

Overview of work-related stress

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Stress is a term that is widely used in everyday life and most people have some idea of its meaning. Work-related stress is recognised globally as a major challenge to workers' health, and the health of an organisation.

Work-related stress describes the physical, mental and emotional reactions of workers who perceive that their work demands exceed their abilities and/or their resources (such as time, help/support) to do the work. It occurs when they perceive they are not coping in situations where it is important to them that they cope.

A worker's response to stressors at work may be positive or negative for worker wellbeing, depending on a number of factors. In the vast majority of instances, people adjust to stressors and are able to continue to perform their normal work duties. While stress itself is not a disease, if it becomes excessive and long-lasting it can lead to mental and physical ill-health.

Your legal obligations

Work-related stress leading to illness, injury and weakened organisational performance can come from many sources, both work and non-work.

Employers are not able to control workers' personal lives and the stressors they may encounter there, however they do have

a legal obligation to minimise their exposure to work-related factors that can increase the risk of work-related stress.

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* imposes a legal duty on business operators to do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate or minimise risk to worker health and safety. This duty extends to protecting workers from the risk of harm from stressors at work.

Risk factors for work-related stress

The key to reducing the effects of work-related stress is to understand what organisational, environmental and individual characteristics may lead to stress in the first place.

Organisational

It is important to understand the types of organisational stressors people can be exposed to when examining work-related stress. A simplified model is shown in Figure 1 (over page).

The model identifies the kinds of organisational stressors or risk factors that might lead to workers experiencing stress and sustaining psychological and/or physical ill-health. These risk factors are outlined in more detail in Tip Sheet 4.

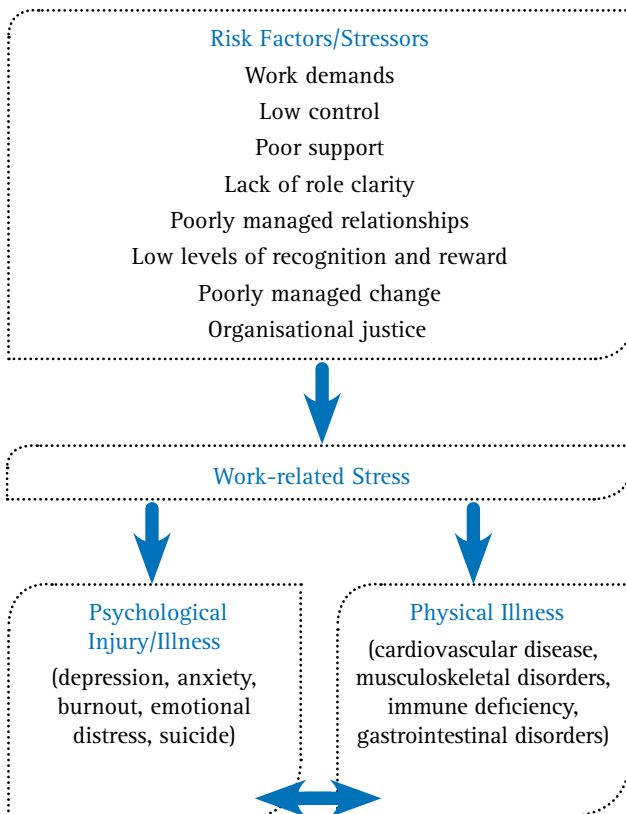
Environmental

Environmental stressors such as physical, chemical or biological agents can influence the worker's comfort and performance in his or her work environment, and might contribute to a stress response. These factors can cause stress on their own, but often act to exacerbate a person's response to another stressor.

Types of environmental stressors include:

- noise
- temperature and humidity
- lighting
- vibration
- air quality
- unguarded plant and equipment.

Figure 1.



Individual

People respond to stressors at work in different ways. It has been suggested that this can, in part, be related to physiological and/or personality factors (e.g. resilience). Worker well-being appears to benefit from a combination of challenging work, a supportive atmosphere and adequate resources.

While it is important to recognise these individual differences and to match jobs and tasks to individual abilities, this does not reduce an employer's legal duty to minimise workers' exposure to risk factors for work-related stress and to ensure the workplace does not exacerbate an existing illness.

Outcomes of exposure to work-related stress

Possible health effects

Short-lived or infrequent exposure to low-level stressors are not likely to lead to harm, in fact short-term exposure can result in improved performance. When stressful situations go unresolved, however, the body is kept in a constant state of stimulation, which can result in physiological and/or psychological changes and illness. For example:

Physical: headaches, indigestion, tiredness, slow reactions, shortness of breath

Mental: difficulty in decision-making, forgetfulness

Emotional: irritability, excess worrying, feeling of worthlessness, anxiety, defensiveness, anger, mood swings

Behavioural: diminished performance, withdrawal behaviours, impulsive behaviour, increase in alcohol and nicotine consumption

Common longer-term health issues linked to stress include cardiovascular disease (CVD), immune deficiency disorders, gastrointestinal disorders, psychiatric/psychological illness (PPI) and musculoskeletal disorders.

Possible effects on organisational performance

Increased stress levels of workers in an organisation can lead to diminished organisational performance as measured by the following:

- productivity and efficiency may be reduced
- job satisfaction, morale and cohesion may decline
- absenteeism and sickness absence may increase
- there may be an increase in staff turnover
- accidents and injuries may increase
- conflict may increase and the quality of relationships may decline
- client satisfaction may be reduced
- there may be increased health care expenditure and workers' compensation claims.

The effects of work-related stress on organisational performance provide good reasons – above and beyond legal duties and the direct financial and human costs – as to why employers and other duty holders should reduce workers' exposure to workplace stressors.

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A risk management approach to work-related stress

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Risk management is a four-step process for controlling exposure to health and safety risks associated with hazards in the workplace.

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* asserts that, to properly manage exposure to risks, a person must:

1. identify hazards
2. assess risks if necessary
3. control risks
4. review control measures to ensure they are working as planned.

Many of the discussions about stress risk management have traditionally been focussed on individuals within an organisation who are already distressed. This approach is not only costly, but it also means that the employer or business operator may not be fully meeting their duty to eliminate or minimise risks to worker health and safety from being exposed to stressors at work.

The risk of work-related stress may be present in any workplace. Employers should apply the risk management process (illustrated in Figure 1) to eliminate or minimise, as far as reasonably practicable, exposure to potential causes of work-related stress.

