PARADIGM SHIFT IN MANEGEMENT PRACTICES IN

POST GLOBALIZATION ERA

Ashu

Dawarkapuri, Old Court Road Jagadhri

Distt. Yamunanagar

INTRODUCTION

Whatever kind of job one is involved in, you would always find several factors that lead to severe stress. It is not uncommon today, with everyone worrying about whether the state of the economy and high employment rates would mean that they are the next to lose their jobs. Like any other management technique, stress management too is very vital for the success of any organization.

If the employees of an organization are unable to work efficiently and be productive, it is the organization that would eventually collapse. It is therefore essential that stress management techniques are understood by all the stakeholders of any organization.

WHAT IS STRESS?

We generally use the word "stress" when we feel that everything seems to have become too much - we are overloaded and wonder whether we really can cope with the pressures placed upon us. Anything that poses a challenge or a threat to our well-being is a stress. Some stresses get you going and they are good for you - without any stress at all many say our lives would be boring and would probably feel pointless. However, when the stresses undermine both our mental and physical health they are bad. In this text we shall be focusing on stress that is bad for you.

TYPES OF STRESS

EUSTRESS :

This is a stress which is essential. It has positive effects, example 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 increases.

➢ **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.

WHAT CAUSES STRESS:

Many different things can cause stress -- from physical (such as fear of something dangerous) to emotional (such as worry over your family or job.) Identifying what may be causing you stress is often the first step in learning how to better deal with your stress. Some of the most common sources of stress are:

Survival Stress - You may have heard the phrase "fight or flight" before. This is a common response to danger in all people and animals. When you are afraid that someone or something may physically hurt you, your body naturally responds with a burst of energy so that you will be better able to survive the dangerous situation (fight) or escape it all together (flight). This is survival stress.

Internal Stress - Have you ever caught yourself worrying about things you can do nothing about or worrying for no reason at all? This is internal stress and it is one of the most important kinds of stress to understand and manage. Internal stress is when people make themselves stressed. This often happens when we worry about things we can't control or put ourselves in situations we know will cause us stress. Some people become addicted to the kind of hurried, tense, lifestyle that results from being under stress. They even look for stressful situations and feel stress about things that aren't stressful.

Environmental Stress - This is a response to things around you that cause stress, such as noise, crowding, and pressure from work or family. Identifying these environmental stresses and learning to avoid them or deal with them will help lower your stress level.

Fatigue and Overwork - This kind of stress builds up over a long time and can take a hard toll on your body. It can be caused by working too much or too hard at your job(s), school, or home. It can also be caused by not knowing how to manage your time well or how to take time out for rest and relaxation. This can be one of the hardest kinds of stress to avoid

because many people feel this is out of their control. Later in this course we will show you that you DO have options and offer some useful tips for dealing with fatigue.

WHAT IS EMPLOYEE STRESS?

Employees stress is a growing concern for organizations today. Stress can be defined as a lively circumstance in which people face constraints, opportunities, or loss of something they desire and for which the consequence is both unpredictable as well as crucial. Stress is the response of people to the unreasonable/excessive pressure or demands placed on them.

Stress is not always negative. It may also bring out the best in individuals at times. It may induce an individual to discover innovative and smarter way of doing things. This positive dimension of stress is called as eustress. But usually, the term stress has a negative implication and this negative aspect of stress is termed as distress. For instance - When a subordinate is harassed or warned by his superior, unhappiness of unsuitable job, etc. We can say that "Stress causes some people to break, and other to break records."

SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

Some of the symptoms of stress at workplace are as follows-

- Absenteeism, escaping from work responsibilities, arriving late, leaving early, etc.
- Deterioration in work performance, more of error prone work, memory loss, etc.
- Cribbing, over-reacting, arguing, getting irritated, anxiety, etc.
- Deteriorating health, more of accidents, etc.
- Improper eating habits (over-eating or under-eating), excessive smoking and drinking, sleeplessness, etc.

It is thus very essential to have effective stress management strategies in an organization so that the detrimental repercussions of stress on the employees as well as their performance can be reduced and controlled.

SOURCE/CAUSES OF STRESS:

The factors leading to stress among individual are called as stressors. Some of the factors/stressors acting on employees are-

1) **Organizational factors-** With the growth in organizational stress and complexity, there is increase in organizational factors also which cause stress among employees. Some of such factors are-

- Discrimination in pay/salary structure
- Strict rules and regulations
- Ineffective communication
- Peer pressure
- Goals conflicts/goals ambiguity
- More of centralized and formal organization structure
- Less promotional opportunities
- Lack of employees participation in decision-making
- Excessive control over the employees by the managers

Some of the other typical causes of stress at work:

- bullying or harassment, by anyone, not necessarily a person's manager
- feeling powerless and uninvolved in determining one's own responsibilities
- continuous unreasonable performance demands
- lack of effective communication and conflict resolution
- lack of job security
- long working hours
- excessive time away from home and family
- office politics and conflict among staff
- a feeling that one's reward reward is not commensurate with one's responsibility
- working hours, responsibilities and pressures disrupting life-balance (diet, exercise, sleep and rest, play, family-time, etc)

2) **Individual factors-** There are various expectations which the family members, peer, superior and subordinates have from the employee. Failure to understand such expectations or to convey such expectations lead to role ambiguity/role conflict which in turn causes employee stress. Other individual factors causing stress among employees are inherent personality traits such as being impatient, aggressive, rigid, feeling time pressure always, etc. Similarly, the family issues, personal financial problems, sudden career changes all lead to stress.

