCM's risk management process consists of five steps that roughly correspond to our core neural pathways for information gathering:

- 1. Consider the context:** In risk management, context refers to the environment in which an organization pursues its mission and delivers programs and services. Context is the backdrop for risk-taking and risk practice, making certain risks more or less likely to materialize. Risk context includes the setting, the surroundings, and the awareness of what is routine. In some instances, contextual issues or considerations may make risk management an urgent priority (such as post-scandal) or burdensome (such as during a period of high turnover). Contextual issues will affect implementation or adoption of risk management strategies.
- 2. Appraise risks:** The process continues with identifying and discussing



“Listening to doubt, evaluating fears instead of avoiding them, can generate better outcomes.”

risks and exposures to events that potentially affect the objectives of the organization. Some nonprofit teams approach this part of the risk management process through informal brainstorming. Others use tools such as the Risk Bow Tie, root cause analysis, or the review of incident logs and claims files. Whether your team takes an informal approach or uses a framework to guide risk identification and appraisal, the key outcome is a deeper understanding and awareness of risks. After identifying risks, it's important to consider which issues warrant primary, versus secondary focus. This is the stage where some teams use a numeric scoring framework related to probability, potential impact, and in some cases, the organization's risk readiness. The NRMCM team has found that

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“Although hunches are fallible, it’s worth exploring them more than we do.”

spending an enormous amount of time on scoring can give the impression that the team’s educated guesses are something more. An important reminder at this stage is to make sure the team identifying and appraising risks is diverse: include veterans as well as newer hires, those who are risk-takers and others who are risk averse.

- 3. Decide what to do and communicate your decisions:** This step involves considering the possible options to address the likelihood or potential consequences of risk, or the organization’s readiness to respond should the risk event occur. The team working on risk management evaluates alternative methods for addressing your exposures and selects the appropriate (practical, affordable, and effective) solution for each targeted exposure.

4. Act on your decision(s):

Implementing strategies the risk management team has selected (such as a new screening process for volunteers), is often the most difficult part of the risk management process. This involves determining the necessary resources, including financial resources, human resources, and information technology required to bring new policies and practices to life.

- 5. Follow up and adjust:** This step involves monitoring the results. How is the change in practice, policy, or training working for the organization? Has there been any pushback or suggestions to amend the approach? Strategies that are not working will almost certainly be felt on an emotional level, before they can be codified in a directive.

Finding Cognitive Balance: Professionalism and the Irrational

Most readers will be familiar with Malcolm Gladwell, who tackled some of these ideas in his runaway bestselling book *Blink* from 2005. Gladwell provided anecdotal evidence for a kind of emotional algorithm, validating choices that seem to be made in an instant. In Gladwell’s findings, great decisions aren’t necessarily those made through a laborious process of information gathering and deliberation but are best made by those who have perfected the art of filtering the few factors that matter most from an overwhelming number of variables. Unfortunately, *Blink* could also reinforce lazy tendencies. We are not saying here that because first impressions sometimes prove to be correct, one should always follow the gut and glibly trust instinct above reason. What is clear, is that our default mode network is doing more than blinking at the world through a transparent eye.

This brings me back to artists, mentioned above. There is a tradition of the irrational element in the arts,

BUILDING HABITS FOR A HEALTHY BRAIN



WHAT DOES YOUR BRAIN NEED TODAY?

Your brain works for you around the clock, directing every one of your activities from your heartbeat to your eye movement across this page. Keeping this powerful organ in great condition is well worth the time and effort. Here are five tips for maintaining prime brain health every day.



Exercise can be just as important for your mind as it is for your body and heart. Getting your blood moving keeps your brain active, stimulating both thinking and memory.



Many studies show that mind exercise has both short and long-term brain benefits. Keep on the lookout for games, hobbies, classes, or puzzles that offer new intellectual challenges.



Diets rich in antioxidants help your body reduce oxidation and plaque formations in the brain. Although research is ongoing, a "Mediterranean" diet is especially recommended: fruits, fish, whole grains, and eggs have all been tied to brain health.



In today's fast-paced world it's easy to compromise on rest, but sleep provides a critical time for your brain to recover and recharge. Resolve to raise the quality of your sleep by relaxing before bedtime and removing electronics or anything else that might get in the way of stress-free sleep.



