



Techniques of stress management for mental health in the contemporary scenario

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Abstract

A person struggling with their mental health may experience this because of stress, loneliness, depression, anxiety, relationship problems, death of a loved one, suicidal thoughts, grief, addiction, various mood disorders, or other mental illnesses of varying degrees, as well as learning disabilities. Therapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurse practitioners or physicians can help manage mental illness with treatments such as therapy, counselling, or medication. In today's economic upheavals, downsizing, layoff, merger and bankruptcies have lost hundreds of thousands of workers their jobs. The loss of a job can be devastating, putting unemployed workers at risk for physical illness, marital strain, anxiety, depression and even suicide. Loss of a job affects every part of life, from what time you get up in the morning, to which you see and what you can afford to do. The objective of this article to give basic treatment for reducing stress level and to make necessary action to decrease the stress of the individuals.

Keywords: mental health, stress, management of stress, job stress

Introduction

At the time of examination, it is the experience of students that they are under stress, if they have not been able to prepare a particular subject. We hardly find a person, who has not experienced stress, may be, due to some work conditions in service or due to some social problem, or due to financial difficulties. High stress results into physical or mental uneasiness, anxiety, frustration, high blood pressure, excitement, anger, remaining absent from service, suicide or heart attack. In general terms stress is a dynamic mental condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important.

Effects of Stress

The major effects of stress would be as follows:

- Physical Effects
- Psychological Effects
- Behavioural Effects
- Performance Effects
- Physical Effects

The effect of high stress on physical health is very serious. It results blood pressure and high level of cholesterol and result into heart disease, ulcers and arthritis. They may be even a link between stress and cancer.

- **Psychological Effects**

The psychological effects of stress are just as important as physical effects. High level of stress is generally accompanied by anger, anxiety, depression, nervousness, irritability, tension and boredom.

- **Behavioural Effects**

A person working under high level of stress will behave in an abnormal way. The behavioural effects would be over eating and under eating, sleeplessness, increased smoking and drinking and drug abuse.

- **Performance Effects**

The effects of stress on performance are always undesirable, it leads reduced productivity, lowering of overall production and adverse effect on quality of goods produced, sabotage in the factory, it leads to high rates of absenteeism and turn over, adverse effect on decision making and lack concentration and so he may fall pray to accident.

Techniques of Stress Management

There are two types of strategies are suggested to cop of with the stress.

A. Individual strategies

- Physical exercise
- Relaxation and Meditation
- Behavioural Self-Control
- Cognitive Therapy
- Social Support
- Time Management
- Role Clarification
- Departure of Job

B. Organisation Strategies

- Selection and Placement
- Goal setting
- Job Redesign
- Organisational Communication
- Delegation
- Supervisory Training
- Stress Reduction Workshop
- Career Planning and Counselling
- Changes in organisation structure
- Wellness Programme

C. Individual strategies

Some of the methods to be used by individuals for stress reduction are as follows:

- **Physical exercise**

People are able to cop off with stress due to exercise because of self-confidence that he would now be well off physically and because of getting one's mind off work for a while.

- **Relaxation and Meditation**

Relaxation may involve mixing and talking with a friend who is a sympathetic listener. All these will definite lead to lowering of stress.

For meditation, Yoga is the best form. There is some research evidence that search meditation can have a desirable physical and mental impact on the people.

- **Behavioural Self-Control**

An employee or officer can think about the way is in which he can change his behaviour and can achieve self-control. For this, he can make certain changes in his job and reduce stress.

- **Cognitive Therapy**

In such a case, the psychologists make him think the other way and thus try to reduce stress. Hypnotism is one of such techniques. In one such programme, the employee was asked to remember events at work and analyse the events which caused stress at work. They are in turn given suggestions to replace negative, self-defeating thinking.

- **Social Support**

The social psychologist says from their findings that when a mane is under great stress, he can form close association with trusted and sympathetic co-worker, who is a good listener and confidence builder. This will definitely reduce stress.

- **Time Management**

One of the causes of stress for manager is pressure of time. For them the 24-hour time during a day is short. Hence many companies make arrangements for teaching time management techniques to their managers.

- **Role Clarification**

We have seen that an employee becomes stressful when his role in the organisation is not clear. Hence, everybody's role must be clarified by the management. If need be, he must ask for clarification about his role.

- **Departure of Job**

When the degree of job stress increase beyond a limit, the employee has no alternative but to leave the job. The nature of job may not suit his temperament or the work conditions are such which creates mental tension or the attitude of supervisor is always fault finding, then the only way left for him is to leave the job.

D. Organisation Strategies

As stress is harmful to organisation also, steps are taken by the management to reduce job stress of employee. Some of strategies are as follow:

- **Selection and Placement**

If management takes proper precautions at the stage of selection and placement, then much of job stress can be reduced. In such cases, employees with enough experience of such work, who will not feel stress, must only be selected.

- **Goal setting**

When goals have been clearly laid down, are challenging, have been decided with consensus of all employees and are quantifiable and measurable, then there is less job stress in achieving them.

- **Job Redesign**

Repetitive, routine and specialised jobs lead to monotony and boredom. Hence, jobs should be redesigned to make them more varied and challenging. There should be job enrichment.

- **Organisational Communication**

Effective communication system will help in increase better understanding of jobs and goals of the organisation. It will reduce stress.

- **Delegation**

When a subordinate is entrusted with a responsibility but has not been delegated enough authority, he will feel stress. Hence, the delegation of authority consistent with his responsibility to the subordinate is a good way of solving stress problem.

- **Supervisory Training**

Supervisors are trained with techniques of reducing worker's stress. He is taught how to evaluate the performance of workers, to give proper guidance and direction in technical matters. This helps in reducing job stress among workers.

- **Stress Reduction Workshop**

The management may arrange for stress reduction workshops from time to time and train employees in techniques of stress reducing.

- **Career Planning and Counselling**

If the employees are left to plan their own career, they may not be able to take any decision. Hence, management must make arrangement for career planning and counselling. Counselling in respect of stress is also undertaken.

- **Changes in organisation structure**

Most large companies today have highly formal organisation structure, which becomes inflexible and impersonal. This can lead to considerable job stress. A prompt strategy in such a case would be decentralisation in the organisation. Participative decision making and upward communication flows are needed. Such organisation change can lead to stress reduction.

- **Wellness Programme**

The company can arrange programmes which will keep employees in good physical and mental health e.g. programmes of how to stop smoking, facilities for exercise, Yoga and Meditation, free medical treatment etc.

Conclusion

According to the discussion as above, stress is very harmful element for competent employees as well as managers. It is necessary to find out the causes, in which they feel stress. There are various types of methods, which can be utilised for reduction of stress as well as to give back them great mental health, which will help them to achieve their individuals goal and as well as the mission of an organisation.

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