

Stress in the work place

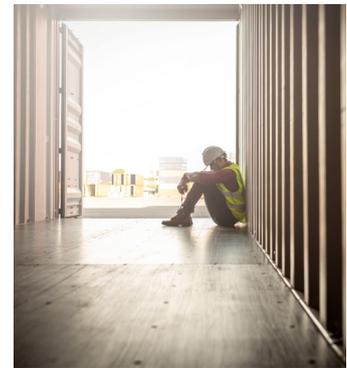
Toolbox Talk MH01



It's probably no surprise that workload is the most common cause of stress in the workplace, followed by management style.

HSE identified the top six causes of stress at work as:

- The demands of the job
- The control an employee has over their work
- The support they receive from managers and colleagues
- The relationships in the workplace
- The employee's role in the organisation
- Organisational change and how it's managed



As well as the effect stress has on a person's health, it can have a huge effect on morale and productivity. Unchecked, it can soon translate into increased staff turnover.

Why stress is a problem:

Just a third (29%) of organisations stated that stress is among their top three causes of absence.



30%

of respondents have taken time off due to mental health issues / stress

of these respondents

63%

did not tell their employer that the reason for their absence was mental health

24%

have considered taking their own life.

This figure rose to 32% from respondents working for companies that employ fewer than 100 staff

Recognising the signs

It's vital that employers are tuned in to how their employees are feeling. The symptoms of stress can appear in a number of ways, but here are some typical signs.

Emotional

Your employee may seem sensitive to criticism, be irritable, have an uncharacteristic loss of confidence or self-esteem, and be less engaged.

Cognitive

You may notice that your employee is making more mistakes than usual, is having problems making decisions, or is not able to concentrate.

Behavioural

This could include things like arriving late, not taking lunch breaks, taking unofficial time off, not joining in with the team or office banter, or not hitting deadlines.

Physical

Employees who are stressed sometime exhibit physical symptoms such as what seems like a constant cold, being tired at work, looking like they haven't made an effort with their appearance, or rapid weight loss or gain.

- Q. So what do you say to someone who is displaying any of the signs?**
A. Start with 'How's it going?' 'Would you like to talk?' 'Is there anything I can help with?'
- Q. What do you do if you're experiencing stress?**
A. Ask for help. Take care of yourself outside of work, including exercise and eating well. Don't bottle things up – talk to a family member, colleague or seek professional help!

Good communication could include staff surveys, giving workers the opportunity to anonymously voice concerns about their jobs and even make suggestions as to how they would like to see management cut down on stress.

Stress, depression and anxiety accounts for a fifth of all work-related illness. It's #TimeToTalk

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