

11

Stress

Learning objectives

This unit is about stress in the business world.

Students begin by discussing a cartoon and the attitudes to stress that the cartoon shows. They then consider their own experience of attitudes towards stress in the workplace. They listen to a talk on stress management and complete a chart showing the effects of stress on performance. They listen again and match photos of work environments to the three levels of stress.

Students then consider their own levels of stress. They read an article on helping colleagues manage stress and match headings to the correct paragraphs. They then consider appropriate and inappropriate behaviour when counselling colleagues about stress.

Students listen to eight short dialogues of meetings between managers and their employees. In each one, the manager is dealing with a situation in which the employee is stressed. Students decide if the manager is doing things correctly or incorrectly. They listen to the recording again and complete some useful expressions.

Finally, students take part in a roleplay to practise helping a colleague in a stressful situation.

Digital resources: Unit 11

Online Workbook; Extension worksheets; Glossary; Student's Book answer key; Student's Book listening script; Fast-track map

1:1

Before starting this unit, discuss the culture of your student's current workplace to see if they think it is stressful and, if so, why. For example, there may be unrealistic sales targets, too few employees, etc. If it isn't a stressful place to work, find out why not. Ask: *What factors make it stress-free?* This discussion will also provide you with useful background information about the student's company and working life.

Warm-up

Write the word *stress* on the board and ask students to build up a word map of useful phrases, such as: *stressful, stressed, to de-stress, to deal with stress, stress-related, etc.*

1 Put students in pairs to discuss the cartoon and answer the questions. Elicit students' ideas.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

- The woman is stressed and aggressive. She is shocked by the man's reaction.
- The man is relieved that the woman's stress-related condition will not have a negative effect on work. He is unsympathetic and insensitive; he does not realize or care that training a replacement will only increase the woman's level of stress.
- The woman clearly feels that the company/management are responsible for her stress. The man feels that managing stress is a personal issue for the employee to resolve, one that cannot be allowed to interfere with productivity. In other words, any stress an employee suffers from should not be allowed to affect their performance at work.

2 Tell students to think about the difference in attitude shown by the man and the woman in the cartoon – they are good examples of how employees can react when there are different levels of sympathy to stress. Attitudes to stress are likely to vary in different work cultures, and between management and employees. Ask students to think about places they have worked and discuss the question about attitudes to stress with a partner. Ask some students to share their experiences.

3 Tell students that they are going to study a chart and then interpret it. Give them a moment to look at the chart. Elicit what each axis represents (the vertical axis shows employee performance from low to high; the horizontal axis shows levels of stress). Ask students to discuss with a partner their ideas on what it shows. Elicit students' ideas, e.g. no stress may mean poor performance; there is a level of optimum stress; too much stress is negative. Find out if students agree with the idea that a certain amount of stress can be a good thing.

4 2.36 Tell students they will hear part of a talk on stress. Play the recording so that students can listen and label the coloured areas on the chart. Check answers with the class. Find out if the term *eustress* is new for anyone.

ANSWERS

- Under-stressed
- Eustress or good stress
- Distress

2.36

Now, this next slide shows how performance varies with the level of stress. At very low levels, as shown by the yellow area, performance, health and motivation are low. This state is referred to as Under-stressed; it may be experienced by people who are unemployed, or who have very boring jobs with too little to do.

As the level of stress increases, in the green area, performance improves and people feel more motivated. This state is known as Eustress, that's E-U-S-T-R-E-S-S, or 'good stress'. Many people need

C

Pitch and persuade

Learning objectives


This scenario is based on the skill of being able to persuade someone successfully.

Students begin by discussing their own experience of persuasive people and the techniques they use. They then watch a video of Peter Neubauer making a pitch to his boss, Sue, which fails. They consider the things he did incorrectly, and how he could improve his persuasive skills.

Students watch a second video in which Peter's pitch is successful in persuading Sue to do more in the area of social media.

Finally, as a post-viewing task, students have a committee meeting to discuss how to help staff adapt to a merger, and then evaluate their own performances.


Digital resources: Management Scenario C

 In company in action C1–C2 and worksheet; Extension worksheets; Glossary; Student's Book answer key; Student's Book listening script; Fast-track map

as: *donors, batches, leverage* (the power to make someone do what you want). Give students time to read the article and decide if the statements are true, false or not stated. Ask students to compare their answers with a partner. Go through the answers with the whole class, asking students to justify their answer with information from the text.

ANSWERS

- a F – Cassie discreetly suggests the idea might be useful.
- b F – no longer
- c T
- d D

3  **C1** Explain to students that they are going to watch Peter making a pitch to Sue in the video. First, give students time to read the list of points. Check that students know the word *precedent*. Play the video and ask students to tick the points that are mentioned. Then ask students to compare their answers.

