

## Causes for Stress and Management of It at Work

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**Abstract:** Stress has been explained in different ways. Most of the employees and managers have strain in the workplace. In working in the organization most of the people are affected with stress due to work environment. The main reason for stress is imbalanced mentality. If stress increases in the work environment first it affects the health condition of the employee. Anxiety, depression, aggressive behavior headache, are the various symptoms of stress in the workplace.

Good employment practice includes assessing the risk of stress amongst employees.

- a. Looking for pressures at work which could cause high and long lasting levels of stress.
- b. Deciding whether you are doing enough to prevent that harm.

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### I. Introduction

Stress has been defined in different ways over the years. Originally it was conceived of as pressure from the environment, then as strain within the person. The generally accepted definition today is one of interaction between the situation and the Individual. It is the psychological and physical state that results when the resources of the Individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of the situation.

### II. Signs of Stress in People's Behavior

Acute responses to stress may be in the areas of feelings (For example anxiety, depression, irritability, Fatigue)

In behavior stress may be aggressive tearful, unmotivated, thinking. (For example difficulties of concentration and problem solving) or physical symptoms (for example headache). If stress persists, there are changes in neuroendocrine, cardiovascular, autonomic and immunological functioning, leading to mental and physical ill health (for example anxiety, depression, heart disease)

### III. How Stress Is Caused

#### ❖ Alarm Reaction :

When confronted with a threat to our safety our first response is physiological arousal, our muscles tense and breathing and heart rate become more rapid. This serves us well when the threat is the proverbial bull in the field rushing towards us.

Example : Unjustified verbal attack by a superior at work. It is usually not socially acceptable to act by "Fight", and an alternative means of expressing the resultant emotional and physical energy is required.

### IV. Problem of Stress

#### ❖ For the Individual Threats to :

- Health
- Well being / Quality of Life
- Self esteem / Confidence
- Personal development

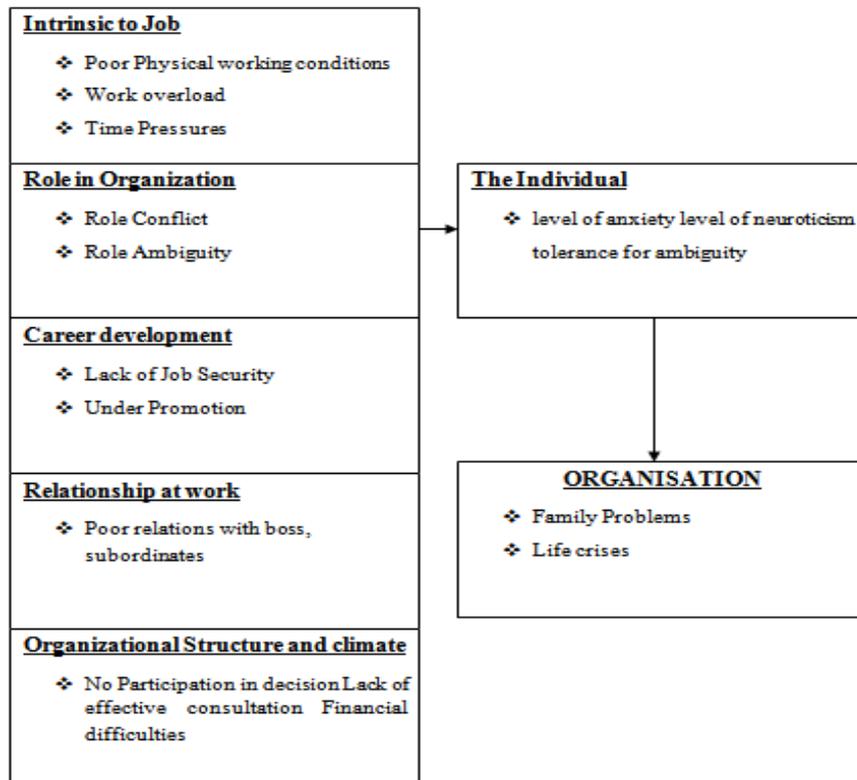
#### ❖ For the organization :

- Increased absenteeism and turnover
- Reduced Quantity and Quality of work
- Reduced job satisfaction and morale
- Problems of recruitment.

