

Leader's Guide To The CRM Video

MANAGING STRESS

2nd Edition

26 minutes, color

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INTRODUCTION

"Stress." The word itself produces anxiety in our hyperactive, time-crunched 90's. And somehow we've all come to believe that stress is one of those things we must accept as a by-product of our busy, productive lifestyles -- like air pollution and that "disc full" warning that our computer occasionally flashes at us. And to an extent, this is true.

However, imagine our reaction if we were to be told that a single element of our lives has been shown to be primarily responsible, not only for our migraines and lower back pains, but also our reduced productivity at work, even endangering the very longevity of our worklives. Well, I'll bet you can also imagine that our "acceptance" of that element of our lives would come under severe scrutiny. Stress is that element, and it's time we took a new look at how it affects our lives.

In a sense, we're all facing what could be called the *Stress Paradox* of the 90's -- to succeed, to be productive, we all seem to need to confront, even embrace increasing levels of stress in our lives, ultimately risking our productivity and very enjoyment of life. Solutions exist, but they involve relearning some of our basic attitudes about ourselves and our work. For instance, we lavish untold expense

and time into assuring the continued function of our computer workstations and other capital equipment, at the same time all but ignoring the most primal maintenance procedures for our own psyches.

Instead of letting *stress*, the word, become just another stressor in our lives, perhaps we can come to view it much like that "disc full" message, as a warning that a piece of delicate and sophisticated machinery warrants attention. By learning to respect the mind-body connection for what it is, the prime *engine* behind all achievement, then we will be better able to imbue our lives with positive value and purpose, and extend our ability to contribute to our organizations as well.

With this release of **MANAGING STRESS -- 2nd Edition**, an updated version of CRM's classic best-seller, we hope that, in conjunction with the new Training Designs in this recently expanded Leader's Guide, you will be better able to properly maintain the "capital equipment" in your organization into the 90's and beyond.

Kirby Timmons, Creative Director for CRM FILMS

SYNOPSIS

The video begins with a series of short, dramatic scenes that show many of the common stressors we encounter in our lives -- the morning rush to get ourselves and children to work and school, getting caught in a traffic jam on the way to the airport, the exasperation of not being able to get through to the right person by telephone -- these are the signs of our times.

The Host explains that stress may seem like a condition of modern life, but it is really as old as humanity itself. Through an entertaining, animated sequence that takes us back to the days of our caveman ancestors, we learn that stress comes from the *flight or flight* response -- our body's physiological capacity to respond to and escape danger.

In today's world, perceived threats are more likely to be mental rather than physical, leaving us with no direct way to release our stress. That's why the presentation we have to make for members of the board can result in a dry mouth, damp hands and a dangerously racing heart. In a dramatized sequence, Daniel experiences this pressure when he stumbles through his presentation before three somber board members of his company. The fact that his co-worker, Anne Jenkins, comes across much better in her

presentation doesn't help. Anne also experiences stress, but for her, stress becomes a tool to sharpen her performance.

Later, we see Daniel and Anne working with Maggie and their Vice President, Bob, on the deadline for a business report. The Host explains that to understand stress we must understand the events that happen to us and our reaction to them. Without stress we can become bored and unproductive, but if we're under too much stress, our work and homelives can suffer. The solution is to bring these two forces into balance.

During the course of her workday, Maggie encounters increasing levels of stress from both her job and personal life. She can't get the specs she needs for her contribution to the report and she has a guest coming that night for dinner. Already pushed to the limits, Maggie, like so many of us, keeps striving to be the perfect employee and the perfect mate.

Sometimes it's the nature of the job itself that causes stress. Through a sequence that uses aerial combat footage from World War II, we learn that co-pilots, who were

along for the ride, but not in control of their missions, were more likely to break down from stress than the pilots. That's similar to today's workplace, where employees who experience the greatest stress are those who have high demands placed upon them, but who have little control over their jobs -- assembly-line workers, for instance, and service industry workers.

Expanding on this knowledge, the Host tells us that the lack of social support also helps to increase stress. The stressors of carrying more responsibility than authority and the lack of a supportive network also occur in the managerial world. It's particularly acute when we can't control our own schedules. Looking in on Maggie, we see that she's now drowning in paperwork, while Anne and David clash with each other in V.P. Bob's presence, over who to use as a printer for the report. The conflict comes from a confusion over the roles each has been assigned and from the inability to change the other person's opinion.

