# 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 then 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 is 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

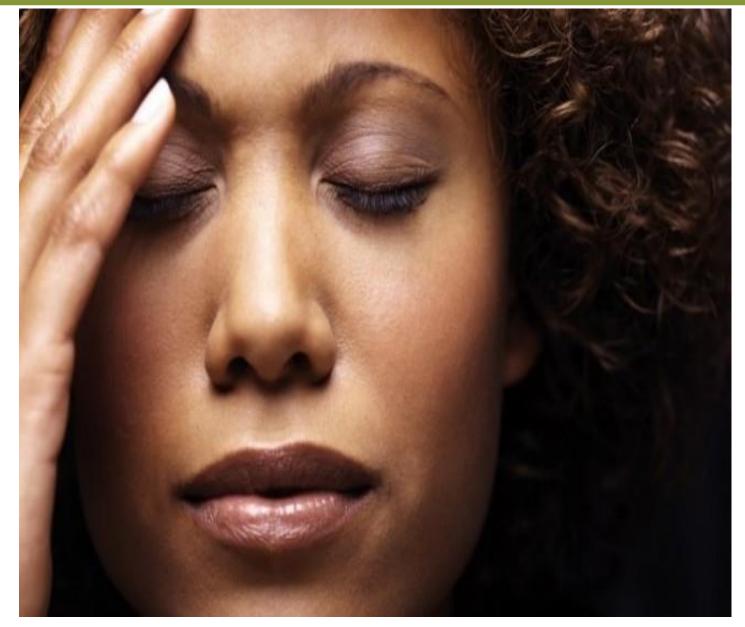
- Increase in absenteeism/ presenteeism
- Turnover
- Medical or psychological disorders
- Loss of revenue
- Missed deadlines
- Loss of productivity
- Poor customer service





### 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

