



What do you know?

- preventing stress in the workplace

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This guide is for those about to implement the project:
What do you know? – preventing stress in the workplace.

The project is intended to aid the stress-prevention work of your organisation. PPclinic, one of Denmark's leading experts in the field of stress, developed the initiative together with Velliv.

We hope it will be a useful tool on your journey towards greater openness, better wellbeing and less stress, and that it will inspire you to want to try more of our various health concepts.

Best of luck!

With best regards,
Velliv

Why implement stress prevention in the workplace?

Despite all the writing and discussion on stress, the number of people experiencing symptoms of stress is increasing.

Thus, there is a suggestion that, as a society, we're not bridging the gap between stress and effective stress prevention in practice. This concept is about how, as a company, you can work to prevent stress. The workplace is central to stress prevention – whether the stress is caused by private or work-related conditions – because stress will often show up in the workplace. And you can help find sustainable solutions.

The concept in brief

The concept is designed to be adapted to your needs and budget.

You're welcome to run the project based on this guide and related material (the booklets and dialogue cards). You don't need external consultants to benefit from the process.

If, however, you would like assistance, PPclinic, who developed the concept, can help with presentations, facilitation and workshops.

What materials are included?

Booklets

The concept contains two booklets, **What do you know? – Preventing stress in the workplace** – one each for managers and employees. The booklets deal with stress and how you, as a company, can work to prevent it. The introductory part of the booklet for both managers and employees aims to create a common starting point for working with stress across the organisation.

Dialogue cards

The booklets are supplemented with two sets of dialogue cards, **What do you know? – one for managers and one for employees**. The cards describe realistic scenarios and dilemmas and ensure that you bring the points of the booklets into play through dialogue.

What do you get out of working with the dialogue cards?

- You become more aware of how stress can present itself.
- You get ideas for what to do in stressful situations.
- You can break down the taboos that often occur in relation to stress.
- You can agree clear, common guidelines and strategies for action.

Rules of play

These are found with the dialogue cards.



Good advice for the process

You may choose to implement the process for either managers or employees, but we recommend that the process be implemented at both departmental and managerial levels, as stress in the workplace has to be dealt with jointly.

It's an advantage if managers are well equipped before commencing the process, which is why we suggest starting there.

The process for managers

- Tell the management team about the concept. Either at a meeting or by mail.
- Invite managers to a meeting to work with the dialogue cards. They are to have read the booklet for managers beforehand.
- Managers meet and talk about the various management-relevant dilemmas.
- Managers round off by discussing whether or not there are specific measures they can take on an individual, departmental or organisational level in general.
- It's important for top managers to state how important this project is to the workplace, and to clearly express their support for the managers prioritising it.

For the department

- The manager has familiarised themselves with the material for both managers and employees.
- Afterwards, the manager informs the staff that wellbeing and stress prevention are focus areas and that various activities will be initiated here.
- Employees are then invited to a meeting to work with the dialogue cards. Before the meeting, they are to have read the employee booklet.
- A summary is made of what employees and managers are taking from the dialogue, and whether it gives rise to new practices or guidelines.

Even very small companies, where management may be limited to only one or a few people, can benefit greatly from this project. Read the booklets and use the dilemma cards as a focal point for a talk on how you're going to handle employees who aren't thriving and the early symptoms of stress.

Tips for moving forward

Make sure to maintain the acknowledgements made based on the dialogue, so you can ensure that you can implement your new knowledge into your working day. Here are some suggestions on what you can do:

- If the process uncovers "gaps" in your knowledge or preparedness, it's important to write them down and delegate tasks that require follow-up.
- If you round off the dialogue by each listing one thing that you'll be better at doing in the future, you can simultaneously agree to meet again in 2-4 weeks, where you can follow up on your individual goals, talk about the things that have been difficult and give each other input.
- You can also choose to work on some guidelines or good points that can help you stay focused on prevention. These can include simple principles such as:
 - "We don't fail to react/close our eyes if we're worried about a colleague."
 - "It's always okay to go to your manager if you are concerned about a colleague."
 - "No one should be left to handle their stress on their own."
 - "Better to ask once too often than once too few."

You can also use the dialogue as a springboard to come up with some suggestions for shared attitudes or guidelines on how to deal with employees who aren't thriving and who are showing the onset of stress – perhaps compiled in a stress policy. Velliv can help with a tool for drawing up your own policy on stress.