



Reduce the Cost of Staff Absence to Improve Your Results

When budgets are tight, of course you'll be looking at cost control. So is there anything that's worth investing in?

Much of your success depends upon you and your staff, so the worst thing for you is an increase in absences. First, some things you need to know about absences:-

- The average cost per head per year is £659 (CIPD 2007)
- This is significantly increased for long-term absences
- The number 1 cause of long-term absence is stress
- The number 2 cause of long-term absence is back pain

Now for some questions for you. Do you think staff will be under more or less stress during tough times? Do absences increase during recession? What impact could that have on your bottom-line? What can you do to reduce staff absence?

I'm sure you know the answers to the first 3 questions, but what about the last? And if you are a business owner, remember that the fewer staff you employ, the bigger the impact that absences will have.

Here are some tips.....

Spotting the Symptoms of Stress

The most common symptoms of stress are :-

- Negative change in mood / behaviour
- Deterioration in relationships with colleagues
- Long hours without achieving more
- Indecisiveness
- Increased absenteeism, drinking, smoking, compulsive eating
- Poor performance (more mistakes, missed deadlines, reluctance to face up to / prioritise difficult tasks)

What is Causing the Stress

According to the Health & Safety Executive, there are 6 common causes of stress:-

- **Demands** – lone working, lack of training, fast pace of work, poor environment
- **Control** – lack of control over work activities, non-participation in decision-making
- **Support** – work-life imbalance, lack of support from peers and management
- **Relationships** – bullying, harassment, victimisation
- **Role** – role conflict or ambiguity
- **Change** – new technology, changing market demands, fears about job security / future

How many of these apply to your staff? Can you do anything about them?



How can you reduce absences and prevent long-term sickness?

Extra Dimension and Wave of Life's 'Refresh Your Staff' package can save your business money, by treating the physical effects of stress AND coaching individuals and their managers in dealing with pressure at work.

Dealing with the physical impact on the body

It is important to recognise that stress, particularly severe and/or long-term stress, causes **physical** changes to our body – you may notice changes in posture, pain, headaches and insomnia, to name just a few symptoms.

Most people are *not* taught that paying attention to themselves and their internal signals is vital to a happy & healthy life. By not doing so, natural mechanisms that help you listen to or observe your body/mind's subtle cues become inhibited, improperly developed or blocked.

Imagine your mobile phone losing its signal. It is not broken; it has simply lost connection. Wellbeing is not about correction because you are broken. It is about the connection that is gained from your body, spine and brain working in harmony.

Network Spinal Analysis (NSA) deals with the aspects of different body postures, which are in line with different situations we find ourselves in. The "Defence" posture can be identified when you feel "scrunched up". Visually the head, shoulders and upper body are hunched forward and the tailbone is tucked under.

This high-tension stress condition comes about when you have been over stressed and in a constant state of fight or flight. People find that when you are like this you find decision making difficult and things easily get on top of you.

The **treatment** consists of a gentle precise touch to the spine, which cues the brain to move from defence posture and stress physiology to peace, growth, health and wellness. These gentle touches are re-connecting the signals in our nervous system, to enable the body to take care of itself again. Using our training we can shift the patient to a more peaceful physiology, where existing, bound up energy is liberated to create healing and a re-organization of the nervous system.

This allows for greater wellness and quality of life, greater physical ease, adaptability to stress, enhanced life enjoyment and facilitation of constructive life changes. Patients of NSA have reported improvements in a wide range of physical complaints, such as headaches, stiffness, pain, eczema and menstrual cramps along with stress and difficulties sleeping, amongst many others.

The benefits of this are that the individual can cope better with a range of situations, and in fact take on a greater workload more efficiently, without feeling the added stress. It can help bring back the feeling of calm and confidence over the whole body thus removing the need for defence as a response to stress.



Dealing with the practical aspects – issues that cause the stress

The first area to address is what is causing the stress. There are a number of approaches to identifying these causes, at an individual, team and organisational level – and bear in mind that the cause may be you, the leader, or your managers.

The key to success is how to deal with the cause(s).

For Individuals, a period of support, through coaching, will help the employee to understand the causes, remind them of what they need to achieve in their role, and create effective action plans to help them succeed.

For Leaders, and Managers, coaching will help them to understand the impact of stress on employees and how to improve performance in more positive, stress-reduced ways.

For Teams, combining a discovery session with another aspect of training, for example, time management, can be a very effective way of moving the team forward. The insights gained are invaluable for leaders and managers for improving team performance.

Refresh Your Staff package

The package delivers a unique, cost-effective solution to reducing staff absences. For a FREE 1-hour consultation on how '**Refresh Your Staff**' can save you money and increase staff performance, call Extra Dimension on 01202 830047 or Wave of Life on 01202 316430.

About the authors



Alan Adair spent over 20 years in the corporate world and was respected for bringing difficult programs and issues back on track, creating new ways of working and driving people development across lines of business. This included focus on customer service, sales, mergers and acquisitions and partnering.

He has been coaching for over 15 years, specialising in motivation, manager development, confidence, prioritising and managing change. Alan is a Licensed Myers Briggs practitioner and has an Institute of Customer Service Award.

Dr Thomasina Craster has six years experience as a Network Spinal Analysis (NSA) practitioner and three years in full time practice. Having started out as a NSA practitioner in Hertford, London, she now practices in her clinic, Wave Of Life Wellness Centre, situated in Christchurch, Dorset. Dr Craster is fully qualified in traditional chiropractic care and certified in procedures of NSA care. She is registered with the General Chiropractic Council and a member of the United Chiropractic Association.

