



Advancing Research 2022

by Rosenfeld

@advancingresrch #AR2022
9 March 2022



WHY I WANT TO SPEAK ABOUT THIS TODAY:

- leading a team of user researchers (~12 ppl) to work on highly sensitive public/civic services
- Frustrated by current discourse that resiliency is a personal responsibility
- Our empathetic approach is our greatest asset, but it is also emotionally demanding and draining - fear that we give too much of ourselves
- Striking the balance < job vs. vocation passion vs. sustainability

WHAT IS WORKING

PROVIDING OPTIONS

There is no one size fits all



SUPPORT NET

Reassuring to know it's there if needed

AUTONOMY

On assignments and working pattern

AWARENESS

Specialist training helping avoid pitfalls

CLOSE-KNIT TEAM

Looks out for and supports each other

WHAT ISN'T WORKING

REACTIVE NOT PROACTIVE MEASURES

Stopping challenges before they exist

EMOTIONAL LABOR

An unseen cost in an already demanding role

See Leah Cowan's TEDx talk

SILENTLY PERSISTING

Not speaking up, and why not?

FINDING BREAKS

Demand for skills preventing opportunities to slow down

Key Learnings

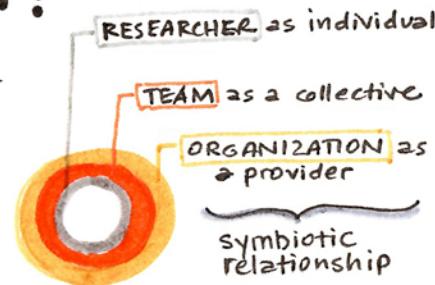
Theme 1: Advancing Our Field curated by Chris Geison

What Does It Mean to Be a Resilient Research Team?

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BRINGING DIFFERENT LENSES to the CHALLENGE



SOME OF THE CURRENT MEASURES IN PLACE:

ORGANISATION (PROVIDER)

- EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
- COUNSELLING SUPPORT
- MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER
- BREAKS BETWEEN PROJECTS

TEAM (COLLECTIVE)

- SPECIALIST TRAINING
- ACCESS TO CLINICAL SUPERVISION
- TEAM DEBRIEFING SESSIONS AND HUDDLES
- 'NO EXPLANATION NEEDED' APPROACH TO ASSIGNMENTS

RESEARCHER (INDIVIDUAL)

- FLEXIBILITY OVER WORKING PATTERN
- NO LONE WORKING
- INFORMAL COMMS/SUPPORT
- REMOVE THEMSELVES FROM ASSIGNMENTS

KEEP COMMUNICATIONS OPEN and TRANSPARENT

- Provide multiple avenues for communication, be that 1to1, group, or anonymous feedback
- Make sure communication isn't lateral; it needs to reach decision-makers influencing the work of researchers
- Clearly outline expectations of the researcher(s) in an assignment so they can manage their approach

SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES AND DON'T CROSSTHEM

- Sometimes good enough is good enough - we can't always give 110%
- Give people the space to let them do their job: which tasks are critical, which are not
- Respect the individuality of each member
- Ensure that researchers are aware of the autonomy they have over their work - and that it is respected
- Hold firm on time between projects: decompression time and development time

SCOPE AND RESOURCE EFFECTIVELY

- Give researchers the time to deliver; it shouldn't be on them to shoulder tight timescales
- Keep a track of past projects, hold retrospectives, and look at patterns in issues - then respond
- Promote and recognize - bring that experience to the decision table
- Where possible get the team involved in scoping - it can be too far downstream to rectify by the time the researchers begin
- Do not push new projects where capacity is limited



It isn't on a researcher or a team to be resilient, it is on those making decisions to avoid this need.