

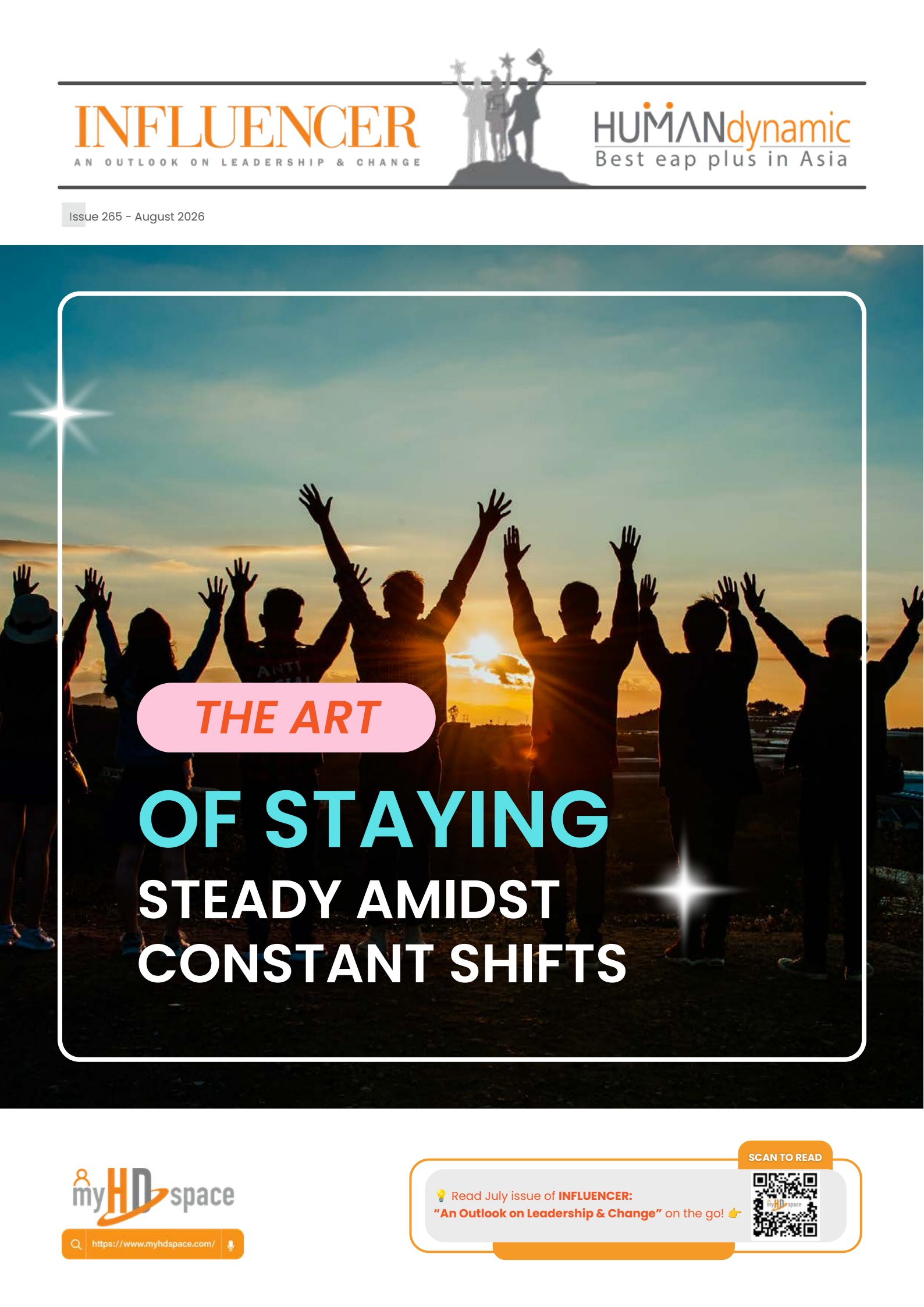
INFLUENCER

AN OUTLOOK ON LEADERSHIP & CHANGE



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PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Adapting Without Losing Yourself



The greatest risk of continuous change is not exhaustion, it is erosion – the slow, quiet process by which people stop recognizing themselves in their own work.

For HR and people leaders, this risk matters twice over. You are stewarding others through uncertainty while navigating it yourself. Adaptability is rightly prized in every organization today, but adaptability without an anchor becomes drift. The goal is not to resist change, nor to dissolve into it, but to move through it with your identity intact.



1 Return to your values before you return to your inbox.

Under sustained pressure, people default to urgency and abandon intention. Values are the antidote. They are the part of a person that no restructuring can touch. Leaders who are clear on what they stand for can flex on almost everything else without feeling lost.

