



Purpose of discussion

Stress can be caused by one thing, but it can also be a build-up of smaller things both at home and in the workplace. This can make it hard to identify and explain to others. Many of us will not talk about stress and the impact it may be having, so it's important we recognise the signs to know when we need to offer, or ask for support.

Kick-off the discussion

Within Network Rail

- 22.3% of known absence relates to mental health
- 38.5% of our employees have self-reported experiencing a mental health condition

Stress is personal and will be different from one person to another. It is important we recognise adjustments we can make to reduce stress in the workplace, but remember that there are some things that we cannot influence and change, and accepting these will help us to stay focussed and productive.

Discussion points

Use the questions below to facilitate discussion. Remember, you don't have to have all the answers – the role of the facilitator is to create an engaging discussion where everyone identifies and commits to solutions.

| Discussion points | Supporting notes |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Think of a time when you felt stressed, were you able to pinpoint the cause? | <p>Stress isn't necessarily the cause of one thing. It can build up over time and be a combination of many things in your life. Recognising triggers can help to prevent stress in the future, or deal with it before it comes a big issue.</p> <p>Some triggers of stress include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feeling under a lot of pressure• Coping with big changes• Worrying about something• Having little or no control over the outcome of a situation• Having responsibilities that feel overwhelming• Not having enough work, activities or change in your life |
| 2. How can I tell if myself or a colleague is stressed? | <p>When we become stressed hormones are released in the body. This is an automatic reaction that prepares us for a 'fight or flight' response.</p> <p>Signs and symptoms will vary from person to person, but can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problems sleeping• Loss of appetite• Difficulties concentrating• Mood swings• Headaches• Racing thoughts• Pain |



Discussion points

3. How does stress make you feel, especially when in the workplace?

Supporting notes

Ask people to consider dealing with stress in their working environment... Do they feel it impacts the delivery of work? Does it impact the safety of themselves or others?

Stress can take many forms as people deal with stress in different ways. Making small adjustments can help you to feel more in control and better able to handle pressure in the workplace.

You could consider:

- Writing down a list of things you have to do, put them in order of importance and complete the most urgent first
- Don't do too much at once, this will put extra pressure on you to get things done




Additional support

For further support visit the health and wellbeing pages on [Safety Central](#)

Speak to your line manager who can contact OH Assist, our occupational health provider for advice and recommendations.
0845 608 0656

Contact the Employee Assistance Programme – a 24/7 confidential advice and support line
0800 358 4858

You can also contact an external support service;

| Support service | What support can be offered? | How to contact |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | 24/7 confidential support line for mental health and any other concerns | 08457 90 90 90 www.samaritans.org |
|  | Guidance, resources and educational materials | 08457 660 163 www.mind.org.uk |
|  | Out of hours emotional support line (6pm – 11pm) | 08457 767 8000 www.sane.org.uk |