Figure 1. The four-step risk management process

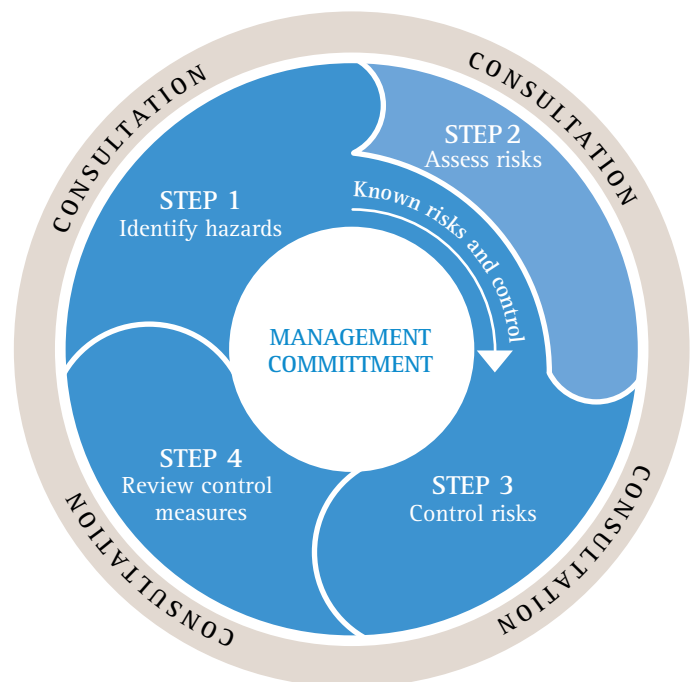


Image based on diagram from *How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice 2011*

Step 1: Identify the hazards

The first step in the risk management process is to identify workplace hazards. This means looking for those things in the workplace that have the potential to cause harm. The source of work-related stress can be determined by evaluating: productivity levels, rates of absenteeism, separation rates/turnover, exit interviews, staff engagement/morale, customer feedback, peak/seasonal demands, analysing incident reports and data trends.

Step 2: Assess and prioritise the risk

This step involves assessing the likelihood and consequences of injury or illness that may result from exposure to work-related stressors. Stressors or risk factors for work-related stress include:

- work demands (emotional, mental, physical)
- low control
- poor support
- lack of role clarity
- poorly managed change
- poorly managed relationships
- low levels of recognition and reward
- organisational injustice.

How to conduct a risk assessment

Risk factors for work-related stress can be assessed by understanding worker complaints, observing interactions between workers, gaining feedback from workers, having one-on-one discussions with workers and through the use of focus groups or a worker survey.

Focus groups are small groups (typically 6–10 people) from across the organisation. The purpose of a focus group is to provide a forum for assessing the risk of exposure to work-related stressors. This is done by considering each of the stress risk factors listed above and how they may or may not apply to their workplace.

Another effective approach to finding out about work-related stressors is to administer a *worker survey*. Surveys can be an important tool in soliciting which stressors are present in the workplace, evaluating the degree to which they are affecting workers and pinpointing where they are originating. When undertaking a worker survey, one must consider the size of the group to be surveyed, how participants are to be selected and how survey results will be fed back to staff. Anonymity must be guaranteed throughout the entire process.

Findings from focus groups or worker surveys would then inform a decision about the likelihood and consequences of injury or illness from exposure to work-related stress and make it clear which risk factors are contributing to that risk.

Step 3: Control risks

After assessing the risk and determining which factor(s) have the greatest contribution to that risk, the most appropriate control measure(s) that are reasonably practical in the circumstances need to be selected and implemented. When selecting a particular control, it is important to be able to justify why it was chosen over a different measure.

For work-related stress, deciding on control measures usually means altering a problem risk factor. For instance, reducing work demands, increasing the level of control a worker has over his or her job, and increasing the amount of peer and/or supervisor support a person is receiving.

Examples of control measures to manage the risk of work-related stress include:

- improving supervisor/managerial skills through coaching, mentoring and/or training
- planning workloads to meet potential demands
- setting clear performance goals/accountability
- ensuring role clarity and reassessing job descriptions
- setting new or adjusting current HR procedures
- providing assistance (e.g. an employee assistance program)
- communicating policy and availability of assistance
- checking understanding and implementation of changes
- promoting effective early rehabilitation.

Step 4: Review control measures

The last step of the risk management process is to review the effectiveness of the control measures that have been implemented to ensure they are working as planned. When reviewing the effectiveness of control measures, it is important to weigh up whether the chosen controls are effective or whether they need some modification.

Risk management for work-related stress is not a one-off exercise, but something that must go on continually in the organisation. The dynamics and complexity of organisations can mean that changes such as a new supervisor, new workers or new processes or procedures can have marked, unexpected and unplanned effects on the stress levels of workers.

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Implementing a work-related stress risk management process

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As well as an important legal duty, risk management for work-related stress can be an organisational improvement strategy.

There have been a number of conditions found to be critical to the success of this kind of intervention:

1. visible organisational and management commitment to dealing with work-related stress
2. worker participation in all activities of stress management, including risk assessment or diagnosis, feedback, planning and implementing control options and interventions
3. organisational communication and consultation regarding the risk management process.

Commitment

Senior management commitment is critical to the success of any significant organisational initiative. Programs such as risk management require resources (people, money and time), but in the long term have been shown to make considerable savings in resources. They require the willing and appropriate commitment of these resources by management upfront.

Gaining employee commitment through frequent and open communication is also a necessary part of successfully changing employee attitudes and/or behaviour.

Participation, communication and consultation

The work health and safety legislation in Queensland has a strong focus on consultation in risk management, which means that employers are required to seek advice or information from the people involved with the risks in the workplace. When it comes to managing the risks of work-related stress, you will be particularly dependent upon input from your workers to identify and address stressors at work and will see clear benefits from communicating with, and involving them in the process.

Consulting with workers at each stage of the risk management process will assist in achieving better health and safety outcomes because:

- workers are in constant close contact with the day-to-day elements of the workplace and the work that can increase the risk of work-related stress – consulting with them will give you access to their first-hand experience
- seeking assistance from the workers will encourage them to accept and comply with the solutions that are to be put in place

- workers can experience stress if they perceive that they have little control over their work and their work environment, and who do not feel supported in their workplace – communicating with them and seeking their participation in the risk management process very directly addresses the risk factors of low control and poor support. In this way the consultation process itself becomes part of the solution.

Ways to facilitate participation and consultation

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* formally provides for consultation through workplace health and safety representatives and committees, where these are required in your workplace.

As well as using workplace health and safety representatives and committees, you can set up a specific communication and project management structure to oversee and implement the risk management process. This structure might include a senior steering committee and/or a working group.

Senior steering committee

A senior steering committee is a group of individuals drawn from those in senior management positions and strategic areas of the organisation, such as human resources, workplace health and safety and organisational communication, who are responsible for general operating policy, procedures and related matters affecting the organisation as a whole. It includes a 'project champion', who heads the committee and gives the project momentum. The purpose of a senior steering committee is to:

- provide overall guidance and direction for a project and to interface with the organisation at a senior level about the project
- provide tangible evidence of management support.

Employers may want to consider establishing a steering committee to oversee the stress risk management process and to ensure that the recommendations for changes are implemented strategically and earnestly.

Working group

The working group includes the people who more actively facilitate the process on the ground. Working groups are an effective way of carrying out a potentially large-scale strategic process like work-related stress risk management. They encourage full and active participation by the workers in the risk management process.

The working group can:

- encourage worker participation
- discuss perceptions and perspectives on work practices
- coordinate focus group discussions or the distribution of surveys
- review the results of surveys and other information provided to confirm or challenge the responses
- analyse and prioritise areas where action is needed
- using a collaborative approach involving workers and managers, develop an action plan to address the identified causes of work related stress
- report to the Senior Steering Committee.