Believe it or not, social interaction is great for the brain. A healthy community can reduce stress, combat depression, and even slow memory decline. Connect with people who will challenge you to think, communicate, and try new things.

RISKY THINKING?

Thoughtful risk assessment is conducted in your "neocortex," an advanced area of the brain found only in mammals that cranks through problems and provides analytical solutions. The neocortex takes up around 76% of the brain to help you listen, speak, and think intelligently!

"The human brain has 100 billion neurons, each neuron connected to 10 thousand other neurons. Sitting on your shoulders is the most complicated object in the known universe."

- Michio Kaku

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generally. Our concentration here is not with a pathological sense of the irrational. The poet and career Hartford insurance executive Wallace Stevens wrote often on this topic, and directly addressed what neuroscience is discovering in the default mode network of the brain. What interested Stevens was, “a particular process in the rational mind which we recognize as irrational in the sense that it takes place unaccountably. . . .” He continues, “It is easy to brush aside the irrational with the statement that we are rational beings, Aristotelians and not brutes. But it is becoming easier every day to say that we are irrational beings; that all irrationality is not of a piece and that the only reason

why it does not yet have a tradition is that its tradition is in progress.” The irrational has legitimacy in how we approach risk. Recognition and acknowledgement of the irrational element in our thinking is itself a heuristic, a practical method for reaching immediate goals.

In 2016 educational psychologists Denis Dumas and Kevin Dunbar found in a study that students at the University of Maryland were able to solve creative problems more successfully if they pretend to “behave like an eccentric poet rather than a rigid librarian.” As an occasional lecturer in college classrooms, I observe more rigid poets than eccentric librarians,

but the point is clear. Pretend, when you're stuck in a creative process, to be someone else for a short time. Risk management isn't about avoidance; nonprofit leaders must take on enough risk to move nonprofits forward. The embrace of heuristics for creative problem solving to simplify complex issues can be a practical approach to self-discovery and makes the most of institutional knowledge, decoupling us from rational-to-a-fault modes of habitual thinking. If you'll risk it.

Glenn Mott is a Senior Consultant for the Nonprofit Risk Management Center, and a partner at New Narrative North America, a media and communications firm with offices in New York and Hong Kong.



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Case Study

Who: A nonprofit culture organization that produces large-scale events

Strategy: To provide risk management and youth protection training to event volunteers

Results: Our work included the delivery of a custom-built online portal featuring courses and resources for volunteers and other stakeholders. To read additional case studies, visit: www.nonprofitrisk.org/case-studies/.



High or Dry: Weed and the Workplace

By *Melanie Lockwood Herman*

Is your nonprofit workplace a “drug-free” zone? Although nonprofit leaders are in agreement that impaired staff pose an unacceptable risk to the safety of people who serve and receive services, the legalization of medical and recreational marijuana creates a host of challenges for nonprofit employers who wish to take a stand against drug use in the workplace. Statutes permitting medical and recreational cannabis use are sweeping the country, fueled by changing attitudes about pot, the industry’s efforts to promote their product, marijuana advocates who fervently promote various general health and pain-relief benefits, and by state governments that will stand to reap the tax benefits. A recent report from the advocacy group Drug Policy Alliance indicates that 70% of voters favor the right to use marijuana if recommended or prescribed by a doctor. (See www.drugpolicy.org/issues/medical-marijuana)

The *U.S. Cannabis Report: 2018 Industry Outlook* issued by New Frontier Data forecasts that today’s legal cannabis market of \$8.3 billion will triple in size over the next six years. Thoughtful nonprofit leaders are adjusting their policies to comply with new laws while also considering how they will respond when marijuana concerns arise in the workplace. Even in states where marijuana is completely banned, employers must anticipate situations where staff or volunteers use or consume marijuana legally by crossing state lines, or simply decide to use or consume it illegally.

Understanding Marijuana

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug in the U.S. Marijuana is “the dried leaves, flowers, stems, and seeds from the hemp plant,

Cannabis sativa.” The component of the plant that is most concerning to employers is its mind-altering chemical, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which alters or impairs senses, movement, and thinking. When smoked, THC effects are felt quickly, but when consumed in food or drink the effects of THC may not be felt until 30 minutes to an hour after the drug is ingested. The “high” from THC wears off in a few hours, but the drug can linger in the bloodstream for days or even weeks.

