



職業安全健康局  
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH COUNCIL



# 工作壓力管理

自用套件

Work Stress  
Management  
DIY Kit





# Content

<b>Foreword</b>	53
<b>Introducing the Work Stress Management Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Kit</b>	54
<b>Part I - Understanding Occupational Stress from Yourself and in Your Company</b>	
1. What is Stress?	56
2. The Effects of Occupational Stress	56
3. The Sources of Stress	58
4. Stress Audit	59
5. Work Stress Management Framework	64
<b>Part II - Managing Stress at Organization Level</b>	
<b>Work Stress Management - The Organization level</b>	76
<b>5-Step Stress Management Model</b>	76
1. Locating the Stressors	77
2. Evaluating the Risks	77
3. Taking Action	78
4. Monitoring the Progress & 5. Reviewing the Effectiveness	81
<b>Part III - Managing Stress at Individual Level</b>	
1. Cultivate Physical, Psychological and Spiritual Health	84
2. Face Problems Positively	84
3. Improve Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support	84
4. Set Up SMARTER Goals	85
5. Happiness List	85
6. The Art of Happiness	86
7. Enhancing Our Resilience	89
8. Be Optimistic Everyday!	92
<b>Conclusion</b>	98
<b>Learning Resources</b>	99
<b>Appendix 1. Stress Audit - Suggestions for Improvement</b>	101







## Foreword

One of the missions of Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) is to provide diversified and quality service with a view to enhancing the level of occupational safety and health in Hong Kong. The Council has been maintaining a close contact with local employers, employees, professionals, academic bodies and different government departments to create a pleasant working environment for employees.

It is the Council's intention to tailor-make a work stress management framework for use by local employees for coping with stress problems in the workplace. To do so, an awareness of the sources and effects of stress on employees is paramount. In 2004, the Council commissioned the Department of Politics and Sociology of Lingnan University to conduct an in-depth research into the occupational stress problems in Hong Kong and produce a stress management DIY kit for employees' use.

The project with Lingnan University was undertaken in three stages. The first stage was a large scale telephone survey to identify the high stress industries. Ten organizations representative of different industrial sectors were invited to take part in an intervention study, in which a tailor-made stress management training programme and different sessions of consultation were tried out on employees. The purposes of this stage were to single out, if possible, common factors causing stress and identify factors that can help to moderate stress in different industries. With the experience drawn from the intervention, stress management strategies and intervention policies were then formulated.

This study comprises a summary of statistical findings and management experience as shared by the participant organizations and a brief literature review of models and research findings from the literature of the East and the West about occupational stress management. The key findings are presented in this DIY Kit in a user-friendly approach to make sure people from different walks of life could understand the materials. Assessment methods and management skills are introduced at both individual and corporate levels to enhance the occupational health of employees and the productivity of organizations.

The Council would like to thank Professor Siu Oi-ling, Professor David R. Phillips, Mr. Theodore Cheung Ching-kong, and Ms. Winnie Shiu Yin-Fong from the Department of Politics and Sociology, Lingnan University for the assistance in conducting the project and compiling the DIY Kit.



## Introducing the Work Stress Management Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Kit

Such terms as 'stress' and 'stress management' may scare away many people who comes across them. Actually we are facing different kinds of stress in our daily life. Do we confront them, or do we make excuses to put them aside? The material in the kit can provide you with basic knowledge and means necessary for tackling stress-related issues effectively. You deserve a better life.

The first part of the kit is to help readers understand how stress emerges, what are the major effects, what are the common coping skills, and the corresponding consequences. Individual factors like psychological as well as organizational factors are identified separately. To this end, the Work Stress Management Framework is used as the basis for discussion. The assessment tools are to enable employees to have a better understanding of their own stress and the stress imposed on them from the company in which they are working.

The second part of the kit is to introduce readers to the Five-Step Stress Management Model. This model is to enable readers to put what they have learnt into practice. Readers will be shown real-life cases for solving using the skills and knowledge they have acquired in the first part of the kit.

The third part is a supplementary section in which there are stress management tips for solving stress problems that may be encountered in everyday life. Good health is not possible without a proper balance of the well being of the body, the mind and the spirit. Knowing the skills to strive for a balance, readers will be able to handle stress problems positively and cope with interpersonal relationships more efficiently.

A DVD is also provided for viewing. Professor David R. Phillips will introduce the design concepts of this project while Professor Siu Oi-ling will give an account of the current situation of stress problems and their management in Hong Kong. She will also talk about Positive Psychology and key elements in stress management and share with readers her experience having worked on occupational stress management for years.



## **Part I**

# **Understanding Occupational Stress from Yourself and in Your Company**

This part is about understanding the stress in us and the stress impacted on us from the workplace.

## 1 What is Stress?



Stress by itself is a neutral motivating force. It motivates us to persevere in things we are working on. However, if the stress from work is too much, we will perceive that we are getting out of control of the work. This state of excessive stress will eventually hinder our motivation to persevere. In the workplace, this situation will happen when employees cannot satisfy the expectation of the employers or when their ability fails to live up to the demand of the job.

Stress is accumulative, which means if you do not handle it at the early stage, the effect can be stored over time. Factors causing stress accumulation can be internal, meaning the loss of balance in the well being of the body and the mind, as well as external, meaning the presence of unfavourable conditions in the environment in which we are situated. In the workplace, occupational stress is a prominent type of stress and is by no mean novel to city dwellers.

## 2 The Effects of Occupational Stress

When we are facing challenges, our bodies will exhibit biological, psychological and behavioural changes to respond to them accordingly. These changes include accelerated heart-rate, panicking, sweating, muscle tensions, and nervousness.

Once the challenges are over, our built-in mechanism will tune us down to its normal level. However, if the stressors persist and the bodily responses are continuously mounted, symptoms of psychological disorder may appear.



It is not surprising that work stress increases as technology in the workplace becomes more sophisticated, market competition more tensed; demand on sales targets doubled, working hours lengthened and as more and more people's jobs are becoming unstable due to stringent competition from neighbouring countries. In the workplace, workloads are also unprecedented. Employees not only have to accomplish a lot of paper work, they also have to meet their clients and business counterparts to sell the services of their company. In their leisure hours, they also have to take enrichment courses for



further career development. So, we can see that employees are pushing themselves to the limit around the clock. It is therefore not uncommon to see that a lot of them are afflicted with different kinds of urban illnesses and rise in suicide and divorce rates. This phenomenon has been the result of the accumulation of occupational stress which can adversely affects your health, interpersonal relationships, your work and other aspects in your life.



**Check it out:** Do you have the following symptoms?

Occupational stress could lead to the following physical and psychological symptoms, directly influencing your health. Please mark with tick(s) and find out if you are suffering from them yourself.

Table 1

Physical		
<input type="checkbox"/> headaches	<input type="checkbox"/> tension	<input type="checkbox"/> stomachaches/indigestion
<input type="checkbox"/> constipation/diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/> breathlessness/heaviness across chest	<input type="checkbox"/> rising blood pressure
<input type="checkbox"/> muscle pains	<input type="checkbox"/> frequently feeling tired	
Psychological		
<input type="checkbox"/> anxious	<input type="checkbox"/> irritable	<input type="checkbox"/> worrying
<input type="checkbox"/> moody/depressed	<input type="checkbox"/> inability to concentrate	<input type="checkbox"/> frequent mistakes
<input type="checkbox"/> forgetful	<input type="checkbox"/> lowering creativity/muddled thinking	<input type="checkbox"/> persistent negative thinking
Behavioural		
<input type="checkbox"/> unsociability	<input type="checkbox"/> restlessness	<input type="checkbox"/> increasing smoking/drinking/drugs intake
<input type="checkbox"/> loosing appetite/binge eating	<input type="checkbox"/> violent behaviours	<input type="checkbox"/> insomnia
<input type="checkbox"/> suicidal attempt		

Do you feel nervous frequently? Are you feeling tired often? Are you occupied with negative thoughts? When you are unhappy, do you smoke, drink, keep yourself at home or have difficulty in getting sleep? If your answers are the affirmative ones, it has been a warning signal that you may be suffering from stress problems.





To an organization, excessive stress can hinder the employees' efficiency in their discharge of duties, which, in consequence, will adversely affect the performance of the organization as a whole. The effects are summarized as below.

- ◆ High turnover rates
- ◆ Frequent absenteeism/ sick leave
- ◆ Making wrong decisions
- ◆ Lowering service and product quality
- ◆ Increasing accidents
- ◆ Poor relationship between employees, and between employer and employees

## 3 The Sources of Stress

Knowing the sources of stress is important. Occupational stress may have been caused because of psychosocial stressors, e.g. heavy workloads, frequent interpersonal conflicts, organizational constraints, high job insecurity, lack of control in the discharge of duties, bad organizational climates, poor working environments, imbalanced work-life and overwhelmingly heavy emotional labour demand. Stress itself may form a vicious cycle, becoming itself a source of stress. The typical stressors found in this study are listed in Table 2 below along with accompanying examples.

### Major Stressors in Hong Kong

Table 2

Workloads	
◆ Meeting tight deadline	◆ Routine and miscellaneous job
◆ Over-load or under-load	◆ Limited control on job priority
◆ Frequent changes in day/night shift	◆ Jobs related to conflicts, violence, deaths
◆ Working hour too long, insufficient rest	◆ Great responsibility, enduring concentration at work
Lack of autonomy	
◆ Ambiguous responsibility assignment, employees are confused	
◆ Employees taking several roles, some of which are conflicting	
Interpersonal conflict	
◆ Lack of colleague support	◆ Workplace violence
◆ Conflicts with clients	◆ Lack of human contact or communication
◆ Conflicts with supervisors/subordinates	
Physical work conditions	
◆ Noise	◆ Dangerous working environment
◆ Dim or strong light	◆ Contact with dangerous or radiation materials
◆ Messy and tiny working space	◆ Workplace design leading to improper physical position
◆ Poor air quality and uncomfortable temperature	



Organizational climate	
◆ Lack of communications	◆ Autocratic management style
◆ Neglect occupational safety and health	◆ Discrimination (gender, age, disability, race)
◆ Improper performance appraisal system	
Work / Family Conflict	
◆ Heavy workload, unable to meet family responsibilities	◆ Lacking family support
Job insecurity	
◆ Lack of career development and promotion	◆ Low Salary not commensurate with effort expended
◆ Threat of staff cutbacks, insecure career prospects	
Emotional labour demands	
◆ Put on positive emotion and face at work	◆ Cold-calls, criticisms, even insults
Organizational constraints	
◆ Lack of support and backups	◆ Lack of appropriate facilities

Table 2 depicts the major stressors identified in Hong Kong. These stressors can be used to assess the sources of individual and organizational stress systemically. For example, if individual A has worse interpersonal relationships than individual B, A is likely to suffer more from stress. Similarly, when comparing company C with company D and we find that C has a higher workload, we can say that employees in C are likely to encounter more stress.



Employees spend long hours in the workplace. If they are under prolonged work stress, their health will be impaired. Accidents may occur more often, and their job performance may also be affected. In the study, 39% of employees rated their work stress as "high" or "very high". It is an alarming figure. To test whether you are one of the stressed ones, you can audit your stress level using the following tools. The audit also enables you to know more about your own stressors, your resilience ability, and the level of your job performance.

