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Is Your Workplace Adding To Your Stress?



Manager Behaviour

Your line manager's behaviour can have a very significant effect on the levels of stress you are likely to experience at work. There has been well documented research done into this issue, by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and Investors in People UK (IIP). This research resulted in a number of tools which are available on the HSE's Stress Management Standards website :- (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm>).

One of these tools "**Line management behaviour and stress at work - Refined framework for line managers**" http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/A6680134-C1CF-4BD6-9B03-311AE62E8DAF/0/stress_at_work_framework_line_managers.pdf has been used in the preparation of this guidance to help NUT members determine how much of a problem stress at work is likely to be for them. Line managers have a critical role in maintaining employee health and well-being and minimising the likelihood of stressful situations arising for their staff. Not enough attention is paid to the development of the correct management skills, indeed, very often the most detrimental of management behaviours is encouraged. The outcome of the HSE research has revealed that a "good" manager will demonstrate all the qualities described in the "Management Competencies" overleaf. This toolkit has been devised for NUT members who wish to assess their own experiences at work and to see how well protected they are from work related stress.



Line management behaviour and stress at work
Refined framework for line managers



Well-designed, organised and managed work helps to maintain and promote individual health and well-being. These are "good jobs".

However, where there has been insufficient attention to job design, work organisation and management, work related stress is likely to be the result. These are "bad jobs".

SUMMARY OF THE 'MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES FOR PREVENTING AND REDUCING STRESS AT WORK' FRAMEWORK

Competency	Sub-Competency
Respectful and responsible: Managing emotions and having integrity	Integrity <i>Being respectful and honest to employees</i>
	Managing emotions <i>Behaving consistently and calmly around the team</i>
	Considerate approach <i>Being thoughtful in managing others and delegating</i>
Managing and communicating existing and future work	Proactive work management <i>Monitoring and reviewing existing work, allowing future prioritisation and planning</i>
	Problem solving <i>Dealing with problems promptly, rationally and responsibly</i>
	Participative/empowering <i>Listening to, meeting and consulting with the team, providing direction, autonomy and development opportunities to individuals</i>
Managing the individual within the team	Personally accessible <i>Available to talk to personally</i>
	Sociable <i>Relaxed approach, such as socialising and using humour</i>
	Empathetic engagement <i>Seeking to understand each individual in the team in terms of their health and satisfaction, motivation, point of view and life outside work</i>
Reasoning/Managing difficult situations	Managing conflict <i>Dealing with conflicts decisively, promptly and objectively</i>
	Use of organisational resources <i>Seeking advice when necessary from managers, HR and Occupational Health</i>
	Taking responsibility for resolving issues <i>Having a supportive and responsible approach to issues and incidents in the team</i>

Area 1

RESPECTFUL AND RESPONSIBLE: MANAGING EMOTIONS AND HAVING INTEGRITY

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
You benefit professionally by having good role models in senior positions					
You are always treated with respect					
You generally trust your colleagues to be truthful and honest					
Your colleagues are never duplicitous					
It is not acceptable to speak about colleagues behind their backs					
People generally stay calm in high-pressure situations					
Everyone is treated with the same consistent manner					
You are not subjected to people's unpredictable moods					
No-one passes their stress onto other people					
You all stay calm when faced with deadlines					
No-one takes suggestions for improvement as personal criticism					
Tasks are all given adequate planning and completion time					
Deadlines are always known well in advance					
Feedback, whether positive or negative, is always fair					
Problems are always sorted out in a timely fashion					
Alternative ways of doing things are encouraged					
Colleagues are forced to maintain a good work-life balance					
Note down the total number of ticks in each column					
Now multiply each column total by the number indicated to calculate your column score	X 1 =	X 2 =	X 3 =	X 4 =	X 5 =
Add the column scores together and note the total score (maximum score is 85)					
Now divide your total score by 85 and multiply by 100	(...../85) x 100 =				

