

Workplace economics – How does the Impostor Syndrome affect organisational output?

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Abstract. *The contemporary economic discourse has increasingly focused on the interplay between individual psychological factors and organizational performance. This investigation investigates the phenomenon of impostor syndrome, which is characterized by a ubiquitous sense of self-doubt and the apprehension of being exposed as a fraud despite the presence of apparent competence, and its influence on organizational output. The article investigates the way impostor syndrome is expressed within workplace hierarchies and teams by utilizing interdisciplinary frameworks from organizational psychology, behavioural economics, and management science. By utilizing a mixed-methods approach that incorporates survey data, in-depth interviews, and case studies, we identify critical patterns that connect impostor syndrome to impaired collaboration, reduced productivity, and decreased innovation. Our results underscore a paradox: in the short term, individuals with impostor syndrome may overcompensate by exhibiting high performance; however, the cumulative effects of chronic stress and exhaustion can undermine long-term organizational objectives. The investigation also assesses potential mitigation strategies, such as targeted mental health interventions, organizational culture adjustments, and leadership training. This research provides policymakers, managers, and scholars with actionable insights to improve workplace efficiency and employee well-being by clarifying the economic and operational implications of impostor syndrome.*

Keywords: impostor syndrome, organisational performance, workplace productivity, behavioural economics, employee psychology.

JEL Classification: D23, J24, M12, M54, I31.

1. Introduction

The psychological phenomena known as "impostor syndrome" causes people to question their achievements, worry about being discovered as frauds, and credit external factors rather than their own abilities (Clance, Imes, 1978). Originally recognized by psychologists Dr. Pauline Clance and Dr. Suzanne Imes, Impostor Syndrome usually shows itself in high-achieving people who, despite proof of their skills, feel constantly inadequate. Affecting personal well-being as well as professional performance, this syndrome can cause burnout, stress, and anxiety.

Impostor Syndrome is particularly relevant in modern companies because of the demand for quick success, competitive surroundings, and focus on personal branding that drives them. Employees with Impostor Syndrome could find it difficult to be job satisfied or productive, which would result in decreased organizational engagement and possibly increased turnover rates (Bravata et al., 2020). Moreover, resolving Impostor Syndrome is essential since underrepresented groups often report higher instances and can negatively impact their sense of belonging and professional development as companies seek diversity and inclusion (Cokley et al., 2017).

2. The Impostor Syndrome's conceptual evolution

Core features of Impostor Syndrome are self-doubt, fear of exposure, and a lack of internalized achievement. Those with this syndrome regularly question their own abilities and successes, which generates constant feelings of inadequacy (Clance, Imes, 1978). This self-doubt can inhibit personal well-being and professional development since individuals experiencing impostor-like feelings could think they are not really deserving of their successes, regardless of their abilities or performance (Sakulku, Alexander, 2011).

Another typical feature is the fear of exposure, which is an illogical concern of being "found out" as incapable or insufficient. As they try to mask their perceived flaws, this anxiety sometimes drives them to over-prepare, work too much, or even avoid dealing with new challenges. Studies reveal that this fear of exposure can cause higher anxieties, stress, and a reluctance to pursue public recognition or promotions (Kumar, Jagacinski, 2006).

A lack of internalized success – that is, the incapacity to completely accept and absorb earned achievements – keeps people from appreciating their abilities as being authentic. This lack of internalization results from attributing success to external factors like chance or the support of others rather than own skill, so sustaining the notion that their achievements are either temporary or unearned (Vergauwe et al., 2015). They might consequently be detached from their successes, which perpetuates a self-doubt and failure-related loop.

Personal traits that are closely connected with Impostor Syndrome include perfectionism, conscientiousness, and neuroticism. These personality traits lead to the persistence of self-doubt, feelings of inadequacy, and an inclination to underestimate one's achievements.

Individuals with Impostor Syndrome commonly show rigid perfectionism, which occurs when they establish overly high expectations for themselves and associate minor errors with failure. This perfectionistic inclination promotes emotions of incompetence and anxiety of being exposed as "frauds," regardless of their actual accomplishments (Clance,

Imes, 1978). According to research, perfectionism can increase Impostor Syndrome symptoms by causing individuals to engage in self-criticism, obsessively re-evaluate their work, and hold off sharing or celebrating their successes due to the fear of not being "good enough" (Flett et al., 2016).