ANSWERS

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| a three-day conference | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a budget cut | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| recruiting new staff | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| return on investment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| an important interview | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| an urgent decision | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| waste water treatment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a precedent for non-profit organizations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Warm-up

Build a mind map on the board based on the verb *persuade*. Make sure you include important words such as: *persuasive, persuadable, persuasion*. Check students know some of the trickier words by creating meaningful sentences with them.

1 Be ready to give students an example of a persuasive person you know, and why. The reasons that they might be persuasive include their use of facts, reasoning, common sense arguments, or emotional arguments. When students have discussed the questions, elicit some answers.

1:1

Ask your student to talk about their experiences of being persuaded by someone, or persuading someone themselves. Be ready to give examples of your own, such as a sales person who persuaded you to buy a product you didn't really want. Encourage your student to identify any techniques they have used themselves.

2 As a lead-in to the reading, ask students which social media sites they use (e.g. Facebook / Twitter / LinkedIn) and why. Tell students they are going to read an article on the power of social media sites, which Cassie recommends to her boss, Peter. Check or pre-teach any tricky terms, such

C1

Peter: They haven't called yet, then?

Emma: No, we're a few minutes early, actually.

Sue: I hope they'll be on time. I have a train to catch at five. By the way, you couldn't fill in these forms for me, could you? We're supposed to send them back today.

Peter: Sorry, Sue. I've got a big meeting tomorrow, and I've got stuff to prepare. Couldn't Cassie deal with it?

Sue: No, I don't think she knows enough about it. I'll just have to do them on the train.

Peter: Right. Um, Sue, I need to talk to you about fundraising for the Eastern India project.

Sue: Well, it'll have to be next week. I'm off to a conference in Manchester for three days.

Peter: Oh. You don't have any time later?

Sue: Sorry, no. Stuff to prepare, you know.

Peter: So when can I make my presentation? It's pretty urgent; we need your decision as soon as possible.


Sue: Well, how about now?

Peter: Now?

Sue: Yes. You've heard of elevator pitches? Well now's your chance! You've got about two minutes before the conference call begins!

Peter: Well, um, my, er, presentation is in three parts, er ...
 Sue: Two minutes, Peter!
 Peter: Right. Er, basically, I think a social media campaign is the best way to raise funds to install solar-powered water pumps in the villages in Eastern India, and I want to launch ...
 Sue: Hold on, I thought we already had government funding for that project?
 Peter: Well we did, but they cut it by 50%.
 Sue: So why didn't you say so? Go on.
 Peter: Anyway, er, studies show over 40% of social media users are sympathetic to helping people in the developing world get access to clean water. At the moment, women and girls are walking miles in very high temperatures to fetch water for their families. Unfortunately, that doesn't mean that the water is fit to drink ...
 Sue: Okay Peter, I've been there, I know what it's like. How will social media help us raise money?
 Peter: Our plan is to encourage the community of current small and mid-level donors to leverage their interest by building shared-giving relationships, a kind of MLM business model that will ...
 Sue: Sorry Peter, you've lost me there. MLM?
 Peter: Multi-level marketing. Basically, instead of Blue Rock appealing directly to potential donors, we identify supporters or fans who each recruit their own team of donors, who then recruit from their own circle of friends and family, and so on, and so on ...
 Sue: You mean like pyramid schemes? I'm not sure that's something we want to be associated with.
 Peter: No, you don't understand! We're not selling anything, Sue! We're just giving donors the satisfaction of making a bigger contribution to improving people's lives, don't you see?
 Sue: Has it been done before by the nonprofit sector?
 Peter: Well, sure, there are lots of fundraising applications for good causes ...
 Sue: For example ...?
 Peter: Well, off the top of my head ... there's DonationConnect, and Giveabit, and ... can I get back to you on that?
 Sue: Hm. What sort of investment are we talking about here?
 Peter: Well, the app service and setting up the mobile website are going to be quite expensive, but the ROI should compare favourably with our conventional strategies. Anyway, what we want to do is ...
 Sue: Sorry Peter, time's up.
 Emma: Hello, Emma Lambert?
 Charles: Hi Emma, it's Charles.
 Emma: Oh hi Charles. Sorry, can I just put you on hold for a few seconds?
 Charles: Sure.
 Sue: You said you need a quick decision?
 Peter: Yes. Can we go ahead?
 Sue: I'm sorry, Peter, I'm not ready to commit to such a big change. Plus, I'm not sure our supporters are

ready for social media. Let's talk again when I get back from Manchester, okay?
 Sue: Hello, Charles? Sue here. Sorry about that, we're ready for you now.