Cannabis oils can have a wide range of THC concentrations. Several states that haven’t legalized medical marijuana allow limited use of cannabis oils if they contain a low level of THC and a high level of cannabidiol (CBD), a non-psychoactive component that may have some health benefits, as well as risks (see “Everything you need to know about CBD oil,” www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/317221.php).

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“The legal landscape pertaining to marijuana is both complex and confusing. As of the date of this writing, “comprehensive” medical marijuana/cannabis programs have been approved in 34 states and the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands; recreational marijuana was legal in 10 states.”

Marijuana: Legal or Not?

The legal landscape pertaining to marijuana is both complex and confusing. As of the date of this writing, “comprehensive” medical marijuana/cannabis programs have been approved in 34 states and the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands; recreational marijuana was legal in 10 states. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) uses the following criteria to determine whether a program is “comprehensive”:

1. Protection from criminal penalties for using marijuana for a medical purpose
2. Access to marijuana through home cultivation, dispensaries, or another system likely to be implemented
3. Allows for a variety of strains or products, including those with more than “low THC”
4. Allows either smoking or vaporization of some kind of marijuana products, plant material or extract, and
5. Is not a limited trial program

(For a Table of State Medical Marijuana/Cannabis Program Laws and links to helpful information on medical marijuana research and public health

resources, see: www.ncsl.org/research/health/state-medical-marijuana-laws.aspx)

Implications for Employers

Under federal law marijuana is a Schedule 1 substance. Federal law pre-empts state law where a clear and positive conflict exists so that the two laws cannot co-exist; however, many states have enacted laws that diverge from federal law without creating such a conflict. For instance, while federal law would prevent the use of marijuana for illegal purposes, states have been able to define and limit the *legal* purposes of marijuana. Likewise, several states have passed laws to prohibit discrimination against employees solely on the basis that they use marijuana. Every employer must carefully balance two important priorities and interests: 1) ensuring appropriate policies and practices that create and support a safe workplace; and 2) achieving compliance with myriad laws governing the employment relationship.

Three of the many questions that arise in the context of marijuana in the workplace include:

1. **Must an employer honor an employee’s request for leave or an accommodation related to cannabis treatment?**

In 2006, an Oregon court ruled that an employee was not disabled under state law if his medical issues could be addressed with a prescription for medical marijuana. Because the employee wasn’t disabled under state law, there was no duty to provide an accommodation. (See *Washburn v. Columbia Forest Products Inc.*) New York has taken the opposite position, requiring that certified medical marijuana patients be deemed as having a disability and requiring employers to reasonably accommodate the underlying disability associated with the legal marijuana use. (See Public Health Law § 3369.) Thus, the answer varies by state.

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“...if your state permits medical marijuana use, do not take punitive action against an employee or candidate who tests positive for marijuana until you first determine whether the positive drug test is the result of legally-permitted medical use of the drug.”

2. May an employer terminate an employee—or disqualify a candidate—for using medical marijuana? State court rulings have been inconsistent on this important issue as well. For example, a Massachusetts court recently held that permitting offsite marijuana use—an exception to the employer’s established drug policy—may be a reasonable accommodation for an employee whose physician prescribed marijuana as the most effective treatment for a disability. (See Barbuto vs. Advantage Sales and Marketing, LLC.) A Washington Court of Appeals found, however, that state law does not restrict an employer from terminating the employment of a staff member after discovering the employee’s use of medical marijuana. In Rose v. Teletech Customer Care Management, the court indicated that state law does not require employers to accommodate either off-duty or on-the-job use of marijuana.

3. Is an employee who was terminated for using marijuana eligible for unemployment benefits? The answer to this question depends on the state in which the employee works. In a recent Michigan case, an appellate court found that terminated employees who held medical marijuana cards were eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. (See Braska v. Challenge Manufacturing Company). In contrast, a Colorado appeals court ruled that a fired employee whose physician recommended, but did not prescribe, marijuana was ineligible for benefits. The court cited state laws providing that employees fired for testing positive for nonprescribed controlled substance during work hours are not eligible for unemployment benefits.

