Work in a healthier way
Complete organizational program and systematic approach to stress at work

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„Work can provide a goal and meaning in life. It can give structure and content to our day, week, year, and life. It may offer us identity, self-respect, social support, and rewards. This is likely to happen when work demands are optimal (and not maximal), when workers are allowed to exercise a reasonable degree of autonomy, and when the "climate" of the work organisation is friendly and supportive.

If this is so, work can be one of the most important health-promoting factors in life. If, however, work conditions are characterised by the opposite attributes, they are - at least in the long run - likely to cause ill health, accelerate its course or trigger its symptoms.”

*Lennart Levi, Guidance on Work-Related Stress. Spice of Life, or Kiss of Death?*
More important than to see the consequences

Stress is the symptom.
Indicates the shift
from the optimal health
of the organization
How do we deal with stress?

As we don’t intervene into higher body temperature without assessment of the risk and careful consideration of the causes.

...that is how we think about stress: What it points to, where it leads?
WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT EXCESSIVE ADMIN. I WANT YOU TO FILL OUT ONE OF THESE REPORT FORMS EVERY TIME YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING SOME...
Stres is the loss of productivity

- 20% finds their job very or extremely stressful
- Leading source of (do 40%) long term absences
- 13.5 million of workdays lost yearly in EU due to stress
- 1/3 of the organizations has increased number of absences due to stress

CIPD 2008 Absence Management survey
How stress influences the organization

Typically

• Lower satisfaction and engagement of workers
• Lower performance
• Decreased productivity
• Illness, absences
• Fluctuation, attrition

➔ Average duration of sick leave due to stress, depression and anxiety 30.3 days a year (EU)

• 13 % complains of headaches,
• 17% painful muscles;
• 20% tiredness;
• 28% ‘stress’
• 30 % backpain;
• stress is significant factor in the development of depression and metabolitic problems – leads to further illnesses and loses

Source: EU OSHA
European Agency for Safety and Health at Work
How much does it cost?

- immediate cost of stress caused absences
  - consistent dana - 35% of total number of absences
- fall of productivity up to 70%
  - people at work who didn’t leave, but are not achieving full performance due to stress
- times 2 due to loss of productivity
  - inadequate productivity, unqualified or inexperienced replacements, bad decisions under pressure, conflicts...
- additional cost of replacements
  - recruitment process, induction/orientation cost, training, impossible to transfer experience/competence
- invisible cost of increased pressure to other workers
  - leads to further loss of productivity and absences

COST:

35% of all absences

*2

(due to fall of productivity)

+ cost of replacing

source: ISMA International Stress Management Association
THE GOAL OF THE PROGRAMME: INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY AND HEALTH
Focus: the organization

We look at the **organizational context**
We don’t see stress as personal problem
Complexity

Systemic approach to overview the causes:

• standards of management,
• communication,
• work role quality
• known stress factors
Good practices

Prevention through everyday good practices
Carriers: organization and the management
Support to key people

Support to individual stress management
Intervention when there is a drop in competencies
Systemic outcomes

Not reducing the outcomes to ventilating
Stress prevention is the legal obligation

The employer is obliged by Labour law and the Work safety law (article 17.)

- Prevent physical and mental diseases caused by working conditions
- This includes:
  - ‘assessing and avoiding risks’
  - ‘fight sources and prevent creating further risks’
  - ‘replace dangerous with less dangerous’
  - ‘adapt job to individual’
A person in the organization

How a person forms her work role? How does she choose her resources to fulfill the role?

What are organizational needs, demands and expectations from the role?
STRESS ASSESSMENT

“Work productively and healthy”

Feedback to managing team
Accumulation of increased working pressure in the organization

- Increased sens of urgency
- Wrong estimations
- Unrealistic decisions

- Increased mistakes
- Lower achievements
- Less satisfaction

- Worsened communication
- Lack of trust
- Unconstructive conflicts

- No expected results
- Fire-workers daily
- Insufficient development

1-3 years
3-5 years
5 and more years
Programme “Work productively and healthy”

1. **Understand** WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS?
2. **Assess** WHO IS EXPOSED AND HOW MUCH?
3. **Explore** PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS
4. **Develop** ACTIVITY PLAN
5. **Carry out** ACTIVITIES AND EVALUATION

