

The Workplace Stress Scale™

**Copyright © The Marlin Company, North Haven, CT,
and the American Institute of Stress, Yonkers, NY**

Directions: Thinking about your current job, how often does each of the following statements describe how you feel?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
A. Conditions at work are unpleasant or sometimes even unsafe.	1	2	3	4	5
B. I feel that my job is negatively affecting my physical or emotional well being.	1	2	3	4	5
C. I have too much work to do and/or too many unreasonable deadlines.	1	2	3	4	5
D. I find it difficult to express my opinions or feelings about my job conditions to my superiors.	1	2	3	4	5
E. I feel that job pressures interfere with my family or personal life.	1	2	3	4	5
F. I have adequate control or input over my work duties.	5	4	3	2	1
G. I receive appropriate recognition or rewards for good performance.	5	4	3	2	1
H. I am able to utilize my skills and talents to the fullest extent at work.	5	4	3	2	1

To get your score, add the numbers you answered to all of the eight questions and see how you compare.

Interpreting Workplace Stress Scale™ scores

Total score of 15 or lower (33% of us are in this category): Chilled out and relatively calm. Stress isn't much of an issue.

Total score 16 to 20 (35%): Fairly low. Coping should be a breeze, but you probably have a tough day now and then. Still, count your blessings.

Total score 21-25 (21%): Moderate stress. Some things about your job are likely to be pretty stressful, but probably not much more than most people experience and are able to cope with. Concentrate on seeing what can be done to reduce items with the worst scores.

Total score 26-30 (9%): Severe. You may still be able to cope, but life at work can sometimes be miserable. Several of your scores are probably extreme. You could be in the wrong job, or even in the right job but at the wrong time, and might benefit from counseling.

Total score 31- 40 (2%): Stress level is potentially dangerous – the more so the higher your score. You should seek professional assistance, especially if you feel your health is affected, or you might need to consider a job change.

Workplace Stress Scale™ scores by demographic:

*Overall: 18.4.....Men: 18.6.....Women: 18.1
Ages 18-34: 17.6.....Ages 35-49: 19.2.....Ages 50+: 18.4*

SOME USEFUL TIPS ON REDUCING STRESS

- Analyze all the items showing high stress levels and figure out how to rein them in, particularly if you feel your health is being significantly affected. But keep in mind that any such scale, along with its categories, is subjective and that some stressors, such as deadlines, can actually have positive consequences.
- Remember that stress differs for all of us. Things like bungee jumping that are distressful for some may be pleasurable for others. Similarly, no stress-reduction technique works for everyone. Jogging, meditation or yoga are great for some but can actually prove stressful when arbitrarily imposed on others. Find out what works for you.
- Don't automatically assume that your headaches or other complaints are stress-related just because you have a high job stress score. A physician should always be consulted if you experience new symptoms, or if past problems seem to be getting worse, because they may be due to something else that is much easier to treat in its early stages.
- Finally, although stress is difficult to define, the feeling of having little control is always distressful. Anything you can do to gain more control over your daily activities will provide powerful stress reduction rewards.