

The Mental Load Test for the Workplace

DO YOU EQUAL CARE @WORK?!

The term #MentalLoad has become a household word for many with respect to private matters, but there remains a significant lack of awareness that in workplaces, too, there are people who take responsibility for invisible or unappreciated tasks that would otherwise be left undone because they do not appear in anyone's job description. It is often the same people who routinely assume this work, and thus contribute in an invisible way to the well-being of others, ensure that an entire team is able to work, and that projects move forward. Progressive companies hire extra people for these jobs by creating a position called 'Feel-Good Manager', who ensures that work in all areas is continually improved. They are there to consider the needs of all employees and to promote constructive cooperation.

How it works:

With the following questionnaire you can figure out as a team if there is one person who, in addition to his or her official tasks, assumes (either voluntarily or out of necessity) a particularly large amount of care work. Conversely, perhaps you will discover there is someone who avoids care work altogether. (If there is a person who is explicitly responsible for the task described and who indeed does it, then simply omit that point). Organize a meeting and find out how the day-to-day care work in your team is distributed.

Afterwards make a list of results in order and discuss:

- Were you aware beforehand that all the tasks mentioned above exist and that someone from your team takes care of them on a regular basis?
- What would happen if this person stopped feeling responsible?
- Are you satisfied with what you are doing on top of your actual job?
- If individuals are not:
How can you better distribute tasks as a team?
- In particular, discuss the column with the relative statement: very often.
What does this mean for the individual?

If your team is not interested in this exercise, simply fill out the test for yourself. It is enlightening to see what additional work some people do and to consider how different types of work are valued.

Scoring

Distribute a questionnaire to each team member. Each person fills it out for themselves.

The scoring is as follows:

very often = 3 points

often = 2 points

rarely = 1 point

never = 0 points

›Mental Load‹

denotes the burden of everyday, invisible responsibility for organizing household and family in private, coordinating and mediating teams in a professional context, and maintaining relationships and determining the needs and sensitivities of all those involved in both areas.

DO YOU EQUAL CARE @WORK?

The Mental Load Test for the Workplace

klischeesc e.V.

	never	rarely	often	very often	
MEETINGS / EVENTS	Check participants' calendars and find a free slot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Book meeting room	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Prepare meeting room	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Make sure that adapters (beamer/computer) are available (or get them ad hoc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Check that the presenter's bag is fully packed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Order any missing items	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide paper for flipcharts and/or metaplan walls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Obtain thank-you gifts for (external) speakers at events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Order snacks/catering/drinks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide participants with working documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KITCHEN	Assume the timekeeper function	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Write minutes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Offer coffee/tea to attendees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Clean up the meeting room afterwards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Put dirty dishes in the dishwasher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Empty clean dishwasher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Collect deposit bottles and put them back in the crates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GENERAL	Wipe down surfaces if they are dirty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Remove old items from the refrigerator and throw them out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Replace used dishrags/towels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reorder/replace used supplies/broken dishes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gather and provide existing information for joint projects in advance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Take care of repairs, e.g. report to landlord/building maintenance staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Collect and distribute mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pre-register and pick up visitors at reception	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Volunteer to take on additional tasks (especially when it comes to 'hard work')	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Remember to re-distribute tasks when a team member is unexpectedly absent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TEAMBUILDING	Assume duties of those who are absent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Help (or be called), e.g. when the copier is jammed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Water plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Remember and commemorate birthdays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Get cards; collect money and signatures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Think of and purchase birthday gifts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Remember anniversaries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Think of and purchase parting gifts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Make suggestions for team events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Organize team events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RESTROOMS	Remember to obtain greeting cards in time for the year-end holidays and send them to customers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Know in which family a new baby is born and purchase a welcome gift	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Contribute to the working environment, e.g. chocolate bunnies, Santas...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Create a good atmosphere, e.g. decorate for various occasions/seasons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Think about the Christmas party	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Organize the Christmas party	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Organize vegan/vegetarian, gluten-free/lactose-free food alternatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Have an open ear for problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Actively notice and address problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Strive for self-regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ADDITIONS	Make an effort to co-regulate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ask how colleagues are doing with changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Advocate for common concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Seek improvement and articulate the need for it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ensure that soap, paper towels, etc. are available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wipe the countertop when everything is under water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Put new toilet paper roll on the holder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

This test is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Public License CC BY-NC-ND. This allows download and redistribution of the work with attribution to the authors only, but no editing. For commercial use, e.g. as an offer for your target group at events, trade fairs, etc., please send your enquiry to: bestellung@klischeesc.de. By Patricia Cammarata (dasnuf.de) and Almut Scherrig (equalcare.de)