Marijuana in the Workplace: Risk Tips

Every nonprofit employer should be prepared to address marijuana use by

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candidates or current employees. Consider the following tips as you prepare and equip your team to respond thoughtfully when concerns related to weed arise in your organization.

■ **Ensure compliance with state law.**

Seek legal review of your drug-testing and screening practices to ensure compliance with applicable state laws. For example, if your state permits medical marijuana use, do not take punitive action against an employee or candidate who tests positive for marijuana until you first determine whether the positive drug test is the result of legally-permitted medical use of the drug.

- **Accommodate with care: Prior to granting an accommodation related to marijuana use, follow your policies that require a medical certification.** Make sure your policy is clear with respect to prohibiting on-duty use and confirm the employee's commitment to adhering to safety policies that reduce risk to staff and clientele.

■ **Enforce policies consistently and uniformly.**

Keep in mind that any policy that is enforced inconsistently could expose your organization to discrimination claims. According to Michael Groebe in the Lorman course "Implications of Medical Marijuana in the Workplace," "If you have policies that aren't enforced and now you're selectively enforcing them, you open yourself up to a claim of discrimination and improper use of your policy." For example, "randomly" screening only employees who disclose their use of medically-prescribed marijuana.

■ **Document violations and incidents in detail.**

A good paper trail will be priceless if your organization ever needs to demonstrate that its handling of marijuana issues was fair and in accordance with your organization's policies. Make certain that your staff knows when, how, and where documentation is maintained, and that appropriate privacy safeguards are in place.

By the time you read this article, the laws applicable to your workplace may

have changed. Marijuana policy reforms are expected to gain traction across the country in 2019 driven by growing support for marijuana legalization among both politicians and voters. According to Mason Tvert, a spokesman for the Marijuana Policy Project, "Several states across multiple regions of the country are strongly considering ending prohibition and regulating marijuana for adult use. A growing number of state lawmakers and governors are either getting behind these efforts or coming to the realization that they cannot hold them up much longer." With marijuana touching so many facets of employer policies and potentially affecting all stages of the employment relationship, nonprofit leaders are wise to educate themselves and stay attuned to changing expectations, laws, and best practices with respect to prohibiting or restricting marijuana use by staff.

Melanie Herman is Executive Director of the Nonprofit Risk Management Center. She welcomes your questions about the topics covered in this article at 703.777.3504 or Melanie@nonprofitrisk.org.

Resources

- "Could marijuana be legal under federal law by the end of 2019?": <https://etfdailynews.com/2019/01/22/could-marijuana-be-legal-under-federal-law-by-the-end-of-2019/>
- "New Frontier Data Projects U.S. Legal Cannabis Market to Grow to \$25 Billion by 2025": <https://newfrontierdata.com/marijuana-insights/new-frontier-data-projects-u-s-legal-cannabis-market-grow-25-billion-2025/>
- "What is Marijuana?" National Institute on Drug Abuse: www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana
- Lorman legal course: https://presents.lorman.com/396029EAU?order_id=1163386&attendee_id=978650#
- "5 Tips to Help Employers Deal With Legal Marijuana Use" (www.thebalancecareers.com/employers-legal-marijuana-use-1917551)
- "Need answers to how long a marijuana high last?" www.drugabuse.gov/publications/marijuana-facts-teens/want-to-know-more-some-faqs-about-marijuana
- "Marijuana Legalization Bills Are Advancing In Several States": www.forbes.com/sites/tomangell/2019/02/27/marijuana-legalization-bills-are-advancing-in-several-states/#4f5ecfab7a35



Dream a Little Dream: Managing Sleep Deprivation Risks

By Katharine Nesslage

Our ambitious 24/7 lifestyles, filled with unbalanced diets, low physical activity, excessive electronic media use, and psychosocial stress, are causing a precipitous decline in our sleep. But the safety implications of sleep deprivation have been known for decades. Precipitating causes of the Three Mile Island nuclear incident (1979), the Exxon Valdez oil spill (1989) and the Space Shuttle Challenger tragedy (1986) include sleep loss and sleep-related disorders.

