

INFLUENCER

AN OUTLOOK ON LEADERSHIP & CHANGE



HUMANdynamic
Best eap plus in Asia



BUILDING STABILITY, ENERGY & MOTIVATION WITHOUT OVEREXTENSION

myHDspace

<https://www.myhdspace.com/>

SCAN TO READ

Read July issue of **INFLUENCER**:
"An Outlook on Leadership & Change" on the go! ➡





TABLE OF CONTENT

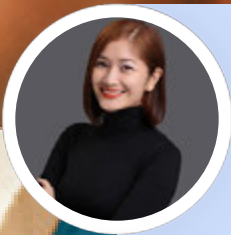


PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

When Motivation Drops but Responsibility Doesn't

By Jaslene Hum – Customer Relationship Manager & Consultant, Human Dynamic Malaysia

1



TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

The Teams People Stay For

By Leeann Lorilla – Managing Director, Human Dynamic Philippines

2



ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Identifying and Supporting Distressed Employees

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

3



WELLNESS CORNER

Body Signals We Learn to Ignore at Work

By Ho Sheau Huey – Consultant – Solution, Innovation & Excellence, Human Dynamic APAC

4



VISIONARY VOICE

Stability Is the New Competitive Advantage

By Eric Kung – Founder, Chairman & CEO, Human Dynamic Group

5



When Motivation Drops but Responsibility Doesn't

By Jaslene Hum –
Customer Relationship
Manager & Consultant,
Human Dynamic Malaysia

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Motivation is an unreliable partner. It thrives on novelty and vanishes when routines become mundane or energy runs low. However, the paradox of professional life is that while our internal drive fluctuates, our external responsibilities remain entirely fixed. Deadlines, client needs, and team dependencies do not pause for a mood shift.

True self-leadership is less about forcing enthusiasm and more about learning to take purposeful action even when your feelings fluctuate. This allows us to remain accountable without becoming self-critical. When motivation drops but duty remains, we can sustain progress without resorting to pressure, guilt, or perfectionism by shifting to a strategy of frictionless systems.

The following strategies can help maintain progress even during periods of low energy or motivation:

Lower the Bar to Keep Momentum



Perfectionism is the enemy of consistency. When energy is low, redefine what a "win" looks like to honour your responsibility without burning out. If you cannot write the entire report, write three bullet points. If you cannot design the whole framework, sketch the outline. Lowering the entry barrier reduces cognitive friction, making it easier to start. Action often precedes motivation, not the other way around.

Rely on Identity, Not Willpower

Willpower is a finite resource. Instead of asking, "Do I have the energy for this?" ask, "What small action would align with the kind of professional I want to be today?" Shifting your focus to your identity and core values anchors your accountability. You perform the task because it aligns with your standard of reliability and commitment to others, not because you feel inspired.



Protect Your Energy Baseline



Low motivation is often a lagging indicator of emotional or physical depletion. Instead of trying to close the gap with brute force, audit your capacity. Schedule micro-breaks, eliminate non-essential tasks, and protect your rest. Managing your capacity ensures that your baseline level of execution remains sustainable even when your drive is low.



REFLECTION PROMPTS

for Self-Leadership

Use these questions to bridge the gap when responsibility outweighs your current drive:

The Reframe:

The responsibility is fixed, but my approach can flex. What is the absolute minimum viable effort required to keep this project moving forward today without compromising its integrity?

The Friction Audit:

Is my lack of motivation driven by actual exhaustion, a lack of clarity on the next step, or fear of a poor outcome?

The Compassion Check:

If a colleague came to me holding this exact responsibility while feeling this depleted, what realistic expectations would I set for them? How can I apply that same standard to myself right now?



Ultimately, consistency is not built on easy inspiration but on choosing to act in its absence. Progress does not require perfection, nor does it demand constant inspiration. It grows through small, intentional actions repeated over time. When responsibility remains but motivation fades, it becomes time for us to choose the next meaningful step.



Jaslene Hum

Customer Relationship
Manager & Consultant,
Human Dynamic
Malaysia

The Teams People Stay For

By Leeann Lorilla – Managing Director, Human Dynamic Philippines



Today's employees expect more than a job and a paycheck. They are looking for an environment where they can do their best work. While compensation and benefits remain important, employees increasingly stay with teams where they feel trusted, supported, challenged, and equipped to succeed.

Research consistently shows that leaders play a significant role in shaping the employee experience. Gallup found that managers account for at least 70% of the variance in employee engagement across teams, highlighting the powerful influence leaders have on how people feel, perform, and contribute at work.

