

5 steps to avoiding stress at work



Introduction

The following is taken from our report on stress related absences. You can read the entire paper [here](#).

Although stress is inevitable, in some instances it is avoidable. Here we give you five tips on how to minimise stress.

Employers have a responsibility to promote the occupational wellbeing of staff. It is advantageous for morale and the smooth running of the school to keep motivation and attendance high.

“An important way to prevent stress is to identify the early signs of it and address them immediately.”

Some of the things to look out for include insomnia, a feeling of being overwhelmed with work, negative or depressed feelings, self-blame or disappointment, loss of motivation, mood swings, change in eating habits and increased smoking, drinking or drug taking.

We suggest five key steps to manage levels of stress thereby avoiding stress related absence:



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1.

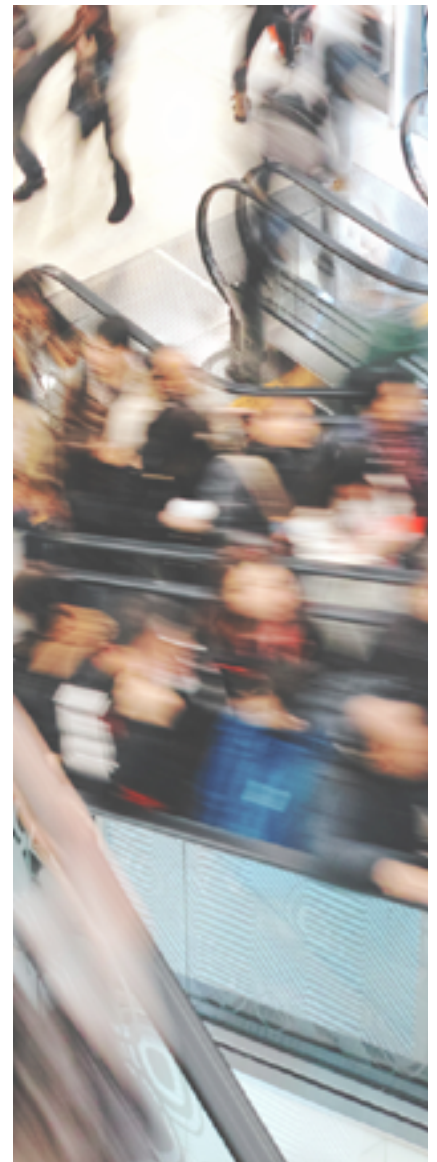
Avoid unnecessary stress

Stress can't always be avoided, and it isn't healthy or appropriate to shirk responsibilities.

However there will be a surprising amount of stressors in your life that can be eliminated. For example if there are individuals in your social life or work life who cause unnecessary stress, avoid them.

If there are other things in your environment which you find stressful, such as traffic on a particular route to work, try and avoid them too.

You must also know your limits and not take on any more than you can cope with. It's important to know when to say "no".



2.

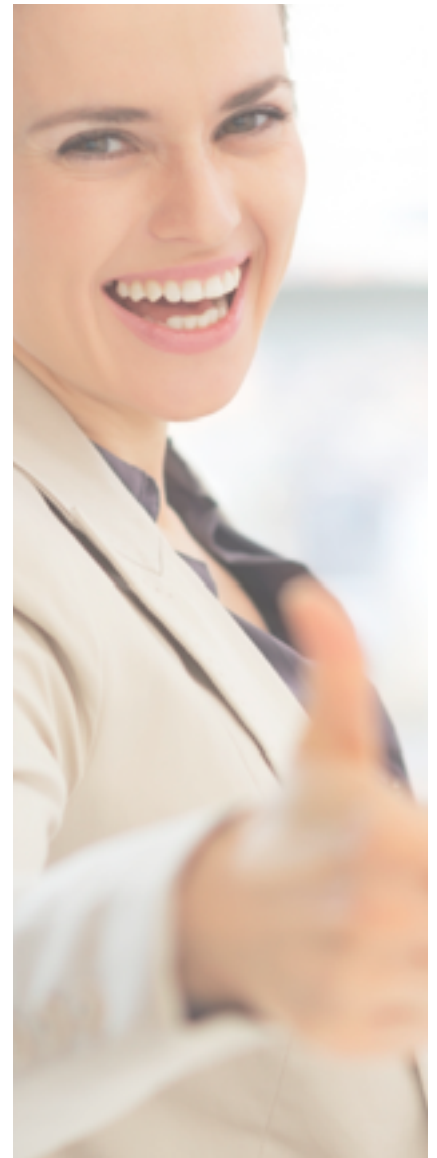
Attitude changes

Arguably the toughest but most important way to eliminate stress is through a change in attitude.

