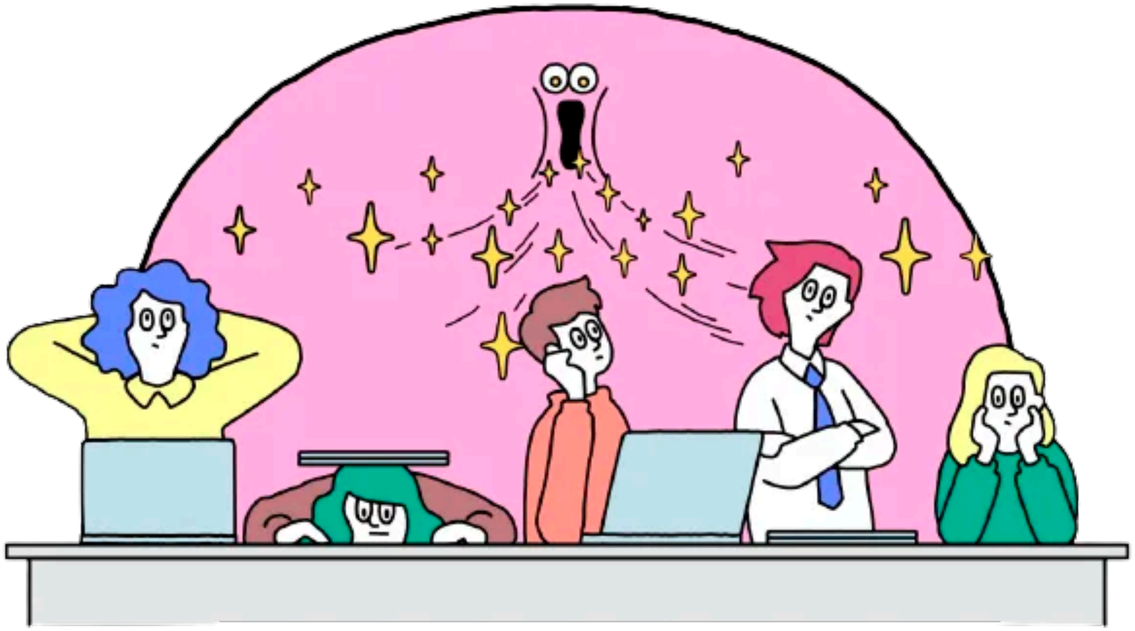
What are Team Spirits?

About Team Spirits

© Atrae, Inc.

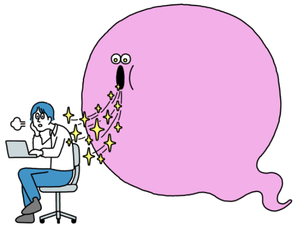
Team Spirits is a framework designed to build a shared understanding of your team’s condition by visualizing otherwise invisible issues within an organization or team using clear and simple expressions.

When issues arise, rarely are they caused by a single individual. In most cases, they stem from interpersonal dynamics and the surrounding work environment.
By identifying the Team Spirits that define these issues as a common issue, this framework supports the team in taking collective action towards a resolution.



Team Spirits Quick Look - 1

© Atrae, Inc.

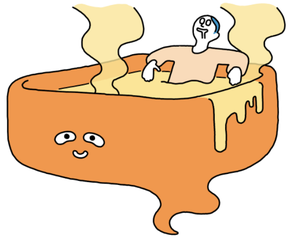


The Significance Sucker

Drains all meaning and purpose from work. With significance stripped away, your job becomes nothing but a series of tedious, monotonous tasks.

The Hustle Haunter

Traps you in a cycle of juggling endless tasks for a false sense of security. As a result, you're buried in work, yet lack any feeling of accomplishment.



The Complacency Creature

Kills all sense of urgency, leaving you in a lukewarm bath of "good enough." While it feels comfortable and secure, a nagging question remains:
"Is this really the best path forward?"

The Ambiguity Apparition

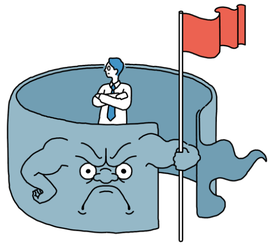
Obscures the intent behind feedback and compensation, leaving your team to guess how success is really measured. Is the system flawed, or are you just missing something? This ghost ensures you can never be sure.