Another component associated with Impostor Syndrome is conscientiousness, which is characterized by high levels of organization, thoroughness, and attention to detail. While conscientious people are often successful, their desire to accomplish high standards might magnify self-doubt since they believe they have not put out "enough" effort, even when tasks are successfully done. Setting high standards can encourage excellence, inspire continual improvement, and promote growth both personally and professionally. Issues arise when these standards become unrealistic or are pursued in a way that negatively impacts mental and emotional well-being. This conscious pursuit of rigid perfectionism can cause stress and tiredness, reinforcing Impostor Syndrome's fundamental feelings of inadequacy (Bernard et al. 2002).

When high standards translate into perfectionism, people may become too critical of themselves, viewing any mistake as evidence of failing. Perfectionism, particularly maladaptive perfectionism, can cause stress, anxiety, and even burnout because people are constantly pressured to fulfil an unrealistic standard (Flett & Hewitt, 2002).

Constantly aiming for very high standards without appreciating accomplishments may increase self-doubt and fear of failure, especially in people with Impostor Syndrome. Individuals may downplay their accomplishments or be concerned that any deviation from perfection will cause others to regard them as incapable (Clance, Imes, 1978).

Research indicates that, while conscientiousness and high standards can be beneficial, excessive self-imposed pressure can lead to increased stress and anxiety, particularly in high stakes work settings. This can have substantial long-term mental health consequences, including symptoms of depression and chronic stress (Shafran, Mansell, 2001).

Neuroticism, or the inclination to experience unpleasant emotions such as anxiety, guilt, and frustration, is a strong predictor of Impostor Syndrome. High neuroticism is associated with higher self-criticism and sensitivity to perceived flaws, which can lead to self-doubt and fear of failure (Vergauwe et al., 2015). Neurotic individuals are more likely to develop Impostor Syndrome because they internalize criticism and experience personal anguish over their perceived lack of ability and competence, despite evidence of their skills and talents (Leary et al., 2000).

The dynamics of gender bias, educational output and the Impostor Syndrome

Gender-based socialization and cultural expectations have a big effect on how likely someone is to experience Impostor Syndrome, which can lead to different experiences and pressures depending on gender. These factors affect how people see themselves, their professional goals, and how they react to success or failure, especially for women and other underrepresented groups. Socialisation practices vary between genders, which can make women feel less confident in their skills and abilities compared with men. Girls may be taught from a young age to look for acceptance and approval, conform to fit in, and avoid taking risks, while boys are more likely to be taught to be independent, competitive, and

tough. These ways of socializing can make women feel like they are unworthy of success and question their own abilities, traits that are at the core of Impostor Syndrome (Clance, Imes, 1978; Cuddy et al., 2015). According to Kay and Shipman (2014), women are more likely to undervalue their accomplishments and think that their successes were a result of luck or other external factors because they may face more critical comments or scrutiny in professional settings.

Furthermore, greatly influencing Impostor Syndrome are cultural expectations. For example, self-perception might be affected by societal preconceptions about "traditional" gender roles and talents. Because of persisting preconceptions about gender and ability, women in male-dominated sectors like STEM, may feel more pressure to prove their competency (Cheryan et al., 2009). These preconceptions contribute to an impression of "otherness" and increased self-scrutiny, therefore increasing the feelings of being a "impostor." Similarly, the notion that women should be more modest and self-effacing in their successes sometimes contradicts the self-promotion expected in many businesses, thereby making it harder for women to feel comfortable in showing their competency (Rudman, 1998).

Double standards will often be applied where women and underrepresented minorities in the workplace are more closely scrutinized than their male counterparts (Cokley et al., 2017). This minority position increases the anxiety of failure and feeds Impostor Syndrome since individuals feel more under pressure to portray their group favourably. As a result, they could internalize even small failures as indicators of incompetence, resulting in reinforcing their sense of being a "impostor" (Bravata et al., 2020).

