MANAGER'S
ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT

Stress and Burnout

WellBe Link

Impact with Purpose

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced work environment, effectively managing workplace stress and burnout is essential in promoting wellbeing, and ensuring a positive work culture. This guide is designed as a practical resource to support organisations:

1. Fulfill their responsibilities towards managing workplace stress
2. Identify the specific stressors impacting employees
3. Assess the current state of stress and burnout within the workplace
4. Offer tips on how to address stress hazards in the workplace

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Disclaimer:

MANAGING STRESS AND BURNOUT

UK Legal Milestones in Workplace Stress Management

- **The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA)** [1]
  Obligates employers to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of their employees, which includes managing and mitigating stress in the workplace.

- **1999- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations** [2]
  These regulations further specify the requirement for employers to assess risks to health and safety – including stress – and to take action to mitigate those risks.

- **The Equality Act 2010** [3]
  Stress can cause conditions that could be considered a disability. Employers have a responsibility to make reasonable adjustments to support employees with disabilities, which can include mental health conditions impacted by stress.

- **Guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) 2019** [4]
  Management Standards for work-related stress were introduced. These standards were developed to help employers manage stress levels in the workplace. This document is inspired by this guidance, research and statistics on stress and burnout.

Summary:

This guidance aligns with current research on stress and burnout and mirrors recommendations from HSE for managing workplace stress effectively. Cultivating stress-reducing cultures helps to develop environments that support health, wellbeing, and optimal performance in the workplace.

MANAGING STRESS AND BURNOUT

The World Health Organisation, WHO, has described burnout as... "a syndrome conceptualised as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed." [5]. The HSE's six management standards below highlight key indicators of stress hazards in the workplace. Identifying areas of stress raises awareness of opportunities for enhancing employee health and wellbeing [6].

Six Management Standards

1 Demands
Excessive workload, being under-resourced and too little work can cause stress, impacting employees' health and the organisation's performance.

2 Control
Employees who have more control over work, experience lower stress levels. Autonomy is linked to job satisfaction and empowerment leading to more effective stress management.

3 Support
Supportive work environments, including access to resources, training, and support from colleagues and management, is crucial for mitigating stress.

4 Relationships
Positive interpersonal relationships at work can prevent conflict and enhance connection helping to create a supportive work culture.
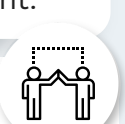
5 Role
Clear role definition prevents confusion and the stress that comes from conflicting demands.

6 Change
Involving employees in decisions that affect their jobs and ensuring clear communication about changes can reduce uncertainty and stress.

MANAGING STRESS AND BURNOUT

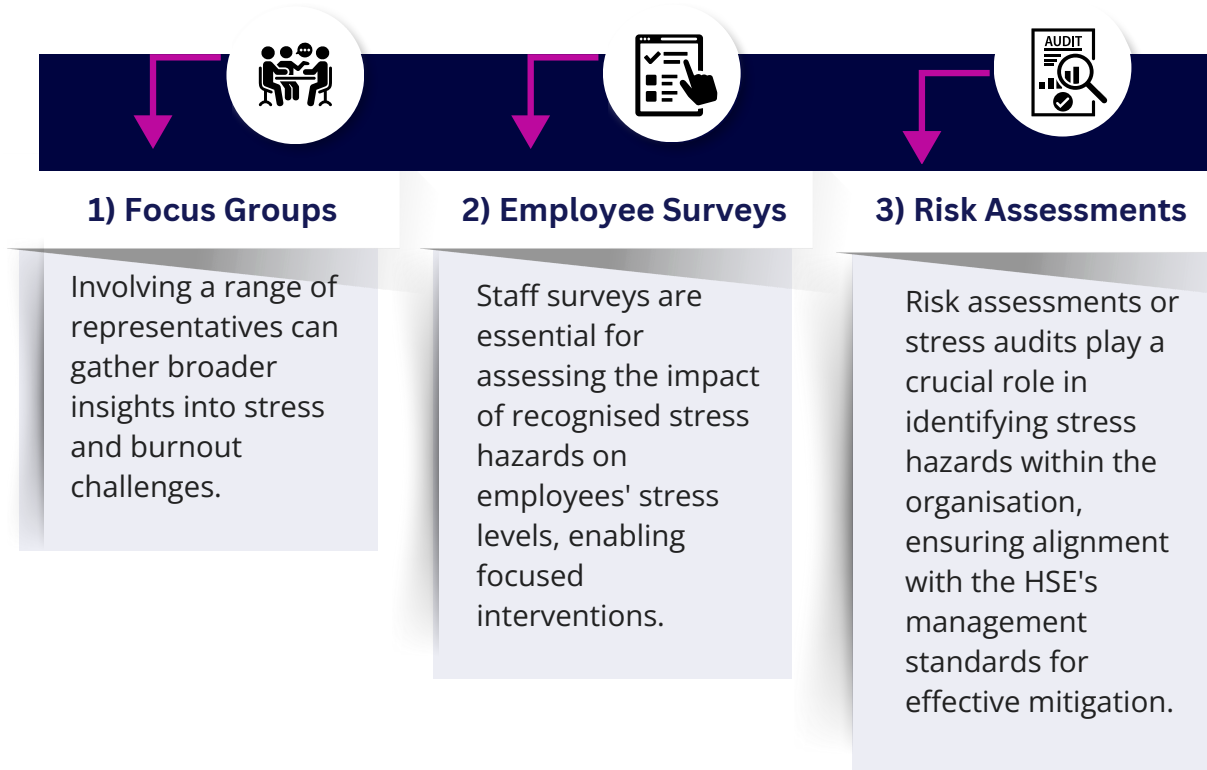The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's, (CIPD) Health and wellbeing at work survey 2023 [7] highlights best practices to identify and evaluate stress levels in the workplace. Recognising that people react to stress in varied ways, a collaborative approach with individuals and teams in line with HSE's guidance is recommended to effectively address and manage stress.
Best practices highlighted by the CIPD include:

