

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them'.

The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health ((2007), Mental health at work: developing the business case policy research paper), estimates that the cost to employers of mental health related sickness absence and staff turnover is estimated at £26 billion per year. This represents an estimated average of 27.5 working days lost per affected case and makes stress, depression or anxiety the largest contributor to the overall estimated annual days lost from work-related ill-health in 2008/09. Reduced productivity when working while unwell with a mental health condition costs an estimated 1.5 times as much working time lost through sickness.

There is no doubt that stress has a sizeable negative impact on productivity, morale and profits. Don't get stressed about it though, it is not all doom and gloom as it is relatively easy to address.

Causes of stress in the workplace – triggers can include excessive workload, lack of autonomy, poor relationships including bullying and inadequate training and lack of development possibilities. **Signs of stress** include a decline in performance and a change in general behaviour for the worse.

The way to beat stress in your organisation is to implement a robust policy and ensure the workforce, especially line managers, have adequate training in recognising and dealing effectively with instances of stress related illness.

It is worth noting that stress affects everyone differently. What is over burdening to one may have no detrimental effect on another.

The Kade Consultancy offers half-day courses covering awareness raising and mental toughness. As Occupational Psychologists, we can tap into the latest research applications and tools to deliver very high quality, effective training. Training that will have a positive, lasting effect on the productivity and morale of your workforce.

- **Awareness training** in the causes and symptoms of stress leads to better understanding, resulting in better managing techniques and resilience for the individual and for managers; the tools to plan for and minimise the impact that stress and absence has on a business.
- **Mental Toughness** – Psychometric analysis of the workforce, where their strengths and weakness lie and how to enable them to effectively deal with change, pressure and stressors.