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PREVENTING TECHNOSTRESS THROUGH POSITIVE TECHNOLOGY
A training project for organizations

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Over the past decade, the workplace has experienced significant changes as a result of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the subsequent digital transformation. At the same time, introduction of ICTs can pose a threat to both a company and its employees through misuse, abuse, and overuse, resulting in technostress. This project aims to present the technostress construct, and show how Positive Technologies can help prevent it, and promote positive work experiences and general well-being through an effective organizational safety culture.

Technostress

Technostress is considered to be a multidimensional construct, and it is defined as **"a negative psychological state associated with the use or the "threat" to use new technologies,"** which leads to "anxiety, mental fatigue, skepticism, and sense of ineffectiveness". The fundamental dimensions to technostress include:

- Techno-anxiety: the use of computers or ICTs that generates fear, apprehension, and agitation in the user
- Techno-addiction: related to workaholism, it appears when an individual is unable to disconnect from work-related ICTs, therefore continuing to, often compulsively, perform work-related functions outside of normal business hours
- Techno-strain: perceived stress experience resulting from the use of new information technologies.

Research shows that many factors contribute to technostress, including techno-invasion, techno-overload, techno-complexity, techno-insecurity, and technouncertainty. Technical and organizational support, employees' involvement in the ICT implementation phase, and appropriate communication management allow for decreased technostress emergence in organizations, as well as encourage greater well-being and productivity.

Organizational Safety Culture

Organizational culture refers to a set of processes, professional practices, explicit, and implicit rules, regulation, conventions, and shared ways of thinking within an organization. When these elements are linked to risk and safety in the workplace, they contribute to define a specific organizational safety culture.

Technostress is a manifestation of a lack of safety culture. Any intervention aiming at preventing or minimizing technostress begins with acknowledging its impact on performance within the organization. Therefore, one possible way to deal with the risks coming from technostress is to focus on work, technological, and communicative processes.

Positive Technology and Technostress

Positive Psychology postulates that personal experiences can be leveraged to foster well-being and personal growth. Similarly, Positive Technology is "the scientific and applied approach to the use of technology for improving the quality of our personal experience".

Perceived quality of personal experience occurs at three different domains: hedonic (technology is used to generate positive experiences); eudaimonic (technology is designed to support individuals in reaching "engaging and selfactualizing experiences"); and social/interpersonal (technology helps improve connectedness between individuals or groups).

If the ICTs are built according to their specifications, abilities, and needs, employees using positive technologies could experience a reduction of techno-anxiety. Furthermore, they could perceive work requests as fitting their role and way of working, and avoid techno-overload. Well-designed processes and ICTs will not require extra time and effort from the employees, thus preserving their work-life balance, avoiding techno-invasion, technostrain, and technoaddiction. Well-designed positive technology and work processes should also support social presence and intersubjectivity.

Conclusion

Positive Technology can be considered as a proactive solution for organizations and companies who seek to increase their employees' well-being and prevent technostress. Conditions necessary for this approach to work is for companies, their employees, and Positive Technology experts to work together in designing new ICTs or modifying existing systems to include work processes that support such technologies. Without appropriate collaboration, technologies will induce technostress, rather than preventing it. As for any technology or process introduced within an organization, Positive Technology must be designed according to the organizational safety culture to which it will belong and contribute.

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