4 + 5  **C1** On the second viewing of the video, students have a chance to develop their listening by exploring the content in more detail. Ask them to read through the questions first. Let students watch the video again, this time making notes on the answers to the while-viewing questions. Put students in pairs to discuss their answers. Check students' answers by asking individual students to read out their answers, and encourage other students to add any further relevant information.

ANSWERS

- 4 a Because she has 'stuff to prepare'. Perhaps also because Peter was reluctant to fill in the forms for her, she is reciprocating.
- b to install solar-powered water pumps in villages in Eastern India
- c She doesn't want Blue Rock to be associated with pyramid schemes.
- d the app service and setting up a mobile website
- e She is not ready to commit to such a big change and she thinks their supporters are not ready for social media.


5 1 b 2 a 3 f 4 e 5 c 6 d

6 Put students in pairs to brainstorm the ways in which Peter could improve his pitch. Ask students to make a list of dos and don'ts for trying to persuade someone. For example, Peter could be brief – an 'elevator pitch' is much shorter than a presentation. He could also offer to help Sue before starting out, as this puts her 'in his debt'. Ask individual students to read out their ideas one by one and list them on the board.

7 The students will read two emails, one from Peter to Emma asking for advice, and the second providing Emma's ideas on effective persuasion. First, tell students to check that they know the trickier words in the boxes, such as: *jargon*, *scarcity*, *reciprocity*. Also deal with any tricky words and phrases in the memo, such as: *to put someone on the spot*, *to lean* and *credentials*. Then ask students to read and complete Emma's email. Monitor and answer any queries. When students have finished, ask them to compare Emma's tips with theirs in 5, by going through the collated list on the board.

ANSWERS

- 1 details 2 overview 3 discussion 4 structure
- 5 specific 6 jargon
- a Reciprocity b Liking c Scarcity d Authority
- e Consistency f Social proof

8  **C2** Establish that in the second video clip, students will see Peter make a second pitch. Check any difficult or new vocabulary, such as: *humanitarian*, *water pumps*, *pyramid selling*, *webcasts*. Play the video and pause it after each of the phrases. Let students study the list and match the phrases to the pieces of advice in Emma's email. Elicit the correct answers.

ANSWERS

a Reciprocity b a reason to listen c he is sincere d being likeable by respecting Sue's point of view e Authority or Social proof f short but specific g Scarcity h a call for action

 C2

Emma: How was the conference by the way?

Sue: Good. But absolutely exhausting, you know what these things are like. And I have to fly to New York tomorrow!

Peter: That's a pretty heavy schedule!

Sue: Yeah. Oh, and I still haven't managed to fill in these stupid forms!

Peter: Leave them with me, I'll deal with them.

Sue: Well, that's very kind of you, Peter. Much appreciated.

Peter: No problem.

Sue: Anyway. You wanted to talk to me again about the Eastern India project. It'll have to be quick I'm afraid, I've got another meeting in five minutes.

Peter: That's fine; two minutes will be plenty! Okay. Did you know 68% of social media users will take time to learn about a humanitarian project if they see a friend post about it?

Sue: Really?

Peter: Yes. As you know, the objective of this project has been to install solar-powered water pumps in Eastern India. Now, the problem we've been facing is the government funding we were promised has been cut by 50%. We think – and by the way, this was Cassie's idea, so she should take the credit – we think the solution is to ask our existing supporters to use their social media contacts to build giving circles.

Sue: I'm still worried it sounds a bit like pyramid selling.

Peter: I know exactly what you mean. We certainly don't want to compromise our reputation and our relationship with our loyal donors. But let me reassure you on that point, this strategy is already being used very successfully by high-profile non-profits like the WWF, UNICEF and the Museum of Modern Art.

Sue: Oh, I see.

Peter: So, how does it work? First, we invite our supporters to post on social media about our work and how they've helped us with their donations. We encourage them to find four or five people who show interest in what we're doing and form what's called a giving circle. We also provide them with an app that they can pass on to their friends and contacts. I know you'll have questions about cost, return on investment and so on, so I've put all the details in this handout.

Sue, Emma: Thanks.

Peter: Now, the great benefit of using social media to build these circles is they just keep growing and growing. Each new supporter to a giving circle passes the word on to their own circle of friends, who then become a new giving circle – and so on, and so on.

So, what are we waiting for? As I mentioned, this strategy is already being used by top NGOs – if we wait till everyone's doing it, it won't be so effective. And the sooner we start, the sooner we can be pumping clean water into those villages. That's why I'm asking you to give the go-ahead before you leave for New York! Do you have any questions?

