



EXECUTIVE EDGE



Overcoming Organizational Change Fatigue

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Endeavor Institute Mission

Enabling leaders to transform the future

Developing the transformational leaders of tomorrow by creating and propagating “tools of thought” through a global network of research, development, and education in leading edge cultural stewardship and leadership.

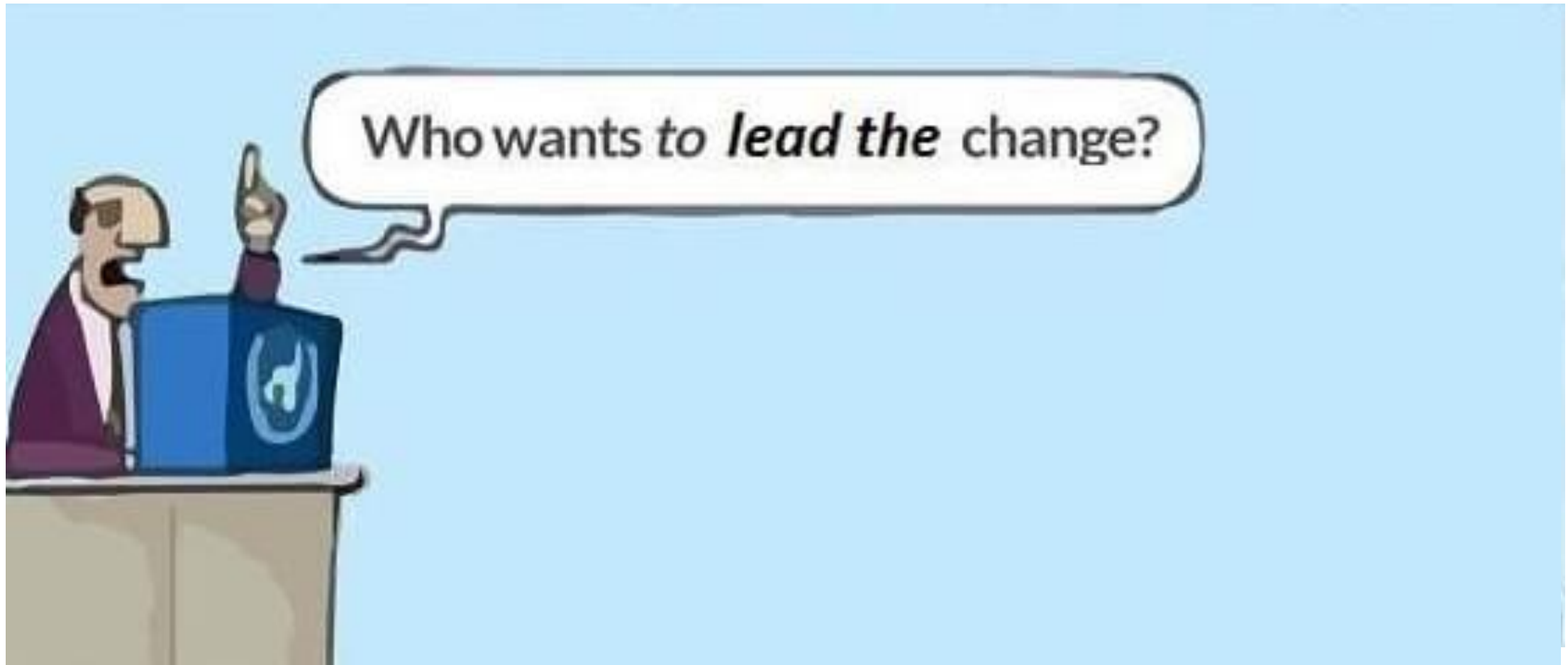
Thought Leadership Communities – We invite you to join our community of practitioners, scientists, leaders, and transformational change agents as we continue explore leading edge practices to the leadership and organizational issues of the future.

Building Leadership Tools – This is the Institute’s research & development department where we engage in collaborative projects with academia, client organizations and other thought leadership organizations to develop practical, empirical tools and instruments for the advancement of cultural stewardship and leadership effectiveness.

Professional Development for Leaders – The Institute provides a leadership development and education program in partnership with St. Mary’s University’s (San Antonio) Industrial/Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior Department.



Organizational Change



Organizational Change Failure

Recent research suggests that failure rates for enterprise-level change initiatives may be as high as 75%.

Implementation failures are often cited as a major reason for change failure.

- Failure to communicate why the change is necessary or how the change will proceed.
- Poor planning.
- Lack of leadership support.
- Lack of resources.
- Inadequate change leadership skills and experience.
- Focus on systems rather than people.

Change Fatigue

The idea of Change Fatigue (CF) was recognized as an important construct almost 20 years ago.

Unfortunately, there has been very little consensus about what change fatigue is or how it should be measured.

Most scholarly articles about CF are non-empirical thought pieces or qualitative case studies.

Change Fatigue

The 3 studies that measure CF quantitatively have focused on the number of changes experienced rather than the psychological and behavioral strain the changes can cause in employees and leaders.

- Rafferty and Griffin's (2006) focuses on the uncertainty of change not fatigue.
- Elving, Hansma, & de Boer (2011) measures a resigned attitude toward change, not fatigue.
- Berneth, Walker and Harris (2011) measures fatigue within oneself, not organizational-level fatigue.

Enterprise-Level Change Fatigue

CF is a psychological state of exhaustion in which excessive amounts of change have led to the perception that future change will be difficult for the individual or the organization.