3. Organisations, impostors, and economic output

Among employees already prone to feel like "impostors", specific characteristics within organizational environments—such as high-performance expectations, competitive culture, lack of feedback, and unclear role definitions—may intensify self-doubt and raise the risk of burnout.

Modern workplaces sometimes prioritize high performance standards, productivity, and ongoing improvement—all of which can be very difficult for people experiencing impostor syndrome. Individuals who believe they must overcompensate to prove their value could experience constant pressure to either meet or surpass expectations (Vergauwe et al., 2015).

Employees in very competitive settings could worry that every error or flaw will make them seem and look inadequate, therefore intensifying their self-doubt and anxiety of being "found out" as unqualified (Sakulku, Alexander, 2011). This high-stakes environment could promote a cycle of over-preparation and perfectionism, resulting in adding to stress and finally burnout (Hutchins, Rainbolt, 2017).

In professional environments, reaching performance standards typically constitutes a good objective since it relates with responsibility, results and development. On the other hand, when performance expectations are set too high, are unrealistic, or are rigidly followed, can cause problems and have negative consequences on individuals as well as companies.

Although experienced employees could satisfy short-term expectations, maintaining continuously high performance without enough support and flexibility can result in total mental and physical exhaustion. Even highly competent workers have limits. Constant high expectations might cause chronic stress that reduces their long-term productivity and motivation (Maslach, Leiter, 2016). High achievers could be especially prone to burnout since they typically feel under pressure to keep or surpass previous achievements without rest or recuperation.

Also generating Impostor Syndrome is a lack of precise, constructive feedback. Regular, positive feedback from managers helps employees to evaluate their competency and value their contributions. Studies have demonstrated that critical or unclear feedback may contribute to feelings of inadequacy when employees interpret the lack of advice, guidance or the lack of appreciation as evidence that they are failing expectations (Clance, Imes, 1978). Furthermore, companies that neglect to offer mentoring or provide an encouraging atmosphere could leave employees feeling isolated in their obstacles and difficulties, which makes it more difficult for them to overcome their and self-doubt and internalise their achievements (Parkman, 2016).

Because they overwork to make up for their perceived shortcomings, employees with impostor syndrome often use time and energy in an inefficient way (Clance, Imes, 1978). Burnout brought on by this excessive effort could eventually lower long-term performance and focus.

Individuals who are afraid of failing or being judged as incompetent may avoid picking up more responsibilities. This avoidance might limit chances for skill development and creativity, so affecting the general job effectiveness (Hutchins, Rainbolt, 2017).

Because they think it is unearned, impostor syndrome sometimes causes individuals disregard positive feedback or praise which can affect performance improvement and professional development (Kumar, Jagacinski, 2006).

Individuals influenced by Impostor Syndrome sometimes minimize their achievements and feel inadequate for positions of leadership. This resistance to go for leadership roles or promotions reduces their chances for career advancement (Parkman, 2016).

Self-doubt and fear of exposure could cause individuals to avoid professional networking or collaborative projects, therefore isolating them and lowering their profile in their field of work (Vergauwe et al., 2015). Impostor Syndrome can erode the confidence in communication and decision-making of those who do land leadership roles, therefore compromising their capacity to effectively manage teams (Bravata et al., 2020).

Individuals who have low self-esteem may be more sensitive to criticism, which might make them unwilling to share their ideas or take risks in the workplace. According to Sakulku and Alexander (2011), this fear contributes to sentiments of incompetence and places a barrier to personal development.

Continuous self-criticism and the fear of failing can lead to mental exhaustion, which, over time, may further decrease the individual's self-esteem and resilience (Hutchins, Rainbolt, 2017).

4. Workplace economics and the push for the competitive rush between employees

Competitive environments sometimes promote direct or indirect employee comparison, which may intensify feelings of inadequacy. Though objectively they are equally competent, individuals may feel their talents or contributions are not as valuable than those of their colleagues (Kumar, Jagacinski, 2006). For individuals with Impostor Syndrome, these kinds of comparisons could support their view that they are less qualified or worthy of the position they have.