Unhappily, Bob intervenes. The lack of support in Anne, Maggie and Daniel's work environment turns competition with each other into a threat and increases their anxiety levels. Back in a conference with Bob, we see the pressure mount for all of them. It's enhanced, as the Host explains, by the fear of failure and the fear of rejection. Unwittingly, Bob undermines the confidence of his team by his own lack of support.

Despite the nature of our jobs and the pressures we experience, the Host says, it's our response to stress, that ultimately determines its effect on our lives. If we don't release it, we pay consequences that can include intestinal and heart disease. Unfortunately, Maggie continues to have difficulty dealing with her stress. When she still can't get the specs from David, she boils. David shifts the pressure down the line to his fork lift operator.

In another animated sequence, we see our caveman ancestors exploring a modern-day response to stress -- alcohol and cigarettes. The scene switches to a contemporary office party, where Ann, Bob, Daniel and Maggie rank among those who smoke and drink. The Host points out that these coping strategies can create even greater health problems, including cancer and emphysema.

Examining why some people seem to endure stress better than others, the Host reviews the classic study of Type A

and Type B personalities. An animated sequence takes us through the character traits of each. The Type A figure goes into a frenzy when he answers a telephone call, demonstrating aggressive, obsessive behavior. Mr. Type B answers his telephone in a relaxed, even placid, manner. For Type A personalities, stress is negative. Their hostile behavior often alienates those around them and they lose their support network, creating a debilitating cycle.

The Host talks about the steps we can take to cope with stress in a positive way. We need to determine if an event is worth getting upset about and we need to learn to live with change. Getting his staff together for another meeting, Bob takes responsibility for the mounting tensions in his group. He uses humor to break the ice, and invites each person's input to arrive at a more realistic schedule. He also defines the role each one of them will play. In turn, Daniel takes a more assertive approach, explaining that in order to do a quality report, he needs help to update the research and create a new spread sheet. Bob sets a time to meet with him.

Over footage of an assembly-line and an office setting, the Host encourages companies to allow workers to participate in the decision-making process and to personalize their work environments. A supportive, comfortable atmosphere can improve productivity. Cutting to a sequence in an Employee Assistance office, Daniel talks with a counselor. We find out that many Employee Assistance Programs are equipped to help individuals deal with stress.

The Host also shows us steps individuals can take on their own to reduce stress -- physical exercise, a healthy, low-fat diet, relaxation techniques, meditation, biofeedback, etc. Demonstrating these techniques, Anne practices a breathing and visualization exercise at her desk, while Maggie learns to let her anger out and then go on. Later we see Maggie and Anne talking out some of their frustrations together. That, too, helps to release their stress.

Another way to get our lives back into control, the Host reminds us, is to establish priorities, then handle each task in order. Still, there will be times in our lives when we can not change a difficult situation. It's up to us to decide whether or not to move on. Finally, the Host implores us to be good to ourselves, to take time out for a movie or other fun pursuits. Coping with stress, he says, doesn't mean eliminating it altogether, it means putting our lives into a proper balance.

BACKGROUND

The subject of stress is one of paramount concern in today's workplace. When our lives and jobs are in balance,

a certain amount of stress provides a natural resource of energy and stimulation, challenging us to do our best work

But when there is too much stress -- either from outside events or internal pressures, both we and our work suffer.

There is no doubt that this negative stress affects the health of our employees and their attitudes toward work, which in turn affects the organization's level of success. Job burn-out, accidents, absenteeism and low productivity have been proved to be caused by the effects of stress, and large and small companies alike are recognizing the importance of addressing this most important issue.

The Stressors in Our Life

Stress, especially in today's world, is a complex affair -- an intricate web woven between the events in our lives and our own reactions to them. To understand how this web affects us, it's important first of all to distinguish between "stressors" and "stress."

A "stressor" is any external event (a new job, an unrealistic deadline, a divorce, moving to a new town) that creates a feeling of disequilibrium in an individual. "Stress" is our physiological and psychological reaction to the stressors in our life. If we react well to these stressors, stress may help us meet a challenging situation -- whether it be climbing a mountain or meeting a deadline. But if the event -- and our own reaction to it -- is overwhelming, the result may be negative feelings of anxiety or tension.

