

MANAGE YOUR ENERGY



Session Leader Guide

Our performance and actions depend on the individual level of energy in each of the members of a team or organisation. The more competitive the environment the greater demand it puts on us to deliver more in less time with fewer resources. This puts us under a lot of strain. In order to cope with these new demands in a productive and healthy way, we need to connect to our current level of energy and understand how and where we need to go to re-fuel.

Human beings need time to relax and recharge their energy, but are we aware of what it consists of and indeed, where we get our energy from? This tool has the ambition to help you to find your answer on these questions.

Our energy sources are strongly connected to our basic human needs. Physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs. By assessing our perception of our current state regarding these needs we also get a good picture of what gives us energy and what changes we need to make to have a balanced energy management.

This tool is based on a Harvard Business Review article published in October 2007 by Tony Schwartz and Catherine McCarthy. It elegantly presents the challenges and possibilities with energy management in a short, simple, yet very useful way.

To find out more, please go to www.theenergyproject.com

PURPOSE

To create better understanding of, and identify our current individual level of energy and encourage us to work on it.

OBJECTIVE

Identify the areas I need to work on in order to improve my energy at work.

Have a picture of what you as a leader, and we as an organisation could do to better manage the energy in our teams.

TIME

The estimated time for this exercise is approx. 1 – 2 hours.

BEFORE THE SESSION

1. Anchor the decision to do this workshop in your team.
2. Define who, when and where and book a meeting room.
3. Send out an invitation at least two weeks before your meeting with purpose and objective and all practical details. Optional: Have the participants listen to Tony Schwartz talking about energy on the internet (www.theenergyproject.com).
4. Select the slides you intend to use. You need only your laptop, a pc-projector and the assessment template "Are you Headed for an Energy Crisis?" as handouts.
5. Make sure the meeting room is set up and ready with all needed materials. No special seating is needed. However, sitting in a circle without any table in front of you is recommended for better communication and connection.
6. Write the Purpose, Objective and Agenda on a flipchart so that everyone can see it during your whole session.

DURING THE SESSION

1. Present the Purpose, Objective and Agenda of the meeting. Highlight when you intend to end the meeting. Ask if everyone will be able to stay during the whole meeting, and/or if they need to have a break for e-mail or phone calls etc.
2. Introduce the exercise by reading out the steps to be taken.
3. Make sure everyone understands the exercise. Walk through the agenda (see proposal and facilitation notes at the end of this tool). Allow time for questions and concerns. Underline and agree upon confidentiality, ie "what will be said in this room stays in this room".
4. Make sure everyone gets the opportunity to voice his or her view. Be assertive and probe for questions. Remember, the process is more important than the outcome in this exercise.
5. End the exercise by reading out your final conclusions. Clarify agreed actions by addressing who, when and how. Communicate intended next steps.

AFTER THE SESSION

1. Write and send out minutes (if any) as soon as possible after the meeting. Enclose the slides you showed (if requested by any of the participants).
2. Make sure the planned actions and wanted behaviours will be followed up according to your shared plan.
3. How do you intend to reinforce your team's conclusions, and make your progress visible? Whatever you decide, make sure it happens.

Agenda

(proposal and facilitator notes)

1. Introduction 15 min

Go through Purpose, Objective and Agenda. Reflect together about how you relate to human energy, what it is and why it is important to pay attention to it.

2. Individual scoring of Energy 10 min

Hand out the two-sided assessment “Are You Headed for an Energy Crisis?” Ask everyone to complete the assessment without sharing their scores with anyone else, unless you personally feel like sharing your results.

3. Reflect and connect to our Energy 30 – 60 min

NB! This step is only to be done if everyone feels comfortable in sharing their needs for energy in the team. If so, ask everyone to review their results and bring up what they feel is needed to be addressed in order to take better care of and create more energy in this team. Give everyone enough space and time to express their views and needs. Focus on listening, do not justify, correct or neglect the needs expressed. Look for themes in the dialogue, and check your assumptions. Note the shared themes on the flipchart or white board.

