

# Resilience in the Workplace

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When  
you can't control  
what's happening,  
challenge yourself  
to control the  
way you respond  
to what's happening.  
That's where  
your power is!

*TheMindsJournal.com*

# What do we mean by ‘Resilience’?

“The ability to withstand or even respond positively to stressors, crises or difficulties”

*NICE*

“The ability to respond effectively to pressures, bounce back from set-backs and find the strength to overcome adversity”

*Centre for Resilience, Silver Lining Training*

“The ability to recover quickly from illness or change”

*National Workplace Wellbeing Charter*

## Confidence

Having feelings of competence, effectiveness in coping with stressful situations and strong self esteem are inherent to feeling resilient. The frequency with which individuals experience positive and negative emotions is also key.

## Purposefulness

Having a clear sense of purpose, clear values, drive and direction help individuals to persist and achieve in the face of setbacks.

## RESILIENCE

## Social Support

Building good relationships with others and seeking support can help individuals overcome adverse situations, rather than trying to cope on their own.

## Adaptability

Flexibility and adapting to changing situations which are beyond our control are essential to maintaining resilience. Resilient individuals are able to cope well with change and their recovery from its impact tends to be quicker.

# Benefits of a Resilient Workforce

- To manage pressure effectively and reduce stress
- Improve performance and enhance health
- Strengthen the ability to respond positively to challenges
- Develop flexible thinking, behaviours and attitudes

# What the Research Tells Us

- Coping is not resilience
- It's not all nature
- We can learn and develop it
- We all have it some of the time
- It's about support and staying connected
- It's about meaning and creating purpose
- We don't necessarily transfer resilience from one situation to another

# Measuring Resilience

Not dissimilar to measuring Stress...

- Sickness days
- Staff turnover
- Workplace disputes
- Rate of error
- Timekeeping
- Achievement of deadlines

# Why bother with it all...?

**"Employers need to take urgent action to promote the mental and physical health of their employees if they are to ensure the competitiveness of their companies in difficult, as well as prosperous, economic times."**

Alex Gourlay,

Chief Executive of the Health and Beauty Division Alliance, Boots,  
Chairman of the Business in the Community Business Action for Working Well Campaign



# Emotional Wellbeing in your Team



Why is team emotional wellbeing important?

The BITC (Business in the Community) Workwell Model shows the business benefits of proactively improving wellbeing and building resilience.



## Higher Productivity:

- Poor emotional wellbeing also creates 'presenteeism'.
- Presenteeism is when an employee attends work but is not as productive as they could be because they are not well or engaged.
- This is estimated to cost 1.5 times the cost of sickness absence.

*(Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, 2007)*



## Better engagement:

A Government report concluded that “if employee engagement and the principles that lie behind it were more widely understood, if good practice was more widely shared... we could see a step change in workplace performance and in employee well-being”

(McLeod and Clarke, 2009)



## Better Attendance:

The average cost of sickness absence is £692 per employee per year, rising to £784 in the public sector, £754 in the manufacturing and production sector and £741 in the non-profit sector.

*(CIPD, 2009)*



## Better Retention and Recruitment:

The average recruitment cost of filling an employee vacancy is £6,125, including costs such as recruitment and selection, temporary cover, redundancy payments, training and induction.

*(CIPD 2009)*



## Better Brand Image:

Companies in the FTSE 100 who show best practice reporting on employee health and wellbeing show a higher total shareholder return than average – 61% instead of 51%