Often you can't change or eliminate the thing that's making you stressed, so you need to change the way you deal with it.

This is a technique that counselling or cognitive behavioural therapy will teach you.

Some of the ways we can do this is by reframing problems and looking at the bigger picture, adjusting your standards by not always seeking perfection and above all, focussing on the positives.



3.

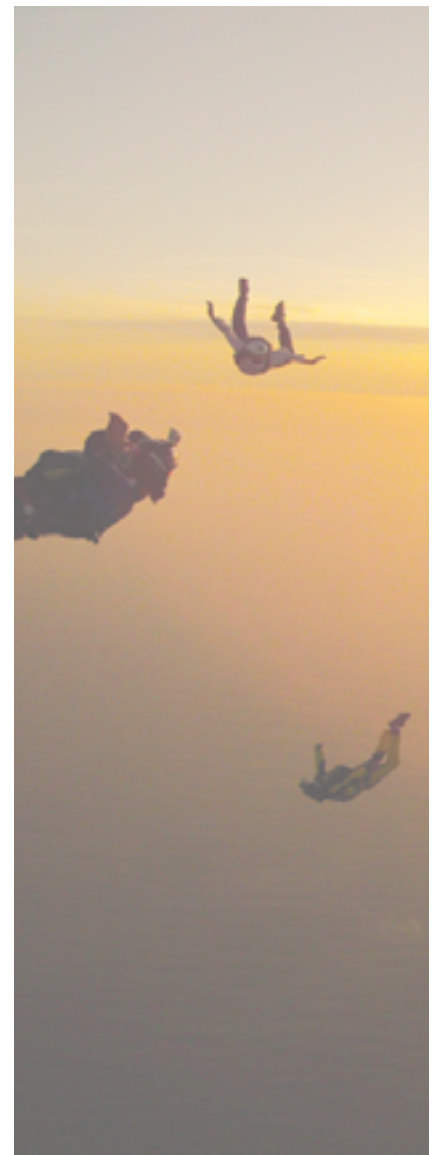
Behavioural changes

It's important to accept that not everything is within our control.

We need to let these things go and concentrate on being assertive with respect to the things that are within our control.

For instance express your feelings rather than bottling them up, which may include speaking to your line manager or HR Manager or even seeking counselling or therapy.

It is also beneficial to concentrate on effective time management to ensure you aren't stretched too thin or running behind schedule.



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4.

Work / life balance

It's something of a cliché but a work / life balance is important to our mental and physical health.

Extra-curricular activities like socialising and exercising are important, and if you have a hobby such as gardening, art, sport or something hands on like restoring a car, you should try to do that as regularly as possible.

In short, do something every day that makes you happy.



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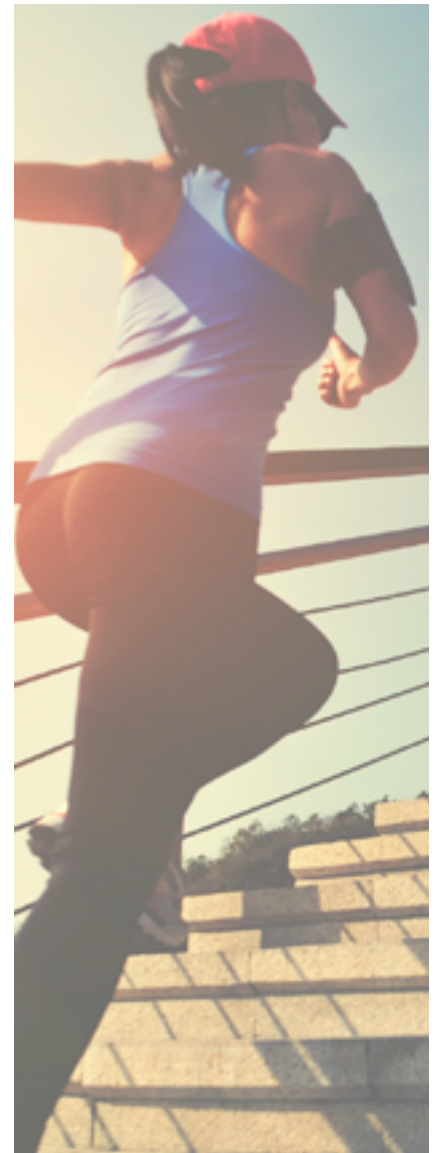
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5.

A healthy lifestyle

A healthy lifestyle will support your body with any physiological reactions to the stress you encounter.

Eating healthily, reducing the amount of nicotine, caffeine or alcohol you consume will help, as will getting the necessary amount of sleep and exercising.



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Thank you
