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Didn't finish your daily to-do list at work? Don't dwell on it

Study finds an employee's downtime mindset impacts day-to-day productivity

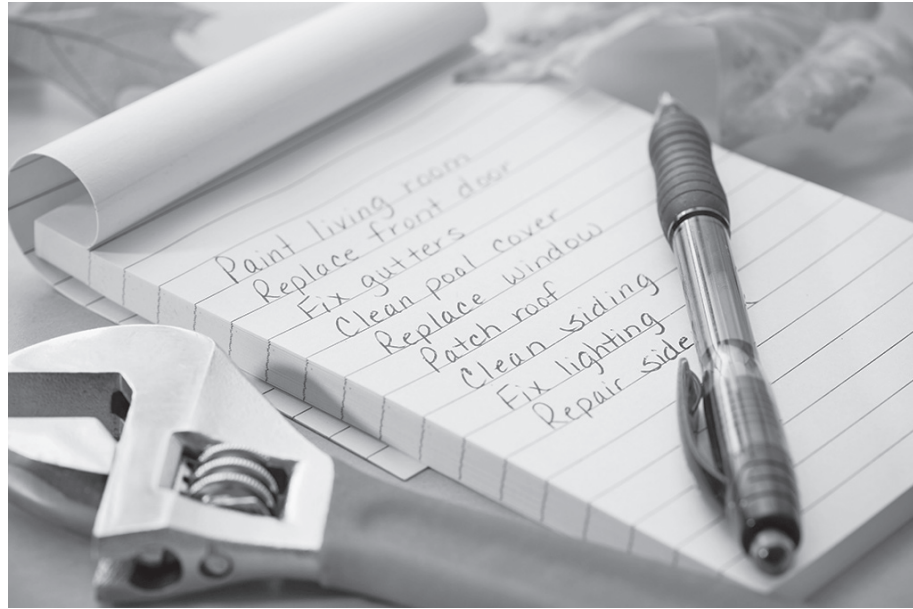
By the University at Buffalo

In today's complex and unpredictable work environments, understanding how employees respond to unachieved daily work goals is crucial to supporting their well-being and day-to-day productivity, according to new research from the University at Buffalo School of Management.

Forthcoming in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, the study found this impact can be mitigated by a workplace climate that encourages a future-oriented mindset and offers practical insight for managers seeking to support and retain employees.

When employees envisioned how to fix a problem if it happened again, rather than reflecting on the failed goal, they were more likely to achieve the goal the next day.

"By shifting our focus from 'why employees failed to achieve goals' to 'how employees react to unrealized goals,' we found that daily unattained goals can lead employees to develop strategies to cope with a cycle of negative thoughts of failure," said study co-author Min-Hsuan Tu, Ph.D., assistant professor of organization and human resources in the UB School of Management. "These coping strategies that focus on the past may relieve some discomfort in the moment, but are often disruptive and can make employees less productive."



The researchers analyzed data of 485 daily reports from 100 working professionals in an executive business program, measuring how employees' perception of failed goals influenced their ability to bounce back from work goals they didn't achieve. The data was collected through two phases, the second of which included two daily surveys for five consecutive weekdays, both before and after work.

The study provides a comprehensive picture of how after-work thought processes can impact day-to-day goals. Tu said that, despite leaving work physically, employees can continue to dwell on the goals they missed that day, and that managers can help their staff recover through guided writing exercises, workshops on positive reflections and by providing additional support.

"Instead of simply treating a missed goal as a mistake or failure that should be punished, managers need to help employees bounce back and protect them from falling into a psychological

downward spiral," Tu said. "Based on our findings, managers should encourage future-oriented thinking in the workplace to protect employees from stress and anxiety, and the impaired pursuit of their daily goals."

Tu collaborated on the study with Yifan Song, Ph.D., assistant professor of management in the Texas A&M University Mays Business School; Yanran Fang, Ph.D., assistant professor of leadership and organizational management in the Zhejiang University School of Management; and Satish Krishnan, associate professor of information systems in the Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode.

Now in its 100th year, the UB School of Management is recognized for its emphasis on real-world learning, community and economic impact, and the global perspective of its faculty, students and alumni. The school also has been ranked by *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *Forbes* and *U.S. News & World Report* for the quality of its programs and the return on investment it provides its graduates. For more information about the UB School of Management, visit management.buffalo.edu.

NYSEG, RG&E remind customers to dig safely

Customers are urged to call 811 before you dig

▼ Contractor and homeowners should follow simple steps for a safer project

Guest Editorial by AVANGRID

As summer continues, New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG) and Rochester Gas and Electric (RG&E) are reminding customers that safety always comes first before taking on any outdoor project that involves excavation or digging.

Residents and contractors should educate themselves on dig safety requirements in code 753, a New York regulation that establishes protections for underground facilities. Homeowners should call 811 or contact UDigNY.org

to place a location request at least two days before the start of a digging project. The companies encourage customers to include "Dig Safe" conversations with any contractor with whom they are working – whether it's a major construction project, a garden fence, or mailbox post – any unmarked digging can put customers and households at risk. The service is free and can be scheduled by contacting UDigNY.org or by calling 811.

Follow these tips for a safer project:

▼ Plan to have underground utilities marked as part of all outdoor projects that involve digging or

excavation.

▼ Mark out the area of construction with white paint.

▼ Call UDig NY, a free and easy service at 811 or visit UDigNY.org.

▼ Verify all utilities listed on the UDig NY ticket have been marked or cleared prior to beginning underground construction.

▼ Be aware: privately owned utilities may be present during construction and are the homeowner's responsibility to locate. These may include but are not limited to gas, electric, water, sewer, storm water, cable, and telecommunication service lines that are not public utilities.

▼ Properly maintain all under-

ground utility markings.

▼ Hand dig in the area of underground facilities.

▼ If our underground facilities are damaged or disturbed, notify RG&E at 800-743-1702 for natural gas or 800-743-1701 for electricity. NYSEG can be notified by calling 800-572-1121 for a natural gas emergency and 800-572-1131 for an electric emergency. We'll come right away to ensure the site is safe, and make repairs if required.

▼ Use and properly install suitable backfill material around underground facilities.

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PUBLISHER
Skip Mazenauer
GM/MANAGING EDITOR

Joshua Maloni

EDITOR IN CHIEF/SENTINEL EDITOR

Terrence P. Duffy

WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

Joshua Maloni

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES

Colleen Rebmann, Jeff Calarco

ACCOUNTING/OFFICE MANAGER

Kim Stacharczyk

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Jennifer Walowitz

PRODUCTION MANAGER/ GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Wendy Juzwicky

CLASSIFIED MANAGER

Wendy Puffer

CIRCULATION

Kim Stacharczyk

SENIOR REPORTERS

Michael J. Billoni, Patrick J. Bradley,

Alice Gerard, Karen Keefe

CONTRIBUTORS

Timothy Chipp, Kevin and Dawn Cobello,

Michelle Blackley Glynn, Wayne Peters, Elijah Robinson, Lauren Zaepfel

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1859 Whitehaven Road
Grand Island, N.Y. 14072

Phone 716-773-7676
Fax 716-773-7190

Editorial:

Dispatch@wnypapers.com
Sentinel@wnypapers.com

Advertising:

NFPDesign@wnypapers.com

Classifieds:

NFPClassifieds@wnypapers.com

Circulation:

NFPCirculation@wnypapers.com

Legals:

legalnotice@wnypapers.com

Website:

wnypapers.com

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