4. Next step and follow up 15 min

Encourage everyone to identify their own individual actions to improve their energy. Review the common themes and agree upon what actions you need to work on as a group. Discuss and agree on how you will reinforce, recognise and follow up. Set a date for review and follow up meetings.

5. Reflection 15 min

Have the group reflect on the following questions:

a. What was the major thing you learned and took away from this meeting?

b. What are the success factors to make our agreed actions happen?

Are You Headed for an Energy Crisis?

Please check the statements below that are true for YOU.

BODY

- I don't regularly get at least seven to eight hours of sleep, and I often wake up feeling tired.
- I frequently skip breakfast, or I settle for something that isn't nutritious.
- I don't work out enough (meaning cardiovascular training at least three times a week and strength training at least once a week).
- I don't take regular breaks during the day to truly renew and recharge or I often eat lunch at my desk, if I eat it at all.

EMOTIONS

- I frequently find myself feeling irritable, impatient, or anxious at work, especially when work is demanding.
- I don't have enough time with my family and loved ones, and when I'm with them my thoughts are often on other things.
- I have too little time for the activities that I most deeply enjoy.
- I don't stop frequently enough to express my appreciation to others or to savour my accomplishments and blessings.

MIND

- I have difficulty focusing on one thing at a time, and I am easily distracted during the day, especially by e-mail.
- I spend much of my day reacting to immediate crises and demands rather than focusing on activities with longer-term value and high leverage.
- I don't take enough time for reflection, strategizing, and creative thinking.
- I work in the evenings or on weekends, and I almost never take an e-mail-free vacation.

SPIRIT

- I don't spend enough time at work doing what I do best and enjoy most.
- There are significant gaps between what I say is most important to me in my life and how I actually allocate my time and energy.
- My decisions at work are more often influenced by external demands than by a strong, clear sense of my own purpose.
- I don't invest enough time and energy in making a positive difference to others or to the world.

By Tony Schwartz and Catherine McCarthy

Tony Schwartz and Catherine McCarthy recommend the following practices for renewing our four dimensions of personal energy:

PHYSICAL ENERGY

- Enhance your sleep by setting an earlier bedtime and reducing alcohol use.
- Reduce stress by engaging in cardiovascular activity at least three times a week and strength training at least once.
- Eat small meals and light snacks every three hours.
- Learn to notice signs of imminent energy flagging, including restlessness, yawning, hunger, and difficulty concentrating.
- Take brief but regular breaks, away from your desk, at 90- to 120-minute intervals throughout the day.

EMOTIONAL ENERGY

- Defuse negative emotions—irritability, impatience, anxiety, insecurity—through deep abdominal breathing.
- Fuel positive emotions in yourself and others by regularly expressing appreciation to others in detailed, specific terms through notes, e-mails, calls, or conversations.
- Look at upsetting situations through new lenses. Adopt a “reverse lens” to ask, “What would the other person in this conflict say, and how might he be right?” Use a “long lens” to ask, “How will I likely view this situation in six months?” Employ a “wide lens” to ask, “How can I grow and learn from this situation?”

MENTAL ENERGY

- Reduce interruptions by performing high concentration tasks away from phones and e-mail.
- Respond to voice mails and e-mails at designated times during the day.
- Every night, identify the most important challenge for the next day. Then make it your first priority when you arrive at work in the morning.

SPIRITUAL ENERGY

- Identify your “sweet spot” activities—those that give you feelings of effectiveness, effortless absorption, and fulfillment. Find ways to do more of these. One executive who hated doing sales reports delegated them to someone who loved that activity.
- Allocate time and energy to what you consider most important. For example, spend the last 20 minutes of your evening commute relaxing, so you can connect with your family once you're home.
- Live your core values. For instance, if consideration is important to you but you're perpetually late for meetings, practice intentionally showing up five minutes early for meetings.

HOW COMPANIES CAN HELP

To support energy renewal rituals in your firm:

- Build “renewal rooms” where people can go to relax and refuel.
- Subsidize gym memberships.
- Encourage managers to gather employees for midday workouts.
- Suggest that people stop checking e-mails during meetings.