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STRENGTH | SUPPORT

SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE





PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The Energy Audit

By Sonia Hillary – Consultant – Solution, Innovation & Excellence,
Human Dynamic APAC

1

TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

Managers as Climate Controllers

By Sufiya Suhail – Consultant, Human Dynamic India

2

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Teams That Don't Depend on One Hero

By Munira Jalil – Client Relationship Manager & Consultant,
Human Dynamic Malaysia

3

WELLNESS CORNER

Physical Wellness Beyond the Gym

By Leeann Lorilla – Managing Director, Human Dynamic Philippines

4

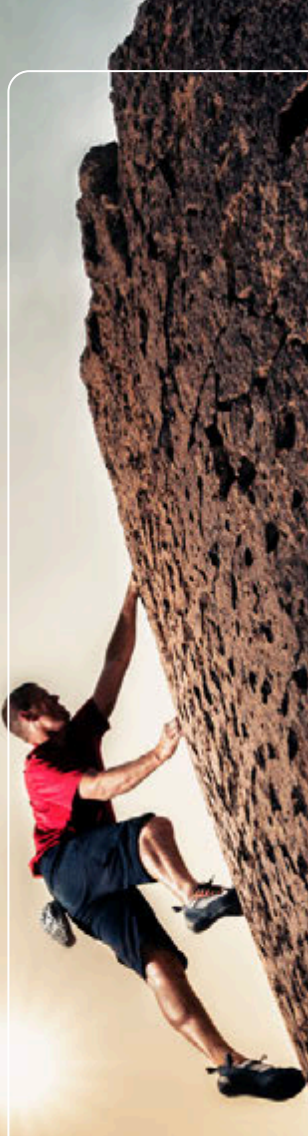
VISIONARY VOICE

When Endurance Becomes the Strategy

By Eric Kung – Founder & CEO, Human Dynamic APAC

5

**IN
THIS
ISSUE:**



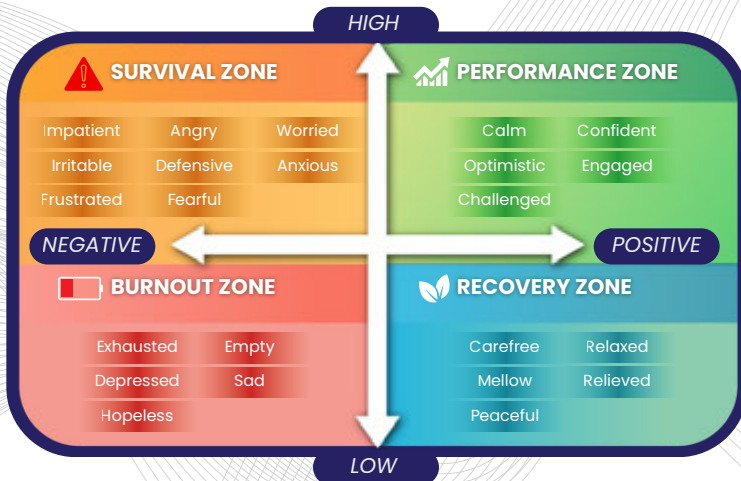


The Energy Audit

You may notice some people stay energized all day and wonder how they do it without draining their energy. Is it their diet, sleep, team, family, or time management? While all this matter, we often overlook a key question—how do they manage their energy?

High performers manage not just time, but their energy - physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual.

First, let's look at the energy quadrants:



The performance zone is where you want to be when you're working towards a specific goal. You feel upbeat, engaged, challenged, and optimistic.

The survival zone is high, negative energy - triggered by threat, shifting control to fight-or-flight and showing up as anxiety, irritability, fear, and self-criticism.

The burnout zone is low, negative energy - marked by feelings of helplessness, emptiness, and exhaustion.

The renewal zone is low, positive energy - a space to recharge and return to performance, marked by calm, serenity, and peace.

The key to sustainable high performance and well-being is to move regularly and deliberately between the performance zone and the recovery zone.



Now let's explore how to move into the performance/renewal zone.

Here's a quick checklist - note areas you need to work on. If unsure, ask a trusted person who knows you well to rate you. Feel free to add other aspects that matter to you.

PHYSICAL ENERGY	MENTAL ENERGY	EMOTIONAL ENERGY	SPIRITUAL ENERGY
Rest	Mindful intermittent breaks	Stay aware of your emotions throughout the workday.	What are the core values that you live by?
Diet	Listening/playing to music	Recognizing events that trigger heightened emotions	Are you aware of them?
Exercise	Engaging in a hobby	Buying time to respond rather than react	How do you identify and follow them?
Nutrition	Stimulating conversations about topics other than work	Communicate - can I get back to you on this after I've had time to gather my thoughts?	Intentionally allocate time and energy to what matters most.
Sleep	Managing negative thoughts	Deep abdominal breathing	Doing what you do best and enjoy most at work
Building Stamina	Avoid distractions when concentrating on a particular task/ in meetings	Exhaling slowly for five or six seconds induces relaxation recovery and turns off fight-or-flight response	What is your sweet and sour spot - at work?
	Being intentional and deliberate to pick up challenging work when energy is high	Have someone you trust to talk to - friend, colleague, family member, or therapist - for anything, big or small.	