The Stress Response

Dr. Hans Selye, in his pioneering work at the University of Montreal, defined the physiological stress response. It starts when the stressor event triggers the nervous system, which signals the adrenal and pituitary glands. These glands produce the hormones ACTH, cortisone, and cortisol, which stimulate protective bodily reactions. An increased heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension give us energy and prepare us to cope with the stressor event. This response, called the "fight or flight" response, was a necessary one for our primitive ancestors. When they encountered a wild beast, it gave them the energy to either fight back or to flee. It can still be appropriate in today's world when we are faced with a runaway vehicle, an athletic competition, or even a challenging assignment. But many situations in modern life -- from a frustrating traffic jam to the tragic death of a loved one -- give us the same rush of excess hormones, but no way to release them. All too often, they build up to toxic levels in the body.

How Stress Affects Our Health Negatively

New clinical experimental research is revealing what has been suspected for a long time: stressful situations can have a considerable variety of unfortunate medical consequences. It is estimated that 60 to 90% of visits to health care professionals are for stress related disorders. The physical stress response may increase the probability of a

wide range of illnesses -- gastrointestinal disorders, hypertension, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, tuberculosis, influenza, pneumonia, and a host of minor afflictions such as colds, headaches, and insomnia. In addition, stress increases unhealthy behaviors such as cigarette smoking and alcohol use, which lead to yet more disease.

Stress and Personality

Of course, not everyone reacts to the same stressors in the same way. This was first examined by Drs. Meyer Friedman and Ray H. Rosenman in the now classic study of Type A and Type B personalities. In the doctors' initial study of some 3,500 men aged 39 to 59 with no known history of heart disease, Friedman and Rosenman classified their personalities as either Type A or Type B. The Type A personality was one with intense drive and ambition, aggressiveness, competitiveness, a need to get things done and to meet deadlines, visible restlessness, impatience, and hostility. Type B personalities were described as people with an easygoing manner, patient, able to take time to appreciate leisure and beauty, unpreoccupied with social achievement, not driven by the clock, and less competitive than Type A's.

Of the subjects who developed coronary artery disease, 70% were from the Type A group.

Recently, some researchers have expanded the basic classification to include Type C and Type D personalities. In her book, "Winning Ways," Dr. Gayle Carson describes Type C people as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of organizations -- loyal, faithful and honest. They're team players, the mediators of the office who prize stability and can be resistant to change. Having to make too many decisions is stressful for them. Perhaps that is why Type C's often work in staff support jobs.

Carson describes people with Type D personalities as people who need to acquire all the details before they make a decision. Motivated by logic, they like tasks that require documentation, and are therefore excellent at analysis and research. D's channel their ego into their work and performance. They're most comfortable in a structured environment. A loss of procedure is stressful for them.

The response to stressors may be determined not only by personality type, but also by sex. Georgia Witkin-Lanoil in her books *The Female Stress Syndrome* and *The Male Stress Syndrome* indicate women and men may perceive stress differently as a result of their upbringing and physiology. Men, for instance, feel stressed if they haven't achieved their career goals by a particular stage in their lives -- the infamous mid-life crisis -- while high-achieving women often experience guilt rather than satisfaction with their success -- believing that career accomplish-

ments have come at the expense of their families and social life.

Understanding the different ways people respond to the stressors in their lives can help organizations develop a more healthful and productive work environment.

Sources of Stress in the Organization

A study by Dr. Robert Kurasek of the University of Southern California School of Industrial Engineering has found that the employees who had more stress-related cardiovascular illnesses were those who had jobs in which high demands were placed on them, but who were given a very low degree of control. These kinds of jobs can be anything from an assembly line job, which demands a high degree of concentrated repetition with no opportunity for independent thinking, to customer service jobs in which the employee had to satisfy demanding customers but had no authority to change procedure. Kurasek also found that those same people had a low degree of social and emotional support, which was another factor in inducing stress-related illness.

