STRESS-A TROUBLESOME OF MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

Stress is a universal element and persons from nearly every walk of life have to face stress. Employers today are critically analyzing the stress management issues that contribute to lower job performance of employee originating from dissatisfaction & high turnover ultimately affecting organizational goals and objectives. How stress affects employee performance, managerial responsibility, & consequences high stress are basic aims of this study. Because the 6stress is unanimously accepted as the prominent factor of ill performances by various employees, not only the employee; even employers too are trying to search the solution to this problem so that their employees could give them better results and performances which they expect. Job stress is conceived of as a first-level outcome of the organization.

Keywords: Stress Management, Organization, Employee.

Introduction

Occupational (job, work or workplace) stress has become one of the most serious issues in the modern world, as it occurs in any job and is even more present than decades ago. Namely, the world of work differs considerably from the working environment of 30 years ago: longer hours at work are not unusual, frequent changes in culture and structure are often cited, as well as the loss of which all leads to greater presence and levels of stress.

Job stress in organizations is widespread. About half of all employees feel the pressures of job-related stress. Extensive research shows that excessive job stress can adversely affect the emotional and physical health of employee as well as it affects the performance at work. The result is decreased productivity, less satisfied, and less healthy employees. Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury. This paper will first discuss stress, the symptoms and causes of stress, and how job stress affects the performance of employees. Perhaps now more than ever before, job stress poses a threat to the health of employees and, in turn, to the health of organizations.

Stress has great impact on the performance. There may be some positive effects of the stresses that will enhance one's performance, but, for the most part, stress is a negative factor keeping us from performing at peak levels, damaging our daily productivity, and decreasing the chances of our longevity. Most employees endure high levels of work stress, which may be derived from work, non-work and/or personal factors. There are always two kinds of reactions to work stress: positive or negative. Adequate work stress can inspire employees' potential and increase their performance; however, excessive work stress will directly influence job performance quality and the whole business affairs at the same time.

Although a great deal of research has explored the impact of job-related stressors on both psychological and physical well-being. Much less work has explored the impact of stressors on employee behavior and job performance in particular. Furthermore, comprehensive reviews that have examined relations between stressors and job performance have generally shown that the magnitude of such relations is quite modest.

Objectives of the Study

•To identify the job stressors and the sources of those stressors that exists at workplace environment.
•Identify the effects of job stress on the output and job performance of the employees.
•Find out the ways of reducing the job stress in workplace so as to increase the efficiency and performance of the employees.
•Find out the ways that top level authorities use to help the employees reduce their job stress.

Effects of Stress on Organization and Employee

Stress can have variety of consequences to organization and employee himself. It can affect individuals in different ways. The experience of stress is associated with feeling of distress, often leading to anxiety and depression. The harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, needs of the worker. Lots of things can cause you to feel stressed at work. High demands at work + low control over them = stress.
Stressors
•Work itself
•Organizational characteristics
•Role in organization
•Relationships
•Career development

•External responsibilities and communities
•Competition

'Any employee can suffer from stress regardless of age, status, gender, ethnicity or disability. It is important that managers, HR personnel, safety officers and welfare staff have a clear understanding of the main issues involved with workplace stress prevention and management'.
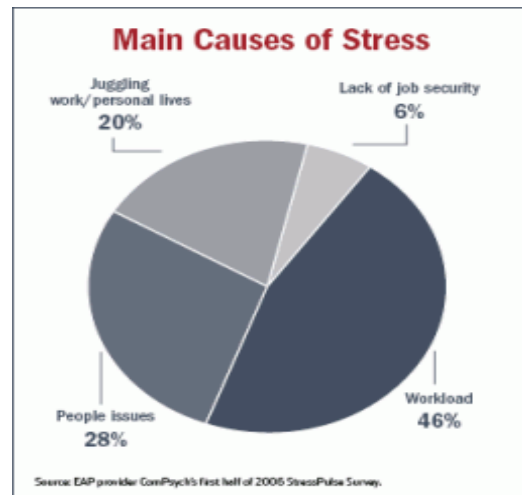
Ways to Reduce Stress

Stress prevention should be tackled by workers and employers together. Employees can bring their concerns to the attention of their employers, and suggest ways that things could be changed. Employers can make changes to workers' duties and the workplace. In this way stress reduction becomes a mutual undertaking.
Things that can help to reduce work stress include:
•Creating a safe and healthy work environment
•Consulting about changes to job roles or workplace practices
•Minimizing unpaid overtime
•Taking a reasonable amount time between shifts and taking regular rest breaks
•Sharing workloads fairly

Elements for Reducing Stress

Stress Management: The Company should provide stress management training and an employee assistance program (EAP) to improve the ability of employees to cope with difficult work situations. Nearly one-half of large companies in the United States provide some type of stress management training for their workforces. Stress management programs teach employees about the nature and sources of stress, the effects of stress on health, and personal skills to reduce stress-for example, time management or relaxation exercises. (EAPs provide individual counseling for employees with both work and personal problems.) Stress management training may rapidly reduce stress symptoms such as anxiety and sleep disturbances; it also has the advantage of being inexpensive and easy to implement. However, stress management programs have two major disadvantages:
•The beneficial effects on stress symptoms are often short-lived.
•They often ignore important root causes of stress because they focus on the worker and not the environment.