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Consultant - Solution, Innovation & Excellence, Human Dynamic APAC



MANAGERS AS CLIMATE CONTROLLERS

Managers often focus on outcomes and deadlines, but their real influence lies in the team's emotional climate. Daily behaviours shape whether people feel safe to speak up, share ideas, or admit mistakes. Psychological safety isn't built through policies but through consistent interactions.

Creating psychological safety doesn't mean lowering standards - it enables open contribution and sustainable performance. Without it, teams risk quiet burnout, where results continue but engagement fades.

Ultimately, a healthy team environment is built through small, consistent leadership behaviours.

MANAGER'S PLAYBOOK

Do's & Don'ts for Building Psychological Safety

DO'S

- ◆ **Make it safe to ask "basic" questions**
When managers openly welcome questions, it signals that learning is valued more than appearing perfect.
- ◆ **Clarify what truly matters.**
When managers openly welcome questions, it signals that learning is valued more than appearing perfect.
- ◆ **Normalize boundaries in everyday conversations.**
Respect time off, discourage unnecessary late messages, and show that sustainable performance matters.
- ◆ **Create space for quieter voices.**
Not everyone speaks up immediately; intentionally invite input from those who may hesitate to share.
- ◆ **Admit when you don't have all the answers.**
Vulnerability from managers builds trust and reduces the pressure on teams to appear flawless.
- ◆ **Reward thoughtful risk-taking.**
Recognize initiative and experimentation, even when the outcome isn't perfect.
- ◆ **Check the emotional temperature of the team.**
Regularly ask how the team is managing workload and pressure, not just progress on tasks.

DONT'S

- ◆ **Don't mistake silence for agreement.**
A quiet room often means people are unsure or uncomfortable speaking up.
- ◆ **Don't turn every conversation into a performance evaluation.**
Teams need space to explore ideas without feeling constantly judged.
- ◆ **Don't unintentionally glorify burnout.**
Praising late nights and constant availability signals that overwork is expected.
- ◆ **Don't respond defensively to feedback.**
If managers shut down feedback, teams quickly learn that honesty is risky.
- ◆ **Don't create pressure through constant escalation.**
Overusing urgency language can make the workplace feel tense and reactive.
- ◆ **Don't micromanage under the guise of "support."**
Excessive control reduces autonomy and signals lack of trust.

Team effectiveness goes beyond capability. It reflects the environment managers create. When people feel safe to contribute and challenge ideas, engagement and sustainable performance follow. Great managers don't just manage work; they shape the environment where it happens.



Sufiya Suhail
Consultant,
Human Dynamic India



TEAMS THAT DON'T DEPEND ON ONE HERO

I grew up watching films like *Superman*, *Die Hard*, and *The Terminator*, where one heroic figure carried the mission alone—certain, dominant, and unstoppable.

Today's world is far too complex for solitary heroes. Greatness now comes from collective strength instead of individual effort.

In films like *The Avengers*, *Justice League*, and *Guardians of the Galaxy*, success is collective driven by diverse strengths, perspectives, and collaboration.

Yet many organisations still operate like the old movies, relying on a single high performer to carry the load.

There is:

One "indispensable" performer

One team member who knows everything

One leader who approves everything

One employee who becomes the default crisis solver



Does this feel familiar?

When organisations rely on a single hero, they create a culture of dependency.

High performers often carry an invisible emotional load, and over time it can lead to burnout. When too much depends on one person, decisions start to slow down, and teams gradually pull back. If that person leaves, performance can drop quickly.

This doesn't happen by chance. It's often shaped by the system. Leaders are promoted for individual excellence, yet the role calls for developing others. When KPIs focus on personal wins, the pressure and performance stay concentrated on a few.

Leaders may also struggle with delegation—having low tolerance for less-than-perfect execution or limited trust in their teams. When control becomes the dominant mindset, power is centralised instead of shared.



Solution:

We build high-resilience teams.



Munira Abdul Jalil

Client Relationship Manager
& Consultant,
Human Dynamic Malaysia

High-resilience teams promote collaboration and collective responsibility:

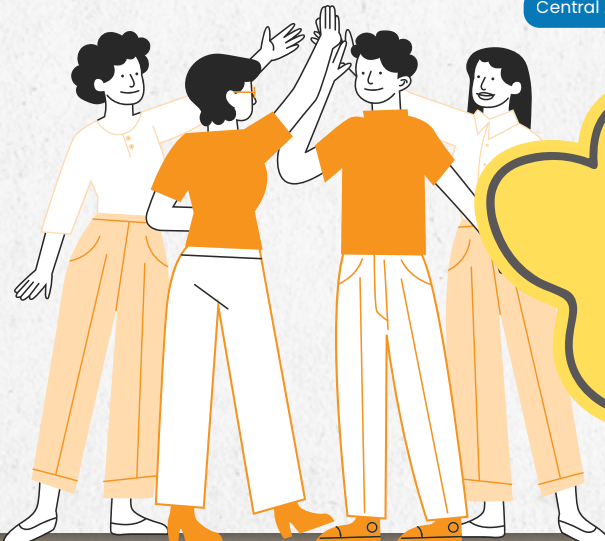
1	Knowledge is intentionally shared.	4	Decision-making skills are coached across levels.
2	Systems and processes reduce reliance on individuals.	5	Internal collaboration is actively encouraged.
3	Success is rewarded collectively, not just individually.	6	Asking for help is normalised - not seen as weakness.