## 4 Stress Audit

### Online Stress Audit

In this study, an online stress audit was developed. It has been revised and validated in different studies and has yielded high reliability and validity. The online version is also available at the Occupational Safety & Health Council's website:

<http://www.oshc.org.hk>

## 4 Stress Audit

### Perceptions of Your Job

#### Job Insecurity

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Occasionally</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Very often</i>
<b>1.1 How often do you feel that</b>						
1.1.1 The thought of getting fired really scares you?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.1.2 You are worried about the possibility of being fired?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.1.3 Your job is not permanent?	1	2	3	4	5	6

#### Interpersonal conflict

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Occasionally</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Very often</i>
<b>1.2 How often</b>						
1.2.1 Do you get into arguments with others at work?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.2.2 Are people rude to you at work?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.2.3 Do you encounter interpersonal conflicts at work?	1	2	3	4	5	6

#### Quantitative Workloads

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Occasionally</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Very often</i>
1.2.4 Does your job require you to do work very fast?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.2.5 Do you have to work overtime?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.2.6 Is there a great deal to be done?	1	2	3	4	5	6

#### Organizational Constraints

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Occasionally</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Very often</i>
<b>1.3 How often do you find it difficult or impossible to do your job because of</b>						
1.3.1 Lack of necessary information about what to do or how to do it?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.3.2 Inadequate help from others?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.3.3 Lack of equipment or supplies?	1	2	3	4	5	6

#### Autonomy

	<i>Very inaccurate</i>	<i>Mostly inaccurate</i>	<i>Slightly inaccurate</i>	<i>Slightly accurate</i>	<i>Mostly accurate</i>	<i>Very accurate</i>
2.1 I decide on my own how to go about doing the work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.2 The job gives me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.3 The job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do the work.	1	2	3	4	5	6



## Work Stress

### Perceived Work Stress

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly disagree</i>	<i>Slightly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>
3.1 I usually feel that I am under a lot of pressure.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.2 The level of pressure at work is very high.	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Attitude To Job

### Job Satisfaction

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly disagree</i>	<i>Slightly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>
4.1 In general, I like working here.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.2 All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Resilience

### Self-rated Resilience

	<i>Very inaccurate</i>	<i>Mostly inaccurate</i>	<i>Slightly inaccurate</i>	<i>Slightly accurate</i>	<i>Mostly accurate</i>	<i>Very accurate</i>
5.1 I feel capable of overcoming my present or any future difficulties and problems I might face such as resolving dilemmas or making difficult decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.2 I have a high capacity for facing adversity.	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Job Performance

### Self-rated Job Performance

	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Marginal</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
6. I evaluate my job performance in terms of.....						
6.1 Quantity of work	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.2 Quality of work	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.3 Attendance	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.4 Professional knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.5 Getting along well with others	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Personal Well-being

### Physical and Psychological Symptoms

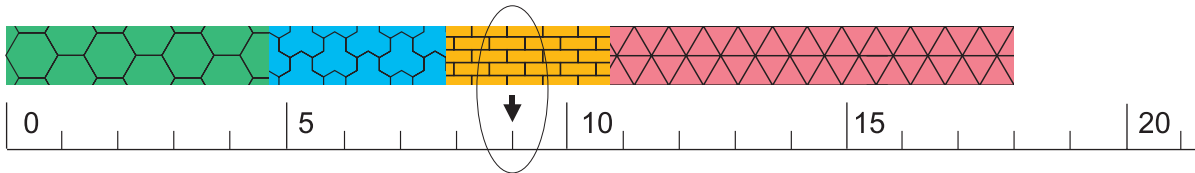
	<i>Never</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Occasionally</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Very often</i>
7. Over the last one month, have you experienced any of the following symptoms, changes in behaviour or emotion?						
7.1 Insomnia - difficulty in getting to sleep	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.2 Headaches	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.3 Muscular tension / aches and pains	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.4 Mood swings	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.5 Feeling nauseous or being sick	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.6 Feeling depressed	1	2	3	4	5	6



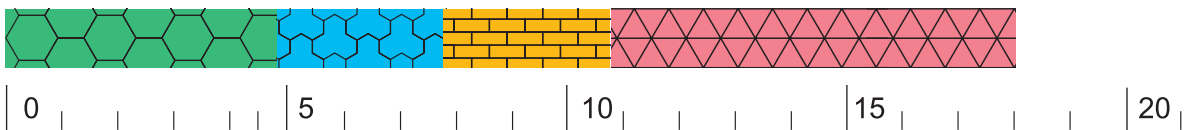
# Work Stress Management DIY Kit

Please fill in your scores in the blanks provided below. Identify your position on the colour bars, and then you will know what categories you are in, e.g. 'Improvement Needed', 'Fair', 'Satisfactory', or 'Excellent'.

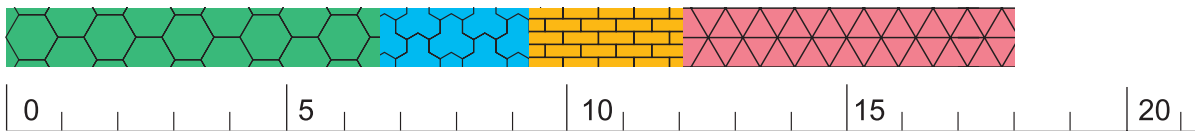
Job Insecurity = 1.1.1 + 1.1.2 + 1.1.3 = 9



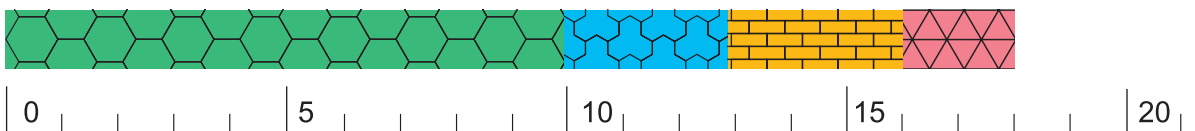
Job Insecurity = 1.1.1 + 1.1.2 + 1.1.3 = \_\_\_\_\_



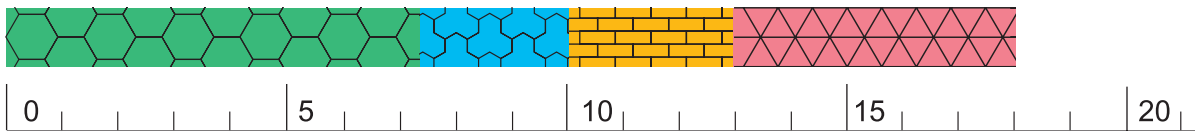
Interpersonal Conflict = 1.2.1 + 1.2.2 + 1.2.3 = \_\_\_\_\_



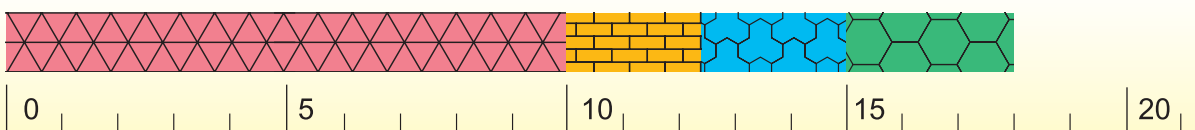
Quantitative Workloads = 1.2.4 + 1.2.5 + 1.2.6 = \_\_\_\_\_



Organizational Constraint = 1.3.1 + 1.3.2 + 1.3.3 = \_\_\_\_\_



Autonomy = 2.1 + 2.2 + 2.3 = \_\_\_\_\_





Perceived Work Stress =  $3.1 + 3.2 =$  \_\_\_\_\_



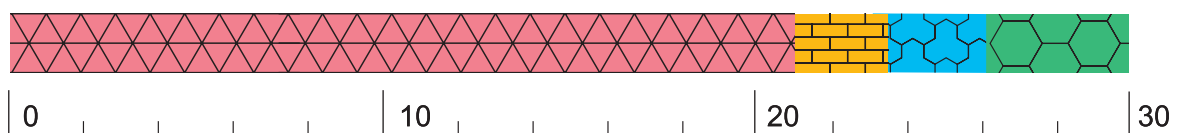
Job Satisfaction =  $4.1 + 4.2 =$  \_\_\_\_\_



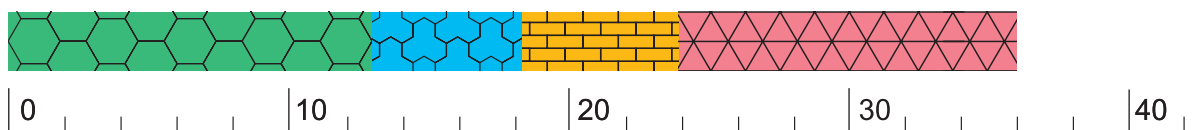
Self-rated Resilience =  $5.1 + 5.2 =$  \_\_\_\_\_



Self-rated job Performance =  $6.1 + 6.2 + 6.3 + 6.4 + 6.5 =$  \_\_\_\_\_



Physical or psychological symptoms =  $7.1 + 7.2 + 7.3 + 7.4 + 7.5 + 7.6 =$  \_\_\_\_\_



From the colour bars, you can identify your attainment in this test with reference to the normative scores by employees in Hong Kong. If you are in the red region ('Improvement Needed') frequently, you have to be on alert then. You can refer to Appendix 1. Stress Audit - Suggestions for Improvement. We recommend you pay special attention to Part II Managing Stress at Organization Level and Part III Managing Stress at Individual Level. We also advise you to consult a counselor for advice if necessary.

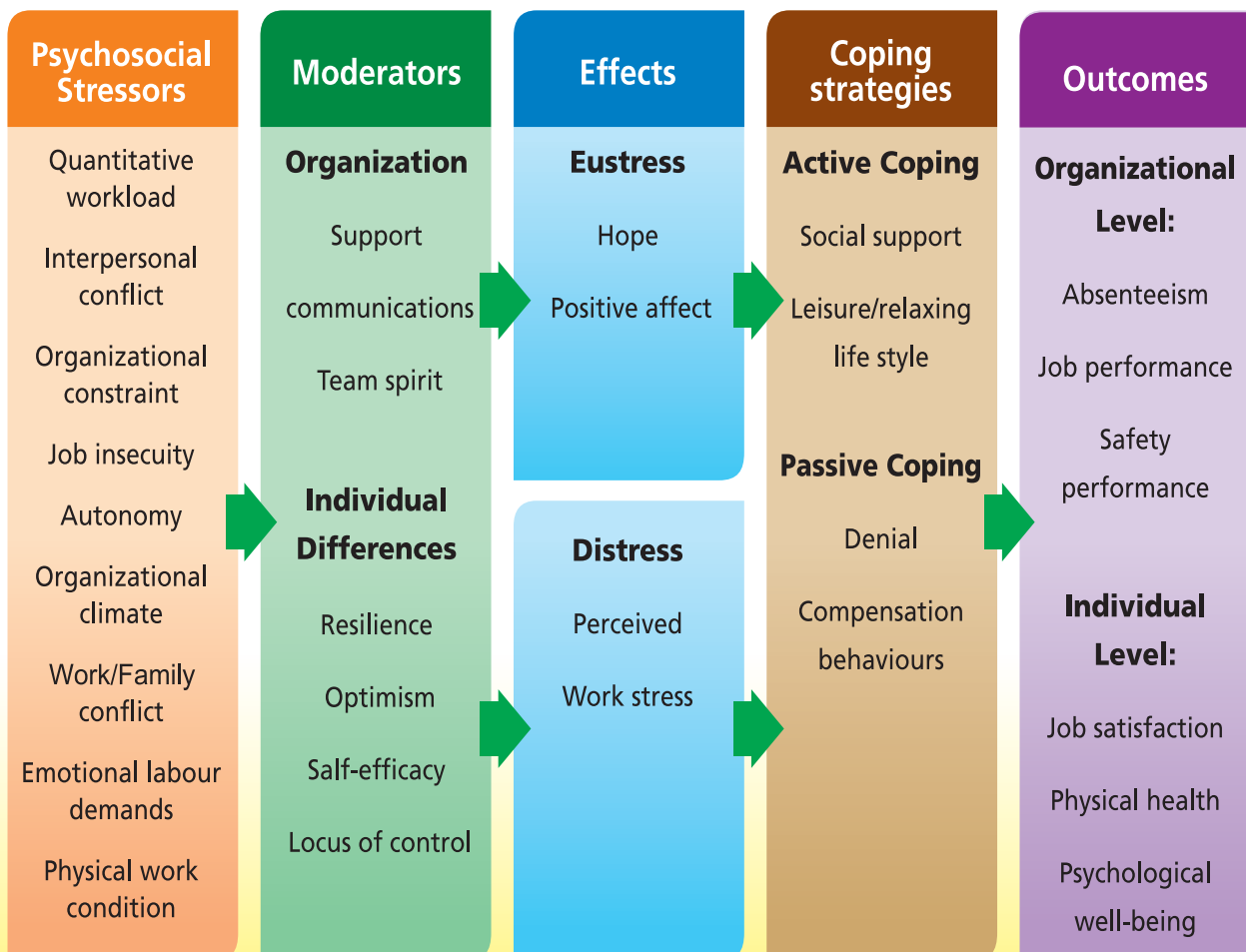
Key: Excellent  Satisfactory  Fair  Improvement Needed 

## 5 Work Stress Management Framework

Now we are familiar with the nature of stress, where it is from and how it affects us. But we have not known the whole story yet. For example, what is the role of an individual? Will an optimistic person be different from a pessimistic one under the same environment? It leads us to the black-box between the causes and the effects. The Work Stress Management Framework is actually a summary of the key elements involved in the formation, evolution and outcome of stress. In the framework, we concretely demonstrate the flow of stress, from its beginning to its consequences. Most importantly, the interactions among individual and organization are highlighted (see Table 3). Once you get familiar with the framework, you could tackle stress problems more systematically by the techniques and steps suggested in Part II & III of this manual.

