

BEING FLEXIBLE CAN MAKE YOU HAPPIER AT WORK

Oflate, are you feeling less passionate and more stressed out at work?

- Well, absence of congruence between you and the external environment could be the reason for this.
- In a fast paced society, hectic schedules and work pressures are bound to be there. Instead of taking in stress, you must find ways to adapt yourself to these conditions. You may not realize but often a rigid attitude or some diehard work habit is behind most of the stress that bogs you down.
- Experts therefore suggest that being flexible can reduce your stress to a good extend and also help in re-igniting your passion for work. Here are some pointers to make yourself more flexible and less stress imbibing:
- **Change yourself:** There are many things in life that you cannot change. Fighting battles you cannot win invariably increases you stress.
- For instance, in today's tough economic conditions, there is no escape from fresh challenges, uncertainties and turbulences.
- Trying to control them is nothing but a futile exercise. On the contrary, what you can most easily control or modify is your own behaviour.
- Therefore to keep stress at bay, be open to changing your attitude, outlook and work habits.
- **Identify stressors:** Overdose of anything is bad. Doing a perfect job is good but if your flair for perfection crosses limits, it could well become a major cause for your stress.
 - If meeting deadlines is becoming increasingly stressful, check if you're spending more time on the tasks than is necessary.
 - Perhaps you are making the task harder than it needs to be by setting too high standards for yourself.
 - If failure to achieve those standards is causing stress, redefine the standards. After all not every task requires high degrees of precision. Similarly, hard work is good but too much of it makes you a workaholic.
 - When you stretch yourself too much it undoubtedly leads to stress. If that is the case, force yourself to slow down.
 - Think on the worst that can happen if you don't work as intensely. You will soon realize that you are unnecessarily pushing yourself too hard.

- **Be Congruent:** Sometimes we develop certain work habits and then rigidly follow them come what may. But taking a uniform approach to every situation may not yield good results.
 - You must try to understand what makes each situation different and unique and then tailor your behaviour accordingly. Supposing you have the habit of taking decisions on your own with little or no input from others.
 - While this approach may work with some people and in some situations, in most others it may not work as well.
 - When you deal or negotiate with different people you must realize that they differ greatly from each other. Not every one is willing to come into your fold easily.
 - Some people need more listening and understanding, others more acceptance and caring.
 - Unless you attempt to understand the perceptions, interests, values and motivations of others, you will not be able to deal with them in a stress free manner.
- **Learn to relax:** When factors beyond your control such as flight cancellations, traffic jams, power outages, technical snags etc cause disruptions to your schedule, don't fume because it is not going to make your situation any better.
- **Instead relax:** Most of the time we frown even when not warranted.
 - Your restlessness won't change anything. In fact physical restlessness automatically results in mental paranoia.
 - When you know you have no control over the delay, the best thing to do is relax. A relaxed state puts your body-mind back in peak shape.
 - To be happy and stress free at work do not always stick to the beaten path.
 - Try developing the kind of flexibility that helps you to overcome the present difficulties and foray into the future with confidence.
 - For this purpose you must always think, plan and manage day-to-day activities in new ways.