

Good-bye burnout! How a sabbatical could help mitigate its effect.

Level: Intermediate (B1–B2)

Time: Approximately 90 minutes (plus possible extra time for email writing)

Business topics: Employee burnout and wellness, sabbatical leave, career moves

Business language: useful business vocabulary, collocations

Activities: discussing sabbatical leave, key words, understanding the text, business language, discussion, discussion and writing a memo about an organisation's sabbatical leave policy

Groups: Whole class, one-to-one, pair work or small groups

Overview: This article shares three cases of an investment banker turned CEO, a tech titan, and a bestselling novelist (formerly a financial analyst) who achieved greater success after going on sabbatical leave.

You can point out the verb and noun forms of this set (be burnt out–burn out; cheer–cheer; contend–contender; envy–envious; extend–extended; disguise–guise; promote–promotion; rival–rivalry).

Key:

1. *peril*
2. *guise, guises*
3. *envious*
4. *promote, promoted*
5. *contender*
6. *oblivion*
7. *extended*
8. *headhunt, headhunts*
9. *burn out, burnt/burned out*
10. *rivalry*
11. *slack off, slacked off*
12. *cheer*

3. Understanding the article

- a. Students look for the information in the article to complete the sentences.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. <i>a</i> | 5. <i>b</i> |
| 2. <i>b</i> | 6. <i>b</i> |
| 3. <i>a</i> | 7. <i>a</i> |
| 4. <i>a</i> | |

1. Warmer

- a. Ask students to read the definition of *sabbatical*. Check understanding by asking what the difference is between a holiday/leave and a sabbatical (an extended leave). Then put students into pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss the questions.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to complete the task individually and then compare their answers in small groups before eliciting the answers from the whole class. You can also ask half the students to complete 1-7 and the other half to complete 8-14 and then work together to check and share their answers.

4. Business language

- a. Ask students to work individually to scan the article and find the collocations in the text. Then ask them to work in pairs or small groups to match them to their meanings.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. <i>b</i> | 4. <i>c</i> |
| 2. <i>a</i> | 5. <i>d</i> |
| 3. <i>f</i> | 6. <i>e</i> |

- b. Ask students to discuss the questions. Monitor and focus on pronunciation. Ask them to identify the number of syllables and the stressed syllable in each word and repeat the words correctly (**cor**-porate; ca-**reer** **su**-i-cide; fi-**nan**-cial **a**-na-lyst; **bro**-ke-rage; **soft**-ware **po**-wer-house; **com**-pa-ny **lo**-yal-ty).

5. Discussion questions

- a. Put the students in pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss the questions. When students have covered all the questions, bring the whole class back together so that they can share their answers and any interesting information that arose from their discussions.

6. Wider business theme – HR sabbatical leave policy and employee wellbeing

- a. Ask students to discuss task A, first. Encourage them to share their own reflections on the information. Then have students work in pairs or small groups to discuss task B. Encourage them to come up with a relevant authentic situation, but if they are struggling, you can suggest that they come up with a policy for the *Financial Times*.

Then have students brainstorm their ideas for task C in pairs or small groups before writing their emails individually. They can complete the writing for homework and peer-edit someone else's email.