

The Eighth Most Stressful Job:**Survival Tips for Inside Sales, Technical Support and Customer Service Representatives**

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If you are an inside sales, technical support or a customer service rep, you have a stressful job. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Statistics, you have the eighth most stressful job among those listed. Your job ranks right up there with air traffic controllers, firemen and policemen. Anyone handling demanding customers all day long and a high call volume is under a lot of stress.

If you feel stressed you are not alone. One out of every three working Americans feels highly stressed, and the number one stress in our lives is our jobs. Stress has surpassed the common cold as the most prevalent health issue in the United States. Seventy percent of all job absenteeism is the result of stress. It is estimated that work-related stress costs U.S. businesses 200 billion dollars a year in absenteeism, compensation claims, increased health costs, and lowered productivity.

Stress exacts a high toll on you, your customers and your organization. It is important that you learn to manage stress.

Determine the things you can control.

In anyone's life there are things about your job or your personal life that you can control or influence, but there are also things that are beyond your control. Part of handling stress effectively means that you identify those things in your life that you can control or influence and let go of those things that you cannot.

Better manage your time.

People who cope well manage their time efficiently. They prioritize tasks in their personal as well as professional lives. In their personal lives, they look carefully at how they feel when they arrive at work. If you begin your day rushed, you will end that way. Feeling stressed will carry over to the way you treat your customers.

To better manage your professional life, arrive early and get the most important tasks done first. Do not let papers mount up on your desk. Sort through your e-mail and do not use your in-box as a storage bin. Read and delete all appropriate messages on a daily basis.

Have a positive attitude.

Optimistic people avoid stress by understanding that difficult times in their lives are temporary and are caused by something other than them. Optimistic people face negative events with hope.

Eat properly.

When people are under stress, they eat a lot of fast food that is high in saturated fat and sugar. They also drink a lot of caffeine. They grab candy bars for lunch or dinner instead of eating nutritiously. Good nutrition is extremely important to coping with stress. It provides you with the ability to think clearly and to make decisions. Brown rice, pastas green leafy vegetables and foods high in protein will keep you mentally sharp.

Get active.

Exercise regularly. Two kinds of physical exercise are important for stress prevention. The first, aerobic exercise improves a person's responsiveness to stressful activities because it affects the cardiovascular system and nervous system. Aerobic exercise also releases endorphins into the body and actually alters your mood.

The second kind of exercise, flexibility training, is important because it helps to eliminate muscle tension. It also maintains joints, increases strength and coordination and eliminates toxins from the blood.

Do Something fun.

People need to refresh themselves with fun activities. So often we spend our free time clean-

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ing the house or changing the oil in our car. Our spirits and body need to be renewed. The more we use our leisure time to connect with others in our lives, the more likely we are to find our lives rewarding.

Enjoy a good laugh. Pre-school children laugh approximately seventy times a week. The average adult laughs about seven times a month. Watch movies or television shows that will alter your mood. Associate with people who are fun. Laughing releases stress. It also promotes healing.

On-the-job stress is inevitable, but it is controllable. Be aware of early signs of stress on your job and actively work at managing them. When you are stressed, it affects how you treat your customers and the people in your organization. It can also affect your health.

Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their face-to-face and over the phone communication skills. It is not what you know but how you communicate it that makes a difference. To reach us, phone (847) 438-4480 or contact our web site, www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com.