According to a Rand Corporation study, the steep price tag of economic losses in the U.S. stemming from workers who receive inadequate sleep are a whopping \$411 billion a year. The Rand

study and similar research published in SLEEP, the official publication of the Sleep Research Society, describe direct health costs associated with sleep loss that include sleep disorders, productivity loss, and premature death. Additionally, organizations may face rising costs from increased absenteeism, pre-absenteeism (where employees are at work but working at sub-optimal levels), nonmedical accident costs and reduced well-being.

Unfortunately, nonprofit employees prioritize cramming as many items as possible into the day without thinking about the potential repercussions sleep deprivation may have on their productivity and health. Nonprofit leaders should

consider the broader risks that arise when employees attempt to 'burn the candle at both ends.' The costly consequences of lack of sleep not only effect the people on which a mission depends, but also threaten the health and well-being of the organization. Nonprofit leaders are in position to change the culture of their organizations from one that rewards sleep-deprived individuals to one that embraces fatigue risk management.

Defining Fatigue and Fatigue Risk Management

Fatigue risk management aims to enable and empower employees to perform at adequate levels of alertness. The

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International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) provides a helpful definition of fatigue: “a physiological state of reduced mental or physical performance capability resulting from sleep loss, extended wakefulness, circadian phase, and/or workload (mental and/or physical activity) that can impair a person’s alertness and ability to adequately perform safety-related operational duties.”

The Nonprofit Risk Management Center views fatigue risk management as an evolving strategy for cultivating employee wellness to optimize performance as well as individual and organizational well-being. The ultimate goal is to create awareness about the benefits of sleep and downside risks of sleep deprivation. A secondary goal is to ensure that the organization’s policies and values are in sync and also support the healthy workplace and healthy workers your mission requires and deserves.

Start Me Up!

Fatigue is a complicated issue that can be managed and reduced but is hard to completely eradicate. Here are some tips for instilling the principles and protocols of fatigue risk management in your nonprofit workplace.

- **Gather insights from a diverse team.** As is true with any complex or complicated risk on your radar, gaining the broadest possible perspective on the issue helps ensure the practicality and durability of your plan and increases the odds your strategies will be based on a holistic view of the issue. Consider using surveys and facilitated conversations as you gather data and start formulating a plan. Keep in mind that team members who are invited to participate in the early stages are more likely to become champions of the effort in the long term. The following are possible question prompts that you can

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customize to elicit ideas and concerns about fatigue:

- To what degree does fatigue—lack of adequate sleep—impact your focus, creativity or productivity in the workplace?
- Have you ever been concerned about the impact of fatigue on co-workers or team members?
- What do you believe are some of the top causes of sleep deprivation—for you and others?
- How often do you feel pressure to skip breaks, meals, or work long hours that exceed your normal work schedule?
- In your experience, what are the safety implications of sleep deprivation?
- To what degree do the managers and supervisors in your functional area or department model our nonprofit's values related to taking breaks and working reasonable hours?

- What changes in policy or practice would make a positive impact on our goal to ensure that all staff are well rested and equipped to do their best work?

- **Create a simple, discrete plan.** Upon recognizing the dangers of sleep deprivation and fatigue, some leaders may want to tackle the issue with a comprehensive, ambitious approach. Given the myriad safety issues that are likely to emerge from internal risk assessments, give yourself permission to start small, with a straightforward, manageable and modest plan. Resolve to evaluate the outcomes from any new activity, learn as you go, and add to your approach incrementally.

Implementation Tips

To build momentum around a new fatigue risk management strategy, it is important to take action after soliciting and receiving employee input. In the following section, we present ideas for building a fatigue risk management program and sustaining the

Caffeine Fast Facts



Did you know that caffeine is most potent 30 minutes after consumption? However, the average half-life of caffeine—the time required for the concentration of a substance in the body to decrease by half—is five to seven hours. This means that at 10:30 pm, 50% of the caffeine in a cup of joe consumed at 4:30 pm is actively circulating in the body.

In his book *Why We Sleep*, Matthew Walker describes how caffeine acts as a masking agent to block the adenosine receptors in an individual's brain that create 'sleep pressure.' Without caffeine's outside influence, which hits mute on the sleep signal of adenosine, an individual's brain will gradually turn down the "volume" on the regions that promote wakefulness and dial up the sleep-inducing regions.