1) Focus Groups

Involving a range of representatives can gather broader insights into stress and burnout challenges.

2) Employee Surveys

Staff surveys are essential for assessing the impact of recognised stress hazards on employees' stress levels, enabling focused interventions.

3) Risk Assessments

Risk assessments or stress audits play a crucial role in identifying stress hazards within the organisation, ensuring alignment with the HSE's management standards for effective mitigation.

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2023 Report
TOP WORKPLACE INTERVENTIONS [6]

- Access to counseling services
- Mental health first aid training
- Employee assistance programmes (EAPs)
- Increasing awareness of mental health
- Phased return and/or reasonable adjustments

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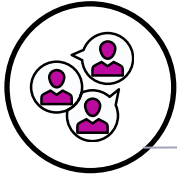
THE ANTI-GOAL FOCUS GROUP ACTIVITY

This focus group activity can promote creative problem-solving and collaborative planning. Rather than solely envisioning the ideal end goal, teams actively explore everything that could lead to the opposite outcome; the worst-case scenarios. By identifying everything that could go wrong, teams preempt and address stress hazards before they happen.

What's the worst that could happen?

Consider the objective of creating a welcoming and relaxing experience for visitors entering the building. The anti-goal, in contrast, involves identifying all the factors that could potentially make the experience stressful and challenging.

Confusing Directions

No parking instructions

Unstaffed entrance

Cluttered waiting area

Lack of accessibility

Poor signage

Identifying these anti-goals helps teams implement corrective actions, and, in this case, enhances the visitor experience during their time at your organisation.

Further anti-goal topic ideas

- Job roles at higher risk of isolation; remote or field workers.
- Situations that are new; inducting new staff, introducing new systems.
- Occasions where additional support may be beneficial- returning from sick leave, or staff with health conditions.
- Communicating organisational change.

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EMPLOYEE STRESS AND BURNOUT SURVEY

This survey is inspired by the Burnout Assessment Tool 2020 [8] and latest findings from the government's stress and burnout report in 2023 [9]. To help identify signs of burnout, please indicate how often you've felt this way recently by choosing a score from 0 to 5, where 0 = Never and 5 = Always for each statement.

Energy Levels:

Totals

☐ I feel mentally exhausted regularly.

☐ Rest or sleep doesn't replenish my energy.

☐ Getting out of bed in the morning is a struggle.

☐ Small tasks cause me extreme stress or anxiety.

☐ Activities that require physical or mental exertion tire me out easily.

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Engagement:

☐ My motivation for work has decreased.

☐ My job no longer interests me as it once did.

☐ I dread starting my work most days.

☐ I feel disconnected from my colleagues.

☐ I am cynical about how others value my contribution.

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Changes in Mood:

☐ I react more strongly or negatively at work than usual.

☐ I find myself acting 'out of character' negatively or defensively.

☐ I become easily irritated by situations or people.

☐ I have heightened emotions, and I don't know why.

☐ I often experience low mood.

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EMPLOYEE STRESS AND BURNOUT SURVEY

Focus:

Totals

☐ Keeping focused on tasks is increasingly difficult.

☐ I'm more forgetful than usual.

☐ I'm worrying about things when I'm trying not to.

☐ I become easily distracted.