Sue: Only one. That was great, Peter. But why didn't you pitch it like that first time round?

9 Divide the class into small groups of around four students. Give each group a few minutes to read the different options for spending the money, and to choose one. Monitor the discussions and help students where necessary, encouraging them to provide their own ideas. Check that each student has selected a different idea.

Give students 5–10 minutes to prepare their pitch. When they are ready, ask them to take turns pitching. Monitor the activity and take notes. When students have finished, and the group has voted, ask someone from each group to report back to the whole class on which was the successful project pitch.

Ask students to turn to page 127 in order to access the two checklists – one for 'pitchers' and one for 'influencers'. Students complete the checklists. For example, they can evaluate their own performance as pitchers as well as completing the checklist for 'influencers' for one of their colleagues. Sum up by asking what went especially well in the winning pitches, i.e. which techniques were effective in terms of persuasion.

Finish the lesson by providing useful language feedback, as necessary.



Ask your student to take the role of the pitcher. Record the session and then go back over it in order to provide feedback on language. If it is not possible to record the pitch, use the pitching and influencing checklists on page 127 to reflect together on how successful the meeting was.

a moderate amount of stimulation and pressure in order to perform at their best.

However, if the level of stress increases beyond a certain point it becomes destructive and reduces levels of performance, motivation and health. This red zone is called Distress. The first step in managing both your own and other people's stress is learning to recognize the symptoms of Distress.

5 **2.36** Check that students know the words *stimulation* and *destructive*. Play the recording again. Ask students to match the photographs with the stress level on the chart. Check answers with the class. Find out what students feel about the jobs in the photographs. Ask: *Could you imagine doing any of these jobs? Do you know anyone who has an especially stressful job?*

ANSWERS

- 1 Under-stressed – photo b
- 2 Eustress – photo c
- 3 Distress – photo a

6 Provide an example of the symptoms of distress for each of the three categories, body, mind and behaviour: *body – itchiness; mind – being anxious; behaviour – shouting at someone*. Give students one or two minutes to continue their lists individually. Then, put students in pairs to compare their lists. Check answers with the class and collate them on the board.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Effects on the body	Effects on the mind	Effects on behaviour
Headache	Anxiety	Overeating or under-eating
Nausea	Restlessness	Angry outbursts
Skin rashes	Loss of concentration	Poor personal hygiene
Sweating	Indecisiveness	Social withdrawal
Muscle tension or pain	Lack of motivation or focus	Speech impediments
Chest pain	Irritability or anger	
Fatigue	Sadness or depression	
Stomach upset	Nightmares	
Sleep problems		

7 Ask students to think about how they manage their own stress and if they know any good techniques for doing this. Put students in pairs to discuss their ideas. Elicit some of their ideas, e.g. taking time to jog or cycle, going to the gym to do exercises that increase your heart rate, and so on.

8 Tell students that they are going to read an article entitled *Helping colleagues manage stress*. Check that they are familiar with the word *strain*. Ask students to read the paragraph headings, skim the article and match the correct headings to each paragraph. Check answers with the class.

ANSWERS

- 1 Share feelings
- 2 Identify the source
- 3 Ease the strain
- 4 Facilitate change

1:1

Before reading, do a collocation building exercise with your student. Write four verbs on cards of one colour: *facilitate, ease, share, identify*. Write four nouns on cards of another colour: *change, the strain, feelings, the source*. Ask your student to create four verb + noun collocations. (Note: it is possible to say *identify feelings*, but *share the source* is unlikely.) When your student has made the collocations, tell them that these are the headings they should match with the paragraphs in the article.

9 Check that students know some of the key vocabulary in the article, such as: *contagious, to keep (something) on track, judgemental, to probe, to keep (things) in perspective, counselling*. Ask students to read the article again and consider how many of the techniques they discussed in 7 are mentioned. Elicit feedback from students.

10 Ask students to use information from the article to give reasons why they shouldn't do the things listed. Go through each of the points in the list, eliciting an answer from students at random. As you go through the list, encourage students to add any more reasons they can think of not to do some of the things in the list. Ask if students agree with the information in the text.

ANSWERS

You shouldn't:

- force your advice on colleagues because this pressure may just increase stress; finding their own solution will be more effective.
- defend yourself as this will reinforce the conflict and the person's feeling of loss of control.
- probe, because you must respect the fact that a colleague's problems may be very personal; they should not feel under pressure to reveal anything they prefer not to discuss.
- ask leading questions, because you may misunderstand the problem or be serving your own interests rather than helping a colleague to deal with their stress.
- minimize the problem, because you cannot measure or predict a colleague's feelings about the relative importance of events and situations.
- provide answers, because they may not be appropriate and you prevent the person from learning to find solutions to problems, which can be as important as the solution itself.

