



**SPECIAL
POINTS OF IN-
TEREST:**

- **Work & Stress Is it Under Control**
- **Problems on the Job**
- **Scope of Stress in Workplace**
- **Handling Stress**
- **Early Warning Signs**
- **Steps to Manage Stress**

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Hats ON for Safety

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Stressed Out?

Work & Stress:

Is it Under Control?

Typically, an employee's greatest source of stress is on the job. Stress is a physical or mental response to the pressures of an event or factors of living in general. Though generally regarded as negative, stress can be either a positive or negative experience. This can be a good thing because it provides the energy and mental agility to get the job done.

If stress goes on for prolonged periods, however, the body can have adverse reactions. Common medical conditions include in-

- **Obsession with quantity of work**

Stress can bring on a pre-occupation with quantity of work or "numbers." However, relying on numbers can cause problems because employees may assume that failure was a

somnia, fatigue, high blood pressure, and digestive disorders, such as ulcers.

Common psychological

conditions include impatience and worry; lack of self-

confidence; anger, frustration, and irritability; and violence, alcohol and drug abuse.

Problems on the Job

Stress can lead to problems on the job.

Lost Priorities Goals are often lost when employees are under stress. They tend to spend hours

working on small details, and feel as if they aren't getting enough done.

- **Rushing** When the workload is heavy and deadlines are looming, employees push themselves and may take shortcuts.

- **Competition** If employees don't believe that co-workers have the same goals,

they won't cooperate, choosing to isolate themselves and begin doing other people's tasks. They believe that if they don't do it, the task won't get done. Co-workers may respond with hurt feelings, and eventually this attitude can affect the company's overall goals.



result of not working hard enough, or they may feel

that their co-workers are not working hard enough.

- **Anger**

If allowed to build

up over time, stress can lead to outbursts of anger over frustration regarding the circumstances of a work situation.



Scope of Stress in Workplace

- One-fourth of employees view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives *Northwestern National Life*
- Three-fourths of employees believe the worker has more on-the-job stress than a generation ago. *-Princeton Survey Research Associates*
- Problems at work are more strongly associated with health complaints than are any other life stressor-more so than even financial problems or family problems. *-St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Co*

Fortunately, research on job stress has greatly expanded in recent years. But in spite of this attention, confusion remains about the causes, effects, and prevention of job stress.

Handling Stress

Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources



or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury.

The first step in handling stress is watching for the warning signs. Encourage employees to become aware of when they're under stress, or when something could trigger stress.

What are *YOU* worried about? Let us know safety topics that could help keep your workplace safe!

Early Warning Signs

- Headache
- Sleep Disturbance
- Difficulty in Concentrating
- Short Temper
- Upset Stomach
- Job Dissatisfaction
- Low Morale



Steps to Managing Stress

- Taking breaks and learning relaxation techniques
- Releasing stress with exercise.
- Maintaining proper rest and diet so they can deal with stressful situations.
- Practicing deep breathing to relax the body and the mind.
- Managing time by setting priorities.
- Building self-confidence by analyzing strengths.
- Sharing work or asking for help.
- Sharing stress with others by talking to someone (family, co-workers, supervisors, counsel-

ors) about what's on their mind.

- Limiting changes that can be overwhelming or that limit them from doing the things they enjoy.
- Avoid medication or alcohol to temporarily eliminate stress.
- Laughing and crying to ease tension.
- Having fun by scheduling time for recreational activities with family and friends.

