



Welcome

Welcome to our second newsletter. Please feel free to contact us if you would like to discuss any aspect of the newsletter. Our contact details are at the bottom of this page. You are most welcome to forward this to your friends and colleagues.

Minimizing Workplace Stress by Identifying Key Causes

The purpose of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 (Act) is that every employer shall take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of employees while at work and protect them from harm. "Harm" is defined in the Act as:

- illness, injury or both; and
- includes physical or mental harm caused by *work related stress*.

The way for employers to meet these requirements under the Act is to identify sources of workplace conflict and then to eliminate, isolate or minimize them.

Blaine Donais, a Canadian employment lawyer, has identified four sources of workplace conflict. Donais is the author of *Workplaces That Work – A Guide to Conflict Management in Union and Non Union Work Environments* (Canada Law Book Company, 2006).

Every workplace has conflict. Conflict must be handled in a fair way, rather than in a subjective or arbitrary way.

Workplace fairness is all about creating a workplace culture that promotes alternative systems to deal with conflicts with the ultimate aim being to equip organizations to manage conflicts before it escalates into disputes.

The four sources of workplace conflict for Donais are:

- **Interpersonal:** These are the most easily identifiable sources of conflict and range from a clash of personality, stress, office politics, through to ethnic, cultural or gender issues (sometimes leading to harassment and drive for achievement).
- **Organisational:** Organisational conflict stems from a variety of managerial and structural sources including hierarchies, which create power differences and communication blockages, differences in work styles and management styles, competition for resources, distribution of work tasks within roles, risk taking and responsibility and accountability.
- **Trends/Change:** Changes in the workplace can be both internal change, such as restructuring or the addition of new technology or systems, and economic change such as downsizing and creating redundancies.
- **External Factors:** Conflict can also arise due to external influences such as economic pressures, the demands and needs of clients and suppliers, and political pressures.

Donais suggests considering the external factors first and working up to the more specific sources. At each stage the employer gives thought to what pressures may be placed on the workplace. The overall exercise will paint a picture of the stresses and potential risk areas.

Interpersonal relationship issues in the workplace are very common, and when they occur can be very time consuming and destructive.

For the **employer**, where there is often **no fault** to begin with, if you **do not resolve** these issues quickly, then **blame** can quickly **shift** and become **your problem**.

"The journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step" Lao Tsu

Inside this Issue

- 1 Welcome
- 1 Minimizing Workplace Stress by Identifying Key Causes
- 2 What's new...?
- 2 Tip of the Month
- 2 Did you know?

What's new...?

Recent Publications:

Managing the Risk of Workplace Violence to Healthcare and Community Service Providers (Department of Labour and the Counties Manukau District Health Board, January 2009)
<http://www.osh.govt.nz/order/catalogue/preventing-violence.shtml>

New Zealand Workplace Health & Safety Awards 2009

Entries are now open for the New Zealand Workplace Health and Safety Awards 2009, now in their fifth year. Run by *Safeguard* with the support of the Department of Labour, the awards will recognise the most successful initiatives developed over the last year to improve health and safety outcomes in New Zealand workplaces.

Organisational categories cover safety, health, wellness, engagement, design/technology, small business, large organisation, and leadership. Personal categories cover practitioner, employee, and lifetime achievement.

Entry is **free and simple** – just describe your initiative and how it solved a problem or improved OHS in some way. Full details, including an entry form and guidance to help you prepare your entry are given on the Safeguard website,
www.safeguard.co.nz/events/awards/

Entries must reach Safeguard's Auckland office by **Tuesday 31 March**. Set time aside soon – today would be good – to consider your successful health and safety initiatives of 2008 and write them up. The awards gala dinner is in **Auckland on 6 May**, so be sure to stick that date in your diary too.

ACC Active Smart

ACC has developed a fully tailored free online fitness training solution called [ActiveSmart](http://www.activesmart.co.nz)
www.activesmart.co.nz

Sign up to receive a plan designed specifically for your needs. The series includes [NetballSmart](#), [SnowSmart](#) and [SoccerSmart](#). All fitness plans have been developed by New Zealand's top fitness trainers and an expert nutritionist will provide advice to match your training plans.

Tip of the Month

When you click open a contact in Outlook, the general tab is the one you view. The other tabs are Details, Activities, Certificates, All Fields.

If you click on the "Activities" Tab in an Outlook contact (not Outlook Express), it will start listing all the email, task, appointment etc activities you have had with that individual. It will also show you what folder that they are in!!

For more tips visit Debbie Mayo-Smith's website

www.successis.co.nz/articles.htm

Important!

Don't let your IT department filter your subscription out! Please add our email address, sarita@bedrocksolutions.co.nz to your **Contact List**, **Safe List** or **Address Book**. This action should help ensure that all emails go directly to your Inbox.

To contact us, please email sarita@bedrocksolutions.co.nz

Did you know?

- African elephants only have four teeth to chew their food with.
- Thomas Cook, the world's first travel agency, was founded in 1850
- Midday refers to the moment the sun crosses the local meridian
- As much as 50 litres of maple sap is used to make a single litre of maple syrup
- The hour glass was invented in order to limit the length of sermons!!

"Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers"
Alfred Lord Tennyson