The Praise Phantom

Preying on good intentions, it snatches praise right out of thin air. While you intend to show appreciation and give credit, this ghost creates a thankless work environment, stealing away praise and gratitude.

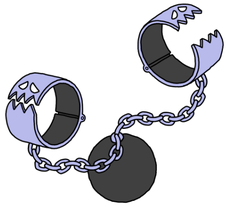
The Signal Scrambler

Hides your colleagues' struggles, leaving them without support. By creating an impression that nothing's wrong, it robs others of the chance to step in and help.



The Gatekeeper Ghost

Preys on high-performers, turning professional autonomy into destructive isolation. Preventing collaboration, it transforms your cohesive team into a mere collection of individuals.

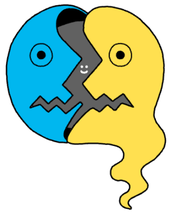


The Challenge Chomper

Chains down autonomy and new challenges. Preying on ambition, it makes your team feel anchored down whenever they try to innovate or take ownership, eventually losing their sense of personal growth.

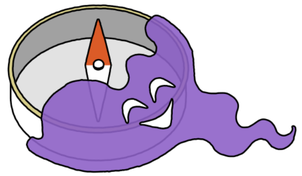
Team Spirits Quick Look - 2

© Atrae, Inc.



The Bond Breaker

Creates dangerous strains between employees and their managers. Actively working to weaken connections, this ghost dilutes relationships before you have a chance to save them.

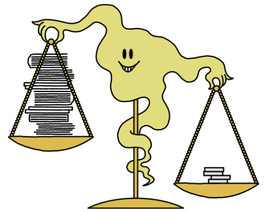


The Vision Vesper

Fosters indifference toward the organization’s vision. Despite a common goal and direction, this ghost clings to the organization’s compass, obscuring the way forward.

The Progress Poltergeist

Brings organizational momentum to a halt, leaving everyone stuck in the mud even as they try to collaborate or move forward. As the organization becomes siloed, its range of motion is narrowed.

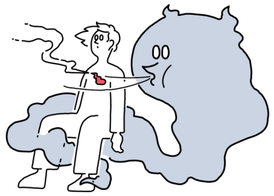


The Reward Robber

Loves to rig the system, possessing the sales that weigh effort against your pay. No matter how hard you work, the compensation never feels proportional.

The Balance Buster

Ensures work is always on your mind, making you feel that no matter how hard you work, no real progress is being made. This vicious cycle leads to burnout.



