

Worksheet
STRESS MANAGEMENT

Dealing with stress at work

Decide What
you really
want

Stress management at work

22 Work-related stressors

- Burnout (see [How to get over a nervous breakdown](#))
- Difficulties with a manager (see: [How to Deal With Criticism](#))
- Boredom at work
- Conflicts with colleagues (see: [Fair fighting rules](#))
- Working with colleagues who don't pull their weight
- Home-related issues impacting your well-being and performance at work (see: [Relationship problems](#))
- Promotion prospects - lack of opportunity, feeling bypassed
- Performance-related interview or exam anxiety (see [Hypnosis FAQ and downloads](#))
- Work reminders of past (childhood) trauma, e.g. police officers dealing with children living in unsafe environments, or frequent reminders of traumatic incidents they have previously dealt with

- Feeling overstretched in terms of workload
- Feeling overstretched in terms of difficulties of tasks (in the wrong job/role in the first place or through reorganisation/changes)
- Working in a job that is known to be stressful
- (Constantly) changing roles, departments or area
- Harassment - racial, sexual or any other kind
- Traumatic work-related experiences (see [PTSD symptoms](#))
- Loss of job or job role - being moved sideways or demoted with or without any say or control
- Unrealistic deadlines
- Commuting: overcrowding and delays or busy roads and traffic jams
- Lack of recognition: you're working hard but appear to be invisible
- Public speaking - whether to a small or large crowd
- The values and beliefs of the organisation/business you work for don't fit with yours
- Anxieties about contributing at meetings or public speaking (see Hypnosis FAQ and downloads)

You can begin to tackle some of these issues by working on yourself first. For others, you'll definitely need help from people at work.

Write down the main stressor that resonates with you...

Step 1 - Break down the problem into chunks

How would you summarise what's happening?

See my article on [problem solving strategies](#) to help you easily write a clear summary.

Who are the people you consider to be *directly* involved in a positive and/or negative way?

Who is *indirectly* involved?

For each person involved in a negative way, consider possible alternative reasons as to why they may be behaving the way they are.

IMPORTANT:

This is *not* to find excuses for unkindness, neglect or

bullying. It's simply to help you look at the problems from a new and potentially more helpful angle.

For example:

Perhaps they have no control, or they're scared of:

- losing their job
- no longer fitting in
- being demoted (earning less and losing status)
- being found out, for whatever reason

What might be the underlying reason they can't cope with additional stress? Maybe because:

- their partner is about to leave them
- they have an ill child at home
- they've just moved in with their new partner and step-children who are being horrible
- they have just lost someone close to them
- they've just discovered that they have a life-limiting illness or someone close to them has a terminal or debilitating illness

- they're coping with mental illness, have financial problems, etc.

Step 2 - Describe how you feel about it

What feelings are bubbling up right now as you're working on this?

This helps you to be clear about the reality of the situation, and to be able to take responsibility for your feelings. It can also help someone else to understand you and the impact of what's happening better.

I feel... when...

How can you help yourself to manage the situation better?

Think about adjusting your perception and ways to manage your own home situation/[relationship problems](#) and stress levels.

Step 3 - Ask for help

Who can you ask for help at work?

- Human Resource Manager
- Your line manager
- A departmental manager or head
- A workplace counsellor or mentor
- A workplace doctor
- A union representative
- A colleague
- The boss

- A combination of these

I have worked at a large police organisation as a therapist.

I know that asking for help can feel almost too overwhelming when you're feeling vulnerable.

You'll know, though, when the time is right. That will be when you have no desire or option to change jobs and your general well-being is being compromised.

Here's a little help to prepare yourself

Consider your answers to the questions in the article on [problem solving strategies](#) and your summary.

What do you *ideally* want to see done or changed about the situation?

Who can help you with that?

What precisely do they/he/she need to know?

What do you need to do before you see each person to prepare yourself?

What will you say?

Here's how you can frame your statement:

1. Describe the problem in factual terms only - no accusations.
2. Say how you feel about the problems
3. Say what you do like about your role/workplace
4. Ask for help in sorting it out.

When will you have that conversation?

If your conversation with the first person you spoke to hasn't been helpful, who will you talk to next?

If necessary, who can you ask to accompany you?

Support away from work

Who else can help and support you through this challenging time?

Think about the people, services and organisations in your life. You could consider talking to:

- Your partner
- A trusted friend or family member
- Your doctor
- A local or online counsellor
- A not-for-profit helpline
- A religious leader

What can they help you with?

You'll get different kinds of support from different kinds of people. Some will be able to offer practical help while others can provide emotional support. Others might be a good for a proper belly laugh to take your mind of the drama at work.

Identify what you need most at the moment, and who you can ask for help with that.