The Unstable Global Marketplace

Another source of stress relates to the changing global marketplace. For decades, employees could expect loyalty to their company would pay off in job stability and a comfortable retirement. But the wild fluctuations in currencies, commodities and the stock markets that created the mergers and take-overs of the 1980's changed all that. Job insecurity has become the number one stress for many employees. Peter G. Hanson notes in his book *Stress for Success* (Doubleday, 1989), that organizations who "manage their stress and their employees' stress competently and ethically will do well in the long term." That means retaining and reassigning employees when possible, or delivering a good severance package and outplacement counseling when employment has to be terminated. During an upsurge in the marketplace, these companies will find a ready pool of loyal, experienced and committed people to fill their positions.

The Impersonal High-tech Workplace

Today's high-tech, computerized work place is now being recognized as a particularly stressful environment. White-collar workers often engage in the kind of repetitive work long endured by assembly-line workers. The tasks leave them prone to eyestrain, headaches, occupational cervicobrachial syndrome (the result of holding arms in an unnatural position for long periods of time), and mental burnout. According to a study by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, these workers register a higher level of stress related complaints than any other group, even air traffic controllers.

The Affects of Stress in the Organization

The affects of stress within an organization can be costly, resulting in absenteeism, job dissatisfaction and turnover. In their article "Combating Job Stress," professors Pamela L. Perrewe and Frank A. Vickory of Florida State University point out that work overload is often indicated as a factor in worker's compensation claims. The overload can be quantitative -- too much to get done in a period of time -- or qualitative -- the individual does not have the knowledge, skills or ability to perform the work satisfactorily. The monetary cost of stress-related worker's compensation can number in the millions of dollars for large organizations.

Managing Stress

As organizations become aware of the need to reduce stress, they are giving employees more control over their jobs and work environments through such concepts as flexible work hours, personalized work settings and participation in goals, policies and decision-making. Many are also developing Employee Assistance Programs to help employees alleviate stressful situations.

To complement their organization's programs, individuals can begin to practice their own stress management techniques that will help them in all aspects of their lives -- personal as well as work related.

The following activities have been found to be important methods for managing stress.

Stress Management Techniques at Work

- Develop a support network. Discussing problems with colleagues, not necessarily those we have conflict with, can help to release frustration.
- Practice time management. Learn how to prioritize. Don't be afraid to delegate tasks. Recognize when you fall into the trap of perfectionism.
- Use assertiveness techniques. Find out when it's right to say "no" or best to be honest.
- Practice good communication techniques. Give co-workers advance notice of deadlines. Give and encourage feedback. Also realize that some people just won't change no matter what we do or say.
- Help foster participative management.
- Encourage supportive and personalized work environments.

Personal Stress Management Techniques

Exercise: Since stress starts as a physiological response, one of the best ways of reducing stressful feelings is to release them through physical exercise. Regular exercise also helps to release *endorphins* -- chemicals in the brain that make you feel good. Exercise may take many forms - gym workouts, sports activities, or one of the best methods, a regular walking program.

Health and Nutrition: Research has shown that the diet is an important factor in elevating -- or reducing -- stress. For instance, since fats take longer to digest than other foods, blood is diverted from the brain to the stomach, and our energy level is lowered. Depending on sugar's empty calories for energy too often leads to a fast let-down. Caffeine also contributes to anxiety, restlessness and insomnia, which in turn raise the stress level. On the other hand, a good diet rich in complex carbohydrates, fruits, and vegetables will deliver the sustained energy that allows one to be productive, thus actually reducing stress levels.

Although alcohol and cigarettes may seem to reduce stress, in reality they don't solve any problems and only contribute to illness. If you suspect you may be a substance abuser, you are encouraged to seek guidance and counseling.

Hobbies and Family Activities: It's important to get away from the pressures of the job and gain a fresh perspective. Hobbies and other family activities take your mind off worries, give you personal satisfaction, and increase your self-esteem -- all important things that will help you face your job with renewed energy. Family and friends will also act as a support network to increase your own self-confidence.

Relaxation Techniques: Mental relaxation exercises can help to reverse the physical symptoms of stress and in turn help one manage stress. There are a variety of relaxation exercises you can do. One of the simplest, which can be performed right in one's office and only takes 5 to 10 minutes is described below.

- Select a comfortable sitting position, away from people and other distractions.
- Close your eyes. Slowly tighten and then relax muscles that feel tense. Begin with your feet and work up to your neck.
- Breathe slowly and deeply, and with each breath count backward from 10 to 1, one number for each breath you exhale.

