



## What is Stress?

**Stress is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response.**

Stress can be thought of as the body's response to pressures from events, feelings or situations. It is completely normal and can be useful in certain situations, helping us to improve performance and complete tasks.

During times of stress, the body responds by preparing for action. These physiological preparations include raising the heart rate, dilating the pupils and getting the muscles ready for action. The hormones involved in these preparations can affect the body for several minutes with each stressful event.

As mentioned, stress can be helpful however, too much pressure, too often can be harmful and can negatively affect our mood, sleep, relationships, and long-term health.

What we find stressful can vary from person to person and can be affected by our personal experiences and upbringing. As we all encounter stressful events in our life, the ability to deal with stress is a very important life skill to have.

### Common causes of workplace stress include:

- Pressure to perform to meet rising expectations
- Pressure to work at optimum levels – all of the time!
- Lack of working flexibility
- Increasing working hours/workload
- Fear of being laid off

### Warning signs that someone may be stressed at work

When someone is stressed, they will likely be overwhelmed at work, the individual may lose confidence and may become angry, irritable or withdrawn.

Other signs include:

- Trouble concentrating
- Social withdrawal
- Problems sleeping
- Headaches
- Anxiousness
- Disengagement

# Top tips to help reduce workplace stress



- Encourage mindfulness in your team
- Encourage your employees to get adequate sleep
- Encourage your employees to get up and move regularly
- Treat everyone fairly without favouritism
- Facilitate open dialogue between employees and managers
- Recognise employees for a job well done
- Be supportive of workers experiencing hard times
- Offer flexible work schedules
- Set realistic, clear goals and expectations



Save the date –  
**Stress Awareness  
Month**

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When stress is at its highest, just know it can only go down