

# Chapter 11: Job Stress

## Objectives

- Understanding stress in the workplace.
- Identifying good and bad stress.
- Changing bad stress.
- Evaluating your job stress.
- Changing overpowering stress to empowering stress.

## Working Vocabulary

- **Stress:** Stress is a mentally or emotionally disruptive influence.
- **Overpower:** Anything that appears too large or difficult to deal with may overpower you.
- **Empower:** Anything that gives you the feeling that you are successful and in control empowers you.

## For Discussion

You cannot avoid stress on the job. Good stress pumps you up, and bad stress drains you. If the demands of a job are so strong that they overpower you, you must make changes. Either you take another job or work on changing the stress. If you want to keep your job and are working toward your long-term goals, then work on reducing your stress.

How do you lessen stress on the job? Identify what is causing you the greatest stress. Is it your boss, co-workers, personal problems, lack of skills, health, lack of time, fatigue, or something else? Discovering the source is the first step in reducing your stress.

Now think about stress in your daily life outside of work? What causes you the most stress? What strategies do you use outside of work to combat stress? How could you start to use those same strategies at work?

## **Presentation Suggestions**

### ***Use with Pages 170–175***

Begin by introducing the vocabulary words. Have the class read the top of page 170 silently. Next, write the points from the Example on the board or overhead. Ask students to add to the list of job stresses. Have students complete the Stop and Think on pages 170–171 individually. Share responses as a whole class. Then read page 171 silently.

Ask students to name ways stress can affect you. Discuss the difference between good and bad stress, as well as what makes it good or bad.

Have students complete the Stop and Think on page 172. When students have finished, invite them to share stories from their lives about when these stresses have affected them.

Review the definition of *overpower*. Have students complete the Stop and Think on page 173 individually and discuss it as a whole group.

Ask students whether they truly believe that bad stress can be changed to good or motivating stress. Briefly discuss. Ask students to quickly complete the Stop and Think on page 174 individually. Then ask a student to read aloud the paragraphs underneath the Stop and Think on pages 174–175.

### ***Use with Pages 176–180***

Direct students to complete the Stop and Think on page 176 individually. (For students currently unemployed, suggest they consider their most recent job or one they have interviewed for.) Consider having students tear out page 176 and place it in their yellow folders.

Direct the class to move immediately to the Stop and Think on pages 177–178. Have students complete it individually. Allow time to divide students into small groups to discuss their responses. Some students may be able to share personal experiences that address questions 1–4.

Ask a student to read aloud “Turn Overpowering Stress into Empowering Stress” on page 178. Have students discuss and then complete the Stop and Think on page 179. Allow time for students to share voluntarily with the whole class. Ask, “When is it important to change overpowering stress?”

Divide students into small groups to complete the Stop and Think on page 180. When the groups have finished, ask a group representative to share the group’s suggestions. Write these on the board or overhead and allow time for discussion.

If possible, you should consider bringing in resources for coping with stress. This could include informational pamphlets, brochures for stress reduction classes and programs, or a list of books and Web sites that students can go to for more information.

If you have the time, use the “**Difficult Situations**” activity to help students brainstorm and role-play solutions to stressful circumstances. Alternatively, you can use the “**Job Stress Crossword**” activity as a quick review.

### ***Until Next Time***

Stress can cause you to want to quit your job. But what can you do if you really want to *keep* it? How do you get job security? What does job security even mean? In today’s economy is there *anything* you can do to ensure that you keep your job? Think about these questions for the next class.