SAFETY FOCUSED

6 Tips for Managing Stress at Work

Forty percent of all employees reported their job was very or extremely stressful, according to a study from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Anxiety from heavy workloads, deadlines and interpersonal conflicts can put large amounts of pressure on any employee. And, if left unaddressed, workplace stress can lead to safety risks, lower performance and health problems.

Stress affects everyone differently, but there are some common strategies you can use to manage it when you're in the workplace:

1. Prioritize your work. Create a list of tasks that must be done and then break them down into smaller, more manageable assignments so you don't get overwhelmed.

2. Avoid multitasking. Often, it's best to focus on a single project for as long as possible so your attention isn't split between too many tasks.

3. Communicate with your managers and co-workers. Other employees may be able to help you complete tasks or offer helpful suggestions.

4. Don't be afraid to take breaks. Even if there's a big deadline on the horizon, a short break to talk to a co-worker or take a walk can prevent you from burning yourself out.

5. Keep ergonomics and comfort in mind. An uncomfortable chair or sitting position can add to your stress without you realizing it, so it's important to adjust your workstation so you aren't slouching or straining.

6. Avoid conflicts. Even if you disagree with someone, take some time to look at a problem from multiple viewpoints and avoid responding right away.

> "Anxiety from heavy workloads, deadlines and interpersonal conflicts are just some of the common pressure points for employees."

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Concussions in the Workplace

The human brain is vulnerable to even small impacts. Common workplace injuries such as blows to the head, sustained falls and vehicle collisions have led to 1 out of every 4 adult concussions occurring at work.

During a concussion, the spinal fluid that surrounds the brain isn't able to act as a cushion. This essentially bruises the brain and creates shearing forces that can also result in severe damage to blood vessels and nerves. And, although most people can recover from minor concussions, many of these injuries are caused by avoidable accidents when they occur in the workplace.

Keep these tips in mind to protect yourself and your co-workers from concussions:

- Know the signs and symptoms of a concussion, such as headaches, confusion, amnesia and dizziness.

- Inform a supervisor and arrange for emergency medical treatment if a co-worker experiences a loss of consciousness, blurred vision, extreme confusion, a progressively worsening headache or unresponsiveness after a head injury.

- Be on the lookout for fall hazards and unclear walkways that could cause someone to fall and hit their head.

- Wear personal protective equipment, such as a hard hat and sturdy footwear, to reduce the chance of a fall or blow to the head.

- Never let someone with a concussion drive or operate equipment until they've been given at least 72 hours to recover.

Most people recover from concussions without having to go to the hospital. However, it's important to avoid any activities that are physically or mentally demanding during the recovery process.

1 in 4 adult concussions occur in the workplace, and most are caused by blows to the head or falls.