

Managing Stress in the Workplace

What Leaders can do to Create a Positive Workplace Environment

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A Look at Stress in the Workplace



- 40% of workers report their job stress was very or extremely stressful
- 25% view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives
- 75% of employees believe the worker has more on-the-job stress than a generation ago
- Job stress is more strongly associated with health complaints than financial or family problems



NIOSH report: Stress...at work, publication No. 99 - 101

Studies show that job stress is far and away the major source of stress for American adults and that it has escalated progressively over the past few decades.

The Financial Cost of Job Stress

UMASS LOWELL
(National Research University)

- 40% of turnover is due to stress
- Employee healthcare spending is 50% greater.
- Replacing an employee can cost 2X their salary.
- Stress-related industrial accidents cost 2X more.
- Depressed employees take nearly 10 annual sick days.
- Absenteeism costs 3.6 million per year.

Definition of Job Stress

Harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker.

The Cause of Job Stress

- Heavy workload
- Poor management style
- Poor communication
- Lack of respect from peers/leaders
- Job insecurity and lack of career advancement opportunities
- No feeling of value/appreciated
- Lack of ability to make decisions



The Results of Job Stress

- Increase in absenteeism/presenteeism
- Turnover
- Medical or psychological disorders
- Loss of revenue
- Missed deadlines
- Loss of productivity
- Poor customer service



Signs of Distress

- Social withdrawal
- Decline in work performance
- Persistent sad mood
- Fatigue/difficulty in concentrating
- Headache
- Sleep disturbances
- Low morale



Strategies for Creating a Positive Workplace Environment



The Importance of Relationships

Relationships are key to a positive work environment and employee engagement

- Genuineness/Authentic
- Effective and frequent communication
- High level of trust
- Manager empathy
- Individual consideration

Balancing being too distant and too close

The Importance of Communication

- Checking in regularly with your employees
- Listen to everyone's ideas
- Communicate both work expectations and what you can do to help
- Express appreciation and the value of your employee's work
- Discuss career development
- Company feedback from employees



Keys to motivating employees

Autonomy: People work better and are more engaged when they are self-directed

Mastery: People want to get better at what they do and want to achieve a level of excellence

Purpose: When people are attached to a bigger picture, you attract and keep better talent

From Daniel Pink's book Drive

Help for Underwhelmed and Overwhelmed Employees

Mihaley Csikszentmihalyi – Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience

Flow is when work challenge and competence are balanced

Dealing with employee boredom: Need to increase their challenge

Dealing with employee anxiety: Decrease their workload, improve their skills or provide them with a mentor

Lead the Way

- Value and appreciate your employees – use of positive psychology
- Maintain a good attitude
- Have good self regulation - use of mindfulness
- Listen and communicate well with your employees
- Recognize and reward hard work