Employees in competitive environments can credit their colleagues' success to talent or hard work while dismissing their own accomplishments to luck or external assistance, maintaining the impostor narrative (Clance, Imes, 1978).

Companies prioritizing high standards often have ambitious goals and demand constant high performance. While this can inspire some workers, it can overwhelm others—especially those who already doubt their own abilities. For those suffering with Impostor Syndrome, this pressure accentuates their fear of failing and their perception that they cannot live up to expectations (Hutchins, Rainbolt, 2017).

High-stakes situations where mistakes are punished or too scrutinized might cause anxiety since employees may believe that any seeming error would expose them as incompetent and unqualified (Vergauwe et al., 2015).

Penalising mistakes can create a culture of fear where Employees may prefer to play it safe rather than explore creative alternatives, which could inhibit innovation (Amabile, 1996).

Employees might conceal errors, which can turn minor mistakes into major problems. A lack of open communication reduces trust and collaboration, both of which are necessary for sustained high performance.

While maintaining high quality expectations is critical, organizations that overly penalize mistakes risk establishing a fear-driven culture that blocks innovation, increases burnout, and reduces long-term performance.

Competitive workplaces may lack clear success indicators, causing uncertainty about what constitutes a "job well done." Employees may be confused whether they are meeting expectations, which may lead to self-doubt. For individuals who experience Impostor Syndrome, uncertainty can lead to overworking and an inability to recognize when they succeeded (Sakulku, Alexander, 2011). They can feel isolated in environments that prioritize individual performance over collaboration. Individuals with Impostor Syndrome may believe that they cannot rely on team support or shared success, increasing the stress of establishing their own worth (Cokley et al., 2017). This isolation can amplify self-doubt and limit chances for positive feedback and support.

Individuals who experience impostor-like feelings' fear of criticism is typically heightened in competitive situations, as they believe their work is always being judged against that of their peers and may experience overwhelming anxiety of being exposed as incompetent or undeserving of their position (Clance, Imes, 1978).

While comparisons can be a source of inspiration and improvement for some, it may contribute to feelings of self-doubt, inadequacy and fear for others, particularly individuals who are affected by Impostor Syndrome.

Comparisons often result in fixating on their perceived weaknesses rather than their strengths, which creates self-doubt (Festinger, 1954). Because they lack confidence, these comparisons may feel overwhelming. Persistent self-doubt lowers motivation and productivity, resulting in poor performance.

5. The root and social concept of the Impostor Syndrome

Children raised in families with exceptionally high expectations may develop the attitude that they must always succeed to be appreciated. Even when they succeed, children may internalize emotions of inadequacy, when these expectations feel unachievable (Sakulku, Alexander, 2011).

Parents who prioritize rigid perfection above effort or growth may unintentionally teach their children that failure is unacceptable, generating self-doubt and fear of making mistakes (Thompson et al., 1995). Encouraging a child to do their best and pushing them to grow further are important aspects of successful parenting that can encourage resilience, growth, and achievement. However, how these expectations are communicated and reinforced is very important. When the focus is extremely strict or perfectionistic, it might lead to unanticipated negative repercussions.

Mixed messages, such as alternating praise and criticism, can lead to misunderstanding regarding self-worth. A child may grow up believing that praise is conditional, causing problems internalizing their accomplishments (Clance, Imes, 1978).

Constant comparisons to others, whether from parents, teachers, or friends, may contribute to the feeling of never being "good enough." This dynamic is common in households where one child is identified as the "successful" or "gifted" one, leaving others feeling inadequate (Kolligian, Sternberg, 1991).

Children who are raised in environments that emphasize outcomes rather than effort can grow to associate their worth with their accomplishments. They may develop the fear of failing to achieve these external standards, which is characteristic of Impostor Syndrome (Sakulku, Alexander, 2011).

Children who achieve early success may set unrealistic expectations for themselves. If they face more difficulties, they may feel like "frauds" who were never actually capable to face them in the first place (Thompson et al., 1995).

Negative criticism or mockery throughout the formative years can undermine self-esteem and reinforce feelings of inadequacy. This is especially true when bullying focuses on perceived intelligence, competence, or distinctiveness (Cokley et al., 2017).

