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# NTA News

**No.1**  
For all your  
Training needs

**My staff are  
stressed?**

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# My staff are stressed

According to the Australian Psychological Society 35 percent of Australians report having a significant level of distress in their lives (*Source: APS Stress and Wellbeing in Australia Survey 2015*).



This often transfers to the workplace with increased absenteeism, conflict, abnormal behaviours and loss of productivity.

So, what can you do if you suspect a staff member is stressed?

First of all, do have that initially hard conversation which starts with “Are you okay?” Sometimes they just need a listening ear.

Secondly, make sure all your staff are aware of contact details for your company’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and how they can assist if feeling stressed (and make you sure avail yourself of the service too).

Thirdly, try to identify what might be making staff stressed? Is it a change management issue, a fear of losing something of benefit, a lack of confidence in the skills to do their job.... There are a myriad of reasons why people in the workplace get stressed.

As a Manager you are in a prime position to identify it and make changes to lessen the stress. For example, in any organisational change situation such as introduction of new technology, employees may think they don’t have the skills to use the new technology effectively. Make sure they get appropriate training and an opportunity to practice, and a few words of encouragement never goes astray.

If you personally don’t feel confident in handling a stress situation speak with your Human Resources Department and seek assistance. There are probably a dozen other Managers in your organisation who are seeking the same kind of help, and HR can put in some strategies to relieve the situation.

Stressed staff are expensive ... but not doing something about it is even more stressful and costly!



# How to Handle Difficult Workmates - Part 1

Many of us spend more time at work than we do at home. And, just like at home, there can be conflict. Here are some practical tips to diffuse conflict at work:

1 Nip it in the bud ... diffuse a conflict issue as it happens.

2 Never argue in front of others. Take the negative energy away from the conflict interaction by speaking in a quiet space. Say "Let's talk in the office". This also helps to take the power away from an angry bully as they no longer have an audience.

3 Take time out ... it often diffuses a volatile situation . Say "Let's meet about this in 30 minutes when we will both be calmer".

4 When you have observed a conflict situation say what you saw exactly, and what you think and feel about it. Don't embellish it with generalisations.

5 Don't participate in negative group gossip. Cut it off at the source.

6 Question whether the colleagues concerns are real or invalid e.g. "Your job is safe during the restructure ... we need great technicians with your unique skills to take us into the future."

7 Use mind talk. Say to yourself "Is this a hill to die on?" Some conflicts just aren't worth the effort. Wait patiently for battles where you can get a better result for all.

8 Literally count to TEN in a conflict situation. It reminds you to think more clearly and calmly.

9 Offer a seat to an angry person. It's a calming technique which operates like lifting the lid off a steaming pot.



***Ask us about our Dealing with Difficult People training workshops (Ph 02 9482 7704 or Q4@bigpond.com)***

# About

## norman turkington and associates



norman turkington and associates is a management training consultancy specialising in helping clients with leadership, change management, team development, handling difficult people, and other soft skills training.

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