

TOPIC: STRESS MANAGEMENT

Meaning of stress

- Stress is defined as a state of emotional or mental strain.
- The strain can affect the concentration and lowers the morale of employees.
- Stress refers to the harmful physical or emotional responses that can happen when there is conflict between job demands on the employee and the amount of control an employee has over meeting these demands.
- It is the wear and tear our bodies experience as we adjust to our changing environment.

Causes of stress in the workplace

- Time pressures and deadlines
- Inadequately trained subordinates
- The necessity of attending meetings
- Work demands intruding on family and personal life
- Keeping up to date with new technology
- Conflict with those in the business with different beliefs and values
- Taking work home
- A lack of power and influence
- Interpersonal relationships with colleagues
- The amount of travel required by work
- Incompetent bosses
- Bullying or harassment
- Job insecurity
- Lack of accountability
- Poor working conditions

Ways to manage stress effectively

- Get eight hours of sleep every day.
- Have a daily set routine.
- Get regular exercise that you enjoy.
- Eat healthy small meals throughout the day so that your blood sugar levels remain constant.
- Plan ahead and be prepared for what you have to do.
- Do not procrastinate.
- Prioritise what you have to do every day.
- Treat yourself kindly.
- Spend time with family and friends – talk and laugh with them.
- Accept that change is inevitable.
- Arrive slightly early so you don't have to rush.
- Breathe deeply.
- Take time out to do what you want to do.

Importance of stress management in the workplace

- If stress is not managed effectively, it can get out of control and cause staff health issues.
- Stressed employees are more likely to miss work, both as a way to cope and due to health-related problems.
- Managing stress will reduce absenteeism in order to maintain productivity at workplace.
- Workers who suffer from stress often display poor judgement in crisis or emergency situations and this can be avoided through managing stress.
- Grievances or complaints that lead to staff turnover can be addressed if stress is well-managed.
- Conflict and interpersonal problems can be avoided if stress is managed at the workplace.
- Having stressed and tired employees serving the public may lead to poor service and unhappy customers and this can be corrected through management of stress
- Stressed employees are more likely to cling to the old ways of doing things by resisting change and this can be controlled through proper management of stress.
- Constant stress can cause many problems for a business since it can become an unhealthy environment.
- Too much stress can become a barrier to success and lowers the performance of workers.

TOPIC: CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Meaning of crisis

- Crises is an unforeseen event that can cause major changes in an organisation.
- It refers to the sudden and potentially disastrous events.
- It is time of intense difficulty, trouble or danger.
- An event that can harm the business's stakeholders, its property, finances and its reputation.
- Any situation that threatens people at home or work.
- Unforeseen event that can cause major changes in the organisation.

Examples of crisis in the workplace

- Loss of property due to fire
- Theft of assets and equipment.
- Breakdown in machinery
- Power outages
- An accident
- Serious illnesses without replacements
- Conflict
- Supply shortage
- A sudden increase in production costs
- Unforeseen drop in revenue
- Lawsuit
- Tight deadline
- Natural disasters, e.g. earthquakes, floods, etc.

Ways to deal with a crisis in the workplace

Intervene swiftly and with urgency, but without panicking or overreacting.

Deal with crisis directly and timeously without trying to avoid/minimise the seriousness of the situation.

Call for help and seek assistance/advice and support from the appropriate agencies and professionals.

Take time to think and collect your thoughts before any hasty/ impulsive responses.

Take the necessary action to end the crisis.

Attempt to contain the situation to minimise further damage.

Identify the real nature of the crisis by making a thorough assessment of the situation and seeking expert opinions.

Communicate with all stakeholders so that they are properly informed about what has happened, what the impact is and how it is being dealt with.

Appoint a spokesperson from the management team who will deal with all questions and provide information.

Consider making a public statement containing the facts about what has happened and making this available to the media/people from outside the organisation who may enquire about the situation.

