

**Health
& Safety**



Stress Questionnaire

**Legal
Plus**

Usdaw

Stress is not a new issue. However, in recent years it has become more apparent. It can be defined as **'environmental factors which exert undue strain or pressure on a person'** and can be caused by numerous factors either at home or in the workplace.

Stress from any source may affect an employee's health and their performance at work.

Causes of workplace stress can be associated with a wide range of factors. The nature of the job or some aspects of the job may be potentially stressful. For example, there may be contact with members of the public whose behaviour can be unpredictable, may be even abusive or violent. This is especially relevant to Usdaw members working in the retail trade with violent incidents in this sector becoming an increasingly serious problem.

Other jobs by their very nature are dangerous with potential exposure to chemical, biological and physical hazards which can cause both short and long term health problems. Boring, repetitive and monotonous tasks can also be stressful.

Other factors to consider are working hours and workload. Some people may be required to work shifts, unsocial or excessive hours, whilst others feel they simply cannot meet targets they see as unrealistic. Many employees experience stress because they are unable to partake in any decision making in relation to their own job, thus feeling that they have no control at all over their destiny at work.

The working environment may contain a minefield of potential stressors; badly designed workstations; inadequate or inappropriate heating, ventilation or lighting; inadequate holidays; long hours, even performance-related pay can be major sources of stress.

Each individual responds differently to the varying levels of pressure to which they are exposed, but when the pressure becomes excessive for the individual, it can result in physical symptoms. These symptoms vary enormously from one person to another in both frequency and severity; a headache after too many hours spent at a VDU screen at one extreme to stomach disorders, eg ulcers and even heart disease at the other.

Other symptoms may include:

- sleeplessness
- irritability
- backache
- neckache
- muscle tension
- anxiety
- nausea

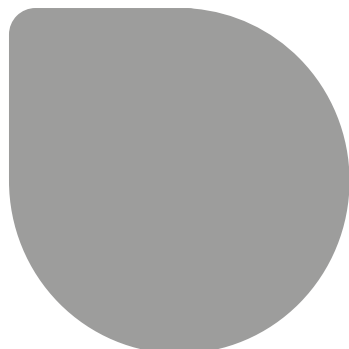
This in turn may lead to increased absenteeism, impaired work-performance and a possible increase in workplace accidents.

It is clear that for the benefit of both employee and employer, a systematic approach to occupational health and stress management should exist.

If you wish to help identify stressors at your workplace, we have drafted a model questionnaire which you can circulate to members which may help. You may want to draft your own questionnaire which asks more specific questions about your workplace.

We recommend that you ask members to complete the questionnaire anonymously thus ensuring complete confidentiality. Once you have analysed the completed questionnaires, you should be able to identify any important cause of stress in your working environment. If you feel that there is a stress problem, it should then be raised with management through normal company procedure.

For further copies of this Health and Safety Advice Sheet contact your Area Organiser at your local Usdaw Office.



Confidential Questionnaire Stress Survey

Please ✓ the appropriate box.

1. Do you ever suffer from any of the following?

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Headaches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anxiety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chest pain/palpitations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indigestion or nausea	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sleeplessness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Irritability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Backache	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Neckache	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stomach disorders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inability to concentrate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Do any of the following cause problems for you at work?

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Noise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor/inadequate lighting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excessive heat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excessive cold	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overcrowding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor ventilation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dust or fumes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor maintenance of equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Do you find any of the following cause problems?

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Shiftwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inadequate breaktimes/mealtimes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unsocial hours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Very heavy workload	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unfair distribution of work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Repetitive/boring work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Meeting deadlines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job insecurity, eg threat of redundancy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor supervision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Under-utilisation of skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Regarding working relationships, do any of the following cause you problems?

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Poor relations with supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor relations with workmates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harassment and/or discrimination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impersonal treatment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of communication from management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with the public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. How much control do you feel you have over your job? Do you feel:

	Never	Sometimes	Often
You are able to plan your own work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You can participate in decision making for your own job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You have some control over the pace/content of your work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You have no control at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Do you feel you:

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Are underpaid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are undervalued	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Receive appreciation for good work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. How do you feel about your job in general? (✓ one)

I am completely happy and enjoy my job	<input type="radio"/>
I sometimes feel dissatisfied but generally enjoy my job	<input type="radio"/>
Most of the time I do not enjoy my work	<input type="radio"/>
I have no interest at all in my work	<input type="radio"/>

8. If you feel you are under stress, please tick which you feel is the main contributory factor:

Problems at work

Problems at home

9. Please list below what you feel are:

(a) The main causes of stress in your job

(b) The effects that these have on other workers and yourself

(c) The steps you think could be taken to ease the situation

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