

UWTSD London Campus

Word Count: 2000 + Role play

Module Title: Problem Solving and Decision Making

STRESS IN THE WORK-PLACE

Module Code: BMSW4004

Student ID: 1917703

Date: 04/01/2021

INDEX

CONTENTS

- 1) Introduction.
- 2) Definition of Stress in the workplace, including scopes and impact.
- 3) Analysis of the information on the identified problem, helping to inform the decision – making process.
- 4) Approach of a range of alternatives and solutions to the problem.
- 5) Making a technique to evaluate a range of solutions to identify the most appropriate option.
- 6) Development of a plan for implementing the solution.
- 7) Communication of the plan to stakeholders.
- 8) Review appropriate monitoring and review techniques to ensure successful implementation of the solution.
- 9) Referencing

1) INTRODUCTION

This individual report will introduce and identify 'stress' as one of the most common problems in the work-based. Besides talking about stress as a problem in the workplace, this document emphasises the marketing sector as my own experience. The information in the identified cause will be analysed to then be able to help inform the decision-making process. Recognised problem-solving tools and techniques will be applied to identify and propose a range of solutions in order to choose the most appropriate option to tackle the problem. The fishbone diagram will be exposed to a better understanding of the problem and its respective causes, thereby effectively solving it. Finally, a plan will be developed to implement the right solution to stress in the workplace.

2) DEFINE A COMPLEX PROBLEM IN THE WORKPLACE INCLUDING ITS SCOPE AND IMPACT

Work-stress's appearance occurs due to the excessive pressure of labour demand and the ability to fulfil it efficiently, consequently making them feel frustrated, spreading negativity, reducing moral so does productivity considerably affecting the work environment. It is one of the common chronic problems for professionals in the workplace. According to the Force Survey shown by HSE (2020), 828,000 workers were suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety in Great Britain in 2019/2020, causing around 17.9 million working days lost. This means that the number of sick leave workers is exceptionally high. However, workers are less likely to take time off for illness when they do not have paid sick leave, making them vulnerable and forcing them to continue their jobs. Workplace stress has an adverse impact on our health and well being. The combination of deficiency of labour control, family or work conflict and financial instability are frequent stressors. Inclusive having an immense psychological impact adversely altering our daily lives.

3) ANALYSE INFORMATION IN THE IDENTIFIED PROBLEM TO HELP INFORM THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

To adequately manage the sensation of stress and negative inhibit emotions, the stress in the workplace should be recognised as a contradictory influence on life. Pattani (2020) states that "Stress causes physical changes in the body that can affect nearly every organ system." Some of them are heart disease, muscle tension, gastrointestinal issues and even associated with the decrease of memory and learning. This implies a significant deterioration in health if nothing is done about it. Once professionals in their workplace recognise suffering from a harmful level of stress, the unfounded causes and triggers need to be identified as soon as possible, allowing professionals to realise how their body responds to this group of stress.

In contrast, according to Perkbox (2020), one of the top industry most likely to experience stress, with 85% is Media Marketing alongside those telecoms. Baker (2020) claims that "Cause number one with a 37% is 'work-related office politics'". It refers to interpersonal relationships in the work area. High-powered figures such as the management team, with their workers, create a lower environment due to high authoritarian power, the pressure to perform excellently, work overload and work schedule. Consequently, due to lack of communication, workers build toxic relationships and a problematic work atmosphere generating a vast trigger of disagreements, making employees feel frustrated and reducing workplace satisfaction with the inability to accomplish tasks in the time provided.

The 'lack of interdepartmental communications' is becoming one of the most recurrent causes in the Marketing workplace. Considering that workers are usually divided into teams, creating competition at the end of the month, each group has different sales strategies that will not be shared with other teammates, forming rivalry and envy. According to Katcher (2021), "Inevitably, this results in a reduction in the quality of the products and services provided by the organisation." This means that the company never gives priority to employees, and they will always remain in the background. It negatively impacts their work performance, because, if the team does not reach the objectives or targets, it will directly affect the salary. Worth noting to gain the desired result, the employee had an immense pressure, uncertainty, and obsession with achieving the objectives, thus unable to detach from work once the journey is over.