*(BITC/Ipsos MORI, 2010)*

# Ten Ways to Build Resilience

- **Develop a strong sense of purpose.**  
Resilient people have a strong sense of purpose and meaning for why they are doing what they're doing. They are guided by a vision that gives meaning to their work and lives.
- **Develop a healthy sense of control.**  
The emphasis is on "personal control". Resilient people focus their energy on those events that they have influence over, rather than situations beyond their control. They accept circumstances that cannot be changed. Entrepreneur, Tim Baumgartner, an independent sales rep who sold electronics to Circuit City, was blind-sided when the company filed for bankruptcy. Within months, however, he launched an online consumer electronics store. "Whining and complaining about how you find yourself here doesn't help," Baumgartner says. "I've refocused my energy on the start-up."
- **See change as a challenge or opportunity.**  
Resilient people tend to see change as a challenge to confront and overcome, rather than an unbearable problem or a stress to avoid. They also see change as an opportunity for self-reflection, learning and growth.
- **Develop self-confidence.**  
Resilient people have a healthy concept of self. They believe in themselves and their strength and ability.

- **Be optimistic.**  
Maintain a hopeful outlook, expecting good things to happen. People with an optimistic outlook do better at managing stress and chaos. When you catch yourself thinking negatively, challenge yourself to reframe the situation more positively. For example, when you open your 401K statement, think: “If I change my investment strategy, I’ll do better” instead of “I’ll never recoup my losses.”
- **Build good social support.**  
Resilient people rely on others to help them survive tough times. Developing a good social support network of friends and family can help lessen the impact of stress in our lives.
- **Become flexible and adaptable.**  
Resilient people are able to adapt to new people and situations quickly. They can let go of the old way of doing things and quickly learn new procedures and skills. They can also tolerate high levels of ambiguity and uncertainty in situations.
- **Use sound problem-solving strategies.**  
Resilient people use their logical and creative mind to map out sound problem-solving strategies. They set realistic goals and outline a specific plan of action.
- **Have a good sense of humour.**  
Research shows that humour can lessen the impact of stress. Resilient people are playful and curious. They find the humour in rough situations, and can laugh at themselves.
- **Stay healthy.**  
A good diet and regular physical activity helps alleviate stress. Resilient people take care of their body and mind. They exercise regularly, take time for relaxing activities, and maintain balance in their lives.



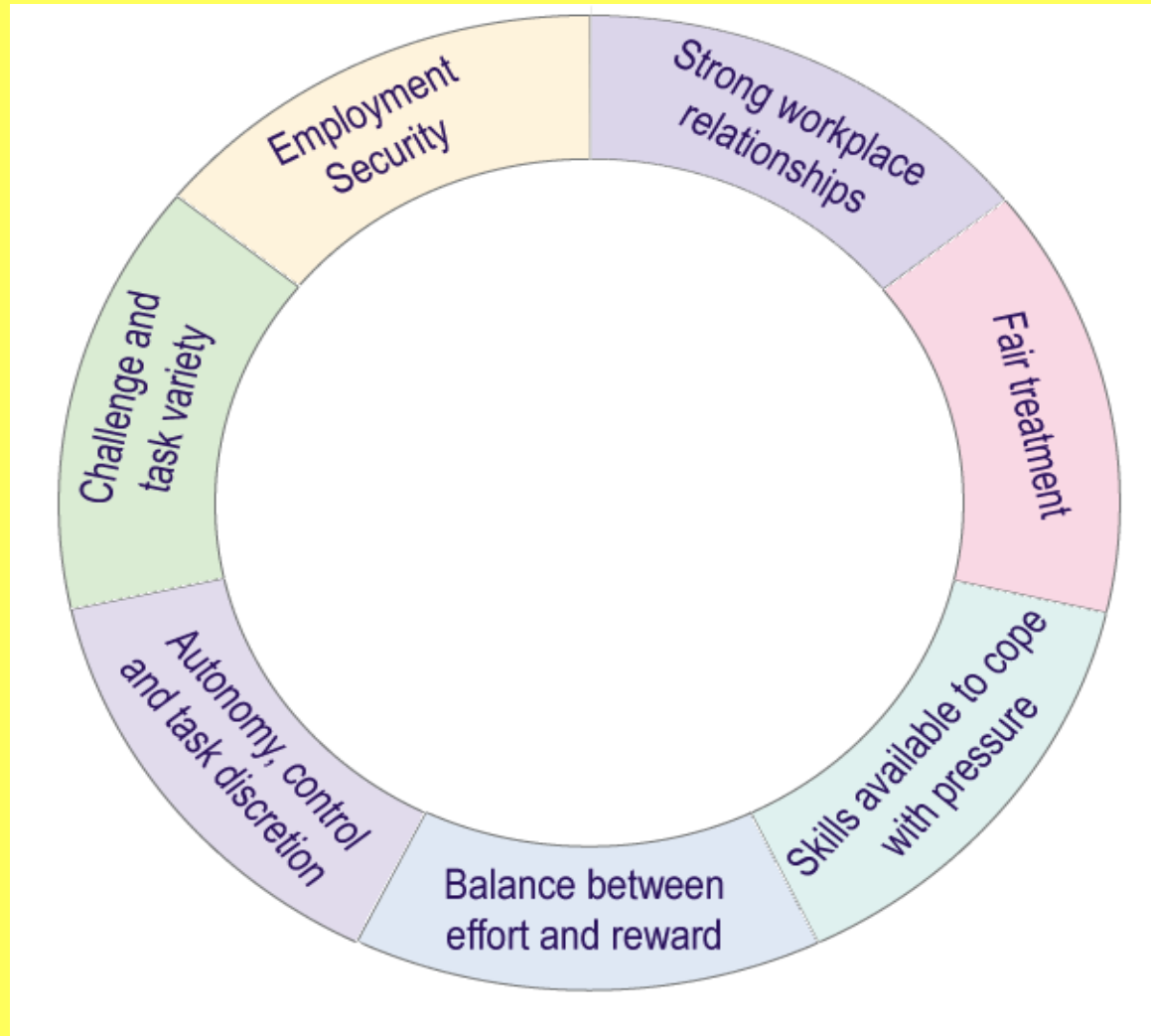
# Achieving the results...

