Human Resource Management
Stress Management - Focused on Indian
Information Technology Scenario

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Abstract: **The information presented gives a clear picture about the stress undergone by an Indian employee in an Information Technology field. This is based on the current study made on the above topic, and also with the survey taken for the same. It clearly reveals the problem an employee faces in his work because of the stress, how he comes out of it and also about how the organization helps him to overcome such problems.**

Index Terms: **Employee, Stress, SWOT**

I. INTRODUCTION

What is stress? By definitions, stress is said to be a physical, mental, or emotional response to events that causes physical or mental tension. In simple words, stress is an outer force that has a command over inner feelings. The term "stress" was coined by Hans Selye in 1936, who defined it as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change" in attempting to extrapolate his animal studies to humans so that people would understand what he meant. He redefined stress as "The rate of wear and tear on the body". Richard S Lazarus states, "Stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize."

In our observation, stress is a self developed pain by thoughts. When a person expects more than what he actually deserves for his work, or when a person thinks it is beyond his capability, and still continues to do, he gets a mental illness. This illness could be stated as stress. There are chances for this stress to break a person, both, internally and externally, and so, it is wise to adapt the ways to handle it, at the right time.

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II. CLASSIFICATION OF STRESS

The two main classifications of stress are *Eustress* and *Distress.* This classification is shown clearly in fig 1, below.

Eustress is a positive stress. It is caused by continuous success and when expectations become higher. This develops the sense of urgency and alertness needed for survival when confronting threatening situations. And stresses to hold their position becomes more.

Distress is a negative stress. It is caused due to disappointments, failures, threats, embarrassment and other negative experiences. This can result is distrust, rejection, anger and depression which eventually may turn out to get headaches, stomach upsets, rashes, insomnia, ulcers, high blood pressures, etc. And this can have harmful effects over one's physical, mental and spiritual health.
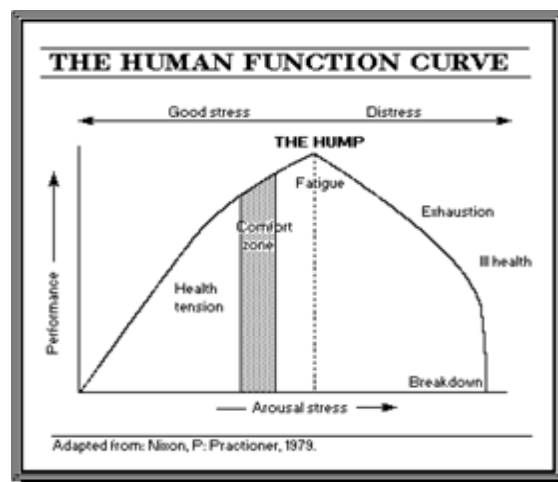

Fig. 1: Eustress and Disstress

III. STATISTICS ON WORK STRESS

- 40% of workers reported their job was very or extremely stressful.
- 25% view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives.
- 29% of workers felt quite a bit or extremely stressed at work.
- 26% of workers said they were "often or very often burned out or stressed by their work".

Three fourths of employees believe that workers have more on-the-job stress than a generation ago. Job stress is more strongly associated with health complaints than financial or family problems.

IV. EMPLOYEE'S STRESS IN EMPLOYER'S PERSPECTIVE

From the employer's perspective, employees are categorized into two classes.

CLASS – I

Class I employee is the one who joins in a job with so many dreams, ideas and enthusiasm on day one. Slowly getting settled down to the environment and becoming flexible to it would approximately take three months. During his six months in the organization, he realizes the ground realities. He comes to know what actually is going around in the organization.

At a year in office, his dreams are shattered. He understands there is no scope to realize his dreams. During year two, he gets frustrated and all types of compromises come on his way. Finally at year three, he realizes his time to leave the organization and resigns the job and gets into a new job with as many dreams, ideas and enthusiasm he had when joining in the previous organization.
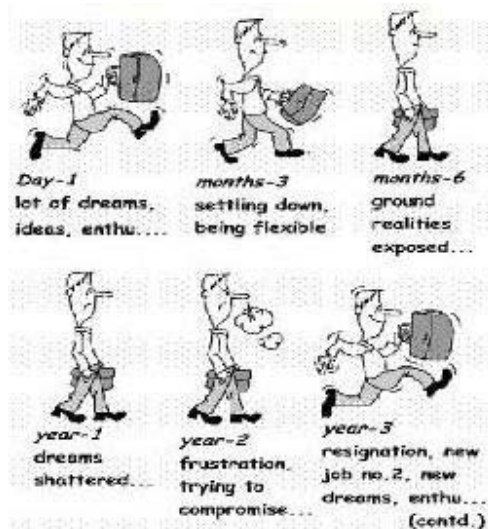

Fig. 2: Employee of Class I

CLASS – II

Class II employee, joins a job with stress, works through out with stress and retires with stress.

When he joins as a fresher/ trainee, he has a fear of loosing his job, if his performance is not as expected. He fears about his incapability and the unsure job.

Once the training is over, and during his experience for less than a year, as an employee he gets into mental stress. He spends more time on mobile phones than at work. His ultimate aim is fun. So when he working hours is less, his work load increases. Eventually he starts blaming that he is overloaded with works comparing with the skilled co-workers.