Reflection: What are the three values I refuse to negotiate, regardless of what changes around me? When did I last make a decision that honored them?



2 Audit your priorities, not just your calendar.



A full schedule is not the same as a clear one. Emotional instability during change often comes from carrying every demand as equally urgent. Clarity of priorities is a wellbeing practice, not merely a productivity one – it tells the nervous system what it can safely put down.

Reflection: If I could only protect three commitments this quarter, which would they be? What am I doing out of habit rather than conviction?

3 Separate your role from your identity.



Titles, structures, and mandates will shift; they always do. When a person's sense of self is fused to a role, every reorganization feels like a personal threat. When it is rooted in values and beliefs, change becomes something to respond to – not something that happens to you.

Reflection: Who am I when the org chart is redrawn? What remains true about me in every version of this company?

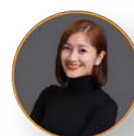
4 Practice self-awareness as a discipline, not a mood.



Grounded leaders are not the ones untouched by uncertainty. They are the ones who notice their own reactions early – fatigue, cynicism, over-control – and respond with care rather than judgment. Modeling this openly also gives teams permission to do the same.

Reflection: What is my earliest signal that I am losing my footing? Who is allowed to tell me when they see it?

Change will keep coming. Let it change your methods. Never let it change your compass.



By Leeann Lorilla
 Managing Director
 Human Dynamic Philippines



TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

Teams That Communicate Through Uncertainty

Change has become constant in today's workplace. Economic uncertainty, geopolitical tensions, rapid advances in AI, and shifting business priorities are transforming not only **what we do**, but also **how we work**.

Employees are expected to learn new skills, adapt to changing KPIs, and deliver results in an environment that often feels uncertain. At the same time, they're also carrying burdens beyond the workplace.

Every day, we're surrounded by headlines about inflation, rising interest rates, geopolitical conflicts, economic instability, market shifts and evolving technology. We see many big organizations restructuring, well-known brands disappearing from the market, and businesses reinventing themselves just to survive. Employees naturally begin to wonder, *could this happen here? What does it mean for my role? Am I still secure?*

During periods of change silence often creates more anxiety than clarity. When people don't have information, they fill the gaps with assumptions, rumors, and worst-case scenarios.

As managers, we can't remove uncertainty, but we can reduce unnecessary uncertainty through clear and honest communication.

Research found that transparent communication builds trust, and trust makes employees more willing to embrace organizational change ^[1].



THE Communication Framework for Managers.



1 Transparent

People don't expect you to have all the answers, but they do expect openness about what's happening.

Explain why the change is necessary, the challenges the organization is facing, and the direction the business is heading. Share what you know and be equally honest about what is still evolving.

Transparency doesn't mean sharing everything. It means providing enough context, so employees don't have to fill in the blanks themselves.



Every communication should answer three simple questions:

- Why is this change happening?
- What does it mean for our team?
- What happens next?



2 Honest

When leaders try too hard to make difficult situations sound positive, employees notice. Overly optimistic messages can unintentionally damage credibility.

It's perfectly acceptable to say, "I don't have that answer yet." In fact, admitting uncertainty often builds more trust than pretending to have all the answers.

People don't expect perfection. They expect honesty which builds credibility, and credibility is the foundation of trust.



3 Empathy

Not everyone experiences change in the same way.

Some people are energized by new opportunities, while others may feel overwhelmed, anxious, or uncertain about their future.

Great managers don't rush to solve every concern. Instead, they create space for people to express how they're feeling by:

- Listening without interrupting.
- Acknowledging concerns instead of dismissing them.
- Encouraging questions, even difficult ones.
- Checking in with quieter team members who may be struggling silently.
- Recognizing that uncertainty affects wellbeing just as much as it affects performance.

Sometimes people don't need immediate solutions – they simply need to know they've been heard.



Tips for Communication During Change

When leading your team through change, remember to:

- Communicate early rather than waiting for the "perfect" message.
- Share facts instead of assumptions.
- Explain the why behind decisions, not just what.
- Repeat key messages consistently through different channels.
- Check in on how people are feeling, not just what they're delivering.
- Follow up after major announcements to answer new questions and address concerns.



The way we communicate during change shapes how our teams experience it. Clear communication builds trust. Trust creates psychological safety. And psychologically safe teams are far more resilient when facing uncertainty.

At the end of the day, great managers don't simply manage to change. **They help people move through it together.**

Resource:

I. Yue, C. A., Men, L. R., & Ferguson, M. A. (2019). Bridging transformational leadership, transparent communication, and employee openness to change: The mediating role of trust. **Public Relations Review**, 45(3), 101779.