- It's important to consider whether your team members are fully equipped with the skills to be able to do their job.
- Although giving additional responsibility to team members is often positive, it will only be so if the team feel that they have the skills to deal with that responsibility.
- You can assess this through one-to-ones, or performance development reviews.
- Providing the skills isn't necessarily about training programmes, but could involve learning through mentoring or shadowing more experienced team members.
- Remember to consider personal skills as well as technical skills - this is where stress management training and health promotion programmes can be very effective.

# Putting it in to Practice

- The Work Foundation introduced the concept of 'Good Work' in a report they produced in 2008.
- 'Good Work' referred to a working environment that was healthy psychologically. This means that the work environment (or conditions under which we work) has an impact on the way we feel, and in turn this has an impact on our body chemistry (for instance our mental health and wellbeing).
- This report highlighted that 'good work' is characterised by seven features.

# The 'Good Work' Model



# Balance between effort & reward

- Reward means what you do to make your team members feel recognised for their work and their efforts.
- Although pay will always be an important reward, reward also includes non-financial recognition such as you giving praise, thanks for a good job done, gaining visible recognition from peers and senior management and even being offered development opportunities.
- In fact, research has shown that many employees rate these types of non-financial rewards much more highly, and therefore as more effective, than pay.

# Autonomy, control & task discretion

- This includes allowing your team members control over what work they do, when they do it and how they do it (how much will depend on the specific job role).
- It doesn't mean you allow employees to do whatever they like and therefore potentially lose control over your outputs as a team, but it does mean you taking a step back and allowing yourself to trust in your team and know that they will do a good job.
- It also means including your team in decision making wherever possible, and adopting a more consultative approach. Getting the opinions of your team members can be helpful to you, and also ensure that your team feel involved and valued.

# Challenge & task variety

- Employees need to be given the opportunity to conduct work that has some kind of variety - therefore the opposite of monotonous and repetitive work.
- Employees also need to feel challenged in their work.
- You may want to think about giving your team members a different but related task to do to build a new skill, encourage them to learn a new skill, or encouraging them to solve their own issues and problems rather than always deferring to you.