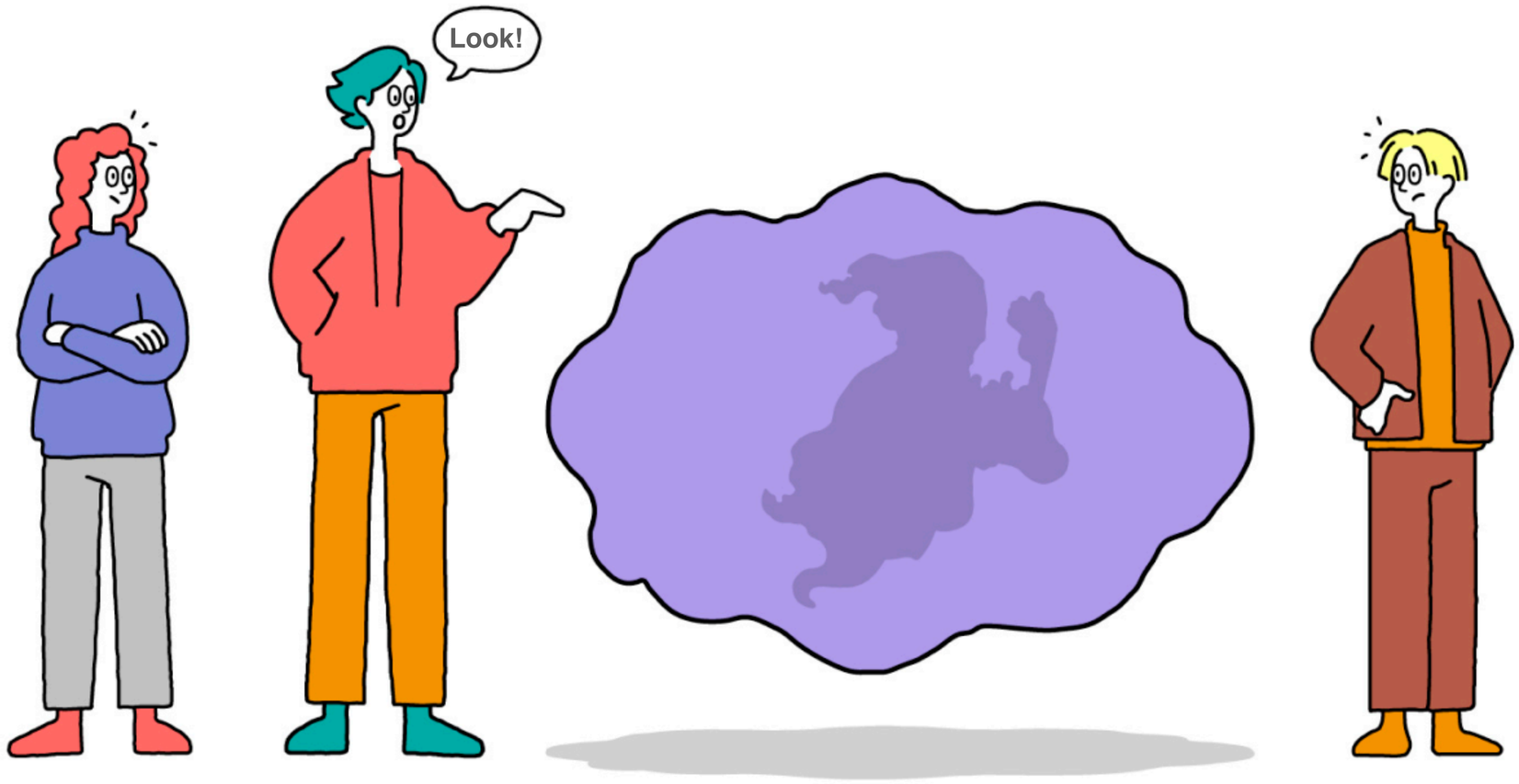
The Burnout Bandit

Thrives on pushing your team past its breaking point. Relentlessly increasing workloads and escalating pressure, it systematically drains your team until there’s nothing left to give.

The Downer

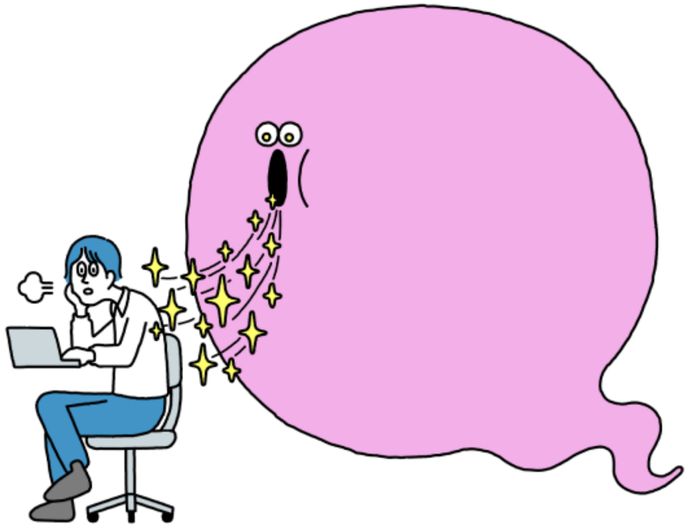
Drags down every aspect of engagement. Work feels empty, stress piles up, and any connection to the company starts to fade away.

Meet the Team Spirits



The Significance Sucker

© Atrae, Inc.



The Significance Sucker drains all meaning and purpose from work.

With significance stripped away, your job becomes nothing but a series of tedious, monotonous tasks.

Haunts your team…

- When simply getting tasks done becomes a goal in itself.
- When busy work leaves no room to focus on main objectives.
- When lack of coordination blurs connection to the bigger picture.

How to deal with it…

- Take a moment to reflect: Why does your work matter?
- Pause as a team or individually: What are our goals, and why?

