

STRESS & CRISIS MANAGEMENT

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PAPER

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TOPIC

STRESS

Define/Elaborate on the meaning of stress.

- Stress can be defined as a mental state or emotional strain or tension resulting from negative or demanding circumstances.
- Stress is the response of a person's body to anything that requires more action or work from an individual than normal.

Outline/State/Explain the causes of stress in the business environment.

- a heavy workload, unrealistic targets, and **deadlines** aggravated by time pressure
- working long hours without adequate breaks
- inadequate training given to employees
- job insecurity, bullying and harassment
- a lack of power and influence

Outline/Explain/Discuss the importance of stress management in the workplace.

- Stressed employees are more likely to miss work because they cannot cope, or because of serious health problems.
- Managing workplace stress will minimise absenteeism and maintain productivity in the workplace.
- Constant stress can cause many problems for a business since it can become an unhealthy working environment.
- Too much stress can become a barrier to success and lower the performance of employees.

Suggest/Recommend ways employees can manage stress in the workplace.

- Self-awareness will assist employees to minimise stress.
- Try to avoid conflict situations with co-workers.
- It is important to get enough sleep and rest to perform work tasks efficiently.
- Take regular breaks to relax and recharge.

CRISIS

Define the term crisis and give typical examples of crisis in the workplace.

Definition: A crisis is an unforeseen event that can cause major changes in an organisation.

Examples of crisis

- Loss of property due to fire
- Theft of assets, equipment and stock
- Breakdown of machinery
- Power outages

Recommend/Suggest ways businesses can deal with crisis in the workplace.

- Assess and evaluate the nature of the crisis.
- If necessary, seek advice from experts.
- Provide training and support to staff members affected by the situation.
- If necessary, revise and amend the emergency plan after the crisis.

CHANGE

Outline/Mention internal/external causes of change.

Internal causes of change

- new management
- restructuring
- retrenchment
- new equipment.

External causes of change

- political factors, for example, changes in government policy and international relations
- social factors, for example, poverty/unemployment/HIV/AIDS, and so on.
- legal factors, for example, the passing of new laws
- economic factors, for example, an increase in the interest rate

Identify the causes of change from given scenarios/ case studies etc.

Discuss/Explain/Describe major changes that people and businesses deal with.

Unemployment

- This occurs when employees lose their jobs due to resignation for a better position, being fired, or choosing to stop working.
- Changes that take place in the business may lead to unemployment due to retrenchment or when businesses close down.
- Many people who are unemployed struggle to cope and this may lead to illness and depression.

Retrenchment

- Retrenchment occurs when a business reduces the number of workers in the business or organisation to reduce the cost of the salaries and wages bill.
- Essentially this is a process that is used by the employer to evaluate the business' needs in order to increase profits whilst reducing its employees.
- Restructuring and economic changes may lead to many people being retrenched from their jobs.

Globalisation

- Due to the narrowing of global markets, businesses can trade in different countries.
- This requires flexibility in order to adapt to changes brought about by globalisation.
- With improved ongoing technological processes, new technology must be combined and used to make processes more efficient.
- The business should ensure that their product or service is of a high standard and quality, which will result in competition amongst businesses.

Affirmative Action

- It is a legal requirement for businesses to ensure that they offer equal opportunities to people from previously disadvantaged or designated groups in the workplace.
- The aim of the policy is to ensure representation of women, people with disabilities and black South Africans affected in business.
- This may lead to resentment towards persons appointed according to this policy.

Suggest strategies business can use to deal with globalisation and affirmative action.

Globalisation

- Businesses should be attentive of changes and trends in their related industry.
- Overseas markets for the businesses' products should be explored.
- Businesses should ensure that their products meet international standards of quality.
- Products that are made available to different markets should be useful, eye catching and unique.

Affirmative Action

- All staff should work together and practice mindfulness about their job.
- Skill levels should be improved so that eligible staff can apply for future positions and promotion within the business.
- Differences amongst staff members should be acknowledged and respected, and emphasis should be placed on achieving the goals and objectives of the business.
- Self-employment opportunities should be explored.

Recommend ways businesses can deal with/manage change in the workplace.

- Employers should engage employees in the process of change to build trust.
- Management should adhere to the plan and not move away from it.
- All employees should be participative in the transformation process.
- By consulting and communicating with employees, management shows that they are transparent and are keeping all staff informed of the expected changes.