

Managing Stress and Time Management

1. Managing Stress

Some people thrive on stress, others don't. Certain forms of stress are normal and essential. However, the key is to manage stress at a level suitable to you.

What are the warning signs?

- Not sleeping
- Loss of energy, exhaustion
- Headaches
- Rashes
- Irrational behaviour
- Stomach upset or ulcer
- High blood pressure
- Missing meals and not eating properly
- Feeling anxious and overwhelmed
- Loss of joy in life
- Depressed mood

If these signs are obvious to you, don't ignore them. Try to look at what events or situations are causing you stress and address the triggers:

- Determine what you can change and how you can act on the changes
 - Determine what you cannot change and how you can accept this
 - Reassess your timetable and get your priorities right
 - Ensure you take part in pleasurable and enjoyable activities
 - Ensure you get a good diet and sleep and maintain a disciplined daily routine
 - Build physical reserves by exercising or playing sport
 - Make sure you have good social times with friends
 - Look closely at how you spend your time.
- Strategies to improve time management are explored below.

2. Time Management

It's easy to forget how critical time management skills can be. It's only when people begin to miss appointments, not deliver work on time or start taking sick days due to stress, that people realize its importance.

Time management is the thoughtful, planned organisation of time around actual tasks, activities or functions that you have to perform throughout your day. Broadly this will include: work, social activity, family time and emergencies.

Effective people have good time management skills as they concentrate on results and not on being busy. The key is the ability to look realistically at all aspects of your life.

To begin the process:

- Check how you really spend your time
 - time sheets
 - Find out how much your time is worth
 - cost your time
 - Make sure you concentrate on the right things - determine work priorities
 - Plan to solve a problem - action plans
 - Tackle the right tasks first - priority lists
 - Decide what your personal priorities should be - personal goal setting
- For many people, determining what is a priority is not a straightforward task. What is urgent and what can wait? How does this feed into work-life balance? Am I comfortable being assertive about my needs or would I benefit from some coaching? Are my energy levels low? Do I feel like I am overwhelmed or do I need to feel more challenged in the work place? These are all questions we can explore at LifeConnect to help reduce stress and regain a sense of control.