The strongest teams are not built through perks alone. They are built through everyday leadership behaviors that create trust and psychological safety. Team members perform at their best when they can speak openly, ask for help, share ideas, and learn from mistakes without fear of embarrassment or punishment. In these environments, collaboration becomes easier, innovation grows, and people are more willing to remain committed during challenging periods.

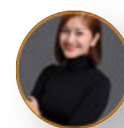
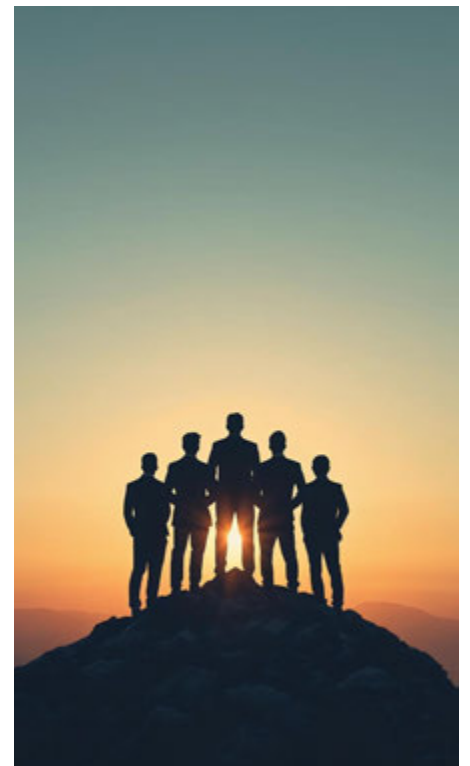
Employees also thrive when leaders act as coaches rather than merely supervisors. Regular feedback, mentoring conversations, and genuine interest in an employee's growth signal that the organization is invested in their success. When leaders stretch people with meaningful challenges while providing adequate support and resources, employees develop confidence, capability, and resilience.

Equally important is clarity. Today's workforce values autonomy, but autonomy works best when expectations, priorities, and goals are clearly communicated. Teams become more effective when leaders provide direction while empowering individuals to take ownership of their work.

Ultimately, people stay where they can grow, contribute, and belong. Trustworthy leadership creates the conditions for all three. When employees feel supported and valued, engagement rises, collaboration strengthens, and performance becomes sustainable over the long term. The teams people stay for are rarely perfect—but they are led by people who consistently create an environment where others can succeed.

Leadership Checklist: Building Teams People Want to Stay In

- ▶ Create psychological safety by encouraging open dialogue, questions, and constructive feedback.
- ▶ Coach for growth through regular check-ins, mentoring conversations, and development opportunities.
- ▶ Provide clarity and support by setting clear expectations, removing barriers, and ensuring employees have the resources they need to succeed.



Leeann Lorilla
Managing Director, Human Dynamic Philippines



Reference

1. Gallup. (2015). State of the American Manager: Analytics and Advice for Leaders. Gallup, Inc. Retrieved from Gallup research indicating managers account for at least 70% of the variance in employee engagement.



ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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

