

Reduce chronic stress

Signs that stress may be an issue at your workplace:

Decline in work quality

Anxiety or irritability

Absenteeism

High turnover

Crowded workspace

Unaddressed hazards such as noise, insufficient lighting, poor housekeeping, faulty equipment

Caregiver concerns

Lack of control over how work gets done

Chronic stress costs U.S. employers \$300 billion a year, lowering productivity, increasing absenteeism, and leading to medical and insurance costs. It also can lead to “presenteeism” (being physically present, but not mentally engaged), which can cause workplace injuries. More importantly, stress can significantly impact personal health, and has been linked to heart disease, depression, obesity, and other illnesses.

With organizational changes and support, you can reduce employee stress. Here’s what has worked well at other organizations:

Address workplace safety.

Employees worried about their safety are less able to focus on the task at hand.

Remove or reduce annoyances.

Irritating sounds, smells, lighting, and temperatures may seem small but cause unnecessary stress.

Support increased engagement by promoting:

Purpose. Employees want to know that what they are doing is worthwhile.

Autonomy. As much as possible, allow employees to make decisions about their work, such as when to take a break and how to perform tasks. Seek their input on decisions.

Learning. Provide opportunities for skills development, new experiences, and training.

Value. Make sure your employees know you care about them beyond their ability to impact the bottom line.

Support resilience. Encourage social connections, fun, physical activity, and recognition, which help us cope with stress.

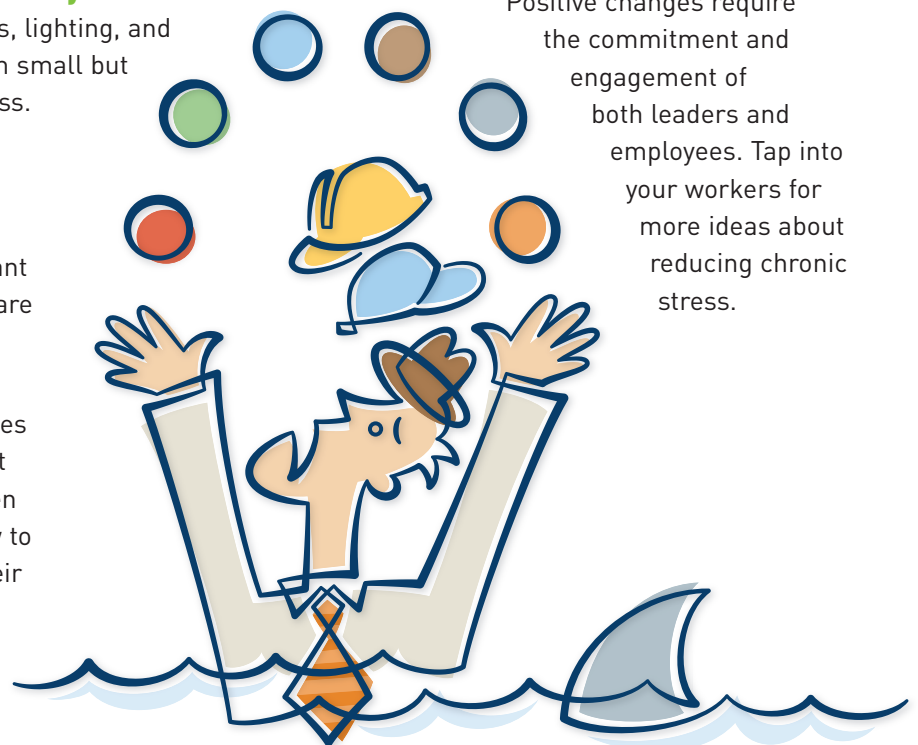
Focus on management.

Effective management requires learning and skills development, not just advanced technical expertise.

Support work-life balance.

Consider benefits such as health care access for family members, flexible schedules, and telecommuting.

Positive changes require the commitment and engagement of both leaders and employees. Tap into your workers for more ideas about reducing chronic stress.



For more information, including guides on other workplace health and safety topics, visit: saif.com/twh.