

JOB STRESS INVENTORY

Job stress management is effective in increasing your sense of control in the work setting. Increased feelings of control can improve job-related symptoms of guilt, depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Job stress management can also reduce job-related psychosomatic symptoms such as insomnia, ulcers, headaches, eating disorders, and lowered immunity to infection.

Time for Mastery

The initial assessment of your job stressors and your response to them can be completed in one day. Learning how to respond more effectively to job stress will take at least a month. The habit of effective job stress management may take from two months to a year to integrate into your daily life.

Take Steps Toward Managing Your Job Stress

Step 1. Identify Your Symptoms of Job Stress

Instructions: Rate each of the following items in terms of how often the symptom was true for you during the last three months.

- 0 = Never*
- 1 = Occasionally*
- 2 = Somewhat often*
- 3 = Frequently*
- 4 = Almost always*

- _____ 1. I feel little enthusiasm for doing my job.
- _____ 2. I feel tired even with adequate sleep.
- _____ 3. I feel frustrated in carrying out my responsibilities at work.
- _____ 4. I am moody, irritable, or impatient over small inconveniences.
- _____ 5. I want to withdraw from the constant demands on my time and energy.
- _____ 6. I feel negative, futile, or depressed about my job.
- _____ 7. My decision-making ability seems less than usual.

- _____ 8. I think that I am not as efficient as I should be.
- _____ 9. The quality of my work is less than it should be.
- _____ 10. I feel physically, emotionally or spiritually depleted.
- _____ 11. My resistance to illness is lowered.
- _____ 12. My interest in sex is lowered.
- _____ 13. I am eating more or less, drinking more coffee, tea or sodas, smoking more cigarettes, or using more alcohol or drugs in order to cope with my job.
- _____ 14. I am feeling emotionally callous about the problems and needs of others.
- _____ 15. My communication with my boss, co-workers, friends, or family seems strained.
- _____ 16. I am forgetful.
- _____ 17. I am having difficulty concentrating.
- _____ 18. I am easily bored.
- _____ 19. I feel a sense of dissatisfaction, of something wrong or missing.
- _____ 20. When I ask myself why I get up and go to work, the only answer that occurs is "my paycheck."

_____ **Total Score**

If you scored 0 to 25, you are probably coping adequately with the stress of your job. If you scored 26 to 40, you are suffering from job stress and would be wise to take preventative action. If you scored 41 to 55, you need to take preventative action to avoid job burnout. If you scored 56 to 80, you are burning out and must develop a comprehensive job stress management plan.

Source – The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook



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Call us anytime!

Step 2. Identify the Sources of Your Job Stress

Instructions: Rate your experience in your job during the past year, using the following 5-point scale:

- 0 = Never*
- 1 = Occasionally*
- 2 = Somewhat often*
- 3 = Frequently*
- 4 = Almost always*

Lack of Control

- _____ 1. I lack the authority to carry out certain responsibilities.
- _____ 2. I feel trapped in a situation without any real options.
- _____ 3. I am unable to influence decisions that affect me.
- _____ 4. There are a lot of requirements that get in the way of my doing certain tasks.
- _____ 5. I can't solve the problems assigned to me.
- _____ Subtotal

Information Gap

- _____ 6. I am unsure about the responsibilities of my job.
- _____ 7. I don't have enough information to carry out certain tasks.
- _____ 8. I am under qualified for certain tasks I'm expected to do.
- _____ 9. Others I work with are not clear about what I do.
- _____ 10. I don't understand the criteria used to evaluate my performance.
- _____ Subtotal

Cause and Effect

- _____ 11. There is no relationship between how I perform and how I am rated.
- _____ 12. I sense that popularity and politics are more important than performance.
- _____ 13. I don't know what my supervisor thinks of my performance.