Identifying and Supporting Distressed Employees

Dear Coach,

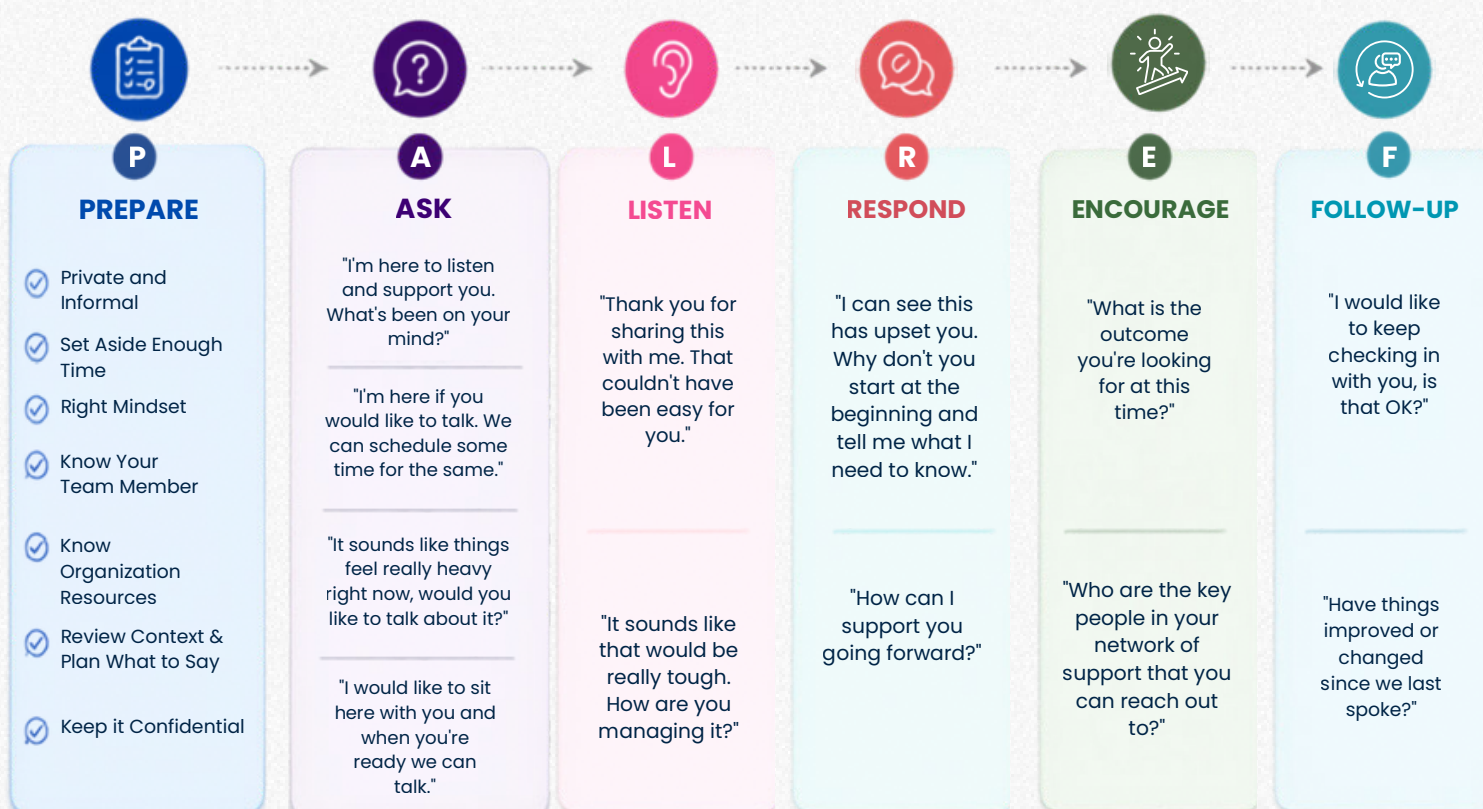
I have noticed an employee who has been distressed over the past two weeks. His behaviour has changed quite a bit and it's concerning – low mood & energy, easily irritable, how do I approach him about this?

**Here is a quick framework to
support an employee/
colleague in distress – PALREF.**



Have you ever noticed someone who is stressed, upset or low but you haven't approached them because you were unsure about what to say or how to manage the conversation? Very often we find ourselves in these situations and sometimes we even brush it off thinking we shouldn't interfere or if the person requires support they'll ask. But more often than not, people find it challenging to ask for support. This is where a kind word can go a long way. Caring doesn't cost a thing!

PALREF Support Pathway





As a manager, this framework can be useful even for regular check-ins and/or with employees who have recently showcased unusual/uncharacteristic behaviours – physically, emotionally & mentally. As an employee, this framework can be useful for individuals you interact with on a regular basis.

A few points to keep in mind – you don't need to solve the distressed employee's problems, diagnose them or be a therapist/doctor to them. All you need to do is hear them out, keep the conversation confidential & guide them to the appropriate resources. If the concern requires you to share details with others, always check with the employee if it's okay to share only the relevant details (not necessarily all the details).

BALANCING PERFORMANCE WITH WELLBEING

An important part of healthy workplace practices & positive work relationships is managing the workload & performance while also taking care of your employees. Here are a few tips on how to do so:

- ▶ Manage on a case-by-case/subjective basis not by assumptions or biases.
- ▶ Focus on the person, not the problem – don't make assumptions – they can still thrive at work.
- ▶ **Reaffirm expectations sensitively while considering health-related solutions & collaboration:**
"I understand that you're dealing with some tough issues, and at the same time, we need to make sure we're staying on track with our projects. Let's think about how we can adjust your workload or find other ways to support you during this time."
- ▶ **Discuss practical implications of any reasonable adjustment request.**
Allow them flexibility; how and when they perform their role where possible in line with business needs
- ▶ **Know when to escalate:**
"We will have a review by XYZ date. I would like to let you know that, if there isn't improvement, it might be helpful to bring in additional support, whether from HR or a mental health professional to make sure you're getting the help you need."
- ▶ **Use mediation**
(contact HRBP) to resolve any conflict if necessary/ appropriate.



Sonia Hillary

Consultant – Solution, Innovation & Excellence, Human Dynamic APAC



WELLNESS CORNER

BODY SIGNALS WE LEARN TO IGNORE AT WORK

By Ho Sheau Huey – Consultant – Solution, Innovation & Excellence,
Human Dynamic APAC

John thought he was handling his pressure well.

