



Cape Cod Human Resources Association

HR NEWS

Cape Cod Human Resources Association P.O. Box 665, Hyannis, MA 02601

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Stress Management for HR Professionals: Building Resiliency During Difficult Times

Linda Piatelli, KGA, Inc.

“Hello Operator, please put me in touch with myself.”

In a quick poll we found many of the HR professionals in the room were feeling the same stresses: communication, time constraints, regulations, change, people and doing more with less.

“Stress is like the flu; it spreads.” Venting and releasing stress is helpful to gain perspective and realize we’re not alone. This workshop gave us some of the tools to do this productively.

To set the stage Ms. Piatelli asked us to do an assessment to determine our top five internal stressors. These may include being overly critical of ourselves or others, the need to do things perfectly, setting unrealistic goals, and over committing ourselves. Internal stressors often impact us more than external stressors. If we are “psychologically hardy” we realize we only have control over how we respond to things. Letting go is empowering.

We reviewed a Burnout Curve, a bell curve analyzing the relationship between stress and productivity. When we reach the peak of high stress and high productivity we risk burnout. Burnout is physical and mental exhaustion because we have pushed ourselves beyond our limits.

If we hang out at this peak too long stress begins to impact us. We experience a fight or flight reaction. It is important to recognize when we are at our peak and how to counteract it so we don’t crash. Think about your symptoms when you are at this peak. Do they include anxiety, panic attacks, irrational thinking, depression, bad habits, anger, irritability, fatigue, physical illness? Taking this inventory can be helpful in recognizing your marker symptoms. Stay aware of them, check-in with yourself and use techniques to counteract them.

The participants then took a resilience self-assessment. Resiliency is the capacity to survive and thrive in stressful circumstances. To assess our psychological hardiness let’s look at these dichotomies:

Commitment vs. Alienation: Finding things enjoyable and being curious

Connection vs. Withdrawal: Caring about and interacting with others

Challenge vs. Threat: Openness to change

Control vs. Powerlessness: Always having control over our own response. It is our attitude that enhances our resilience.

So, how do you relax and renew? Relaxation techniques are the opposite of the fight or flight mechanism. True relaxation is a state of quiet in the body and mind. Ms. Piatelli gave us each a CD entitled “Twelve Minute Relaxation Program” developed by KGA, Inc. She also recommends several relaxation methods:

- Breathing: Focusing on your breath
- Progressive relaxation: Releasing tension in your body
- Visualization: Using imagery in your mind



Kathy Greer of KGA, Inc. states in a piece she wrote entitled *Managing HR Stress*; “HR professionals are not typically included on the list of helping professionals who are considered most vulnerable to trauma. From an EAP perspective, this is one profession that should be added. It is widely accepted that trauma can impact the functioning of employees and that EAP intervention can help. However, the data reveals that HR professionals themselves are often the last to accept support from counseling resources.” “HR professionals are on the front line, being asked to manage crises every day. HR professionals need extra resiliency in order to avoid burnout.”

A suggested book is *Resilience At Work: How To Succeed No Matter What Life Throws at You* by Salvatore Maddi and Deborah Khoshaba

Pandemic H1N1 2009: The Public Health Perspective

FLU?

*If we but knew
The cause of flu
And whence it came and what to do,
I think that you
And we folks too,
Would hardly get in such a stew.
Do you?*

*Illinois Health news, vol. 9
November 1918*

Over 20 participants attended this free workshop facilitated by **Lisa Crowner**, Regional Health Educator and Trainer for Emergency Preparedness with the MA Department of Public Health (MA DPH).

The objectives of the workshop included distinguishing seasonal and pandemic influenza, gaining a history of pandemics, getting current with what is known about H1N1 flu, and learning guidelines for care, treatment, infection control and prevention of pandemic H1N1.

In addition to these objectives we learned tools on how to manage a pandemic outbreak in our place of business and the resources that are available. This workshop also served as a train-the-trainer so can deliver this same workshop to our employees. The MA DPH offers two Power Point presentations that you can use to deliver your own workshop. An additional benefit is that these programs are offered in different languages.

Attached to this newsletter is a Business Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist developed by the CDC that will help you to protect your employees' health and safety against pandemic influenza.

Here are resources that are available to you free of charge:

Mass 221:
www.mass211.org/emergencyinfo.html

Mass DPH:
www.mass.gov/dph/swineflu

Centers for Disease Control:
www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/

US Dept of Health & Human Services:
www.flu.gov/

World Health Organization:
www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html

Here are materials that are available to you free of charge from the MA DPH:

Flu: What You Can Do – Caring for People at Home: 33-page comprehensive booklet

Flu: What You Can Do – Caring for People at Home: 24-page basic literacy booklet

Flu Facts: What You Need to Know: Informational wallet card

Flu Facts: What You Need to Know: Print advertisements

Flu Facts: What You Need to Know: Informational poster

Flu Facts: What You Need to Know: Web banners



Up-Coming Events

Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce
www.ecapechamber.com

12/2	Free Small business Innovation Research Grants
12/3	Business and Education in Our Global Economy with William D. "Bill" Green
12/4	Venture Hyannis presents "The Smart Guide to HR and Management Seminars."

New England Human Resources Association NEHRA
www.nehra.org

12/3	Webinar: Advanced HR: How to Achieve Maximum Value Out of Every Negotiation
12/8-9	Leadership Workshop for Today's Times: Engaging Employees to Drive Results
12/10	Professional Development Coaching for Commitment
12/15	Leading the Transformation to Sustainable High Performance

American Society for Training & Development ASTD
www.astd.org

12/7-11	Essentials of Evidence-Based Training
12/14	Essentials of Adobe Captivate 4: Production tips and Tricks
12/14-16	Essentials of Scenario Based E-Learning
12/3-17	Business Essentials On-Line Marketing

Human Resources Leadership Forum HRLF
www.hrlf.org

12/12	HR In An Uncertain World. Eamonn Kelly, The Monitor Group
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