

STRESS AWARENESS

Preparing and starting the discussion

Preparing for the discussion

Yes No

Clarify what evidence you have that there may be a problem

- Observations: change (in mood/behaviour/ attitude/health/appearance)
- Listening: problems mentioned
- Records: attendance and other management information
- Knowledge: nature of work and potential sources of stress

Arrange to have the discussion

- Where: advisable to have the discussion face-to-face wherever possible if dealing with sensitive issues, somewhere that is private (not overheard) and comfortable to talk
- When: you don't have to rush off, aren't distracted etc., and not at a time that is going to cause problems for the individual, leave them brooding about the discussion etc.
- Part of a regular one-to-one arrangement or one off?
- Clarity to ensure a safe and relaxed conversation: make clear it is about welfare and joint problem solving, not disciplinary or something to be nervous about
- Don't put it off!





Discussion of the issues

Yes No

Start with an introduction in which you:

- Re-affirm purpose of session and timings
- Aim to put individual at ease
- Clarify confidentiality/how information will be used (NB: don't promise or assure confidentiality where you can't keep it)

Aim to build rapport

- Adopt a non-judgemental approach
- Listen, listen, listen
- Use questions where appropriate/supportive
- NB don't feel that you have to be your team member's counsellor, confidant or therapist – maintain professional approach/boundaries

Encourage a two-way process

- Check understanding at regular intervals
- Ask if the person has any questions and deal with them

Find a common understanding of the problem with the team member by:

- Describing your understanding of the problem/issue (using evidence)
- Asking team member's understanding of problem/issue
- Using the Health and Safety Executive management standards to explore work-related causes if appropriate
- Agree the nature of the problem/issue together

Round off the discussion

- Summarise and check understanding
- Review next steps
- Check for other issues/problems
- Agree next meeting
- Thank team member for their time