

HSE SAFETY CORNERSTONES

Provided by **The Risk Hub Ltd**

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Managing Workplace Stress

Job-related stress significantly impacts individuals both in their workplaces and at home. According to recent research conducted by Westfield Health, more than one-quarter of workers ranked their job as more stressful than a relationship breakdown. This research highlights the considerable negative effects that workplace stress can have.

Other research supports these findings, as well as studies indicating that mental health in the workplace is declining. In fact, on average, employees are taking a week off of work due to mental health issues each year; this equated to 17.9 million working days lost in the UK in 2022.

To help mitigate mental health issues due to workplace stress, it's important to know how to help employees.

Consider the following tips for doing so:

- **Recognise the signs of stress.** Spotting the signs of stress early can make it easier to reduce or remove specific stressors. Signs of stress in the workplace may include arguments, high staff turnover, actual reports of stress, increased absence, decreased performance and complaints. It's important to know these signs and continually monitor them in order to assess overall workplace stress levels.

- **Use a talking toolkit.** Talking toolkits can be used as a conversation starter to help identify causes of stress for workers and determine possible solutions. The HSE provides a [stress talking toolkit](#) to help form the basis of these conversations.
- **Address the HSE's Management Standards.** The Management Standards are composed of six areas of work that could lead to stress if not properly managed. These areas include [demands](#), [control](#), [support](#), [relationships](#), [role](#) and [change](#). Having open conversations about how these six categories are operating at your workplace can help you assess and manage employee stress levels.
- **Provide mental health resources.** Start increasing awareness about workplace stress and mental health by sharing well-being resources. Additionally, consider adopting an open-door policy to encourage employees to speak candidly about their concerns. By increasing awareness and encouraging transparency, you can tackle workplace stigma and proactively deal with potential problems.

Contact us today for additional workplace stress management tips.

Company Fined After Multiple Employees Are Diagnosed With a Life-changing Condition

A manufacturing company has been fined after failing to protect two of its workers from exposure to vibration in 2019. Both operators of hand-held power tools used the equipment for extended periods of time without adequate systems in place to control the exposure to vibration. Long-term exposure to vibration from hand-held power tools can cause hand-arm vibration syndrome, which can lead to loss of strength in the hands and tingling and numbness in the fingers. An investigation by the HSE found that the company had no hand-arm vibration risk assessment in place to identify what level of vibration workers were exposed to or control measures in place to reduce exposure levels. On 17th July 2023, the company pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act. [It was fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,605.37.](#)

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