If there are likely to be legal consequences of the crisis, avoid any public statements until you have consulted lawyers on the matter.

Arrange debriefing sessions for all those directly involved in the crisis or who have been traumatised by the event.

Ways to deal with tight deadlines in the workplace

Prioritise – identify what is really important to do each day and try not to get distracted by small details.

Break-it-down – break the whole task down into smaller deadlines so you can tick things off and feel you are making progress.

If deadlines are impossible negotiate a later one.

Make time to sleep, exercise and relax in-between. Your mind will be more alert and your work better.

TOPIC: DEALING AND ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Meaning of change

- Change is a process that takes people, employees and organisations from the present to a future desired change.
- New ways to get things done.
- A business needs to change in order to meet changing needs of customers, improved technology and international competition.

Internal cause of change in the workplace

New business objectives or goals

High employee turnover where many new employees have to join the business

New policies and procedures implemented in the business

New management
Restructuring

New equipment
Retrenchment

External causes of change in the workplace

- Political factors e.g. change in government policy and international relations
- Social factors e.g. poverty/unemployment/HIV & Aids/etc.
- Legal factors e.g. the passing of new laws
- Economic factors e.g. increase in the interest rate
- Technological factors e.g. advances in production techniques and the information and communication technology (ICT) revolution.
- Market factors e.g. new businesses entering the market and introducing new products.

John Kotter's 8 – steps of leading change

Establish a sense of urgency by motivating their employees.

Create a guiding coalition they can bring together a team of influential people who will convince everyone else that change is needed.

Develop a vision and a strategy and decide what values are central to the change.

Communicate the vision frequently and demonstrate the kind of behaviour that they want from their employees.

Empower broad based action by identifying employees who are resisting change and help them see the need for change.

Create short term wins and make sure their businesses taste success early in the change process.

Build on change by analysing what went right and what needs to be improved after each win.

Anchor the changes in corporate culture and this must become part of the core of their business.

Major changes that people and businesses deal with

Unemployment

- It is when employees lose their jobs because they are fired, or they quit their jobs
- Change can lead to unemployment due to retrenchment.
- A business may close down/sold/merge resulting to unemployment.
- Coping with unemployment is traumatic and can lead to depression.

Retrenchment

- Retrenchment is when a business cuts the number of workers to reduce their wages and salary bill.
- A process whereby the employer reviews its business needs to increase profits or limit losses, which leads to reducing its employees.
- Economic changes may result in many people being retrenched from their jobs.

Globalisation

It is a trend where businesses are able to trade in different countries.

Businesses must deal with and adapt to changes that globalisation brings.

Globalisation means that many local businesses struggle to compete with bigger, stronger and experienced markets abroad.

Strategies business can use to deal with globalisation

Businesses should be aware of changes in the related industry.

Keep abreast of new technology, processes and developments that could give your business a competitive edge.

Investigate overseas markets for their products.

Source overseas manufactures, materials and suppliers.

Build a strategy for connecting with governments.

Comply with international standards of quality.

Comply with international trade laws.

Upgrade the enterprise's information technology (IT) network to enable online purchasing.

Be creative in making products desirable and unique.

Affirmative action

- Affirmative action is a policy that ensures that qualified people from designated groups have equal opportunities in the workplace.
- The policy aims to ensure that Black South Africans, women and people with disabilities are well represented in businesses.
- Workers can resent affirmative action appointments and people who have been appointed in affirmative action positions.

