

Title	Stress at Work _ Management and Prevention
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Source	Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann publications
Pub Date	2005
Brief Introduction	<p>People at work worry about all sorts of things – increasing competition for jobs, globalization, terrorism, ‘rationalization’ of the organization’s operations, looking after ageing parents and relatives, the threat of redundancy, annual appraisals, new technology, outsourcing of jobs to India and other Third World countries together with increased demands by employers for higher productivity. Moreover, they may be put under excessive pressure at certain times, for example, to meet sales targets, attend meetings on time, learn and follow new procedures and fit in with changes in the organization’s culture. This can result in varying levels of stress. According to the Health and Safety Executive, workplace stress is now the fastest growing cause of absence from work.</p> <p>What sort of employer are you? When your employees complain of stressful conditions at work, do you reply with the old maxim ‘If you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen!’? The days when such a response from employers was common are over. Employers now need to get to grips with a range of policies and procedures to deal with stress at work.</p> <p>What is important is that the poor standards of performance by many employees due to the effects of stress at work represent a substantial financial loss to their organizations and the British economy. Moreover, recent cases in the civil courts, and the greater attention now being paid to the subject of stress at work by the enforcement agencies, means that employers need to consider stress in the workplace and the measures they must take to prevent employees suffering stress arising from their work. It is not uncommon for six figure sums to be awarded as damages in civil claims for stress-induced injury.</p> <p>This book has been written as a guide for managers. It should enable them to understand the meaning of stress, the causes of stress, human responses to stress and aspects of behaviour which are significant in this area. In particular, employers need to manage stress by incorporating stress protection for their employees into their management systems.</p> <p>The book incorporates a number of important features, including a stress audit, the recent Court of Appeal general guidelines with respect to civil claims for stress-related ill health, measures necessary with respect to bullying and harassment and procedures for bringing stress management into operating procedures.</p> <p>I would like to thank Dr Jacques Tamin of Interact Health Management for contributing the work-related stress (WRS) risk assessments.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Jeremy Stranks August 2004</p>