

PROFESSIONAL STRESS MANAGEMENT

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Abstract: Regarding actual life conditions one of the most important facet of stress is the stress at the workplace. The professional stress is situated on the second place in the hierarchy of the health problems at the workplace, after the lumbar ache and affects a third from the employees of the European Union. The stress effects at the work place may manifest in the behavioural, psychological and physiological plan.

Cuvinte cheie: stres profesional, management

Rezumat: În condițiile vieții actuale, una dintre cele mai importante fațete ale stresului este stresul la locul de muncă. Stresul profesional ocupă locul doi în ierarhia problemelor de sănătate la locul de muncă, după durerile lombare și afectează o treime dintre angajații Uniunii Europene. Efectele stresului la locul de muncă se pot manifesta în plan comportamental, fiziologic și psihologic.

SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC SYNTHESIS

Modern society offers us many advantages, things that we can't be deprived, but also many sources of stress that earlier or later will reveal their negative effects and we will be transformed in "stressed persons".

Professional stress is situated on the second place in the hierarchy of the professional health issues in the European Union, after the lumbar ache. Affects one in three employees, meaning more than 40 million employees from the European Union countries. Also, it is responsible for the apparition of the cardiovascular diseases in 16% from the entire men and in 22% from the entire women that suffer at present from these affections.

Stress is a state of intense tension of the organism forced to mobilize all the defending means to face a threatening situation. (Dictionary of psychology Larousse). Hans Selye (1976) considers the stress, as a nonspecific response of the organism at any solicitation directed on it, being considered a physiological condition identifiable and triggered by psychological factors having as a consequence the affection of the psychic and somatic equilibrium of the individual.

The stress represents a complex of emotional reactions, cognitive, behavioural and psychological ones regarding varied aspects of the content of work, organising of the work and work environment. The positive stress (eustress) acts as an energising factor on the human organism having as effects the intensifying realisation of the proposed objectives at high quotes, the negative stress (distress) can't be controled and may affect in a negative way the functional physiological systems. May affect the health by determining the apparition of different diseases such as: myocardial infarction, asthma, migrena, psychic affections (anxiety, depression, suicide), muskulo skeletal disorders, gastro intestinal disorders. During life and profession we are exposed to minor or major events that may determine the apparition of stress.

To have a clearly and fully understanding of this issue we need a short classification of the different types of stress that we may be confronted to. The stadiums of stress (after Selye)

are the following: alarm reaction, resistance stadium and exhaustion stadium. The alarm reaction is the first answer of the organism, this proces meaning the "general mobilisation" of the defence forces of the organism. In the acute phase of the alarm reaction, the general resistance of the organism declines under the medium level.

The complete answer is not reduced to the alarm reaction because if the nocive agent continues to action it is produced the stadium of resistance or adaptation. In other words not even one organism founds itself in the permanent stadium of alarm, the initial reaction being followed by the stadium of resistance.

The second stadium, the resistance one is distinguished from the first one through the chemical and physiological reactions that are produced. After the organism has adapted, in the stadium of resistance the capacity of the organism grows over the level medium resistance. If the person is exposed for long time to the action of a nocive agent, the adaptation obtained disappears. This way the third stadium is reached, which symptoms are similar to the ones present in the alarm stadium. In the exhaustion stadium the resistance is smaller than level of medium resistance.

The stress factors are very different. They may be of psychic order (conflicts, professional or familial discontent, exhaustion) of socio-cultural order or of physical order (pain, infectious diseases). The potential stress factors in our life may affect almost everybody in any organization; meanwhile others affect only those that play certain roles. Interpersonal conflicts are a strong factor, especially for those with accentuated tendencies of avoiding it.

The whole range of conflicts, from the personalities clashing to intergroups argues has great chances to determine stress, when drives to real or only perceived attacks to the integrity or to the good opinion of one self. In the case of conflict between employment- family the stress results from the conflict of roles being the member of a family or the member of an organization. The uncertainty of the job is also an important factor of stress. A certain job represents an objective for almost anyone and when this one is menaced the stress may come out.

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The ambiguity of the role exists where the objectives of the job or the way to accede to them are unclear. The lack of a directive may prove stressful, especially for those that can hardly tolerate such an ambiguity. Near those general factors one may encounter other stress factors: the lack of a workplace, a good workplace may be stressful when the employee is permanently unsatisfied, has no advancing perspective or of a significant change, hasn't the certainty of the presence at the right job and in the same time he doesn't know what else he could do.

The organization or even the community may be stressful when the demandings are conflictual, the objectives unclear or the resources inadequate, if there are changes that are not planned adequately or are unconsulted or if there is a conflict between the satisfaction of the needs and the expectations.

Other causes of stress may be: improper work conditions (noise, illumination, misery, humidity, excessive heat/cold), a weak time management, uncertain financial future, lack of support procedures and supervision.

The workplace may be stressful if the employee has too little or too many things to do, if the job is too easy or too heavy, if the employee has to take decisions without being properly informed or without proper authority, if he has terms that he can't control or if he has the responsibility of others life.

The stress may be generated by the relationship with colleagues, subordinates, superiors, the administration board, the beneficiaries, members or persons from other organisations.

A special importance should be given to the autoinduced factors; they are specific to the persons that don't treat themselves correspondingly.

They may be due to the physical neglecting that next to the own stress potential may determine the capacity of resisting to other stress factors or to abandoning the relaxing periods. Among the external stress factors that evade the control we may mention: legislative changes, the decisions of the financier, the traffic, the common transport.

The stress effects at the work place may manifest in a behavioral, psychological and physiological plan. The behavioral reactions are activities practiced openly, that the stressed individual uses in his trial to cope to stress.

They include: attitude of solving the problem, of retiring and of use of substances that gives dependency. Psychological reactions imply first the emotional and cerebral processes.

The psychological reaction that is more often met is the usage of the defending mechanisms (psychological efforts to reduce the anxiety associated with stress). Regarding the physiological reactions at stress there are proves that stress at the work place is associated with the irregular function of the heart, with hypertension, accelerated pulse, a growing cholesterol.

Stress has been associated with the beginning of some diseases such as: respiratory ones and bacterian infections. Some of the employees consider the stressful conditions of work as a needed amiss-the company has to cope with the employees pressure and to assure their health in order to remain productive and profitable in the actual economic conditions.

The stressing conditions are associated with the growing of the absenteeism, the delaying and with the intentions of the employees to leave their workplace, all those showing a negative effect on the company. A healthy organisation is defined as an organisation with a small rate of falling ill, of the infirmity of the work force, and the politics in favor to the employees determine benefits for the organisation.

The researchings have identified organisational characteristics associated with health, with a minimum level of stress at the work place and a high level of the productivity

(recognising the performance to the employees, opportunities of developing the career, organisational culture that valorises the employee).

American companies promote classes for the stress management for their employees. The programs of stress management teach the employees about the nature and causes of the stress, for exemple: the time management and relaxing exercises. Part of the organisations promote individual consultations for the employees to discuss their familial problems or problems related to the workplace.

Those programmes may rapidly reduce the symptoms of stress: anxiety, sleep disorders and have as advantage that they are easy to apply and cheap.

The stress due to the work place represents a menace to the employees health and the searchings regarding the stress at the work place has extended a lot in the last years.

But, in spite this attention, the confusion connected to the causes, effects and the prevention of the stress at the workplace persists.

Not but that, the prevention of the stress should be realised at the level of organisation, it is important that any individual realises how to administrate stress, to assure its professional succes on a long term and to maintain its physical and mental health.

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