Work Stress Management Framework

Table 3



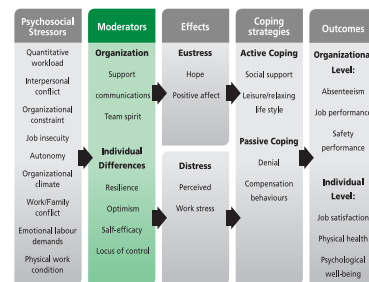
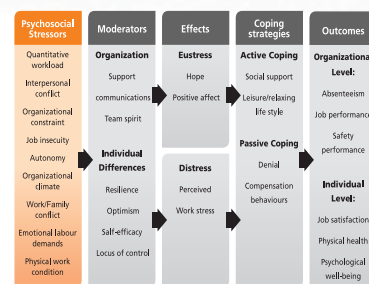


The far left column of the work stress management framework shows **Psychosocial Stressors**, which include workloads, interpersonal conflicts, organizational constraints, job insecurity, lack of autonomy, organizational climate, physical work conditions, work/family conflict, and emotional labour demands, etc. (see Table 2)

The second column of the framework shows **Moderators**, including social support, communications and team spirit at organizational level as well as resilience, optimism, self-efficacy and locus of control at individual level. These variables are playing crucial roles in moderating stress effects. For example, heavy workloads and great emotional labour demands are commonly reported in the sales department of a telecommunication company. If there is good communication among senior and junior staff while the colleagues are supporting each other, workloads could become a positive motivating factor, like hope and positive affect.

To continue at the organizational level, relationships between supervisor-subordinate and that between colleagues such as trust, communications, and team spirit, are directly affecting the effects of stress. In the same scenario, the sales department of the telecommunication company usually faces heavy workloads and great emotional labour demands (e.g., be patient and smiling to clients, often criticisms, sometimes even insults from clients). Physical work condition is also not desirable (e.g., may need to hold on-street booth). These factors impose quite a negative work environment. Now, let's think about how trust and care from colleagues and supervisor could transfer and make a difference in such situation.

At the individual level, we now consider individual personality characteristics, which affect our subjective perceptions and feelings. In the framework, we highlight some key moderators, namely resilience, optimism, self-efficacy, and locus of control. "Resilience" is the capacity to prevail in the face of adversity; the maintenance, recovery, or improvement in mental or physical health following challenges. "Optimism" means a positive mind to life events and belief in hope even in aversive situations. "Self-efficacy" is the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the causes of action required to produce given attainments. Lastly, "locus of control"



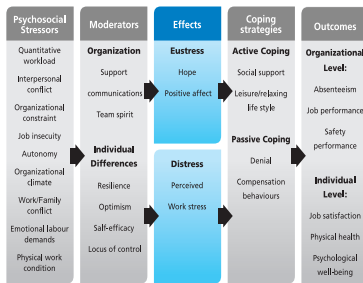


# Work Stress Management DIY Kit

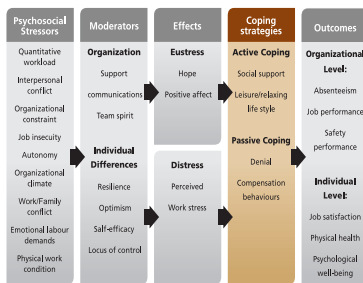
refers to one's perceived control over the environment, which is generally divided into "internal" and "external" locus of control.

People with "internal control" would regard things as under their control, so they would often take the initiative. People with "external control" would tend to believe in external forces such as faith or free-chance, and they are less assertive. Some studies found that people with internal control enjoy a better life.

In sum, even in the same working environment, different personality or values will lead to different outcomes. Still using the previous scenario, employees A and B work in the same team of the sales department. They have similar workloads, and the same working conditions. Employee A, however, is more resilient, more optimistic, and believes he has a better control over the work, and therefore, he perceives less stress than employee B.

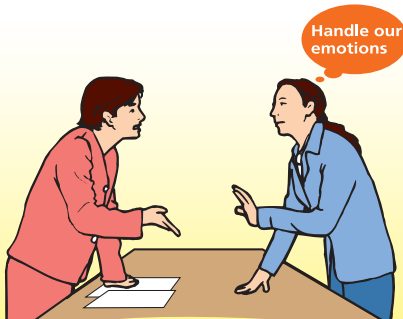


The third column in the framework is **Effects**. We could divide them into positive and negative ones. As we have mentioned, stress could be a positive force (motivational), bringing us hope and positive affect. However, if the stress is overwhelming and accompanying other negative personal or environmental factors, it creates harm (stress).



**Coping Strategies** come after effects. We could say there lay the last line of defense. It functions to soften the negative effects. From the framework we know that whether the effects of stress are of either kind, we will act correspondingly, and we call them "coping strategies". Psychologists classify these actions into positive and negative ones, while the positive ones are further divided into "emotion-focused coping strategies" and "problem-focused coping strategies". The former include seeking social support, taking relaxing life-style, etc. The latter refer to breaking the task into smaller components and solving the problem step-by-step. Forward planning, logical thinking and effective time management are other examples.

So which approach is better? This is difficult to judge. Sometimes we need to maintain a calm and logical mind to solve a question. On the other hand, we may need to handle our emotions as the first priority in some cases before we seek rational solutions. An example here is when we face unfair treatment from a supervisor.





Negative coping strategies include denial such as denying the facts and adapting different compensating behaviours. After covering the two kinds of coping strategies, do you want to know more about your own style?



**Check It Out**, Do I engage in the following coping behaviours when facing work stress?

Table 4

### Emotion-focused Coping Strategies

- ☐ Report to immediate supervisor and seek advice
- ☐ Talk to colleagues who can actually help with the problem
- ☐ Seek as much social support as possible, e.g. talk to understanding friends, share with colleagues or family members
- ☐ Take time to relax, e.g. reading newspaper, have a leisurely walk in a park, take deep breaths, listen to music
- ☐ Take a break and go on a trip for holiday
- ☐ Do physical exercises, e.g. Yoga, Tai Chi
- ☐ Resort to hobbies and pastimes, e.g. go hiking or play badminton with colleagues, massage, planting flowers
- ☐ Have social activities, e.g. enjoy happy hours and 'Karaoke' with friends
- ☐ Pray and do meditation

### Problem-focused Coping Strategies

- ☐ Accept the reality, concentrate on the main problems, try my best to fulfill the task
- ☐ Try to 'stand aside' and think through the situation
- ☐ Review the cases and find out areas for improvement / feasible solutions
- ☐ Set priorities and deal with problems accordingly
- ☐ Gather relevant information , plan ahead, have better preparation
- ☐ Benchmark with counterparts in other countries and brainstorm solutions
- ☐ Try to maintain an active positive attitude
- ☐ Have more communications, e.g. try to discuss the case with the parties whom they had conflicts, have regular team meetings to share daily operational difficulties and experiences to handle

## Avoidance or Passive Behaviours

- ☐ Cannot manage the problem and accept the reality without straining themselves
- ☐ Try to have their attention to be distracted
- ☐ Daydreaming
- ☐ Shopping, shopping and more shopping
- ☐ Cry, shout coarse words and/or hit walls
- ☐ Slowing down working pace



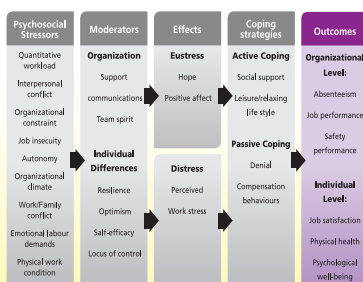
I believe you do not answer all 'yes' or all 'no' to one particular category. You may typically have experience in solving problems very objectively while you may have also sought support, or avoiding the problems. However, if you find yourself ticking a lot of avoidant and negative behaviours, you must pay special attention to it.

In the study, we found that the more people used positive coping strategies, the less were the perceived work stress and body symptoms, and the higher job satisfaction and job performance. On the other side, avoidant and passive behaviours tended to bring more stress and different negative influences (see Table 5).

## Different coping strategies leading to different outcomes

Table 5

	Positive coping	Negative coping
Perceived job stress	Lower	Higher
Physical symptoms	Lower	Higher
Job satisfaction	Higher	Lower
Job performance	Higher	Lower



The last column in the framework is **Outcomes**. Besides the physical, psychological and behavioural aspects (individual) mentioned in Table 3, absenteeism, job performance, productivity, and safety performance (organization) are included.

If occupational stress is not treated immediately and properly, the adverse effect will accumulate, resulting in anxiety and distress. Allowing anxiety and distress to persist will do harm to the body and affect interpersonal relationships.



Conflicts occur frequently. Once when they are in existence, your incentive to work will die out gradually and the joy you can get from work will diminish as well. Your focus is shifted from the work itself to other issues. As conflicts deepen, you withdraw yourself from your colleagues and become uninvolved in everything happening in the company. You also become late for work, frequently apply for leave and prone to accident so as to stay away from the working environment.

### ***Do different occupations bear different stress?***

The answer is affirmative. We have conducted a telephone survey for the purpose, in which 1,500 respondents were asked to give their rating for the level of stress for the industries they are working in. Focus groups were also formed to deliberate on the rating. The survey revealed that the telecommunication industry ranks first in occupational stress, with the teaching profession in the second and the financial and property/estate management industry in the third. (see Table 6).



### ***The Ranking of Industry According to High Occupational Stress***

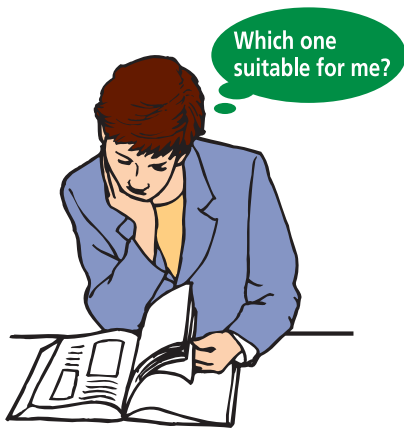
Table 6

Rank	Occupational Group
1	Telecommunication Industry
2	Teaching Profession
3	Financial & Property/Estate Management Industry
4	Transportation & Logistic Industry
5	Construction Industry
6	Hotel & Catering Industry
7	Social Service & Personal Care Service (excluding teachers)
8	Manufacturing Industry
9	Wholesale, Retail, Import/Export Trade Industry
10	Other Industries

Based on 2004 Telephone Survey





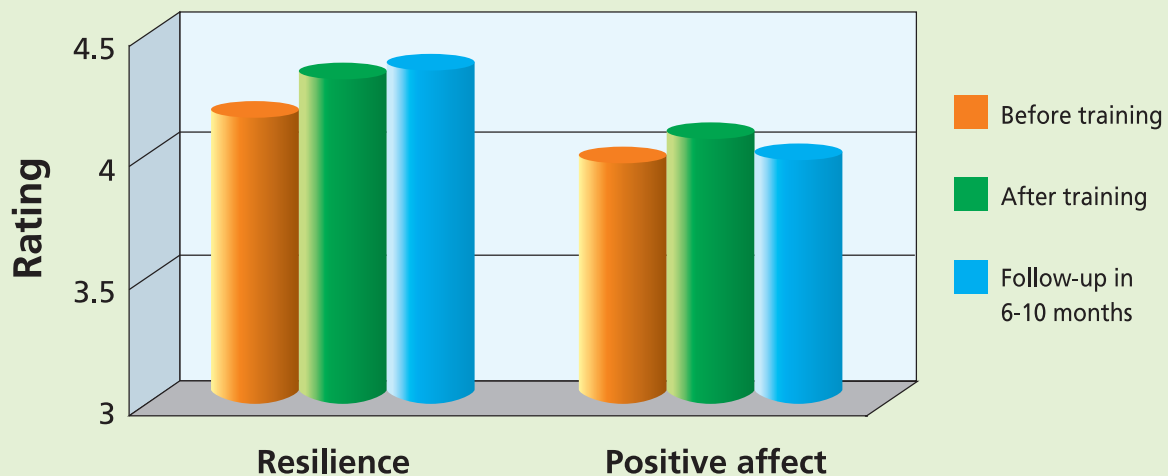


The ranking does not imply we should only choose certain occupations with low stress. Our message is to prepare well, such as knowing the stress management knowledge, before we choose an industry. You may ask, "what about if I'm already in the top industry for stress?" Let us clarify. First, the ranking is done by averaging the scores for the whole industry, but it does not necessarily mean that everyone in that industry will be suffering from high stress. The result may indicate more negative psychosocial stressors causing stress in a particular industry. Secondly, the major purpose of the ranking is to raise your awareness on managing stress. In our study and many others, consistent findings show that greater understanding of and more training in stress management could relieve the problems.