When the employee has 4-5 years of experience, his aim is no more at fun. He has a better problem to think of, and that is about his marriage. He wishes to marry, for which, he starts to claim for more salary, saying he has got to marry and get settled in life. He develops a self induced stress by this.

When he has a 5+ years of experience and is married, then he is a little better comparatively. Now his problem would be time management. The employee, who has been working through day and night, restricts himself from working for more time, just because he wants to spend more time with his family. So his complain now would again be "I'm overloaded with work".

Table 1: Employees of Class II

Employee	Stress	Reason
Fresher/Trainee	Fear of loosing job	Incapability
Employee for less than 1 year	Mental stress	Wrong comparison with co-workers
4-5 years experience	Self induced stress	Unmarried and wants to settle in life
5+ years of experience	Less concentration	Lack of time management

V. EMPLOYEE'S STRESS IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSPECTIVE

In the employee's view, the main reasons for their stress are listed below.

- ➢ Looming deadline that causes sleepless nights
- ➢ Cantankerous clients
- ➢ Angry boss
- ➢ Failure, mistake, setback or a lean patch
- ➢ Unclear Requirement
- ➢ Change in technology
- ➢ Communication gap

VI. TO TACKLE THE STRESS

When the boss criticizes a work, the employee shouldn't react immediately in an ignoring or denying or deflecting manner. Instead listen to the boss and understand what he is actually trying to tell, accept responsibility for the problem as said by John Adair in his book 'Effective Communication', so that he could be an employee who can correct it. He should take the criticism at face value rather than assuming that the employer has some ulterior motive towards him.

Whether a client makes unreasonable demands or some of the co-workers are bent upon making the employee's life miserable, he is supposed to always employ positive confrontational techniques to come out of the situation successfully, because it is not going to work if he asks those people to stop doing what they are doing. However more positive tactics can certainly help, like approaching the person

with whom he has a problem for a one-on-one discussion, using gentle humour which can ease the situation, and becoming a peacemaker to see if he can solve the issue.

When the employee is passed over for a promotion, sidelined or left out of a plum assignment, he should never lose hope about it and shouldn't take it personally, as that does not mean that he is not talented enough. He should understand that, the decision not to consider him for promotion or new assignment often has more to do with the company's specific selection criteria.

It is easy to blame oneself and focus on his shortcomings and past failures when faced with a setback at work. But that is not going to help him in the least. Instead, seeing that he learnt something from the experience seriously helps. Accepting setbacks are part of life. So, focusing on one's strength helps turning tables on his favour in due course.

VII. To Avoid Stress

➢ To avoid stress, employees at first should be aware of their capability. They should analyze there skill level.
➢ Every employee has to take up a SWOT analysis test to know his/her current level of capability.
➢ Taking up SWOT analysis test also helps to enhance the skills possessed in the current situation.
➢ Planning an effective time management surely helps through the stress. A well planned work is half done. Similarly, a very well managed time avoids most stress.

VIII. Do's And Don'ts To Come Out Of Stress

Do's:
➢ Yoga
➢ Relaxing Exercises
➢ Self distracting
➢ Alternative solutions
➢ Adopting problem solving techniques
➢ Listening to good music of favorite genre
➢ Spending more time with kids and pets
➢ Going for a long walk
➢ Light scented candles
➢ Curling up with a good book
➢ Having a conversation with old friends

Don'ts:
➢ Taking more sugar, chocolates and sweets
➢ Intake of excess caffeine (coffee), sodas, tea
➢ Consuming alcohol
➢ Zoning out for hours in front of the TV or computer
➢ Taking out your stress on others like lashing out, angry outbursts, physical violence
➢ Filling up every minute of the day to avoid facing problems
➢ Chewing tobacco, cocaine, heroin and other drugs
➢ Shopping and gambling sprees

IX. New Ways To Get Rid Of Stress:

These ways are newly adapted by people to overcome stress and one may find it to be silly too.

First key is to laugh. Laughter releases endorphins, and endorphin relieves stress. To laugh, picking up a funny movie or a boring movie and enjoying over it by commenting would be best recommended. Since our body could not differentiate between a real laughter and a fake laughter, we could take advantage over it.

Second key is friend. Choose one best friend of yours. You list out your stressors and ask your friend to do the same. Now, exchange the lists among yourselves. You tell him how you would sort out his stress if you were onto his shoes, and ask him to suggest you the same way. This will make our thinking wider and more solutions could be obtained from it.

Next the third thing is self tuning up. Practice yourself to wake up and get ready, not for work, but for your day. On the drive to work, listen to music, humor, instead of attending office calls over the phone. Take an alternate route to work, as the change in scenery will help you stay alert to the road and keep your mind off the job. Plan your work and work your plan. Devote every paid minute to your job. Deviate from your work plan only when absolutely necessary. Take your allotted breaks. Remember that the opposite of stress is relaxation. Don't work through lunch or coffee breaks. This also means don't think or talk about work during your breaks. Instead of soft drinks, opt for water, juice, or electrolyte infused drinks as dehydration often is the cause of fatigue. Coffee and soft drinks that contain caffeine may seem to "keep you going", but in reality they add to stress and don't keep your body hydrated.

Making out a stress journal can help in identifying the regular stressors in life. Taking a note of what caused your stress, how you felt physically and mentally, and how you responded to it can help you draft a way out of the stress.

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