- Headaches? Probably poor sleep.
- Tight shoulders? Bad posture.
- 3am wake-ups? Just thinking ahead.
- Fatigue, forgetfulness, and irritability? Part of being busy.

Like many high performers, he didn't think he was overstressed. He thought he was just dealing with a few physical aches and a demanding schedule. What John didn't realize was that his body had recognized the overload long before his mind did.



The Body Keeps Score

Many of us think of stress as something we feel emotionally. In reality, stress often appears physically first. Our nervous system does not distinguish between a difficult client conversation, a tight deadline, or an actual physical threat. It responds to all of them by activating the exact same survival system.

When stress is short-lived, this response is helpful. Your body releases adrenaline and cortisol, increases focus and energy, and prepares you to perform. The problem begins when the pressure never seems to stop. Instead of switching back into recovery mode, many people remain in a continuous state of alert. [1]

The Traps We Fall Into

When stress starts showing up physically, most people respond in one of three ways:

Endure

- "I'll deal with it later."
- The workload gets completed, but the physiological stress remains.

Escape

- More coffee to stay alert.
- More scrolling, TV, or other numbing habits to unwind.
- Temporary relief without actual recovery.

Rationalize

- "I'm just tired."
- "It's probably my age."
- "It's the chair, mattress, or my posture."



Sometimes those explanations are true. But when multiple symptoms appear together and linger, the body may be telling a larger story.





The Cost of Ignoring the Signal

When the body's stress response stays activated for too long, it can affect multiple systems [2]

Listen Before the Body Forces a Pause

Learning to recognize these early warning signs is a vital first step for our well-being. Here is how to start.

Listen and understand:

When a symptom surfaces, get curious rather than dismissive. What is your body trying to tell you? Does it need time to slow down? Is it asking for rest, movement, nourishment, or stillness?

Practice relaxation techniques:

Engage in deep breathing, mindfulness, or gentle movement – even five minutes a day makes a difference. You don't need to wait for a long holiday to reset; small, daily moments of calm are what your nervous system needs most.

Seek social support:

Reach out to trusted friends, family, or colleagues. Building a life-enhancing social network provides an emotional buffer that helps soothe stress and worry.

Have You Been Ignoring the Signals?



Take a quick self-check. How many of the following apply to you?

- ▶ Waking between 2am and 4am unable to switch off your thoughts
- ▶ Frequent headaches or migraines
- ▶ Persistent neck, shoulder, or jaw tension
- ▶ Feeling exhausted after a supposedly restful weekend
- ▶ Becoming more forgetful, distracted, or impatient than usual

If three or more sound familiar, your body may be carrying a stress load it hasn't had the chance to fully set down. By tuning into your body's early warning signs, you can shift from enduring the pressure to proactively managing your long-term well-being. Your body is already communicating, it's time to start listening.

References:

- 1 Harvard Health Publishing. (2024).**
Understanding the stress response. Harvard Medical School.
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthy-aging-and-longevity/understanding-the-stress-response>
- 2 American Psychological Association. (2024).**
Stress effects on the body.
<https://www.apa.org/topics/stress/body>



Ho Sheau Huey

Consultant – Solution, Innovation & Excellence, Human Dynamic APAC



Visionary Voice

Stability Is the New Competitive Advantage

By Eric Kung – Founder, Chairman & CEO, Human Dynamic Group

When the editor of the Influencer told me about this topic, my first response in my mind was: Are you serious? Stability has often been regarded as the stumbling block for organizational change and business transformation. People are challenged to leave their comfort zones or stability and to embrace change fast! "There is no stability; there is only opportunity."

Then, I think of the keel of a sailing boat. A keel is to keep the fast-moving sailing boat stable and "grounded". Otherwise, the boat could capsize by strong winds or waves. Stability of organizations could mean strong and committed leadership team, foundations of talents, technology, innovation, and capitals (structural, financial, intellectual, and human), and most importantly the value, mission, and vision (VMV) of the organization.



We often hear management gurus or leadership coaches remind their clients to "go back to your basics" and to "focus on your core competencies". Passion is a double-edged sword; it could drive you to strive for success and to lose sight of your heart, which is where your passion comes from. "Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart." (Proverb 4:21) Your heart is the base of your stability and the source of your life!



Stability in leadership is about your authenticity, integrity, righteousness, faith, trust, love, and hope; those elements all come from your heart. In a changing and challenging business environment, we need to adapt fast, learn fast, and innovate fast. The commander of the US Army for Dessert Storm operation said, "Speed is lethal; speed is final!" The same applies to business competition. However, if your mission is not just, then victory will become evil. Search your heart and find your source of stability before it is too late.



Eric Kung

Founder, Chairman & CEO, Human Dynamic Group