Indeed, more and more employers and managers today are recognizing the importance of employees' health. They treat the employees as crucial components, and assets of the company. Therefore, more resources are driven to provide stress management training and relevant service. In this study, we confirm that the training and consulting (including teaching of self-healing methods, team building) could enhance personal quality and job performance (see Picture 1-3).

## ***The Effectiveness of Stress Management Training - Personal Quality (Individual Level)***

Picture 1

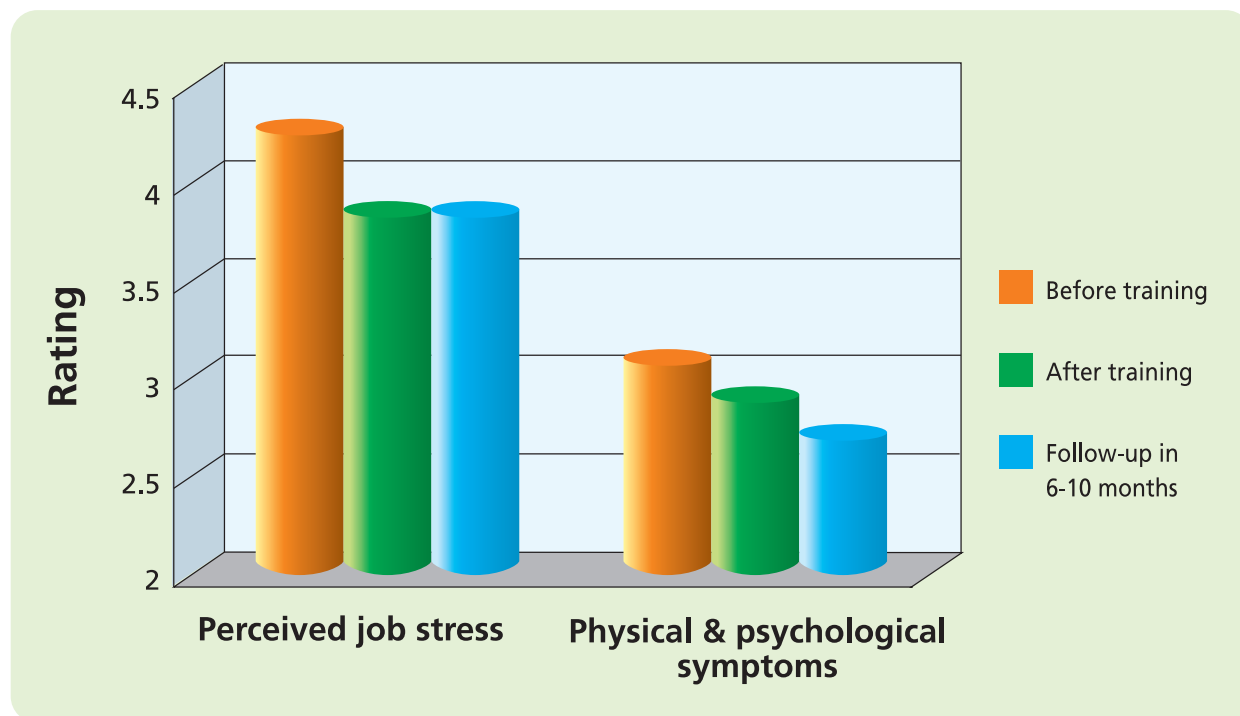




## ***The Effectiveness of Stress Management Training***

### ***- Perceived Job Stress and Physical & Psychological Symptoms (Individual Level)***

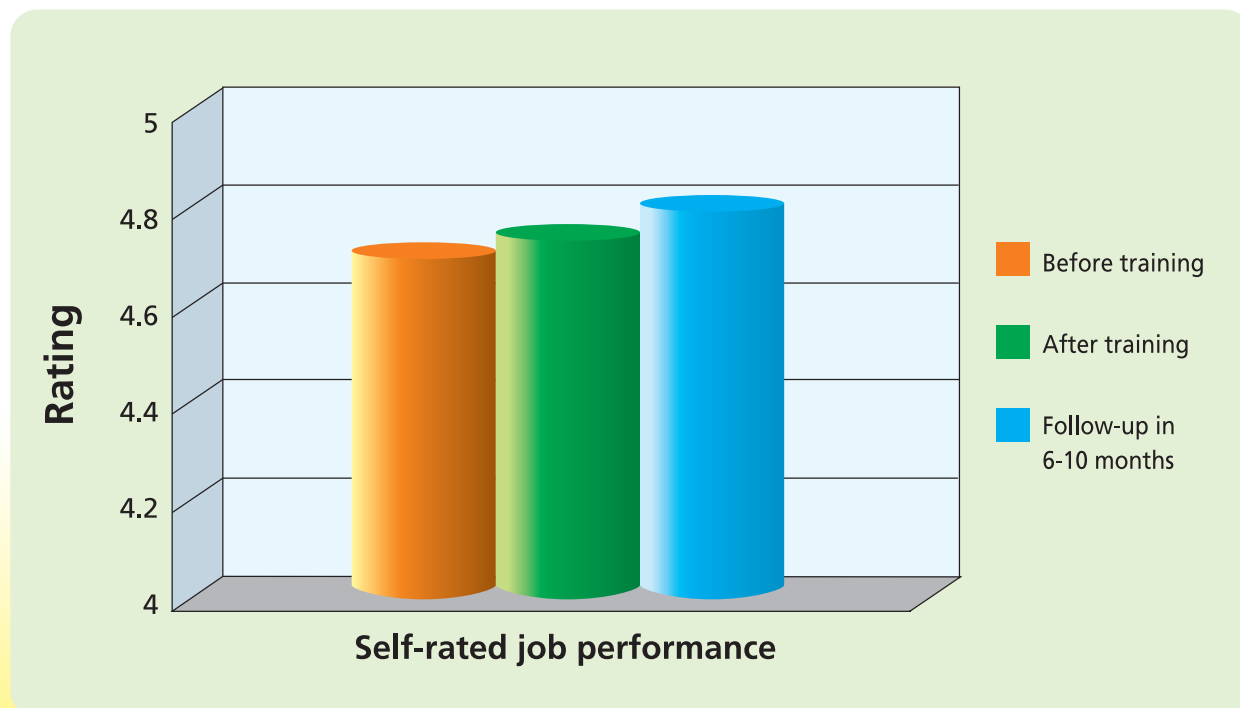
*Picture 2*



## ***The Effectiveness of Stress Management Training***

### ***- Job performance (Organizational Level)***

*Picture 3*





From Picture 1 we can see that after the training, resilience levels increased, which lasted for 6 to 10 months in the follow-up study. Positive affect was increased after the training, but the effect was less prominent and was relatively temporary. We could indicate the effect by an important health index, perceived job stress level (see Picture 2). After the training, the stress level had immediate and long lasting effect, which is also in line with the lessening of physical and psychological symptoms. For an organization, employers benefit from having healthier employees and enjoyed their better productivity (see Picture 3). This is actually a win-win situation.

We estimate the training will bring far more benefits to both individual and organizations. We suggest employers to take initiative in promotion of stress management.

Training is however only one part of stress management. Does your company practice adequate measures to manage occupational stress? Please score your company using the following organization audit.



## **Check it out:** Organization Audit

### Good Management Practices Checklist

Table 7

#### Build Corporate Awareness and Understanding

- ☐ Issue clear policy statements to create appropriate conditions in the area of preventing and taking away stress, and maintaining work-life-family balance.
- ☐ Form a steering committee (with representatives from human resources, occupational health and line management) under the chairmanship of senior management and formulate and monitor the implementation of the occupational health policy.
- ☐ Sign an occupational health and safety charter to show the commitment and devotion of the organization in enhancing employees' physical and mental well-being.
- ☐ Have regular contacts with relevant organizations (e.g. Occupational Safety and Health Council, Labour Department) who can advise on occupational stress management.

#### Risk Management

- ☐ Analyze the data collected from the existing communication channels to explore any occupational stress problems.
- ☐ Review employees' physical health status and their sick leave records regularly, and find out whether they are caused by stress-related illness or burnout.
- ☐ Commission consultants or occupational psychologists to conduct periodic occupational health studies, risk analysis and/or stress audit.



## Training

- ☐ Provide training for managers and supervisors, for example on stress awareness and recognition, managing work pressure, counseling skills, managing change in their department, assertiveness, managing conflicts.
- ☐ Establish monitoring and training board to audit employees' stress level periodically, and arrange necessary trainings.
- ☐ Encourage employees to participate training in different aspects and provide study leave and sponsorship in training.

## Job Design

- ☐ Good ergonomic design of work stations that suits the task to the worker (e.g. provide employees with ergonomically sound facilities for using computer keyboard and mouse) and issue employee guidance on proper and safe working procedures.
- ☐ Review employees' overtime pattern and recommend employees not to leave the office too late (e.g., the office is closed by 9 pm).
- ☐ Remind employees to take a break (e.g. play some light music or show a pop-up message on the computer screen).

## Employee Involvement

- ☐ Make sure that supervisors feel they can communicate easily and effectively with the employees, so that they are able to pick up any problems that may cause stress at home or at work.
- ☐ Provide sufficient communication channels (e.g. staff suggestion scheme, staff newsletter, annual staff opinion survey).
- ☐ Strengthen social support networks in the workplace (e.g. organize leisure activities, encourage employees to take care of colleagues' emotion difference, encourage employees to join volunteer work, organize experience sharing sessions).

## Promote Work-Life-Family Balance

- ☐ Issue policy and provide fitness facilities to enhance employees' physical health (include encouraging employees to do physical exercises regularly promote healthy diet, take care of employees' occupational health needs).
- ☐ Organize talks on time management and financial management.
- ☐ Provide relevant information to help employees to develop positive affect (e.g., buy self-help books for staff's learning resources centre or post relevant information in company's intranet; designate a humor corner or a resting place and place some comics or leisure reading materials; show a pop-up encouraging message on the computer screen when starting the computer).
- ☐ Provide employees with counseling services.

Each ✓ is worth 5 points. You can sum the scores and assess your company's stress managing strategies.

The scoring:

0-40 Poor, much improvement needed

41-60 Fair, improvement needed

61-80 Good, still room to improve

81-100 High quality management



Of course, we all know that every company has its own needs and thus adopts different management policies. The above checklist is just for a general reference. You could nevertheless use it to assess your company periodically to monitor improvements. Besides, the organization audit could accompany the stress audit to monitor the effectiveness of certain newly implanted policies for individuals.

## Summary

In this part we have taken off from yourself and your company to understand the story of stress. The key themes are stated structurally in the Work Stress Management Framework in Table 3. In addition to the common causes and effects of stress, we have highlighted the moderators, the different coping strategies in different perspectives. We have also introduced several tools to help you manage stress in workplace. Congratulations! You are no longer a layman in stress management!

Next you will learn how to implement different policies and strategies effectively in a systematic and sustainable way - Part II: Managing Stress at Organization Level.





## **Part II**

# **Managing Stress at Organization Level**

Just like other advanced cities around the world, the Hong Kong is facing drastic changes in its economy and working styles. Worldwide, we are boosting flexibility and efficiency, and occupational stress is now a common problem. However, we should not treat it as normal or even neglect it. From Part I, we now know that prolonged and continual stress could handicap the productivity of any organization. The physical and psychological health of each individual can also be affected. More accidents may result and it can lead to family and social disharmony.



Employers and management should therefore treat the stress problem as seriously as they might treat any other occupational threat. Employees should also work closely with the relevant policies and equip themselves with better ability to resist and prevent stress.

In this part, we will provide some suggestions on prevention and management on stress at the corporate level, aiming to improve occupational health of employees and enhance the overall productivity of the whole organization.

