

PROCUREMENT TALK - SERIES 7, EPISODE 6

MANAGING STRESS AT WORK

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"Welcome to Procurement Talk and this is your host David Byrne. Procurement Talk is for procurement of business professionals where we provide insights and solutions to your procurement challenges.

Hello and welcome to Procurement Talk. This is your host David Byrne. This episode is titled Managing Stress at Work.

Stress is an interesting subject and it's one that does get a lot of airplay, both within the media and also in the workplace. So being able to manage your workplace and your busy days and everything else that comes with life, it does have an impact on people, so you need to find ways to ensure that you can produce the quality and the volume of work that you would want to achieve, and to ensure that you are successful, and you are happy at work, and you are doing the right thing, not just for yourself, but also for the employees.

There's some obvious ways in helping to manage your stress. I mean, it's well written, good diet, adequate sleep and regular exercise, these are a good priority but how do you make all this work in your workplace? Can you bring a change to your own workplace to help decrease workplace stress levels? You might want to look at potential stresses and de-stresses that exists within your team. Can your workplace provide exercise spaces or classes or relaxation classes like Tai Chi or yoga, or start a lunchtime walking club? I was lucky enough to work in a building once that had a swimming pool and I could go for a swim at lunchtime. It was a great way to actually step out of the workplace and give yourself that break so that your brain, your body, and you can come back refreshed to the afternoon session.

If that's not easy, there are other ways that you could possibly do that - change the business attire so that you wear more comfortable and more casual clothes? Is the workload evenly distributed across the organisation? Are people feeling like it's all being dumped on them, and can we actually manage that differently so people can feel better? Do we have effective and good communication across the organisation, and support that with quality training programs? These are key things because people sometimes feel like they're out in the wilderness and that adds to the stress. But if we've got a good and effective communication process, and backed up by quality of training in place, that really helps the employees to actually step out and feel like they're actually contributing, and not feeling like everything's coming in on top of them.

Organisations have moved to flexible working hours and working from home since COVID, and that's really made a strong difference, but are people ensuring that they are working those flexible hours? Are they taking breaks and having that appropriate time so that their workplace is effective, and managing their hours and how they do activities.

Another idea is, are ideas actually listened to? And this is a common one where you have people within an organisation, they bring ideas and new initiatives to the table and they just don't feel like they're getting anywhere, and this can add to a person's stress because things aren't changing. And we all know that change is constant within an organisation but if new ideas are not being listened to and not being aired and given the appropriate discussion, well, where does that leave you? I mean, that does leave some people disheartened and frustrated, and that can lead to that managing the stress level because things aren't happening at the appropriate speed that you would like. You might find yourself not being listened to by the decision maker on ideas, and I know that can hurt, and some suggestions just don't actually get that airing. So there are some

things you can change within a workplace. And if you've got a decision maker who's not taking up those ideas, that's really disappointing. And, you know, you might want to go over the head or around them if possible. That's not always easy to do, but it could help you in actually managing that stress.

I've read a book, Don't Sweat the Small Stuff that really helped me with managing stress. It really did break down a lot of things for me and I thoroughly do recommend it, so there are plenty of books out there and literature around that can help you in managing your stress, helping you take the necessary steps to ensure that you're comfortable, you're contributing and works going in a positive and less stressful manner.

Sometimes the most productive thing you can do is relax. And that's important. You must be able to relax. It can't just be go, go, go. That's just not the way we're built. It just doesn't work. Much of the stress that people feel doesn't come from having too much to do, it comes from not finishing what we've actually started. So being able to relax, think about it, process it within your brain, so the work that you're doing within the organisation is to the appropriate standard that you do want to do.

There's numerous quotes on stress and you will see them all out there. And some people say there's no stress. There's only people thinking stressful thoughts. Well, you know, and another one is that, there's no pressure, no stress, no headaches unless you play golf. (Well, I don't play golf).

But I understand that stress is an integral part of us as human beings, and so taking the necessary steps to managing stress within your workplace is really, really important.

So if you're a leader or you're an employee, no matter what your role at an organisation, take the necessary steps to manage stress at your workplace. All the very best and bye for now.

This concludes this episode of Procurement Talk. Thank you for listening. Procurement Talk is brought to you by David Byrne and BWD Consulting. We're helping organisations transform procurement. Talk to you again soon. Bye for now".