Related Subcategories

Sense of fulfillment

Sense of accomplishment

The Hustle Haunter

© Atrae, Inc.

The Hustle Haunter traps you in a cycle of juggling endless tasks for a false sense of security.

As a result, you're buried in work, yet lack any feeling of accomplishment.

Haunts your team…

- When you're overwhelmed by multiple simultaneous projects.
- When management and communication overhead prevent you from seeing what really matters.

How to deal with it…

- Evaluate your tasks: What needs your attention the most?
- Step back and locate the busywork: What's keeping you overwhelmed?
- Refocus the team: What should you really be concentrating on?

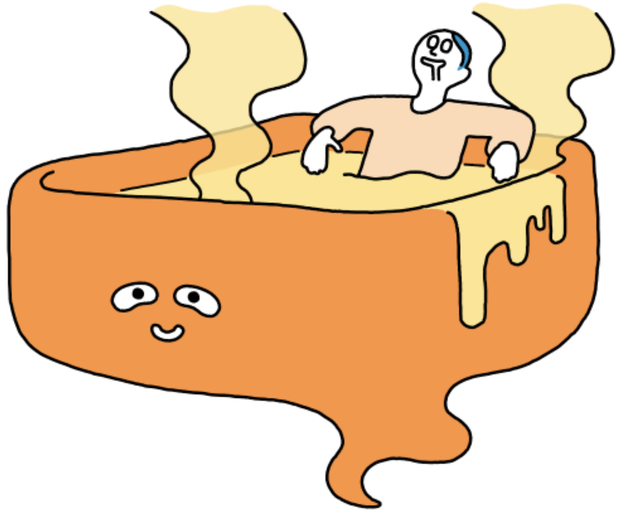
Related Subcategories

Workload

Sense of accomplishment

The Complacency Creature

© Atrae, Inc.



The Complacency Creature kills all sense of urgency, leaving you in a lukewarm bath of “good enough.”

While it feels comfortable and secure, a nagging question remains:
“Is this really the best path forward?”

Haunts your team…

- When your team has been collaborating on the same task for too long.
- When routine work takes up most of your time.
- When work is too simple and challenges rarely appear.

How to deal with it…

- Stop and ask: Are we really challenging ourselves?
- Reflect as a team or individually: Based on our goals, what should we be aiming for?

Related Subcategories

- Sense of fulfillment
- Workload
- Work-life balance

The Ambiguity Apparition

© Atrae, Inc.

The Ambiguity Apparition obscures the intent behind feedback and compensation, leaving your team to guess how success is really measured.

Is the system flawed, or are you just missing something? This ghost ensures you can never be sure.

Haunts your team…

- When varying roles and skillsets between managers and team members make evaluation inherently difficult.
- When few opportunities exist to give feedback on performance.
- When communication is limited between managers and team members.

How to deal with it…

- Step back and ask: Are the reasons behind ratings and pay clear to everyone?
- Pause and discuss: How does each person perceive feedback about themselves and others?

Related Subcategories

Satisfaction with evaluation

Satisfaction with compensation

The Praise Phantom

© Atrae, Inc.

The Praise Phantom preys on good intentions, stealing praise right out of thin air.

While you intend to show appreciation and give credit, this ghost creates a thankless work environment, stealing away praise and gratitude.

Haunts your team…

- When the bar is set too high and simply completing tasks or achieving results are taken for granted.
- When mistakes are heavily scrutinized, making failure feel risky.

How to deal with it…

- Step back and ask: Is everyone getting a chance to speak up?
- Check in: How can we share praise and celebrate wins together?
- Reflect: Are we creating a culture that values both process and results?

Related Subcategories

Sense of accomplishment

Recognition of accomplishments

The Signal Scrambler

© Atrae, Inc.

The Signal Scrambler hides your colleagues' struggles, leaving them without support while creating a facade of normalcy.

By creating an impression that nothing's wrong, it robs others of the chance to step in and help.

Haunts your team…

- When managers are too busy to keep an eye on the team's condition.
- When team members' roles are scattered, creating lack of unity.

