

# Resilience

## Competency Development Activities

### Competency Definition

Deals effectively with pressure; maintains focus and intensity and remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks. Effectively balances personal life and work.

### Developmental Activity Levels

#### All (A)

*Applies to all competency levels*

#### Beginner-Basic Knowledge (B)

*A person at the Beginner-Basic Knowledge level has limited experience applying the competency. He/she applies general knowledge in common situations but has limited practical experience in applying the competency in a work environment presenting more complex situations.*

#### Mid-level (M)

*A person with mid-level proficiency has applied the competency repeatedly and successfully in the performance of his/her job but still has much to learn about the advanced aspects or behaviors associated with the competency. A person at this level can usually apply the competency on his/her own.*

#### High (H)

A person at the High level has extensive knowledge of and experience with this competency and can apply the competency exceptionally well on the job without assistance. At this level one is an expert and has enough experience to teach the competency to others.

### Articles, Books, and Websites

A Maddi, Salvatore R. and Khoshaba, Deborah M., Resilience at Work: How to Succeed No Matter What Life Throws at You, American Management Association, February, 2005.

Readers will learn proven techniques for increasing positive attitudes like commitment, control, and challenge. Developing patterns of support based on giving and getting assistance will also be covered. Luckily, resilience is not simply an ability one is born with, but a skill anyone can learn and improve. The authors provide the motivation and the tools to work constructively and remain hardy through difficult situations, and turn stressful changes in the workplace into golden opportunities.

A Losyk, Bob, Get a Grip!: Overcoming Stress and Thriving in the Workplace, John Wiley & Sons, October, 2004.

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Though it's impossible to lead a completely stress-free life, this book will help everyone-from CEOs to homemakers-deal with the difficulties of daily life. The book offers powerful, prescriptive advice for living and thriving in our high-stress times. Integrating techniques that relax the mind, the body, and the spirit, it presents quick and easy ways to make the day less stressful-and get the most out of each and every day.

**A** Luskin, Frederic and Pelletier, Ken, Stress Free for Good: 10 Scientifically Proven Life Skills for Health and Happiness, Harper San Francisco, February, 2005.

There are many books, magazine features, TV programs, videotapes, meditation classes, and seminars, all aimed at stopping stress. This book describes a scientifically based program that not only starts working within seconds but also creates a foundation to help remove stress and the symptoms associated with it from your life for good.

**A** Covey, Stephen R., The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Fireside Paperbacks, 1990.

**A** [Stress management](#)

This NIH site contains tools and techniques for assessing and relieving stress.

**A** [Stress Management Briefs](#)

This site contains brief articles on the causes of stress and how to cope with stress.

**H** Carlson, Richard, Don't Sweat the Small Stuff at Work: Simple Ways to Minimize Stress and Conflict While Bringing Out the Best in Yourself and Others, Hyperion, 1998.

The author shows readers how to interact more peaceably and joyfully with colleagues, clients, and bosses and reveals tips to minimize stress and bring out the best in themselves and others.

**H** Allen, David, “Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity”, Penguin USA, 2003.

**H** Hamel, Gary and Valikangas, Lisa, The Quest for Resilience, Harvard Business Review, September 1, 2003. HBR 0309C

Continued success no longer hinges on momentum. Rather, it rides on resilience--on the ability to dynamically reinvent business models and strategies as circumstances change. Strategic resilience is not about responding to a onetime crisis or rebounding from a setback. It's about continually anticipating and adjusting to trends that can permanently impair the overall success of the organization.

**H** Coutu, Diane L., How Resilience Works, Harvard Business Review, May 1, 2002. HBR 0205B

In the business arena, resilience has found its way onto the list of qualities sought in employees.

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As one of the author's interviewees puts it, "More than education, more than experience, more than training, person's level of resilience will determine who succeeds and who fails." Learn about how three fundamental characteristics seem to set resilient people and companies apart from others.

**H** Harris, Clare, Minimize Stress, Maximize Success: Effective Strategies for Realizing Your Goals, Chronicle Books, April 2003.

This book shows executives how to address the sources of stress—whether they're external, such as unrealistic deadlines or poor organization, or internal, such as not being able to leave work behind or rely on others. It offers individuals a wealth of solutions and constructive exercises. Readers learn how to: Think more effectively and creatively; Build energy and resilience; Put stress in perspective; Let go and delegate. They learn to minimize stress—and maximize success.

**H** Brooks, Robert B. and Goldstein, Sam, The Power of Resilience: Achieving Balance, Confidence, and Personal Strength in Your Life, McGraw-Hill/Contemporary Books, September, 2003.

The authors emphasize taking responsibility for one's actions and their impact on others. Read about setting realistic short- and long-term goals. The book offers a number of useful strategies to put into practice and an appendix of worksheets that address the concepts covered in each of the chapters.

#### Activities

**A** Practice looking at changes by first analyzing the benefits of the change and then addressing what needs to be done to implement the change.

**A** Set aside time each day and each week for personal activities that alleviate stress.

**A** Learn and use stress-reduction techniques such as deep breathing, mental imagery, deep relaxation, or meditation.

**A** Identify three ways in which you can include some form of relaxation in your day.

**B** After you have dealt with a conflict situation, ask for feedback from your supervisor on how you handled it.

**B** Make a list for a week of things that cause you stress and analyze it to see if there is a pattern. See if there are any ways to remove or alter these activities to reduce your stress.

**H** Plan systematic debriefs of situations which do not go the way you planned or expected. Involve relevant players and stakeholders to discuss what happened, what worked, what didn't work and what can be learned for the future.

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#### **Coaching Suggestions for Managers**

**B** If a team member experiences a setback or failure, ask that person to write down what you see as the reason and what he or she could have done to avoid it. Give the team member feedback on their analysis. If a situation arises that is similar, monitor the team member's use of the knowledge gained previously.

**H** Assign people to “pressure cooker” situations temporarily and then debrief them on how to handle them more efficiently.

**H** Ask staff to establish systematic debriefing processes for dealing with problematic situations and setbacks. Encourage them to use the debriefs to reduce the negative impact of those situations and to capture learning for the future.

**H** Ask staff to identify things that help them recover from stress at work and encourage them to build those things into their daily routine.