

Sailing through Stress at Work



Some Workplace “Wild Oceans”

One of the major causes of stress in the workplace is feeling that things are beyond our control. Other stressors can include:

- Overload – “too much work, too little time.”
- Conflict in relationships.
- Conflicts between work roles, job demands, and juggling the balance between work and home.
- Long hours and being unclear about your work role.
- Feeling isolated or undervalued.
- Changes in role or organisation.
- Bullying or harassment.
- Feeling uncomfortable about talking about stress, health or mental health problems.
- Physical environment – noise, mess, dangers, lack of air or poor equipment, messy workspace.
- Feeling enslaved by email or the phone.

Seeking Calmer Seas

- Create a do-able list of priorities before work gets under way.
- Work a little on large or daunting projects each day. You may get more done than you think.
- Create a work space you like.
- Shrink worries:
 - *Question it* – whose problem is it?
 - *Talk it out* – share your problem with someone you trust.
 - *Write it down* – What is the worst that can happen? This can help you put it in perspective.
 - *Imagine* a few years from now. How much will it matter then?
 - *Attack it* – take the first step to solving the problem.
- Write down a list of what is achievable, instead of focusing on what is not.
- Take short breaks – go outside, laugh with a colleague, eat your lunch.

“Oar Retrieval” Assistance

It’s OK to seek help. Talking to an EAP / workplace support person, Lifeline, books on the subject, spiritual resources, Department of Labour www.osh.dol.govt.nz and creative and physical activity can all help.