Feedback of results of the risk assessment

Providing feedback on the risk assessment to members of the organisation is crucial. This step helps ensure information about risk factors is used in designing, implementing and evaluating appropriate interventions.

Feedback may focus initially on the project champion and steering committee or working group, with discussions on how the results could be best positioned and presented. However this process should not be restricted to this group alone, with the promise of wider feedback an important factor in securing worker commitment to any interventions or risk reduction activities.

It is also important to seek worker input into the designing, implementing and evaluating of any control measures for managing risks associated with work-related stress.

Risk factors for work-related stress

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Risk factors for work-related stress are aspects of work that are associated with psychiatric, psychological and/or physical injury or illness.

The eight risk factors for work-related stress are interrelated so it is best not to consider them in isolation. There is a greater risk of work-related stress when a number of these stressors or risk factors act in combination.

The following eight risk factors have been identified as being associated with work-related stress related ill health.

1. Work demands

Everyone has a given capacity for work and if a person's capacity is exceeded the person may experience work-related stress.

Some common work demands include:

- time pressure including inadequate time and resources to complete jobs satisfactorily, working too hard or too fast and difficult targets.
- high mental task demands such as work that requires high-level decision making or prolonged periods of concentration.
- work that is monotonous and dull or does not utilise a worker's range of skills or previous training.
- high emotional task demands, including work that is emotionally disturbing or requires high emotional involvement.
- working long hours or overtime, working through breaks or taking work home.
- shift rosters that are unpredictable and/or affect amount and quality of sleep, or make it difficult to balance work and family life.

2. Low levels of control

The risk factor of 'control' refers to how much influence a person has in how they meet their task demands and how they perform their work in general (also known as autonomy). Unnecessary levels of supervision and surveillance, excessive responsibility but little authority or decision making and little or no say in how work is done can all lead to a stress response.

A person's tasks need to be meaningful, varied and allow for an appropriate degree of autonomy. It is possible for everyone in an organisation (not just those in senior positions) to feel they have input into their work simply by the communication and consultation strategies that are utilised in the work team.

3. Poor support from supervisors and/or co-workers

This important risk factor covers aspects such as whether workers feel they are given constructive feedback, whether they can talk to their supervisor and peers about work problems, whether their supervisor helps fix work problems, whether peers help out when things are tough and whether it is possible to talk to, and form relationships with, work colleagues. The way workers are supported is key to reducing or moderating work-related stress. For instance, support may be provided through practical assistance in performing tasks or through the provision of information. It can also come in the form of emotional support, which refers to non-tangible assistance such as talking over a problem with a worker, providing positive feedback/encouragement or informally congratulating a member of a team for a job well done.

Support provided by peers and supervisors can 'cushion' the stress responses people might otherwise experience where their jobs are demanding and they feel that they are not in control. This gives them greater coping resources in times of high work demand.

4. Lack of role clarity

Role confusion arises when workers do not have clarity regarding their work objectives and key accountabilities, their co-workers' expectations of them and the overall scope and responsibilities of their job. A wide range of situations can create confusion, for instance beginning a new job or starting in a new organisation, a transfer, a new supervisor or manager or a change in the structure of a work unit.

Role conflict occurs when a worker is required to perform a role that conflicts with their values or when they are torn between incompatible job demands. The greater the role conflict, the higher the likelihood of a worker experiencing work-related stress.

The risk of work-related stress can be reduced by ensuring workers understand their role within the organisation and that any expectations placed on them do not conflict.

5. Poorly managed relationships

Colleagues can be important sources of support but they can also be potential sources of stress. Relationships with bosses, peers and subordinates can positively or negatively affect the way a worker feels and it is likely that wherever groups of people work together, some conflict will arise from time to time. This is normal and in some cases can provide positive impetus for innovation and growth. Conflict becomes a risk factor however, where it remains unresolved or becomes particularly intense. This may include prolonged friction and anger between colleagues, strained relationships or bullying. It is important that proactive steps be taken by the individuals and/or by management to resolve conflict early.

6. Low levels of recognition and reward

Rewarding workers' efforts and recognising individual and team contributions and achievements within the organisation is important when trying to minimise the risk of work-related stress. Appraisal and recognition can be achieved through tangible rewards or through feedback on task performance and providing opportunities for the development of skills.

Worker recognition is a communication tool that reinforces and rewards the actions and behaviours you most want people to repeat. Providing worker recognition by saying "thank you" encourages more of the same actions and thinking. Workers who feel appreciated are more positive about themselves and their ability to contribute.

7. Poorly managed change

This risk factor refers to how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation. Change can be related to alterations in individual work conditions such as a change of role or shift roster or the introduction of new technology, or can be related to work-team or organisational level changes such as mergers, acquisitions, restructures or downsizing. Poor management of this process can lead to workers feeling anxious and uncertain about aspects of their work or employment status. Communicating what the organisation wants to achieve through the change and involving and supporting workers throughout the process is crucial.

8. Organisational justice

Organisational justice refers to perceptions of fairness about work procedures and how they are enacted. Procedural fairness generally relates to how procedures are implemented within the organisation. For example, procedures are regarded as fair when they are unbiased, consistently applied, use accurate information and are open to appeal processes.

Relational fairness refers to the degree of dignity and respect afforded to a worker during a process. It is important for employers to promote a positive and fair working environment, with the experience of injustice being potentially harmful to both the individual and the organisation.



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Work demands

Work demands are one of the most common sources of work-related stress. While workers need challenging tasks to maintain their interest and motivation, and to develop new skills, it is important that demands do not exceed their ability to cope. Workers can usually cope with demanding work if it is not excessive, if they are supported by supervisors and colleagues, and if they are given the right amount of autonomy.

Possible solutions

Decisions need to be made about what practical solutions (control measures) will be used in the workplace to prevent, eliminate or minimise the effect of work-related stressors on worker health.

At the **organisational level**, controls target the work itself and focus on job design, work environment and working conditions.

For the risk factor 'high work demands', organisational level solutions address time pressure, long or irregular working hours, mental demands, physical demands and emotional demands.

Time pressure

When there is a demanding workload:

- Ensure workers have adequate time to complete their tasks and allow them to have input when determining the timing and pace of their work.
- Consult with workers when determining performance targets, set targets that are realistic and achievable, and take into account existing workloads when setting targets. Team-based targets are an effective measure for improving overall performance against the organisational goals and building effective teams.
- Regularly review workloads to ensure workers have sufficient resources (in terms of time, administrative support or equipment) to cope. Workloads can be reviewed during team meetings, through an informal check-in with the supervisor or by undertaking worksite assessments.

- Monitor workloads during periods of peak demand (e.g. Christmas, school holidays or seasonal peaks) and provide additional support where required.
- Assist workers in the development of personal work plans to help them prioritise their tasks.
- Negotiate reasonable deadlines for completing tasks. During periods where deadlines are tight, inform workers of the reasons behind the deadlines and why it is important they are met.
- Encourage workers to speak up at an early stage if they feel their task demands are excessive and to seek guidance from management about priorities if there are insufficient resources to effectively complete the tasks.