On the other hand, as a cause of stress already provided, employees who have lost the opportunity to reach the objectives started to create a different atmosphere of missed chances. They will feel overall defeated because it can trigger a staff turnover process, making them think their capacities are undervalued, leading to overthinking and once again, not being able to disconnect from work when the working day has finished.

4) PROPOSE A RANGE OF ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM

The realisation of the Brainstorming technique practised in class helps me comprehend, how to identify possible alternatives that bring out my creative side; usually, management and employees try to find their roots in the work-related cause of stress. In agreement with Willkomm (2018), "The brainstorming session helped us identify specific ideas to communicate the goals and benefits better, some brainstorming sessions end with strong results, while others may need more time." That means the effectiveness of implementing this technique, bringing together and contributing different opinions with a common purpose. This way, employees can participate honestly, without fear that their ideas will be judged. A list of approaches will be provided below, which could work regardless of how unconventional they may seem.

- Training self-awareness, producing the ability to handle all kinds of actions, sensations and feelings.
- Engaging in effective listening, developing trust and showing interest.
- Being receptive in a positive way with the feedback received that may oppose from the own.
- Stay focused on what requires to be performed, getting rid of distractions, prioritising what is worthy.
- Taking breaks fundamental to avoid mental fatigue and to keep good performance during the workday.
- Utilise vacation time wisely to improve better mental health and productivity at work.
- Receive some support from a qualified professional person improving thus in decision-making and life quality.
- Develop healthy solutions like working out a few times a week to release stress and fill up with energy.
- Learn how to relax, such as doing the meditation technique, which is a great way to help handle stress and minimise anxiety.
- Encourage social activities to keep a pleasant mood while connecting with others.
- Recognition in the workplace, so the employees feel motivated and valuable.
- Create a quiet time is crucial to stay away from continuous stimulations and renew stamina.
- Economic remuneration plays a vital role because it creates enthusiasm and motivation towards the employees.

5) DECISION-MAKING TECHNIQUE TO EVALUATE A RANGE OF SOLUTIONS TO IDENTIFY THE MOST APPROPRIATE OPTION.

The cause and effect diagram, also known as a Fishbone or Ishikawa diagram, will be used to graphically demonstrate the examination results in steps, recognise the problem, and analyse it in detail: who is affected, when and where it happens. Conforming to Hayes (2020), "The purpose of the Ishikawa diagram is to allow management to determine which issues have to be addressed in order to gain or avoid a particular event." This means that the diagram permits identifying some inputs and outputs before the root causes, thus taking the appropriate measures to tackle the issue.

Observe these following steps to solve the Stress problem in the workplace with Fishbone diagram :

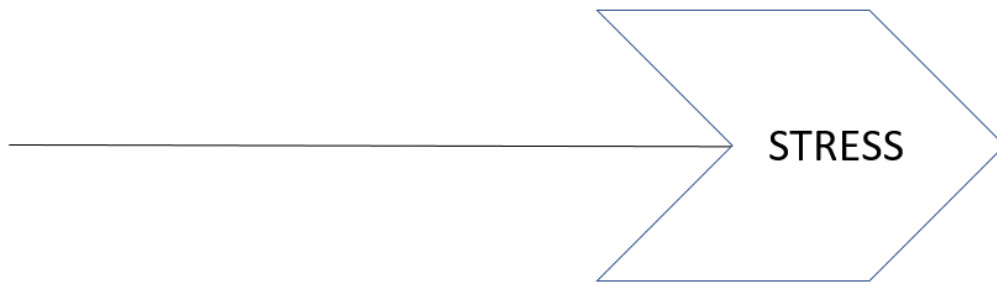


Figure 1.

Figure 1. The Fishbone diagram is related to stress in the workplace in the Marketing area.