## Work Stress Management - The Organization Level

To deal with occupational stress more effectively, companies need clear vision of instituting a systematic and flexible stress management model. If we have implemented a framework from the outset, we could react immediately using effective and appropriate strategies once problems appear.

Based on the findings in the study, we developed a 5-Step Stress Management Model (see Picture 4), which is a modification of existing models in Western societies and suited to the local situation in Hong Kong. Its characteristics are the simplicity and the effectiveness in assessing, implementing, reviewing and improving the stress management policies and plans, forming a sustainable cycle for continuous improvement.

### 5-Step Stress Management Model

Picture 4





## 1. Locating the Stressors

- ◆ The first step of stress management is to identify the stressors in the workplace. Methods include:
  - analyze the information from the existing communication channels (e.g., suggestion boxes, occupational safety and health committee) to see if there are any opinions regarding stress
  - Analyze tasks, list the potential stressors and use questionnaires method to collect employees' perceptions and input on various stressors
  - Examine employees' health status and ascertain whether they often take sick leave due to stress-related problems.
  - monitor job performance records
  - execute stress auditing to all employees
- ◆ To assess stress on different individual, departmental, and hierarchical levels, stress audits in a questionnaire format are a top priority. It allows later follow-up and provides a basis for future comparison.

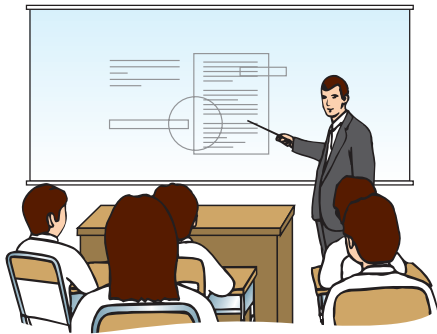


## 2. Evaluating the Risks

- ◆ After locating the prominent stressors in your company, the next step is to assess the effects of these stressors. Their influence on individual, departments, and on the working atmosphere and environment needed to be differentiated. The evaluation includes:
  - What are the most prominent stressors?
  - On whom do they exert their effects?
  - How likely would the stress-induced problem occur?
- ◆ In addition, the conditions of the current risk management practice need to be evaluated. This is a critical step for further planning of modifying the present practice or launching new ones. The following aspects worth special attention:
  - Corporate awareness and understanding on safety and health
  - Risk management
  - Training
  - Job design
  - Employee involvement
  - Promote Work-Life-Family Balance
- ◆ You could get help in assessing your company by the Organization Audit in Part I (Table 7).







**Case 1:** A school principal has found out that many teachers are perceiving stress; therefore, he calls several group meetings to talk to the teachers. He also carries out stress auditing. He finds that besides massive teaching work, the teaching staff are required to take up many administrative jobs. The most frustrating experience to them is their effort not being recognized. For example, the school had issued 108 notices, reminding parents about school activities last year. However, some parents still complain about insufficient information from the school.

In this case, the main stressors found are heavy workloads and lack of recognition due to inadequate communication. Once the sources of stress are identified, their effects could be assessed. The direct influence of the stress is on the teachers' morale, which may in turn lead to decreasing commitment. The students will then be affected too. On the other hand, the current policy, communications and management style should be re-evaluated. Is there any room for improvement? Does the school provide crisis management training? Is the work-life-family balance being addressed? After acknowledging the sources, assessing on whom the effects acting, and relevant environmental factors, appropriate steps could be carried out.



**Case 2:** A restaurant manager is worried about recruiting new waiters. Due to the keen competition in the labour market, the changing human resource policies and the flat benefits package, it is difficult to attract competent employees. At same time, the turnover rate is worrying. The manager has reviewed attendance records and job performance records, and has carried out stress auditing. From the information gathered, he understands the underlying problems and the difficulties faced by the employees. He then assesses the potential risk of the stressors and evaluates the current policies. After integrating all the information, he has a new plan in mind....to be continued.



### 3. Taking Action

Once the sources of the problems and their effects have been identified, employers or decision makers should establish corresponding policies to eliminate the negative consequences of stress. We can categorize the interventions into three levels.



## Primary Interventions

The primary interventions are on the policy and management level. Most of the previously-mentioned factors causing stress at work can be controlled by the management, therefore active measures should be taken to prevent putting staff at risk. This should not involve a back-to-front approach by requiring the staff to change their behaviour to cope with stressors when these can be avoided.

### Policy

- ◆ Formulate clear company policies and objectives, reasonable and feasible working and administrative measures.
- ◆ Formulate rules and regulations to eliminate discrimination.
- ◆ Formulate a reasonable merit and demerit system. Make sure they are implemented fully.
- ◆ Promote harmony and team spirit within the organization, and ensure appropriate handling of internal conflicts and complaints.

### Working environment

- ◆ Provide a safe and healthy working environment and facilities. Formulate and instruct the employee to adopt safe work practices.
- ◆ Arrange adequate breaks; improve welfare facilities, such as a room for relaxation, canteen, and restroom, etc.
- ◆ File and store documents in systematic manner.
- ◆ Green plants could bring fresh air and be excellent natural decorators.

### Job design

- ◆ Provide sufficient resources including manpower, equipment and skill-training, so that employees are capable of carrying out work assigned to them.
- ◆ Distribute appropriate work and workload according to employees' capabilities and experience.
- ◆ Job flow could be made more flexible.
- ◆ Make the job more challenging and interesting to boost employee's responsibility, sense of achievement and sense of recognition.
- ◆ Give employees clearly defined roles and responsibilities and make sure employees are aware of them.

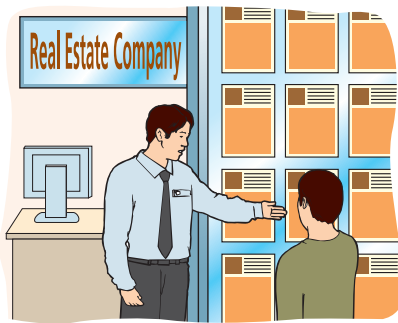


## Secondary Interventions

Secondary interventions focus on the training and development of individual employees. When the management cannot prevent stress problems originating from the intrinsic nature of the work, e.g. problems with students, violent incidents, dealing with disasters, shift work, etc., then it should provide support to relevant employees, enhance their ability to deal with the problems and assist them in reducing stress responses.

### Work-life-family balance

- ◆ Promote health message, arrange regular body check.
- ◆ Formulate, or encourage the employee to formulate, a personal development plan.



### Employee involvement

- ◆ Allow employees have more opportunities to decide their own methods and conditions of work.
- ◆ If major changes are to occur in the employee's job or welfare situation, they should be consulted in advance and advised of any progress.
- ◆ Ensure open and effective communication channels, giving employees sufficient chance to reflect their work goals and how they feel about policies, in order to enhance their commitment to the company and develop their potential to the fullest.



**Case 3:** Due to the increasing expectations of employees in the real estate and property management industry, they need to advance their skills and knowledge. One real estate company finds their training and development support inadequate. These result in a gap between the market's demand and the real ability of employees.

Provided an open communication platform exists, the needs could be presented and corresponding support could be arranged effectively. During the identification of the stressors, employees' inputs could definitely accelerate the whole process. The reason is simple: employees often know the needs the best. In this case, without consulting the employees, the management level may think of some professional training or relevant subsidizing programme. They then arrange some workshops for the employees to prepare higher qualification examinations. The real need, however, may be to raise the spoken mandarin level as there are increasing numbers of mainlander property buyers in the market.



### Training

- ◆ The management boards should also be trained to handle departmental reforms, conflicts, and stress more effectively, and to reduce inefficient decision makings.
- ◆ Provide preventive measures to employees susceptible to potential workplace violence and incident handling procedures and training.
- ◆ Provide tailor-made stress management skill training courses.

**Case 4:** In this study, the transportation and logistics industry ranks the 4th in occupational stress. Let us take an example of a public transport organization. We may consider the responsibility of a driver is to pay attention to the traffic and drive carefully. In fact, drivers need to handle a lot of sudden incidents everyday. For example, they frequently need to answer requests from passengers. When facing other angry and impatient road users and passengers, they still need to remain calm and smile at them. From these examples, we now understand that, besides driving skills and concentration, the emotional labour demands are very high for a driver.

After stress management training, many drivers have acquired some stress-reducing techniques. One technique is a daily 15-minute "happiness habit", in which they learn to develop a feeling of thankfulness and appreciation of life by recalling enjoyable or happy events and forgetting sorrow.

The "happiness habit" is one of the self-healing skills taught in the training programme. Besides self-healing skills, a stress management programme also covers understanding of stress and effective coping methods, building organizational climate, raising individual qualities such as resilience and optimism, and facilitating team building.



### Tertiary Interventions

In this level, we are concerned with crisis management and recover rehabilitation. For those employees suffering from occupational stress, employers should arrange prompt treatment and necessary counseling service to facilitate early recovery.

### 4. Monitoring the Progress & 5. Reviewing the Effectiveness

After establishing and implementing new prevention and stress management policies, the effectiveness should be closely monitored and assessed for making continuous improvement of stress management. Monitoring and assessment should include:

- ◆ Carry out another questionnaire survey with the employees.
- ◆ Examine the control measures to ascertain if they are still effective and functioning properly.

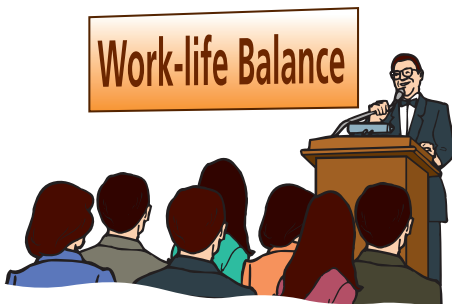




# Work Stress Management DIY Kit



- ◆ Observe the employees and the organization, e.g.:
  - the employees' health and behaviour
  - the culture and atmosphere within the organization
- ◆ Analyze various indicators and statistics, e.g.:
  - rates of accidents and absenteeism
  - productivity and service quality
  - customer complaints
  - medical insurance claim figures, etc.



**Case 2 (continued):** After understanding the situations from the different assessments, the manager changes the organizational climate of the restaurant by increasing interactions and communications with employees. The management style shifts to a more employee-oriented one. More care is shown. Conflicts are avoided. All these actions contribute to increases in commitment, which results in a lowering of the turnover rate. The shortage of manpower is thus solved. The key point here is to make the employees know that they are crucial to the company's business. With this perception, the two parties could build up trust more easily, which fosters a better organizational climate.

**Case 5:** Some welfare workers noted that the demands from the public are growing. There are more unreasonable requests. They may be subjected to insults. Some staff are worried about workplace violence. They are upset that their professionalism is not recognized. Understanding the needs of the employees, the department arranges relevant seminars like work-life balance talks, and training such as stress management training, and skills enhancement training.

In this case, monitoring progress includes collecting the employees' opinions on the seminars and training courses. Their stress levels and self-efficacy are evaluated to see if there are improvements. Useful courses are identified. At the same time, the demands from the public are also evaluated to estimate if extra resources are needed.



- ◆ Reviewing the effectiveness is based on the information gathered regarding the new policies and measures. The aim is to enhance the measures. Useful ones should be further developed while less effective ones are to be modified or discarded. Are the sources of problems identified correctly? Is the follow-up method appropriate? Only by constant reviews and improvements could a company create for the employees a happy working environment.

## Summary

The 5-Step Stress Management Model could actually be treated as a cycle. Through consistent assessments and enhancement, a sustainable healthy and happy work environment is not impossible.



## **Part III**

# **Managing Stress at Individual Level**

In this part, we will introduce some tips to prevent and cope with stress at individual level.



## 1. Cultivate Physical, Psychological and Spiritual Health

- ◆ Physical: healthy life-style, balanced food in-take, avoiding unhealthy food like coffee, alcohols, and junk food, taking appropriate exercises, practicing relaxation skills, such as meditation and yoga, sufficient rest.
- ◆ Psychological: cultivate good psychological quality, avoid low self-esteem, and habitual negative thinking.
- ◆ Spiritual: Concerns an even higher level of needs, including the personal value systems, the meaning of life, know how to face success and failure, and avoid too much pursuit of materialism.

