



Old Myths about Stress

Myth 1 *A little Stress is good for you*

All Stress is bad! Some pressure can be stimulating and motivational; indeed no arousal can be boring or depressing and stressful in itself. Stress is the negative and adverse effects of too much/ or too little arousal.

Myth 2 *Only people who are weak suffer from stress*

Stress can result from a variety of situations. To be aware of your flash points and to take responsibility for your situation is a sign of strength.

Myth 3 *Everyone is affected the same way*

Each person will be different and have different aspirations, self concepts and coping strategies. Each personality has its strengths and shadow side, it's areas of vulnerability, they are just expressed in different ways.

Myth 4 *There is such a thing as a stressful job*

According to HSE there is no such thing as a stressful job. It depends on good selection, training, support and management. However recent research is showing that some jobs, where work-load is high and people are continuously placed in difficult and testing situations, there is a need for a very high level of awareness.

Myth 5 *It is always the employer's fault*

Notwithstanding the legal responsibility that employers have with a duty of care, employees also have a responsibility for themselves, their physical and mental health, and to avoid causing harm to their work colleagues.

Myth 6 *Combating workplace stress will cost an organisation money*

Quite the reverse is true. The costs of work-related stress are so high that any action to save these costs will have an immediate positive effect on the bottom line. Somerset County Council saved £1,900,000 over two years by introducing an effective stress reduction programme.

Myth 7 *Home life and work life are separate*

The pressures that build up to cause stress can have an accumulating dimension. Although difficult situations in one area can be counter balanced by positives in the other, negative effects in one will lower the threshold in the other.

Myth 8 *Legislation is there to penalise business*

The Health and Safety at Work Act and other legislation are there to protect *all* who work in a company. They gives guidance as to what should be done. Failure will affect company profits, less through Court fines but more through loss of productivity and staff costs.