

WORKPLACE STRESS TEST

In conjunction with its research on workplace stress, Northwestern National Life Insurance Co. (NWNL) of Minneapolis developed this quiz to help you test the level of stress in your organization. Read each of the following statements and decide if it has been true in your workplace in the past 12 months.

STRESS PRODUCERS (3 points each)

- _____ 1. Company recently has been purchased by another company.
- _____ 2. Downsizing or layoffs have occurred in the past year.
- _____ 3. Department or employer has had a major reorganization.
- _____ 4. Employees expect that the company will be sold or relocated.
- _____ 5. Employee benefits were significantly cut recently.
- _____ 6. Mandatory overtime is frequently required.
- _____ 7. Employees have little control over how they do their work.
- _____ 8. Consequences of making a mistake on the job are severe.
- _____ 9. Work loads vary greatly.
- _____ 10. Most work is machine-paced or fast-paced.
- _____ 11. Employees must react quickly and accurately to rapidly changing conditions.
- _____ 12. Personal conflicts on the job are commonplace.
- _____ **TOTAL**

(2 points each)

- _____ 13. Few opportunities for advancement are available.
- _____ 14. Employees deal with lots of red tape to get things done.
- _____ 15. Staffing, money or technology is inadequate.
- _____ 16. Pay is below the going rate.
- _____ 17. Sick and vacation benefits are below the norm.
- _____ 18. Employees are rotated between shifts.
- _____ 19. New machines or ways of working have been introduced.
- _____ 20. Noise or vibration levels are high or room temperatures keep changing in work areas.
- _____ 21. Employees generally are isolated from one another.
- _____ 22. Performance of work units generally is below average.
- _____ **TOTAL**

(1 point each)

- _____ 23. There are few or no windows or natural lighting.
- _____ 24. Employees have little or no privacy.
- _____ 25. Meal breaks are unpredictable.
- _____ 26. Work is either sedentary or physically exhausting.
- _____ **TOTAL**
- _____ **GRAND TOTAL STRESS PRODUCERS**

STRESS REDUCERS (3 points each)

- _____ 1. Management takes significant action to reduce stress.
- _____ 2. Mental health benefits are provided.
- _____ 3. Employer has formal employee communication program.
- _____ 4. Employees have current and clear job descriptions.
- _____ 5. Employees are given information regularly on how to cope with stress.
- _____ 6. Management and employees talk openly with each other.
- _____ 7. Employees are free to talk with one another.
- _____ 8. Employer offers exercise and other stress-reduction classes.
- _____ 9. Employees are recognized and rewarded for their contributions.
- _____ **TOTAL**

(2 points each)

- _____ 10. Work rules are published and are the same for everyone.
- _____ 11. Child care programs are available.
- _____ 12. Employees can work flexible schedules.
- _____ 13. Perks are granted fairly based on a person's level in the organization.
- _____ 14. Employees have access to the technology they need.
- _____ 15. Employees and management are trained in how to resolve conflicts.
- _____ 16. Employees receive training when assigned to new tasks.
- _____ 17. Employer encourages work and personal support groups.
- _____ 18. Employees have a pace and time to relax during the work day.
- _____ **TOTAL**

(1 point each)

- _____ 19. An employee assistance program is available.
- _____ 20. Employees' work spaces are un-crowded.
- _____ 21. Employees can put up personal items in their work areas.
- _____ 22. Management appreciates humor in the workplace.
- _____ 23. Elder-care programs are available.
- _____ **TOTAL**
- _____ **GRAND TOTAL STRESS REDUCERS**

SCORING

- _____ **GRAND TOTAL FOR STRESS PRODUCERS**
- _____ **GRAND TOTAL FOR STRESS REDUCERS**
- _____ **WORKPLACE STRESS LEVEL**

Your score can range from minus 50 points (no stress) to 60 points (extremely high stress).