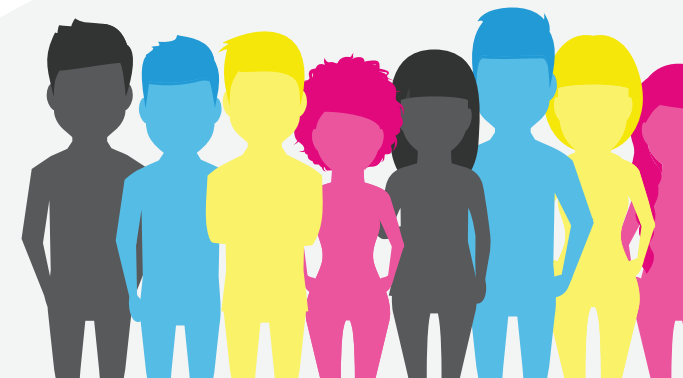


Workplace Stress Study 2019:

The reasons UK workers are stressed
and what they're doing to cope

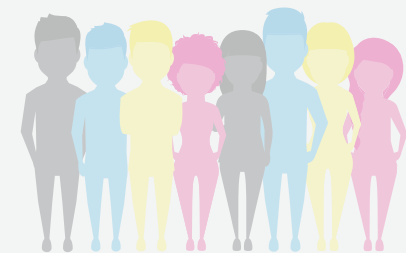


Introduction

In October 2019, Cartridge People commissioned a study of 1,066 UK workers made up of both those who are employed and self-employed to identify what's currently causing stress in the workplace. We also looked at how workers are attempting to cope with stress and whether this is causing them to look for work elsewhere.

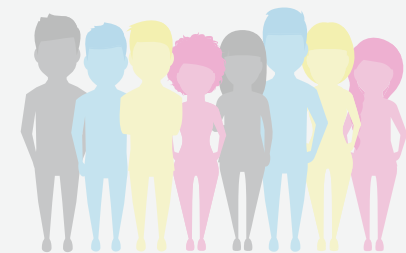
At a time when there is political uncertainty and technology is playing a bigger and bigger role in work environments across the country, this study looks to uncover the main causes of stress at work.

Andrew Davies, Cartridge People



Executive Summary

- Men feel more stressed at home than at work, while more women feel stressed at work than at home
- More than half of women are stressed at work at least once a week... for 23% it's at least once a day
- Workload stresses 43% of men and stresses 53% of women
- 31% of women go on social media at least once a day due to stress
- More than 1 in 10 women have left their job due to stress in the last 12 months
- More than 1 in 10 people are thinking about leaving their job due to stress
- 15% of UK workers are stressed at work because of Brexit
- 16% of women are stressed by their boss
- Primary cause of workplace stress is workload
- One in three women will escape to the toilet at least once a week when stressed
- Over one in five women will escape to the toilet at least once a day when stressed
- Almost half (39%) of the British population is stressed at work at least once a week. For 15% it's every single day.



Workplace Stress

It's been reported that over 15million days are lost every year due to employees suffering from work-related stress. Additionally, over 500,000 people in the UK feel ill as a result of their level of work-related stress.

There are a growing number of reasons why workers may find their job is causing them stress. In addition to the internal factors within a business that have a history of causing stress levels to rise such as a difficult work environment or an unhelpful boss, the impact of external factors such as Brexit are now starting to become a cause of stress.

If you're an employer and are concerned about the stress levels of your workers, you could ask them to take an [Individual Stress Test](#).

According to Peninsula, you should also be on the lookout for signs of anxiety and depression and these can include:

- Headaches.
- Heart palpitations.
- Insomnia.
- Irritability.
- Lowering quality of work.
- Isolation from colleagues.
- Depression.
- Lack of creativity.
- Increased absenteeism.
- Increased presenteeism.



How Often Are We Stressed?

Our study found that 61% of women are stressed at least once a week with 23% stating that they suffer from workplace stress every day. In the case of men, 43% said they were stressed at least once a week with 9% suffering from stress on a daily basis.

Across both genders, 48% are stressed at least once a week.

Being stressed so often in a job has obvious implications on an individual's wellbeing with one possible consequence being "burn out".

Speaking to the NHS' Moodzone, Liz Tucker who is now a health and wellbeing counsellor who specialises in stress management told of she suffered from burnout after she'd set up her own company: "When the doctor told me I'd burned myself out from too much stress, I found it difficult to believe. To me, stress meant being unhappy, whereas I was really enjoying my life. But it was true: there was no work-life balance and I was living a high-stress life.