## 2. Face Problems Positively

- ◆ Reflect opinions to management level, eliminate the sources of stress like buying supporting tools and improve the job flows.
- ◆ Plan ahead for job, prioritize sub-tasks, improve time management skills.
- ◆ Discuss possible solutions with colleagues and supervisors, seek support.
- ◆ Break down complicated job into smaller tasks with forward planning.
- ◆ Make meaning to job to increase commitment.
- ◆ Discourage long working hour, do not work in leisure time, learn to relax and take short breaks when necessary.

## 3. Improve Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support



- ◆ Build good connections with colleagues, family members and friends, establish a social supporting network.
- ◆ Accept support from others, and at the same time give a helping hand if necessary.
- ◆ Talk to reliable people when puzzled, or seek advice from professionals such as counselors or psychologist.
- ◆ Consult a doctor when prolonged anxiety or depression appear.



#### 4. Set Up SMARTER Goals

- ◆ **Specific:** avoid blur and abstract target
- ◆ **Measurable:** make sure the result is observable
- ◆ **Achievable:** make the goal within your reach
- ◆ **Relevant to your situation:** make sure you need it
- ◆ **Time-bound:** restrict yourself to achieve it within a time-frame
- ◆ **Evaluate:** assess the progress periodically
- ◆ **Reward:** don't forget to reward yourself

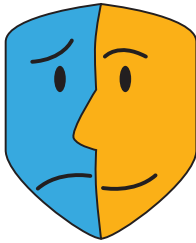


#### 5. Happiness List

- ◆ **Humour Corner:** collect jokes, interesting news and experiences to share with the people surrounding you.
- ◆ **Personal habits - the 15-minute happiness habit.**
  - spare some time to recall all the happy events everyday
  - calm your mind and listen to the heart
- ◆ Forget those things make you unhappy, forgive those people who make you angry.
- ◆ Don't be too demanding in life, show more appreciation at heart.
- ◆ Enjoy life, don't focus on unnecessary worries.
- ◆ Appreciate the blessing, bear adversity and don't forget to forgive.
- ◆ Think positively.







## 6. The Art of Happiness

### 6.1 Understanding "Happiness" and "Unhappiness"

Before questing for "happiness", we must first understand the meaning of "Happiness" and in what ways how unhappy emotions are developed.



**Check it out:** Let's try this simple personal assessment:

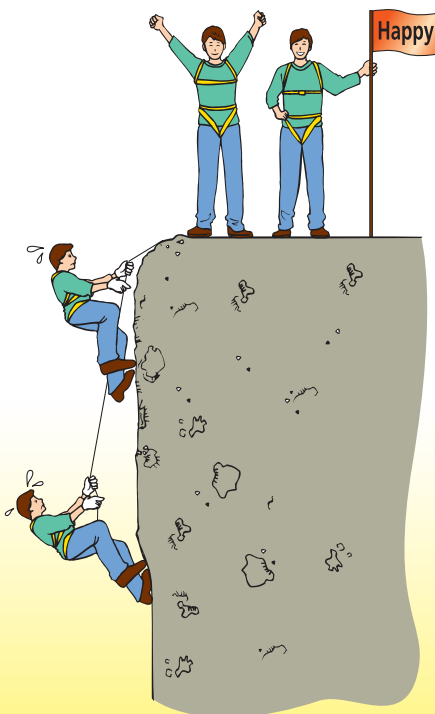
Using a scale of 1 (terrible) to 10 (happy) to rate. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?

Table 8



Which of the following factors is most important to your personal happiness?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Health              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial stability         | <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonious Society  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Political stability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonious family relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-esteem         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Life satisfaction   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual practice          | <input type="checkbox"/> Job satisfaction    |



In simpler terms, "Unhappiness" generally results from people's failure to satisfy their human needs. When faced with conflict, it's easy for people to fall into thinking error. If we cannot overcome this mindset, our internal desires will keep preying on our minds, pulling our goals further apart from daily reality, thus causing us to be "unhappy".

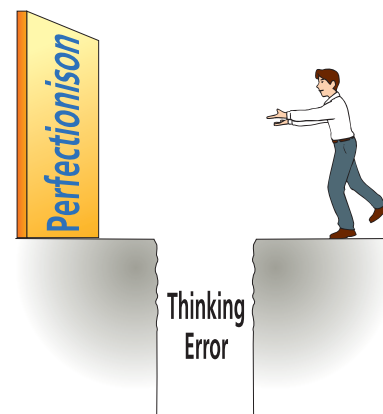
Abraham Maslow, a psychologist, proposed the Hierarchy of Needs Theory about human motivation. The lowest of these hierarchies are biological and physiological needs. Further up the list come safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs. "Self-actualization" represents the peak experience of life. Self-actualized people are not only better able to live and enjoy life freely; they are better equipped to face the reality. Ultimately, self-actualized people are capable of enjoying utmost "happiness" even in adversed environment.



Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, an American Professor of Psychology, argued that rather than taking place when we feel "very rich" or enjoy a "crazy celebration", life's happiest, most superior moments occur after the resolution of a harsh struggle.

## 6.2 How to avoid falling into a trap of "Thinking Errors"?

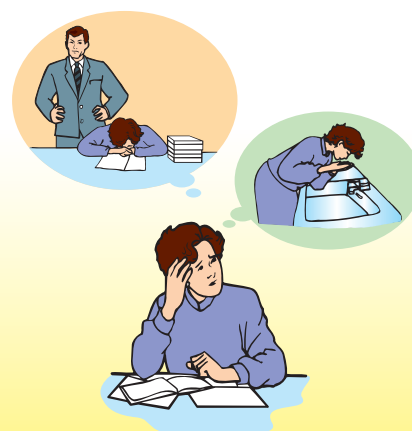
Every day of our lives, we face plenty of conflicts. They include "approach-approach conflicts" in which two equally attractive things are desired, but only one option can be chosen, and "avoidance-avoidance conflicts" in which we must accept one of two equally unattractive alternatives. Other conflicts we must face on a daily basis include struggles between our internal sense and external sensibility. Most of us have many "should be's" in our mind, or have too much expectations of ourselves. Such feelings can result in a variety of uneasy feeling when our "actual self" fail to achieve the levels demanded by our "ideal self". This invariably results in our failing to reach a state of tranquility and harmony.



Only by resolving to overcome and resolve whatever clashes and conflicts that confront us will we be able to walk away from difficult situations and leave potential trouble behind us. The key to doing this is "self-realization", a process whereby we learn to understand and to accept ourselves. "Self-realization" also includes avoiding comparison and the placing of too much value on our need for "face", helping us to try and free ourselves from adversities such as "egocentrism" and to learn to rethink what living really means. Once we do this, we can successfully avoid being misled by our external environment and free ourselves from being manipulated or affected by our emotions.

## 6.3 From "Suffering" to "Happiness"

When we feel troubled or perplexed, we can try different therapies to free ourselves from burdens. We should also try to understand our own strengths and weaknesses so that we can convert the unhealthy negative emotions into healthy positive emotions. For example, when feeling very tired and sleepy during a meeting, instead of fearing being told off by the supervisor, we should try to



resolve the problem by asking our supervisors if we can take a rest. Alternatively, we could try to negotiate with our internal self about taking a 'time out'. We could, for example, wash our faces to try and relieve our tiredness and to give ourselves a break and resolve the inner conflict in our mind. At the same time, we should also attempt to analyze the causes for our tiredness in order to figure out a solution. When we are able to act as our own carer and collaborator, conflicts are not that serious.

There are many different types of psychotherapies, many of which can be roughly categorized into problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. Problem-focused coping involves facing problems with an active and positive attitude (e.g. dividing the jobs into smaller parts; doing forward planning; thinking rationally and logically; and managing time more efficiently, etc). Emotion-focused coping involves techniques such as muscle relaxation, calligraphic therapy, music therapy, yoga, meditation and "qigong" exercises, etc. Cognitive rational therapy, such as cognitive therapy and personal spiritual cultivation will also help us to recognize our real personal needs and interpret them from different perspectives. Such therapies can also help us to face the root causes of our problems and take appropriate measures to resolve them. Ultimately, we will be able to free from conflicts.



One of the simplest ways of resolving conflicts is to devote just 15 minutes a day to practise "happiness habits" such as recalling happy people or events. Frequently maintaining happy emotions will greatly benefit not only our work, but also our life and our health.

**Don't Forget: "Happiness" is a subjective form of emotional measurement! Only YOU YOURSELF can change your levels of "happiness" or "unhappiness".**



## 7. Enhancing Our Resilience

### 1. "Resilience"

An expert once said, "Adversity is a kind of blessing in disguise."

"Resilience" is the word that describes our adaptability when facing crises and difficulties, which can minimize or overcome the damages brought about by adverse circumstances. . Resilience can also help us to overcome problems more positively. When faced with pressure, some people are able to deal with situations easily and become tougher with each trial. Others may become frustrated and may even become entirely defeated. The big difference lies in the individual's strength of resilience.



**Check it out:** When you are facing a difficulty or under stress, treat it as such a test as you can see, feel and confront. Try to take a deep breath and relax, and ask yourself the following questions from another perspective:

Table 9

- ☐ What are testing you?
- ☐ What will you need to overcome?
- ☐ Where can you obtain help and guidance?
- ☐ How can you strengthen yourself?
- ☐ What do you learn from it?
- ☐ How will you deal with it in future?
- ☐ How can you avoid it in the future?



By adopting different perspective to consider problems and difficulties, you can become your own collaborator. You can then nurture more positive attitudes towards dealing with challenges and your resilience will grow steadily.

Professor George Vaillant, the director of the Harvard Study of Adult Development at the Harvard Medical School, follow selected groups of people over a 50-year span. He found that than being resilience is not simply something that we are born with, it can be cultivated and learned throughout our lifetime.

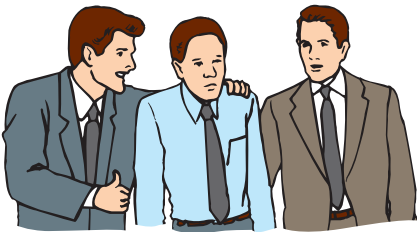




## 7.2 Factors Affecting Resilience

If resilience is not inborn, how come the resilience levels of different people facing the same problem vary so greatly?

There are many factors that determine the strength of one's resilience. Major external causes include the care and support from family and friends. For example, in encountering problems at work, colleagues can gradually create a climate of team spirit by cooperating and caring for each other, and with the support and encouragement of senior management. This will help to motivate depressed team members to solve problems more vigorously when facing difficulties at work. In contrast, in workplace where everyone is indifferent and detached, it is very likely that no one will discuss their problems with their colleagues or supervisors. Ultimately, if a member of staff does not have outstanding self-confidence and problem solving skills, it's easy for him or her to fall into a trap of thinking error, in turn; they corner themselves into a dead end. Such staff can have difficulties in building up his or her resilience.



Of course, the strength of each individual's resilience is determined by his or her personal cultivation.



**Check it out:** Which of the following characteristics best describe you:

Table 10



- ☐ Can you work out and launch a feasible plan?
- ☐ Do you have a positive self-image?
- ☐ Do you have confidence?
- ☐ Can you communicate with others easily?
- ☐ Can you solve problems by yourself?
- ☐ Do you have adequate self-control to manage strong emotions and impulse?

If all your answers to the above questions are positive, you have a high level of resilience. As such, you are unlikely to panic no matter what difficulties and pressure you may encounter.



### 7.3 Building Up Your "Resilience"

In fact, an individual's level of resilience can be directly affected by his or her own way of thinking. Whenever you feel frustrated, you can develop a resilient personality and positive emotions by following the procedures listed below:

- ◆ "Switching off" negative thoughts
- ◆ Jumping over the trap of thinking errors
- ◆ Identifying the "obstacles" that are hindering us
- ◆ Re-arranging our thinking to be more positive and encouraging



**Check it out:** When circumstances turn against you and your mind is filled with negative thoughts, simply ask yourself the following questions:

Table 11

- |  |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Are you sure it is real?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Are you sure that these are going to happen?                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do others really think the same?                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is there a positive side to the situation that you have overlooked? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How can you resolve the problem if you don't even try?              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is it possible for you to do everything perfectly?                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is it going to help to think in such way?                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is it the end of the world?   |

By trying to think through your problems from a different perspective, you will realize that many difficulties can easily be resolved.

