

Stress: A BIG Problem for IT Managers

- According to William Cross, CIO at Seminole Electric Cooperative, IT workers have high divorce rates and personality types that can be cauldrons for stress. They tend to avoid people but have a need for recognition and praise, a “very seriously flawed combination,” he said.
- IT workers often put in long hours and deal with systems that can cause frustration.
- In a recent IT staffing survey conducted by CIO.com, keeping morale up and preventing burnout of staff was the top challenge facing IT managers.
- According to Connie Tyne, executive director of the Cooper Wellness Program, 52 percent of executives will die of diseases related to stress.

It's no joking matter that stress is taking a toll on IT departments everywhere. But a high level of stress among your staff is a bad sign that can lead to increased turnover, poor performance, and high levels of absenteeism. And since the world of IT generally comes with a great deal of stress, here are five things that you can do to prevent burnout among your staff.

1. Help staff achieve a work-life balance.

- Offer flexible work hours/schedules.
- Encourage employees to take breaks.
- Make sure that staff takes their vacation time.

2. Recognition matters.

- Recognize employees for a job well done.
- Offer monetary incentives such as hiring bonuses, staying bonuses, and stock options.

3. Encourage staff to continue learning.

- Offer training programs to encourage learning and broadening of skill sets.

4. Set up “at the office” perks.

- Have a fresh pot of coffee always available.
- Hire a massage team to come in and conduct a day of “at desk” 10-minute massages.
- Provide relaxation CDs or calming music that staff can put on their iPods or listen to while at their desks with headphones.

5. Promote exercise and healthy eating.

- Develop employee wellness programs.
- Start a lunchtime walking club.
- Offer discounts on gym memberships.
- Order a healthy lunch for your team and encourage employees to socialize during this time.

References:

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