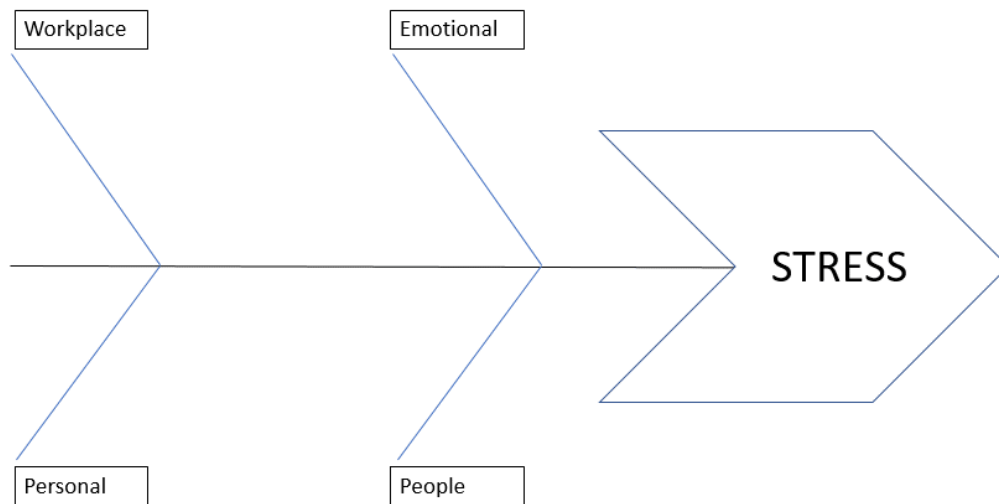


Figure 2.

Figure 2. The Fishbone diagram could identify four significant factors representing the main categories of potential causes in each line; Emotional, Personal, Workplace and People.

