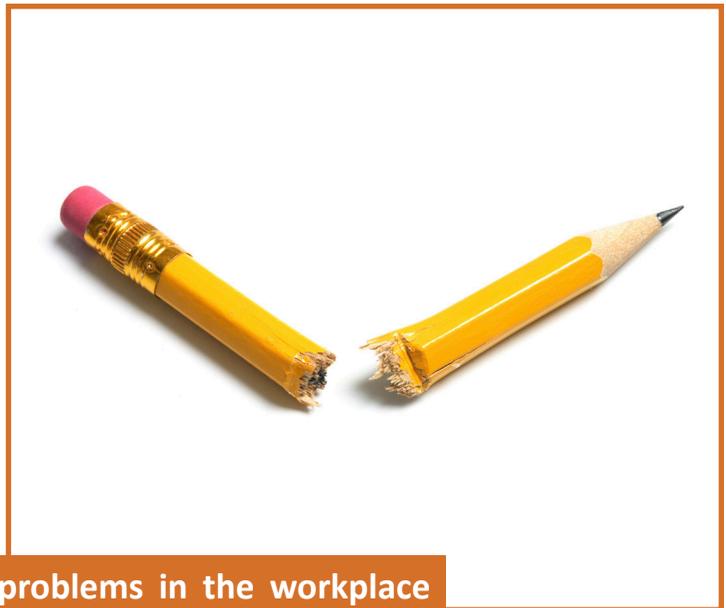


How to control stress at work



Stress is one of the most common problems in the workplace today, regardless of the type of work you do. More often than not, your stress levels can be significantly reduced and managed. So, how do you bring your job stress down to an acceptable level?

Here are five simple rules to remember:

Get enough sleep

Getting enough sleep should be your first priority. If you're tired, any plans you make to be effective at work will just be an uphill battle. Make sure you get at least seven hours of sleep every night.

Take frequent, short breaks

Short breaks can help you feel more energised throughout the day. Try dividing your tasks into chunks and reward yourself between each one with something that motivates you like a short stroll or a healthy snack.

Manage your distractions and interruptions

We can lose up to two hours a day on distractions. Use tea breaks and walks between meetings to catch up with colleagues and remember that you don't need to answer your emails immediately. Sometimes it helps to switch off your email alerts if you're busy with an important task so that the task gets your full attention. It might be hard to

manage meetings but we can insist that they don't go over 90 minutes.

Implement a 'decide once' rule

When you get an email or a new task you can implement a 'decide once' rule, where as soon as you're informed of the new item, you can decide what you will do about it – respond now, take action, or schedule a time in your calendar in which to do it. If you try to address all emails and tasks as they arrive on your desk, you won't be able to focus on one task at a time and complete it. This way you are only handling things like emails once.

Stay positive

Make your office environment as positive for yourself and others as you can. This may mean volunteering your skills for projects that you know you will enjoy, surrounding yourself with family pictures and ornaments, listening to music to soothe your nerves, taking time to chat to colleagues about shared interests, or finding things to laugh about wherever possible.