



Managing Stress in the Workplace

By: Evelyn Scotten – President, InfoSYS Inc. | May 2006

As managers in today's fast-paced workplace, we are all challenged with stressors. Your staff looks to you to "clear the way" for the job to be done and service to be delivered. Moreover, stress in today's offices has changed from years past. Client expectations are higher, technology is more advanced. Life in general is more challenging.

In order to maintain a high level of productivity and happy employees, it is important to facilitate stress relief in the workplace as well as alleviate stress as much as possible. How is this done?

Let's look at a few common stressors:

- Unrealistic expectations by the client, management or the company at large
- Conflict in the workplace
- Unanticipated demands
- Job insecurity
- No balance between work and life
- Incompetent co-workers
- Change in the workplace

Every company has had experience dealing with some or all of the stressors listed above. It seems overwhelming to think about the challenge of solving these issues. Your staff can be empowered, however, to tackle some of these problems and solve them. Not only will this relieve stress in the workplace, moreover, your employees will have the satisfaction of being "problem-solvers" on their own!

Allocate time realistically. Work with your staff to set realistic goals for their day and year. **Encourage** your staff to understand priorities in the office and focus on those actions that are most important and activities that will have the most positive impact on the organization. Technology tools are in abundance. **Educate** your staff on the use of Outlook or an electronic planner to

schedule each goal and activity to commit to accomplish, not just appointments. If that report will take two hours to write, schedule the two hours just as you would a meeting. If reading and responding to email takes an hour per day, schedule the hour.

Reconsider some meetings. Why hold meetings in the first place? An effective meeting serves an essential purpose - it is an opportunity to share information and/ or to solve a critical problem. Meetings should only happen when interaction is required.

Applying some of the ideas above may alleviate several workplace stressors such as life/work balance, dealing with unrealistic expectations and unanticipated demand response. Your staff will be better-prepared to deal with these issues when they have more time.

Change in the workplace is common. Help your employees navigate through change by staying informed and being informative. No one likes speculation or surprises. One of the most stressful aspects of change is a lack of feeling of control. Information gives people a sense of control. It is important to share appropriate information with your staff. This fosters trust and commitment. Share the "big picture" but also provide details that will give your staff "peace of mind" as they navigate change and contemplate what it means to them.

Under-performing staff drags the team down. Not addressing under-performing staff issues sends a message that either management is not adept at troubleshooting or that mediocre performance is acceptable. This will surely cause turnover and worse. Address the under-performing staff member in person and confidentially. Set a performance management objective and monitor improvement.

May 2006 Issue

Managing Workplace Stress

President's Commentary

Meeting Agenda

Meeting Location

Next Meeting Info

Managing SLAs

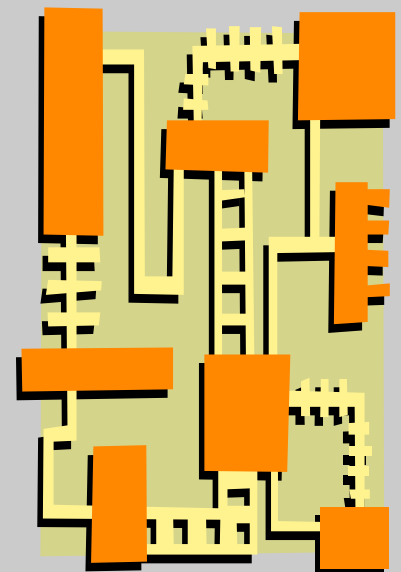
Guest Speaker – Julie Mohr

ITSMF Event Info

Calendar

This month's Sponsor:

Spherion





President Commentary

A Message from the President

Oscar Gomez – Help Desk Manager

Seen and Heard In Nashville.

I attended the National Conference in Nashville, Tennessee this past month. The theme at this year's event was "Getting Connected". This is a fundamental action that we here in our Sacramento Chapter should take action on. Getting connected is more than just shaking a strangers hand or saying hi before a meeting. I define getting connected as action words that are career changing.