Children may experience tremendous pressure to live up to social expectations of success in cultures or societies that place a strong emphasis on accomplishment, competition, and comparison. These pressures can lead to self-doubt and the fear of failing to meet expectations (Clance, Imes, 1978).

Gender stereotypes, such as the belief that boys should thrive in specific fields (e.g., math and science) and girls should be modest about their accomplishments, might influence children's self-perception and perpetuate Impostor Syndrome tendencies (Cuddy et al., 2015).

Overprotective parents who intervene to resolve difficulties for their children may unintentionally block them from getting confidence in their abilities. This can leave children feeling unprepared to face issues on their own, leading to feelings of inadequacy in adulthood (Thomas, Chess, 1977).

In contrast, highly critical or perfectionistic parenting might make children believe that they are never "good enough," regardless of their efforts or triumphs (Sakulku, Alexander, 2011). Teachers who unintentionally favour specific students or establish unrealistically high standards may cause self-doubt in students who fall short to reach those expectations (Thompson et al., 1995).

Competitive academic environments may result in feelings of inadequacy, particularly in children who compare themselves to their high-achieving peers (Kolligian, Sternberg, 1991). Setting high standards and creating competitive academic environments are not automatically negative; they can inspire children to strive for excellence, build resilience, and realize their full potential. However, when implemented without proper support, these techniques might have unanticipated negative implications for some students, particularly those who lack confidence or struggle to keep up with the demands.

When teachers establish expectations that are too high or unrealistic for a student's current ability, students may see them as unreachable. Rather than motivating them, this can result in frustration, abandonment, or emotions of failure (Thompson et al., 1995). Students may develop a fixed mindset, feeling they are by nature incapable, which decreases their motivation to put forth effort or tackle challenges (Dweck, 2006).

Competitive environments that encourage student comparisons can worsen feelings of inadequacy, particularly for those who struggle to keep up with their higher-achieving colleagues. While some students may find comparison motivating, others may see it as proof of their inferiority (Kolligian, Sternberg, 1991).

Instead of aiming for improvement, students may avoid difficult activities, retreat from competition, or concentrate entirely on results rather than the learning process. The emotional toll on students who consistently fail to meet high expectations can be severe. This includes anxiety, fear of failure, and low self-esteem, especially in contexts where mistakes are penalized rather than viewed as learning opportunities (Maslach, Leiter, 2016). Over time, these emotional challenges can impair academic achievement, diminish involvement, and possibly result in mental health problems.

Competitive environments may place too much emphasis on grades, rankings, and accomplishments, diverting focus away from the learning process itself. This may limit innovation, exploration, and intellectual curiosity since students are more concerned with avoiding failure than with taking on new challenges (Amabile, 1996). Students may rely on surface learning—memorization and repetitive tasks—rather than building deeper comprehension and critical thinking skills.

The generational divide – Millennials and Generation Z with impostor syndrome

Impostor syndrome has received a lot of attention among Millennials (born 1981-1996) and Generation Z (born 1997-2012), due to the unique cultural and workplace dynamics that these generations face. Social media has a tremendous impact on the self-perception and

expectations of Millennials and Generation Z. Social platforms often accentuate only the positive elements of people's lives, resulting in a "highlight reel" that distorts reality (Twenge, 2017). This frequent exposure to curated representations of success can worsen impostor syndrome, making people feel inadequate in comparison to the accomplishments of others.

Employees who are millennials or Generation Z may suffer more self-doubt and pressure to perform. This pressure, fuelled by social media, can cause heightened anxiety, fear of failure, and a reluctance to share achievements, as individuals may downplay their own accomplishments to avoid appearing arrogant or exposing perceived flaws.

Millennials and Generation Z place a high importance on feedback and validation, regularly looking for confirmation from superiors and peers to prove their competency (Tulgan, 2016). While feedback is useful, individuals with impostor syndrome should avoid relying too heavily on external validation. They may become overly dependent on constant feedback, unable to internalize achievement and relying on others to validate their worth (Anderson, Jiang, 2018).

