

THE EMOTIONAL TAX OF TRANSFORMATION

AND HOW LEADERS CAN REDUCE IT

Summary: We centered our discussion on the "emotional tax" of transformation, defined as the additional burden employees face beyond their regular workload. [Andrea Still](#) and [Stefanie Sancho](#) joined [Cassandra Worthy](#) to emphasize the need for leaders to be transparent, empathetic, and human. Below are key takeaways of what they shared.



What Emotional Tax Is and How It Can Present

- The result of multiple layers of change on a professional, personal, political, and financial level, leading to mental and physical burnout.
- Emotional tax is often masked as professionalism, leading to high blood pressure, substance abuse, and sleep disorders.
- The sentiment of feeling overwhelmed due to an extra layer of hours, capacity, and resources not factored into your workload.
- Doing two jobs: your regular work and suppressing or hiding your true emotions.

Strategies for Leaders to Reduce Emotional Tax

- **Communicate - *honestly* - the realities of transformation**, including the marathon nature of change and the importance of co-creation.
- **Practice *confident vulnerability*** (openly admitting when you don't know) to deepen connection and highlight what makes us most human in an AI-driven world.
- **Understand the importance of listening** and involving people in the decision-making process to build trust and improve results.
- **Align your team's work to their personal values** wherever possible. People excel in positions and on projects that match their interests and values.
- **Celebrate small wins**, focus on the journey, and take care of yourselves to lead effectively.