



# MANAGING THE STRESSED EMPLOYEE

The impact of personal hardship and adversity in the workplace

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The webinar will begin soon



# MANAGING THE STRESSED EMPLOYEE

The impact of personal hardship and adversity in the workplace

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ICW Group Risk Management Services



Today's Presenter:

**Terio Duran**

Sr. Risk Management Consultant



“EVERY LIFE HAS A **STORY...**  
IF YOU TAKE THE TIME TO **READ IT.**”

## **JOB STRESS DEFINED**

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

# Important Statistics

- 83% of US workers suffer from work-related stress.

*The American Institute of Stress (2022). Workplace Stress.*

- Stress causes around one million workers to miss work every day.

*The American Institute of Stress*

- 50% of US workers are not engaged at work as a result of stress.

*The American Institute of Stress*



# Personal Factors



Family Problems



Medical Problems



Substance Abuse



Financial Problems



Legal Problems



Marital Problems



# Job Factors



Reorganization



Demotion



Harassment Bullying



Overworked



Hazardous surroundings



Fear of being replaced or let go



Supervisor Relationship

**Why should we  
be concerned?**

# Job Stress Can Result In...

## Health Issues

- Cardiovascular disease
- Substance abuse
- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Psychological disorders
- Suicide, cancer, ulcers, impaired immune function
- Workplace injuries

## Work Issues

- Job concentration disrupted
- Self-initiative reduced
- Trust in others diminished
- Resentment
- Depression
- Burn-out

# Adversely Impact an Organization

- Poor Attendance
- Low Employee Morale
- Decrease in Productivity
- Quality Defects
- Poor Customer Service
- Workers' Compensation Fraud
- Safety Workplace Injuries
- High Employee Turnover
- Difficulty Qualified Candidates



# Costs to Organization

- U.S. businesses lose up to \$300 billion yearly as a result of workplace stress. *American Institute of Stress*
- Depression leads to \$51 billion in costs due to absenteeism and \$26 billion in treatment costs. *Mental Health America*
- Work-related stress causes 120,000 deaths and results in \$190 billion in healthcare costs yearly. *Goh, J., Pfeffer, J., & Zenios, S. A. (2015)*

“At least 85% of all work accidents are caused by the inability to cope with emotional distress.”

– E.M. Gherman, *Stress and the Bottom Line*



“The vast majority of accidents contain a substantial human factor, often irrational or irresponsible action, indicating the involvement of mental or emotional duress in accident causation.”

*University of Texas*



# Fall Accident Case Study



# How do we manage the stressed employee?

# Management Approaches

- Cover-up approach
- Limited approach
- Comprehensive approach



# Most Common Workplace Stressors

*American Institute of Stress – 2022*

- Amount of work (39%)
- Supervisor relationship (23%)
- Work-life balance (19%)
- Job Security (6%)

# Stress Warning Signs

- Isolation
- Deterioration of personal appearance
- Loss of interest
- Carelessness
- Poor work quality
- Increased absenteeism
- Lowered productivity



# Stress Coping Methods

- Talking to a friend/colleague/spouse (55%)
- Exercising (40%)
- Eating (35%)
- Stepping away from work (35%)
- Taking a day off (32%)
- Drinking after work (24%)





# Supervisor Role

1. Practice empathy
2. Make yourself available
3. Know what you can offer
4. Check in regularly to make sure they're doing ok
5. Consider workload
6. Be transparent and consistent
7. Listen first, suggest second





# Senior Management Role

1. Planning, organizing, and leading
2. Policies and procedures
3. Supervisor training
4. Personal commitment



# Senior Management Role (continued)

- Manager/team member relationship
- Design of work tasks
- Interpersonal relationships
- Managing workloads
- Career concerns
- Environmental conditions



# 7 Steps to Help Manage Stress

1. Eat a balanced and nutritious diet starting with breakfast
2. Get a good night's sleep
3. Volunteer time and services
4. Seek professional help
5. Keep moving – Exercise 30 minutes a day
6. Express your feelings – you're not alone
7. Get to the root of it - remove the stressor or try new coping strategies

# A Few Ways Organizations Can Help

- Allow some control over schedules
- Include employee input in decision making
- Balance responsibility & authority necessary for tasks
- Set reasonable limits & timelines
- Recognize a job well done
- Resources - health club membership, elder-care & on-site or near- site childcare
- Employee Assistance Programs and Wellness Programs
- Review work distribution process – Fair & effective?
- Social interaction among workers
- Compatible work schedules

# Stress Management Checklists



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## Supporting Mental Health in the Workplace Checklist for Supervisors

There has been a reported rise in the number of individuals experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depressive disorders in the United States. This checklist provides recommendations for supervisors to help support mental health and alleviate stressors for workers.