- Pick an image to concentrate on -- imagine yourself floating on a puffy white cloud, or walking along a tranquil tropical beach. Dismiss all other thoughts from your mind and think only of this peaceful image.

- After a few minutes, slowly take a deep breath and open your eyes. Gently wiggle your fingertips, feet and arms, then stretch your whole body.

- Return to your activities with renewed energy.

Use Your Sense of Humor: Laughter helps you put things in perspective, gets your mind off your troubles, and also releases those brain endorphins.

Be Good to Yourself: Sometimes you need to comfort yourself for a specific time before getting back to the task at hand. A treat might be a good movie, a relaxing dinner, or even a hot spa bath.

Put Yourself in Control: Be aware of when you feel stress, then analyze if it is really important enough to get upset about. Distinguish between those things that you can and cannot change. Realize when you do things only because you "ought to" or "should." Have the courage to be imperfect. Finally, ask yourself: "What's more important -- my health or their approval?"

The C Zone of Peak Performance

In their book, *The C Zone: Peak Performance Under Pressure*, Robert Kriegel and Marilyn Harris Kriegel set up a model that uses positive stress to stimulate consistent peak performance -- what they call the *C Zone*. By being confident, committed and in control, individuals move back and forth between mastering challenges and creating new challenges for themselves -- continually upping the ante and playing for higher stakes.

Organizations, too, need to identify the difference between mastery and challenge, so they can continue to provide employees with a stimulating work environment.

SUGGESTED TRAINING DESIGNS

The Training Designs presented here will reinforce and expand the main points of the video **MANAGING STRESS -- 2nd Edition**. Both Training Designs help participants apply stress-reducing techniques that will enhance their physical and mental health. The first Training Design focuses on actions individuals can take to reduce stress in their work places and personal lives. The second helps managers identify the sources of stress in their or-

ganizations and find ways to eliminate stressful situations.

In choosing the Training Design that best suits your needs, consider the size, character and goals of your training group. Feel free to put your individual stamp on the workshop, by combining the Discussion Starters and exercises into a design of your own.

OBJECTIVES

After watching **MANAGING STRESS -- 2nd Edition** and taking part in the Training Designs, participants should be able to:

- Understand the origins and physiology of stress.
- Identify the common sources of stress in both the work place and our personal lives.

- Evaluate our capacity to cope with stress according to individual personality type.

- Apply a number of stress-coping techniques available.

- Alleviate stressful situations in our organizations.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1.) When you say "I'm under stress" or "I'm stressed out," what do you mean? What is the difference between stress and a stressor?

2.) Is stress always a negative thing? Name some of the positive aspects of stress.

3.) Describe your own personality. Do you recognize characteristics in yourself that cause you undue anxiety such as perfectionism, obsessiveness, competitiveness, fear of failure, etc.? How do you deal with these anxieties? Is there a way to channel these personalities traits into positive action?

4.) What jobs do you think are the most stressful? Airline pilot, police officer, fire fighter, stockbroker, doctor, etc. What jobs do you think are least stressful? Secretary, customer service worker, assembly-line worker, directory assistance operator, cook, etc.? Give the reasons for your answer.

5.) Think of one or two situations that have recently occurred in which you felt "stressed out." Was it the situation or your own personality traits that caused the stressful

situation? Analyze if it was worth getting upset about, or if there was another way to react to the event.

6.) Are you able to control the pace of your work and choose how you will approach your tasks? What steps can you take to bring more control to your job? If you're not able to change your job situation, what steps can you take to cope more positively with the inevitable stress? Time management, communication, assertiveness techniques, etc. Have you used these techniques or others to manage your stress level?

7.) Think about a situation when you were so fearful of the consequence that you were unable to act -- missing a deadline to make your project better, changing your job, discussing a problem with the boss. Then make a list of the worst possible scenarios that might have occurred.

8.) Have your multiple roles at both work and home increased your stress level? How would you resolve this conflict?

9.) Evaluate your style as a manager. Examine the way you communicate, the demands you make, the expectations

you convey, the nature of your criticism, the tasks you delegate -- do any of these create stressful situations for your subordinates? If so, what can you do to reduce the

stressors in their work lives? Regular meetings, more realistic deadlines, role clarifications, support system, etc.?

