

Stress Reduction - 3 Steps to Greater Work Productivity and Less Stress

Have you ever felt overwhelmed and stressed by all your responsibilities and obligations? You work full time, have a long commute to the office, have children and a partner, parents who are beginning to have health problems and volunteer commitments. Feeling stretched to the breaking point, your mood and health might be negatively impacted. Although there are many conveniences which are supposed to make life easier, if you don't use them, don't know how to use them or overuse them, it adds to the chaos you may already be experiencing. These days many companies expect you to do more with less. You may be worried about how you will manage to do everything you're required to, particularly with the time lines you have been given. Your own beliefs about a situation can also create stress. Are you a person who likes to have things done a particular way? Do you sometimes think it is just easier to do it yourself, rather than show others how to do it? How do you react if they do it differently and it is just as effective, if not better? Do you become self critical, expecting perfection? What about connecting with family and friends? When people are devoting an inordinate amount of time to work, other areas of their life are ignored. This leads to living a life which is out of balance which in turn creates stress. When you experience stress, eating habits generally worsen, exercise doesn't occur and fun and relaxation isn't on the agenda. Doing everything yourself is not humanly possible, besides some of the tasks probably bore you. So what is the answer? A 3 step process consisting of elimination, automation and delegation. Elimination involves de-cluttering both your working space and your life. Have you ever walked into someone's office and it looks like a disaster area? Papers are every where and trying to find things can take forever. Creating a filing system which works for you and getting rid of clutter is very freeing. A supportive environment helps to reduce stress and improves productivity. The ability to refuse requests is another form of elimination. Learning to pay attention to what you can and cannot do is very important. When you are operating from a place of overload, being able to say "no" is a critical skill. Make space in your life for you, not just what others want from you. Automation is the second step. There are many devices, appliances and technology which are designed to make life easier. You need to take advantage of these things. At the office turn your phone off for an hour and let your calls go to voicemail. At the same time do not look at your emails. Tell your staff not to disturb you during this time, unless it is a "life or death issue." Spend the time working on tasks which you never seem to finish and notice if you are able to accomplish more. Maybe it is your turn to make dinner for the family but you aren't able to leave work until 6 p.m. Preset your oven to turn on or use a slow cooker. Set your watch or cell phone to remind you of particular tasks or events. Experiment with how you might automate more effectively. If you don't know how to use a particular piece of equipment, ask for help. Last but not least is delegation. How can others help you save time and ultimately money? What are the things you are doing that you could refer to someone else, freeing you up to do more of what you love. Consider off loading more tasks to an administrative assistant, secretary or team member. If you are a small business owner perhaps it would mean hiring a book-keeper or virtual assistant to do some of the time consuming tasks while you concentrate on building your business. Timothy Ferriss in his book *The 4 Hour Workweek* is a big advocate of out sourcing. He feels that it prepares you to manage your life in a whole different way with the end result, having more time to do the things you enjoy. If you have someone managing the daily activities of your business, then you can take off while knowing that you do not have to always be on call. To live a happier life, you need to incorporate elimination, automation and delegation into your daily routines. Copyright 2008, Gail Solish.

About the Author

Gail Solish, provides Executive/Personal coaching to managers, directors and executives focused on workplace development and relationship management. Claim your FR-EE e-course "Unleash Your Potential and Increase Productivity and Fulfillment" at <http://www.ActualizeYourGoals.com>

Source: <http://americanahost.com>