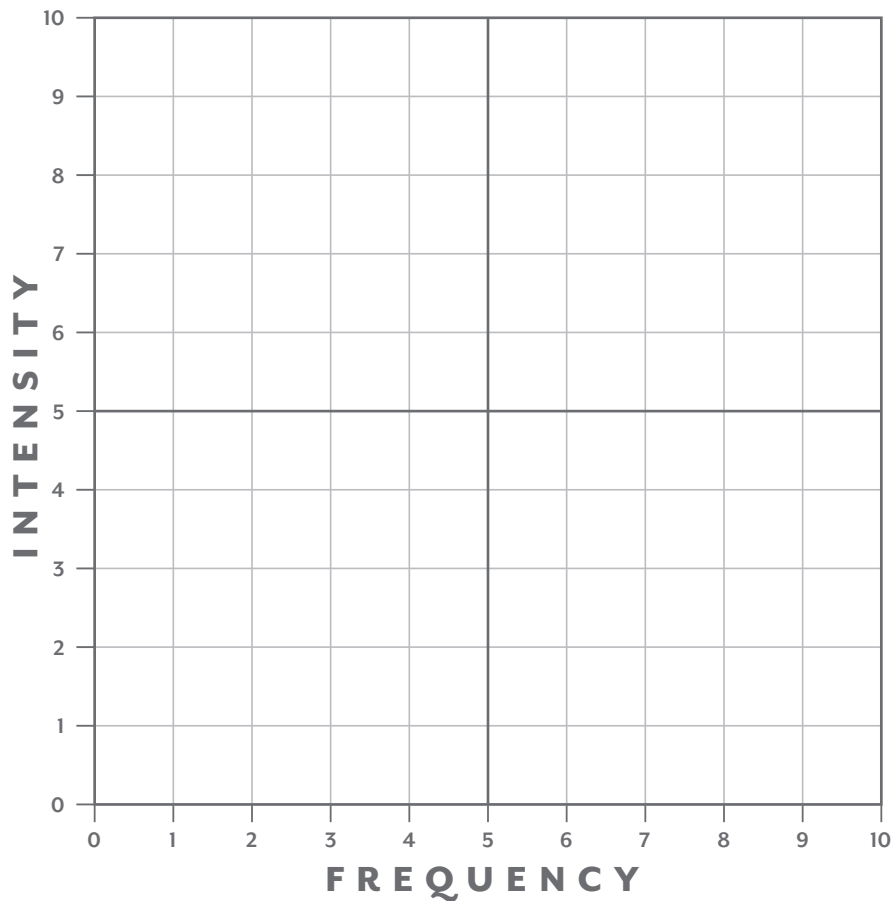


circuit breakers exercise

We've identified 13 circuit breakers that have the potential to interrupt the flow of energy and break our connections with our team, our company and ourselves.

DIRECTIONS: Plot each circuit breaker (using its symbol) on the grid below, based on how intensely and frequently you experience them in your worklife.



A AMBIVALENCE

B BOREDOM/MONOTONY (LACK OF INSPIRATION + HIGHER THOUGHT)

C CONFLICT

CL CLUTTER (MENTAL, ORGANIZATIONAL, PHYSICAL DISORDER)

D DOUBT (LACK OF BELIEF)

F FEAR

IM IMPATIENCE

I INFERENCE

L LABELING

O OVERCONFIDENCE

P PHYSICAL DEPLETION

R RESOURCES (FINANCES, ETC.)

S STRESS

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FEAR: Whether you're winning or losing, this feeling is nondiscriminatory, as even success can induce fear about what will change and move us out of our comfort zones. Fear diminishes our self-confidence and leaves us afraid to make decisions, leading to irrational and ineffective action.

AMBIVALENCE: This mix of feelings creates a misguided or complete lack of internal direction, as the pull toward multiple, contradictory ideas prevents solid decision making. We end up leaving room to mitigate potential damages, which simultaneously gives us the opportunity to abandon ship and try something else rather than going all in on one initiative.

CLUTTER: Whether the disorganization is mental, organizational, physical, or otherwise, clutter impedes a direct path. The confusion forces us to expend more time and energy navigating through basic but now disordered processes; time and energy which could be redirected towards ideas with far better design and more promise.

LABELING: We often employ labeling because it gives us a momentary, false sense of control, thinking that if we can name something or categorize it, we can influence or perhaps even manage it. Although well-intentioned, labeling often ends up constricting something that hasn't yet taken shape and interrupts an idea at an early, formative stage.

DOUBT: Doubt is a loss of faith or lack of belief that shuts down optimism or bravery. Doubt prevents making real progress but can be remedied with trust and belief in your colleagues and your ideas.

IMPATIENCE: The need for constant activity, often accompanied by micromanagement, depletes resources and increases irritation. Impatience survives in the business world thanks to our innate sense of impulsivity and desire to do something, as well as the nature of the business environment that often favors short-term gains over long-term sustainability.

BOREDOM: Boredom makes us lazy, under-achieving, and unmotivated. Boredom drives decisions and actions that are, overall, ineffective, insufficient, without passion, and oftentimes negatively consequential.

CONFLICT: This feeling emerges out of power struggles between people over resources or perceived territory rather than ideological differences. Conflict can be a positive, because it adds a burst of energy to an otherwise neutral environment, but that energy can be overwhelming and set off a chain reaction of unsuitable and undesirable toxicity.

OVERCONFIDENCE: Leaders absolutely need to be able to make decisions, believe in themselves and others, and discern the best options for their companies. However, confidence becomes problematic in excess, when it transforms into arrogance, self-absorption, peacocking, and baseless feelings of invincibility.

PHYSICAL DEPLETION: Leaders are trained to lead and serve on the front lines, never showing weakness, yet the increasing frequency of unhealthy workplaces, mental health issues, and illnesses, like obesity, show that leaders must deal with the real-life consequences of the daily mental and physical grind that they endure. The conscious decision of when to expend energy in the workplace and when to reserve it is an art, and sadly, to some, is mistaken as a sign of weakness.

INFERENCE: In our modern world of social media, brevity is revered, punctuation is nonexistent, and voice is left for the reader to discern—leaving even the most basic words open to interpretation. As a result, we find ourselves assuming more and twisting the narrative to fit our own opinions and reasoning, moving conversations further away from their intended destination.

RESOURCES: We are each constantly evaluating and measuring our resources against ourselves, our friends, our peers, and our competitors. There are times when we don't pursue the development of an idea because we can't afford it or don't have the people to implement it; however, is it that we do not have the resources, or are we unwilling to fundamentally rethink the conventionality of our execution plan?

STRESS: Stress is the mental or emotional tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances. High frequency and intensity of any of the aforementioned 12 circuit breakers results in stress.