This exhaustion limits one's ability to adapt to future changes.

The personal experience of CF is important, but it is essential that organizations also measure perceptions of CF in others.

- Reduces the likelihood that self-reports will be distorted or biased.
- Captures the impact of change on the organization, rather than a single individual.
- Less dependent on the rater's personal ability to manage change.

Goals for the Current Research

Develop a new measure of change fatigue that fully captures the dimensions of fatigue, exhaustion, and overwhelming change.

Create scales measuring employees' self-reported change fatigue (Self Change Fatigue) and their perception of change fatigue in others (Other Change Fatigue).

Create two versions of each measure.

- Long version for initial baseline analyses - more detailed information.
- Shorter scales for subsequent quick-takes.

Our Study

Surveyed change fatigue across a variety of companies.

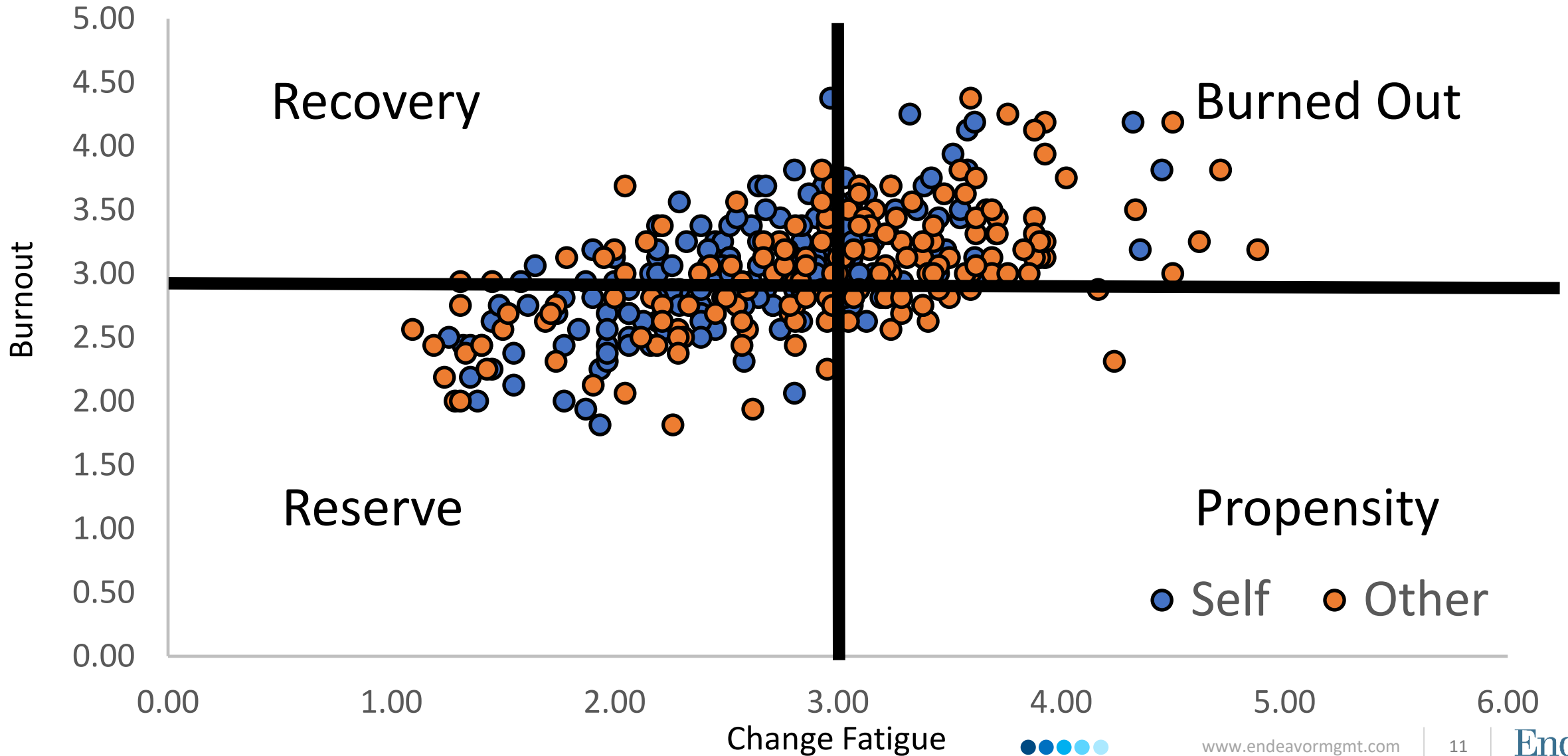
Measured burnout, engagement, and intention to turnover.

Participants were from a variety of industries, and were located at many levels within their organizations including managers and supervisors.