### 7.4 Self-efficacy

Highly resilient people possess a high level of "Self-efficacy". According to Professor Bandura, "Self-efficacy" is "peoples' beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their own actions". In other words, "self-efficacy" means having self-confidence and life



goals. Ultimately, "self-efficacy" means having trust in our own abilities to meet life challenges to overcome adverse situations to achieve peace of mind.



The higher levels of "self-efficacy" we possess, the greater confidence with which we will go about our daily work. With an optimistic attitude, we will be able to face obstacles and challenge, and persevere when facing possible problems. Thus our chances of success will be higher.

Let's take the hula-hoop exercise as an example. If you don't know how to play with a hula-hoop but possess a high level of "Self-efficacy", you will have great confidence in mastering the skill. You will probably begin by observing others' actions and then imitating and practicing them until you can play hula hoop by yourself. People whose self-efficacy is low may think that it's impossible for them to master the skill even without trying it. Consequently, they may give up before making any effort to improve their hula-hoop skills. They will never succeed.

**The key point here is: to try or not to try, to persist or not to persist, ONLY YOU CAN DECIDE.**

## 8. Be Optimistic Everyday!

### 8.1 Develop Positive Emotions and Build Up a Sense of Humour

Highly resilient people find it easier than others to view problems from different perspectives. They are better equipped to look on the positive side of life and maintain a realistic view of oneself and the world. Optimists believe the future is bright and hopeful, and are far more likely to become genuine "happy persons" who can really enjoy life.





Like resilience, "optimism" can be nurtured. Being optimistic will not only help us to confront fears and to overcome obstacles, and can even share the joy and excitement with our family members and friends.

To develop optimism and nurture a sense of humour, knowing how to make fun of you is an essential criterion. Sigmund Freud believed that humour is one of the healthiest defense mechanisms. (like Ah Q). Humour allows one to maintain a detached perspective in the face of misfortune and adversity. In addition, it is easier for humorous people to maintain friendships with others. Such people are also able to develop a rich social support network and consequently to obtain the mental and physical health benefits of social support.



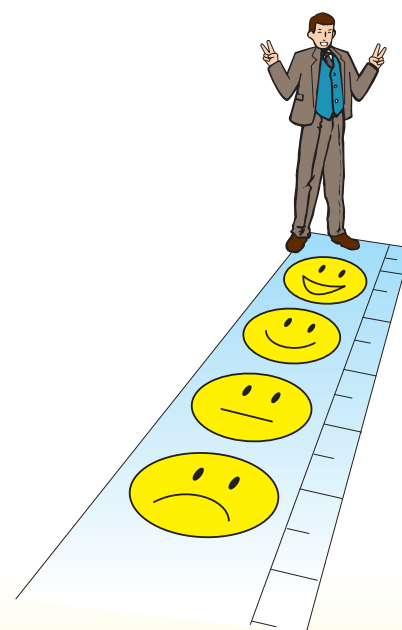
**Check it out:** Here's how you can measure your sense of humour:

Table 12

- ☐ When facing a problem, can you discover an interesting side of it by looking from a different perspective?
- ☐ Are you able to relax by giving a laugh to things around you?
- ☐ Are you able to "Make Fun" of you?

If you always see the interesting side of things, you will find that your "problems" are greatly minimized. You will discover that the "problems" facing you may not be as difficult as you first thought!

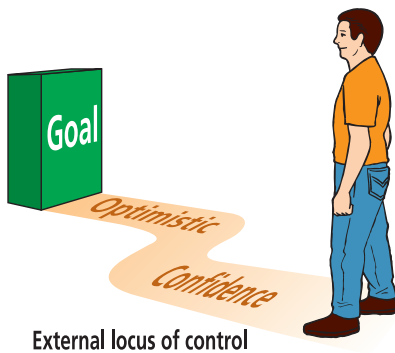
Of course, we cannot handle everything and give it a laugh by adopting an optimistic view! In particular when faced with a risky decision, you cannot be optimistic but to handle it more seriously. A final decision should only be made after considering the consequences of possible loss arising from the decision.



## 8.2 "Internal Locus of Control" and "External Locus of Control"

Humans have a universal motive to exert control or mastery over their environment. Having a sense of control is said to be a critical element in successful psychological adjustment to not only work but also other domains of life.

If you are an optimistic person, you always find life is full of hope. Such a forward-looking and hopeful attitude towards the future can easily be turned into drive and energy which motivate you to adapt and re-write your future in many different ways. Such "man's will, not heaven, decides" personality is termed as "internal locus of control" whereas "heaven, not man's will, decides" personalities are termed as "external locus of control".



People with "internal locus of control" personalities tend to view pressures as challenges that can eventually be solved. Such people will work hard at integrating, exploring and using their resources to ensure a positive solution which will enable them to relieve their tension and at the same time "thrive". People with "external locus of control", on the other hand, often refuse to face stress. They fear that they do not have the ability or power to resist. They simply do not do anything and even escape. Eventually, such people will be defeated by stress.



It is easier for people with "internal locus of control" personalities to accept new challenges and to cope with stress. Hence, senior managements should assess the personality type of their staff members when allocating jobs. Staff with "internal locus of control", for example, will be more capable of taking up marketing or other positions that require frequent contacts with different types of customers. Staff with "external locus of control", on the other hand, will be more suitable to take up monotonous jobs that require a very scrupulous attitude.

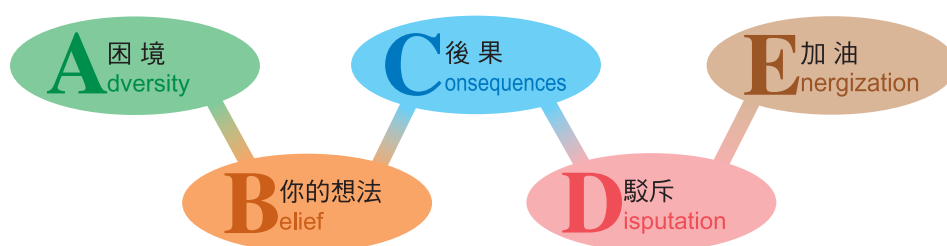




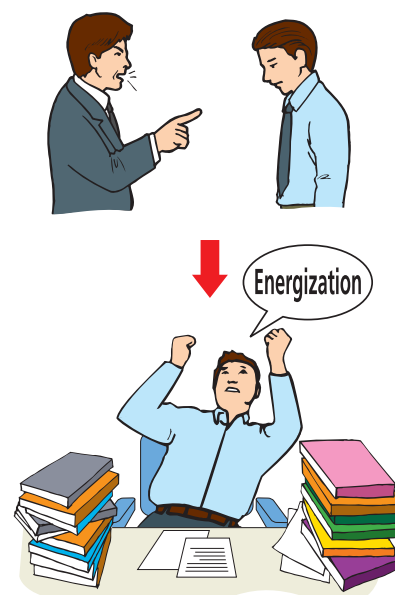
### 8.3 Thriving:

When you are full of confidence, understand your own personality, maintain an optimistic attitude in all circumstances and can deal with challenges and adversity with humour, you have already thrived in the face of adversity successfully.

The ABCDE Stress Model proposed by Cooper, a renowned psychologist should help you to deal with various daily hassles and stress more effectively:



When you are facing adversity, such as being severely criticized by your supervisor (A: Adversity), your belief (B: Belief) may be: (1) "what a shame it is that I am being criticized in front of so many colleagues!"; or (2) "I have tried my best and my performance so far is OK!". An attitude like (1) thinking may influence your emotion and result in a continued failure in your work (C: Consequences). A belief like (2) will help you to feel confident and help you to eliminate unhappy emotions. Eventually, various questions (D: Disputation) such as: "Is my working performance really that bad?"; "What factors are influencing my performance?"; and "Is it acceptable to deliver such performance under these influences?" Ultimately, each of these questions represents a true feeling of one's heart and may thus reveal a good way to resolve the problem at hand. At this point, we need to begin pulling ourselves together again and trying to solve our problems in the most possible effective and energetic way (E: Energization). Only by identifying our weaknesses can we recognize the crux of the problems and avoid making the same mistakes in future, Such steps are sure to achieve personal improvement and self-enhancement.





**Check it out:** Think of resilience as similar to taking a raft trip down a river. You need to:

Table 13



- ☐ Have knowledge about this river
- ☐ Have past experience in dealing with it
- ☐ Have a plan or a strategy
- ☐ Have courage and insight
- ☐ Have trusted companions

**Don't Forget:**

**You can always climb out to rest along the river. But to get to the end of your journey, you need to get back in the raft and continue.**

Some simple ways to reduce pressure:

- ◆ No need to please everybody;
- ◆ Learn to say "No" assertively and politely;
- ◆ Try to relax and let your brain have a rest;
- ◆ Try to learn from failures and defeats and to gain experience;
- ◆ Understand that nothing is perfect in the world and there is no need to pursue perfectionism deliberately;
- ◆ Reserve sufficient time for yourself and "be friends with yourself";
- ◆ Set aside sufficient time for your loved ones, especially for your family members;
- ◆ Try your best to get your work done and leave the results to Heaven's decision;
- ◆ Learn to slow down! - The earth will never change because you are moving extraordinarily fast;
- ◆ Develop and be involved in interests that are not related to your work or profession.





## Summary

Success and failure are both parts of our daily experience. None of us can enjoy success forever without experiencing any failure. Similarly, failure cannot be the only thing in one's life. A baby learns to stand up from crawling for the first time is already a major triumph experience.

Each of us must face numerous tests, challenges, defeats and adversities at various stages of our life, and such problems are sure to keep coming one after another. A person who is lack perseverance or a peaceful or optimistic mind are more likely to be defeated under stress, and severely attacked by external influences and internal sufferings.

After using this DIY kit, we hope you will fully understand that "only you" can decide whether your life is happy or not. If you wish to do so, you can start trying to rid yourself of mental constraints and begin confronting problems lying ahead of you. Even in times of adversity, we should each try to face affirmatively with the belief that "tomorrow will be better". Under certain circumstances, don't even be afraid to be an "Ah Q". The "Ah Q" spirit can be a new way of resolving different problems too and is sure to keep you persisting in difficult times.

If you understand the true meaning of "happiness", you will be much better able to take life's ups and downs. Best of all, your optimistic personality will influence your family and friends and help to inspire them to find a way to move forward and continually strengthen themselves.

### **Conclusion**

Congratulations! Now you are equipped with the knowledge of the whole story as well as with the substantial stress management skills. Very often, we neglect a problem and its significance due to inadequate knowledge. Now your new levels of understanding of stress and its diversified effects can bring you a whole new view on the occupational stress problem. More importantly, you have acquired effective tools and procedures to tackle stress in your own work setting.

We hope that, besides individuals, corporations are able to apply the Work Stress Management Framework and the 5-Step Stress Management Model introduced in this book and make references to the cases mentioned. Tackling work stress does not solely rely on employers or employees, the efforts of both parties are required. Following the steps and suggestions outlined, with the close cooperation between employer and employees, problems could then be systematically solved. Meanwhile, please do not forget that preventive measures are the most effective way eliminating stressors.

At individual level, we hope you can start from the minor and insignificant tasks. If you could practice the advice instead of just talking, you could change your way of thinking and your living habits gradually. With a clear and smart goal, you will soon discover things are changing around you. One day, your health will improve if you follow your new eating and excises habits. Your relationships with others will also be become closer and closer. When you are in need, there will be someone who is willing to listen to you, giving you a helping hand, enabling you to rebound from various adversities and challenges.



## Learning Resources

### Government department and statutory body

- ◆ Labour Department: [www.labour.gov.hk](http://www.labour.gov.hk)
- ◆ Occupational Safety & Health Council: [www.oshc.org.hk](http://www.oshc.org.hk)

### Recommended learning resources

#### 1 Books

Title	Author(s)
1. Conquer your Stress. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.	Cooper, C. L., & Palmer, S.
2. Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment	Martin E. P. Seligman, Ph.D.
3. Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life	Martin E. P. Seligman, Ph.D.
4. The 100 Simple Secrets of Happy People	David Niven, Ph.D.
5. The 100 Simple Secrets of Healthy People	David Niven, Ph.D.
6. Get the Happiness Habit	Christine Webber
7. The Art of Happiness-A Handbook for Living	HH Dalai Lama & Howard C. Cutler
8. Flow - The Classic Work on How to Achieve Happiness	Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
9. 幸福心理學	Michael Argyle 著 / 施建彬、陸洛譯
10. 幸福心理學	鄭雪、嚴標賓、丘林、張興貴
11. 我選擇快樂 - 快樂心理學（第四版）	劉遠章、陶兆輝
12. 廣闊「心」空 - 一位精神科醫生的個案手記	葉恩明
13. 釋放「心」間 - 精神科大夫小記	葉恩明
14. 戰勝抑鬱	青山醫院
15. 我要放鬆 - 實用身心鬆弛法	胡潔瑩
16. 恢復力	穆揚



## 2 Websites

### Publications on Occupational Safety

- (1) Occupational Safety & Health Council (職業安全健康局)  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk>  
Most of the OSHC publications are in pdf format, including books and leaflets, most downloadable.

