Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress at work

Emma Donaldson-Feildner
Affinity Health at Work
Session outline

• Why focus on line managers?
• Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress (research findings)
• Integrating the competencies into practice
Why focus on line managers?

• Managers’ behaviour is vital:
  – Direct impact: potential source of stress/well-being for their staff
  – ‘Gate-keeper’ role: influence their staff’s exposure to sources of stress

• Managers play key role in identifying and tackling stress in their staff

• Managers are key to achieving the HSE Management Standards
Needed research to...

• Understand what manager behaviours are important in the context of well-being
• Develop evidence-based guidance and tools to:
  – Provide managers with clear guidance on behaviours to adopt
  – Enable integration into employers’ selection, appraisal and training processes
1. Interviews with nearly 400 managers and employees + workshops with HR/OH/H&S
   Produced framework with 19 behavioural themes

2. Questionnaire survey with over 800 managers and employees + further workshops
   Refined framework to 4 broad themes, with 12 sub-themes

3. Testing whether we can help managers use and develop the behaviours identified
   Can help managers change behaviour
## Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Sub-Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respectful and responsible: Managing emotions and having integrity</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managing emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Considerate approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing and communicating existing and future work</td>
<td>Proactive work management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participative/empowering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing the individual within the team</td>
<td>Personally accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empathetic engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning/Managing difficult situations</td>
<td>Managing conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of organisational resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taking responsibility for resolving issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Management competencies for preventing & reducing stress vs general people management.
## Overlap with management/leadership models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Sub-competency</th>
<th>TLQ (Pub)</th>
<th>TLQ (Priv)</th>
<th>ELS</th>
<th>LBD Q</th>
<th>Great 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respectful and Responsible: Managing emotions and having integrity</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managing Emotions</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Considerate Approach</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing and Communicating existing and future work</td>
<td>Proactive work management</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participative/empowering</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning/Managing difficult situations</td>
<td>Managing Conflict</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of organisational resources</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taking responsibility for resolving issues</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing the individual within the team</td>
<td>Personally accessible</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociable</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empathetic engagement</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Management competencies for preventing & reducing stress vs general people management
Changing manager behaviour

- Upward feedback
- Interactive workshop
- Follow-up upward feedback

3mths later
Messages for managers

• This is about day-to-day people management behaviour – not ‘extra’ activities
• Not single behaviour – complementary set of behaviours (depends on situation/ individual)
• Some things may do already, others may need to add to management approach: upward feedback helps understand which
• Can change behaviour, but there may be barriers to overcome
• Seek support from others
Messages for organisations

• Some behaviours may be included already, others you may need to add
• Can help managers change behaviour, particularly those with development needs, if you:
  – Provide upward feedback
  – Provide additional support
  – Help managers overcome barriers
  – Achieve buy-in
  – Integrate with organisational practices
Integrating the findings: into HR/mgt development

• Competency framework can be used to:
  – Dovetail into existing management development and develop new training programmes
  – Integrate into manager induction programmes
  – Provide guiding structure/checklist for other skills training (eg communication, delegation)

• Indicator tool questionnaire can provide insight via feedback – NB with support/coaching
Integrating the findings: into well-being/resilience activity

• Competency framework can be used to:
  – Review/develop policies
  – Inform the development of action plans

• Indicator tool questionnaire can give feedback/information in order to:
  – Provide individual diagnostic/information at the local level
  – Tackle specific situations or scenarios e.g. ‘hot spots’
Tools available from the research (1)

Guidance leaflets for managers/ HR: 
www.cipd.co.uk/topics/health/stress/_lnstrswrk.htm?IsSrchRes=1
Tools available from the research (2)

   – 66 questions
   – Available as PDF download or excel macro
   – Provides a score on each of the competencies
   – NB our research suggests upward feedback useful
3. New packages of online materials will be available soon to help facilitate behavioural change in managers through:
- direct support to line managers
- helping employers, consultants/coaches, training providers and other delivery partners to provide support to line managers

• To try out the prototype materials, sign up at: [www.hse.gov.uk/stress/volunteer.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/volunteer.htm)
Session summary

• Why focus on line managers?
  – Vital role in managing stress in staff

• Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress (research findings)
  – 4 key themes of manager behaviour

• Integrating the competencies into practice
  – Can integrate with L&D and/or stress/well-being programmes. Tools available.
Other links

Research reports:
www.cipd.co/researchinsights
www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr633.htm
www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr553.htm
Thank-you for listening

For further information, please contact:
- Emma Donaldson-Feilder
  emma@affinityhealthatwork.com