



**Action Learning Set – in Bristol
Tackling stress in the workplace
Five days between Sept 2006 and Feb 2007**

Sickness absence costs UK employers around £12 billion a year. Stress related absence is on the increase. Almost three-quarters of senior managers claim workplace stress is damaging their health, happiness and home life, not to mention their performance at work.

As part of its real ways of learning pilot programme, creating:excellence is running an action learning set to help organizations develop new approaches to managing stress in the workplace. This course is aimed at human resources and other managers responsible for developing and implementing policy and/or directly managing people at risk of stress at work.

Over six months from September 2006, participants will be able to identify and address specific issues relating to their workplace in collaboration with an interested and supportive group of colleagues for example:

How can we create flexible supportive working environments that enable people to perform at their best?

How can we help people working in naturally high stress jobs to look after their own mental health?

Action learning is based on the idea that people faced with common problems learn more effectively when working together. Action learning can bring about real change in individual and organisational behaviours. It involves a group of people with a common interest coming together to share their skills, knowledge and experience through active and collaborative learning.

Participants will be introduced to a range of action learning tools which they will be able to use and share with others long after the action learning set has finished.

Through cycles of review, action and reflection participants support each other to try out new approaches and to learn from their experience. This has been shown to work particularly well in complex and fast changing work environments where strategic and operational contexts are constantly shifting.

Key Learning Opportunities

- Actively address real issues that affect you and your organisation
- Pick up good practice from a wide range of colleagues
- Practice supported action and reflection learning cycles
- Develop collaborative learning and communication skills
- Strengthen problem solving and leadership skills
- Establish a new network of professionals with a common interest and understanding of the issue

Target Audience

Individuals who want to affect real change in their own, and their organisation's practice. This programme will be particularly relevant to senior and middle managers in

strategic and/or operational roles who are keen to create balanced, healthy and flexible working environments for themselves and others.

Participants from private, public and voluntary sectors are equally welcome and the programme does not assume any knowledge or previous experience of action learning.

Stress at Work – a major challenge

Research has shown clear links between high stress levels and adverse working conditions - having too much to do and not being supported enough by managers are commonly cited triggers. One stress expert, Cary Cooper at UMIST, blames 'the Americanisation' of the workplace – where longer working hours, 'leaner' structures in the name of efficiency, increased use of short term contracts become the norm. In addition, dealing with the deluge of e-mails, coping with endless technology breakdowns and being available 24/7 via mobile phone is adding to levels of workplace stress

About creating:excellence

Creating:excellence is the South West centre for sustainable communities. It aims to build the skills and knowledge of people working for sustainable development, regeneration, and renewal. To meet the needs of such a diverse group of people creating:excellence links learning and networking activity across design, evidence, and funding arenas.

For further information about creating:excellence and the real ways of learning programme visit www.creatingexcellence.org.uk.



Tackling stress in the workplace Programme details

Five full day sessions

14th September

5th October

26th October

17th November

11th December

Half day review/evaluation

1st February 2007

Venue: YHA, Narrow Quay, Bristol

Max no of participants: 8

Cost £250. In certain circumstances financial support may be available from creating:excellence participation fund. Visit the learning page at www.creatingexcellence.org.uk for more details.

Further Information/Booking

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