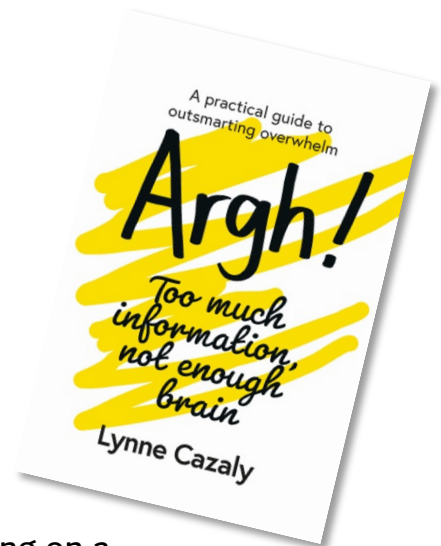


# LEADERSHIP TIPS

## What to do when a team member is overwhelmed



Many employees remark and report that their supervisor, manager or leader doesn't know just how overwhelmed they are. So, they push on through it, putting on a brave face. This is dangerous, for the health and wellbeing reasons mentioned in the book, but also because it's not good leadership. Good leaders are connected and in communication with their team.

Here's what to do if a team member responds in ways that make you think they might be overloaded and overwhelmed, or they say they are overwhelmed and overloaded.

AVOID...	TRY TO...
Avoid saying things like, 'you should have come to me sooner' or 'why didn't you say something?' They are saying something now, so respond with compassion.	Say 'thanks for raising this with me' or 'thank you for saying something; I know that might have been tough to do.'
Avoid getting frustrated, particularly if the pressure is on or there are deadlines looming.	Take a breath and realise they may be coming to you for support, direction or guidance.
Avoid naming their experience as being 'over sensitive' or 'dramatic'.	Validate their experience and story. It's true for them, even if it's not how you see it.
Avoid assumptions. Don't think it's all about work. There could be other things that have triggered their overwhelm response.	Ask open questions to get them to share their story or what's going on e.g. 'tell me how you're feeling...', 'what's difficult or challenging for you at the moment?' or 'what's been happening for you?'

<p>Avoid rash or dramatic responses like, 'Stop working on that project!' or 'Don't do anything else for that team!'</p>	<p>Respond in a coaching style, asking them for their ideas as well for what they think might help, resolve, or reduce their overwhelm experience.</p>
<p>Avoid making an example of them or telling others in the team or beyond about their experience.</p>	<p>Show compassion and confidentiality with what they've brought to you and the future conversations you have with them.</p>
<p>Avoid labelling them. They're a human, having a human response.</p>	<p>Try to identify if there are elements of their overwhelm that are emotional, workload related or information related.</p>
<p>Avoid thinking it's a quick fix. Solving their concern today may not be the end of their experience of overwhelm.</p>	<p>Try to check in with them frequently, regularly to see how they are and how they are responding to the changes or solutions you've suggested or created together.</p>
<p>Other tips...</p>	