

# Stress management for HR professionals

## Overview

Stress continues to have a major impact in organisations. According to HSE research, the total number of working days lost due to this condition last year was 9.9 million days with stress accounting for 43% of all working days lost due to ill health. Despite this huge impact, CIPD research shows that many organisations are failing to take adequate steps to proactively identify and reduce stress in the workplace and many struggle to recognise and support staff who are already suffering from stress-related symptoms.

This programme has therefore been designed to help HR professionals identify how they can best support their organisation in preventing, reducing and managing stress. It recognises the role that HR can play in helping develop proactive strategies to reduce incidents of work-related stress as well as helping individuals to cope with or recover from stressful situations. It also recognises the important role that HR has in equipping managers with the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to manage stress within their team appropriately. The workshop provides participants with a wealth of ideas, strategies and tools to use within their organisations. It draws on current research, best practice guidance, lessons from case law and learning from a wide range of organisations in the form of case studies.

## Learning objectives

By the end of the workshop participants will:

- Understand the impact of stress at work and the causes of work-related stress
- Understand the benefits of proactively managing stress, including minimising legal risk
- Know how HR can best support the organisation as a whole in managing stress and, in particular, how to support managers prevent and respond appropriately to stress within their team
- Have learnt how other organisations tackle stress and the range of support and wider tools and initiatives available
- Have reviewed how their organisation prevents and manages stress and have identified areas for improvement

## Audience

HR professionals.

## Format

This one-day workshop is highly participative and uses group exercises, case studies and practical exercises to illustrate problems and develop a best practice approach in dealing with them. Group discussions and feedback are used to develop learning points and to enable participants to relate examples to their own situations.

Participants will receive a welcome letter with some pre-work. In particular, they will be encouraged to reflect on:

- The impact of stress in their organisation and the sources of work-related stress
- What their organisation is doing already in this area. What is working well? What less so?
- Specific concerns / challenges they experience in this area
- Personal outcomes for the day

## Special feature

Your organisation's policies and procedures can be incorporated into the workshop, to ensure that participants are continually relating the learning to your current in-house processes.

## Expert trainer

This programme is delivered by **Rachel Hicks**, our lead trainer in this area. See her profile [here](#).

## Workshop outline

### 1 Introduction

- Course objectives and benefits from attending this course
- Participants' experience and confidence in this area
- Personal objectives
- Ground rules re confidentiality

### 2 Understanding stress

- *Group exercise*
- Understanding what stress is and how to recognise stress at work
- Exploring the impact of stress and the business benefits of managing stress proactively
- Reducing risk; an overview of legislation and practical application of four legal principles; relevant case law

### 3 Sources of stress

- Understanding typical sources of stress; learning from CIPD and HSE research
- *Group exercise: Analysing sources of stress in your organisation against the six factors identified in the HSE Stress Management Standards*
- Ideas and actions to help reduce stress against these factors

### 4 Roles and responsibilities

- Identifying key responsibilities within the organisation for preventing and managing stress
- Identifying the important role managers have in:
  - Grievance
  - Preventing stress
  - Recognising stress at an early stage
  - Demonstrating a positive attitude towards stress
  - Responding appropriately
- Recognising the specific role, responsibility and influence HR has in this area
- Other sources of support, eg, Occupational Health, EAP, etc

### 5 Levels of action

- Understanding different levels of action, eg, proactive actions to prevent stress or help individuals cope with stressful situations and reactive actions designed to help individuals recover from and deal with the impact of stress
- Examples of interventions that are implemented at an organisational level, eg, risk assessments identifying stress 'hot spots' in the organisation, determining strategy and policy
- Examples of interventions aimed at managers or teams and those designed to support individuals with stress management, eg, raising managers' awareness of stress, adjustments to role, coping strategies, etc.

## 6 Practical ideas and resources

- Practical tools and resources
- How to develop and support line managers; a management toolkit
- Promoting positive wellbeing; the Workplace Wellbeing Charter
- Case studies: Learning from other organisations. A wide range of interventions that cover areas such as promoting health and wellbeing, providing positive information and support on stress and mental health, up-skilling managers, training on coping strategies such as resilience, mindfulness, etc.
- *Group exercises to embed learning and identify practical applications*
- *Group exercises on challenging situations*

## 7 And finally...

- Open forum – remaining challenges and ‘what if’ scenarios
- Action planning – identifying how participants will transfer this learning into the workplace and what else they may need which will help them to do this effectively
- Review and close

For a no-obligation discussion about running this programme for your organisation on an in-house basis, just give us a call on **01582 463462**.