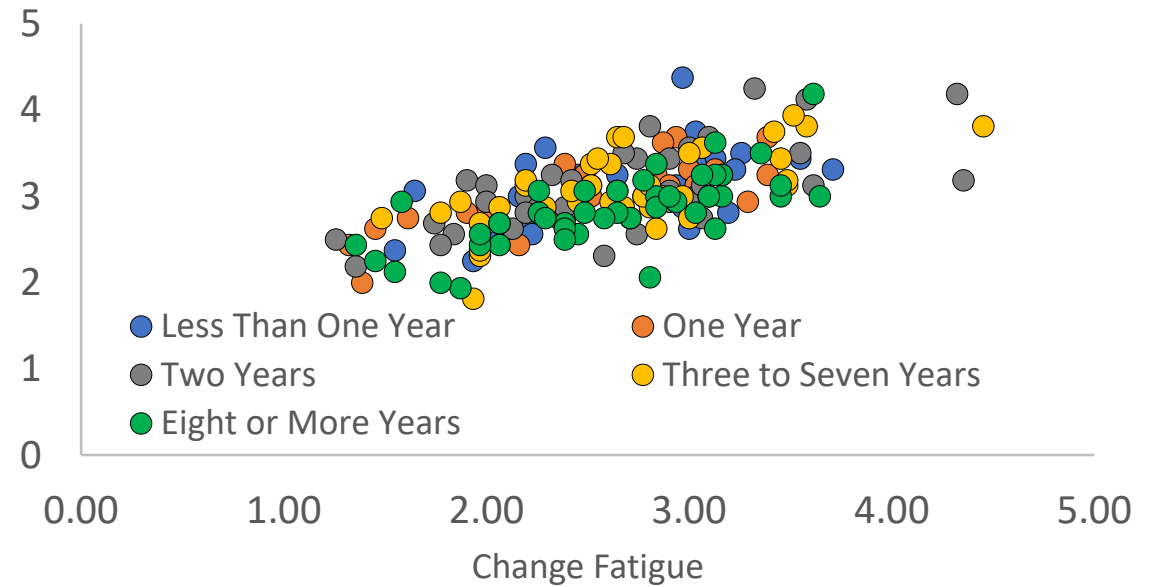
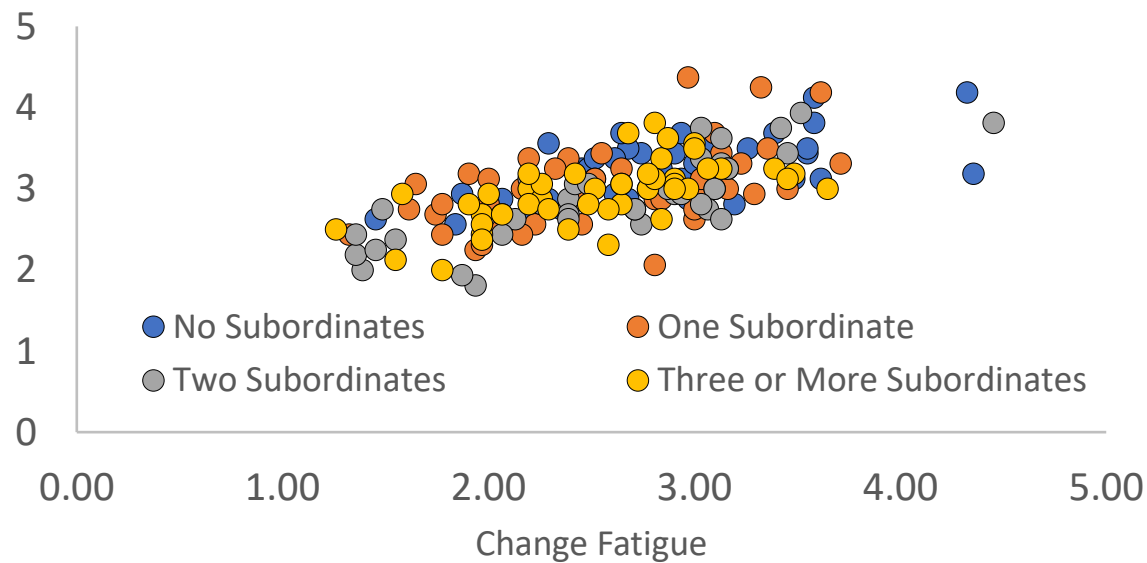
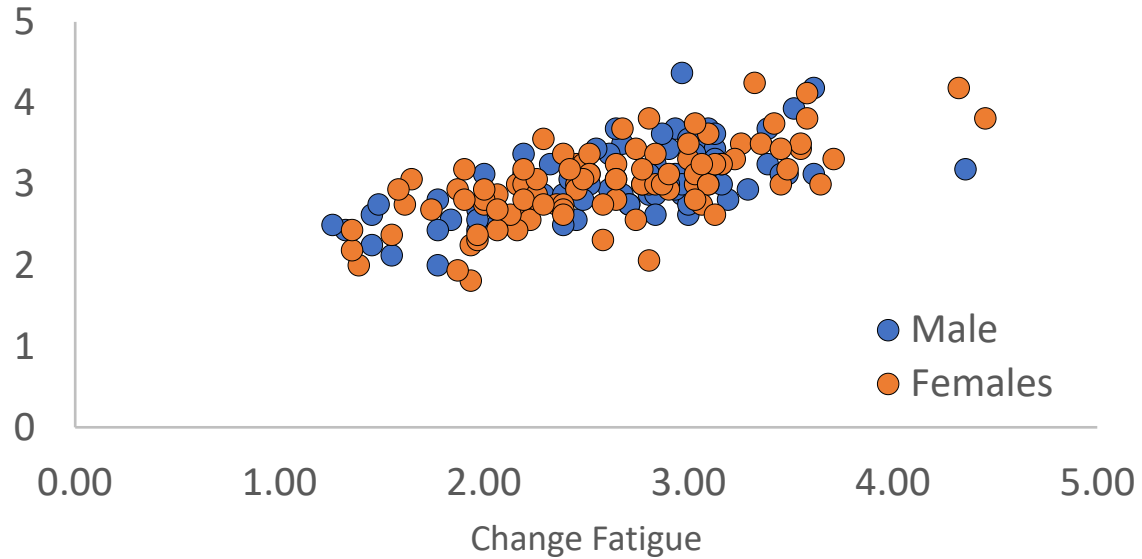
Our Results

