

Potential Solutions

Problematic Practice

Inadequate office furniture and equipment, bad lighting, chemicals and poor air quality harm employees' bodies.

Working remotely puts some employees and contractors in inadequate physical environments, at home, in their cars, etc.

The movement martyr culture, glorifying overwork, leads organizers and other staff to feel that it's better for campaigns if they neglect self-care; some think that's what managers want from them.

Organizing can feel like relentless, grim work with only long-term rewards.

Sustainable Practice

Offices and other worksites need clean air, adequate bathrooms, safe drinking water and a lack of squalor and vermin.

Buy remote workers ergonomic furniture or laptops needed to comfortably work from home; pay their extra utilities (e.g., Internet and electricity).

Don't assume that organizers have adequate cars; rent cars for staff if needed.

Support and encourage self-care for all employees. Offer exercise and/or meditation onsite. Put self-care on staff meeting agendas so staff can share their ways of preventing burnout.

Communicate clearly and often that staff well-being is a priority.

A healthy organizational culture balances serious work focus with laughter and light-hearted fun. Strive to create a sense of community.

Make the office an enjoyable place, with uplifting art representing the mission and the community, and comfortable spaces for breaks. Free food can raise morale.

Encourage staff creativity and incorporate the arts into the workplace and special events: music, visual art, poetry and spoken word.

Schedule fun excursions for annual retreats or post-campaign recovery days. Make sure all staff are comfortable with the type of fun planned.

If some staff work off-site and some on-site, avoid the hybrid model of some people Zooming in to a social time designed for in-person participation. There are many [remote team-building activities](#); if anyone is remote, everyone should participate electronically.

Aspirational Practice

Get periodic ergonomics assessments from an occupational safety and health organization, such as a local [NCOSH affiliate](#).

If budget allows, buy cars for organizers who need to drive around the community (or ask donors for used cars to loan to staff).

Offer a wellness benefit that staff can use for gym memberships, therapy, etc.

If space allows, equip the office with equipment for fun breaks, such as a pingpong table.

Offer affordable perks such as museum and gym passes, and public transit subsidies.

Consider benefits that recognize obstacles that staff from marginalized backgrounds may face, such as debt forgiveness for education, medical or carceral. There are a range of [taxable and nontaxable fringe](#) that can help meet retention and equity goals.

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Problematic Practice

Employers don't always realize that some employees struggle with mental illness, substance abuse, family crises and other stresses, and so don't offer referrals or support.

Contributions of organizers and other lower-level staff go unacknowledged.

Potential Solutions

Sustainable Practice

Gather information about affordable resources staff in trouble can turn to, and make these referral lists easy to access without disclosing a need.

Frequently give awards, newsletter profiles and other recognition to staff at all levels, especially at the end of a campaign.

Aspirational Practice

Consider an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) so that employees can get confidential referrals. Check for quality, as some programs are inadequate or overpriced.

In recognition of special effort and contributions, give gift cards and other perks.