How to deal with it…

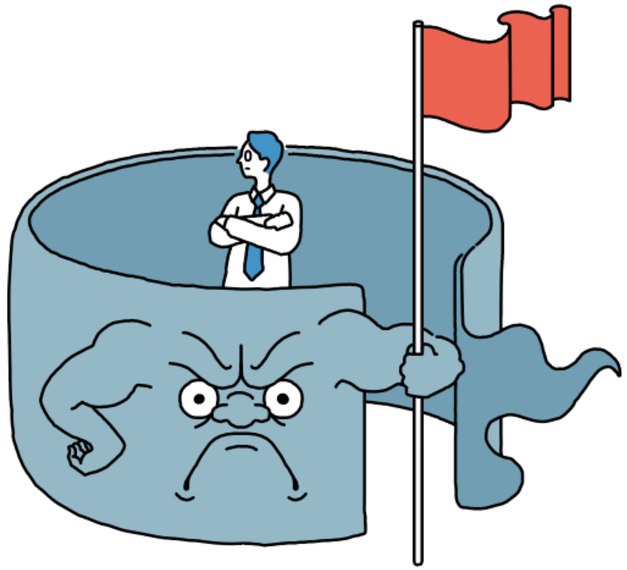
- Step back and ask: Are we allowing opportunity for team members to check in and share their feelings?
- Pause and check in: Are we taking time to talk about challenges and things that aren't clear?

Related Subcategories

- Support for personal growth
- Support for duties
- Clear statement of mission

The Gatekeeper Ghost

© Atrae, Inc.



The Gatekeeper Ghost preys on high-performers, turning professional autonomy into destructive isolation.

Preventing collaboration, it transforms your cohesive team into a mere collection of individuals.

Related Subcategories

- Support in times of need
- Relationship with coworkers
- Recognition of accomplishments

Haunts your team…

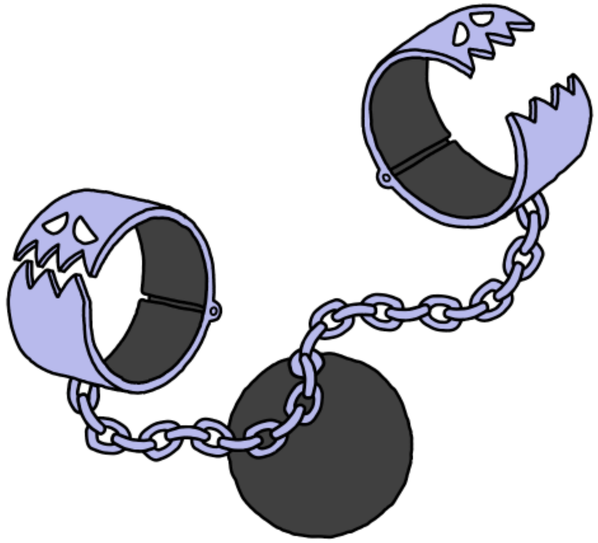
- When team members are too focused on their own immediate goals.
- When goals are managed individually rather than as a team.

How to deal with it…

- Step back and ask: Are we creating opportunities to share knowledge and insights as a team?
- Reflect together: Are we setting goals and challenges as a team?

The Challenge Chomper

© Atrae, Inc.



The Challenge Chomper chains down autonomy and new challenges.

Preying on ambition, it makes your team feel anchored down whenever they try to innovate or take ownership, eventually losing their sense of personal growth.

Haunts your team…

- When micromanagement becomes overbearing.
- When many team members are at junior levels.
- When tasks carry a high risk if a mistake occurs.

How to deal with it…

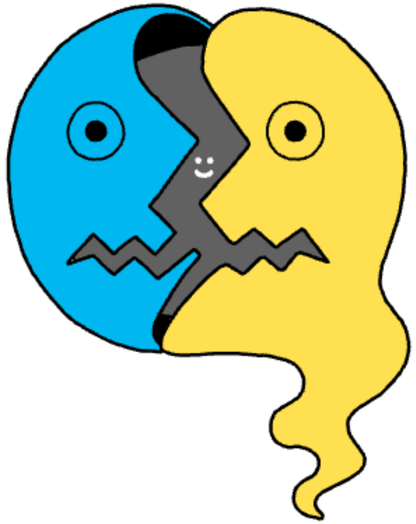
- Step back and ask: Are we discussing how to take on challenges as a team?
- Check in as a team: Which decisions can we delegate to team members to encourage them to try new approaches?

