

# Stress management

## Lecture outline

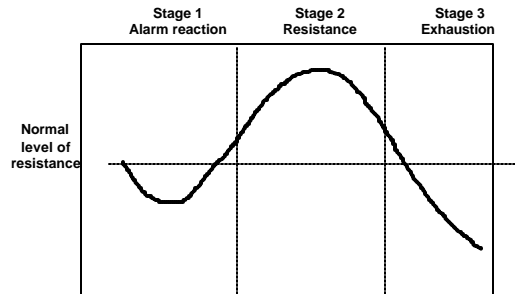
1. Define stress and describe the stress experience.
2. Identify the different types of stressors in the workplace.
3. Outline the stress process from stressors to consequences.
4. Explain why a stressor might produce different stress levels in two different people.
5. Discuss the physiological, psychological and behavioural effects of stress.
6. Identify five ways to manage workplace stress

## What is stress?

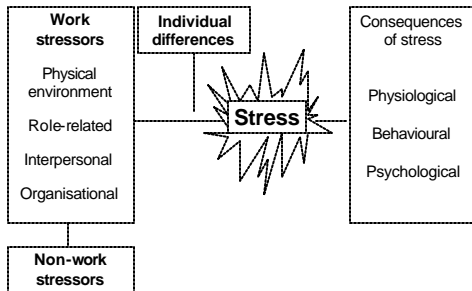
An adaptive response to a situation that is perceived as challenging or threatening to the person's well-being



## General adaptation syndrome



## Stressors and stress outcomes



## Role-related stressors



- **Role conflict**
  - interrole conflict
  - intrarole conflict
  - person-role conflict
- **Role ambiguity**
  - uncertain duties, authority
- **Workload**
  - too much/too little work
- **Task control**
  - machine pacing
  - monitoring equipment
  - no work schedule control

## Interpersonal stressors

- Conflict with others
- Increased emphasis on team work
- Sexual harassment
- Workplace violence
- Workplace bullying

## Interpersonal stressor: violence

- High risk of workplace violence in the US, but higher in several other countries (eg France, Argentina, Canada)
- Workplace violence stress occurs from
  - trauma of experiencing violence
  - observing violence to others at work
  - perceptions of risk of violence at work

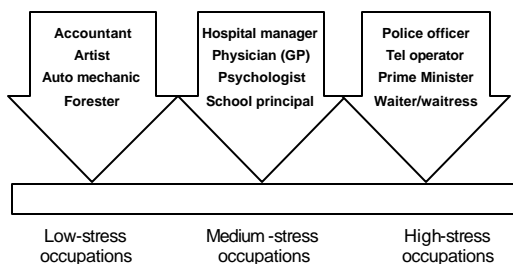
## Interpersonal stressor: bullying

- Offensive, intimidating or humiliating behaviour that degrades, ridicules or insults another person at work
- Workplace bullies tend to be people with higher authority
- Workplace bullying is reduced through
  - code of conduct
  - careful hiring
  - 360 degree feedback
  - conflict resolution system

## Work/non-work stressors

- Time-based conflict
  - due to work schedule, commuting, travel
  - women still do 'second shift' (most housework)
- Strain-based conflict
  - work stress affects home and vice versa
- Role behaviour conflict
  - incompatible work and non-work roles

## Stress and occupations



## Individual differences in stress

- Perceive the situation differently
  - self-efficacy
  - locus of control
- Different threshold levels of resistance to stressor
  - store of energy
- Use different stress-coping strategies

## Type A / Type B behaviour pattern

Type A behaviour pattern

Type B behaviour pattern

- Talks rapidly
- Is devoted to work
- Is highly competitive
- Struggles to perform several tasks
- Has a strong sense of time urgency
- Is impatient with idleness
- Loses temper easily
- Interrupts others

- Handles details patiently
- Is less competitive with others
- Contemplates issues carefully
- Has a low concern about time limitations
- Doesn't feel guilty about relaxing
- Has a relaxed approach to life
- Works at a steady pace

## Consequences of distress

- Physiological consequences
  - cardiovascular diseases
  - ulcers, sexual dysfunction, headaches
- Behavioural consequences
  - work performance, accidents, decisions
  - absenteeism – due to sickness and flight
  - workplace aggression
- Psychological consequences
  - moodiness, depression, emotional fatigue

## Job Burnout

**“Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do “people work” Maslach & Jackson (1986)**

## What is emotional exhaustion?

- I feel emotionally drained from my work.
- I feel used up at the end of the work day.
- I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
- Working with people all day is really a strain for me.
- I feel burned out from my work.

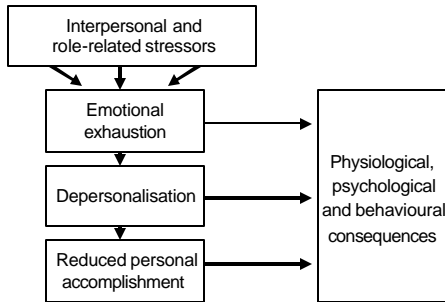
## What is depersonalisation?

- I feel I treat some patients as though they were impersonal objects
- I've become more callous towards people since I took this job
- I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.
- I don't really care what happens to some patients.

## What is personal accomplishment?

- I can easily understand how my clients feel about things.
- I deal very effectively with the problems of my recipients.
- I feel I am positively influencing other people's lives through my work.
- I feel very energetic.
- I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my recipients.
- I feel exhilarated after working closely with my recipients.
- I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
- In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.

## Job burnout process



## Managing stress at Darlot Mine

Employees at Homestake's Darlot gold mine in Western Australia are managing their stress better through exercise, nutrition and awareness of how to cope with shift work. The idea is that healthier employees cope with stress more effectively.



## Work-family balance

- “work-family balance as the extent to which individuals are equally involved in- and equally satisfied with- their work role and their family role” Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (in press)

## Work-life balance initiatives

- Flexible work time
- Job sharing
- Telecommuting
- Personal leave
- Childcare facilities



## Other stress management practices

- Withdrawing from the stressor
  - permanent – better person-job fit
  - temporary – work breaks, vacations
- Changing stress perceptions
  - self-efficacy, self-leadership
- Controlling stress consequences
  - fitness and lifestyle programs
  - relaxation and meditation
  - employee counselling
- Social support
  - emotional and informational



## Mid-Semester Exam Questions

- Please note that several multi-choice questions will be reviewed in class, some of which will appear in mid-semester exam