Managing and Reducing Stress Meeting Kit

What’s At Stake

Workplace stress then is the harmful physical and emotional responses that can happen when there is a conflict between job demands on the employee and the amount of control an employee has over meeting these demands.

What’s the Danger

PHYSICAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF STRESS

1. Common Psychological effects

- headache
- muscle tension or pain
- chest pains
- increased heart rate and blood pressure
- weakened immune system
- fatigue / insomnia
- stomach and digestive issues
- high blood sugar
- increased cholesterol and fatty acids

2. Mood Effects

- increasing forgetfulness, anxiety, restlessness, defensiveness, mood swings, hypersensitivity, anger, etc.
- decreasing ability to think clearly or focus

3. Contribute to incidents

- sleep poorly
- self- or over-medicate themselves
- feel depressed
- feel anxious, jittery, and nervous.

- become angry and reckless

4. Reactions to Stress

- become momentarily (but dangerously) distracted
- feel withdrawn or isolated
- have outbursts, etc.
- neglect responsibilities
- make errors in judgment
- put their bodies under physical stress,
- react poorly in normal activities that require hand-eye or foot-eye coordination

5. Untreated long term (chronic) stress effects

- Anxiety.
- Insomnia.
- muscle pain.
- high blood pressure.
- weakened immune system.
- heart disease.
- depression.
- obesity.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

COMMON WORKPLACE STRESSORS

Time Stress. You usually experience this when you think there’s not enough time for you to finish a task.

Manage Time Stress. When facing time stress, it is important to manage your time and get your priorities straight.

- **Do First.** Tasks in this category should be your first priority. Anything that is placed here should be done as soon as you’re able and not later than the day after tomorrow.
- **Schedule.** This could be important tasks but are not so urgent. These kinds of tasks are either important scheduled meetings or an article with a set deadline.

- **Delegate.** Tasks in this section are not important but still urgent. It could be a follow-up call to a client or a request for your presence for a presentation. These can be transferable to people you can trust, though.
- **Don’t do.** Tasks in this category are neither important nor urgent. You can either do it when you have nothing else to do or not do it at all.
- **You can use this method if you like prioritizing things the traditional way.** However, with today’s technology, you can use apps like Evernote and Toggl to boost your productivity and manage your ideas and time easily.

Anticipatory Stress. This stress is associated with the feeling of anticipating the future a little too much. You anticipate so much that uncertainties of what could happen in the future overwhelm you. Here is how to deal with anticipatory stress.

- **Be Positive.** Positive visualization of outcomes helps by cutting off the negative stream of thinking.
- **Be Prepared.** Face the unknown and tackle it head on by visualizing both the best- and worst-case scenario.
- **Be Brave.** In order to combat failure, prepare yourself by visualizing possible obstacles in your path.

Situational Stress. Situational stress happens when everything starts to go out of your control.

Be Self-Aware. The most important point is to be self-aware in whatever you will be doing.

Be Calm. Keep hold of your cool and use your head instead of your temper or emotions.

Be Patient. Be patient by hearing each side of the conflict before deciding how to solve it. Meet them halfway in order to come up with a peaceful end to it.

Encounter Stress. This stress involves the feeling of being overwhelmed by meeting new or too many people. All of us can be overwhelmed by a lot of people, whether we are introverts or extroverts.

Handling Your Encounter Stress. In order to be able to manage a lot of people well, practice or even perfect your people skills. Be confident with interacting with them, so that you can take control of the situation. You'll be calmer knowing that you can handle any problem that can arise.

Be Emphatic. Putting yourself in someone else's shoes will make you understand them deeper and feel what they are feeling without judging them. It'll avoid possible conflict and strengthen relationship bonds at the same time.

Breathe. Whenever stressed, it is important to breathe. Deep breathing has the ability to reduce stress in the body.

BEST GENERAL STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- **Accept it** – Some things are out of your control and all you can do is accept them and learn from them.
- **Avoid it** – Stay away from recurring situations or sources of constant frustration.
- **Alter it** – Change your feelings or ask someone else to change their behavior.
- **Adapt to it** – Learn to cope with the situation or look at it as an opportunity. Focus on the positive things.

FINAL WORD

It is important for employers, supervisors, loss control personnel, and workers to recognize stressful jobs, situations, and signs of stress in themselves or in their coworkers before accidents, injuries, or violence.