When there are under- or over-qualified workers:

- It is important workers are competent at their job and that their work is rewarding, therefore:
 - design jobs to be within workers' capabilities
 - consider workers' skills and abilities when allocating tasks
 - provide training and skill development when needed.
- Develop a system to keep training records up-to-date, ensuring workers are competent and comfortable in undertaking the core functions of their job.
- Limit giving workers tasks that under-utilise their skills. They may feel frustrated and unmotivated if they are not being challenged in their work.
- Consult with workers about the opportunity to broaden the scope of their job by expanding the range of job tasks and responsibilities assigned to them.
- Avoid repetitive and monotonous work by rotating job tasks.

When there are demanding hours of work, including overtime and shiftwork:

- Ensure sufficient cover for workers who are on annual or sick leave. If overtime is necessary, plan ahead so that workers can schedule their activities around it.
- Develop a system to notify workers of unplanned tight deadlines and any exceptional need to work long hours.
- Ensure adequate work breaks and, where practicable, allow some flexibility in the timing of breaks.
- Strive to make working hours regular and predictable.
- Avoid encouraging workers to regularly work long hours, take work home or work through breaks.
- Ensure workers have adequate time management skills and provide training where needed.
- Promote a work-life balance and encourage workers to take annual leave or holidays when they are due.
- Ensure shift rosters are agreed to by workers and provide

communication and consultation when designing or changing rosters.

- Educate workers about the early warning signs of stress and fatigue. Encourage them to report their tiredness and take breaks when they need to.
- Ensure the roster provides for a continuous seven to eight hours sleep in each 24 hours, and at least 50 hours sleep for every seven days.
- Limit overtime and do not allow workers to regularly exceed a 12 hour shift.
- Minimise safety critical tasks during the early hours of the morning (3 am to 5 am).
- Have a policy on second jobs – ensure that the worker understands the need to get sufficient sleep.

Refer to the *Managing Fatigue* guide for practical information about managing fatigue in the workplace.

Mental demands

There are a number of ways to manage work that requires lengthy periods of concentration:

- Rotate tasks and schedules so that workers are not always assigned jobs that require an extreme focus of their attention.
- Give workers some control over the way they do their work including work pace and order of tasks (see *Tip Sheet 6: Solutions – Low levels of control* for more information).
- Allow sufficient time for breaks.

For work that requires complex and high-level decision making:

- Provide sufficient information to enable workers to perform tasks competently, including adequate support and resources for decision-making.
- Provide additional practical assistance when workers are doing challenging tasks.
- Allow workers sufficient time to perform the tasks assigned and provide suitable equipment which is appropriately maintained.
- Evaluate and review workers' competency and capability and provide additional training where needed.
- Have systems in place to support workers when they are required to make difficult decisions or when there are negative consequences to decisions they have made (e.g. child safety workers).

Physical demands

- Manage environmental hazards such as noise, vibration, poor lighting or poorly designed equipment.
- Make the physical environment as comfortable as possible and designed specifically for the tasks being undertaken (e.g. make changes to the work station, tools or equipment, or the way a job is done where needed).
- Allow workers to take regular breaks away from physically demanding work and where practicable, rotate repetitive tasks between workers.
- Ensure workers are well trained and capable of undertaking the required tasks.

Emotional demands

Some forms of work are inherently high in emotional demands, including work that is emotionally disturbing, requires high emotional involvement or requires workers to regularly hide their emotions (e.g. customer service work).

For work that is emotionally demanding:

- Where possible, allow workers greater control over their jobs (e.g. empowering workers to make decisions that will reduce emotional demands such as giving a refund for a product).
- Give workers the opportunity to get some distance from work that is emotionally demanding and encourage regular breaks or 'time out'.
- Provide training to workers on how to diffuse difficult or confronting situations (e.g. conflict management skills) and ensure they have available support from supervisors.
- Provide additional training and support to workers who are required to interact with clients (e.g. patients, customers, children, passengers or guests) and who may have to spend more time regulating their own emotions or display a higher variety of emotions at odds with their true feelings.
- Assess the risk of client-initiated violence and aggression and develop and implement systems to manage this risk where workers are exposed.
- Make psychological/medical support available to workers who are directly and indirectly involved in a traumatic event or in other emotionally demanding work.

- Where emotional demands are an unavoidable part of a workers' role, ensure these are captured in a position description and that applicants are informed at the pre-selection stage (e.g. at interview) of the demanding nature of the role.

At the individual level, solutions are aimed at assisting individuals to cope or build resilience.

Appropriate activities to be considered at this level of intervention include:

- corporate induction programs
- access to employee assistance programs
- training about resilience
- health and wellbeing programs
- counselling/therapy for people experiencing distress from sources both in and outside of the workplace.



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Levels of control

This risk factor addresses the level of influence workers have on how they meet their task demands and the way they perform their work in general. Low levels of job control, where there is high work demand and low support from co-workers or supervisors, can increase the likelihood of worker strain occurring.

Some jobs are inherently low in control—for example call centres—but it is possible for all organisations to enhance workers' control over their work in a number of ways.

Possible solutions

Decisions need to be made about what practical solutions (control measures) will be used in the workplace to prevent, eliminate or minimise the effect of work-related stressors on worker health.

At the **organisational level**, controls target the work itself and focus on job design, the work environment, and on working conditions.

For the risk factor 'low levels of control', organisational level solutions address levels of self direction, allowing input into decision making, fostering consultation and communication and supervising workers appropriately.

Choice/self direction

- A worker's tasks need to be meaningful, varied and allow for an appropriate degree of self direction.
- Let workers have a say in how their own work is organised rather than imposing direction. Allow them to have input on:
 - how job tasks should be completed (where the order and timing of tasks are not critical to the outcome)
 - how problems should be tackled
 - the pace of their work.
- Ensure workers have the skills required to achieve most of their goals. Where skills are lacking, discuss opportunities for development.
- Use performance reviews as a positive opportunity for workers to have input into the way they do their work, rather than focusing only on inadequate performance.
- Provide opportunities for job rotation to enable skill development and job variation.

Input into decision-making

Everyone in an organisation should feel they have input into their work – not just those in senior positions. There are a number of ways an organisation can ensure everyone contributes to decision-making:

- Hold regular team meetings during which workers can have input into decisions that concern their work.
- Involve workers in the allocation of responsibility for tasks within teams and in determining work objectives and anticipated outputs, roles, timeframes and resourcing.
- Provide training to develop supportive leaders who delegate and encourage participation and welcome new ideas.
- Encourage a participative approach to management through all of the above.

Consultation and communication

- Communicate with workers about how and why decisions are made. Whenever possible, seek team involvement with making these decisions.
- Develop and maintain a working environment in which workers are consulted and can provide feedback on changes impacting on their tasks.
- Develop a system that enables workers to have input into broader organisational issues (for example a suggestion scheme/box).
- Know when it is appropriate to consult with workers and ensure the outcomes of a consultation process are fed back to them.

Appropriate supervision

- Ensure that managers are competent supervisors without micro-managing.
- Consult with workers when developing performance monitoring systems.
- Provide a method through which workers can review and contribute to the output of monitoring systems.
- Develop team-based targets which assist in building effective teams and by measuring team performance against the organisational goals.
- When assigning work, negotiate objective and reasonable standards to increase workers' perceptions of ownership and fairness.

