



## STRESS MANAGEMENT TOOLS

# Change Your Workstyle



Everyone has a bad day at work now and then, but if you feel hurried, irritable and frustrated most of the time, you may be suffering more than you need to from workplace stress. Here are some tips for switching to a low-stress workstyle.

### Set Priorities

Much on-the-job aggravation comes from having too much to do in too little time. Take a few minutes each day to list your priorities. Put the “must-do” tasks at the top of the list and save the others for a slow day.

### Change Your Outlook

Why does a particular event bother you more than another? Does Mary’s inability to meet a deadline get you steamed because it makes you look bad or because you think she’s being deliberately slow? Perhaps she’s just as overworked as you. When you look at it this way, you’re less likely to overreact. By the same token, take a close look at what you expect from yourself. You don’t have to be perfect to be successful.

### Use Your Skills

Few things are more stressful than doing work you’re not suited for. Make a list of your job’s requirements and your skills. How well do they match? If there’s a gap between your skills and the requirements, see what you can change. Study or ask for help learning skills you don’t have. If you’re not using your best skills, ask your supervisor about ways to put these skills to use.

### Be Open to Change

Much stress is simply a result of change we feel we can’t control. If you adopt an attitude of expecting things to change, you can be ready for the change and work with it to your best advantage.

### Make a Commitment

Many people experience stress on the job because they know inside that they’re not giving their best effort. Make a commitment to your work. You don’t have to be heroic. Just decide to do your very best at whatever you attempt. Take pride in your company and know that your efforts are important to its success.

### Take Care of Yourself

You can’t help feeling frustrated and resentful if your needs are not being met. You need to be respected and appreciated on the job. At the same time, you should not be taken advantage of. Learn to say “no” to unreasonable demands. If these needs are not being met, talk the situation over with your supervisor. Take care of your mental and physical health by taking breaks and lunch hours. Give yourself vacation time away from the job, allowing yourself time to do the things you love. Get some exercise each day and eat well-balanced nutritious meals both on and off the job. Finally, learn some stress-management techniques such as meditation and other relaxation techniques for those times when stress is unavoidable.