Strategies business can use to deal with affirmative action

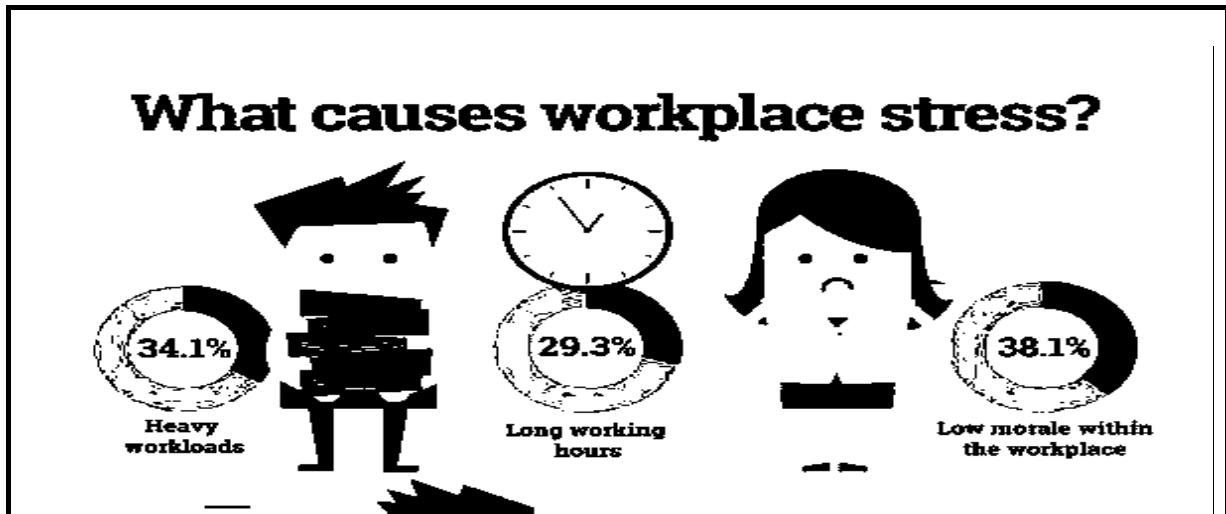
- Inform employees on how affirmative action will be implemented in the business.
- Businesses must have acceptable affirmative action programmes.
- Businesses must indicate in all their job adverts that they are affirmative action employers.
- They should open themselves to new ideas and opportunities instead of sticking to the past.
- Employees need to focus on the job rather than the differences of the people in the team and how they were appointed.

Ways businesses can deal with/manage change in the workplace

- Acknowledging that change is stressful and empowering employees to cope with stress.
- Transparency in the process of change is important in building trust with employees.
- Management need to ensure that it communicates with employees and keeps all informed of decisions and anticipated changes.
- Do not deviate from the original plan.
- Involve employees in the transformation process.
- The business can manage change easily if employees have interpersonal relationships that are characterised by trust, respect and support.
- Employees should increase their skills levels in order to be more competitive for positions and promotion.
- Respect differences and focus on achieving the objectives.

TOPIC: STRESS, CRISIS & CHANGE MANAGEMENT – ACTIVITY

1. Study the picture below and answer the questions that follow.



- 1.1 Explain the meaning of stress in the workplace. (2)
- 1.2 Quote **TWO** causes of stress and identify **ONE** impact of stress from the picture above. (3)
2. Mention **FOUR** other causes of stress in the workplace. (4)
3. Discuss the importance of stress management in the workplace. (10)
4. Read the scenario below and answer the questions that follow:

TRENDY LTD

Trendy Ltd has employed more than 100 workers who are responsible for manufacturing and distribution of plastic bottles. One day a part of Trendy's building caught fire. Employees got confused and started moving to different directions. The management of Trendy Ltd did not know how to handle the situation.

- 4.1 Name the concept that can be used to explain the challenge faced by Trendy Ltd. Motivate your answer by quoting from the scenario. (3)
- 4.2 Advise Trendy Ltd on how to deal with the concept identified in question 4.1. (10)
5. Mention **TWO** internal and **TWO** external causes of change in the workplace. (4)
6. Discuss ways how businesses can deal with change. (8)
7. Explain how businesses can use John P Kotter's 8 steps of leading change in the workplace. (16)
8. Recommend ways in which businesses can deal with globalisation and affirmative action in the workplace. (12)