



Building Staff Resilience when Working in a Challenging Environment

Working in a Challenging Environment:
Promoting Employee Engagement, Health & Well-Being
National Federation of Voluntary Bodies

Tullamore
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Work-Related Stress - Context

- Work-related stress is a considerable societal problem (European Commission 2011; EASHW, 2014).
- Health and social care workers are particularly prone to work related stress due to the nature of their work (Wells 2011).
- Within Ireland cuts in numbers employed, reduced pay and changes to working conditions have created a more stressful working environment (Wells & White 2014).
- The 2015 European Week for Safety and Health at Work, running from October 19 to 23, is part of the Healthy Workplaces Campaign, 'Manage Stress'.

Work-Related Stress

The EU Framework Directive 89/391 places a legal obligation on employers to protect workers by tackling risks in the workplace.

Some of the **general principles of prevention** listed in the directive are the following:

- developing a coherent overall prevention policy
- prioritizing collective protective measures (over individual protective measures)
- giving appropriate instructions to the workers

Work-Related Stress

Psychosocial hazards in the workplace develop:

- When the workers have excessive workload, inappropriate ability for the job demand (**lack of competence**)
- Have very little say over how they do their job (**little autonomy**) and
- Receive little support from work colleagues or their manager (**little relatedness**).

Benefits of Prevention

- 1) Reduction in the levels of absenteeism, and retention of experienced and highly skilled personnel
- 2) Increased motivation to work and participate actively in the workplace
- 3) Prevent 'Burnout' in the workplace

Resilience

Resilience is the ability to persist in the face of adversity and “bounce back” from setbacks.

Resilience comes from a combination of positive attributes we develop through our upbringing, education, social and cultural connections, and other life experiences.

It helps us cope with disappointments and stress, overcome obstacles, recover from or adjust to change or misfortune, and deal with the normal stresses and challenges of life.

Resilience

Resilience in a multi-dimensional concept

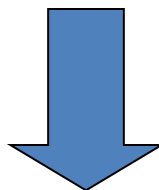
While there is some disagreement as to its exact nature, the following processes are regarded as key to supporting resiliency:

- **Self-Efficacy**
- **Mindfulness**
- **Competence**
- **Coping Skills**

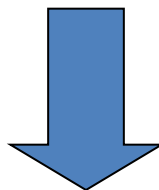
Work-Related Stress

Building Resilience in the Workplace is a Tailored Process

Identify Needs/Priority Area



Implement Action



Review and Share Outcomes

Introduction to the Ten Category Framework

- This framework looks at the effect of the workplace setting on how workers feel. You might want to identify what are the types of hazards to be found in your workplace.
- These hazards can be physical, job role related or psychological. Sometimes there can be a relationship between all three.
- You might use this framework to reflect on whether these are causes of stress in your workplace and to focus your thinking on how you might change the situation.

How to use the Ten Category Framework

Individual Exercise:

Use column 1 to reflect on what is positive in your workplace

Use column 2 to reflect on the possible problems

Use column 3 to write down your own example of these problems

Use column 4 to think of solutions

Key words are: Autonomy, Relatedness and Competence

Positive Context	Possible Problem	Examples in Your Workplace	Solutions
1. Good support in the workplace	Poor communication, low levels of support for problem-solving and personal development, unclear organisational objectives		
2. Clear roles in workplace	Lack of clear definition of what you do in the workplace leading to disagreement. For example, do people understand what is expected of you in your job?		
3. Good career development and progression in the work place	Little or no training or job development, poor pay, job insecurity, low social status. For example, how much encouragement and support do you get to improve your qualifications?		
4. Encouragement of participation in decision-making	Little consultation and lack of control over daily work. For example, how much say do you have over how you do your work?		
5. Promotion of good interpersonal relationships	Poor relationships between managers, staff and colleagues, workers feeling isolated		
6. A balanced relationship between home and work	Conflicting demands of work and home, low support at home, both partners working		
7. Good work place facilities	Maintenance of the workplace and repair of equipment		
8. Effective task allocation	Lack of variety in work tasks, meaningless work, under-use of your skills		
9. Balanced work load	Too much work or too little work, pressure of time		
10. Balanced working hours	Length of working day, long or unsocial hours		

Ten Category Framework

A large group of blue, stylized human figures holding hands in a circle, symbolizing unity and teamwork. The figures are arranged in a dense, circular formation, with their arms extended to hold the hands of those next to them. The figures are rendered in a simple, geometric style with a light blue color. The background is a light, neutral tone, and the overall composition conveys a sense of collective effort and support.

Developing a supportive work environment

How Supportive is Your Environment?

- 1) Employers attitude to workers' performance
 - Is there an emphasis on meaningful contribution to the work environment by all members of staff?
- 2) Shared beliefs and values about the organisation?
 - Do workers have a positive view about the aims of your organisation?
- 3) Common and approved ways of behaving at work?
 - Are standards of behaviour assessed and rewarded in the work place ?

How Supportive is Your Environment?

4) How stress is reported

- Are workers encouraged to talk about their work load and decision making in an honest way without fear of consequence?

5) How the organisation deals with stress

- Are there supportive policies in your workplace for dealing with and preventing stress amongst workers?

Case Study Example: 'Heads-Up' Initiative

Support of Safe Work Australia and the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance

Access EAP: a not for profit organisation that aims to promote resilience in the workplace.

Sample Initiatives:

- Extended lunch-break to encourage incorporation of physical activity

- Dedicated staff room and specific time for key breaks

- Onsite Counsellor

- Open Door/Communication Policy

- Workplace leaders to raise awareness of issues with managers

- Managers encouraged to share and enact changes

- Support and guidance-raising and tackling issue of stress does not necessarily require awareness of cause/treatment



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Developing a focused cost effective approach

- Online and mobile access to support individuals in the work place (European Commission, 2014).
- The development and provision of a cost effective and accessible web based programmes
- European Commission funded projects:
 - ROSE
 - (**R**educing **O**ccupational **S**tress in **E**mployment)
 - DELAROSE
 - (**D**elivering **E**-**L**earning **A**ccreditation to **R**educe **O**ccupational **S**tress in **E**mployment
 - DELAROSE based on a previous scoping exercise of health and social care workers in 5 EU countries



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DELAROSE Programme Content

Person-Centred

- Introduction to Stress
- Prevention of Stress
- Learning Ways of Coping With Your Stress
- Changing How you Think About Things
- Giving Feedback
- Challenging Behaviour
- Learning How to Relax
- Physical Activity

Environment-Centred

- The Organisation and Stress
- Interpersonal Skills, Listening and Assertiveness
- Leadership and Motivation
- Change Management, Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution
- Organisational Policies
- Risk Assessment
- Ergonomics



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<http://www.delarose-project.eu/moodle/course/view.php?id=17>



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Thank You



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