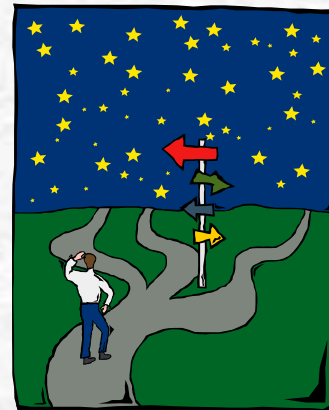
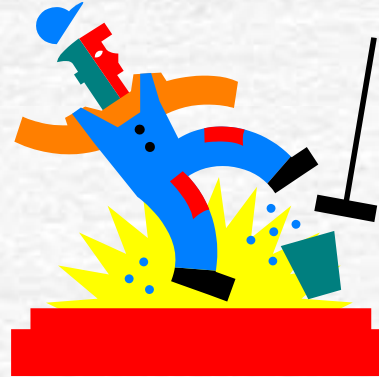


# Risk assessment and Stress



# Risk assessment who, what?

- ☛ Employers have a **general duty of care** towards their employees. They also have to “ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health safety and welfare of employees and others affected in their workplace”
- ☛ The **Workplace Health & Safety Regulations** require employers to (amongst other things):
  - ☛ prevent and control risks arising from all activities
  - ☛ consult employees and their representatives on all matters affecting their health and safety at work

# Risk assessment who, what cont ?

- ✦ make effective arrangements for managing health and safety and appoint WH&S persons to advise them
- ✦ carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments
- ✦ apply the general principles of prevention when assessing risks
- ✦ identify 'vulnerable groups'
- ✦ record risk assessment findings
- ✦ monitor and review their effectiveness

# What should we be looking at?



- ☛ So what should we be looking at in risk assessment?
- ☛ How should we be going about it?
- ☛ And what are the problem areas?



# Main sources of stress at work

## Physical

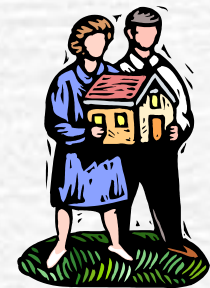
- Physical stressors include noise, heat and vibration. Workers are exposed to them not only in their physical working environment but also sometimes electronically or mechanically.



# Main sources of stress at work cont

## Psychosocial

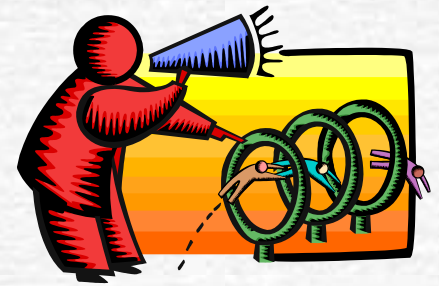
*Psychosocial stressors* concern social factors and relationships, including behaviours, attitudes and culture. They can also involve things like economic and social or family status (or attitudes to them at work and in wider society). They affect not only what people do but also the way they think and feel and how they are perceived by others.



# Main sources of stress at work cont

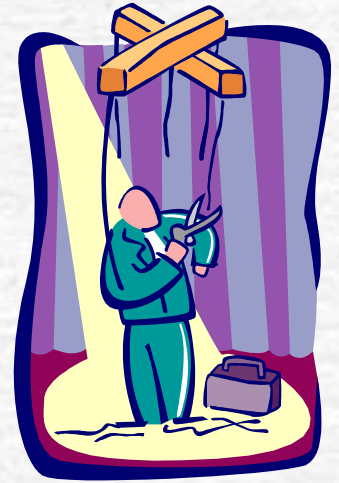
## Organisational

- Organisational stressors are sources of stress that arise from the nature of the work organisation -for example, systems of work, working conditions, working time arrangements, organisational structures and resources, management and supervision, staffing levels and so on.