Organizational Change: In contrast to stress management training and EAP programs, company should try to reduce job stress by bringing in a consultant to recommend ways to improve working conditions. This approach is the most direct way to reduce stress at work. It involves the identification of stressful aspects of work (e.g., excessive workload, conflicting expectations) and the design of strategies to reduce or eliminate the identified stressors. The advantage of this approach is that it deals directly with the root causes of stress at work. However, managers are sometimes uncomfortable with this approach because it can involve changes in work routines or production schedules, or changes in the organizational structure. As a general rule, actions to reduce job stress should give top priority to organizational change to improve working conditions. But even the most conscientious efforts to improve working conditions are unlikely to eliminate stress completely for all workers. For this reason, a combination of organizational change and stress management is often the most useful approach for preventing stress at work.

How to Change the Organization to Prevent Job Stress
•Ensure that the workload is in line with employee's capabilities and resources.
•Design jobs to provide meaning, stimulation, and opportunities for employees to use their skills.
•Clearly define workers' roles and responsibilities.
•Give workers opportunities to participate in decisions and actions affecting their jobs.
•Improve communications-reduce uncertainty about career development and future employment prospects.
•   Provide opportunities for social interaction among workers.
•   Establish work schedules that are compatible with demands and responsibilities outside the job.
Preventing Job Stress: No standardized approaches or simple "how to" manuals exist for developing a stress prevention program. Program design and appropriate solutions will be influenced by several factors-the size and

complexity of the organization, available resources, and especially the unique types of stress problems faced by the organization.

Although it is not possible to give a universal prescription for preventing stress at work, it is possible to offer guidelines on the process of stress prevention in organizations. In all situations, the process for stress prevention programs involves three distinct steps: problem identification, intervention, and evaluation. For this process to succeed, organizations need to be adequately prepared. At a minimum, preparation for a stress prevention program should include the following:

- Building general awareness about job stress (causes, costs, and control)
- Securing top management commitment and support for the program
- Incorporating employee input and involvement in all phases of the program
- Establishing the technical capacity to conduct the program (e.g., specialized training for in-house staff or use of job stress consultants)

Bringing employees and managers together in a committee or problem-solving group may be an especially useful approach for developing a stress prevention program. Research has shown these participatory efforts to be effective in dealing with ergonomic problems in the workplace, partly because they capitalize on workers' firsthand knowledge of hazards encountered in their jobs. However, when forming such working groups, care must be taken to be sure that they are in compliance with current labor laws.

Steps toward Prevention

Low morale, health and job complaints, and employee turnover often provide the first signs of job stress. But sometimes there are no clues, especially if employees are fearful of losing their jobs. Lack of obvious or widespread signs is not a good reason to dismiss concerns about job stress or minimize the importance of a prevention program.

Step 1- Identify the Problem: The best method to explore the scope and source of a suspected stress problem in an organization depends partly on the size of the organization and the available resources. Group discussions among managers, labor representatives, and employees can provide rich sources of information. Such discussions may be all that is needed to track down and remedy stress problems in a small company. In a larger organization, such discussions can be used to help design formal surveys for gathering input about stressful job conditions from large numbers of employees.

Regardless of the method used to collect data, information should be obtained about employee perceptions of their job conditions and perceived levels of stress, health, and satisfaction.

- Hold group discussions with employees.
- Design an employee survey.
- Measure employee perceptions of job conditions, stress, health, and satisfaction.
- Collect objective data.
- Analyze data to identify problem locations and stressful job conditions.

Step 2 — Design and Implement Interventions: Once the sources of stress at work have been identified and the scope of the problem is understood, the stage is set for design and implementation of an intervention strategy.
In small organizations, the informal discussions that helped identify stress problems may also produce fruitful ideas for prevention. In large organizations, a more formal process may be needed. Frequently, a team is asked to develop recommendations based on analysis of data from Step 1 and consultation with outside experts.

- Target source of stress for change.
- Propose and prioritize intervention strategies.
- Communicate planned interventions to employees.
- Implement Interventions.

Step 3 — Evaluate the Interventions: Evaluation is an essential step in the intervention process. Evaluation is necessary to determine whether the intervention is producing desired effects and whether changes in direction are needed.

- Conduct both short- and long-term evaluations.
- Measure employee perceptions of job conditions, stress, health, and satisfaction.
- Include objective measures.
- Refine the intervention strategy and return to Step 1.

Conclusion

The negative implications of work stress are recognized as a challenge to both employers and workers, with women, youth, shift, part-time, and non white collar workers being more likely to have high-strain jobs. Those with such jobs perceived their work to be physically demanding and less satisfying. Low personal incomes and low levels of education were also associated with higher stress. Work stress can be measured by several indicators. As a result, some variables can at times show different types of associations with various population groups. In particular, self-perceived work stress often had a seemingly inverse relationship to other indicators of work stress. For example, white-collar workers were more likely than others to have low job strain and high job satisfaction, yet they also had higher levels of self perceived work stress.

Work stress factors have significant cross-sectional and longitudinal associations with job performance. All the three dimensions physiological, psychological and behavioral are important to the understanding of job stress and coping strategies in modern organization. Stress cannot be eliminated from daily life, nor should it be. The solution is to manage it effectively. Efforts should be made by both employer and employee to come out from stress.

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