### Articles, Tests and Scales on Positive Psychology and Resilience

- (2) American Psychologists Association  
<http://www.apahelpcenter.org/featuredtopics/feature.php?id=6>  
The publication "The Road to Resilience" is downloadable from the site.
- (3) Authentic Happiness  
<http://www.authentichappiness.org>  
There are online tests and scales developed by Martin E. P. Seligman and his colleagues to help users check their progress of the happiness journey.
- (4) United Centre of Emotional Health and Positive Living  
<http://www.ucep.org.hk>  
It is a site developed by the United Christian Medical Service to promote positive psychology and emotional health in order to enhance people's positive living. There are practical tips on various kinds of emotional control, including depression, anger, and jealousy, and advices for employees, parents, teenagers, and children.
- (5) Oasis  
<http://www.ha.org.hk/oasis/html/spring.htm>  
It is a corner in the website of Hospital Authority to share inspiring stories, photos, and drawings.

- (6) Positive Psychology Power  
<http://www.pppower.org>  
A website developed by three local clinical psychologists to introduce the concept of positive psychology and 3R (refresh, reflect, reconstruct) illustrated with real cases.
- (7) The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention, University of Hong Kong  
<http://csrp1.hku.hk>  
There are inspiring stories for self help and practical advice on how to deal with suicidal people. The Centre has also developed an interactive website, Little Prince is Depressed at <http://csrp2.hku.hk/dlp/b5/home.html>, to introduce the concept of depression with multimedia illustrations.

### Articles on "Fun at Work"

- (8) Personal website of Mr. David Granirer, North America's Psychotherapist and a speaker and trainer who gives laughter in the workplace presentations  
<http://www.granirer.com>  
There are articles written by Mr. Granirer to suggest how to promote sense of humor in the workplace.

### Comics

- (9) Old Master Q Comics (老夫子)  
<http://www.oldmasterq.com>  
Daily comics, e-cards, and wallpapers are downloadable from the site.
- (10) Match Man (火柴人)  
<http://www.matchman.com.hk>  
The official website of the comic character, Match Man, developed by Breakthrough Ltd. Comics and e-cards with encouraging messages are downloadable from the site.



## Appendix I. Stress Audit - Suggestions for Improvement

### Job Insecurity

#### Organization Level

- If major changes are to occur in the employee's job or welfare situation, they should be consulted in advance and advised of any progress.
- Ensure open and effective communication channels, giving employees sufficient chance to reflect their work goals and how they feel about policies, in order to enhance their commitment to the company and develop their potential to the fullest.

#### Individual Level

- Upgrading work skills and enhancing employability through continuous learning.
- Make meaning to job to increase commitment.
- Build good connections with colleagues, family members and friends, establish a social support network.
- Accept support from others, and at the same time give a helping hand if necessary.
- Enjoy life, don't focus on unnecessary worries.

### Interpersonal Conflict

#### Organization Level

- Formulate rules and regulations to eliminate discrimination.
- Formulate a reasonable merit and demerit system; make sure they are fully implemented.
- Improve communication channels, promote harmony and team spirit within the organization, and ensure appropriate handling of internal conflicts and complaints.
- Aim to achieve mutual agreement and cooperation.

#### Individual Level

- Cultivate good psychological quality; avoid low self-esteem and habitual negative thinking.
- Know how to face success and failure, and avoid too much pursuit of materialism.
- Build good connections with colleagues, family members and friends, establish a social support network.
- Act according to realistic situation, avoid getting emotional.
- Aim to achieve "Win-Win" situation, avoid Lose-Lose.

### Quantitative Workloads

#### Organization Level

- Arrange adequate breaks; improve welfare facilities such as a room for relaxation, canteen and restroom etc.

- Distribute appropriate work and workload according to employee's capabilities and experience.
- Provide sufficient resources including manpower, equipment and skill training, so that employees are capable of carrying out work assigned to them.

#### Individual Level

- Plan ahead for job, prioritize sub-tasks, and improve time management skills.
- Discuss possible solutions with colleagues and supervisors.
- Break down complicated job into smaller tasks with forward planning.
- Be a flexible perfectionist.
- Concentrate on one task at a time.
- Discourage long working hour, do not work in leisure time, learn to relax and take short breaks when necessary.

### Organizational Constraints

#### Organization Level

- Formulate clear company policies and objectives, reasonable and feasible working and administrative measures.
- The management boards should also be trained to handle departmental reforms, conflicts and stress more effectively, and to reduce inefficient decision makings.
- Make job flow more flexible.
- Make the job challenging and interesting to boost employee's responsibility, sense of achievement and sense of recognition.
- Give employees clearly defined roles and responsibilities and make sure employees are aware of them.

#### Individual Level

- Reflect opinions to management level, eliminate the sources of stress like buying supporting tools and improve the job flows.
- Discuss possible solutions with colleagues and supervisors.
- Make meaning to job to increase commitment.

### Autonomy

#### Organization Level

- Make job flow more flexible.
- Make the job challenging and interesting to boost employee's responsibility, sense of achievement and sense of recognition.
- Give employees clearly defined roles and responsibilities and make sure employees are aware of them.

# Work Stress Management DIY Kit

- Communicate regularly with employees and respect their idea.

## Individual Level

- Set up specific and achievable goals.
- Assess the progress periodically.
- Do not forget to reward yourself.
- Make meaning to job to increase commitment.

## Perceived Work Stress

### Organization Level

- Make sure that supervisors feel they can communicate easily and effectively with the employees, so that they are able to pick up any problems that may cause stress at home or at work.
- Good ergonomic design of work stations that suits the task to the worker (e.g. provide employees with ergonomically sound facilities for using computer keyboard and mouse) and issue guidance on proper and safe working procedures.
- Review employees' overtime pattern and recommend employees not to leave the office too late (e.g., the office is closed by 9 pm.).
- Remind employees to take a break (e.g. play some light music or show a pop-up message on the computer screen).
- Promote Work-Life-Family Balance and other health information.
- Provide tailor-made stress management skill training courses

### Individual Level

- Try to relax and let your brain have a rest.
- Maintain Work-Life-Family Balance.
- Understand that nothing is perfect in the world and there is no need to pursue perfectionism deliberately.
- Try your best to get your work done and leave the results to Heaven's decision.
- Develop and be involved in interests that are not related to your work or profession.
- Learn to slow down! The earth will never change because you are moving extraordinarily fast.
- Discourage long working hour, do not work in leisure time, learn to relax and take short breaks when necessary.
- Accept support, talk to reliable people when puzzled, or seek advice from professionals such as counselors or psychologist, consult a doctor when prolonged anxiety or depression appear

## Job Satisfaction

### Organization Level

- Strengthen social support networks in the workplace (e.g. organize leisure activities, encourage employees to take care of colleagues' emotion difference, encourage employees to join volunteer work, organize experience sharing sessions).
- Formulate, or encourage the employees to formulate a personal development plan.
- Encourage employees to participating training in different aspects and provide study leave and sponsorship in training.
- Promote Work-Life-Family Balance.
- Provide tailor-made stress management skill training courses.
- Give support to employees and recognize their performance and achievement.

### Individual Level

- Set up specific and achievable goals.
- Do not forget to reward yourself.
- Make meaning to job to increase commitment.
- Don't be too demanding in life, show more appreciation at heart.
- Appreciate the blessing, bear adversity and don't forget to forgive.
- Re-set a goal and thrives.

## Self-rated Resilience

### Organization Level

- Colleagues can gradually create a climate of team spirit by cooperating and caring for each other, and with the support and encouragement of senior management. This will help to motivate depressed team members to solve problems more vigorously when facing difficulties at work.
- Provide training on stress awareness and recognition, managing work pressure, counseling skills, managing changes in their department, assertiveness, managing conflicts.
- Provide relevant information to help employees to develop positive affect (e.g., buy self-help books for staff's learning resources centre or post relevant information in company's intranet; designate a humor corner or a resting place and place some comics or leisure reading materials; show a pop-up encouraging message on the computer screen when starting the computer).
- Strengthen social support networks in the workplace (e.g. organize leisure activities, encourage employees to take care of colleagues' emotion difference, encourage employees to join volunteer work, organize experience sharing sessions).



### Individual Level

- By adopting different perspective to consider problems and difficulties, you can then nurture more positive attitudes towards dealing with challenges and your resilience will grow steadily.
- "Switch off" negative thoughts.
- Jump over the trap of thinking errors.
- Identify the "obstacles" that are hindering us.
- Re-arrange our thinking to be more positive and encouraging.
- Keep smiling and think positively
- Build up a sense of humor and be hopeful.
- Enhance level of "Self-Efficacy"
- Maintain "Internal Locus of Control"

### Self-rated Job Performance

#### Organization Level

- Formulate clear company policies and objectives, reasonable and feasible working and administrative measures.
- Formulate a reasonable merit and demerit system; make sure they are fully implemented.
- Improve communication channels, promote harmony and team spirit within the organization, and ensure appropriate handling of internal conflicts and complaints.
- Give support to employees and recognize their performance and achievement.

#### Individual Level

- View problems from different perspectives; look on the positive side of life and maintain a realistic view of oneself and the world. Be optimistic and believe the future is bright and hopeful.
- Have confidence on yourself and understand your own personality, maintain an optimistic attitude in all circumstances and can deal with challenges and adversity with humor.
- Try to learn from failures and defeats and to gain experience.
- Understand that nothing is perfect in the world and there is no need to pursue perfectionism deliberately.
- Be a flexible perfectionist.
- Try your best to get your work done and leave the results to Heaven's decision.
- Develop and be involved in interests that are not related to your work or profession.
- Learn to slow down! The earth will never change because you are moving extraordinarily fast.

### Physical and Psychological Symptoms

#### Organization Level

- Issue policy and provide fitness facilities to enhance employees' physical health (include encouraging employees to do physical exercises regularly promote healthy diet, take care of employees' occupational health needs).
- Promote health information, arrange regular body check.
- Provide relevant information to help employees to develop positive affect (e.g., buy self-help books for staff's learning resources centre or post relevant information in company's intranet; designate a humor corner or a resting place and place some comics or leisure reading materials; show a pop-up encouraging message on the computer screen when starting the computer).
- For those employees suffering from occupational stress, employers should arrange prompt treatment and necessary counseling service to facilitate early recovery.
- Implement exercise plan and encourage employees' participation.

#### Individual Level

- Cultivate physical, psychological and spiritual health
  - Physical** : healthy life-style, balanced food in-take, avoiding unhealthy food like coffee, alcohols, and junk food, taking appropriate exercises, practicing relaxation skills, such as meditation and yoga, adequate sleep;
  - Psychological**: cultivating good psychological quality, avoiding low self-esteem and self-efficacy, and habitual negative thinking;
  - Spiritual** : Concerns an even higher level of needs, including the personal value systems, the meaning of life, the wisdom to treating win and loss, spiritual pursuit, etc.
- Enhance our resilience.
- Develop optimistic and positive emotions.
- Talk to reliable people when puzzled such as family, colleagues and friends.
- Arrange prompt treatment and necessary counseling service to facilitate early recovery.





**職業安全健康局**  
**OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH COUNCIL**

香港北角馬寶道28號華匯中心19樓

19/F, China United Centre, 28 Marble Road,  
North Point, Hong Kong

電話 Tel : 2739 9377 傳真 Fax : 2739 9779

電子郵件 E-mail : [oshc@oshc.org.hk](mailto:oshc@oshc.org.hk)

職安熱線 Hotline : 2739 9000

職安資訊傳真服務 SafeFax : 2316 2576

網頁 Homepage : [www.oshc.org.hk](http://www.oshc.org.hk)

**攜手創職安**  
*Partnership in Safety*

ISBN 962-968-281-8



9 789629 682811

©2006 職業安全健康局版權所有 05/2006 (02)