A project professional's guide to

# MANAGING STRESS AND WELLBEING

apm association for project management

THE CHARTERED BODY FOR THE PROJECT PROFESSION

**Workplace stress** is the adverse reaction we have to excessive pressure and demand placed on us. The project management profession often deals with fast paced, dynamic workloads and research shows that many project professionals feel stress. **Prioritising healthy wellbeing** within your organisation, team and project is vital and beneficial.

## SITUATIONS THAT CAN LEAD TO STRESS

- Relations with team members and stakeholders
- Thinking you have little control of a situation
- Volume of work to complete within a time frame
- Lack of clarity on performance objectives or KPIs

**TIP** | **Commitments outside of work are secondary stressors that affect our wellbeing: family and relationships, financial concerns, caring responsibilities, etc.**

## SIGNS OF STRESS

**It's important for you to notice stress – for yourself and your team – before it leads to burnout or makes burnout worse. Here are some signs to look out for:**

| | | |
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| Headache or dizziness | Losing motivation | Chest pain or muscle pain |
| Difficulty concentrating | Constantly worrying or feeling anxious | Feeling overwhelmed |
| Stomach problems or appetite changes | Being irritable or snappy | Becoming more withdrawn |

## WHAT CAN PROJECT PROFESSIONALS DO?

**1**

**Prioritise the way of working** by minimising multitasking, limiting work hours, balancing between focused work and simpler work. It's vital to take time for yourself and give time to others.

**2**

Improve **time management** by planning, setting small goals and recognising that different tasks will require different amounts of time.

**3**

**Build better relationships** and get to know colleagues; understanding them better and appreciating them out loud.

**4**

**Reflect on yourself** by asking how you are and be curious, concentrate on what you enjoy and align your work. Encourage your team to do the same.

**5**

**Let go of the anticipation** by focusing less on the future outcome and more on the tasks at hand. Try setting smaller goals to build confidence and boost morale with small wins.

**6**

**Re-evaluate the environment** you're in and understand your strengths and weaknesses so you can redesign your work to optimise using your strengths.

**TIP** | **Share this with your project team, peers and colleagues. The more we all talk about and advocate for better wellbeing, the more we'll help each other manage stress well.**

**For more information on managing stress, mental health and wellbeing for project professionals visit our toolkit at apm.org.uk/resources/mental-health-toolkit/**

**With thanks to our members for reviewing and contributing to this infographic**