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STRESS, CAUSES AND PROCESS OF STRESS MANAGEMENT



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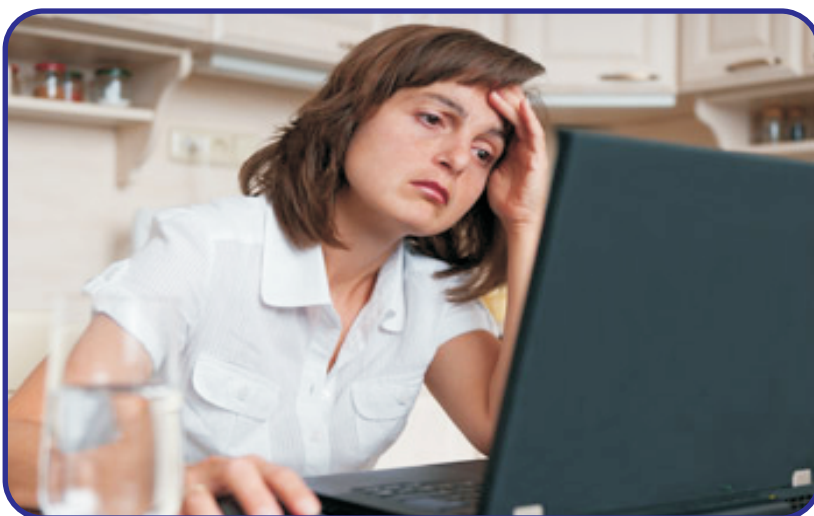
ABSTRACT

Stress is simply a fact of nature - forces from inside or outside world affecting the individual. The individual responds to stress in ways that affect the individual as well as their environment. Because of the overabundance of stress in our modern lives, we usually think of stress as a negative experience, but from a biological point of view, stress can be a neutral, negative, or positive experience.

KEYWORDS :Process of Stress Management , physical environment, organization,nutritional status.

INTRODUCTION

In general, stress is related to both external and internal factors. External factors include the physical environment, including job, relationships with others, home, and all the situations, challenges, difficulties, and expectations confronted with on a daily basis. Internal factors determine body's ability to respond to, and deal with, the external stress-inducing factors. Internal factors which influence the ability to handle stress include nutritional status, overall health and fitness



levels, emotional well-being, and the amount of sleep and rest.

Stress has driven evolutionary change (the development and natural selection of species over time). Thus, the species that adapted best to the causes of stress (stressors) have survived and evolved into the plant and animal kingdoms we now observe.

CAUSES OF STRESS

Factors that are responsible for causing stress are called Stressors. The major causes of stress in an organization or at a workplace:

CAREER CONCERN:



If an employee feels that he is very much behind in the corporate ladder, then he may experience stress and if he feels that there are no opportunities for self-growth he may experience stress. Hence unfulfilled career expectations are a major source of stress.

ROLE AMBIGUITY :



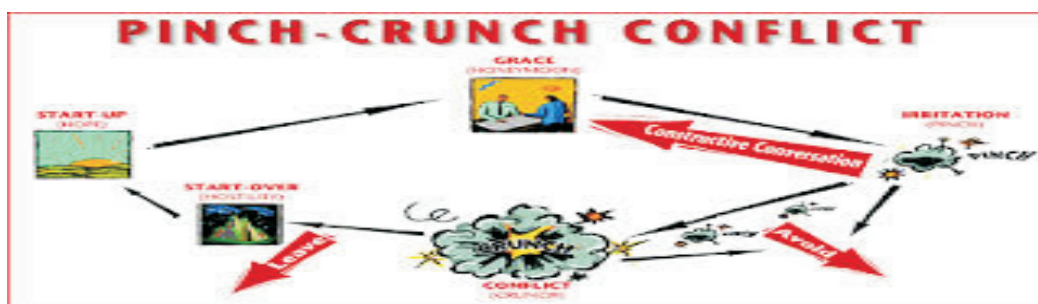
It occurs when the person doesn't know what he is supposed to do on the job. His tasks and responsibilities are not clear. The employee is not sure what he is expected to do. This creates confusion in the minds of the worker and results in stress.

ROTATING SHIFTS :



Stress may occur to those individuals who work in different work shifts. Employees may be expected to work in day shift for some days and then in the night shift. This may create problems in adjusting to the shift timings, and it can affect not only personal life but also family life of the employee.

ROLE CONFLICT



It takes place when different people have different expectations from the person performing a particular role. It can also occur if the job is not as per expectation, or when a job demands a certain type of behavior that is against the person's moral values.

OCCUPATIONAL DEMANDS



Some jobs are more stressful than others. Jobs that involve risk and danger are more stressful. Research findings indicate that jobs that are more stressful usually require constant monitoring of equipments and devices, unpleasant physical conditions, making decisions, etc.

LACK OF PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING



Many experienced employees feel that management should consult them on matters affecting their jobs. In reality, the superiors hardly consult the concerned employees before taking a decision. This develops a feeling of being neglected, which may lead to stress.

