

## Stress in the Workplace

Stress is the consequence of any action, situation, or force (stressor) that places physical and/or psychological demands on an individual. Stress can be either positive; helping to concentrate, focus, perform at peak efficiency, or negative; keeping a person “keyed up”, and unable to perform or relax.

All stress is not bad. An individual’s attitude determines whether or not a stressor is perceived as positive or negative. Conversion of negative stress to positive stress (eustress) converts stress energy into constructive activity.

Stress-related Workers’ Compensation claims account for nearly 15% of all occupational disease claims, and cost over \$150 billion annually in direct and indirect costs. Stress is a significant causative factor in many occupational injuries. Both the frequency and severity of stress-related Workers’ Compensation claims are expected to escalate in the future.

Adverse effects of stress are definite and recognizable, and affect both the worker and the organization.

Stress-related Workers’ Compensation claims are generally more expensive (twice the cost of an average physical injury claim), result in more lost time workdays, are litigated more frequently (as often as five times that of physical injury claims), and take twice as long to resolve as physical injury claims.

### Worker Effects

- Accident Proneness
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Aggression
- Anxiety
- Apathy
- Boredom
- Burnout
- Depression
- Diminished Decision making Ability
- Eating Disorders
- Emotional Instability
- Fatigue
- Frustration
- Health Breakdown
- Insecurity
- Insomnia
- Irresponsibility
- Lack of Self-Control

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