



# Managing Workplace Stress

Cor\_2009\_Managing Workplace Stress

The way staff are supported is key to reducing workplace stress. Support provided by managers/supervisors can reduce the stress response that staff may experience when their work is demanding and when they feel they have no control over those demands.

This tip sheet can assist Managers with managing workplace stress.

## *WHAT IS WORKPLACE STRESS?*







World Health Organisation (2015) defined workplace stress as: "the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope".

## *UNDERSTANDING WORKPLACE STRESS*

Workplace stress isn't always bad. It can help staff stay focused, energetic, and enable them to meet new challenges in the workplace. However, when workplace stress hinders a staff member, it stops being helpful and can start causing major damage to their mind and body as well as to their job satisfaction.

## *FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO WORKPLACE STRESS*

A number of factors can contribute to a staff member's workplace stress:

-  Working long hours or overtime, working through breaks or taking work home
-  Time pressure, working too hard or too fast, or unrealistic targets
-  Work that is repetitive and not reflective of skills and experience
-  Work that has low levels of control or inadequate support
-  Job insecurity
-  Bullying

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- ✎ Lack of role clarity or communication
- ✎ Conflict with colleagues or managers
- ✎ Discrimination

## ***MANAGING YOUR EMPLOYEE'S WORKPLACE STRESS***

There are a number of strategies that you can apply in managing your staff's responses to workplace stress:

1. Observe your staff, notice if there are any changes in their behaviour or relationships.
2. Listen to your staff, are there more complaints or excuses than usual and/or conflict about their role.
3. Consider whether the stress is work related or non-work related, and whether work is aggravating their non-work related stress.
4. Discuss with the staff member your observations and raise awareness of workplace supports, including Human Resources and Employee Assistance Program.
5. Put into place better strategies to manage workplace stress.

The key is to act early and engage with your staff providing support and assistance. Avoidance of workplace stress will not lead to improvements in their ability to meet expectations in performing their role.

## ***GETTING HELP***

You can seek help and assistance for managing workplace stress and coaching for your team from Pure Insights, who delivers your Employee Assistance Program. Please make an appointment with one of our Counsellors on 1300 796 640 or [info@pureinsights.com.au](mailto:info@pureinsights.com.au).

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