STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE
AND HOW TO DEAL WITH IT

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1CjvMTHbKc

Workplace Stress: An Epidemic

Before Work   After Work
Did you know that over 1 million people miss work everyday due to stress at work?

Everyone who has ever held a job has, at some point, felt the pressure of work-related stress.

Work is the #1 cause of stress (APA)

69% of employees say their main cause of stress is work.
80% of employees say they are stressed out by their jobs.
41% say they feel tense/stressed out throughout the day.
Only 37% of Americans surveyed said they were doing an excellent or very good job managing stress.

More than 1/3 of working Americans reported experiencing chronic work stress and just 36% said their organizations provide sufficient resources to help them manage that stress.

2013 survey by APA's Center for Organizational Excellence
Workplace stress costs U.S. employers an estimated $300 billion per year in absenteeism, lower productivity, staff turnover, workers' compensation, medical insurance and other stress-related expenses.

51 Percent of employees claim to be less productive at work as a result of stress and anxiety at work. Considering this, stress management may be business's most important challenge of the 21st century.

http://www.fdu.edu/newspubs/magazine/99su/stress.html

The cost of chronic diseases make up more than 75 percent of the $2 Trillion health care costs in the United States.

Mood disorders are set to cost more than $50 Billion in lost productivity and result in $321 Million in lost workdays.
62 percent of workers have reported that their workload has increased over the past 6 months with some people skipping vacations as a result.

70 Percent of employees say they have to work overtime in order to stay ahead, yet only 62 percent of employers agree with that.

More than 80% of employees feel as if companies are expecting too much work out of a small group of people.

The average workweek has increased since the 1970’s, but leisure time has decreased up to 37 percent. People often have to sacrifice sleep or family time just to do a hobby.

80% of us workers are putting in over 48 hrs/week
31% say they have difficulty managing work and family
35% say their jobs interfere with family or personal time
APA FOUND THAT LOW PAY IS #1 REASON FOR JOB STRESS

Over 49% cited it as a significant factor.

Makes sense when money is the second leading cause of stress reported after the workplace.
STRESS IS A HIGHLY PERSONALIZED PHENOMENON

People are very different and what is stressful to one person may not be stressful at all to another.

One survey showed that having to complete paperwork was more stressful for many police officers than the dangers associated with pursuing criminals.

The severity of job stress depends on the magnitude of the demands that are being made and the individual’s sense of control or decision-making latitude he or she has in dealing with them.

(The American Institute of Stress)
WHAT ARE THE MOST STRESSFUL JOBS?

It's not necessarily the job that determines the amount of stress a person feels. It is the person/environment fit that matters. Some people thrive on multi-tasking and large amounts of deadlines, while others do not.

One of the key areas of importance is whether a person feels they have control of their work and/or environment. Scientific studies based on this model confirm that workers who perceive they are subjected to high demands but have little control are at increased risk for cardiovascular disease.

It is important to keep in mind that stress levels vary for even the same jobs in different areas of the country. A teacher or police officer working in the inner city ghetto probably experiences much higher stress levels than their rural counterparts.

(The American Institute of Stress)
IS YOUR JOB RIGHT FOR YOU?

Sometimes the job may just be a bad fit...

COMMON SOURCES OF WORK STRESS

1. Low salaries
2. Excessive workloads
3. Few opportunities for growth or advancement
4. Work that isn't engaging or challenging
5. Lack of social support
6. Not having enough control over job-related decisions
7. Conflicting demands or unclear performance expectations
8. When you’re a square peg in a round hole
9. Traumatic events on the job
10. Work setting
HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE’S 7 FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH LEVEL OF WORKPLACE STRESS

1. the amount of change a person has to cope with
2. the relationships they have with those around them
3. the amount of control they have over what they do
4. the amount of support they have
5. how defined their role is
6. whether the demands of the role are too much for a person to sustain.
7. Organizational culture

EFFECTS/SIGNS OF UNCONTROLLED STRESS

Short term effects:

- Headaches
- Stomachaches
- Sleep disturbances
- Short temper and difficulty concentrating
- Loss of mental energy – inability to be solution focused
- Lack of interest and/or concentration
EFFECTS OF UNCONTROLLED STRESS

Chronic stress can result in:

Anxiety
Insomnia
High blood pressure
Weakened immune system
Depression
Obesity
Heart disease
EFFECTS OF STRESS

THE ORGANIZATIONAL SYMPTOMS OF STRESS INCLUDE:

- Increased sick leave taken
- Increased staff turnover
- Reduced performance and morale
- Increased overheads on recruitment and training
STRESS EFFECTS ON BUSINESSES

THE COST OF STRESS ON YOUR BUSINESS

Work causes stress for 83% of Americans

An estimated 40% of workers say they are unproductive because of stress

FORTY PERCENT OF WORKER TURNOVER IS DUE TO JOB STRESS.
COST OF NOT TREATING THE PROBLEM

The indirect costs of untreated mental health disorders result in a $79 Billion annual loss to businesses due to loss of productivity and absenteeism.

Depression results in more days of disability leave than chronic health diseases such as hypertension, heart disease, and diabetes.

Stigma around mental health issues often causes many people not to tell employers they need treatment and/or access the treatment they need.

Companies with the most effective health and productivity initiatives achieve:

11% more revenue per employee
28% higher shareholder returns
Lower medical trends
Fewer absences per employee
4 OUT OF 5 EMPLOYEES BELIEVE THAT THEIR EMPLOYERS SHOULD ENCOURAGE HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES.

An office can promote employee wellness in many ways:

- Provide fruits and vegetables for the office
- Have a meal plan
- Offer gym memberships
- Group workouts
- Ergonomic desk equipment.
- And more!

Does your company/office encourage wellness through special programs?

IT’S A BALANCE

It’s up to managers to provide employees with the tools they need to do the job and support employee wellness.

It’s up to the employees to take needed opportunities to relax and gain a sense of perspective of their work and how it will affect them.
The key to reducing stress is to prevent it.

Develop a healthy lifestyle
- Get enough sleep
- Eat a proper diet
- Exercise
- Avoid excessive caffeine and other stimulants
- Take time out to relax
- Enjoy hobbies
FORTUNATELY, THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO HELP MANAGE JOB-RELATED STRESS.

Some programs blend relaxation techniques with nutrition and exercise.

Others focus on specific issues such as time management, assertiveness training, and improving social skills.

TIME MANAGEMENT IS KEY!
TOP 10 TIME MANAGEMENT MISTAKES

1. Keeping too many things in your head

2. Doing whatever grabs your attention next (urgent vs. important tasks)

3. Not spending enough time on your top priorities

4. Doing very efficiently that which need not be done at all

5. Poor planning

6. Working in a disorganized and distracting work environment

7. Attempting to do too much

8. Always saying yes

9. Not managing your inflows

10. Confusing activity with productivity
TRACK YOUR STRESSORS

Keep a journal for a week or two to identify which situations create the most stress and how you respond to them.

Record your thoughts, feelings and information about the environment, including the people and circumstances involved, the physical setting and how you reacted.

Did you raise your voice? Get a snack from the vending machine? Go for a walk?

Taking notes can help you find patterns among your stressors and your reactions to them.

ESTABLISH BOUNDARIES

In today's digital world, it's easy to feel pressure to be available 24 hours a day. Establish some work-life boundaries for yourself.

Let others know when you are available for drop ins/office visits

Check your email at scheduled times. Act, don't react to emails all day.
TAKE TIME TO RECHARGE

To avoid the negative effects of chronic stress and burnout, we need time to replenish and return to our pre-stress level of functioning.

This recovery process requires "switching off" from work completely.

That's why it's critical that you disconnect from time to time, in a way that fits your needs and preferences.

Don't let your vacation days go to waste!!

When possible, take time off to relax and unwind, so you come back to work feeling reinvigorated and ready to perform at your best.

When you're not able to take time off, get a quick boost by turning off your smartphone and focusing your attention on non-work activities for a while.

LEARN HOW TO RELAX

Meditation, deep breathing exercises and mindfulness (a state in which you actively observe present experiences and thoughts without judging them) can help melt away stress.

Start by taking a few minutes each day to focus on a simple activity like breathing, walking or enjoying a meal.

The skill of being able to focus purposefully on a single activity without distraction will get stronger with practice and you'll find that you can apply it to many different aspects of your life.
SCHEDULE YOUR DAY FOR ENERGY AND FOCUS

Take breaks
Meditate
Take a walk
Stretch at your desk
Do relaxation exercises

THINK POSITIVE!