# Employment Security

- Although the concept of a 'job for life' is seen as a thing of the past and is not usually now an expectation of employees; employees do need security in terms of a sense of belonging in their workplace - feeling comfortable in their organisation.
- If employees are to feel secure, you can demonstrate how their job fits in with the goals and objectives of the wider organisation; and try to make them feel an important part of it.

# Strong workplace relationships

- In the Work Foundation report, this is referred to as social capital, and seen as the basis of the trust between you and your team.
- This means good relationships between you and your team and also strong and effective relationships between employees and the employer - for instance through a union or a works council.



# Fair treatment for all

- Fair and equal treatment for all employees is key for 'good work'.
- This means creating an environment where bullying, harassment, violence and discrimination are not tolerated and where there are adequate policies in place to deal with any situations that do arise, and which encourage fair and equal treatment to all employees.
- This would include provision for flexible working, fair selection practices, redundancy processes, pay and benefits, bonus payments, maternity and paternity leave, retirement provisions and so on.

# Achieving the results...

**Running through all 7 of those subjects is the need for:**

- Strong, ethical workplace relationships
- A collaborative and communicative management style and organisation culture
- A culture in which learning and development is encouraged.

# Manager Impact...

Research has shown that when managers feel under too much pressure or stress, their behaviour changes. In stressful situations managers could:

- Panic openly and/or become 'frantic'
- Blow issues out of proportion
- Not want to talk to or engage with team members
- Become snappy and short with team members in phone, email or face-to-face conversations
- Become intolerant of employees asking questions or interrupting
- Ignore emails or not respond quickly
- Lose their temper and show anger
- Have unpredictable moods
- Be overly critical of team member's work
- Be inconsiderate of team member's workloads when setting deadlines or passing on work

Do any of these ring a bell? Have you behaved like this towards your team members when you are feeling stressed?

# Pressure v Stress

## Pressure

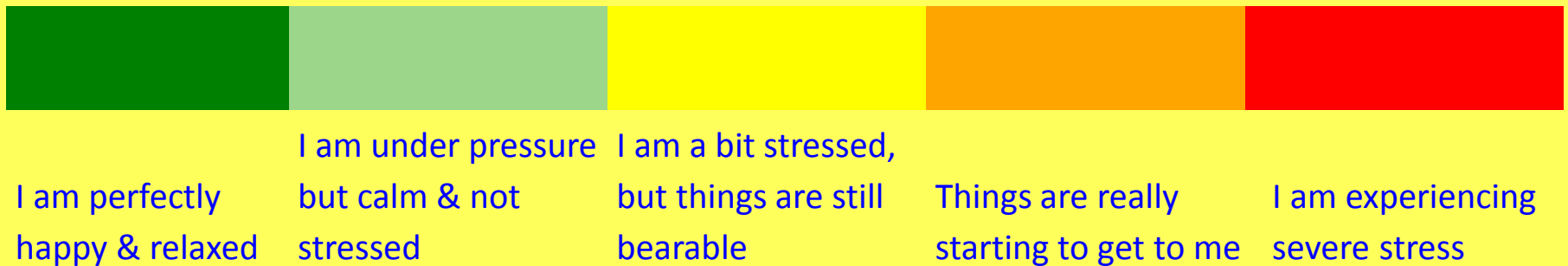
- Increased adrenaline
- Focus
- Desire to achieve
- Motivation “buzz”
- Optimum performance
- Energy
- Enjoyment
- Clear thoughts
- Intensely creative
- Deep concentration
- Decisive

## Stress

- Poor concentration
- Focus narrows
- Brain overloaded
- Distracted
- Anxious
- Negative thoughts
- Inability to deal with information
- Impaired decision making
- Lack of creativity
- Unable to handle demands
- Self doubt / lack of confidence

# Where are you right now...?

## My personal wellbeing and resilience chart



Take care and have a nice day.



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