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Change Fatigue (Others)	.97							
	How CONSISTENT our items were							
2. 12-Item Change Fatigue (Others)	.89*	.95						
3. Change Fatigue (Self)	.95*	.79*	.92					
	How well our scales related to each other							
4. 12-Item Change Fatigue (Self)	.76*	.76*	.92*	.92				
5. Recent Changes	.27*	.19*	.20*	.20*	1			
	Change predicts Change Fatigue							
6. Burnout	.56*	.54*	.67*	.63*	.08	.85		
	Fatigue predicts Burnout							
7. Engagement	-.42*	-.42*	-.64*	-.53*	-.02	-.75*	.93	
	Fatigue predicts Engagement							
8. Turnover	.46*	.43*	.47*	.34*	-.12	.55*	-.54*	.88
	Fatigue predicts Turnover							

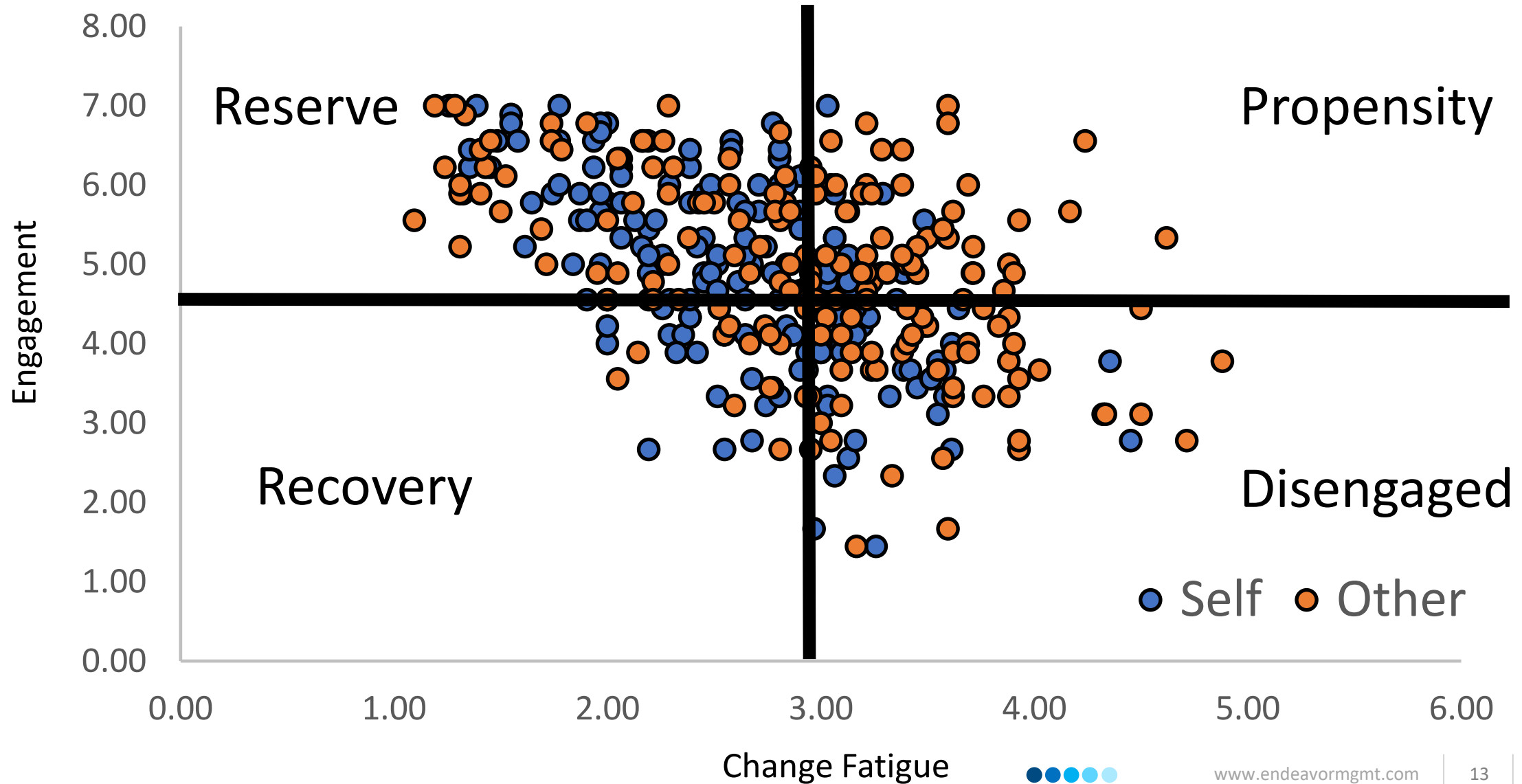
Change Fatigue and Burnout



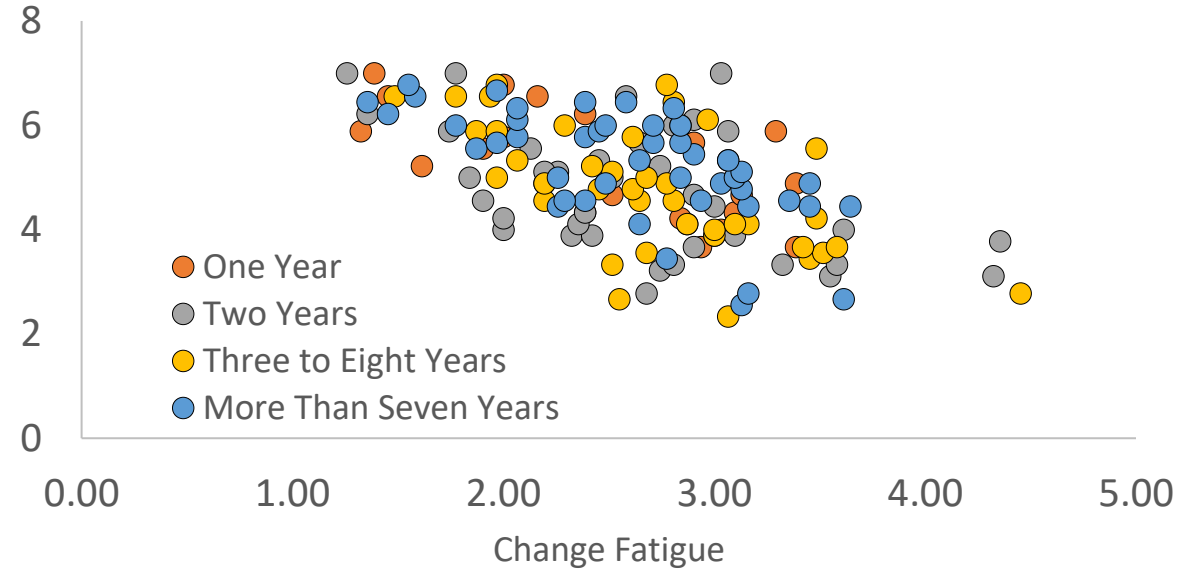
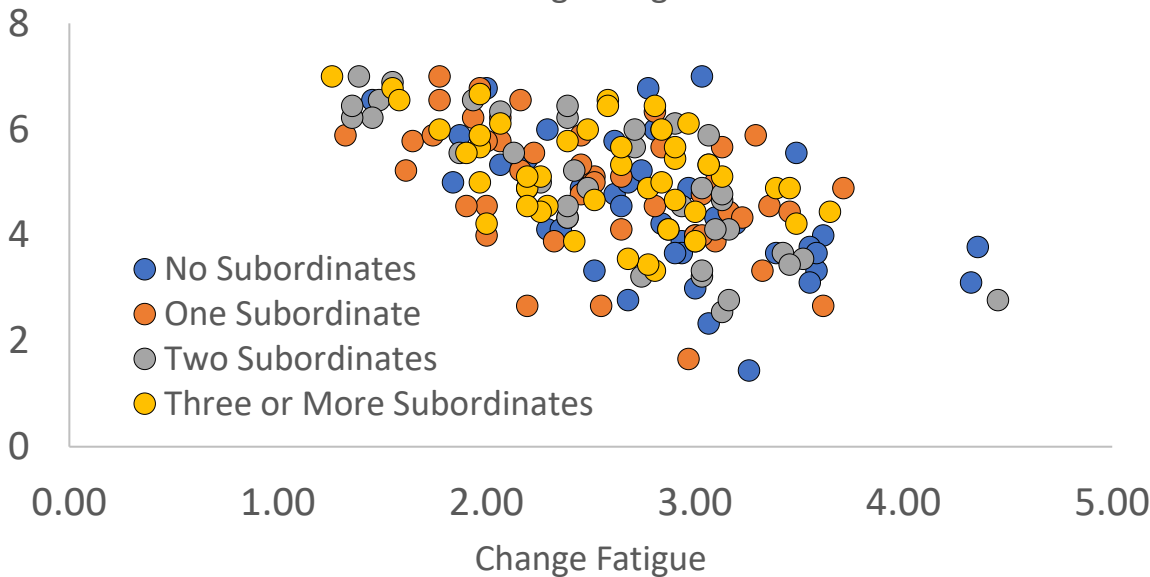
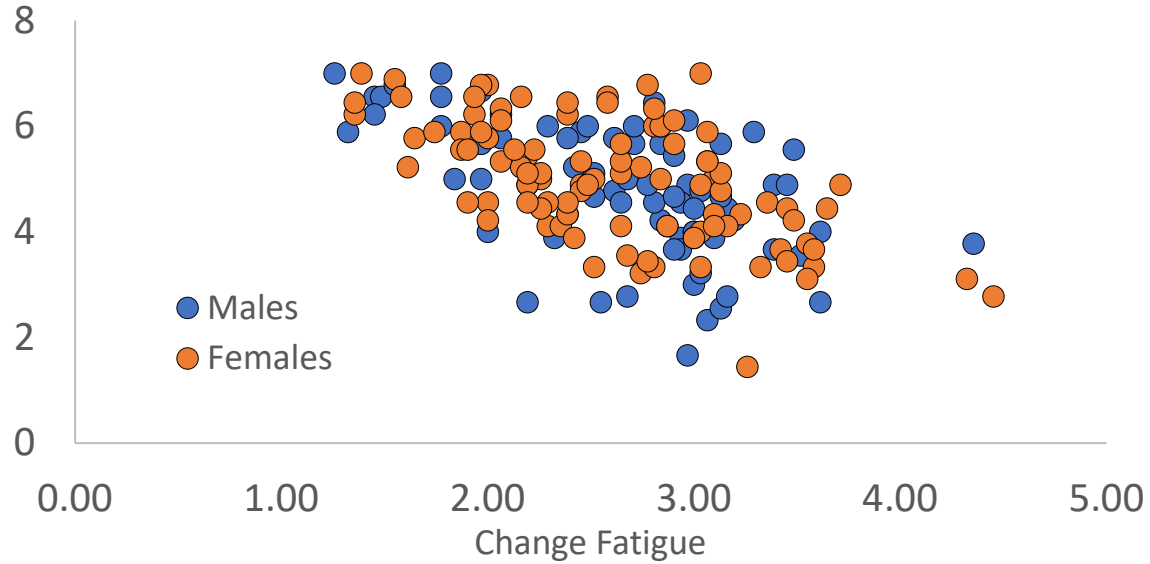
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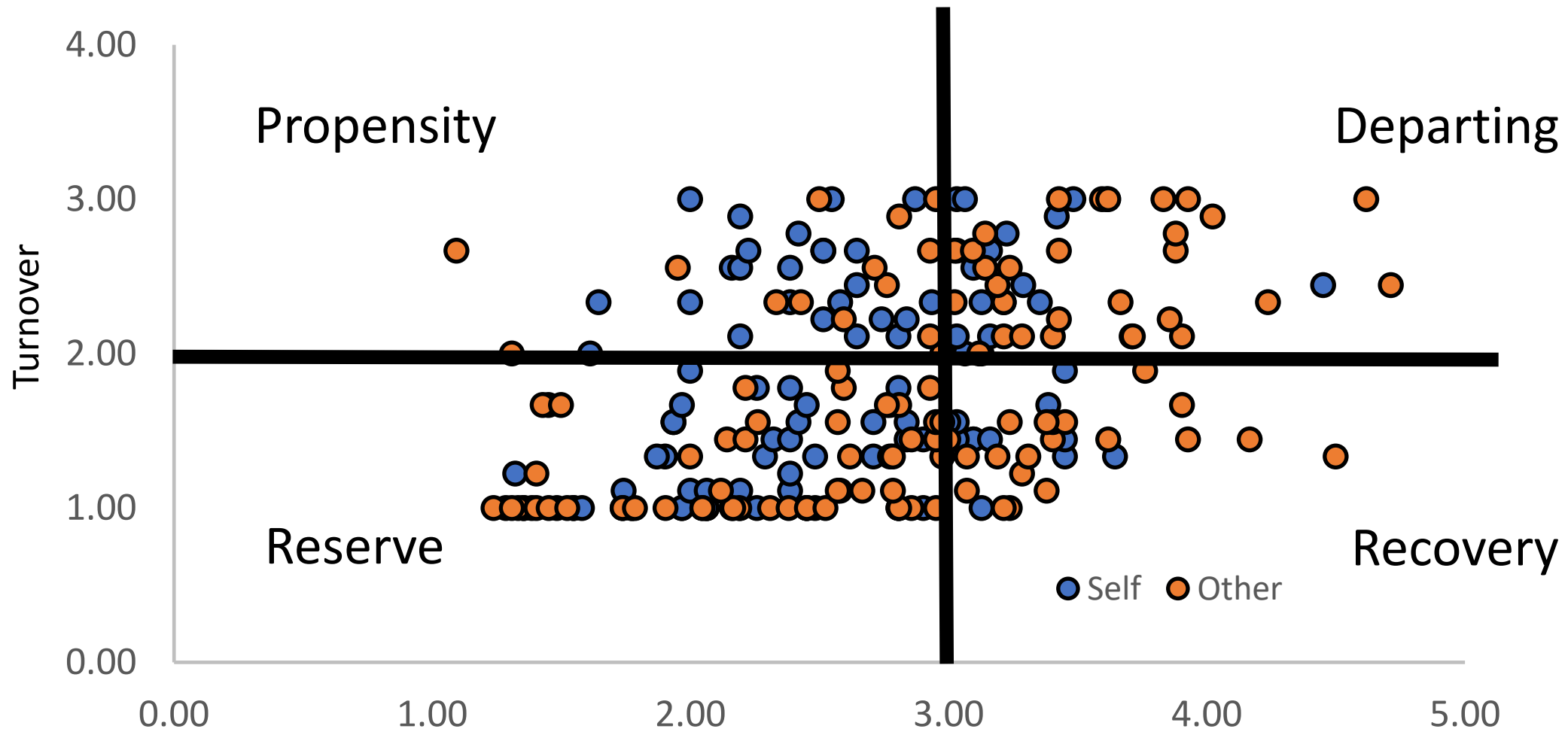
Change Fatigue and Engagement