"In addition, my diet was appalling. I lived on food that I bought in petrol stations, and I hadn't been getting nearly enough sleep. My body had shut itself down in protest.

"For the next 3 months, I couldn't get out of bed. All I did was sleep. Very slowly, I began to improve, but then, after a few months, the doctor diagnosed me with ME (also known as Myalgic Encephalomyelitis or chronic fatigue syndrome). I was housebound.

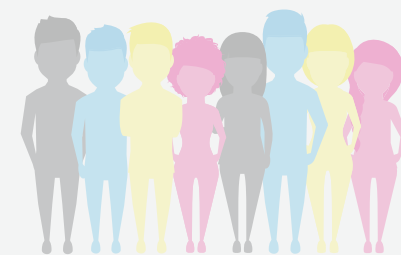
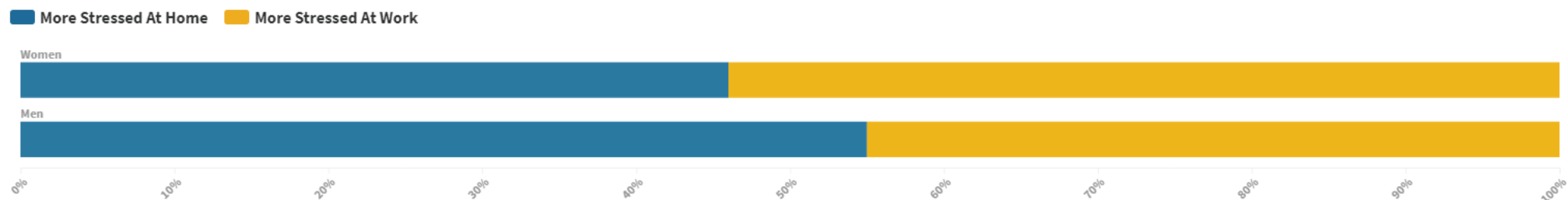
"The physical symptoms were bad, but the mental 'fog' was awful. It was like someone had drilled a hole in my head and filled it with concrete."



Workplace Stress versus Stress at Home

When we asked those who took part in our study whether they were stressed more at home or at work, 56% said they were more stressed at home than they were at work. A deeper look into our results found that:

54% of women were felt stressed at work more than they did at home.



Why Are We Stressed At Work?

Looking into the reasons we're stressed at work, the main one that stands out is workload with a staggering 53% of women and 43% of men attributing that with why they're stressed in the workplace.

With the threat of burnout, this is something that should be a concern for employers and measures should be put in place to avoid individuals becoming so overloaded with work that they cannot perform their job effectively or at all.

We can all find implementing new systems in work a stressful experience and so it's no surprise to see technology the next highest cause of stress. 18% of men said they were stressed out by technology in their office or workplace while 23% of women said this was what made their stress level rise.

At an unprecedented time of political uncertainty, we asked those who took part in our study whether Brexit was a reason they were stressed in work. The amount of UK workers to say this was a cause of stress was 15%.

Brexit just was rated slightly higher than your boss/manager (14%) and commuting (13%) as causes of stress in work. Interestingly, the proportion of women who felt stressed by their boss was a little higher than the percentage of male responses listing that as a reason for stress; 16% vs 14%.



What Do We Do To Cope With Stress?

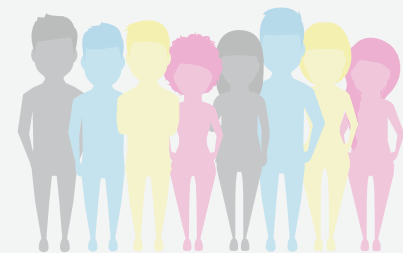
Our study asked what UK workers did to help cope with stress in work. It's often said that going for a walk to "clear your head" is a good coping mechanism and 39% admitted to having to go for a walk away from the office or workplace as a result of being stressed at least once a week. The number of those who need to relieve stress by going for a walk every day is 22%.

In women, nearly a quarter said they'd go for a walk at least once a day (24%).

With internet access readily available either through your workstation or via a smartphone device, an escape to the world of social media is not far away if you find yourself stressed by work. When we asked those in our study how often they visited social media websites (including Snapchat and WhatsApp) to counter feeling stressed, 21% said they would go online at least once a day.

However, the statistics for the number of women visiting social media when stressed revealed that:

31% would use social media daily to cope with stress and half of those would visit social media sites at least three times a day.

