

STRESS MANAEMNT AND STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH STRESS AT ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

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Abstract

Stress has become significant to dynamic social factor and changing needs of life styles. Stress is man's adaptive reaction to an outward situation which would lead to physical, mental and behavioral changes. Even though stress kills brain cells, not all stresses are destructive in nature. Appropriate amount of stress can actually trigger passion for work, tap latent abilities and even ignite inspirations. The study throws light on the wide spread silent problem by name 'Stress', which gave raise to acute dysfunctions and are called many diseases, increase divorce rates, and other harassments. The work stress is found in all professions. Stress can make a person productive and constructive, when it is identified and well managed. The focus of the paper is to study the stress level among employees and to suggest the coping strategies.

Keywords: Stress, adaptive reaction, behavioral change, eu-stress.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a fact of life, wherever you are and whatever you are doing. You cannot avoid stress, but you can learn to manage it so it doesn't manage you. Changes in our lives—such as going to college, getting married, changing jobs, or illness—are frequent sources of stress. Keep in mind that changes that cause stress can also benefit you. Moving away from home to attend college, for example, creates personal-development opportunities—new challenges, friends, and living arrangements. That is why it's important to know yourself and carefully consider the causes of stress. Learning to do this takes time, and although you cannot avoid stress, the good news is that you can minimize the harmful effects of stress, such as depression or hypertension. The key is to develop an awareness of how you interpret, and react to, circumstances. This awareness will help you develop coping techniques for managing stress.

MEANING OF STRESS

Stress is often described as a feeling of being overloaded, wound up tight, tense and worried. We all experience stress at times. It can sometimes help to motivate us to get a task finished, or perform well. But stress can also be harmful if we become over-stressed and it interferes with our ability to get on with our normal life for too long.

Meaning of Stress Management

Stress management refers to the process through which stress can be controlled. It must, however, be kept in mind that the stress management never talks of eliminating stress thoroughly. The one significant reason for this is that to certain extent stress increases efficiency. Some people even go the length of saying. "There is no life without stress". In short, it can be said that in case stress crosses a certain limit, it has to be controlled or managed to avoid its negative effects.

SIGNS OF STRESS

When we face a stressful event, our bodies respond by activating the nervous system and releasing hormones such as adrenalin and cortisol. These hormones cause physical changes in the body which help us to react quickly and effectively to get through the stressful situation. This is sometimes called the 'fight or flight' response. The hormones increase our heart rate, breathing, blood pressure, metabolism and muscle tension. Our pupils dilate and our perspiration rate increases. While these physical changes help us try to meet the challenges of

the stressful situation, they can cause other physical or psychological symptoms if the stress is ongoing and the physical changes don't settle down. These symptoms can include:

- Headaches, other aches and pains
- Sleep disturbance, insomnia
- Upset stomach, indigestion, diarrhoea
- Anxiety
- Anger, irritability
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Feeling overwhelmed and out of control
- Feeling moody, tearful
- Difficulty concentrating
- Low self-esteem, lack of confidence
- High blood pressure
- Weakened immune system
- Heart disease

Types of Stress:

Stress is primarily of two types:

(1)Eustress: This is a stress which is essential. It has positive effects, e.g., examination day's stress. If this stress is not there on the students, they will not study well. This stress creates energy. As a result, the efficiency increase.

(2)Distress: This is a stress which is absolutely not desirable. For example, insecurity of job. It creates tension. If it is not managed or controlled in time it becomes an enemy. It leads to high blood pressure and heart diseases.

According to Global business and Economic Roundtable of Addiction and Mental Health, the top 10 stressors are:

Lack of Control: Less control employees have over their situations, the greater their stress.

Solicit and consider employee suggestions, comments and input.

Lack of communication: Try communicating early and often, making sure you listen as often as you deliver news or observations.

No Appreciation: When is the last time you praised an employee for a job well done? "Thank you" more often. Put it in writing for even greater impact. Corporate wellness is a good investment, with a strong return on investment.

No Feedback, good or bad: Don't wait until the annual review to let employees know how they're doing. They wonder every day. Career and Job ambiguity: Uncertainty about opportunity within the company or job security can lead to a feeling of loss of control. Keep employees clear about performance goals, room for advancement and how your organization is doing.

Unclear Policies and no Sense of Direction: Clearly communicate policies and company goals, and alert top management if employees need further clarity. Mistrust, Unfairness and office Politics: It's important to treat everyone the same- and perfectly appropriate to reprimand someone who is negative about other employees. Backbiting keeps everyone on edge.

Pervasive Uncertainty: This results from inadequately explained or unannounced changes. Meet with people individually to review changes. Follow those meetings with a written memo so everyone can review the facts after emotions have died down.

Random Interruptions: Telephone calls, e-emails, walk-ins and supervisor demands can keep employees from completing the work at hand. Consider time management training to help people prioritize and delegate.

The treadmill syndrome: Having too much or too little to do results in self-defeating behavior that can lead to high stress. Make sure work is evenly divided, and hire additional help where needed.

Strategies to deal with stress at organizational level

Following are the strategies to deal with stress at organizational level

Stress management programs: Conducting stress management programs at organizational level with the objective of creating awareness about stress and making employees learn stress management techniques.

Physical activities planned in job design: The body can release stress, better through physical exertion, as physicians were suggesting, indulging in any kind of physical activity is recommended while job design.

Stress-audit: Conducting stress-audit at organizational level, for the purpose teaching individual, what causes stress and its impact on themselves. This leads to design the best suitable strategies for managing the stress.

Life style modification programs: To combat the ill effects of stress, life style modification programs at individual and organizational level are recommended, after discussing experts. Ultimately individual should be responsible to carry forward these programs.

Finding triggers and stressors: Identifying triggers and stressor though continuously monitoring health of the employees and proactive organizational style will be a coping strategy in stress management.

Supportive organization culture: Though, Organization culture impacts in multiple dimensions of organizational outcomes, stress management is also among them. A supportive organizational system will integrate an individual system in order to understand stress and designing appropriate coping strategies.

Ergonomics and environmental design: Need for improvement in equipment used at work, and physical working conditions are in much demand in much demand in present tech-savvy world, and undoubtedly this will become one of the best stress coping strategies at organizational level.

Stress counseling programs: Introducing stress counseling programs, in order to understand and solve stress related problems to control mostly behavioral and emotional outcomes of employees.

Spiritual programs: Conducting spiritual programs at organizational level will leads to introspection of employees and reduce stress to create more energetic and enriched platform which can increase organizational performance.

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Conclusion

Stress issue has become contemporary, being an occupational hazard in fast pacing IT profession needs to be address without delay. Hence the importance of the study of stress at various levels, among employees is growing. At organizational level, well designed coping strategies have become the attention of companies Stress can make an individual productive and constructive when it is identified and well managed. In times of great stress or adversity, it's always best to keep busy, to plow anger and energy into something positive. Positive attitude and meditation will be helpful for coping the stress. Having broader perspective of life will definitely change the perception of stress. Let us hope that we will be successful in making distress into eu-stress for our healthy lifestyle as well as organizational well being.