**Stress Free Zone**

Find your peace with these strategies to identify, manage, and reduce workplace stress.

| Type | Workshop |
| --- | --- |
| Purpose | Resilience |
| Topics | Resilience, habits, self-care, mindfulness |
| Audience | General |

## **About this activity**

According to the ComPsych Stress Pulse Report, 62% of U.S. workers have high levels of stress, and 33% say they have constant but manageable stress levels. Doing more with less has significantly led to a high level of stress, as 41% of those surveyed cite work overload as their top source of stress and 32% of workers surveyed point to relationships with others in the workplace as their main stressor.

In this workshop session, participants will learn to recognize and effectively cope with work stress. Through interactive discussions, stress assessment tools, and hands-on exercises, attendees will gain insights into stressors they face at work and learn evidence-based strategies for mitigating their impact while boosting job satisfaction and overall well-being.

Stress Free Zone works well for a general audience of any size in an in-person, hybrid, or remote setting.

#### Important details

| Best for groups of | Unlimited |
| --- | --- |
| Preparation time | 15 minutes |
| Duration | 60 minutes |
| Required materials | * Stress Free Zone presentation * Presentation equipment, if in person * Meeting platform, if virtual |
| Required location | * Indoors |
| Noise level | Low |

## **How it works**

#### Instructions

Before conducting the activity (15 minutes):

The facilitator will familiarize themselves with the presentation and be prepared to lead the five short stress management activities.

Conducting the activity:

Introduction (5 minutes):

The facilitator will ask participants by a show of hands how many have experienced stress at work. Every hand will likely be raised, and the facilitator will acknowledge that stress is a normal part of life. The goal of this workshop is not to eliminate stress but to learn strategies to help manage stress more effectively.

The facilitator will outline the topics to be covered using the overview slide in the Stress Free Zone presentation.

Identifying Stress Quiz (10 minutes):

The facilitator will guide participants through the Identifying Stress Quiz presentation slides and ask participants to answer ten questions about workplace stress, rating their answers as “almost always,” “frequently,” “occasionally, “or “rarely or never.” There are no right or wrong answers nor is there a total score. The point of the exercise is to help participants develop an awareness of their stress levels and areas that need attention.

Stress Management vs. Self-Care (10 minutes):

The facilitator will use the slides to walk through the difference between stress management and self-care, with the main differentiator being an approach to managing immediate stress symptoms vs. an ongoing effort to nurture overall well-being.

After citing a few examples, the facilitator should ask participants to contribute some other examples of stress management and self-care. The facilitator should then reiterate that the strategies participants will learn in the remainder of the session will focus on stress management.

The 4As of Stress Management (15 minutes):

The facilitator will begin with a humorous quote about stress on screen and then introduce the slides discussing the 4As of Stress Management, which are: AVOID, ALTER, ADAPT to, and ACCEPT stressors. The facilitator will walk through each “A” word and provide examples of how to apply these principles to stressful situations.

5 Stress Management Techniques (15 minutes):

The facilitator will walk participants through 5 quick, simple stress management techniques that can be used in any environment to immediately reduce stress. The facilitator should stress that these methods are all accessible and available to everyone and do not require any preparation or special equipment to perform. The facilitator should lead participants in a quick practice of each technique. For the journaling technique, a great 30-second prompt is to have participants write on a piece of paper or in the notes app on their phone, 3 things they are grateful for.

Wrap-Up (5 minutes):

With the remaining time, the facilitator should discuss the following questions as a group and allow for responses as time allows:

1. Which stress management technique is your favorite and why?
2. Which of these practices can you see yourself doing at work or home?

The facilitator will conclude by thanking participants for their practice and reminding them that there are many helpful resources and apps available if they would like to continue these practices.

#### Rules

None

#### Example

None

## **Materials**

#### For facilitator

Stress Free Zone presentation

Presentation equipment

Meeting platform, if virtual

#### For attendee

None