Even *The Avengers* understood this: No single hero could defeat the ultimate threat alone. It required teamwork. Each member's strengths compensated for another's limitations.

The strongest teams are not built around one hero. They are built with many heroes. And in today's complex world, that makes all the difference.

Mindset Shift from One Hero Team to High-resilience Team

One Hero Team	High-resilience Team
Problem Solver	Capability Builder
Rescuer	Enabler
Central Authority	Distributed Ownership



3 REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

- *If your top performer resigned tomorrow, what would break?*
- *If your leader is unavailable, who makes decisions then?*
- *Is your team strong or is one person strong?*



Leeann Lorilla
Managing Director,
Human Dynamic Philippines

PHYSICAL WELLNESS BEYOND THE GYM

The Micro-Movement Toolkit

We often treat wellness as a destination – a gym we visit at 6:00 PM or a yoga mat we unroll on Sundays. But for the modern leader and professional, resilience grows in the micromovements we make between emails, shifts, and meetings.

To stay high performing without the burnout, I invite you to adopt this Daily Practices Toolkit. These are non-intimidating, accessible habits designed for the desk, the operations floor, or the home office.

1

Master Your Internal Rhythms

Your brain follows ultradian rhythms rather than a linear 8-hour stretch.

- ▶ **The 90-Minute Rule:** Every 90–120 minutes, your focus naturally dips. Instead of powering through with caffeine, take a 5-minute mental recovery break. Use no-meeting blocks to protect this time.
- ▶ **The Power Nap:** If you're hit by the 3:00 PM slump, a 15–20 minute nap can reset your cognitive load more effectively than a third espresso.

2

Environmental & Physical Alignment

Your surroundings dictate your biology.

- ▶ **Posture & Breath:** If you're desk-based, practice box breathing (inhale for 4 counts, hold for 4 counts, exhale for 4 counts, hold for 4 counts) to lower cortisol and add quick stretches—reach up or roll your shoulders—to counter hunching.
- ▶ **Brain-Friendly Spaces:** Use natural light and greenery—they reduce visual fatigue and support high-performing brain states.

3

Fuel and Recovery

- ▶ **Hydration & Nutrition:** Physical wellness starts with baseline biology. Keep water at your station and prioritize slow-release energy (proteins and fats) over sugar spikes to avoid the mid-day crash.
- ▶ **Digital Detox:** End your day with a screen-free hour. Better sleep hygiene starts with darkness, allowing your brain to flush out metabolic waste from a day of heavy lifting.

4

The Culture of Safety

Psychological safety is closely linked to physical wellness. When mistakes are treated as information rather than threats, stress levels decrease, trust grows, and the body is better protected from the strain of ongoing pressure.

Wellness isn't an added task; it is the foundation that keeps us function effectively. Let's take small, intentional steps to care for our wellbeing today, for a healthier tomorrow.



WHEN ENDURANCE BECOMES THE STRATEGY



"No pain, no gain!" "Do not give up!" "Do more with less!" "Cut costs and increase effectiveness!" We hear of those sayings or similar ones when times get tough, and corporations and individuals are striving to survive in the global recession, geo-political wars, tariffs and trade wars, impacts of A.I. on technology, production, and labor force. There are no "silver bullets" that could solve those problems because the mega trends are beyond our control. So, many business leaders turned inward to boost productivity, only to find it declining as sustained pressure drained employees' motivation, energy, and health.

I know a friend who worked in a well-known software technology company some years ago. He was a project leader of a software development team. There was a new project, and the division manager posted the project specifications among the project leaders and had them bid for the project by time (i.e., whoever bids for the least time gets the project). My friend, as an ambitious and talented software engineer in his prime time of his career, bid the project for 10 days to deliver the results. Everybody was amazed by his daring attempt. He then started his "non-stop" work in the next 10 days to push himself towards the finishing line. After 10 days, he made it and completed the project with good results. His boss and colleagues praised him saying "Awesome!" On the eleventh day, he collapsed and was sent to the hospital. The doctor told him that his immune system had been badly damaged by his literally "non-stop" work in those 10 days (i.e., he told me that he refrained from eating, sleeping

and going to the toilet to focus on his work). He was hospitalized for three months and later resigned from his promising job.

True resilience and wellness lie in knowing when to work, rest, and stop. A resilient mind and healthy body are two sides of the same coin-driving performance, productivity, and life-and must be cultivated at individual, team, and organisational levels.

There's a line from the Bible that captures this tension well:

"What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?" (Luke 9:25 NIV) *.

*Editor's note: In the pursuit of success, it's worth pausing to ask: what is the value of gaining everything externally if it comes at the cost of losing yourself?



Eric Kung
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Human Dynamic APAC