

## Absence Management

### Employers are wasting their money

Many employers are wasting their money in the way they manage employee absence. The 'scatter gun' approach to reducing employee absence often results in inappropriate, unnecessary and poorly targeted expenditure, and can actually increase employee absence.

The average employer in the UK is experiencing 8 or more days absence per employee per year. The CIPD estimates the average cost of this absence to be £666 per employee.

### Why are employees absent?

Stress remains the major cause of long term stress in non-manual employees. A recent survey in two public sector organisations revealed that absence recorded as being due to stress was in fact less than half of the true figure. Employees were misreporting their stress as minor ailments to prevent perceived criticism from their managers.

Don't confuse pressure with stress! Stress is the point at which excessive pressure causes physical or mental harm. Misuse of the word 'stress' to refer to normal everyday pressure has caused many employers to ignore what is a major cause of financial loss within their organisation.

### Non Recorded Absence

The 2008 CIPD absence management survey reported that "fewer than half of employers monitor the cost of absence and only half have set a target for reducing absence." This suggests that such an employer with say 1000 employees sees no reason to attempt to reduce estimated losses of over £0.65 million per annum.

### Hidden Absence

Not all employee absence can be recorded so is not included in the above figures. Employee consultations with guaranteed anonymity have revealed that many employees reduce their paid productive time by up to an hour a day in extended 'comfort' and lunch breaks, 'spinning out' mundane tasks, internet surfing and going 'walk about' around the workplace.

### Best Practice

Effective employee absence management requires clear and concise data on what is causing the absenteeism, who is involved, where they are located and potential solutions. When properly managed, preferably using an independent consultation manager, employee consultations with guaranteed anonymity provide the necessary answers and reduce both costs and losses.

## Employee Consultations

*Bespoke consultations from just £1.20 per employee.*

Have you taken sick leave because of stress?			If you have been absent due to stress did you report your absence as stress?		
Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Ask questions that verify the accuracy of your records and highlight where and why absence is occurring.*

A greater appreciation and recognition of work well done is required

A greater level of support from senior management is required

A greater level of support from line managers is required

*Identify what employees would like to see done to improve their work life balance.*

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
3	33	63	67	27
1.55%	17.10%	32.64%	34.72%	13.99%

*Use the Analysis Tool to get detailed information on complex question combinations.*

	Technician	Senior Technician	Group Manager	Senior Manager and above	Part-time / On Call Specialist	Project Managers
Manchester						
Liverpool	2		1			
Leeds	1					
Newcastle						
Dundee						
Edinburgh	1					
Glasgow						
Aberdeen	2	1				
Birmingham	1					

*Use Matrix Tool to highlight 'hot spots' to target remedial measures.*

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