# WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH

**What is stress?**

HSE, UK defines stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them'.

**Did you know?**

1. It is estimated that 1 in 6 people in the past week experienced a common mental health problem. Mental Health foundation, UK

2. More than 40% of employees are neglecting other aspects of their life because of work, which may increase their vulnerability to mental health problems. Mental Health Ireland. (2018).

3. 1 in 6.8 people are experience mental health problems in the workplace (14.7%). Mental Health foundation, UK

**According to Forbes:**

- The average business professional has 30 to 100 projects on their plate.

- Modern workers are interrupted seven times an hour and distracted up to 2.1 hours a day.

This may be why more than 40% of adults say they lie awake at night plagued by the stressful events of the day. Stress affects people differently – what stresses one person may not affect another. Factors like skills and experience, age or disability may all affect whether an employee can cope

**How can we improve stress in the work place?**

**1. Beat work place stress by reaching out**

A good support network of colleagues, friends and family can ease your work troubles and help you see things in a different way.

**2. Support your health**

Exercise, the right food and good sleep patterns won't make your stress disappear, but it will reduce some of the emotional intensity that you're feeling, clearing your thoughts and letting you deal with your problems more calmly.

**3. Have some "me time"**

In the UK and Ireland, we work the longest hours in Europe. To prevent burnout, set aside time for activities you enjoy — such as reading, socializing or pursuing a hobby.

4. **Avoid unhealthy habits** such as excessive caffeine intake or resorting to alcohol to help deal with a bad day

Caffeine may affect your mood and may lead to withdrawal headaches and to low or irritable mood when the effects wear off. Alcohol should also be treated with caution. Drinking too much alcohol can cause dehydration and can lead to B vitamin deficiencies, which can lead to feelings of depression and anxiety.

5. **Take breaks at work** - Research has shown that the key to unwinding and combating the effects of work stress is taking breaks (Charlotte Fritz et al 2013). The most consistent finding is that engaging in relaxing experiences is linked to increased employee well-being regardless of the length of the break. So, allow yourself to **Take 15**

6. **Work smarter not harder**

Create a plan of what you need to do each day and break big projects down into more manageable tasks. Doing so will help you avoid the stress of thinking about all the work that is ahead of you, help you focus on one thing at a time, and provide you with a sense of completion when you finish each chunk.

7. **Laugh every day.**

Laughter has been found to increase your endorphins, stimulate your muscles, and help soothe the stress response. Look for a book, TV show, podcast, image, friend, colleague or anything else that will help you find something to laugh at daily

For more information on mental health see links below:

**Mind UK:**

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Contact number: 0300 123 3393

Text: 86463

**Mental health Ireland**

Email: Info@mentalhealthireland.ie

Contact number: 01 284 1166

**Website links**

http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/

https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/

For stress busting Apps recommended by the NHS

https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/

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