

Techno-Stress, the Generator of Conflict Professional Life - Private Life

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Abstract: Workplace techno-stress is viewed as a negative psychological response to the implementation and abusive use of new information and communication technology (NICT). This study identifies the main problem of modern society, the negative effects of the work-life balance, the positive effects of the balance between career and personal life on the company, but also the ways to achieve it. In other words, the study presents the impact of NICT on the conflict between work and private life as a stress factor.

Keywords: NICT; techno-stress; work-life balance.

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1. Introduction

The main objective for which new information and communication technologies (NICT) have been introduced is facilitating and streamlining communication and working processes, etc. If modern technology was designed to empower us, release and leave us satisfied, why we often feel the (techno-) stress caused by the use of this technology? Why use e-mail or the internet sometimes leads to anxiety, discomfort and physical disorders?

Technostress is one of the specific types of stress caused by the use of NTIC, which results largely from the high speed at which technological change occurs.

2. Theoretical Background

Although different definitions of techno-stress [2; 5] have been presented, most of them include physical, psychological or behavioral responses to techno-stressors [1]. For example, Wang, Shu and Tu [4] define techno-stress as a "reflection of discomfort, fear, tension and anxiety when someone learns and uses computer technology directly or indirectly, repeats and hinders one of later learning or computerized technology ". Based on the workplace settings, Salanova, Cifre, Llorens and Nogareda [3] proposed a definition of the technical experience at the workplace as the negative psychological state associated with the use of ICT in the future. This experience is related to feelings of mental fatigue, anxiety, skepticism and ineffectiveness.

The techno-stress phenomenon is seen as a negative psychological response to the implementation and misuse of new information and communication technologies (NICT), intervening in the balance between professional and private life. This marks the conflict between career and personal life.

3. The imbalance between career and personal life

In the current economic climate, where the pressure to work more and better is present at all times, the need for relaxation and the elimination of stress is more and more often felt. The desire to have control over the factors that affect your life is in human nature. But the imbalance between career and personal life can have a number of negative outcomes:

- ❖ **Exhaustion:** a person who has worked too much will be exhausted at some point, both professionally and personally.
- ❖ **Stress:** Not touching this balance can create even more stress in your life. Stress can cause both health problems and problems in privacy. (burnout syndrome).

These issues can impose their personal and professional lives on individuals, through a physical impact, a break in relationships or a lack of performance at work. This desired balance has as a prerequisite the need to recognize and respect the right of a person to have a life fulfilled both in paid work and outside. The goal of this balance is to eliminate employee stress and improve performance at work.

4. Work-life balance

Work-life balance differs from individual to individual, because each person's priorities vary according to a number of factors, including age, which can completely change an employee's vision.

E.g:

- people between the ages of 20 and 35 are more focused on building a solid careers, leaving behind their family life
 - people aged 35 to 50 focus on family life and personal activities.
- Why should your employer support you in achieving this goal:
- ✓ Achieving this balance can have positive effects on the company, not just on individuals.
 - ✓ Positive effects of career balance and personal life on the company
 - ✓ Happy employees, who are under constant pressure or do not have a major stress factor, are more productive.
 - ✓ If an employee leaves the company because of overwork, there is higher recruitment costs than if he were allowed to have free time.
 - ✓ In the struggle between companies for the best candidates, offering a flexible work program or a range of flexible working options can attract potential employees.

The decision to work over the program or to work additionally, often without additional financial motivation, may come from the desire to advance more quickly on a professional level, on the one hand, or the need to keep a job, especially in the current economic context, on the other. Last but not least, there are people for whom work is the most important aspect of everyday life. Try to avoid this situation and reach the balance you need.