# Risk factors for stress

- ☛ culture
- ☛ demands
- ☛ control
- ☛ relationships
- ☛ change
- ☛ role
- ☛ support, training and factors unique to the individual





# Major life events

**Work is not the only source of stress in people's lives. Stress can also be caused by events outside the workplace. Such as:**

- ☛ bereavement - partner or close relative
- ☛ divorce
- ☛ severe relationship problems
- ☛ severe financial worries
- ☛ long-term separation
- ☛ own serious illness
- ☛ serious illness of close relative or friend
- ☛ moving house
- ☛ taking out mortgage
- ☛ job loss
- ☛ children leaving home

# 5 steps to risk assessment

1. Look for the hazards
2. Identify people at risk
3. Evaluate risks and  
identify control measures
4. Record main findings
  - implement them
5. Monitor and review  
effectiveness
  - revise if necessary



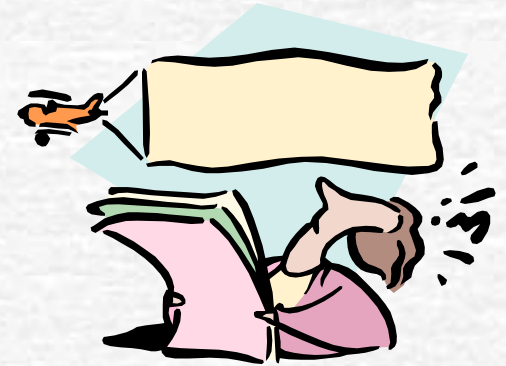
# Common problems

- ☛ misunderstandings
- ☛ focus
- ☛ methods and approach
- ☛ implementation



# Common misunderstandings...

- ☛ nature of stress
- ☛ pressure v stress
- ☛ nature of stress response
- ☛ nature of signs and symptoms
- ☛ prevention v cure





# Principles of prevention

- Avoid / control risks
- Tackle risks at source
- Take account of individual fit work to worker
- Collective measures



# Hierarchy of prevention

- ☛ Remove the hazard if possible
- ☛ Reduce /eliminate risks



## ***If risk remains:***

- ☛ Control risks / exposure
- ☛ Protect worker



# Manual Handling Assessment

☞ **T**ask

☞ **I**ndividual

☞ **L**oad

☞ **E**nvironment



# Manual Handling Assessment

## PREVENTION AND CONTROL

- ☛ Can **task** be avoided / redesigned?  
Done differently? Mechanical aids?  
Less demands?
- ☛ Redesign **load**?  
Reduce weight / size?  
Stabilise / secure?
- ☛ Alternative **location**?  
Remove environmental hazards?  
Controlled environment?
- ☛ Individual training? Aids or adaptations? PPE?



# Stress Risk Assessment

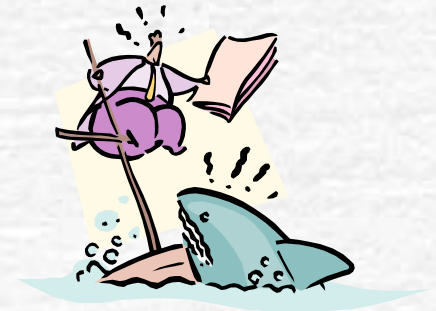
**W**ork  
**O**rganisation  
**R**esources  
**R**oles and relationships  
**I**ndividual  
**E**nvironment  
**D**emands



# Stress Risk Assessment

## WORK

work activities  
tasks / job design  
working methods  
working times / location  
workload / workflow / pace  
worker's control  
work equipment and PPE



# Stress Risk Assessment

## ORGANISATION

organisational structures  
work organisation  
management systems  
pay systems  
communications  
change management  
corporate culture / ethos



# Stress Risk Assessment

## RESOURCES

time?

people?