❖ Poor Communication and Increased Conflict

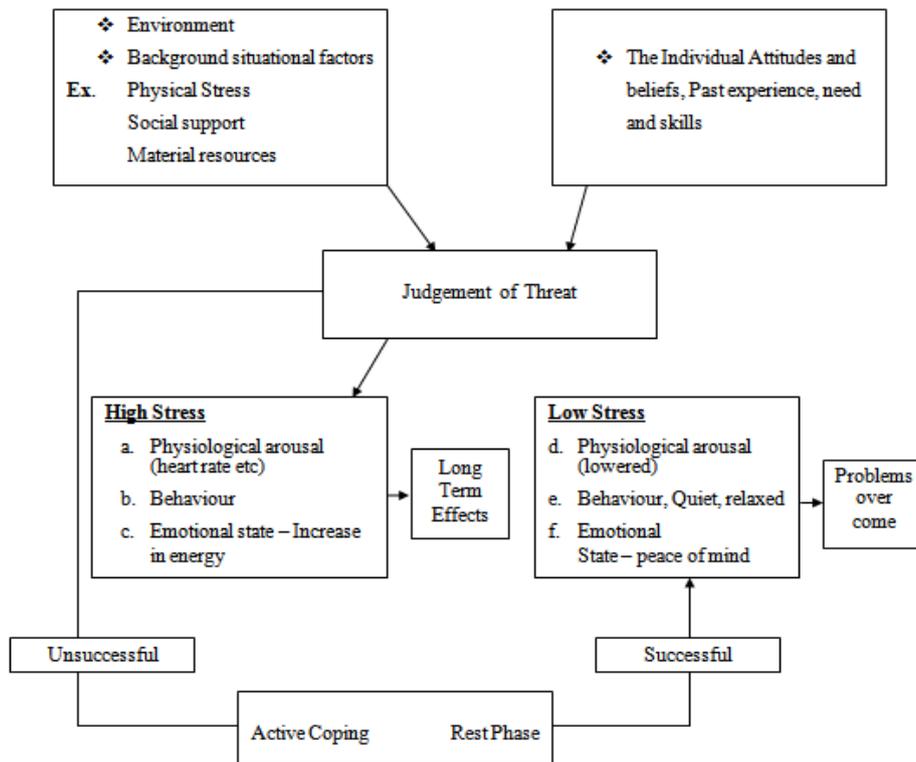
V. Sources of Stress at Work

Figure: 1



VI. Model of Stress and Its Management

Figure : 2

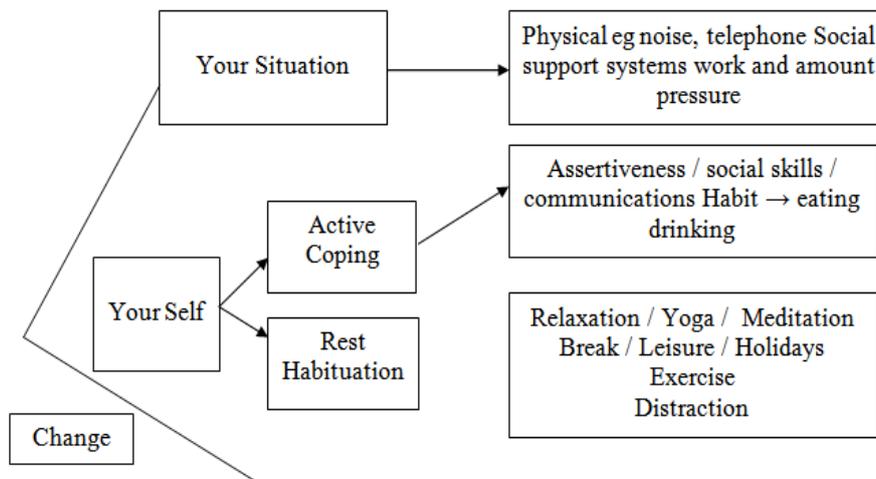


### VII. Opportunities

It is clear from Figure (1) and Figure (2) individuals differ in their risk of experiencing stress and in their vulnerability to the adverse effects of stress. Individuals are more likely to experience stress if they lack material resources (for example financial security) and Psychological resources (for example coping skills, self esteem) and are more likely to be harmed by this stress if they tend to react emotionally to situations and are highly competitive and pressured (Type a behavior). A successful strategy for preventing stress within the workplace will ensure that the job fits the person, rather than trying to make people fit jobs that they are not well suited to.

### VIII. Interactions between Work and Home Stress

Increasingly the demands on the Individual in the workplace reach out into the homes and social lives of employees. Long, uncertain or unsocial hours working away from home, taking work home, high levels of responsibilities, job insecurity



and Job relocation all may adversely affect family responsibilities and leisure activities. This is likely to undermine a good and relaxing Quality of life outside work, which is an important buffer against the stress caused by work. In addition domestic pressures such as childcare responsibilities, Financial worries and housing problems may affect a person’s robustness at work.

However there are many sources of stress that the individual is likely to perceive as outside his or her power to change, such as the structure, management style or culture of the organization. It is important to note that stress management approaches that concentrate on changing the Individual without changing the sources of stress are of limited effectiveness, and may be counter productive by masking these sources.

For example, breathing deeply and thinking positively about a situation causing stress may make for a temporary Feeling of well being, but will allow a damaging situation to continue, causing persistent stress and probably, stress to others.

### IX. Organisational Stress Management

The prevention and management of workplace stress requires organizational level Interventions, because it is the organization that creates the stress. An approach that is limited to helping those already experiencing stress is analogous to administering sticking plaster on wounds, rather than dealing with the cause of the damage. An alternative analogy is trying to run up an escalator that’s going down organizational interventions can be of many types, ranging from structural (For example, staffing levels, work schedules, physical environment) to psychological (for example social support, control over work, participation)