In our monthly meetings, we are represented by different companies that all do the same thing; we are all Help Desk Professionals. We answer phones, we resolve problems and we provide answers to the many questions our customers have. The person you never met in the seat in front of you does the same thing as the person behind you. They work for different companies but fundamentally, do the same thing. It is an amazing thing when someone comes to me and asks how we do this or that, and we become engaged in conversation that we both learn

something new. It is an amazing thing that occurs when people start talking, when people start getting connected.

In our local chapter, we plan monthly meetings that promote getting connected. Each meeting, there is a 45 minute window that we call our meet and greet session. What better way to initiate a conversation and meet someone new. What better way to reinforce ideas you have with someone who may have gone through the same thing. That is what HDI local chapters are all about, getting connected locally so we learn from each other. We learn what works and what doesn't. We find out what's new and what is being passed out. We learn sometimes that new fads are duds or the next best thing.

The Sacramento Chapter meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month. We invite you to our meetings as our guests. Membership is suggested however come check us out a couple times and see for yourself what getting connected in Sacramento is all about.

Meeting Agenda

Thursday May 18, 2006

Start Time: 3:00pm

| Time | Topic |
|-------------|--|
| 2:15 – 3:00 | Meet and Greet (Join the chapter officers, members, and guests for this informal networking opportunity) |
| 3:00 – 4:45 | Guest Speaker – Julie Mohr |
| 4:45 – 5:00 | Door Prize Drawing |

Meeting Location

Delta Dental

11155 International Drive Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Next Meeting Info

We will not be meeting in June 2006.

We'll see you again in July!





How to Maintain Your Service Level Agreements

Spherion Pacific Enterprises LLC | 2005

How to Maintain Your SLAs

Conducting ongoing maintenance of your SLAs is important for ensuring they are still relevant as new technology and processes are introduced into the support environment. The following four steps will assist you in your maintenance efforts:

1. Conduct monthly performance review meetings with customers, management & staff

- It's important to conduct monthly performance review meetings with your customers, management, staff and other support areas. This allows everyone the opportunity to identify any changes in the service environment. You may also want to add a change clause or addition as an addendum to the SLA to allow mutually agreed upon changes.

2. Conduct proactive analysis of service disruptions

- Proactively analyze SLA compliance and non-compliance. This should easily be accomplished if the proper reporting and analysis processes were created during the development phase. It is recommended that the types and frequency of analysis be written into the SLA.

3. Renegotiate & adjust SLA reporting requirements as your business changes

- While conducting the monthly review meetings and analyzing SLA results, you may find that you need to renegotiate and adjust the established criteria. You may also need to adjust the reporting requirements to reflect changes in business initiatives, products and services.

4. Establish an annual process to review & update your SLAs

- Establishing an annual process to review and update your SLAs is a very important part of the SLA maintenance process. Even if your environment hasn't changed much over the past year, you should still review and analyze your service level agreements with your customers, as there may be a need for some minor changes made.

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Julie Mohr

Director of Professional Services with IHS Support Solutions

Guest Speaker Bio

Julie Mohr is the Director of Professional Services with IHS Support Solutions. For over 14 years, Julie has been passionate about service and support management. Her broad range of experiences include working as a Managing Consultant for outsourcing providers ARC and Pomeroy as well as NASA, The National Institute of Health and the Department of Education.

Julie is a certified Helpdesk Director from Helpdesk 2000 and certified ITIL Service Manager. Julie provides imaginative insight and dynamic leadership to transform IT service and support organizations into best practice, customer-focused environments.

Julie has helped organizations to implement Knowledge Management, ITIL processes, organization structures, service catalogues, and service level management. Julie is an active contributor to the future development of the industry through speaking engagements at conferences and publishing articles on best practices.

Julie is the author of The Help Desk Audit: Blueprint for Success, The Help Desk Toolkit: Companion CD and The Help Desk Dictionary, and maintains a service desk enhancement website at www.blueprintaudits.com.

She is also a member of IEEE Computer Society, the Help Desk Institute, itSMF, ICMI and the Association of Support Professionals.

June ITSMF Event

ITIL on the River

June 20th, 2006, 8:00am – 5:00pm

Delta King, Old Sacramento

<http://www.itilontheriver.com/>

May 2006

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------|-----------|-------------------------|--------|----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 Mother's Day | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 HDI Meeting | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 Ascension Day | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 Memorial Day | 30 | 31 | | | |

May Sponsor



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