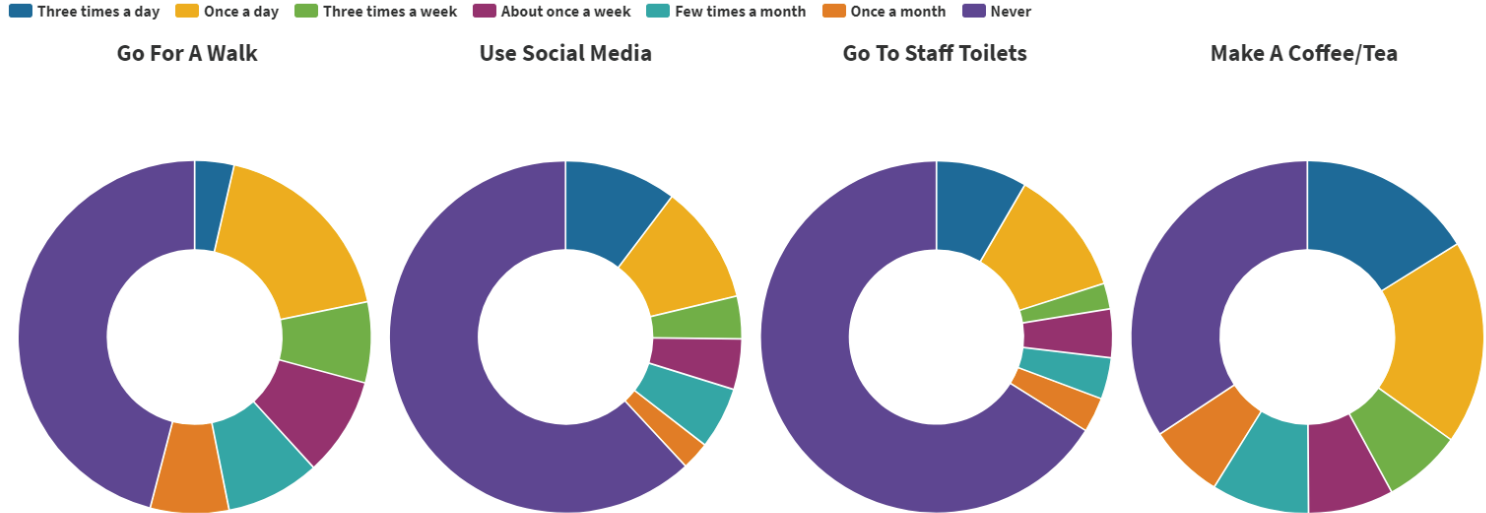


The reliance on social media to help relieve stress could be misguided though. Scientists have argued that the regular use of social media sites can cause huge amounts of stress. The term ‘technostress’ has been used to describe the issue and a piece of research by IT and management expert Monideepa Tarafdar of the Lancaster University and colleagues examined the habits of 444 Facebook users.

“While it might seem counter-intuitive, social media users are continuing to use the same platforms that are causing them stress rather than switching off from them,” said Professor Tarafdar.

Sometimes, the only place to go when you’re stressed at work is the staff toilets and 20% of workers said they would go to the toilet at least once a day when they’re feeling stressed. The proportion of female workers who’d go to the staff toilets when stressed was 24%.

Another way to combat stress at work is to try and relax with a tea or coffee. It turns out that 35% of us need to go and make a brew at least once a day when we’re feeling stressed.



Stressed Enough To Leave?

Whilst there's every chance that our jobs can make us feel stressed, we wanted to find out whether that amount of stress was enough to make you think about leaving your current job.

We found that 11% of those in our study were currently thinking about leaving their job due to stress. According to our data, 11% of women have already left a job in the last year due to stress.



Conclusion

It's clear from our study that there is a lot more that needs to be done to try and reduce the stress levels of UK workers. There are a number of ways in which you can avoid feeling stressed and ways to try and ensure that if you do encounter stress in your job, that you have the right coping mechanisms in place.



About Cartridge People

Cartridge People is one of the leading UK suppliers of printing consumables and office supplies with a passion for printing and customer service excellence.

It aims to deliver the best printer cartridge solutions and office supplies across the whole of the UK.

Cartridge People's products are only sourced from manufacturers, with the highest standards, many holding ISO accreditations for quality.

Displaying and charging one price with no hidden extras and delivery throughout the UK included, Cartridge People supplies home users, businesses, educational establishments, local authorities and government departments.

Cartridge People supplies major brands including: HP cartridges, Canon ink cartridges, Epson ink cartridges, Brother cartridges, Lexmark ink cartridges, Dell toner cartridges, Kodak ink cartridges and many more.

Based in Crewe, Cheshire, Cartridge People has been saving UK businesses money since 2001 by offering low cost, high quality consumables.



About Our Study

For more information relating to this study please email editor@cartridgepeople.com