____ 14. I don't know what I am doing right and what I am doing wrong.

____ 15. If I give suggestions, my supervisor does not include them.

____ Subtotal

Conflict

____ 16. I am expected to satisfy conflicting needs.

____ 17. I disagree with co-workers.

____ 18. I disagree with my supervisor.

____ 19. I am caught in the middle.

____ 20. I can't get what I need to get the job done.

____ Subtotal

Alienation

____ 21. I feel pessimistic about opportunities for advancement or growth in my job.

____ 22. My supervisor or boss is critical.

____ 23. I feel unaccepted by the people I work with.

____ 24. My good work is not noticed or appreciated.

____ 25. My progress on the job seems less than it could be.

____ Subtotal

Overload

____ 26. I experience little meaning in my work.

____ 27. I feel unsupported by my co-workers or boss.

____ 28. My values seem at odds with those of management.

____ 29. The organization seems insensitive to my individuality.

____ 30. I find I cannot be myself at work because I feel different from my co-workers.

____ Subtotal

Underload

- _____ 36. I have too little to do.
- _____ 37. I feel overqualified for the work I actually do.
- _____ 38. My work is not challenging.
- _____ 39. Most of my work is very routine.
- _____ 40. I miss contact with people in my job.
- _____ Subtotal

Environment

- _____ 41. I find my work environment unpleasant.
- _____ 42. I lack the privacy I need to concentrate on my work.
- _____ 43. Some aspects of my environment seem hazardous.
- _____ 44. I have too much or too little contact with people.
- _____ 45. I have to deal with many little hassles.
- _____ Subtotal

Value Conflict

- _____ 46. I must do things that are against my better judgment.
- _____ 47. I must make compromises in my values.
- _____ 48. My family and friends do not respect what I do.
- _____ 49. I observe my co-workers doing things That I don't approve of.
- _____ 50. The organization that I work for pressures employees to do things that are unethical or unsafe.
- _____ Grand total

If your score is over 100, you have more than an average number of job stressors. If your score is 130 or higher, the number of job stressors is unusually high. Identify the categories in which you scored 12 or more. In addition to dealing with your specific major stressors, you will want to give consideration to additional action.

Step 3. Identify How You Respond to Your Specific Job Stressors

What are your specific job stressors and how do you tend to respond to them? In addition to referring to your responses on the job stress inventory, reflect back over your recent experiences at work. In the far left-hand column, list your specific stressors. For each stressful item, write down your feelings when it occurs, what you say to yourself about it, and what you do in response to it. First, take time to review our example sheet if you would like.

Exercise: List your specific stressors and how you respond to them. Use as little or as much detail as you need.

<i>Your Job Stressor</i>	<i>Your Feelings</i>	<i>Your Thoughts</i>	<i>Your Behavior</i>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Now that you have written out your specific job stressors and how you typically respond to them, review your list and see if any patterns emerge.

In looking over your list of specific job stressors and your responses to them, what patterns did you pick out?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

The Next step is to set realistic goals to respond more effectively to your job stressors. This will be done with the assistance of an EAP consultant in order to give you the highest level of good professional and confidential feedback.

Source – The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook

For additional EAP Services or questions, contact Arbor any time, any day of the week. Give us a call, we want to hear it!



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For example, Patty, a computer programmer, wrote down the specific stressors in her job and her response to them in the following shorthand manner:

<i>Your Job Stressor</i>	<i>Your Feelings</i>	<i>Your Thoughts</i>	<i>Your Behavior</i>
Programming	Bored, numb	“Non-stop programming makes Patty a dull girl.”	Plodding, Inefficient; eat sweets, drink coffee
Deadlines	Anxious	“I’ll never make it!”	Work faster and Longer; mistakes
Meetings	Annoyed, impatient	“What a waste, I’ve got work to do.”	Critical, resistant to suggestions
Vague supervisor	Insecure, confused, annoyed	“What does it take to please this jerk?”	Guess what he wants; complain
Chatty co-worker	Angry	“Why does he keep interrupting me?”	Respond politely and return to my own work
Uncooperative secretary	Angry, frustrated, dissatisfied	“She’s lazy, slow, and utterly useless.”	Refuse to talk to her
No privacy	Annoyed	“Hard to focus.”	Tense my muscles; neck and backache
Terminal	Strained, tired	“I wish I didn’t have to do this.”	Eye strain, headache
Down time	Frustrated, refreshed	“Damn, I lost it.”	Eat, drink coffee, socialize
No raise	Angry, frustrated	“I deserve better than this!”	Complain bitterly