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Stress at Work

If you are feeling stressed at work you are not alone. A survey conducted by the Harvard T.H. Chan School in collaboration with National Public Radio and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, found that one in five workers (20%) reported they felt a great amount of stress in the past year and 37% reported feeling some stress in the past year. That is a pretty significant amount.

According to the American Psychological Association (APA) some of the stress is caused by an unrealistic workload, a job with no opportunities to move up, a job that is not engaging, and a feeling of having little or no input into decisions made at work. Not only will stress impact your work but it can also impact your home life and eventually your health.

You may experience some of the signs of work-related stress without realizing it could be a result of your job. Some of the signs of work-related stress are headache, stomachache, trouble sleeping, a short temper, and difficulty concentrating. Prolonged stress can go even further resulting in depression, obesity, and heart disease. Some people who are feeling excessively stressed reach for junk food, cigarettes, alcohol, or even drug abuse. It is important to find more constructive ways to deal with stress before it radically impacts your life.

To help reduce and deal with the stress found at work, the APA recommends the following:

- Look for patterns in what is causing your stress so you anticipate them and know how you are going to handle them. Write them down: How did you feel? Was someone else involved? How did you react to the stress?

- Once the stressors are identified, create a healthy response for when they do occur. Some healthier responses are exercising, enjoying a healthy snack, or even reading a book for a little while.
- Create a work life-balance that works best for you to help relieve some of the work related stressors. Don't feel you need to be available 24/7.
- Take time to unplug, relax, unwind, and recharge. The APA states: "When possible, take time off to relax and unwind, so you come back to work feeling reinvigorated and ready to perform at your best."
- Learn how to relax. Some techniques to learn are yoga, meditation, or deep breathing techniques.
- Talk to your manager or supervisor about how you are feeling and how you plan to manage your stress. Don't use it as a chance to complain about the company or your job but a chance to work with your manager to develop the best way to deal with your stress that allows you to do your job.
- Finally, get support or seek help. Some companies have an employee assistance program. If yours does, use it. If you have tried all of the options outlined here and you still feel overwhelmed and stressed out, look into talking to a mental health professional. Talking to someone outside of your work or home life may be helpful in dealing with stress.

Whatever your stress level is, or the cause, it important to identify the stressors and develop a plan to deal with them. Not only can they impact your job, but also your personal life and your health. Seek help, there are many options available.

Source: <http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/15770-feeling-stressed-at-work>

Hot Off The Line

Q - I have a regular full time employee who asked if he could opt out of the New York State Paid Family Leave. He feels he would never use the benefit and does not want to have the weekly payroll deduction. Is this possible?

A - An employee cannot opt out of the NYS Paid Family Leave if he qualifies, even if he feels he would not take advantage of the benefits.

HR Stats & Facts

- According to a recent survey of 855 respondents across the U.S., 57% offer a traditional PTO Program (sick, vacation, and personal days tracked separately), up 2% from 2015. *Source: 2018 Zwave.com PTO Survey.*
- The cost of lost productivity to the economy the day after the Super Bowl was predicted to be at least \$3 billion. Lost productivity was also predicted to be at least \$194 million in Philadelphia alone. I guess it wasn't very productive in Philadelphia on 2/5! *Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas study.*
- A survey conducted by Northwestern National Life revealed 40% of workers reported their job is "very or extremely stressful." *Source: www.cdc.gov.*

DID YOU KNOW?

If you are a first-tier government contractor with \$50,000 or more in federal government contracts and 50 or more employees at one location; or, a second-tier government contractor (supplies to a first-tier contractor) with \$50,000 or more in contracts and 50 or more employees at one location you are required to have an Affirmative Action Plan. MACNY can audit your plan, rewrite it, or create one for you as well as complete your Adverse Impact. If you are interested in receiving a quote or would like additional information please contact Patty Clark, HR Services Manager at 315-474-4201 x 10 or pclark@macny.org.

CPI

Wage/Clerical	December	November	Pt. Chg. (Mo.)	% Chg. (Mo.)	% Chg. (Yr.)
1967=100	716.5	716.9	-0.4	-0.1%	2.2%
1982-84=100	240.5	240.7	-0.1	-0.1%	2.2%
Urban					
1967=100	738.5	738.9	-0.4	-0.1%	2.1%
1982-84=100	246.5	246.7	-0.1	-0.1%	2.1%
Unemployment Rates					
December - Onondaga County: 4.6; Metropolitan Syracuse Area (MSA): 5.1					