

Healthy Workplaces

*manage
stress*

www.healthy-workplaces.eu

Managing stress makes sound business sense

Your organisation can play a leading role in encouraging others to manage work-related stress and psychosocial risks.

Healthy Workplaces Campaign 2014–2015 ‘Manage Stress’

Organised by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), the campaign will run throughout 2014 and 2015. A key aspect of the campaign involves building partnerships with employer and trade union organisations and multinational companies committed to promoting the campaign across Europe.

Stress cannot be ignored. It is the second most frequently reported work-related health problem in Europe and is believed to be the cause of more than half of all lost working days.

The causes of work-related stress are widespread. They may lie in work practices or arise from social interaction, and can be further influenced by competition from other businesses, restructuring, tough financial targets or client expectations. Stress has a negative impact on everyone’s health, which in turn affects business performance.

The good news is that effective, successful management of stress and psychosocial risks is possible. In fact, psychosocial risks can be managed in the same systematic way as any other occupational safety and health risk. Tackling them can protect workers’ health and improve overall business performance, particularly long-term sustainability and social responsibility.



Let's work together

Campaign partners are crucial to supporting the campaign across sectors and geographies. In return, they can benefit from increased visibility and an improved social responsibility profile.

EU-OSHA needs your help to make this campaign a success. Are you ready to take up the challenge and join a committed group of European leaders in managing stress?

Exactly what is stress?

Work-related stress occurs when the demands of the job exceed a worker's capacity for coping with them. It happens, for example, if too much is asked of staff in the time available, if they are presented with conflicting demands, if they aren't supported by management and colleagues or if they are poorly trained. It can happen to anyone, at any level.

Experiencing stress at work *is not the same as working in a demanding or exciting job*. If demands are being monitored, if workers have enough resources and adequate support in place, then staff are able to cope with the challenges, staying highly motivated and productive.

Some facts about stress

- Workers affected by stress find it difficult to concentrate, make decisions and learn new things.

- Stress causes people to make mistakes, become anxious and tire easily. These negative outcomes are likely to have an impact on performance long before stress presents itself in ill health and absence from work.
- Prolonged stress may result in serious health problems such as cardiovascular or musculoskeletal diseases.
- Absences caused by stress can last longer than those caused by other factors. Such absence in turn can heighten stress for other colleagues still at work.
- In some cases, workers may be unwell but still coming to work – this is known as presenteeism. It occurs when workers come to work but function below their full capacity.

Stress is very expensive. For example, one UK estimate is that stress costs employers EUR 1220 per worker per year. Another estimate, this time for France in 2007, placed the cost of occupational stress in the region of EUR 2 to 3 billion.

In Austria, psychosocial disorders have been reported as the cause of over 40% of early retirements. The total cost of mental health disorders in Europe, both work and non-work related, are estimated at EUR 240 billion each year.

How the campaign can help

- The campaign aims to promote managing stress and psychosocial risks in the workplace.
- The campaign objectives include creating healthy work environments and positive working cultures and, ultimately, keeping workers healthy as well as improving business performance.
- The campaign provides guidance and simple tools for organisations to manage psychosocial risks. It demonstrates how to deal with these sometimes sensitive issues in a professional and efficient manner.

Legal obligation

Employers have a legal obligation to manage risks at work, including psychosocial risks. So, managing stress ensures compliance with the law.

Compliance doesn't have to be expensive: however, non-compliance can be costly. And the most convincing argument goes beyond mere compliance; it is in the best interest of your business to manage stress effectively.

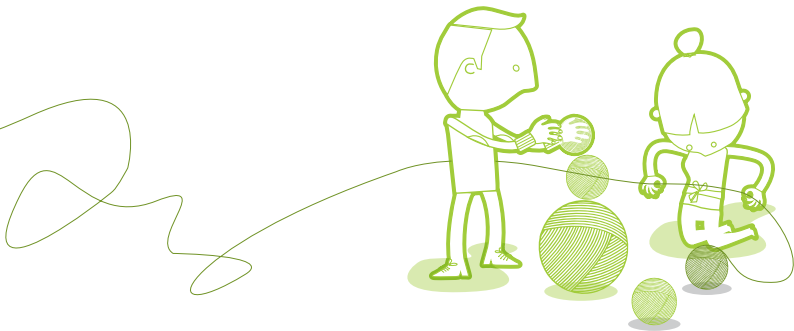
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Managing stress and psychosocial risks can contribute to the delivery and improvement of key business performance indicators, such as meeting quality and delivery goals, becoming a more reliable supplier, lowering operating costs and reducing staff turnover.

If an organisation is effectively managing psychosocial risks, workers can operate at full capacity and there may be fewer lost days.

There are many potential long-term benefits for effectively managing psychosocial risks and stress: organisations will find that recruiting staff is generally easier, as job seekers come to value the positive environment and culture in such companies. These benefits should flow through the value chain to customers.

The investment in time and resources in managing stress will pay for itself in the form of a healthier workforce and workplace environment and in the long-term sustainability and improved social responsibility of the business.



Becoming an official campaign partner

EU-OSHA encourages all European and multinational organisations to become official campaign partners. Campaign partners help increase awareness of the campaign and are key to its success.

More than 80 companies and associations from the private and public sector, including some of Europe's most well-known companies, support our Healthy Workplaces Campaigns as official partners.

They value highly their involvement in the campaigns for the opportunity to participate in learning-exchange initiatives, such as the benchmarking OSH workshops and events, where official partners take the lead in addressing solutions to the issues raised by the campaigns.

The 2014–15 official campaign partners will have the opportunity to:

- take part in many Agency and European initiatives on managing stress
- participate in the next managing stress campaign's benchmarking initiatives
- network with other like-minded companies, business leaders and organisations

- share ideas and learn what other organisations are doing about psychosocial risks
- have their company logo and profile on the campaign site as an official partner
- promote their campaign-related initiatives on the campaign website
- raise the organisation's social responsibility profile
- become recognised as an industry or sector leader in the management of psychosocial risks and stress.

To find out more about becoming a campaign partner please visit www.healthy-workplaces.eu

Leading by example

If you have managed workplace stress effectively, why not share your experiences and lead by example?

Our campaign gives you the opportunity to play a leading role in demonstrating how to prevent psychosocial risks in the workplace.

By becoming a campaign partner, you can play your part, alongside other leading organisations, in inspiring and encouraging others to manage stress and psychosocial risks. You have the opportunity to share your commitment and the practices developed by your organisation for tackling these risks.

Let's work together! You can apply for the partnership here:

<http://www.healthy-workplaces.eu/en/get-involved/become-an-official-campaign-partner>



What previous partners say

Every level in the company should be engaged and work together in health and safety strategy.

Dagmar Kotová, CEOC International

The behaviours of the company leaders are essential – they must be an example to all the workers.

Davide Spanti, Pirelli

For us it's all about [being] responsible together and safer together.

Tom Schalenbourg, Toyota Material Handling Europe