Area 2

MANAGING AND COMMUNICATING EXISTING AND FUTURE WORK

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
You clearly understand what is expected of you in carrying out your job					
You are aware of and agree with the school's action plans					
Workloads are monitored to make sure they do not get excessive					
You all work as a team to review how you organise your work					
You can say "no" to additional work when it all gets too much					
Everyone plays their part and contributes to the best of their ability					
Projects always get seen through to delivery					
Reviews are done to see if you can all be better organised					
You all understand and agree what the priorities are for future activities					
A rational way forward is always found for each problem					
You generally get asked how you got on when you have had a problem to deal with					
When you ask for help or advice you get it quickly					
When you ask for a decision it is made promptly					
You are able to manage all the things you are responsible for doing					
You feel that you are consulted as much as is reasonable					
You feel well informed about what is happening					
You have a mentor you can go to when you need support and advice					
You and your colleagues are all allocated tasks on an equitable basis					
You and your colleagues are offered the opportunity to develop your skills further					
Team work is actively encouraged					
You have team meetings when and only when necessary					
You are given about the right amount of direction					
Note down the total number of ticks in each column					
Now multiply each column total by the number indicated to calculate your column score	X 1 =	X 2 =	X 3 =	X 4 =	X 5 =
Add the column scores together and note the total score (maximum score is 110)					
Now divide your total score by 110 and multiply by 100	(...../110) x 100 =				

Area 3

MANAGING THE INDIVIDUAL WITHIN THE TEAM

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
Staff speak to each other personally rather than use email					
You are provided with regular opportunities to speak one to one with your manager					
Staff generally return calls and emails promptly					
Managers are available to talk to when needed					
Staff bring in treats from time to time					
Staff socialise outside of work					
People mostly have a good sense of humour and are willing to have a laugh at work					
Everyone is encouraged to have an input in discussions					
Managers listen when employees ask for help					
Managers make an effort to find out what motivates employees at work					
Staff all try to see each team member's point of view					
Managers take an interest in team members' lives outside work					
People regularly ask you how you are?					
All team members are treated with equal importance					
Managers check that employees are okay					
Note down the total number of ticks in each column					
Now multiply each column total by the number indicated to calculate your column score	X 1 =	X 2 =	X 3 =	X 4 =	X 5 =
Add the column scores together and note the total score (maximum score is 75)					
Now divide your total score by 75 and multiply by 100	(...../75) x 100 =				

Area 4

REASONING/MANAGING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
You know who to go to when you need someone to act as a mediator					
Minor squabbles get dealt with before they escalate					
Managers deal objectively with conflict situations					
Managers deal head on with conflict situations					
Problematic issues are always sorted out					
The management hierarchy works effectively as a team					
Managers can get help from HR professionals when necessary					
Managers can get help from Occupational Health professionals when necessary					
Conflict situations get followed up to make sure they are resolved					
Victims of abuse, eg assaults, get adequate support from management					
When things go wrong, people don't shirk their responsibilities					
Bullying is not tolerated					
Note down the total number of ticks in each column					
Now multiply each column total by the number indicated to calculate your column score	X 1 =	X 2 =	X 3 =	X 4 =	X 5 =
Add the column scores together and note the total score (maximum score is 60)					
Now divide your total score by 60 and multiply by 100	(...../60) x 100 =				

You have now calculated a percentage score for each of the four behavioural areas that have been identified as important in a person with management responsibilities if they are to successfully minimise the levels stress at work experienced by their employees.

In order to interpret what these scores mean, use the following guidelines:

75% or below = Development Need: This is an area in which your managers would benefit from some development. Please refer back to the questionnaire to explore which of the behaviours your manager should consider using more often in the future in order to be more effective at preventing and reducing stress in your workplace.

76% to 89% = Reasonable: Your manager shows a good awareness of the behaviours needed for effectively preventing and reducing stress in others. It may be helpful to refer back to the questionnaire to see if there are any behaviours they should add to their repertoire in this area to increase their effectiveness in managing stress in others.

90% and above = Effective: Your manager demonstrates the behaviours that have been shown to be effective in preventing and reducing stress in the workplace.

The 'Stress management competence' profile:

Fill in each of the right hand columns. In the effectiveness column, add 'Development Need', 'Reasonable' or 'Effective' using the guidance above.

Competency	Percentage	Effectiveness
RESPECTFUL AND RESPONSIBLE: MANAGING EMOTIONS AND HAVING INTEGRITY		
MANAGING AND COMMUNICATING EXISTING AND FUTURE WORK		
MANAGING THE INDIVIDUAL WITHIN THE TEAM		
REASONING/MANAGING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS		

If your manager wishes to improve on their performance they can access advice and support from the HSE Stress Management Standards website and in particular from the link below. They should open the "Line Manager Competency Indicator Tool"

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/mcit.htm>