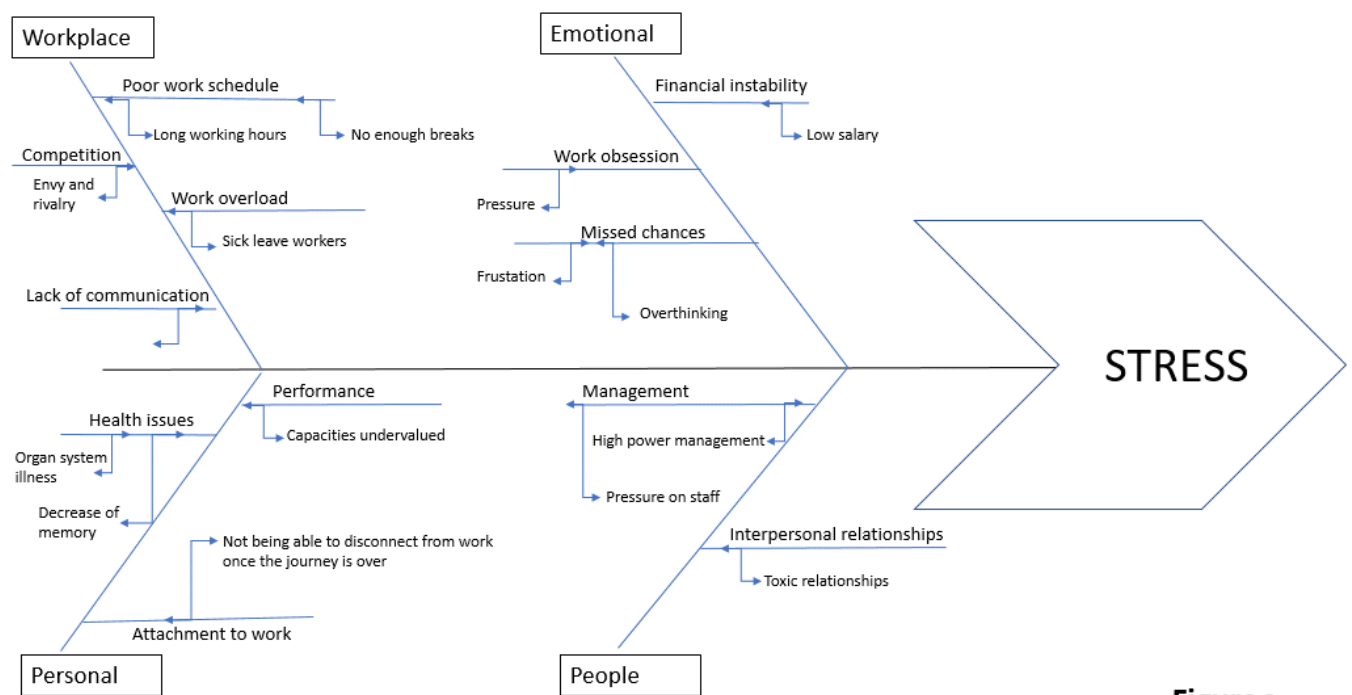


Figure 3.

Figure 3. A thorough examination of each factor was made, specifying 'causes of causes', adding more spine lines.

Emotional is the first category to be analysed, including possible factors contributing to the problem, such as financial instability, family conflicts, or work obsession. Consequently, creating a spine line of frustration and overthinking by the missed opportunities.

The workplace is the second factor that contributes to the appearance of stress. Within this category, factors such as work schedule, work overload, meagre environment and lack of communication are established. Respectively, the subcategories of long working hours and breaks, reduced satisfaction and inability to complete tasks are divided into spine lines.

Personal ambit is the third factor involved, which is divided into four causes. The first cause is the deficiency of labour control. Following this, the appearance of health issues that contains sub-causes such as organ system illness and decrease of memory. Performance is the third cause analysed, where capacities are undervalued, and finally, the attachment to work, not being able to disconnect from it once the working day is over.

As the last category provided is the influence of people. Lack of interpersonal relationships and high-powered management put pressure on staff, creating toxic relationships, thus causing staff turnover.

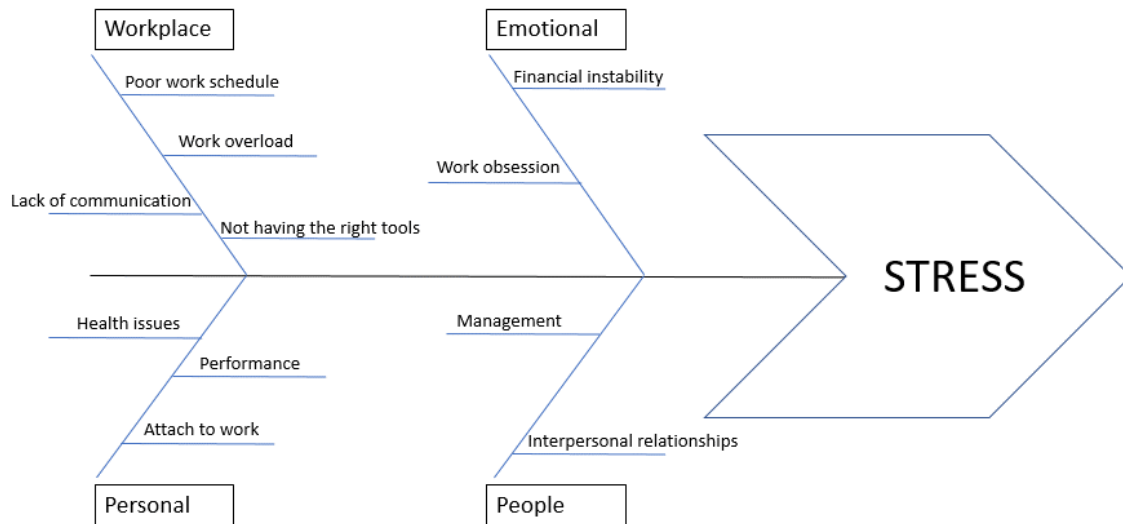


Figure 4.

