By the Numbers – Workplace Stress

WORKPLACE STRESS

DID YOU KNOW?

The workplace was the fifth leading cause of death in the US, responsible for some 120,000 deaths and approximately $190 billion in additional costs each year (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Work is one of the leading causes of stress, and the physiological effects of stress on blood chemistry, including cholesterol levels, the immune system, and metabolic functioning have been well-established.

This represents 5% to 8% of national health care spending derived primarily from high demands at work (48 billion) lack of insurance (10 billion) and work – family conflict (24 billion)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention research:

- From 2000 to 2016, the U.S. suicide rate among adults ages 16 to 64 rose 34 percent, from 12.9 deaths for every 100,000 people in the population to 17.3 per 100,000.
- The highest suicide rate among men was for workers in construction and mining jobs, with 43.6 deaths for every 100,000 workers in 2012 and 53.2 deaths per 100,000 in
- The highest suicide rate among women was for workers in arts, design, entertainment, sports and media, with
- 11.7 fatalities for every 100,000 workers in 2012 and 15.6 deaths per 100,000 in 2015.

Here are 15 statistics unearthed by a survey conducted by Harris Poll in August of 2017. Not surprising work and money are the main

sources for stress.

- 8 in 10 Americans are afflicted with
- 79% of Americans feel stress sometimes or frequently in their daily lives
- 17% say they rarely feel stressed and 4% say they never feel stress
- 4 in 10 U.S Adults (41%) say they lack sufficient time to do all they want
- 80% of working people feel stress on the job and half of them need help in managing stress
- 65% of working people said that workplace stress had caused difficulties and more than 10% described these as having major effects
- 10% said they work in a violent atmosphere due to workplace stress
- 42% of working people reported that yelling and verbal abuse is common
- 29% had yelled at co-workers due to workplace stress
- 14% said they work in those environments where machinery or equipment has been damaged
- 1 in 5 respondents had quit their earlier jobs and 1 in 4 had been driven to tears due to workplace stress
- 62% working people end their day with work-related neck pain, 44% with stressed out eyes, 38% complained of hurting hands and 34% with difficulty in sleeping due to stressed-out condition
- $300 billion in lost productivity annually to employers due to workplace stress
- Well-being Index among U.S adults have dropped from 62.1 to 61.5 from the year 2016 to 2017
- Americans stress level, on a 10-point scale has increased from 4.8 to 5.1 between August 2016 and January 2017

KEEP IN MIND

Work-related stress has been around for a long time. But recognition of stress as an occupational hazard is a product of modern times. Unfortunately, not all companies have gotten the

message. That leaves it to safety directors and supervisors to persuade management that stress really is a problem to take seriously. The best way to do that is to relate the problem to dollars.

Workplace stress hurts profits because it increases absences and cuts productivity. According to a press release from the World Congress on Health and Safety at Work, of the 40.2 million working days annually lost by businesses worldwide, 13.4 million are from stress, anxiety, and depression.

In the U.S. alone, stress is creates a workplace hazard every bit as damaging as chemical and biological hazards. How does workplace stress hurt business?

This is tricky because stress isn't a line item cost listed on the typical profit and loss statement. It's a bundle of

hidden costs. There are five elements in this bundle that you should point to:

- **Higher Injury & Illness Rates**

The more stress workers experience at work, the more likely they are to engage in unsafe behavior. The result is more incidents involving personal injury and/or damage to equipment and machinery. The link between stress and incidents isn't just a matter of common sense; it's well documented.

- **Increased Absenteeism**

Studies confirm that workers under stress are more apt to call in absent—either because they're genuinely ill

or they're feigning illness to avoid having to go to work.

- **Higher Turnover**

Stress at work also causes people to leave the company. In addition to losing good people, companies incur high administrative costs in seeking replacements. And, replacement costs tend to rise to the extent that the company gains a

reputation for being a stressful place to work.

- **Premature Retirement**

Stress causes older and more senior workers to retire before they’re ready. Result: High replacement costs and in many cases lump sum and pension payments.

- **Reduced Productivity**

Workplace stress harms workers’ productivity and performance. The effect of stress on productivity is hard to

measure; but it is real.

Conclusion

There’s nothing mystical about workplace stress. It can be managed. The only way to secure the necessary resources is to persuade your CEO that workplace stress poses a serious threat to your workers and your company’s bottom line.