

THE PERCEPTION OF THE EMPLOYEES OF A TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANY WITH RESPECT TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE OCCUPATIONAL STRESS²⁴

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Summary

Stress appeared at the same time as life and it is an attribute of the living. Without stress, there is no life, no evolution. In excess, it becomes harmful. This is stress, good and bad, always present and necessary. The life of people in the modern times is carried out at a fast pace and in a completely new framework with respect to the previous generations. Life in modern, overcrowded and polluted cities, the physical but mainly psychological strains, life in a constant competition make people nowadays move away more and more from the “patriarchal life” existent only a few generations before. The life of the modern man contains a permanent state of stress. The major source of stress is change. Today’s world is characterized by radical and fast changes in all fields: technology, philosophy, ethics, politics, and the ability of people to adapt to the new conditions is slower than the rhythm of changes. The result of this mismatch is stress. The baneful influences of stress on organizational activities have determined detailed research on the internal mechanisms of generating stress. Its negative effects on the efficiency and performance have convinced the managers to form habits of attenuating the impacts and maintaining the stress under control. Starting from the study of hormonal reactions in the stress syndrome, the involvement of the nervous system (somatic and vegetative) was achieved. Nowadays the studies are focused on behavioural and psychological reactions. The outcome is that we have accepted stress as such. We learned to live and die with it. Changing this rooted behaviour ingrained in us is a long process, but it can be realized. This work presents

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1 Introduction

Stress management plays an important role within the management issues of the system of public policy. Defined by H. Selye as a nonspecific response of the body to any request, the term has seen many definitions and interpretations.

Negative influences of stress on organizational activities have resulted in detailed research on the mechanisms of internal production. The negative effects on efficiency and performance have convinced the managers to form habits of mitigating the impact of stress and keeping of it under control.

Most theorists have noted that there are three stages in processing stress. The first is the reaction is the alarm - the body's first response, a general mobilization of defense forces. The second aimed at the stage of resistance, in which self-regulation mechanisms are activated and, ultimately, Burnout stage, very similar alarm reaction, when, due to the continuation of the action of harmful agents, resistance subsides. How can it be shaped and who is responsible for the resistance to stress? The answers are many. Occupation and lifestyle influence the resistance to stress. Also, labor and life satisfaction, interpersonal relations and intense, rich love fulfilled, etc., make the man less vulnerable to stress.

We considered necessary to study the way in which employees within a company of telecommunications relate to stress. We had in mind, in particular, professional stress, although it is hard to pick a dividing line between professional stress and the nonprofessional one.

2 Research techniques

We opted for the investigation for a self-report survey. This is a type of questionnaire in which respondents read the question and select a response by themselves without researcher interference. The advantages of using this type of questionnaire are:

- the opportunity to obtain various information from a considerable number of persons
- the ability to extrapolate the results of a large-city populations, county, region, country
- the ease to fulfill the questionnaire.

The questionnaire that we have done has a total of 14 questions: 9 research questions and 5 questions are identification-age, service, function, studies and family situation.

3 Sample and objectives

We chose a total of 25 subjects, whom we interviewed. In order to have an image as close we chose both leadership and execution positions.

The main objectives were the following:

- the impact of stress on the professional activity
- to find out if the subjects were pleased with their work
- the importance of domestic factors in generating stress
- the factors that stress the most the subjects
- the influence of personal problems on stress
- the direct relationship between professional stress and work results
- their opinion about the involvement of in reducing stress
- ways of reducing stress-related subjects
- the behavior in stressful situations
- does the superior has any influence in limiting the professional stress.

4 Data processing and interpretation

Data processing and interpretation of the results led to the following conclusions:

Question 1 – Do you considered it necessary to study the impact of stress on a professional activity? The vast majority of subjects – 90% - responded *very much so* and *quite a lot*. Of those who answered, 15% were aged between 26 and 35 years old, and the rest are included in the age group between 36 and 50 years. Most of the subjects interviewed had between 6 and 15 years of experience. Over 75% of those who responded *very much so* are married and have children. These answers clearly show the desire of the subjects to know the positive and negative influences of professional stress.

Question 2 – Do you find your work pleasing? More than half of the subjects interviewed responded *very much so*. More than 70% of them are young, aged between 26 and 35 years old and have a work experience between 6 and 15 years.