3) Job concerning factors- Certain factors related to job which cause stress among employees are as follows-

- Monotonous nature of job
- Unsafe and unhealthy working conditions
- Lack of confidentiality
- Crowding

4) Extra-organizational factors- There are certain issues outside the organization which lead to stress among employees. In today's modern and technology savvy world, stress has increased. Inflation, technological change, social responsibilities and rapid social changes are other extra-organizational factors causing stress.

SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

After having understood the causes of stress, it is important to know the symptoms of stress. While a person is under stress he is affected physically, psychologically and behaviourally. On this very basis the symptoms of stress can be divided into the following three category:

1) PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS: When a person feels stressed his mind reacts and his senses are excited. Physical balance is disturbed. Its effects can be short term or long term. In the form of short term effect, his digestive system is disturbed and his throat gets parched. In the form of long term effect, ulcer and heart disease can be developed. In short physical symptoms of stress start appearing in the following ways:

- Heart disease
- Kidney disease
- High blood pressure
- Headache
- Perspiration
- Digestive problems
- Dryness of throat
- Ulcer
- Frequent urination
- Sleep disorder

2) <u>PSYCHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS:</u> Every individual has a special nature. Some people are mentally more strong and such people solve their problems in better way than the others. Mentally weak people gets nervous at insignificant problems. They get quickly depressed and lose their confidence. Such people consider themselves helpless and are always looking for other people's sympathy. In short, the psychological symptoms of stress get reflected in the following ways:

- Depression
- Emotional stability
- Feeling scared
- Feeling moody/irritated
- Nervousness
- Tension
- Job dissatisfaction

3) <u>BEHAVIOURAL SYMPTOMS:</u> When a person is feeling stressed, apart from showing physical and psychological symptoms, he displays some behavioural symptoms also. His conduct under goes a change under the impact of stress. His style of conversation gets fast, he gets agitated with others. His mode of eating changes. He starts consuming intoxicating drinks like wine, etc. he looses his self confidence and remains depressed all the time. In short, he displays the following behavioural symptoms of stress:

- Absenteeism
- Aggression
- Smoking
- Using alcohol
- Grinding teeth
- Losing confidence
- Defensive

<u>STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING STRESS</u>

Stress experienced by the employees in their job has negative impact on their health, performance and their behaviour in the organization. Thus, stress needs to be managed

effectively so as to set off these harmful consequences. Strategies for managing stress are as follows-

Organizational strategies for managing stress

1) Encouraging more of organizational communication with the employees so that there is no role ambiguity/conflict. Effective communication can also change employee views. Managers can use better signs and symbols which are not misinterpreted by the employees.

2) Encourage employees' participation in decision-making. This will reduce role stress.

Grant the employees greater independence, meaningful and timely feedback, and greater responsibility.

3) The organizational goals should be realistic, stimulating and particular.

4) The employees must be given feedback on how well they are heading towards these goals.

5) Encourage decentralization.

6) Have a fair and just distribution of incentives and salary structure.

7) Promote job rotation and job enrichment.

8) Create a just and safe working environment.

9) Have effective hiring and orientation procedure.

10) Appreciate the employees on accomplishing and over-exceeding their targets.

Individual strategies for managing stress

1) The employees should make a "to-do" list daily, prioritize the acts in the list and plan the acts accordingly. Take regular breaks during work to relax you. By effective time management, the employees can achieve their targets timely and can meet work pressures and, thus, avoid stress.

2) Do hard work. Strive to achieve your goals but do not do it to the harm of family, health, or peer.

3) Indulge in physical exercises. It helps in effective blood circulation, keeps you fit, diverts mind from work pressures.

4) Encourage a healthy lifestyle. Take a regular sleep, have plenty of water, have healthy eating habits. Promote relaxation techniques such as yoga, listening music and meditation.

5) The employees should have optimistic approach about their work. They should avoid connections with negative approach employees.

6) The employees should have emotional intelligence at workplace. They should have self-awareness, self-confidence and self-control at workplace.

7) The employees should build social support. They should have close connections with trustworthy peer who can listen to their problems and boost their confidence level. This social network will help the employees to overcome stress.

8) Employee counselling is a very good strategy to overcome employee stress. Through counselling, employees can become aware of their strengths and how to develop those strengths; their weaknesses and how to eliminate them; and they can develop strategies for changing their behaviour. Employees are also given career counselling which helps in reducing their ambiguities with regard to career.

9) Find a fun way to release stress, such as, cracking jokes, playing tennis, golf, etc.

10) Do not remain pre-occupied with yourself. Turn your focus outwards. Help others. This will release some stress.

CONCLUSION

Organizations are constantly undergoing change through new demands, changing technology, demographic changes and increased competition. Due to the increase in workload, psychological problems related to occupational stress have increased rapidly. More than ever before, job stress has become a hazard to the health of employees. These can include physical health decline as well as depression.

The overall importance of stress management in the workplace is that it helps to tackle the issue of work related stress. It also helps in identifying the causes of stress within an

organisation, department or team and discusses about managing the pressure that workers face and consequently the amount of stress that they experience.

Thus, the process of stress management is one of the keys to a happy and successful life in modern society. Although life provides numerous demands that can prove difficult to handle, stress management provides a number of ways to manage anxiety and maintain overall well-being. And the principles that could prevent stress at work are:

- Working conditions are adapted to people's differing physical and mental aptitudes
- Employee is given the opportunity to participate in the design of his/her own work situation, and in the processes of change and development affecting his/her work
- Technology, work organisation, and job content are designed so that the employee is not exposed to physical or mental strains that may lead to illness or accidents. Forms of remuneration and the distribution of working hours are taken into account
- Closely controlled or restricted work is avoided or limited
- Work should provide opportunities for variety, social contact, and cooperation as well as coherence between different working operations
- Working conditions should provide opportunities for personal and vocational development, as well as for self determination and professional responsibility

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