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**Kick off – management**
- Introduction for the leading team
- Includes individual consultations

**Current state assessment**
- Questionnaire/Focus group/Absence data

**Management feedback**
- Inquiry into current state, think together, propose solutions
- Propose activities

**Develop activity plan**
- management/employees/process level

**Implement activities**
- Initiatives, education, process improvement
- Continuous development
- Turn into yearly cycle
1. RISK FACTORS

Stress prevention does **not require** additional work – it is cumulated through daily good practices.
Our approach: careful assessment of risks

1. work demand
2. control
   (of working rhythm and work processes)
3. quality of managing
4. collegial support
5. work role
6. change management
7. work relationships
Assessment of current state, September 2013

- 6.63 Need to work too much
- 5.75 No breaks

- 4.5-5.5 I can rely on...
+ I can choose time of breaks.
+ They are ready to listen
+ Quality feedback
+ Trust
+ No unacceptable behaviours
- Tension
- Anger
- Processes not defined
- 2.5 Not included in the planning and implementation

- 2.38 Flexible worktime
- 1.63 Decide on the content of my daily work
- Overtime

- Work demands
- Control
- Management support
- Collegial support
- Relationships
- Workrole
- Change participation

Note: The values represent the frequency of occurrence of various aspects, with higher numbers indicating greater frequency.
Focus of development
Levels of influence

- Processes
- Management
- Communication
- Cooperation
- Team and Individual Workload
- Skills
Insights and recommendations

Insights

- High complexity and work demand
- Emotional burden of work tasks
- Insufficient consistency of work activities / urgency over importance
- Quality of leader’s communication with employees – inadequate feedback, unstructured reward system
- Unclear work roles – communication to clients depends not on working standards, but on the team leader
- People’s knowledge and experience not involved enough
- Physical workspace!

Recommendations

→ Support systematically handling everyday demanding work under pressure (emotional demand and work complexity)
→ Align the goals – balance quality and quantity in communication with clients
→ Draw and clearly communicate the strategy of working with problem clients
→ Increase coordination activities between departments and operative competences of managers and team leaders
→ Better the quality of work supervision – structure the reward system, daily feedback
→ Seriously consider improving physical conditions of workspace
Proposed activities

1. Prevention of burnout
   (emotionally demanding and complex work tasks)

Proposed activities:

Workshops – all levels
(1 day + 2-4 *0,5 days for continuous support)
   - Change management
   - Communication in demanding situations
   - Managing emotions and energy (stress prevention)

Individualised help for employees who have high exposure
Individual work – stress consultation + prevention techniques
Proposed activities

2. Process improvement of communication to clients
   (interaction of different departments)

- Communicate clearly the strategy of working with regular and problematic clients
- Aligning processes for quality communication across departments
- Review and improve – structure and inform on rewards and recognition system across departments. Support quality not volume of communication with clients.

Proposed activities:

Inter-departmental coordination – regular meetings
Work on aligning the strategy and work processes together
(instead of each department in their own scope)
Proposed activities

3. Increase competencies of the managing team:
   • work role, assertiveness, good feedback
   • understand stress, burnout and mental problems
   • skillfull communication

Proposed activities:
Group coaching/education for the managing team (including line management)

Themes:
• supervising and feedback on performance
• leading team in demanding situation
• assertivness and managing emotions
• key competences to manage stress in team / aligned with individual goals and competences
Proposed activities

4. Increase cooperation and team work
   Facilitation/ team building

5. Asses risk factors and working pressure regularly
   Create annual cycle
   Give feedback on the health of the system, systemic needs
   Put stress assesment into daily quality supervision
Key message to the managing team

Your **daily behaviour** could significantly decrease work pressure for your team members and as a manager, it is possible to lower the stress exposure for the team ‘gate keeper’

Key competences:

- Integrity, mature emotional stance, kind approach
- Proactive problem solving and managing
- Skillful conflict management
- Use organisational resources wisely
- Include participation and empower employees
- Personal availability, empathy
- Take responsibility to deal with demanding work
Thank you for your attention!

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