Question 3 – Which of the following domestic factors have a great importance in generating professional stress? The answers were as follows:

- Relationships with others: About half of the subjects consider it as having a low significance. While more than a third regard it as a factor of some importance. 9 subjects, who responded *very little importance* have a work experience between 6 and 15 years and 2 have between 16 and 25 years of work experience;
- Task solving has a *low* and *very low* influence in generating professional stress, as stated by 60% of the interviewed subjects. Among those who responded that the influence is *very low*, 6 are between 26 and 35 years old, and 4 are aged between 36 and 50 years. In terms of work experience, 6

subjects had between 6 and 15 years of experience and 4 had from 16 to 25 years of seniority;

- Relations with superiors is *extremely important* and *very important* for about half of the interviewed subjects. Among those who responded that the relation with the superiors is *extremely important*, 2 have a work experience between 6 and 15 years and 4 had between 16 and 25 years of seniority;
- The work environment is *extremely important* and *very important* for 60% of our subjects. Among those who responded that the work environment is *extremely important*, 5 have between 6 and 15 years of experience and 2 have between 16 and 25 years of seniority;
- Professional conflict is *extremely important* and *very important* for 44% of the subjects. Among those who responded that the professional conflicts is *extremely important*, over half of them have more than 16 years of seniority;
- Planning activities is *moderately important* in generating stress for 32% of the subjects. About 20% of the respondents believe that this is *very important* upon stress, most of them having a seniority between 16 and 25 years;
- Insufficient salary is *extremely important* in generating stress for more than 68% of the subjects. Most of them have a seniority between 6 and 15 years.

Question 4 – Family problems have an influence on your stress? More than half of the subjects interviewed responded *in some degree*. Most of them were aged between 26 and 35 years old, with a seniority between 6 and 15 years. As a conclusion, we can say that the subjects interviewed do not have a direct correlation between family and stress.

Question 5 – To what extent do you believe that stress affects your professional work? The vast majority of those who were interviewed, more than 80%, consider stress to affect their work *very much* or *quite a lot*. Among those who consider that stress diminishes the results *very much* and *quite a lot*, nearly half have a work experience between 6 and 15 years old, while the rest have between 16 and 25 years of seniority.

Question 6 – Do you consider that the leaders from the telecommunication company act in order to reduce the occupational stress? More than 56 % consider that the leaders act in *small* and *very small* measure. Those who responded in *very small* degree are 40 % of the subjects. Half of them have 6 to 15 years of seniority and half of them have a work experience between 16 and 25 years. 36% of the subjects answered *in some degree*.

Question 7 – List several methods that you use to reduce stress? The main methods were following:

- Ensuring a *sufficient wage* for a decent living, it's a way that appeared in all of the responses. The general opinion is that subjects need a salary rate to ensure a normal life. Also, subjects do a direct connection between the level of wages and the level of stress;

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- *Leisure activities* (sports, reading) is an effective way for 19 subjects, 89% of them being aged between 26 and 35 years old;
- *Rethinking the organization and functioning methods* used in the telecommunication company is a way used by 16 for subjects out of our 25;
- A greater *freedom of action* is a method used by 12 subjects. This method concerns both professional and nonprofessional preoccupations.

Question 8 – How do you act when you feel stressed? The answers were the following:

- *I rise my voice*: Approximately 32% of the respondents admitted that this is how they act, while 28% admitted that they keep a normal tone;
- *I rush*: 22% of respondents stated that this is the way they react. Almost half of the subjects surveyed admitted that this is not a way they usually react. Most of them are young and have the seniority between 6 and 15 years;
- *I'm looking for bickering around me*: This is a way that 26% of the subjects react;
- *Argue with someone from the family*: This is not a common way to react for approximately half of the subjects;
- *I am short tempered*: This is common for 35% of the subjects interviewed. Most of them are young;
- *I become aggressive*: 68% of respondents stated that they do not react aggressively at all;
- *I am reserved*: 36% of those surveyed responded that this is how they act, half of them being young.

Question 9 – Do you think your superior has any influence in reducing your professional stress? About 92% of the subjects responded that the superior has is *extremely important* and *very important* in limiting stress.

The subjects like very much the actions related to stress management at their workplace. Although there are no systematic actions concerning this, they acknowledge that their existence would be very beneficial. The equipment used remains the biggest sources of stress. In the opinion of the majority, the superior plays a large role in the management of stress at work.

5 Conclusions

From the processing and interpretation of the resulting data as follows:

- the factors with the greatest influence on occupational stress of employees are: insufficient salary, work environment, professional conflicts
- professional stress diminishes the results
- more than half of the subjects find pleasure in their work (of whom 70% are young)
- the family influences in some degree the stress levels

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- the leaders of the telecommunications company are very little involved in reducing stress
- 78% of those interviewed responded that in moments of stress they *rush*
- the superiors have a major influence in reducing stress.

6 Reference

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