TRAINING DESIGN #1 -- *MANAGING STRESS* (2 hours)

(Supplies needed: A flip chart, easel, marking pen or blackboard and chalk.)

1.) Introduce the workshop and explain to the group that today's Training Design will explore the nature of stress and our individual responses to it, both at work and in our personal lives. Ask the group two or three questions from the Discussion Starters on Page 6. Then, ask them to relate some events in their lives that cause them stress. Write the most common responses on a flipchart or blackboard. (15 minutes)

2.) Have participants complete Exercise A. (25 minutes)

3.) After the group discusses the results of Exercise A, show the video **MANAGING STRESS -- 2nd Edition**. (26 minutes)

4.) Ask the group to describe their individual personalities. Are they predominantly Type A or Type B? What significance does this have for them? After seeing the video, can they identify the personality types of their bosses and co-workers? (15 minutes)

5.) Ask the group how they can apply their understanding of Type A and Type B behavior to their relationships at home and at work. (15 minutes)

6.) Using the flip chart or blackboard, look again at the stressful situations the group discussed before viewing the video. How would they handle these situations now? (20 minutes)

7.) Finally, review the stress reduction techniques of exercise, healthy low-fat diet, relaxation techniques, a sense of humor and taking time out for yourself. (5 minutes)

TRAINING DESIGN #2 -- *REDUCING STRESS* (2 hours)

(Supplies needed: A flip chart, easel, marking pen or blackboard and chalk.)

1.) Introduce the workshop and explain to participants that the purpose of this training session is to learn how to create a less stressful working environment for their employees. Ask participants to describe situations in their workplace they believe are particularly stressful. Write the most common answers on a flipchart or blackboard. (10 minutes)

2.) Choose one or two of the situations. Ask the group what they would do to alleviate the stress. (15 minutes)

3.) Have participants complete Exercise B. (25 minutes)

4.) After the group discusses their responses to Exercise B, show the video **MANAGING STRESS -- 2nd Edition**. (26 minutes)

5.) Ask participants to discuss some of the management stress reduction techniques seen in the video. Are these techniques they have ever tried? What were the results? (10 minutes)

6.) Discuss the section of the video on Type A and Type B personalities. How does knowing if an employee is Type A or Type B affect how participants manage them? (10 minutes)

7.) Ask participants about the management implications of handling Type A versus Type B employees. What tasks best suit Type A's while creating minimal stress? Type B's? (10 minutes)

8.) Go back to some of the stressful situations listed on the flipchart or blackboard. How would participants handle them now? (10 minutes)

9.) Review the steps managers can take to reduce stress in the workplace -- open communication, reasonable work loads, personalized work environments, participation in decision-making, etc. (5 minutes)

BALANCING ACT -- WORKSHEET I (Exercise A)

Since stress is a fact of life, we must all learn how to cope with it. Each of us can help maintain good physical and mental health by learning how to balance the negative stressors in our lives with stress reduction techniques. These techniques involve both positive behaviors and positive attitudes. Picture your life as a seesaw. Too many negative stressors can pull you close to the ground. Positive stress reducers keep us in balance -- or even lift us high in the air. Respond to the following **True** or **False** questions as honestly as you can.

1.) I set unrealistic goals for myself.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>
2.) I feel rested when I wake up in the morning.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>
3.) I am anxious about my personal finances.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>
4.) I have a support network of co-workers, friends and family.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>
5.) I eat foods that are high in calories, saturated fats and low in fiber.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>
6.) I set my priorities and pace out my day.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>
7.) I suffer from low self-esteem due to the way I perceive my physical appearance, education, family background, job skills, etc.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>
8.) I follow a prescribed exercise routine.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>
9.) I drink, smoke or take other drugs.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>
10.) I practice relaxation techniques -- yoga, meditation, self-hypnosis, visualization, etc.	True? <input type="checkbox"/> or False? <input type="checkbox"/>

SCORING: Odd numbered statements, **1, 3, 5, 7** and **9**, indicate negative stressors in your life. For each of these that you marked True, give yourself minus 10 points. Add up the score to get your total minus points.

Even numbered statements, **2, 4, 6, 8**, and **10**, indicate Stress Reducers in your life. For each of these that you marked True, give yourself plus 10 points. Add up the score to get your total positive points.

