Stress: Causes and Cures
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Goals and Agenda

Goals

- Identify the impact of stress at work an in our personal lives
- Describe the things that lead to stress
- Develop approaches to handle stress productively

Agenda

1. Goals and Starters
2. Impact of Stress
3. Signs and Causes
4. Positive Energy
5. Getting “In the Zone”
6. What to Do
7. Close
Stress

- A physical, chemical, and/or emotional factor that leads to bodily or mental tension.
- An alarm signal – the body’s response to a challenge.
- A feeling, response, or emotion that we experience when something is not the way we want it to be.

Goal

The goal of stress management is to find the right mental and emotional responses to stress that will help keep you moving and motivated, but not allow the stress to overwhelm your coping mechanisms.

WebMD
Impact

Stressful Reactions                  Energized, Low Stress
Lower engagement                    Higher engagement
Higher absenteeism                  More present
Lower productivity                 Higher productivity
More illness                       More healthy

Cost of $200 - 300 B per year

Towers Watson, "Workplace Stress Leads to Less Productive Employees," Internet, September 3, 2014

Signs of Stress

• Physical: heart racing, blood pressure rises, headaches, tightness, stomach cramps, sweating
• Confusion
• Irritation
• Anxiety
• Anger
• Withdrawal
Situations that You Experience

- Municipal leaders complain about costs
- Leaders or co-workers demand better financial results or higher quality
- Citizens or vendors question requisition process
- Vendors questions purchasing decisions
- Employees are not performing as expected
- Family issues
- Personal health issues

Causes

- Work: deadlines, pressures, responsibilities, staffing
- Interactions: with boss(es), employees, citizens, co-workers, vendors
- Physical: ailments and illness
- Emotional: powerful feelings, sense of self
- Financial: cash flow, security
- Social: family, loved ones, friends
So …

How are you going to manage all these issues??

What is “Eustress”

- “Good stress”
- Experiences that lead to satisfaction, engagement, achievement, fulfillment, growth, meaning
- Relate to motivation, challenge, empowerment, hope
- Correlate with well-being: happier, healthier, productivity
Self Assessment: What Energizes You?
- Work challenges
- Family experiences/spare time/parenting
- Self time
- Volunteering
- Exercise
- Socializing
- Spiritual/Meditative
- Other
- Other

The Conditions of Flow

Czikszentmihalyi (1990), Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience
Cures: Actions to Take

- Manage priorities and commitments
- Pay attention to stress signs and signals
- Monitor stress levels
- Focus on what you can control/influence
- Focus on the present
- Communicate/speak up
- Find friends
- Change lifestyle choices
- Exercise/massage
- Healthy diet
- Sleep
- Practice relaxation techniques
- Do fun stuff: laugh!
- Take care of self: physical and emotional
- Get support

Addressing Stress

| Acknowledge your values and goals | Know yourself. Keep your own values in mind |
| Recognize organizational and personal priorities | Know organizational goals and strategies. Align your work with organizational priorities |
| Examine your thinking about the situation | What’s the worst that can happen? How likely is it? How am I seeing this issue? What is my “style” when it comes to this type of issue? How can I see the situation optimistically? |
| Build your own resilience | Emphasize your own strengths |
| Seek support | Discuss the issue with others. Develop relationships. Seek coaching |
| Confront the problem: communicate about the issue | Address concerns openly, politely, and directly. Seek mutually beneficial outcomes. Show initiative |
| Build your physical and mental capabilities | Meditate. Seek spirit. Choose well in food and drink. Exercise |
Action Plan

- What are the key points you will take away?
- What will you do to focus on “flow” and lessen negative stress?

Emil J. Sadloch

Emil J. Sadloch, President of SADLOCH DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES, has worked for over 30 years in learning, leadership development, and human resource development. He provides leadership training, consulting, and coaching to leaders in client organizations.

Sadloch earlier served as Account Executive and Training Performance Consultant for AchieveGlobal (LengerMuller and Learning International). He was also Director of Personnel/Training and Vice President, Human Resources for Thomas Cook Financial Services (New York and Princeton), the international travel financial organization known for travelers’ cheques and the “Cook’s Tour.”

Sadloch instructs in the Rutgers “Leadership Studies” minor and leads programs offered by the Center for Government Services and Executive and Professional Education at Rutgers. He was an instructor for Penn State Management Development. He is an Authorized Partner for The Leadership Challenge from Wiley Publishing and is a Certified Coach for the Leadership Practices Inventory 360.

A graduate of Washington and Lee University, Sadloch holds a Master of Arts from Montclair State University and has completed additional graduate work in personnel management, industrial psychology, and general management at NYU and Rutgers. He is the Facilitator for the Tri-State Human Relations Coalition.

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