Related Subcategories

- Support in times of need
- Relationship with coworkers
- Recognition of accomplishments

The Bond Breaker

© Atrae, Inc.



The Bond Breaker creates dangerous strains between employees and their managers.
Actively working to weaken connections, it dilutes relationships before you have a chance to save them.

Haunts your team…

- When personality gaps between managers and team hinder understanding.
- When remote work makes communication challenging.
- When there's no culture of casual or non-work conversation.

How to deal with it…

- Step back and reflect: Are we creating opportunities for casual chats?
- Ask the team: Are we sharing our values to deepen mutual understanding?

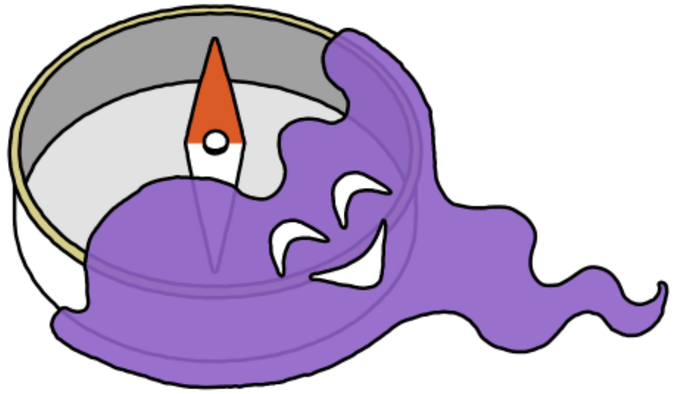
Related Subcategories

Support for duties

Relationship with manager

The Vision Vesper

© Atrae, Inc.



The Vision Vesper fosters indifference toward the organization's vision.

Despite a common goal and direction, it clings to the organization's compass, obscuring the way forward.

Haunts your team…

- When daily work feels disconnected from the company vision.
- When few opportunities exist to hear messages from leadership.
- When leadership communications rarely clarify the purpose or meaning of your own work.

How to deal with it…

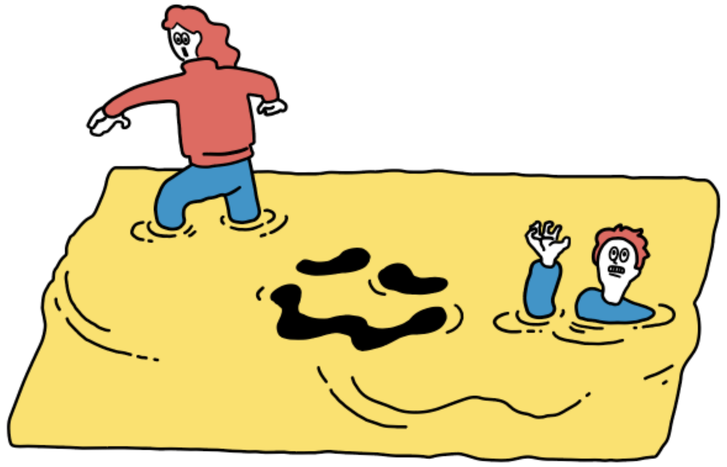
- Step back and ask: Are we deepening our understanding of the company vision?
- Pause and check in: Are we finding points where our goals align with the company's direction?

Related Subcategories

- Alignment with mission and vision
- Agreement with policies and strategy
- Trust in management
- Pride in business and service

The Progress Poltergeist

© Atrae, Inc.



The Progress Poltergeist brings organizational momentum to a halt, leaving everyone stuck in the mud even as they try to collaborate or move forward.

As the organization can become siloed, its range of motion is narrowed.

Haunts your team…

- When there's little or no sharing of information between departments.
- When differences in business domains or characteristics make mutual understanding difficult.