- Avoid asking workers to regularly stay after hours without prior consultation.
- In participation with workers, develop clear policies on the development, implementation and purpose of electronic performance monitoring (EPM). EPM is a system to measure outputs at either an individual or group level (e.g. calls per hour). Ensure all workers are aware of these policies.
- Avoid unnecessary monitoring of workers and/or excessive or punitive use of EPM data in performance review processes.
- Train supervisory workers in the objective, appropriate and ethical use of EPM.

At the **individual level**, solutions are aimed at assisting individuals to cope or build resilience.

Appropriate activities to be considered at this level of intervention include:

- corporate induction programs
- access to employee assistance programs
- training about resilience
- health and wellbeing programs
- counselling/therapy for people experiencing distress from sources both in and outside of the workplace.



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Support from supervisors and/or co-workers

The way workers are supported is key to reducing or moderating work-related stress. Support provided by supervisors and peers can cushion the stress responses people might otherwise experience when their jobs are demanding and they feel they do not have control over those demands.

Possible solutions

Decisions need to be made about what practical solutions (control measures) will be used in the workplace to prevent, eliminate or minimise the effect of work-related stressors on worker health.

At the **organisational level**, controls target the work itself and focus on job design, work environment and working conditions.

For the risk factor 'poor support', organisational level solutions address practical assistance, the provision of information, emotional support and positive feedback.

Organisational structures

There are many approaches a workplace can take to ensure its workers feel supported:

- Ensure that management structures across the organisation and reporting lines within work teams

are clear. This will help workers know who they are accountable to (either overall or for particular tasks) and where they can go for help with work problems.

- Provide new workers a proper induction to the organisation and work unit.
- Provide and promote an employee assistance service that responds to individual issues or concerns, both work and non-work related.
- Promote a culture that values diversity in the workplace.
- Provide and promote flexible work practices that best suit individual and business needs. This may include working from home or flexible working hours.

Practical support

There are various types of assistance that a supervisor/manager or colleague can provide:

- Assist with work demands, including clear work goals.
- Provide all workers with adequate information.
- Provide workers with training and development opportunities.

- Conduct performance reviews and include constructive feedback.
- Provide additional assistance when workers are undertaking challenging tasks, such as new duties or roles.
- Ensure adequate backfilling of roles or redistribution of work when workers are out of the office or away on leave.

Information provision

- Hold regular team meetings to discuss pressures and challenges within the work unit. Assist workers to come up with practical solutions for any task-related issues that arise.
- Provide sufficient information to enable workers to perform tasks competently, particularly when workers are taking on new work.

Training and development

- It is important workers feel confident and capable of undertaking assigned tasks. Make sure they receive enough training for them to be competent in their roles.
- Training can be both task-specific and more general including, for example, training in ethics and behavioural expectations (code of conduct), mental health and cultural awareness.
- Develop training refresher sessions to ensure competencies are up to date.
- Make training available to part-time, casual and shift workers and those in remote locations.
- All workers, contractors and labour hire workers should be made aware of the policies concerning acceptable behaviour in the workplace.
- When appropriate, give workers managerial responsibilities to encourage a wider understanding of their tasks. This could include:
 - managing workload and resources
 - health and safety
 - performance management
 - managing conflict
 - interpersonal skills
 - emotional intelligence, including empathy and expressing and managing own emotions
 - effective communication.

Constructive feedback

- Provide regular feedback on task performance.
- Formally or informally congratulate workers/team members when tasks have been done well and be specific about what was done well.

- Give workers practical advice and guidance on areas that need improving.
- Use annual performance reviews to provide constructive advice for future performance, and include opportunities for skill development. It is important that annual performance tools are not seen as a disciplinary measure.

Emotional support

Emotional support from co-workers or supervisors can have a protective effect and may reduce worker strain, particularly in situations of high demand and low control.

Ways to do this are:

- Support open communication and encourage workers to share their concerns about work-related stressors at an early stage. They should feel comfortable with discussing any issues that may arise.
- Be aware of non work-related stressors that might be present in workers' lives and allow flexible work arrangements where practicable.
- Promote a team culture in which workers assist each other and provide support when required.
- Provide the time to talk through problems with workers and try to promote an 'open door' policy.
- Deal sensitively with workers who are experiencing problems.
- Pay attention to a team member who is behaving out of character.
- Hold formal and informal team-building activities to improve team cohesion.
- Establish a peer support system and a mentoring/buddy program for new starters.
- Take an interest in workers' lives beyond the workplace whilst being respectful of personal and professional boundaries.

At the **individual level**, solutions are aimed at assisting individuals to cope or build resilience.

Appropriate activities to be considered at this level of intervention include:

- corporate induction programs
- access to employee assistance programs
- training about resilience
- health and wellbeing programs
- counselling/therapy for people experiencing distress from sources both in and outside of the workplace.



Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Role clarity and role conflict

Poorly defined or conflicted roles in organisations can be a stressor for workers. Poor role definition arises from a lack of clarity in workers' objectives, key accountabilities, their co-workers' expectations of them and the overall scope or responsibilities of their job. Role conflict occurs when a worker is required to perform a role that goes against their personal values or when their job demands are incompatible.

Possible solutions

Decisions need to be made about what practical solutions (control measures) will be used in the workplace to prevent, eliminate or minimise the effect of work-related stressors on worker health.

At the organisational level, controls target the work itself and focus on job design, work environment and working conditions.

For the risk factor 'poor role clarity and role conflict', organisational level solutions should address workers' understanding of their role within the workgroup and the organisation, and the potential for expectations placed on them to conflict.

Role clarity

A wide range of work situations can create role confusion, such as beginning a new job, starting in a new organisation, a transfer, a new supervisor or manager or following a change in the structure of a work unit. Lack of role clarity can lead to tension and conflict between workers.

Refer to *Tip Sheet 9: Solutions - Poorly managed relationships* for information on how to manage task and/or relationship conflict.

The following can help to manage this stressor:

- Provide all workers with a corporate induction and ensure they are aware of their role within their immediate work team or unit, program area and the broader organisation.
- Ensure all workers receive suitable training for their jobs.
- Assist workers to develop personal work plans that clearly define task objectives and expected outputs.

- Develop and maintain a working environment where workers are consulted and can provide feedback on changes impacting on their job tasks.
- Implement a performance feedback system, where workers receive regular feedback on jobs well done and any areas for improvement.
- Encourage workers to talk to their supervisor or manager early if they are unclear about the scope and/or responsibilities of their role.
- Ensure workers have an up to date role or position description, which includes the role purpose, reporting relationships and the key duties expected of them.
- Ensure that management structures across the organisation and reporting lines within work teams are clear. This will help workers know who they are accountable to and where they can go for help with work problems.
- Provide an organisational chart that gives a clear view of the organisational structure and communication channels.
- Following an organisational change or restructure, check with workers to ensure they understand any additional responsibilities or duties that are required of them. Make sure they are comfortable with new functions and revise position descriptions to reflect new accountabilities.
- It is important workers feel confident and capable of undertaking new or revised tasks. Make sure they receive enough training for them to be competent in their roles.
- Where a change in structure or roles occurs, or re-training is required, use the performance review process as a positive opportunity for workers to have renewed input to the way they complete their work.
- Ensure systems are in place to enable workers to raise concerns about any conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities. For example, hold regular team meetings to enable workers to discuss any potential role conflict.
- Avoid assigning roles to workers that conflict with their personal needs and values.