Internal negativity is just as likely to stress you out as an external event.

The fix? Identify self imposed stress
Instead of being harsh and critical of yourself, try pumping yourself up.
Encouraging thoughts will help motivate you to achieve and ultimately train you to inspire others.
PRIORITIZE YOUR PRIORITIES

With competing deadlines and fast-changing priorities, it’s critical to define what’s truly important and why.

It’s important to understand your role in the organization, the company’s strategic priorities, and your personal goals and strengths.

Cull your to-do list by focusing on those projects that will have the most impact and are best aligned with your goals.

INFLUENCE OTHERS

Confront a problem coworker or employee by stating the bad behavior in a respectful tone, describing the impact on the team and the individual, and requesting a change.

For example, constant negativity might be addressed in this way: “When you speak in a critical tone, it makes others uncomfortable and less likely to see you as a leader. I understand your frustration but request that you bring concerns directly to me, so we can talk them through.”

By transferring the ownership of the problem, you’re more likely to resolve it. (Melnick)
MORE SOLUTIONS

- Sit up straight
- Get organized
- Abandon unrealistic goals
- Try to avoid interruptions
- Embrace your stress!
- If you feel angry, walk away/count to 10
- Use breathing techniques to calm yourself
- Humor is a great stress reliever!

SET REASONABLE STANDARDS FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Don't expect perfection.

Talk to your employer about your job description. Your responsibilities and performance criteria may not accurately reflect what you are doing.

Working together to make needed changes will not only benefit your emotional and physical health, but also improve the organization's overall productivity.
DELEGATE APPROPRIATELY

You are not the only one that can do the job right.

Allow others to learn and make mistakes.

Grow your staff through delegation of responsibilities.

TALK TO YOUR SUPERVISOR

Healthy employees are typically more productive, so your boss has an incentive to create a work environment that promotes employee well-being.

Develop a plan to help you improve your skills in areas such as time management, prioritizing, or organization

Identifying employer-sponsored wellness resources you can tap into

Clarifying what’s expected of you

Getting necessary training, resources or support from colleagues

Enriching your job to include more challenging or meaningful tasks, or making changes to your physical workspace to make it more comfortable and reduce strain.
GET SOME ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Accepting help from trusted friends and family members can improve your ability to manage stress.

Your employer may also have stress management resources available through an employee assistance program (EAP), including online information, available counseling and referral to mental health professionals, if needed.

If you continue to feel overwhelmed by work stress, you may want to talk to a therapist or psychologist, who can help you better manage stress and change unhealthy behavior.

EVIDENCED BASED TREATMENTS FOR ANXIETY

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) has been dubbed one the most effective treatment for anxiety disorders.

The CBT model suggests that dysfunctional cognitions (thoughts) are causally linked to emotional distress, and that correcting these dysfunctional cognitions results in improvement of emotional distress and interfering behaviors.

CBT’s goal is to change patterns of thinking and/or behavior that are behind people’s difficulties, and in doing so, change the way they feel.

CBT works by shifting people’s outlooks, as well as their behavior, by focusing on the thoughts, beliefs or images that they hold and how this relates to the way they behave as a means to cope with emotional issues.
Stress is not all bad. In fact, some stress is actually a good thing.

The correct amount of pressure, applied in the right way can help your organization to flourish.

Research shows that staff who are put under the right amount of stress are better engaged and can perform better, the added pressure allows them to rise to the challenge – and when it's manageable, people feel satisfied.

PAREDO’S RULE

- 20% of what you do is always responsible for 80% of your results...

- 20% of your tasks account for 80% of the value in your to-do list.

(People tend to work on the 80% of tasks that account for 20% of importance most of the time....)

(Don't just work smart – work smart on the right things)!
We don’t need to work harder, we need to begin working smarter.

We don’t need to work longer, we have to be more efficient.

We don’t have to stress over work, we need to make sure we’re enjoying what we do!

Try to follow the advice in Reinhold Niebuhr’s, serenity prayer:

“Grant me the courage to change the things I can change, the serenity to accept the things I can’t change, and the wisdom to know the difference.”
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