

HOW TO HANDLE WORK-RELATED STRESS

by:

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Work-related stress is a prevalent issue affecting employees across all industries. When left unmanaged, it can lead to serious health issues, decreased productivity, and job dissatisfaction. Fortunately, there are effective strategies individuals can use to cope with and reduce work-related stress.

One of the first steps in handling work-related stress is recognizing its signs and sources. Common symptoms include irritability, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, and physical problems such as headaches or stomachaches (American Psychological Association [APA], 2023). Identifying stressors—whether it's workload, interpersonal conflicts, or lack of control over tasks—enables employees to address the root causes directly.

Time management is a critical skill in stress reduction. Prioritizing tasks, setting realistic deadlines, and breaking large projects into smaller, manageable parts can prevent feelings of being overwhelmed. The use of planners or digital calendars helps in organizing tasks effectively and ensuring that important activities are completed on time, thereby minimizing last-minute rushes that can trigger stress.

Developing strong communication skills is another essential approach. Expressing concerns to supervisors or colleagues, asking for help when needed, and providing constructive feedback can prevent misunderstandings and resolve conflicts before they escalate. Healthy communication creates a more supportive and collaborative work environment, which can reduce stress levels significantly.

Moreover, maintaining a healthy work-life balance is crucial. Employees should set clear boundaries between work and personal life, such as avoiding checking emails after hours and taking regular breaks during the workday. Scheduling time for hobbies, social activities, and physical exercise fosters mental rejuvenation and enhances overall well-being.

Physical health also plays a significant role in managing stress. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and sufficient sleep strengthen the body's ability to cope with stress. Activities like yoga, meditation, and deep-breathing exercises have been shown to reduce stress hormones and promote relaxation (Mayo Clinic, 2023).

Another effective method is seeking social support. Talking to friends, family members, or professional counselors can provide emotional relief and offer new perspectives on stressful situations. Many workplaces also offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) that provide confidential counseling and support services.

Finally, cultivating resilience and a positive mindset is essential for long-term stress management. Viewing challenges as opportunities for growth, practicing gratitude, and focusing on achievements rather than setbacks can help individuals maintain emotional strength in the face of difficulties.

In summary, while work-related stress is inevitable to some degree, it does not have to control one's life. By recognizing stressors, managing time effectively, communicating clearly, maintaining work-life balance, prioritizing health, seeking support, and fostering resilience, individuals can effectively manage stress and create a healthier, more fulfilling work experience.

References:

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