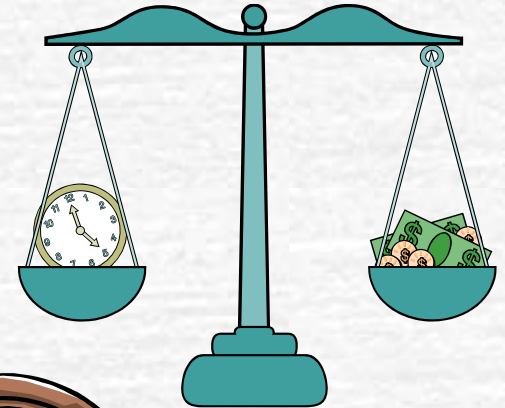
money?

materials and facilities?

equipment / technologies?

information, instruction, training  
and supervision?

welfare facilities / occupational  
health?





# Stress Risk Assessment

## ROLES and RELATIONSHIPS

role definition?  
role ambiguity / conflict?  
relationships with others?  
attitudes / culture?  
relationship between work  
and personal life?



# Stress Risk Assessment

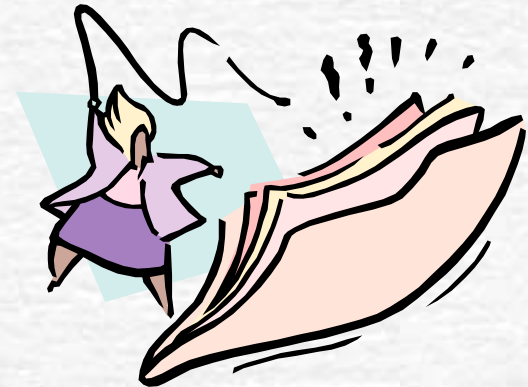
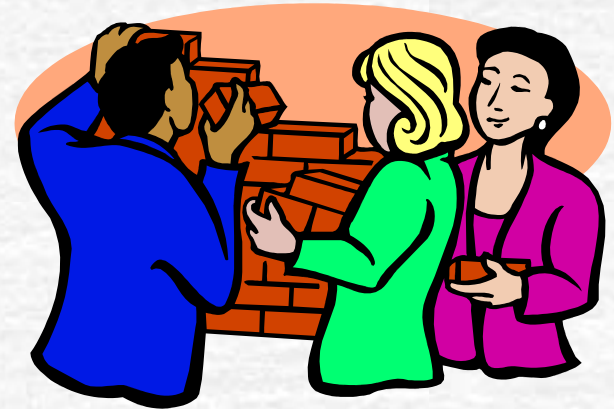
## INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

background / culture?

personal circumstances?

characteristics?

perception / response?



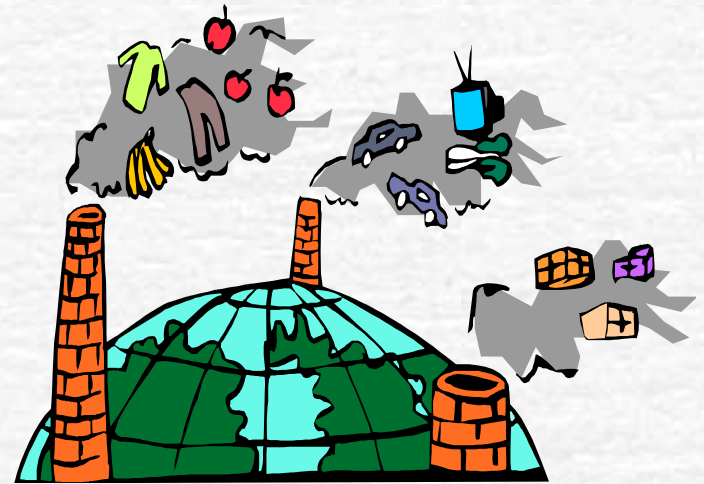
# Stress Risk Assessment

## ENVIRONMENT

physical?

psychosocial?

environmental  
hazards and risks?



# Stress Risk Assessment

## DEMANDS

- Physical demands include:
- physical effort (explosive or repetitive)
- awkward / restricted postures
- working long hours / at night / doing rotating shifts
- working in hostile environments
- meeting unrealistic performance targets / other people
- intensive listening or speaking
- Physical stressors can include having too little as well as too much work.