**Be a compassionate leader and establish a supportive tone.**

- Raise awareness about stressors and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and substance use by:
  - Talking about the types of specific stressors that relate to your particular workforce and sector, as well as their impact on mental health (e.g., high rates of depression and anxiety disorders, increased substance use).
  - Sharing [open-door policies](#) so that workers know they are not alone if they are facing mental health or substance use issues.
  - Sharing a story about stress for you and what you are doing to address it in your own life.
  - Showing empathy, being vulnerable, and communicating that the group will support them.
  - Telling workers that it's natural to feel stressed and encouraging them to talk to someone if they need it.
  - Telling workers that it's natural to feel stressed and encouraging them to talk to someone if they need it.
- Implement an "open door" policy for workers to express their problem and how they are doing.
- Check in with workers periodically to ask them how they are doing and if management can do to support them.
- Hold frequent group meetings to promote connectedness and receive information about work concerns, ask questions, and receive support if necessary.
- Build connections and encourage coworkers to be trusted and seek outside support if necessary.
  - Creating peer support networks around common concerns.
  - Encouraging coworkers to check in on each other and share their stories, and brainstorm potential solutions.
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- Planning optional in-person or virtual camaraderie among staff (e.g., virtual book clubs).
- Be a good role model by:
  - Reducing workplace stress benefits everyone and can lead to improved morale, increased productivity, fewer sick days, better focus, fewer workplace injuries, an enhanced quality of life, and improved physical health (e.g., better sleep, lower blood pressure, stronger immune system).

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## Supporting Mental Health in the Workplace Checklist for Senior Managers

There has been a reported rise in the number of people experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depressive disorders. This checklist provides recommendations for senior managers to help support mental health and alleviate stressors for workers.

**Be a compassionate leader and establish a supportive tone.**

- Tell staff you are committed to supporting their mental health and well-being. To reinforce your commitment, consider:
  - Importance of addressing workplace stress and supporting workers' mental health and well-being.
  - Identifying specific staff in your organization whom workers can contact with concerns about job-related stressors.
  - Promoting a judgment-free workplace by making it clear that workers can ask for help without facing negative consequences in the workplace.
- Raise awareness about workplace stressors and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and substance use by:
  - Talking about the types of stress for the general population, and mental health (e.g., high rates of depression and anxiety disorders).
  - Sharing [open-door policies](#) so that workers know they are not alone if they are struggling with mental health or substance use issues.
- Be transparent. Ensure communication takes place regularly to help alleviate the stress of uncertainty and to deliver misinformation and rumors that might be circulating.
  - Consider creating a mental health task force or committee that includes representatives from different levels of your organization (i.e., not only senior managers) to talk about existing and emerging workplace stressors and ways to reduce them.
- Build a culture of support and encourage coworkers to be supportive of one another by:
  - Creating peer support networks around common issues such as hybrid or remote work. These networks can be formal or informal. Each network might have a trusted employee to set up sessions (in person or virtual) for their coworkers and lead conversations that give other staff a chance to talk about issues, feel their stories, and brainstorm potential solutions.
  - Encouraging coworkers to check in on each other and/or create a "buddy system," as helping others improves an individual's sense of control, belonging, and self-esteem. For example, advise coworkers to break into small teams and ask them to call or email each other weekly or biweekly to check in.

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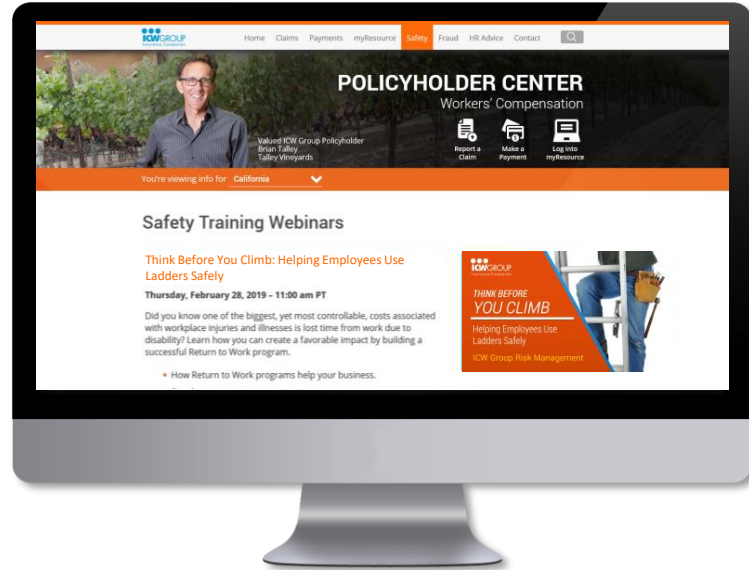
# Managing Stress At Work

We will never completely remove stress from our life, but identifying and managing stress factors can help maintain a positive and healthy lifestyle for our team members and ourselves

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# QUESTIONS?

Contact Us:

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**THANK YOU!**

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