

CHAPTER 16

STRESS and COUNSELING

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is difficult to define because it is subjective sensation associated with varied symptoms for each of us.

A general term applied to the pressure, people feel in life. When pressured, there are adverse strain on a person's emotions, thought processes, and physical condition.

As a negative influence, it can result in a feeling of distrust, rejection, anger, depression which in turn can lead to health problems and death.

Introduction

Stress is a costly business expense that affects both employee's health and company profits.

Job stress is a consequence of two key ingredients: a high level of job demands and a little control over one's work

No one is immune to stress, for it can affect employees at all levels of the organization.

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is the "wear and tear", our bodies experience as we adjust to our continually changing environment.

Stress can create positive and negative feelings. As a positive influence, stress can help compel us to action, it can result in a new awareness and an exciting new perspective.

EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

- Moody and hypersensitive
- Restlessness and anxiety
- Easily irritated
- Sense of being overwhelmed
- Lack of confidence
- Apathy
- Urge to cry or laugh at inappropriate times

INTELLECTUAL SYMPTOMS of STRESS

- Memory problems
- Difficulty in making decision
- Inability to concentrate
- Confusion
- Seeing only negative
- Repetitive or racing thoughts
- High blood pressure
- Poor judgment
- Loss of objectivity
- Desire to escape or run away

BEHAVIORAL SYMPTOMS of STRESS

- Eating more or less
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Isolating yourself from others
- Neglecting your responsibilities
- Increasing drug use and alcohol
- Nervous habits
- Teeth grinding or jaw clenching
- Overdoing acts such as exercising or shopping
- Losing temper
- Over reacting to unexpected problems

TRAUMA

Trauma can be a natural disaster, an organizational crisis, dramatic employee abuse by the employer, or personal job loss.

Three types of trauma – workplace trauma, layoff supervisor's sickness, and post traumatic stress disorder.

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS of STRESS

- Headache
- Digestive problems
- Muscle tension and pain
- Sleep disturbances
- Fatigue
- Chest pain, irregular heartbeat
- High blood pressure
- Weight gain loss
- Asthma or shortness of breath
- Skin problems
- Decreased sex drive

EXTREME PRODUCTS of STRESS

Stress can be temporary or long term, mild or severe.

Temporary stress or mild stress can easily be handled by the person's internal resilience.

Long term or severe stress made a person physically and psychologically weakened to combat stress (BURNOUT). Another severe product of stress is TRAUMA.

WORKPLACE TRAUMA

Workplace trauma can arise from harassment at work, wrongful termination, discrimination or an employee's perceived incapacity to meet evolving performance expectations.

Source of workplace trauma is sudden job loss, with its potentially crushing effect on one's self esteem.

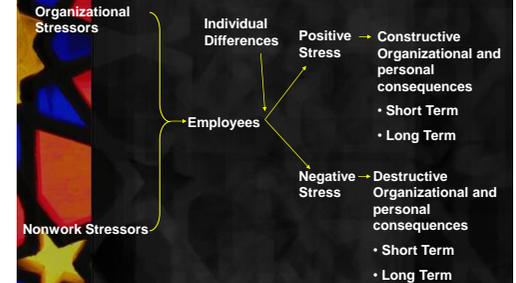
LAYOFF SURVIVOR'S SICKNESS

Layoff survivor's sickness is experienced after mass downsizings of individuals with feelings of uncertainty, anger, guilt and distrust. They are glad that they have a job but are guilty that their workmates are gone.

CAUSES of STRESS

- State of the world, environment, family, irresponsible behavior, negative attitudes and feelings, unrealistic expectations
- Highly individual-personality of a person, general outlook on life, problem solving abilities and social support system

A MODEL of CAUSES, TYPES, and CONSEQUENCES of STRESS



POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

Workplace violence is unique in that it is often both a product of stress and the source of enormous stress on others. Any person who witnesses violence, receives injury on it, or lives under the fear of repeated future violence may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

TYPICAL CAUSES of STRESS

- Work overload
- Time pressure
- Poor quality of supervision
- Insecure of climate
- Inadequate authority to match responsibilities
- Role conflict and ambiguity
- Differences between company and employee values
- Frustration

STRESS AND VULNERABILITY

Worker's vulnerability to stress is a function of the external and internal stressors. One internal factor is an employee's stress threshold - a low threshold or a higher threshold.

The second internal factor is the amount of "perceived control" people have over their work and working conditions.

Stress vulnerability is often related to Type A and Type B people. Type A people are aggressive, competitive and set high standards, while Type B people are more relaxed and easy going.

KEEP STRESS under CONTROL

- Take a stand against over schedule
- Be realistic
- Get a good night sleep
- Learn to relax
- Treat your body well
- Watch what you think
- Solve the little problems

COUNSELING FUNCTIONS

- **ADVICE** – telling a person what you think must be done
- **REASSURANCE** – giving a person courage and confidence to face a problem
- **COMMUNICATION** – providing information and understanding
- **RELEASE of EMOTIONAL TENSION** – helping a person feel more free of tensions
- **CLARIFIED THINKING** – encouraging more coherent, rational thought
- **REORIENTATION** – encouraging an internal change in goals and values

APPROACHES to STRESS MANAGEMENT

- Prevent or control it
- Escape from it
- Learn to adapt to it

WHAT COUNSELING IS

- Comes from the Middle English, COUNSEIL, from old French, CONSEIL, from Latin, CONSILUM, akin to CONSULERE, to take counsel, consult
- The term was originally used by FRANK PARSONS in 1908
- Discussion with an employee of a problem that usually has emotional content in order to help the employee cope better
- Seeks to improve employee's mental health
- Exchange of ideas and feelings between two people – a counselor and a counselee

TYPES OF COUNSELING

- **DIRECTIVE**
- **NON DIRECTIVE**
- **PARTICIPATIVE**

DIRECTIVE COUNSELING

Directive counseling is the process of listening to an employee what should be done, and then telling and motivating the employee to do it.

NON DIRECTIVE COUNSELING

Non directive, or client-centered is the process of skillfully listening to and encouraging a counselee explain troublesome problems, understand them, and determine appropriate solutions.

COUNSELING METHOD

1. **DIRECTIVE COUNSELING** – the counselor primarily controls the direction of the conversation and does most of the talking

STATUS of PARTICIPANTS

DIRECTIVE - the counselor is at least implicitly superior to the employee

NON DIRECTIVE – the counselee and the counselor are on an equal level

ROLE OF PARTICIPANTS

DIRECTIVE – the counselee is psychologically dependent on the counselor, whose role as a problem-solver, tends to limit the counselee's personal growth.

TYPES OF COUNSELING ACCORDING TO AMOUNT OF DIRECTION THAT COUNSELORS PROVIDE



2. **NON DIRECTIVE COUNSELING** – the counselee primarily controls the direction of the conversation and does most of the talking

RESPONSIBILITY for SOLUTION

DIRECTIVE

COUNSELOR

NON DIRECTIVE

COUNSELEE

DIRECTIVE – Solution of current problems is emphasized with feelings and emotions often ignored

NON DIRECTIVE – Psychological adjustment is paramount, with deep feelings and emotional problems accented

PARTICIPATIVE COUNSELING

- Also called cooperative counseling
- A mutual counselor – counselee relationship that establishes a cooperative exchange of ideas to help solve a counselee's problem