

This tool is designed to help you break stress down into manageable chunks. The tick boxes are there to help you identify what's a top priority to address. You don't have to answer everything, just fill in what's most relevant for you.

Workload	not a problem	problem	big problem
I have too much to do in the time allowed/available			
I find it difficult to prioritise and plan what to do, or when			
I have			
I can't see the workload getting any better, in the foreseeable future			
Other comments (write in box)			
Skills	not a problem	problem	big problem
I don't feel I have the skills to do what I have to do, fully and well			
I feel I am doing work which is beneath my skill level or not challenging			
Other comments (write in box)			
Control	not a problem	problem	big problem
I don't feel in control of what work I do, and when			
I don't feel able to make decisions which I'm capable of making			
I feel that I'm not given enough responsibility			
I don't have enough flexibility in how and when I work			
Other comments (write in box)			

Change	not a problem	problem	big problem
There has been too much change lately (eg restructuring or new roles)			
I'm worried about the impact of planned changes			
Things are not changing, but they need to			
Other comments (write in box)			
Being valued	not a problem	problem	big problem
I don't feel valued for the work I do			
My work and effort is taken for granted			
Other comments (write in box)			
Management	not a problem	problem	big problem
I feel that I need managing better, or in a different way			
I feel a lack of management input or guidance			
I feel there is too much management input or micro-managing			
Other comments (write in box)			
Other work interactions	not a problem	problem	big problem
I'm experiencing difficulties with some team members			
I'm experiencing difficulties with external people eg customers, clients, partners			
Other comments (write in box)			

Pay and conditions	not a problem	problem	big problem
I feel underpaid for what I do			
I do not get financially rewarded for extra time or effort			
I am not happy with the work environment or conditions			
Other comments (write in box)			
Motivation	not a problem	problem	big problem
I don't really understand the values and objectives of the organisation			
I don't feel in tune with the values and objectives of the organisation			
I feel unmotivated for a number of reasons			
Other comments (write in box)			
Taking care of myself	I do this well	I do this a bit	I hardly do this
I take regular breaks and a proper lunch break from the workload			
I exercise several times a week			
I eat and drink healthily, and avoid too many snacks			
I take time for my family, friends and partner			
I make time for other interests and leisure activities			
I'm able to speak honestly with others about my problems			
Other comments (write in box)			

What signs of stress do you notice in yourself or others	not really	to some degree	definitely!
increased absence from work, for ill health, anxiety or any other reason			
poor performance and timekeeping			
poor sleep/tiredness, low-energy			
irritability, anger, tearfulness etc			
an increase in disputes and grievances, and dysfunctional team working			
stress at work is affecting my home/social life or my health			
Other comments (write in box)			

Add up the ticks in the right hand boxes

If you have scored more than 7, you have multiple stress factors. What is the likely outcome for your well-being, success and motivation, if you don't address this?

What to do with your stress test

This quick check may help you to break down stress factors into manageable chunks. The key steps now are:

- first, congratulate yourself for taking the first step in addressing your stress
- be confident that things can change if you take responsibility for your own wellbeing
- see if you can find some quick wins – for example, if workload is a major stress factor, identify one or two ways this manifests and trial a new approach
- print your test outputs, and decide who you will share it with – this is important information for your line manager, who may be unaware that you're suffering stress – ask for a review and a friendly chat about the results of this test
- commit to making a plan to address your stress issues – start with the things that are entirely in your own control, then move on to more complex issues and identify who you need to involve in making changes
- consider taking a mindfulness course, which has proven results in stress management and wellbeing.

Here are some tips to address some common problem

1 – Face up to work overload and unreasonable deadlines

Just getting organised may not be all that's needed. Somehow we need to approach the working day in an altogether more purposeful, creative and energetic way. This means clearing the obstacles first, that you may have identified.

Here's our top action list:

- Be clear what needs doing - avoid surprises or burying your head in the sand
- Make a table of tasks, time required, what you need to do it (eg from others), deadline, & importance
- Figure out what's realistic and achievable
- Share this between staff and managers, agree a do-able list, and a strategy for addressing the tasks which can't be done (eg inform those who need to know)
- Stick to the plan
- Update every week and if necessary go through this process again
- Make sure the plan is reasonable and SMART

2 – Improve working relationships

We're social animals, and we can't avoid playing out social games, fears and habits in the workplace, where we're surrounded by people we may not have chosen to be close to. From a mindfulness perspective, the following steps can be transformative:

- Articulate the problems on paper – who do you have a problem with, what are the triggers, how does that make you feel, what is your response?
- Step back and breathe – take time out to de-stress and learn to pause between action and response
- Be clear what we really know to be true - our experience is processed in our minds, and is our own interpretation of events
- Recognise that we all have problems – so before reacting to what someone says or does, take a moment to step into their shoes
- Take appropriate action – meet with the people concerned in an informal way, to explain on how their actions affect you – and be friendly!
- Set an intention at the start of each day to be friendly and compassionate, and smile more!

3 – Take care of yourself

The only person who can make things better is you – we all need to take responsibility for our own well-being (and encourage our staff and colleagues to do this too). So here are a few easy wins:

- Create gaps to pause, breathe and get perspective
- Create a nurturing workspace – tidy up and treat yourself eg flowers
- Eat proper meals, away from the desk, and drink more water
- Get some exercise or do yoga every day
- Be kind to others – it makes us happier
- Develop a personal well-being plan, and find a buddy to work with so you make a commitment with each other