Figure 4. Regarding the Labour Force Survey, "British adults in employment – a staggering 79% commonly experience work-related stress, making work-related stress the most common form of pressure in the UK." (Perkbox, 2020) Therefore, it is evident that measures must be taken to achieve a decrease in it. An example of a solution to this problem was implemented in my workplace 'Bespokeprofessionals Limited', where one of the Marketing sales sides adopted the Fishbone diagram to identify the various potential causes of stress. In the abridged diagram shown above, the various main factors such as the workplace, poor schedule, emotional, financial instability, personal, performance, people, and interpersonal relationships, among other factors, were identified. The team then carried a fast evaluation to conclude how often the potential causes occurred. Based on that data, the team presented multiple fronts to increase motivation and expectation, thus exceeding sales and becoming a qualified team development, which resulted in improvements for the company to reduce stress.

6) DEVELOP A PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION

Based on the four factors that were identified:

1. **Emotional:** It has been decided to consult a psychological professional for the realisation of therapies within the company and thus be able to deal with the internal conflict and successfully have better self-management, being able to create confidence and security.
2. **Workplace:** It was determined to hold specific meetings to know the worker's rights, making a detailed description of the contract and job position specifying how many hours to work per day and what is the real function of each role. Once all this is clarified, employees will be allowed to work one day a week from home to achieve more optimal results.
3. **Personal:** While conflicting skills and legal rights knowledge are sorted out, hard work will be done to reduce the worries created by stress. A general medical examination will be ordered to ensure that stress's physical symptoms are not causing a significant health problem. The implementation of physical exercise and meditation two to three times a week will be crucial to face this cause.
4. **People:** A cultural outing will be proposed for the whole team to interact more with each other, thus creating a stronger bond between the workers and a good and comfortable work environment.

After implementing this plan, in around one month, once the work situation has been solved by working fewer hours, it will be possible to work much better handling stress, thus improving interpersonal relationships. These measures will continue to be implemented in order to enhance job satisfaction and previous performance of workers.

7) COMMUNICATE THE PLAN TO STAKEHOLDERS

For these measures to be successful, a communication plan will be included for each interested party, with the prior development of short and long-term objectives and goals, thus meeting the company's requirements.

The implementation of weekly emails will be carried out and thus be updated at all times of the company's current situation and employees, eventually, scheduling meetings to increase confidence and propose ideas to maintain a healthy environment.

8) ASSESS APPROPRIATE MONITORING AND REVIEW TECHNIQUES TO ENSURE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOLUTION

Exhaustive monitoring of the previous measures will be carried out annually, reviewing the progress of the goals achieved. Therefore, it should be ensured that a prior record is kept each end of the month, using weekly checklists to guarantee the plan's effectiveness. With the frequent control and appropriate communication throughout the working hours, the proposed measures will achieve their objectives in combating and reducing the stress problem identified notably.

9) REFERENCES

Baker, 2020, '*Work-related office politics*' and '*lack of interdepartmental communications*' are now the biggest causes of stress for UK employees, visited 23 December 2020, ['Work-related office politics' and 'lack of interdepartmental communications' are now the biggest causes of stress for UK employees - Employer News](#)

Hayes, 2020, *Ishikawa Diagram*, visited 30 December 2020, [Ishikawa Diagram Definition \(investopedia.com\)](#)

HSE, 2020. *Health and Safety at Work. Britain 2020 Statistics Summary*, visited 23 December 2020, [Health and safety statistics 2020 \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

Pattani, 2020. *Sleepless nights, hair loss and cracked teeth: pandemic stress takes its toll*, visited 27 December 2020, [How Chronic Stress Impacts People During the COVID-19 Pandemic | The Mighty](#)

Perkbox, 2020. *The 2020 UK workplace stress survey*, visited 23 December 2020, [The 2020 UK workplace stress survey | Perkbox](#)

Willkomm, 2020. *5 TIPS FOR BRAINSTORMING IN A VIRTUAL WORLD*, visited 29 December 2020, [5 Tips for brainstorming in a virtual world | Drexel Goodwin](#)