

# **Identifying the causes of stress in the workplace**

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The HSE has developed six standards, known as the 'management standards,' to help organisations manage stress. The standards are based on factors which are recognised to be the key causes of workplace stress. If not properly managed, these factors can lead to ill health, absence, and reduced productivity.

### **HSE's management standards**

#### **1 Demands**

Includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment.

#### **2 Control**

How much say do the people have over the way they work?

#### **3 Support**

Includes encouragement and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.

#### **4 Relationships**

Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

#### **5 Role**

Do people understand their role within the organisation, and does it ensure roles are not conflicting?

#### **6 Change**

How is organisational change (large and small) managed and communicated?

One, or a combination of these factors, can result in an employee feeling stressed in the workplace. For example, an employee with a high work demand, with little support or information about how to do the job

following a recent organisational change, could be experiencing high levels of stress due to the complexity of factors that it involves.

The workplace health and safety standards, produced by the HSWG outline the legal requirements to risk assess stress.