WORK OVERLOAD



Excessive workload leads to stress as it puts a person under tremendous pressure. Work overload may take two different forms:

Qualitative work overload implies performing a job that is complicated or beyond the

employee's capacity.

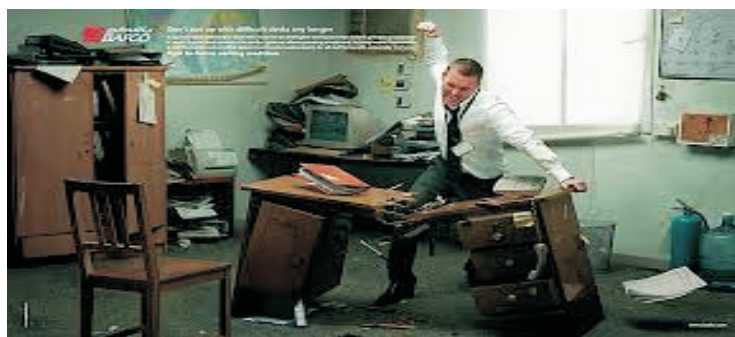
Quantitative work overload arises when number of activities to be performed in the prescribed time are many.

WORK UNDERLOAD



In this case, too little work or very simple work is expected on the part of the employee. Doing less work or jobs of routine and simple nature would lead to monotony and boredom, which can lead to stress.

WORKING CONDITIONS



Employees may be subject to poor working conditions. It would include poor lighting and ventilations, unhygienic sanitation facilities, excessive noise and dust, presence of toxic gases and fumes, inadequate safety measures, etc.

All these unpleasant conditions create physiological and psychological imbalance in humans thereby causing stress.

Lack of Group Cohesiveness



Every group is characterized by its cohesiveness although they differ widely in degree of cohesiveness. Individuals experience stress when there is no unity among the members of a work group. There is mistrust, jealousy, frequent quarrels, etc., in groups and this lead to stress to employees.

INTERPERSONAL AND INTERGROUP CONFLICT



Interpersonal and intergroup conflict takes place due to differences in perceptions, attitudes, values and beliefs between two or more individuals and groups. Such conflicts can be a source of stress to group members.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES



When changes occur, people have to adapt to those changes and this may cause stress. Stress is higher when changes are major or unusual like transfer or adaption of new technology.

LACK OF SOCIAL SUPPORT



When individuals believe that they have the friendship and support of others at work, their

ability to cope with the effects of stress increases. If this kind of social support is not available, then an employee experiences more stress.

Managing Stress

Mental Techniques to Manage Stress

There are many ways in which to manage stress. Below are some techniques, try some, not all will be suitable or possible for everyone. Remember what works for one person may not work for another.

REHEARSAL



By running through a stressful event such as an interview or a speech several times in advance can polish performance and build confidence.

Planning

By analysing the likely causes of stress, will be able to plan responses to likely forms of stress. These might be actions to alleviate the situation or may be stress management techniques that will use.

It is important that formally plan for this - it is little use just worrying in an undisciplined way - this will be counter-productive.

AVOIDANCE

Avoidance of Accountability



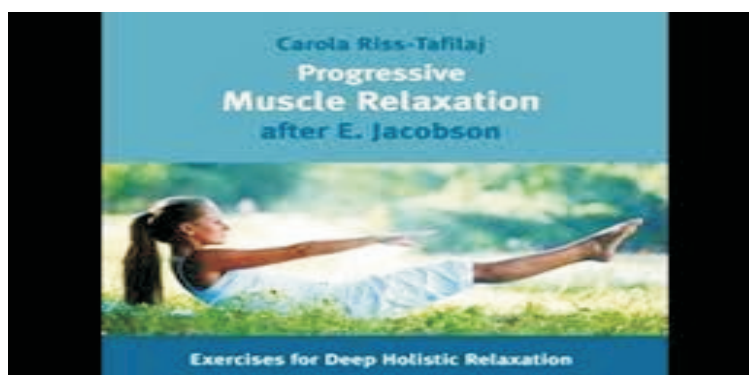
Where a situation is likely to be unpleasant, and will not yield any benefit, it may be one can just avoid. Should be certain in own mind, however, that this is the case.

Physical Techniques to Manage Stress Exercise



Taking frequent effective exercise is probably one of the best physical stress-reduction techniques available. Exercise not only improves health and reduces stress caused being unfit, it also relaxes tense muscles and helps to sleep.

Muscular Relaxation



Progressive Muscular Relaxation (PMR) is a purely physical technique for relaxing body when muscles are tense.

The idea is behind PMR is that tense up a group of muscles so that they are as tightly contracted as possible. Hold them in a state of extreme tension for a few seconds. Then relax the muscles to their previous state.

BREATHING CONTROL



Deep breathing is a very effective method of relaxation. It is a core component of everything from the 'take ten deep breaths' approach to calming someone down, right through to yoga relaxation and Zen meditation.

It works well in conjunction with other relaxation techniques such as Progressive Muscular Relaxation, relaxation imagery and meditation to reduce stress.

CONCLUSION

To overcome stress one should know how to manage stress. To eradicate stress Mental Techniques and Physical Techniques are very much useful to overcome stress.

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