This reliance can lead to inefficiencies since managers and team members may feel obligated to provide continuous support. Furthermore, this dependence inhibits the development of self-confidence, preventing younger employees from accepting accountability for their accomplishments and perpetuating a cycle of self-doubt and low self-efficacy (Thompson et al., 2000).

Raised in an era of digital visibility, Millennials and Generation Z may be especially cautious about making mistakes, as they can be magnified online. This fear of public failure can increase impostor syndrome, causing people to avoid taking chances, presenting new ideas, or pursuing leadership positions that may expose them to scrutiny (Cuddy et al., 2015).

Individuals with impostor syndrome often engage in risk-averse behaviour due to a fear of failure, since they believe that mistakes will reveal their lack of competence. This might impede career advancement since Millennials and Gen Z employees might avoid jobs that would lead to growth or visibility, resulting in limited professional development and limited innovation inside the organization.

Rigid perfectionism is a typical attribute among people with impostor syndrome, and it is especially prevalent among Millennials and Generation Z, who join fast-paced work environments with high expectations (Hill, 2019). Many younger employees associate success with flawlessness, leading them to overwork and take on more duties than they can sustainably do. This perfectionistic urge contributes to impostor syndrome by inducing a loop of overwork to compensate for perceived deficiencies.

Rigid perfectionism, combined with the stress of a demanding work environment, usually leads to burnout. As a result, companies may struggle to retain talented younger employees who are overwhelmed by the high expectations they set for themselves (Maslach, Leiter, 2016). Rigid perfectionism is generally motivated by fear: fear of failure, fear of judgment, or fear of being "not enough." While fear can be a powerful short-term motivator, it can eventually lead to worry, exhaustion, and a negative self-image.

Individuals with impostor syndrome may avoid seeking help or revealing mistakes over the fear of exposing their apparent inadequacy (Young, 2011). The need to look capable and educated among Millennials and Generation Z employees might lead to a reluctance to ask questions or seek assistance from managers.

Professional development may be affected by such hesitation since these employees pass up chances to gain knowledge and develop under supervision and feedback. Furthermore, the lack of open communication reduces team participation, potentially leading to knowledge gaps and preventable errors that may have been avoided with early intervention (Edmondson, 1999).

Millennials and Generation Z employees often engage in silent comparisons with colleagues both inside and outside their company because social media increases the sense of competitiveness. Since they could feel inferior in comparison to their colleagues' seemingly faultless achievements, this competitive mindset could worsen impostor syndrome (Twenge, 2017). Silent competition within teams can lead to an unwritten "every person for themselves" ethos, in which individuals prioritize personal success over collaboration. Because employees may be afraid of peer criticism, this setting diminishes psychological safety by preventing candid communication and teamwork. Consequently, this lack of cooperation and encouragement diminishes team unity, which impacts organizational morale and productivity.

Professional standards for the workplace (bare minimum vs. high performance)

The notion that "no one needs to be perfect" involves establishing realistic, sustainable expectations for success and growth (Dweck, 2006). Striving for excellence involves consistently aiming to achieve the best possible outcome, learning from setbacks, and progressively enhancing accumulated and earned skills and accomplishments. Conversely, perfectionism may discourage individuals from even pursuing ambitious objectives due to their worry of not attaining a perfect score, for the fear of not achieving 100% (Dweck, 2006).

Working sustainably requires making a powerful, consistent effort without becoming exhausted by unrealistic rigid standards, standards that allow no room for mistakes, learning or gradual improvement, that they feel discouraging, rather than motivating.

Over time, individuals can enhance their abilities by allowing themselves to make errors and learn from them (Neff, 2003; Maslach, Leiter, 2016).

Additionally, the objective is to redirect motivation from proving oneself to others toward intrinsic goals. This viewpoint promotes individuals' pursuit of personal fulfilment and development, rather than conforming to societal expectations of flawless performance (Ryan, Deci, 2000).

Accepting that it is acceptable to make mistakes and learn from them leads to increased productivity and quality over time. Maslach and Leiter (2016) define a balanced approach as the ability to maintain high-quality work by setting high standards without the pressure of perfectionism.