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Dream a Little Dream: Managing Sleep Deprivation Risks

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interest and participation of your team. These building blocks were inspired by resources on managing fatigue risk from the National Safety Council:

- **Educate and train staff to be aware of the risks and provide guidelines on how to manage fatigue.** Prioritize rest and breaks and offer specific suggestions about managing fatigue during working hours. For example, remind staff about the telltale signs of fatigue: excessive yawning, irritability, bloodshot eyes, poor performance, forgetfulness, lack of focus, slow response time, and micro napping (involuntary four to five second naps). Offer tips for minimizing fatigue, such as limiting caffeine intake after lunch.
- **Adopt sleep-savvy practices.** One simple but effective work practice is to encourage and incentivize staff to get up and move throughout the day. Staying seated and sedentary drains creativity and inspires drowsy desk work. Help staff increase alertness and

clearer thinking by encouraging them to visit co-workers located in different parts of your building or campus when questions pop up, rather than relying solely on email, instant messaging or an intercom system. Invite your team to collaborate in designing an *up and moving* challenge activity or other healthy routines as alternatives to afternoon caffeine boosts. Additional practices include:

- Consider flexible work hours with options for the morning larks (approximately 40% of the population) and night owls (30% of the population). Morning larks, who prefer to wake up with the rising sun, will be most productive earlier in the day. Night owls show their true performance potential in the late afternoon and early evening.
- **Mitigate fatigue through a positive workplace environment.** Certain environmental factors can cause

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Dream a Little Dream: Managing Sleep Deprivation Risks

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undue physical stress on employees which contribute to or exacerbate fatigue. Environmental controls like temperature, light, air quality, and noise level can have an effect on the fatigue felt by staff. For example:

- Promote alertness with a moderate temperature, bright lighting, clean air and a quiet working environment.
- Promote short breaks throughout the day by setting up comfortable, phone-free break areas that are located away from the busiest and noisiest part of your office. Encourage all staff to visit the break area anytime they need to gather their thoughts or take a breather.
- Consider allowing short naps, especially for staff required to work long shifts. According to the National Sleep Foundation, 20 minutes is all that is needed to provide “the benefits of napping such as improved alertness, enhanced performance, and a better mood.”

■ Collect data and monitor the benefits of managing fatigue risks.

Elicit feedback from employees about the work environment (lighting, noise, etc.), organizational policies, and the degree to which managers and supervisors are modeling sleep-savvy behaviors. Update incident reporting forms to ensure that the issue of fatigue as a causal factor is considered when reviewing incidents and near-misses.

Fight Fatigue

Research on the costly consequences of fatigue in the workplace should inspire the resolve to fight fatigue. Nonprofit missions require creative, alert, well-rested team members. Nonprofit leaders who encourage breaks and ample rest can expect to reap the rewards of sound sleeping teams.

Katharine Nesslage is Project Manager at the Nonprofit Risk Management Center. As an experienced meeting planner, Katharine is no stranger to sleep deprivation! She welcomes your questions about managing fatigue risks in the workplace at Katharine@nonprofitrisk.org or 703.777.3504.

Fatigue Risk Management Resources

- *Why We Sleep Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams*, by Matthew Walker
- “Five Ways to Prioritize Sleep and Wake Up a Better Employee,” by Rachel Montañez, www.forbes.com/sites/ellevate/2017/11/29/five-ways-to-prioritize-sleep-and-wake-up-a-better-employee/#4ff67597249c
- “Why sleep matters—the economic costs of insufficient sleep,” by Marco Hafner, Martin Stepanek, Jirka Taylor, Wendy M. Troxel, Christian Van Stolk, RAND Corporation, www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1791.html
- “The Economic Cost of Inadequate Sleep,” by David Hillman, Scott Mitchell, Jared Streatfeild, Chloe Burns, Dorothy Bruck, Lynne Pezzullo, SLEEP, <https://academic.oup.com/sleep/article/41/8/zsy083/5025924>
- National Sleep Foundation: <https://sleepfoundation.org>
- National Safety Council, Fatigue: www.nsc.org/work-safety/safety-topics/fatigue
- “Sleep and Sleep Disorder,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/sleep/index.html
- “Risks of Sleep Deprivation: Get Your Beauty Sleep for Safety,” RISK eNews: www.nonprofitrisk.org/resources/e-news/sleep-deprivation/

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