



How to handle a client with high level of stress










Emp_1004_How to handle a client with high level of stress

With the busy lifestyle of Western culture and the increased demands of work life, Australia is seeing an increased report of stress levels in individuals. According to a study executed by the Australian Psychological Society nearly a quarter (22%) of their participants expressed moderate to severe levels of psychological distress.

This Tip Sheet can assist you with handling a client who presents with high level of stress.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT FROM A CLIENT WITH HIGH LEVELS OF STRESS?





If you are seeing a client with high level of stress, then you should expect to see some of the following psychological symptoms:

-  anger,
-  irritability,
-  changes in mood,
-  anxiety,
-  depression,
-  helplessness,
-  concentration or memory difficulties,
-  low self-esteem,
-  or feeling overwhelmed and out of control.

HOW DO I COMMUNICATE WITH MY CLIENT?

If your client is experiencing elevated levels of stress, they will probably have difficulty concentrating on what you are saying and instead they may be focused on something distressing. **le; Will I complete my work in time for tomorrow meeting?**

So what techniques can you employ at the beginning of the session to make sure you have their complete attention?

-  Engage them in a relaxation conversation for 5 min;
-  Offer them a glass of water;
-  Make them take 5-10 deep breaths to help them distress;
-  Do a quick session of stretching with them to loosen them up.












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WHAT FORM OF STRESS IS MY CLIENT EXPERIENCING?

Common causes of stress include conflict, loss, over commitment and exertion. If your client is experiencing stress you will need them to feel comfortable and relaxed enough to open up to you so the first thing you should try is to get the client to feel relaxed and comfortable. Once this has been achieved you should try uncover the cause of the stress and the type of stress that your client is experiencing. It may be one of the following:







-  **Physical:** intense exertion, manual labour, lack of sleep, travel
-  **Chemical:** drugs, alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and environmental pollutants such as cleaning chemicals or pesticides
-  **Mental:** perfectionism, worry, anxiety, long work hours
-  **Emotional:** anger, guilt, loneliness, sadness, fear
-  **Nutritional:** food allergies, vitamin and mineral deficiency
-  **Traumatic:** injuries or burns, surgery, illness, infections, extreme temperatures

-  **Post Traumatic:** experiencing spontaneous memories and feelings of a distressful event that happened in the past.
-  **Work Related:** busy work schedule with high stress to meet deadlines.

Once you have identified the cause and type of their stress you will be better able to understand your client and determine appropriate cause of action and advice.

There are many reasons your client may be experiencing high levels of stress.

Research shows that the leading causes of stress for Australians is in fact

-  financial issues,
-  family and relationship issues,
-  personal health issues,
-  issues with trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle,
-  concern over the health of others,
-  issues in the workplace.





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WHAT LIFE CHANGES CAN MY CLIENT COMMIT TO THAT WILL HELP RELIEVE STRESS?

Sometimes making small adjustments to our lifestyles can make a big difference to the level of stress we feel. It is important that your client understands how to manage their stress successfully on their own. A report from the Australian Psychological Society indicated that almost half of Australians reported drinking to help manage stress. This is obviously a counterproductive method to manage stress and should be discouraged.

Activities you should and should not encourage your clients to commit to:

<i>Encourage</i>	<i>Discourage</i>
Physical Activity	Caffeine intake
Creative Stress Management Exercise, i.e. hobbies	Burnouts or Overloading Oneself
Healthy Lifestyle i.e. food and sleep	Alcohol consumption

If you are concerned for your jobseekers, please do not hesitate to contact Pure Insights for further advices and tips on supporting your jobseekers.

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