Embracing imperfection creates a perspective that prioritizes growth over an impossible ideal. By removing the fear of making mistakes, it allows individuals to pursue challenging objectives and goals without becoming complacent.

Instead of viewing standards as "impossible," we can conceptualize them as aspirational objectives. A high-reaching and challenging aspirational objective is perceived as achievable through consistent effort and improvement. This method enables gradual achievement and preserves motivation, without the concern of failing to meet an "impossible" standard (Dweck, 2006).

Rigid perfectionistic, all-or-nothing thinking might make objectives appear "impossible" due to the perception that any deviation from perfection is considered a failure. This perspective is replaced by a growth-oriented one, which enables individuals to perceive setbacks or mistakes as components of the learning process rather than as failures that disqualify them (Neff, 2003).

This change enables individuals to pursue challenging goals without experiencing the necessity of perfectionism. Breaking down a high standard into realistic, achievable milestones is necessary to perceive it as both challenging and feasible. Rather than concentrating solely on an idealized end point, each step forward brings a sense of accomplishment and progress toward the overall goal (Locke, Latham, 2002).

Obtaining small, quantifiable milestones serves as a source of motivation and a direct indication of progress. In this manner, even the most ambitious objectives appear achievable and attainable.

Individuals can preserve their resilience when aiming to meet high standards through the practice of self-compassion. People avoid the trap of viewing ambitious goals as "impossible" or feeling disheartened by every small error by accepting setbacks as normal. They can continue to advance without feeling discouraged (Neff, 2003). Self-compassion promotes resilience and maintains motivation, enabling individuals to perceive challenges as fleeting obstacles rather than immovable, overwhelming ones.

6. Conclusion

Employees with impostor syndrome can be viewed by organizations from a variety of angles since they display both positive and negative behaviours that affect team cohesion, productivity, and workplace dynamics.

Because impostor thoughts might motivate individuals to seek continuous improvement since they feel compelled to meet or surpass expectations, they actively seek training, mentorship, or feedback to overcome perceived shortcomings and deficiencies (Neureiter, Traut-Mattausch, 2016).

This inner desire to grow and develop can be beneficial because it corresponds with organizational goals such as establishing a culture of learning and professional development. Their inner drive to either meet or surpass expectations pushes them to feel motivated to pursue ongoing development so in order to solve perceived shortcomings, they relentlessly seek mentoring, feedback, or training (Neureiter, Traut-Mattausch, 2016).

Given corporate objectives of encouraging a culture of learning and professional growth, this natural need to grow and develop can be advantageous for companies. Because impostor syndrome often makes individuals feel extremely conscious of their perceived flaws, resulting in humility and empathy, they are typically very supportive and inclusive of their coworkers, which contributes to positive team dynamics (Whitman, Shanine, 2012). These employees are appreciated by companies for their capacity to create collaboration, trust and confidence inside teams, so improving psychological safety and interpersonal interactions.

Fearing that more responsibility might expose their perceived imperfections, employees with impostor syndrome might decline high-visibility responsibilities or leadership positions (Clance, Imes, 1978). They could also doubt their ability to assume leadership roles by attributing past achievements to luck rather than competence, which can lead to talent management and succession planning to be more difficult since otherwise capable employees may fail to recognize or apply their leadership potential.

While impostor syndrome typically pushes employees towards growth, they may view constructive feedback as confirmation of their incompetence, leading to increased anxiety and self-criticism (Thompson et al., 2000), which can make evaluations and coaching sessions more difficult for managers since employees focus excessively only on perceived shortcomings and deficiencies.

Employees with impostor syndrome are more likely to experience mental exhaustion and burnout due to their perfectionist inclinations and fear-driven work ethic, which causes them to disengage or decrease their efficiency over time (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). In the end, high burnout rates can impact organizational morale and efficiency by increasing absenteeism, turnover and the loss of high-performing personnel.

They may also be very hesitant to express their ideas or opinions in meetings, fearing that their contribution is worthless or insignificant (Kark et al., 2012), which can block innovation and limit the diversity of viewpoints and perspectives when it comes to decision-making processes, limiting the organization's ability to adapt and thrive.

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