How to deal with it…

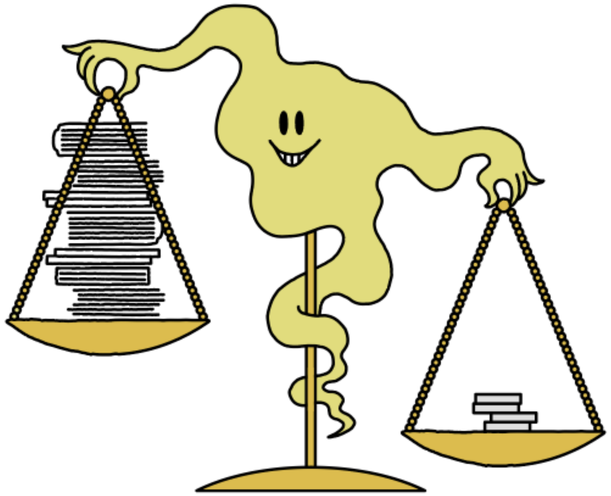
- Reflect together: Are we properly analyzing processes that hinder collaboration?
- Pause and check in: Are we discussing ways to overcome these obstacles?

Related Subcategories

- Trust in management
- Fairness of praise
- Culture of challenge
- Interdepartmental cooperation

The Reward Robber

© Atrae, Inc.



The Reward Robber loves to rig the system, possessing the sales that weigh effort against your pay.

No matter how hard you work, the compensation never feels proportional.

Haunts your team…

- When your hard work doesn't feel connected to results.
- When a "throw everything at the wall" approach becomes the norm.
- When workload is unevenly distributed between team members.

How to deal with it…

- Step back and ask: Are we clarifying the outcomes of our work?
- Pause and reflect: Are we finding ways to ensure our efforts match results and how to make meaningful contributions?

Related Subcategories

Workload

Satisfaction with compensation

The Balance Buster

© Atrae, Inc.

The Balance Buster ensures work is always on your mind, making you feel that no matter how hard you work, no real progress is being made.

You find yourself stuck in a vicious cycle that leads to burnout.

Haunts your team…

- When you can't seem to get your mind off work.
- When constant messages from clients or teammates become disruptive.
- When team members can't control their own pace.

How to deal with it…

- Step back and ask: Are we using tools and technology in a way that supports focus and well-being?
- Reflect as a team: Are we discussing as a team ways to foster a better work-life balance?

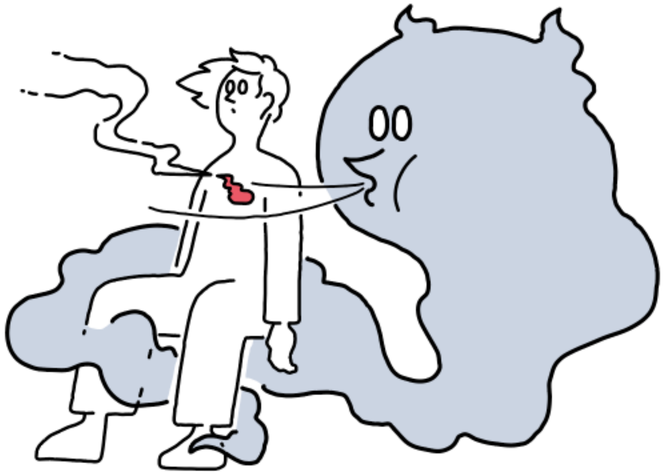
Related Subcategories

Satisfaction with work environment

Work-life balance

The Burnout Bandit

© Atrae, Inc.



The Burnout Bandit thrives on pushing your team past its breaking point.

Relentlessly increasing workloads and escalating pressure, it systematically drains your team until there's nothing left to give.

Haunts your team…

- When high volumes of tasks fall in areas people struggle with.
- When a heavy workload reduces daily communication and weakens team relationships.

How to deal with it…

- Step back and ask: Are we reviewing workload and identifying stress points?
- Pause and check in: Are we considering adding resources or reducing tasks to balance the workload?

Related Subcategories

- Stress reactions
- Workload
- Work-life balance

The Downer

© Atrae, Inc.

The Downer drags down every aspect of engagement.

Work feels empty, stress piles up, and any connection to the company starts to fade away.

Haunts your team…

- When team members feel resigned or resistant towards the company.
- When they lack a sense of ownership or intent in their work.

How to deal with it…

- Step back and ask: Do we understand the concept of engagement?
- Pause and check in: Are expectations being clearly communicated?
- Reflect as a team: Are we finding ways to align work with personal intent?

Related Subcategories

All of them!