

Effort Recovery

During times of increased pressure / workload it is important to look after your personal wellbeing so that you can sustain your performance over the longer term and recoup your energy.

An effective and pragmatic strategy to help you do this is focusing on Effort Recovery.

What is Effort Recovery?

When your job is especially demanding, you are less inclined to feel more refreshed after a break / leisure time such as the weekend. The effort recovery model was developed to accommodate these findings.

Research shows that if a day has been busy / stressful/ exhausting an effective way to recoup your energy is to focus on something completely different that engages the mind in a different way, enabling you to psychologically detach from work and replenish your personal resources.

Factors that contribute to effort recovery are:



Psychological detachment from work – The capacity for individuals to disengage from their work tasks, feeling a sense of distance from the workplace and naturally orienting their thoughts to other activities

Relaxation – relaxation exercises can curb the deleterious effects of stress at work, ultimately curbing fatigue from work and fostering life satisfaction

Mastery – activities that are challenging and enlightening, and can facilitate learning as well as improve the degree to which individuals feel competent. The experience of mastery in the afternoon has been shown to enhance energy the next morning

Control – when individuals experience a sense of control of choice over their lives outside work, recovery is enhanced

Why is it important?

Effort recovery has been shown to:

- Boost positive emotion
- Provide relaxation
- Involve connecting with valued others
- Allow you to mentally detach from work (no rumination or thinking, planning for work)
- Provide a sense of mastery & achievement



It enables you to take micro mental, physical and emotional break from work and recoup your energy / resources in a short period of time.

What can you do?

Engage for at least 30-60 minutes per day in activities that replenish psychological resources that are depleted during the day. These activities will be different for each of you, it is important to think of activities that totally absorb your mental space in a way that is engaging and positive. They can include:

- Going for a walk/ to the gym/yoga/Pilates/boxing etc. – **as long as whilst you are doing these activities you are not thinking/planning/problem solving things related to work!**
- Cooking
- Meditating / mindfulness
- Creating – painting, sewing, crafting, woodwork, quilting, pottery, sculpting, Lego etc.
- Sudoku's, crosswords, brain games
- Online gaming, PlayStation, etc.
- Catching up with friends / family in person or via skype (**ensure social distancing and make sure that they are friends & family that you get along with, no stress, arguments etc.**)
- Listening to music /podcast/ ted talk
- Reading a book
- Watching a movie / Netflix etc. – light television that totally engages you and allows you to switch off.
- Learning a new skill