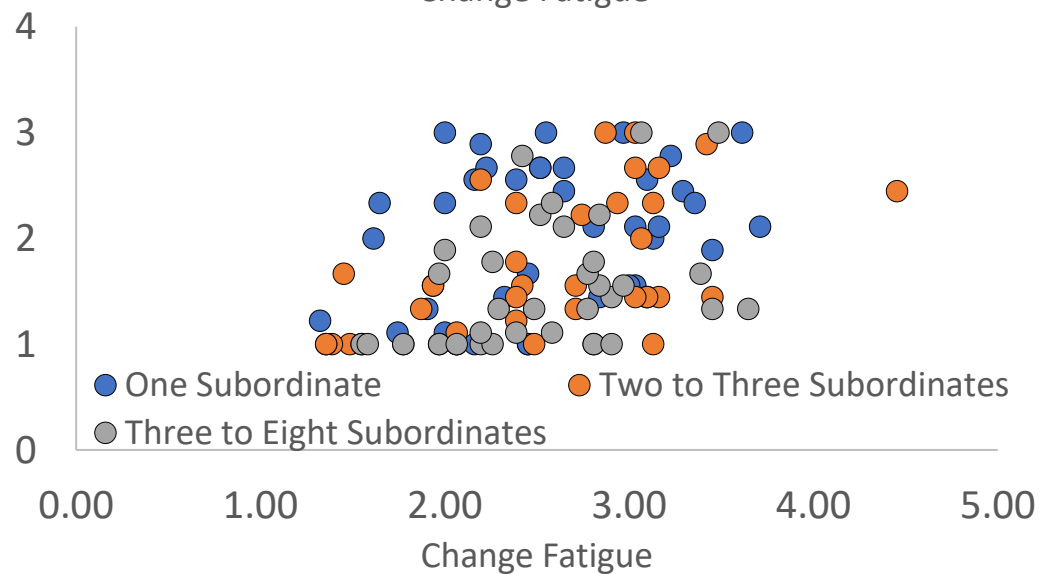
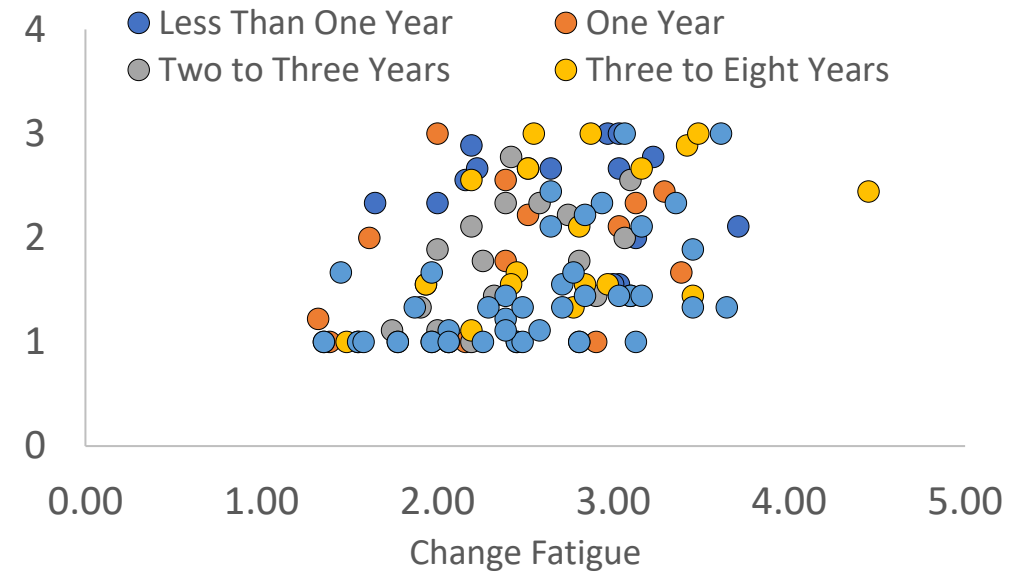
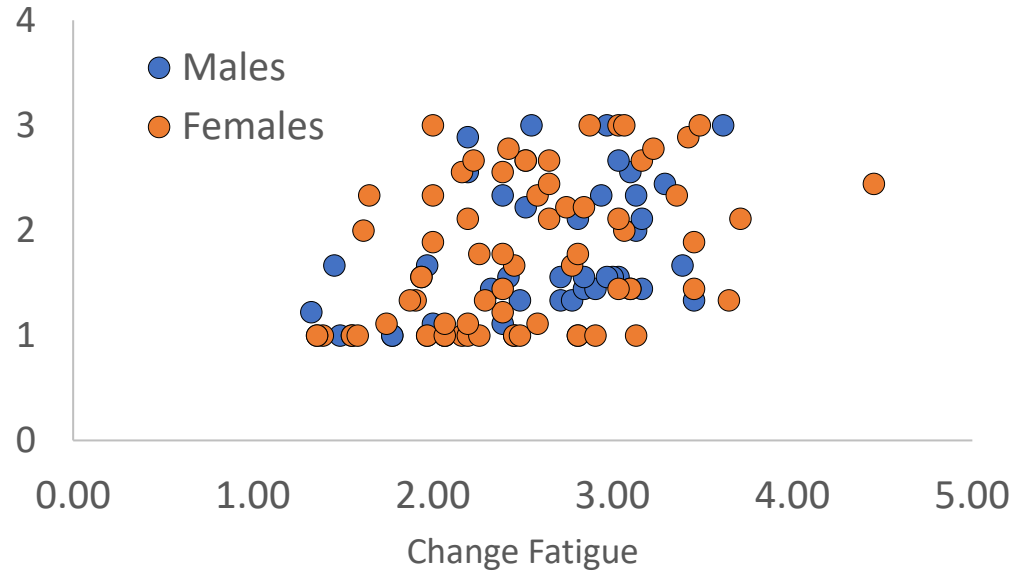
Change Fatigue and Engagement