☐ I'm making more mistakes than usual.

| | 25 |

Sub Total | | 100 |

0-20: Minimal risk of burnout. Your responses suggest low stress and minimal to no burnout risk.

21-40: Low risk of burnout. Indications of stress are present but manageable.

41-60: Moderate risk of burnout. Signs of burnout are more pronounced, suggesting a need for early intervention.

61-80: High risk of burnout. Your responses indicate a high level of stress and potential burnout. Take steps to reduce stress, such as seeking professional support, engaging in stress-reduction activities, and exploring options for workload or role adjustments.

81-100: Severe risk of burnout. Scores in this range suggest severe stress and potential burnout, requiring urgent action. Professional support is recommended, along with discussions with your employer about changes to reduce stressors.

Disclaimer

This survey provides guidance for organisations to identify stress and burnout, aiming to cultivate a supportive work culture. It is not intended as medical advice. Always seek professional support if you have health and wellbeing concerns.

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WORKPLACE STRESSOR ASSESSMENT

This survey gathers insights into aspects of your work environment. The survey focuses on the Health and Safety Executive's six management standards [4,6]. Score statements from 0-5, where 0 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree.

Demands

☐ I find my workload manageable.

☐ I am able to complete my work within my scheduled hours.

☐ My work patterns (e.g. office-based, shifts, fieldwork) support my wellbeing.

☐ The work environment is comfortable (lighting, seating, noise etc)

☐ My skills are effectively utilised in my job.

Use this space to expand on your answers above:

Control

☐ I have the freedom to decide how I complete my tasks.

☐ I can set my own work priorities and deadlines.

☐ My input is valued in decisions that affect my work environment and tasks.

☐ I am encouraged to make decisions that affect my own work.

☐ I have autonomy over the methods I use to complete my work.

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Control cont...

Please share any experiences where having control over your work has positively or negatively impacted your stress levels.

Support (Guidance, Training, and Resources)

☐ I receive adequate guidance and support to do my job.

☐ My manager provides the support I need to succeed.

☐ I have access to the training necessary to perform my role.

☐ The resources needed to do my work are readily available.

☐ My coworkers are supportive and collaborative.

Use this space if you'd like to expand on your answers above:

WORKPLACE STRESSOR ASSESSMENT

Relationships

☐ have positive relationships with my colleagues.

☐ My interactions with coworkers are respectful and professional.

☐ The organisation promotes a culture of cooperation and support.

☐ I feel comfortable discussing work-related issues with colleagues.

☐ Conflicts within my team are resolved in a constructive manner.

Share your experiences regarding how interpersonal relationships at work have affected your stress levels at work.

Role

☐ My job duties are clearly explained to me.

☐ My role matches my job description.

☐ I am confident in understanding my role within the company.

☐ I receive clear communication regarding any changes to my role.

☐ I rarely have overlapping job tasks with my coworkers.

Role continued...

Please provide details about any experiences of role uncertainty.

Change Management (Communication and Involvement)

☐ The company communicates changes that affect my work.

☐ I am involved in decision-making when changes impact my role.

☐ Change communication is clear and provided in a timely manner.

☐ I feel prepared for changes due to communication efforts.

☐ Feedback is sought from employees about proposed changes.

How has communication and inclusion about change impacted you? :

Summary

Scores closer to 5 indicate well-managed areas of the business and lower scores suggest opportunities for improvement.
Disclaimer- This survey provides guidance for organisations to identify stress and burnout. It is not intended as medical advice. Always seek professional support if you have health and wellbeing concerns.

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REFERENCES

[1] Health and Safety at Work ETC Act 1974, Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 – legislation explained. Available at: https://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm (Accessed: 06 May 2024).

[2] The management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Legislation.gov.uk. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/contents/made (Accessed: 06 May 2024).

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[6] Working together to reduce stress at work - HSE (2008) Health and Safety Executive . Available at: https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg424.pdf (Accessed: 06 May 2024).

[7] Health and wellbeing at work (2023) Survey report September 2023 Health and WellBeing at Work . Available at: https://www.cipd.org/globalassets/media/knowledge/knowledge-hub/reports/2023-pdfs/8436-health-and-wellbeing-report-2023.pdf (Accessed: 06 May 2024).

[8] 2020 Test manual bat (English) - version 2.0. Available at: https://burnoutassessmenttool.be/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Test-Manual-BAT-English-version-2.0-1.pdf

[9] January 2024 Mental health UK | the burnout report 2024. Available at: https://euc7zxtct58.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/19145241/Mental-Health-UK_The-Burnout-Report-2024.pdf

SUMMARY

For more help and support in tackling workplace stress, including training, counselling or consultation from one of our psychologically informed team members, please contact us using the details below:

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