At the **individual level**, solutions are aimed at assisting individuals to cope or build resilience.

Appropriate activities and assistance to be considered at this level of intervention include:

- corporate induction programs
- access to employee assistance programs
- training about resilience
- health and wellbeing programs
- counselling/therapy for people experiencing distress from sources both in and outside of the workplace.

Role conflict

Role conflict occurs when workers are given two different and incompatible roles at the same time, or their role overlaps with another worker or work group. The greater the role conflict, the higher the likelihood of a worker experiencing occupational stress.

Ways to manage role conflict:

- Avoid placing inconsistent demands on workers and ensure that as far as possible the different requirements are compatible.
- Have clear reporting relationships so that workers know who they are directly accountable to. Avoid making workers accountable to more than one immediate supervisor to reduce potential conflict in work demands.



Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Managing relationships

Work colleagues can be important sources of support, but they can also be sources of stress. Relationships with bosses, peers and subordinates can positively or negatively affect the way a worker feels. Wherever groups of people work together, it's likely that some conflict will arise from time to time.

Conflict only becomes a stressor if it remains unresolved, if it becomes particularly intense or if it becomes workplace bullying. It is important that an organisation takes proactive steps towards preventing or minimising conflict as early as possible.

Possible solutions

Decisions need to be made about what practical solutions (control measures) will be used in the workplace to prevent, eliminate or minimise the effect of work-related stressors on worker health.

At the **organisational level**, controls target the work itself and focus on job design, work environment and working conditions.

For the risk factor 'poorly managed relationships', organisational level solutions should address ensuring workers have clearly defined roles, encouraging communication, educating workers on appropriate workplace behaviours and training workers to diffuse difficult interpersonal situations.

Task conflict

Task conflict arises over resources, procedures and policies or disagreements about facts. Modest levels of task conflict can encourage creative thinking and problem solving. High levels of conflict may limit workers ability to focus on the task at hand. Ways to manage task conflict include:

Role clarity

- Provide all workers with a corporate induction and ensure they are aware of their role in their immediate work team or unit, program area and the broader organisation.
- Encourage workers to talk to their supervisor or manager early if they are unclear about the scope and/or responsibilities of their role.
- Ensure workers have an up to date role or position description, which includes the role purpose, reporting relationships and the key duties expected of them.
- Assist workers to develop personal work plans that clearly define task objectives and expected outputs.

- Ensure systems are in place to enable workers to raise concerns about any conflicts they have within their role and responsibilities. For example, hold regular team meetings to enable workers to discuss any potential task conflict.

Communication

- Encourage workers to have input into procedures and tasks. Wherever possible, involve workers in the decision-making processes which will impact on their job tasks.
- Hold regular team meetings to discuss the pressures and challenges within the work unit. Encourage workers to come up with practical solutions for any task-related issues.
- Provide regular feedback on task performance. Praise workers whenever tasks have been done well and be specific about what was done well. Give workers practical advice and guidance on areas that need improving.
- Coach workers in communication skills to increase their awareness of other people's points of view and how to negotiate solutions to resolve task conflict.

Relationship conflict

Relationship conflict amongst workers can be harmful to both individuals and the organisation. It must be minimised or prevented as early as possible. Relationship conflict can present itself in various ways, including animosity, social conflict and abusive supervisory styles.

Ways to manage relationship conflict:

- Train workers in the Code of Conduct at induction so that they are aware of appropriate work behaviours. Ensure these standards are implemented to demonstrate that there are consequences for poor behaviour.
- Provide conflict management training to all workers to teach them how to diffuse difficult or confronting situations.
- Provide training to managers that shows them how to identify a conflict situation and resolve it early.
- Show commitment to workers by being willing to confront people issues and manage their resolution.
- Encourage workers to share their concerns about work-related conflict at an early stage by supporting open communication. This will enable workers to feel comfortable when discussing interpersonal conflict.
- Develop formal and informal confidential complaint handling processes to enable the reporting of inappropriate behaviour.

Refer to *Tip Sheet 12: Solutions – Organisational injustice* for ways to ensure relational fairness in the workplace.

Team work

- Promote a team culture in which workers assist each other and provide support when required.
- Promote that differences in workers' ideas and opinions is a positive.
- Create a culture where colleagues trust and encourage each other to perform at their best.
- Encourage good, honest, open communication at all levels in work teams.
- Look for design issues that may negatively effect team communication. For example, minimise isolated work groups and if this is unavoidable, provide additional support to these groups.
- Give group rewards based on the performance of a team or unit rather than any one individual. This can be achieved by linking rewards to the performance of a group as a whole and will both enhance teamwork and avoid potential conflict between workers.
- Provide rewards that reinforce teamwork (for example, a team dinner or a team trip). Ensure that the reward is equitable and accessible to all team members that contributed to the project or task.

Prolonged and unresolved relationship conflict may result in more extreme forms of conflict known as workplace bullying. As workplace bullying may harm the health and safety of workers, all employers have an obligation to manage exposure to risks of workplace bullying under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. For guidance on how to manage this risk, refer to the *Guide for preventing and responding to workplace bullying*.

At the **individual level**, solutions are aimed at assisting individuals to cope or build resilience.

Appropriate activities and assistance to be considered at this level of intervention include:

- corporate induction programs
- access to employee assistance programs
- training about resilience
- health and wellbeing programs
- counselling/therapy for people experiencing distress from sources both in and outside of the workplace.



Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Recognition and reward

Rewarding workers' efforts and recognising their organisational contributions and achievements as individuals and teams, are essential to minimising the risk of work-related stress.

Possible solutions

Decisions need to be made about what practical solutions (control measures) will be used in the workplace to prevent, eliminate or minimise the effect of work-related stressors on worker health.

At the organisational level, controls target the work itself and focus on job design, work environment and working conditions.

For the risk factor 'low recognition and reward', organisational level solutions should address feedback on task performance, performance reviews, skill development and formal and informal rewards.

Worker recognition and reward are powerful tools in any workplace. They are ongoing ways of showing appreciation and affirming the positive efforts of workers. Thanking workers motivates them and encourages more of the same actions that make an organisation successful. Workers who feel appreciated are more positive about themselves and their ability to contribute.

Ways to recognise and reward workers include:

Feedback on task performance

- Listen to workers' needs, concerns and ideas and be responsive to them as a meaningful form of recognition.
- Provide regular feedback on task performance. Praise workers whenever tasks have been done well and be specific about what was done well so that it may be repeated.
- Recognise and reward workers for their ingenuity or effort, not just for their contribution or productivity.
- Formally or informally congratulate workers/team members on a job well done by:
 - celebrating successes through team lunches or morning teas
 - recognising individuals in team meetings
 - conducting staff awards programs
 - writing an article in an internal publication
 - advising a supervisor if a peer performs well
 - communicating the good news up the chain.
- Recognise and celebrate individual and team successes promptly.