### X. Assessing the Risk of Stress within the Workplace Must Take Into Account

- a. The likelihood and the extent of ill health which could occur as a result of exposure to a particular hazard.
- b. The extent to which an individual is exposed to the hazard.

The analysis of stressful hazards at work should consider all aspects of its design and management and its social and organizational context. Creating a safe system of work requires targeting equipments, materials, the environment and people (For example ensuring sufficient skills for the tasks) It also requires having monitoring and review systems to assess the extent to which prevention and control strategies are effective.

### **XI. Principles of Preventing Work Stress in the Organization**

- ❖ 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 organization 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.
- ❖ Working conditions should provide opportunities for personal and vocational development as well as for self determination and professional responsibility.

### **XII. Risk Assessment Strategy**

#### ❖ **Hazard identification**

Reliably identify the stressors which exist in relation to work and working conditions, for specified groups of employees, and make an assessment of the degree of exposure.

#### ❖ **Assessment of Harm**

Collect evidence that exposure to such stressors is associated with impaired health in the group being assessed or of the wider organization. This should include a wide range of health - related outcomes, including symptoms of general malaise and specific disorders and of organizational and health related behaviours such as smoking, drinking and sickness absence.

#### ❖ **Recommendations on Residual Risk**

Take existing management control and employee support systems into proper account to make recommendations on the residual risk associated with the likely risk Factors related to work stress.

### **XIII. Conclusion**

The main reason for stress in the work place is pressures and demands put on an individual. There are some important dimensions for job strain, the person working in the environment, his role ambiguity, job demands, these are the main reasons for job strain. In stress management the organization has to take some adequate steps to overcome the stress, providing proper type of training for their development, changing the sources of stress, increasing the level of confidence among the employees, interventions designed to increase their participation in decision making. Time management is also very important to avoid stress. Work is not perfectly done by the employee due to some health problems or stress. Then that particular time is not saved by him for doing the work effectively and promptly.

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