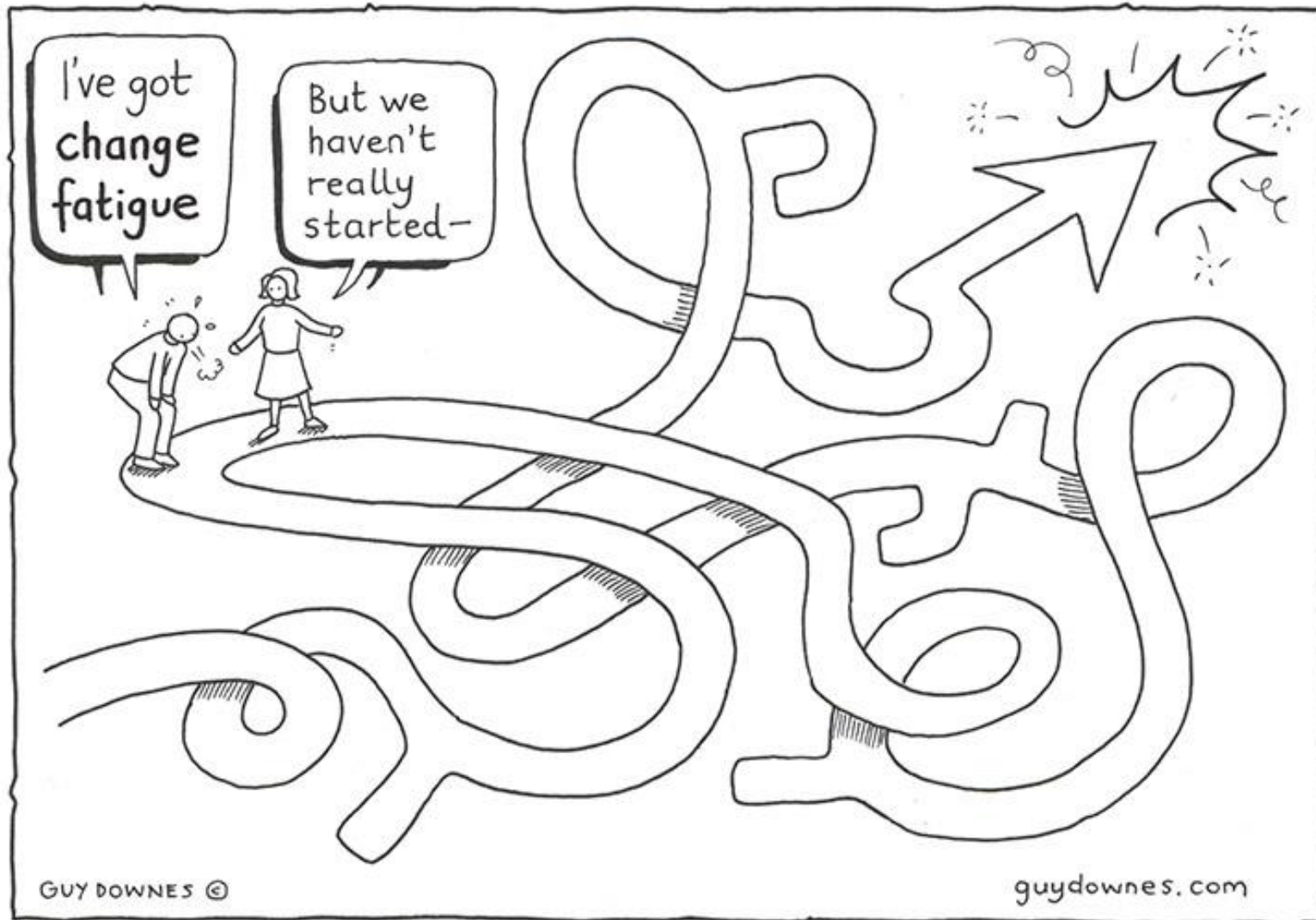
Change Fatigue and Turnover



Change Fatigue and Turnover



What's Next?



Next Steps For Research

Measuring fatigue over time.

Relationships between fatigue and other outcomes.

Identifying additional symptoms of fatigue.

Exploring fatigue in other contexts and settings.

Designing science-based interventions to remedy fatigue.

So, Your Company Has Change Fatigue... What Can You Do About It?



Business Risk Management Perspective

Avoid – don't engage in activities known to carry certain risk.

Abate – reduce or eliminate the probability of the risk occurring or the severity of the consequences.

Mitigate – dealing with the damage after it has occurred.

Change Fatigue in the Business Risk Management Context

Avoid – Not feasible to totally avoid but you can catch it very early.

- Establish a baseline within your organization.
- Measure frequently to catch an increase in CF before it is serious (i.e., early warning or an “annual physical”).
- Implement a Run-the-business / Change-the-business governance process.
- Consolidate and coordinate communications across all change initiatives.
- Have a strong program and project management process (treat org initiative as program).

Change Fatigue in the Business Risk Management Context

Abate – Change Fatigue is reaching concerning levels.

- We want to reduce the damaging impact of CF.
- Use information to reduce the severity of the consequences.
- Add resources (Tactically).
- Decrease operational ("day job") work loads.
- Deliver measureable/observable results in 90 day periods of time.

Mitigate – Negative consequences of Change Fatigue have already occurred.

- Communicate, communicate, communicate.
- Provide rest and recovery periods.
- Celebrate progress and successes.

Thank you.
Questions?

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