Add your minus points and your positive points together. (Example: -50 added to a +40 equals a -10). See whether you come in on the plus side or negative side of the balance. A high positive score means you're ahead of the game in reducing stress. A high negative score indicates a red alert. You need to start practicing stress reduction techniques now. A low negative score, low positive score or a zero means there is ample room for improvement in your stress reduction techniques.

A STRESS REDUCTION SELF-EVALUATION -- WORKSHEET II (Exercise B)

Today's employees are experiencing unprecedented levels of stress in the workplace due to everything from changes in the worldwide market to new, impersonal, high-tech environments. The following statements will help you determine if your management style increases or decreases worker related stress. Consider each statement carefully and answer it as honestly as you can. See **SCORING** Key in Exercise B, page 10.

1.) I set realistic schedules for my subordinates.

Mostly Often Rarely Never

2.) I give my subordinates the opportunity to set their own pace during the course of the day.

Mostly Often Rarely Never

3.) I give and encourage feedback from my employees.

Mostly Often Rarely Never

4.) As long as their performance is good, I don't try to change subordinates, but accept their personality differences.

Mostly Often Rarely Never

5.) I am direct and assertive with my employees, and not afraid to say "no."

Mostly Often Rarely Never

6.) I realize my employees will make mistakes, and try to turn their mistakes into learning experiences.

Mostly Often Rarely Never

7.) I refrain from losing my temper when my subordinates' performance doesn't meet my expectations.

Mostly Often Rarely Never

8.) I invite my subordinates to participate in the decision-making process.

Mostly Often Rarely Never

9.) I let my subordinates personalize their work environment.

Mostly Often Rarely Never

10.) I am flexible and don't impose a rigid set of rules on my subordinates.

Mostly Often Rarely Never

EXERCISE A -- YOUR PERSONAL STRESS INDEX (25 minutes)

- 1.) Explain to the group that to cope with negative stress, we need to evaluate how well our state of mind and personal habits balance the stressors in our lives.
- 2.) Make a copy of **Worksheet I** on Page 8 of the Leader's Guide and pass them out to the participants. Ask them to fill them out.
- 3.) After participants have completed **Worksheet I**, have them total up their scores, using the formula outlined at

the bottom of the **Worksheet**. The formula adds total negative points to total positive points to let participants know if they are succeeding or failing in their stress reduction techniques.

- 4.) Ask the participants to reflect on their test scores. Did they end up on the positive or negative side of the equation? In what areas do they most need to improve?

EXERCISE B -- STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE (25 minutes)

- 1.) Explain to the participants that the purpose of this exercise is for managers to determine if their style creates or reduces stress in their employee's work lives.
- 2.) Make copies of **Worksheet II** on page 9 and hand it out to the participants. Ask them to answer each question as truthfully as they can.
- 3.) After they have completed **Worksheet II**, have them total up their scores according to the following: For every **Mostly** give yourself 10 points; every **Often** earns you 6 points; every **Rarely** gets 2 points; and **Never** rates 0

points. **90-100** means you've got the stressors under control in your department; **80-90** indicates you have a good grasp of stress reducing techniques; **70-90** reveals that you need to create a less stressful environment for your employees; **60-70** should push you to consider a change in your management style; **under 60** means your subordinates may start wearing panic buttons.

- 4.) Ask the group to discuss their responses to the questions. What areas need the most improvement if they're going to successfully alleviate employee stress?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Baker, Bob. "Assembly Line Stress in Offices," Los Angeles Times. June 13, 1991, Section A, Pg. 1, 28-29.

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A Case of Working Smarter, Not Harder

This film offers exciting new perspectives on innovative strategies for success in such key management issues as

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Help your organization create a pleasant and productive work environment by exploring the factors that influence employee satisfaction including interpersonal relationships, the communications channels they use, shared values and goals, and the distribution of responsibility.

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Here's how to create a more pleasant, more productive environment for supervisors and employees alike. Reduce stress and improve job performance. These true-to-life vignettes will help your managers work through common conflict management issues.

Working with Difficult People

Supervisory and non-supervisory groups alike will benefit from this focus on three characters, each of whom works with a person who exhibits difficult behavior. Film points out specific strategies and steps to take in order to achieve a successful result.

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Shows that although we cannot control time, we can control how our time is spent. Viewers will learn that the art of better time management lies in setting goals and priorities.

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