Performance reviews

- Use performance reviews as an opportunity for constructive communication around work.

- Use performance reviews as a time to provide positive and constructive advice for future performance, including opportunities for skill development. A general rule is to give two-thirds of positive feedback and one-third of constructive or developmental feedback.
- Where possible, avoid linking performance reviews with discussions about pay as this may distract from the process.

Opportunities for development

- Ensure rewards are meaningful and are tailored to suit the worker and/or work group. For example provide:
 - additional incentives (linked to work performance and achievements)
 - access to company workshops and training programs beyond those that are necessary for workers to undertake their roles
 - opportunities to participate in ongoing personal and professional development through continued learning outside of the work environment.
- Provide workers opportunities for career development such as acting in higher level roles during a superior's absence.
- Consider rotating jobs or using coaching/mentoring to enrich workers' interest and motivation and enable them to broaden their skill set.

Tangible rewards

- Emphasise work as its own reward to avoid complacency and the notion that work should only be done well if there is an additional reward at the end of it.
- Use rewards to acknowledge good performance and not as a way to control a workers' behaviour. Consider rewards as an expression of appreciation and a way of recognising individual or group contribution to a job responsibility, task or an organisational goal.
- Determine the objective of a reward (for example to recognise a worker's value or to provide encouragement) before deciding on what the reward should be.
- Provide meaningful rewards for workers' efforts, including adopting adequate pay levels. The financial reward/gain should reflect the level of effort applied. Ensure the system is fair and equitable for all workers and that the rewards may be achieved with realistic effort.
- Rewards may be:
 - informal (for example simple comments such as 'thank you' or 'great work' or assignment to a special project)
 - formal (for example prizes, commissions, bonuses, gift certificates, or share options).
- Unexpected financial rewards may be a way to convey appreciation for a task well done. However, avoid using them on a frequent basis as they do little to establish a culture of appreciation and it may become an expected entitlement.

Rewards program

- When using an incentives-based scheme, ensure the objectives and intent of the program are clear to all workers. Keep decision criteria for rewards simple and ensure that rewards under the scheme are achievable.
- Implement a rewards program that provides positive reinforcement for contributions, which align with the organisation's overall goals.
- Research or consult about the type of rewards that workers would find meaningful and relevant.
- Ensure the program is communicated to the entire organisation and that all workers have an opportunity to benefit from the program, not just the top performers.
- Develop a formal training program for managers about the rewards program and its rationale.

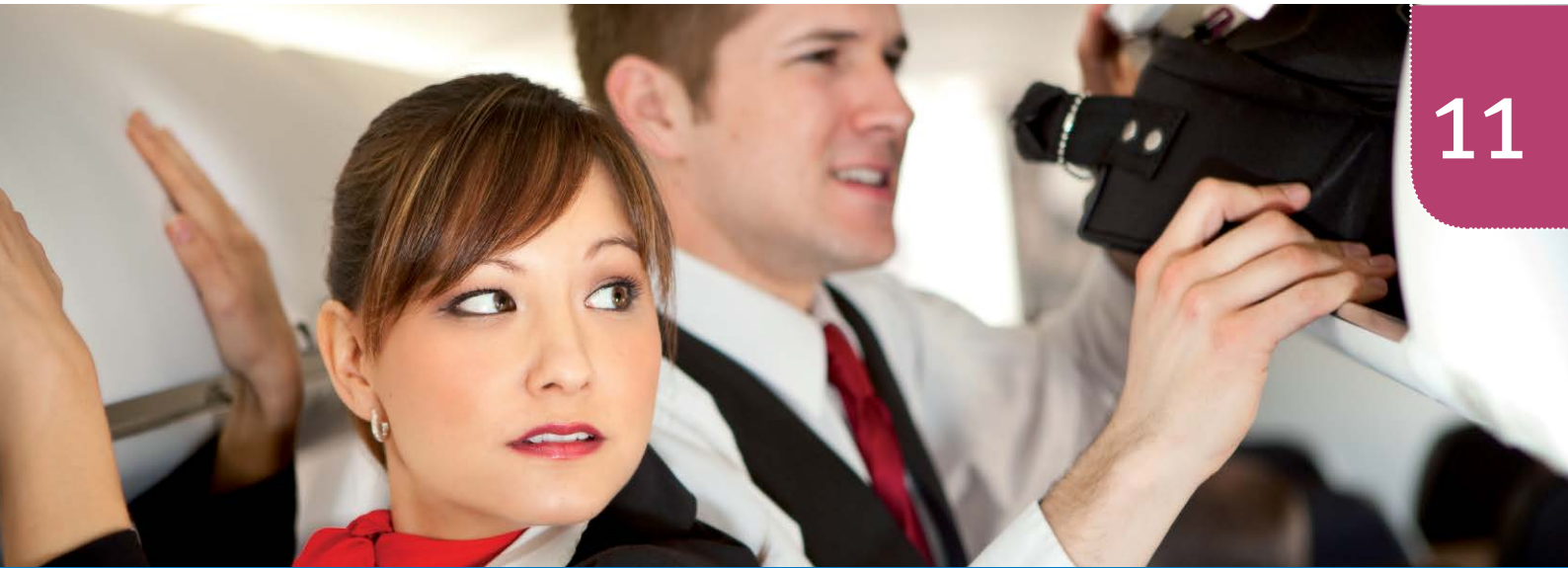
Group rewards

- Recognise and reward workers for individual, as well as team accomplishments.
- Give group rewards based on the performance of a team or unit rather than any one individual. This can be achieved by linking rewards to the performance of a group as a whole and will both enhance teamwork and avoid potential conflict between workers.
- Provide rewards that reinforce teamwork, for example a team dinner or a team trip, and ensure the reward is equitable and accessible to all team members that contributed to the project or task.
- Consider different reward systems for different teams—in an organisation of diverse teams, a one-size-fits-all approach may not be the best solution.
- Be mindful of rewarding workers for individual accomplishments as well as accomplishments as a member of a team. Each member of the team still needs and expects to be individually recognised and rewarded for their contribution to team goals.

At the individual level, solutions are aimed at assisting individuals to cope or build resilience.

Appropriate activities and assistance to be considered at this level of intervention include:

- corporate induction programs
- access to employee assistance programs
- training about resilience
- health and wellbeing programs
- counselling/therapy for people experiencing distress from sources both in and outside of the workplace.



Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Managing change

Change is an inevitable aspect of organisational life and can be essential for future growth. However, poor management of the change process can lead to workers feeling anxious and uncertain about aspects of their work or employment status.

Possible solutions

Decisions need to be made about what practical solutions (control measures) will be used in the workplace to prevent, eliminate or minimise the effect of work-related stressors on worker health.

At the organisational level, controls target the work environment itself and focus on job design and on working conditions.

For the risk factor 'poorly managed change', organisational level solutions should address communication before and during a change process, consultation and participation throughout the process and revision of job roles following any changes that occur.

Communication

Communication is the most important strategy in achieving successful change. Failure to effectively communicate changes in the workplace may increase worker distress.

