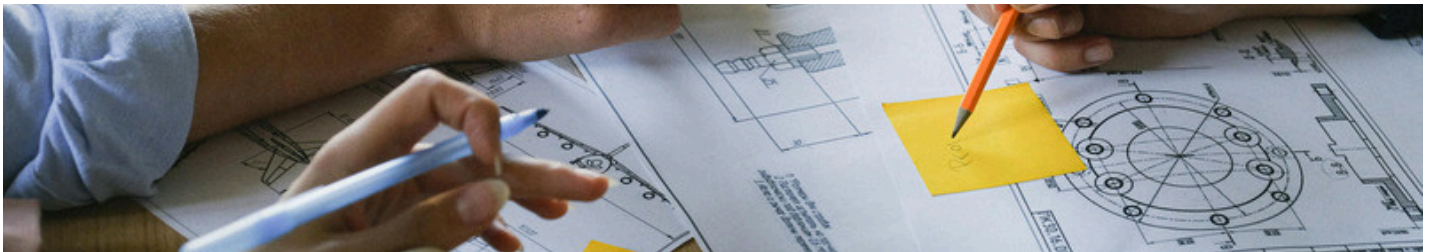


ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The Fine Line Between Agility and Overload

In one of my consultations, a client shared that in her company, they are always told to be resilient. She lamented that the company itself isn't doing enough to make it sustainable, to provide necessary resources, sufficient manpower and a clear direction. "I hate that word – resilience", she said.

Her words stayed with me; it got me thinking resilience was never meant to become a burden. Somewhere along the way, organizations began treating resilience as an expectation rather than something they intentionally cultivate.



Today, organizations genuinely need to be agile, setting expectations for employees to learn, pivot, adapt, and deliver. But the bigger question is "Are we overstressing employees in the name of agility?" Agility becomes unhealthy when adaptation is expected continuously without providing the conditions that make adaptation possible. Continuous exposure to such situations exposes employees to cognitive overload that impacts their ability to adapt.

Psychology recognized that adaptability is not simply a matter of mindset. The Job Demands–Resources model shows that when job demands continually exceed the resources available, people experience burnout. At the same time, Cognitive Load Theory reminds us that our brains have limited processing capacity. As workloads expand and uncertainty becomes the norm, mental resources deplete. Rather than becoming more agile, people become cognitive overload, resulting in a struggle to focus, make decisions, solve problems, and respond flexibly to change. In short, sustained overload doesn't build resilience; it reduces the very mental capacity needed to adapt.

Agility should be fostered through more supportive strategies by creating space for recovery, develop leaders who are supportive and genuinely care to improve situations, provide clear communication and directions during change and invest in enhancing employee wellbeing.



Resilience should never become another KPI that employees are expected to achieve alone. Instead, it is an organizational capability that leaders must intentionally build to create workplaces where both people and performance can thrive through it.



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