

“How Much is ‘Employee Stress’ Costing Your Company?”

It’s soon set to *soar* unless you take specific measures to prevent it!

Dear Mr

Employers like yourself will soon be legally obliged to protect their employees from stress, anxiety and depression. If you don’t, you face **criminal** prosecution with harsh action and heavy financial penalties (not to mention the bad publicity).

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) believes poor work organisation leads to ill health. And they plan to get tough about it. The new HSE ‘stress code’ is due to come into force within months . Unless you put specific measures in place, you could become an easy target. (I’ll explain shortly how you can easily meet the requirements of the code at *no financial cost to yourself*.)

In fact, it took the HSE *less than a month* to bare its teeth after it issued draft management standards on stress. 3 organisations were reprimanded including Dorset County Hospital. Their record of outstanding success and plaudits for excellence counted for nothing.

According to the HSE, they failed to assess the risk to their staff or put protective measures in place. If local management don’t come up to scratch within months, it could mean *unlimited* fines or even **prison terms for its senior executives.**

And this is under *existing* legislation, before the code has even come into force!

The HSE, under political pressure, intend a more active role in prosecuting employers. As for employees, those with stress-related illness will find it much easier to seek compensation. This is one of the intentions of the code.

Indeed, they will be actively encouraged to seek compensation, if not by the HSE then by no win no fee lawyers and a business-bashing media:

“If you’re under unreasonable pressure at work, don’t get drunk, *get even*. The HSE’s stress code means you can take action against your employer with the force of the law behind you.”

BBC News 7pm

Compensation Claims Could Be Huge

According to Jonathan Whittaker, senior employment lawyer at SAS Lawyers: “the worst thing an employer can do is ignore the problem and just hope it goes away.” He says the new code could allow an employee to resign and make the following claims:

Claim 1: Unfair Dismissal – maximum compensation £60,100

Claim 2: Personal Injury – recent awards for stress have exceeded £200,000

Claim 3: Disability Discrimination – *no legal financial limit*

Even if you consider yourself a caring employer; even if you already have procedures embedded through management systems and personnel policies, meeting the code will still be challenging. For instance,

85% of employees must say they can cope with the demands of the job, feel they have adequate say over their work, and have all the backup they need.

Failure to meet these figures gives the HSE full power to issue a prohibition notice forbidding activities defined as stressful. If this misfortune happened to you, **it would effectively shut down your business!**

They accept the code is a huge added burden, but stress that no employer is immune. They encourage employers to apply the standards now. Those that do will be in a strong position when the code comes into legislative force.

Meet The Stress Code in Full – At Zero Cost!

In order to reduce compensation claims and meet the requirements of the stress code, we have developed a specialist programme called *Insight*. This is designed to meet all 6 Stress Management Standards laid down by the HSE.

Insight has been devised not only to reduce your employees' stress, but to cut sickness absence, reduce staff turnover, boost productivity and increase morale. These outcomes will cut costs significantly and result in a superior corporate financial performance.

How will you find the budget for such an intensive programme? You won't have to. *Your employees will pay for it!* Not only will they pay, they'll be queuing up to do so. It won't even involve the sacrifice of work time, since it is conducted outside such hours. (However you will have to provide space for training.)

You see, because stress has become such a crucial and potentially expensive issue, we believe it requires a complete shift in thinking; hence our approach. Our experience tells us that given the opportunity, employees are *keen* to take part in courses that improve their career skills, work performance, health and lifestyle.

We have 16 years experience in providing health promotion programmes for the corporate sector including BBC radio, Coopers & Lybrand, NYPD, The German Police School, and United Distillers. We have learned a great deal about what works (and what doesn't) in that time.

This programme goes beyond any we have developed so far. We are convinced, once your employees experience the positive effect of *Insight* during week 1 (*provided free if you register in December*), they will gladly sign up for the rest of the course.

As Steve Wood, a director of Royal & Sun Alliance said recently: "UK companies have got to start taking this seriously. It should be a boardroom issue."

To find out more about *Insight* and how it protects your business from draconian action by the HSE, lowers your bottom line costs and produces superior financial results, please contact me now on

Yours sincerely,

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