When communicating proposals for change, either concerning individual work conditions or larger changes to the work-team or organisation, the following can help manage this stressor:

- Ensure the person communicating the change has the skills and authority to do so. If necessary, train managers or supervisors to support workers through periods of change.
- Give workers the background and reasons behind the change.
- Explain what the organisation wants from the change (key objectives) and discuss expected outcomes and timeframes with workers.
- Be upfront about any significant adjustments that will follow the proposed change (for example a restructure or the need to retrain workers).
- Establish a communication system (for example meetings or emails) that keeps workers up to date with developments.
- Communicate developments quickly, preventing the spread of rumours and enhancing workers' feelings of job security.

- Try to have an open door policy for workers who want to discuss their concerns with their managers or supervisors.
- Advise workers of the final decision both verbally and in writing.

Consultation and participation

- Ensure workers are consulted about workplace change and as a minimum, note that workers and/or their unions have a legal right to be consulted about significant changes under their award, agreement or industrial relations legislation.
- Ensure workers are supported throughout the change process and are aware of any potential impacts on their roles.
- Provide opportunities for workers to participate in the change process to encourage uptake, increase motivation and promote ownership of the process and outcomes.
- Encourage involvement from individuals and work teams.
- Provide group information and/or feedback sessions to give workers the opportunity to raise any concerns about the change in a group setting. For example, hold regular meetings or focus groups. Workers may feel more comfortable raising issues in a group rather than individually.
- Give workers enough time to consider and respond to any proposals.
- Encourage workers to be involved in the planning of change initiative(s) and to provide ongoing feedback on the proposed change.
- Ensure the results of consultations are fed back to the group or individuals and discuss why it may not have been possible to take some ideas on board.
- Implement changes in a timely manner.

Review roles

- Review team and individual work plans after the change to ensure roles, objectives and accountabilities are clear.
- Change job descriptions to match the new duties and tasks of the role, preventing ambiguity and role conflict. Workers should participate in this review process where possible.
- Encourage workers to develop their skills to help them undertake new and challenging work produced by the change.
- Ensure workers feel confident in undertaking their job tasks and make sure they receive enough training for them to be competent in their roles.
- Where a change in structure or roles occurs, or re-training is required, use the performance review process as a positive opportunity for workers to have renewed input to the way they complete their work.

Provide support

- Be aware that workers may need additional practical or emotional support during times of organisational change (refer to *Tip Sheet 7: Solutions – Poor support from supervisors and/or co-workers*).

At the **individual level**, solutions are aimed at assisting individuals to cope or build resilience.

Appropriate activities to be considered at this level of intervention include:

- corporate induction programs
- access to employee assistance programs
- training about resilience
- health and wellbeing programs
- counselling/therapy for people experiencing distress from sources both in and outside of the workplace.

Organisational justice

Organisational injustice refers to workers' perceptions of fairness at work. Procedural fairness relates to how procedures are implemented and relational fairness relates to the degree of dignity and respect given to workers. It is important for employers to promote a positive and fair working environment as the experience of injustice can be harmful to both the worker and the organisation.

Possible solutions

Decisions need to be made about what practical solutions (control measures) will be used in the workplace to prevent, eliminate or minimise the effect of work-related stressors on worker health.

At the organisational level, controls target the work itself and focus on job design, work environment and working conditions.

For the risk factor 'organisational injustice', organisational level solutions may include ensuring procedures are unbiased, consistently applied, use accurate information and are open to appeal processes.

Procedural fairness

Work procedures where unfair practices commonly occur include management of poor performance, selection and recruitment, promotion, the allocation of tasks and resources and the performance review process.

The following can help manage this stressor by ensuring procedures are regarded as fair:

Consistent and unbiased

- Design procedures so they can be consistently applied to all workers and work groups. For example, have a structured performance review process so all workers are reviewed using consistent criteria.
- Carry out procedures the same way each time they are applied (for example, job selection and performance management).
- Ensure decision makers are impartial and that they collect unbiased and accurate information to guide their decisions.
- Listen to the concerns of all workers being impacted by a procedure and allow workers to request additional information or clarification if needed.
- Appoint or promote workers based on performance, using valid and reliable selection and recruitment methods.

- Provide workers with a mechanism to appeal the result of a procedure. Where a worker may perceive unfair work practices, encourage them to access the appeal process.
- Regularly review the effectiveness of procedures to ensure they are meeting their objectives.

Consultation and communication

- Familiarise workers with organisational policies and procedures, both during induction and ongoing. Ensure they are easily accessible—online and in hardcopy—so that workers know what to expect.
- Encourage a participative approach to management by encouraging workers to have input into decisions that directly affect them.
- Encourage worker involvement and ownership of procedures by engaging workers at all levels of the organisation during their development.
- Develop and maintain a working environment whereby workers are consulted and can provide feedback on changes impacting on their job tasks.
- Communicate the reason for a change in policy or procedure to workers. They are more likely to accept a decision, even if unfavourable, if they are given a clear explanation of its background and aims. Successful strategies for communication include:
 - internal newsletters
 - direct email
 - website
 - team meetings
 - noticeboards.
- Develop a system that enables workers to have input into broader organisational issues (for example a suggestion scheme/box).

Relational fairness

Relational fairness refers to the way managers interact with workers as well as the way workers interact among themselves.

The following can help manage this stressor by ensuring fairness is maintained in the workplace:

- Treat workers with respect, dignity and politeness at all times.
- Ensure that management structures across the organisation and reporting lines within work teams are clear. This will help workers know who they are accountable to and where they can go for help with work problems.
- Ensure workers have an up to date role or position description, which includes the role purpose, reporting relationships and the key duties expected of them.
- Have a direct supervisor provide a worker feedback on their performance as they need to be familiar with the requirements of the role and how well the worker is meeting their task demands.

- Use performance reviews as a time to provide positive and constructive advice for future performance, including opportunities for skill development.
- When investigating issues of misconduct, ensure all parties have equal opportunity to respond to allegations.
- Train managers in how to have difficult conversations with their workers (refer to *Tip Sheet 9: Solutions – Poorly managed relationships*).

Managing poor or under performance

- Provide workers evidence for decisions made about their work performance.
- Allow workers to have input in the process (for example, allow workers to respond to issues raised about their work performance).
- Do not focus on placing blame. Instead use this process as an opportunity for learning and improvement.
- Choose the meeting location carefully when having difficult conversations to maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- Inform workers of the consequences of continued poor performance and ensure they are aware of the process used to manage this issue.
- Ensure grievance and complaint handling procedures are applied fairly to all workers.

Provide support

- Practical or emotional support from a supervisor and/or co-worker can have a positive impact on a workers' perception of fairness (refer to *Tip Sheet 7: Solutions – Poor support from supervisors and/or co-workers*).
- Provide and promote an employee assistance program that responds to individual issues or concerns, both work and non-work related.

At the **individual level**, solutions are aimed at assisting individuals to cope or build resilience.

Appropriate activities and assistance to be considered at this level of intervention include:

- corporate induction programs
- access to employee assistance programs
- training about resilience
- health and wellbeing programs
- counselling/therapy for people experiencing distress from sources both in and outside of the workplace.