

Award in Managing Chemical, Biological and Psychological Risks

Work-Related Stress and Psychosocial Hazards in Occupational Health Psychology

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Undergraduate Diploma in
Occupational Health and Safety

Learning Outcomes

- **Master** the Risk Management Cycle (PRIMA-EF).
- **Differentiate** between the levels of OHP interventions.
- **Identify** the impact of leadership and culture on health.
- **Integrate** Psychological Safety and Social Capital into business strategy.



Module 1: Psychosocial Risk Management

Defining the Strategy

- **Psychosocial Risk Management:** A systematic, evidence-based problem-solving strategy.
- **Logic:** Hazard → Risk → Harm.
- **Legal Imperative:** Employers have a "Duty of Care" for psychological health.



The Risk Management Cycle

- **Identification:** Spotting the hazards.
- **Assessment:** Analysing the likelihood of harm.
- **Reduction:** Taking action.
- **Evaluation:** Checking if it worked.

Scenario: The High-Turnover Tech Team

- Situation: An IT firm loses 30% of its coders annually.
- Hazard Identification: Workers report "monotonous work" and "no say" in deadlines.
- Assessment: High sickness absence recorded in Q3.



Step 1: Identification (Worker Expertise)

- Subjective Evidence: Relying on the "expert judgment" of employees.
- Methods: Interviews, focus groups, and surveys.



Step 2: Assessment (Hard Data)

- Objective Evidence: Absence records, turnover rates, and health referrals.
- Audit: Reviewing what systems are already in place.



The PRIMA-EF Framework

- Definition: The European Framework for Psychosocial Risk Management.
- Focus: Promoting "Social Dialogue" and corporate citizenship

Module 2: Interventions to Promote Well-Being

The Three Levels of Intervention

- Primary: Target the Source (Work Design).
- Secondary: Target the Person (Coping Skills).
- Tertiary: Target the Harm (Rehabilitation).



Primary Interventions (The Fence)

- Objective: To remove or manage hazards at their source.
- Examples: Role clarification, flexible hours, and participative decision-making.



Secondary Interventions (The Climber)

- Focus: Increasing the individual's "toolkit" of coping skills.
- Mechanism: Equipping workers with "flexible coping strategies".



Stress Management Training (SMT)

- Active Methods: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and problem-solving.
- Passive Methods: Relaxation, meditation, and biofeedback.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) at Work

- Technique: Monitoring "automatic thoughts".
- Substitution: Replacing negative thoughts with realistic interpretations.



Tertiary Interventions (The Ambulance)

- Remedial Support: Targeted at employees already experiencing harm.
- EAPs: Employee Assistance Programmes (counseling and legal aid)



The Effectiveness Gap

- Process Evaluation: Analysing how an intervention was implemented.
- Type III Error: concluding a plan failed when the implementation was actually the problem.



Critical Success Factors

- Support: Senior management commitment and supportive culture.
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- Readiness: Individual and organisational motivation to change.





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Module 3: Organisational Culture and Leadership

Defining Corporate Culture

- The "Iceberg" Model: Tacit values, norms, and basic assumptions.
- Definition: "How we do things around here".



The Three Levels of Culture

1. Artefacts: Visible behaviour and physical workspace.
2. Espoused Values: What the company says it believes (Mission Statements).
3. Basic Assumptions: Hidden, taken-for-granted beliefs.



Leadership as a Health Determinant

- Ambassadors: Leaders who prioritise the health and performance of their staff.
- Servant Leadership: Leaders prioritise helping employees develop and reach meaningful goals.



The "Bullied Boss" Phenomenon

- Upward Bullying: Subordinates bullying their managers.
- Susceptibility: Female managers in male-dominated fields (military, police) are at higher risk.



Organisational Social Capital

- Definition: Trust, justice, and cooperation within the organisation.
- Outcome: High social capital leads to better psychosocial health and less absence.



Module 4: Sustainable Strategies and CSR

Sustainable Risk Management

- Focus: Long-term orientation and continuous improvement.
- Integration: Embedding health into the normal organisational development process.



Internal Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- Definition: Socially responsible practices concerning employee safety and well-being.
- Strategic Goal: Establishing a business case of strategic importance.



The Business Case for Well-Being

- Costs of Inaction: Mental health issues cost the EU 132 billion EUR in 2004.
- Presenteeism: Working while ill leads to more mistakes than staying home.



Developing "Ownership"

- Key Agent: Managers and workers must "own" the health process.
- Risk of Failure: Outsourcing ownership to outside service providers leads to programme death.



Module 5: Psychological Safety and Trust

Foundations of Psychological Safety

- Safety Culture: An organisation that supports human health and well-being values.
- Participative approach: Involving everyone in the search for solutions.



Transparency and Communication

- Best Practice: Openly discussing risk assessment results and action plans.
- Ethics: Protecting the psychosocial health of people as a moral obligation.



Emotional Labour: The Hidden Hazard

- Definition: The requirement to behave in a manner contradictory to one's actual feelings.
- Example: Police officers remaining polite to hostile members of the public.



Crossover Theory

- Definition: Transmission of positive or negative emotions between connected individuals.
- Impact: Work stress travels home to spouses and children.

Promoting "Decent Work" (ILO)

- ILO Vision: Work that is productive and delivers a fair income.
- Security: Social protection for families and freedom for people to express their concerns.



Conclusion: The Double Dividend

- Dividend 1: Healthy and vital people.
- Dividend 2: Improved innovation, productivity, and business continuity.



Final Recap

- Rule 1: Fix the source (Primary).
- Rule 2: Build trust (Social Capital).
- Rule 3: Maintain ownership (Sustainability).

