

Stress management tools

Here are some ideas about sources of stress at work, followed by some tools from avoiding any personal stress. First decide your own definitions of success and then use the Setting Well Formed Outcomes form for making decisions.

Finally a cheering poems from some schoolchildren.

Stress at Work

These seven risk factors have been identified by the Health & Safety Executive as the significant potential stressors that employers should evaluate when carrying out risk assessments.

- Culture - of the organisation especially in regard to stress.
- Demands - such as workload and exposure to physical hazards.
- Control - the amount of control that the individual has over the way they work.
- Relationships - covering such things as bullying and harassment.
- Change - both how it is communicated and managed.
- Role - both role conflict and role ambiguity.
- Support - which includes support from peers and line managers, the training of employees both in Health and Safety and in carrying out their role and also factors that are unique to the individual.

These factors are covered in the HSE booklet "Tackling Work Related Stress" available from <http://www.hsebooks.co.uk>.at (£7.95)

Here is a list of the stressful characteristics of work given in the report (section 5.2 Psychosocial Factors, table 1 Stressful Characteristics of Work) which also contains more information on each area.

Characteristics of the context to work:

- Organisational culture and function
- Role in organisation (eg conflict, ambiguity)
- Career development
- Decision latitude/control
- Interpersonal relationships
- Home-work interface

Characteristics of the content of work:

- Work environment and equipment
- Task design
- Workload/work pace
- Work schedule

Decide your own definitions of success

"Success is the progressive realisation of one's worthy ideals"

Success means making the most of all the available resources.

Success is not being the best according to the standards of others.

Success is doing your best according to your own desires and goals.

How can you apply the definition of success as "doing your best" to each of the following areas of your life?

Your career:

Your relationships with other people:

Your health and physical fitness:

Your education and personal development:

Attaining your long-term goals:

Knowing where you want to go is the first stage of getting there.

WELL FORMED OUTCOMES

Name:

Date:

Outcome:

NOTE: keep repeating this exercise until you can answer all questions satisfactorily.

1. What do you want? State your outcome specifically. You can define a multiple outcome by using the word AND. Never, ever, use BUT. Check that your outcome is stated in the positive. Then ask what would be a better outcome than this?
2. Is the achievement of this outcome within your control?
What do you need to achieve it?
3. When and where do you want this?
4. What will the achievement of this outcome do for you?
How will achieving this outcome benefit you?
5. What might stop you achieving this outcome? Why have you not already achieved it? What might be the benefits of not achieving it?
6. How will you know when you have achieved this outcome?
What evidence will you use to let you know that you are achieving this outcome?
7. How will achieving this affect other areas of your life?
Is this outcome acceptable to you and to other people?
8. What is the first action you must take to achieve this outcome?

The Stress-free Workplace in 2046

A poem written by pupils at Leechpool Lane School for Roffey Park Management Institute

The stress-free workplace,
It really could be true.
Work and pleasure rolled into one.
Read on, this could be you.

The main building is the workplace
The rest is to unwind.
The gym, the sauna, a restaurant,
Are pictures in my mind.

The gym a place to workout
Or badminton if you care,
A peace garden to wander round
No noise or hassle there.

A music area to express your thought
Or to calm any tension.
What a place this really is,
I could work there 'till my pension.

A crèche to cater for the tiny tots
Their every need provided.
While you go off and do your work
In caring hands they're guided.

A restaurant to serve delicious meals
Or even just a snack.
A bar for drinks or to tell a joke,
There's nothing here we lack.

A conference room to discuss and plan.
A table with many places,
A lecture room to learn things new,
A theatre full of faces.

The stress free workplace,
It really could be true.
The idea of this is possible.
Your future's here, are you?