11 **2.37** Tell students that they are going to hear a recording of eight managers counselling their employees. Ask students to decide if the managers are doing things correctly or incorrectly. Check that students know what a *leading question* is. Play the recording. Check answers with the class.

Ask students to read the list of advice (a-h) that the managers are following, or should follow. Ask them to match a manager to each one. Play the recording again so that students can check their answers and, if necessary, pause the recording at each change of speaker to give students time to complete the task. Go through the grid and check answers with the class.

ANSWERS

Manager	✓/✗	Advice
1 Mark	✓	c
2 Jacky	✗	d
3 Corey	✓	a
4 Brett	✗	b
5 Jo	✗	h
6 Perry	✗	g
7 Chris	✓	f
8 Georgie	✓	e

2.37

1

- A: I'm sorry, Mark, you must think I'm so unprofessional!
- B: Not at all. You're frustrated because the customer keeps changing his mind. It's perfectly normal, and it's better to get it off your chest.

A: Thanks.

2

- C: I just never seem to finish my 'to do' list. There just aren't enough hours in the day.
- D: You obviously need to prioritize. HR run a really good time-management course. If I were you, I'd register straight away. In fact I'm surprised you haven't already done it!

C: Oh, yeah. Erm, thanks, Jacky.

3

- E: Look, Corey, even if I write the whole thing again, I'm sure it still won't be good enough for you!
- F: I understand how you feel. Would it help if Martha took over some of your regular work for a couple of weeks? That would give you more time, and then maybe you could work from home some days?

E: Oh, yes, that would be great. Erm, thanks.

4

- G: Brett, I just can't go on like this!
- H: What's the matter?
- G: I don't ... I don't want to talk about it.
- H: Was it Pete Jennings? Has he upset you again?
- G: Mm.
- H: Was it something he said? D'you want me to talk to him?
- G: No!! ... erm, no ... thanks.

5

- I: Listen, Jo, how can you ask me to transfer to London when you know my partner has just found a good job here?
- J: Well it's hardly my fault! I don't decide company policy; I'm just trying to do my job.
- I: Oh, right! Well thanks!

6

- K: That's the third time this week I've left after 8 pm. I'm burning out here, Perry!
- L: It's just the time of year. It's always like this in November. You'll get used to it. Anyway, it's not as bad as January.
- K: Oh great - thanks!

7

M: What's the matter?

N: I've just had my head bitten off by Production. I ordered the wrong components again. I can't seem to go a week without putting my foot in it. I must be stupid or something!

M: Oh, come on! It could happen to anyone. You're just going through a difficult period. It was an honest mistake, there's no need to feel guilty about it.

N: Yeah, I suppose so. Thanks, Chris.

8

O: I'm never going to meet the new sales objective. It's just not fair!

P: Not fair?

O: Yeah, just because Marcus is always over target, you've raised everybody's objectives! I mean come on, Georgie, we're not all sales superstars like he is!

P: Hmm. What would happen if you didn't meet your target?

O: Well I wouldn't get my bonus for a start!

P: Uh huh. How big a problem would that be?

O: Well ... not really that disastrous actually, since the basic's gone up. It's just the principle, isn't it? But yeah, if you look at it like that, I suppose it's not the end of the world. Thanks.

12 **2.37** Ask students to try to complete the missing words. Play the recording again for students to check their answers, pausing after each extract.

ANSWERS

1 perfectly 2 chest 3 feel 4 help 5 happen
6 guilty 7 happen 8 big

13 Tell students that they are going to take part in two roleplays. Each roleplay will give students practice in helping to counsel a colleague with stress. Put the students in pairs, A and B, and ask As to turn to page 118, and Bs to turn to page 136 and read the first roleplay. Give students a few minutes to prepare their role. Monitor and provide any language help, as necessary. When the students are ready, give them about five minutes to perform the roleplay. Monitor the roleplays and take notes on language use, as well as on any successes and failures in terms of following the advice suggested in the article.

Follow the same procedure for setting up the second roleplay, in which students exchange roles. Finish the lesson by providing feedback on both stress management skills and language.

1:1

Proceed with both roleplays, your student taking the role of Student A and you of Student B. Record the conversations and then play them back in order to evaluate how successful they were in terms of providing advice and the accurate use of language. If you cannot record the meetings, spend a few minutes after each roleplay debriefing it, i.e. reflecting together on how successful it was.