# Stress Risk Assessment

- ☛ *Mental demands* include:
  - ☛ mental effort (e.g. concentration / memory, attention to detail / precision / multi-tasking)
  - ☛ exercising responsibility (e.g. judgement / decision-making)
  - ☛ management (e.g. of time / people / resources / relationships)



# Stress Risk Assessment

- ☞ *Emotional demands* include:
- ☞ dealing with distressed / disturbed / sick / vulnerable people
- ☞ handling hostility, conflict or trauma
- ☞ working in emotionally-charged or distressing situations



# Stress Risk Assessment

## RISK EVALUATION

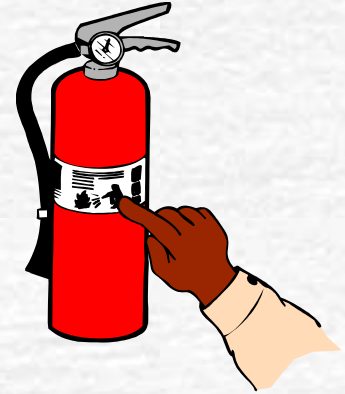
What preventive measures are already in place?

Are they sufficient / effective in preventing the risk?

Does anything else need to be done?

Which risks are the most serious?

What are the priorities?



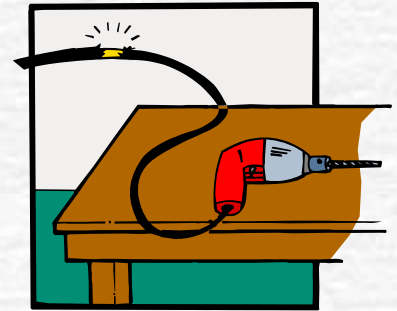
# Stress Risk Assessment cont

## PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Can hazards be removed / avoided / contained / reduced? Can risks be controlled? Can people be protected?



What can be changed for the better? What control measures are needed?



What is needed in terms of information, instruction, training and supervision?



# Suitable and sufficient?

## ☞ consultation

- *meaningful, in good time*

## ☞ inclusion

- *ALL workers / work activities / risks*

## ☞ hierarchy of prevention

- *tackle / control risks at source if possible*

## ☞ principles of prevention

- *adapt work to workers*

## ☞ vulnerable people

- *take account / make adjustments*

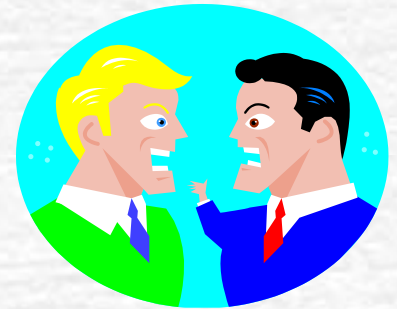
# Working Together?

## *What partnerships can deliver*

- meaningful consultation
- agreed goals / action
- shared understanding / knowledge
- open 2-way communications
- improved working relationships
- positive culture change
- greater trust / empowerment
- better risk assessment
- benefits all round



# Example: Tackling Bullying



- ☛ Policy & procedure development
- ☛ Roles, responsibilities and procedures
- ☛ Training and awareness-raising
- ☛ Monitoring and review

# Example: Tackling Violence


- Policy & Procedures training
- Workplace Health & Safety Committee
- Reporting and recording
- Risks assessment / action







# Commitment to Action?

- ☛ Risk assessment is a tool, not an end in itself. The goal is prevention.
  - ☛ It must result in effective action to prevent and control the risks of stress at work
  - ☛ Sharing information with employers, monitoring trends, having regular discussions with staff,
  - ☛ listening to their concerns, observing them at work, carrying out site tours and workplace inspections, all contribute to this process and help to make the workplace healthier and less stressful.
- 

# Must Haves...

- ☛ Raise awareness / understanding
- ☛ Have meaningful consultation - involve everyone
- ☛ Show a real commitment to action

## Must Do's...

Implement findings and properly communicate to all concerned.

monitor and review effectiveness / trends, provide feedback