

Top 10 Most Stressful Professions

By Louise Jaggs

According to a recent survey by South West News Service, IT experts are more likely to suffer from stress than any other professional. A staggering 97 percent of people working in IT claim to find their life at work stressful on a daily basis.

Four out of five IT consultants feel stressed before they even enter the workplace, in anticipation of another day juggling complaints, pressure from managers and daily targets.

And a quarter of IT experts are under such enormous pressure to perform at work they have taken time off suffering with stress.

The poll also revealed that a third of IT professionals say it is difficult to get the work done when managers are constantly on their backs.

One IT respondent said: "I spend most of my day fielding calls from people who don't even have a basic knowledge of computers and printers. "It is amazing the amount of time I spend teaching people where the on-off button is.

"And when I do actually find a technical problem to solve, I have my manager breathing down my neck wondering why I have a backlog of complaints."

Kevin Young, managing director of SkillsSoft says: "Our research was sparked by a recent Gartner report which claims that the untrained or under-trained desktop user will cost an organization five times more to support than a well-trained worker. This led us to thinking about how much pressure this must also put on the IT professionals who have to provide such support.

"By commissioning this study, our aim was to establish to what level workload affects the stress levels of people working in IT and across a variety of other job disciplines; and to learn more about the sort of other factors that impact on stress in the workplace."

People working in medical professions have the second most stressful job - with 96.8 percent saying caring for others is rewarding but traumatic on the same hand.

Engineers, Sales and Marketing professionals and Teachers also have demanding roles, according to the poll. The poll reveals that 37 percent of these folk find it difficult to meet deadlines, whilst 31 percent stress about taking on other people's work.

A disgruntled 28 percent say they lack job satisfaction, and would prefer to work elsewhere.

A third of people would rather be their own boss, and have complete control over their daily duties.

And employees claim to feel put-upon and suffer most at the hands of their managers - who are blamed for lack of support, increasing pressure, interruptions and bullying behavior.

Kevin Young continues: "According to the Health & Safety Executive, stress is now the biggest cause of working days lost through injury or ill-health (an estimated 12.8 million lost days each year). And the TUC estimates that work-related stress costs the economy up to 7 billion per annum.

"By understanding more about what makes people stressed at work, organizations are much better placed to manage its causes."

TOP TEN STRESSFUL PROFESSIONS

1. Information Technology
2. Medical / Caring Professions
3. Engineering
4. Sales and Marketing
5. Education
6. Finance
7. Human Resources
8. Operations
9. Production
10. Clerical

TOP TEN WORK STRESSES

1. Workload
2. Feeling undervalued
3. Deadlines
4. Type of work people have to do
5. Having to take on other people's work
6. Lack of job satisfaction
7. Lack of control over the working day
8. Having to work long hours
9. Frustration with the working environment
10. Meeting Targets

TOP TEN COLLEAGUE IRRITATIONS

1. Seeing others not pulling their weight
2. Managers changing their minds about what they want doing
3. Lack of support from managers
4. Pressure from managers
5. Feeling put-upon by managers
6. Interruptions by colleagues
7. Interruptions by managers
8. Bullying behavior by managers
9. Lack of support from colleagues
10. Bullying behavior by colleagues

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