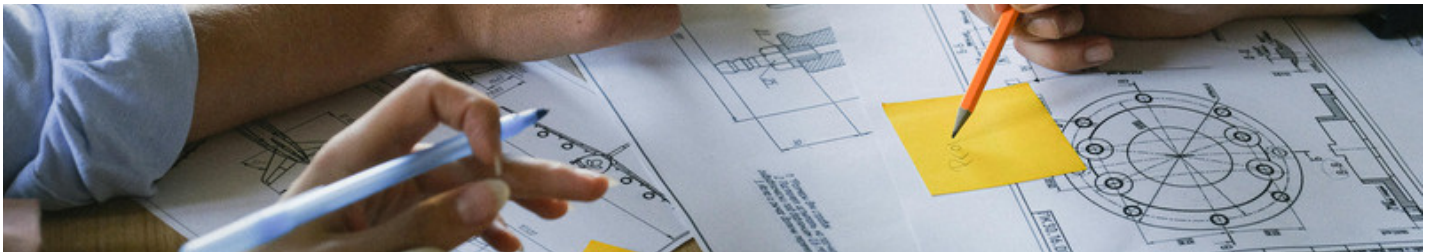
By Anh Nguyen
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ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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.



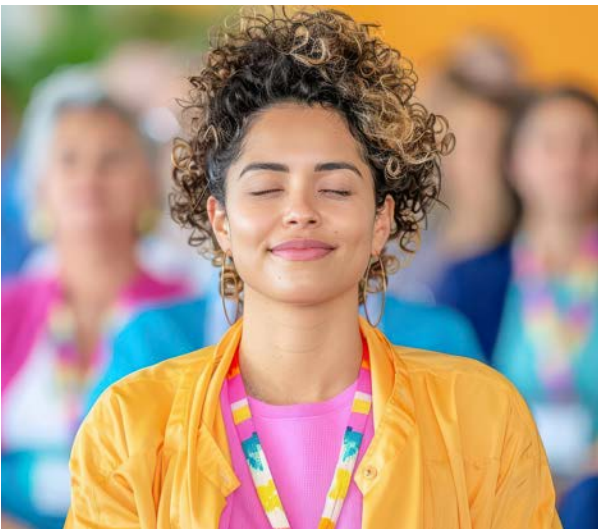
Resilience should never become another KPI that employees are expected to achieve alone. Instead, it is an organizational capability that leaders must intentionally build to create workplaces where both people and performance can thrive through it.



By Sharmini Karim
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WELLNESS CORNER

Micro-Habits for Mental Clarity



One thing I've come to appreciate is that mental clarity isn't something we "find" when life gets quieter, it's something we create through the small choices we make every day. I've had days where the to-do list feels endless, meetings run back-to-back, and by the end of the day, I wonder where the hours went. What has helped me most hasn't been making drastic changes, but building in small moments to pause, reset, and refocus.

There's growing evidence that even brief moments of recovery can improve focus, decision-making, and emotional regulation. The good news is that supporting our mental wellbeing doesn't require major changes. Small, intentional habits, practised consistently, can make a meaningful difference.



Your Mental Clarity Toolkit

Think of this toolkit as five simple reminders to support your mind during the workday:

Pause:

Create intentional moments to slow down before responding or switching tasks.

Prioritise:

Focus on what matters most instead of trying to do everything at once.

Move:

Gentle movement helps reduce mental fatigue and restore energy.

Hydrate:

Staying hydrated supports both energy and concentration.

Reflect:

End the day by acknowledging progress and preparing for tomorrow.



These five principles are simple, but their value comes from practising them consistently. Rather than trying to change everything at once, choose one or two habits that fit naturally into your day. Small steps are often the ones that last.

Putting It into Practice

Here are seven simple practices that can help turn these principles into meaningful moments of focus, recovery, and mental reset throughout your workday.



1 Start with one priority.

Before opening your inbox, decide on the one task that will have the greatest impact.

2 Take reset breaks.

Every 60–90 minutes, stand up, stretch, or simply step away from your screen for a few minutes.

3 Pause between meetings.

Three slow breaths or writing down one key takeaway can help you transition with greater focus.

4 Reduce multitasking.

Giving one task your full attention often leads to better thinking and less mental fatigue.

5 Step away from your workspace.

A few minutes of movement or natural light can provide a surprisingly effective mental reset.

6 Check in with yourself.

Ask, "What do I need right now to stay present?" Sometimes the answer is a glass of water, a stretch, or simply a moment of stillness.

7 End the day intentionally.

Before logging off, note one accomplishment and tomorrow's first priority. I've found this simple habit helps me leave work at work and return the next day with a clearer mind.



Mental clarity isn't about eliminating stress or having perfectly productive days. It's about creating small opportunities to recover, refocus, and move forward with intention. Over time, these small changes can become habits that support not only how we work, but how we feel.



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