5. Ways of Balancing Personal Life and Care

The main ways to achieve the balance between career and personal life are:

1. Establish a set of rules that allow both workplace performance improvement (without being stressful) and the ability to spend time for family and friends. Several ways to achieve this balance can be:

- Creating realistic boundaries between job and other aspects of life, from the point of view of the NICT used;
- Prioritize work tasks and events to attend, both at work and in private life;
- Allocating time for hobbies or setting a time period when you will not use work-related NICTs;
- Compile a list of objectives for a day of work and respect it within the time you set. (To-do list is a great way to make your work more efficient);
- Be perfect, but in the positive sense.

2. Organization of work (solving work requirements, considering their importance or urgency).

3. Focus only on the things you can really do, obviously considering their importance. The rest must be delegated.

4. What really matters is the fulfillment of tasks that are urgent and important. As also emerges from the Eisenhower matrix, what is urgent is not necessarily important, and, on the other hand, what is important is not necessarily urgent.

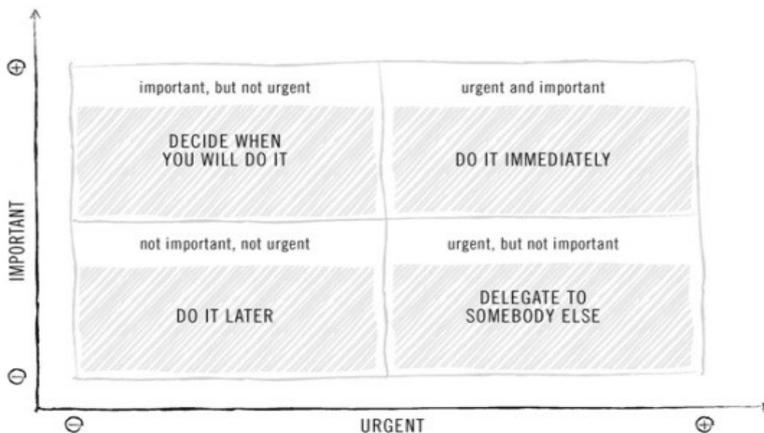


Figure 1. Matrices Eisenhower

Source: <http://www.ro.ronland98.com/psihologija/86444-matrica-eisenhauera.html>, accessed on 14.04.2018, 13:05 [6]

6. Work-life balance: Excess is the main problem of modern society

Because the excess, even the one involving ordinary activities, such as the state of the office, or especially the excess of the use of technology, with obsessed eyes on a bright screen, affects not only our physical health but also the psyche.

Always connect with everything that is new, run between work and home, maybe to a meeting or a business lunch, trying to find a balance between daily activities.

Thus, the Work Life Balance concept has emerged as an attempt to control over-work and to reduce professional fatigue.

The most common issues that may arise from the intensive use of NICT (phone, tablet, computer) are:

Of physical nature:

- *headache* - generated by high contrast on bright screens.
- *dryness of eyes*
- *eye pressure* - constant eye test to focus.

Of psychological nature: attention deficit, narcissism, unrealistic expectations, feeling of isolation, depression.

Preventing the emergence of these disorders can be achieved as such:

- by pausing from using electronic devices (as much as possible on holidays, try to get rid of any device);
- by limiting the amount of time spent on social networks daily;
- by closing all your devices when you go to bed to avoid interrupting your sleeping pace;
- also by closing the TV screen with an hour or two before bed to allow your eyes to rest.

So, human relationships have undergone considerable changes since technology has advanced by providing us with "more comfortable" communication channels than face-to-face. However, in this manner, authentic communication is lost and intercognition is extremely superficial, because only the verbal language in its written form, which makes only 7% of the communication process, remains for interrelation. The essence of the human relationships and their authenticity is, however, hanging and struggling in the spider web called the world wide web.

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, a first step towards diminishing the negative consequences generated by the excessive use of NICT is the awareness of the techno-dependence transforming into the techno-stress, followed by the second step, namely: establishing a balance in the use of NICT both professionally and personally.

So it is essential to find a balance between careers and private life that will keep us from working in the office and allow us to enjoy our personal life.

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