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Stress Costs! Resilience Saves!

HeartMath Experts Say Chronic Stress is a Serious Health and Productivity Crisis Affecting Millions of Employees and the Companies They Work For

Boulder Creek, California – November 12, 2009 – Why is it that when it comes to stress we tend to gloss over it? It’s as though people think there isn’t much we can do about it; that it’s an unavoidable fact of modern life. Instead of treating the source, we tend to focus on managing – and paying for – all of the ailments and chronic diseases that stress has caused or aggravated. It’s no wonder that 70-90% of visits to primary care physicians are due to stress-related complaints. Much of this stress is related to finances, relationships or the workplace. [HeartMath LLC](#), a California organization known for their unique stress solutions and award-winning emWave® technologies, has developed programs geared to bring quick results, rapidly improve and sustain performance and produce a significant return on investment (ROI). Employers sponsoring their programs report a significant drop in turnover rates, higher employee satisfaction, greater productivity from HeartMath trained workers and a considerable increase in the company bottom line due to lower health care costs, less absenteeism, improved employee output, and increased resilience. ([Click here to see related video](#))

Just two years ago the [Journal of the American Medical Association](#) reported that “workplace stress is as bad for your heart as smoking and high cholesterol,” but we still don’t see TV ads talking about it. Furthermore, data from a three-year study involving 47,500 employees representing 22 companies and government agencies showed depression and stress as the *most costly* contributors to adjusted annual health care expenditures. In a recent nationwide survey from the [American Psychological Association](#), 32% of Americans reported experiencing extreme levels of stress. Nearly half of Americans believe that their stress has increased over the past five years. One in five reported that they experience their highest level of stress 15 or more days per month – and this was *before* the economic crash.

It’s astounding that in the face of statistics from these and many other studies showing that workers under stress produce *less*, many executives and managers still believe that ongoing stress is essential for job productivity. According to the federal [Centers for Disease Control](#), stress is the *single highest cause of worker absenteeism*, double that of all other illnesses and injuries. It’s also well established that stress interferes with memory, concentration, judgment and decision-making.

“People often confuse stress with challenge,” said Bruce Cryer, CEO and President of HeartMath LLC, “We all know that one person’s stress can be another person’s fun challenge. But let’s be honest, when most of us talk about our stress overload around the water cooler, we are referring to the momentum of emotional distress that is draining our personal energy, our focus and our productivity. This kind of stress progressively establishes itself as our new norm, making us much less effective at work and at home. HeartMath has been developing scientifically-validated alternatives to the stress treadmill, and they involve innovative technologies to help people build resilience and prevent stress before it happens. ”

So how do we address stress when the very things that trigger our stress seem out of our control? There are [ROI-driven programs](#) available that provide the education and tools that can help us to change our response to stress and create resilience, that capacity of human beings to adapt to adversity. For example, HeartMath’s ROI-driven programs are based on 18 years of published research that demonstrate a critical link between emotions, heart function and cognitive performance. Their programs are providing benefits to individuals as well as employers, building resilience on both personal and organizational levels. On an individual level, these programs have shown that they increase resilience, reduce emotional stress *and* improve job performance. Employers have reported a significant drop in turnover rates, higher employee satisfaction and more

productivity from HeartMath-trained workers as well as a considerable increase in the company bottom line due to lower health care costs, less absenteeism and greater presenteeism (being present and productive on the job).

Steve Stephenson, a senior manager in organizational development, engineering & product Integrity with Boeing said, "Some see HeartMath as stress reduction. Some say it helps their family life and their productivity. Our focus was both cost and productivity on the 767-400ER program. HeartMath gave our team the coherence we needed to come in under budget--on time--with productivity gains of up to 12%."

One California government agency that enlisted HeartMath's program saw significant reductions in overall psychological distress, anger, fatigue, hostility, anxiety and type-A behavior, accompanied by marked improvements in total cholesterol, glucose and diastolic and systolic blood pressure. In addition, they saw increases in productivity, motivation, goal clarity and perceived manager support. As a result, the agency projected reductions in both health care and absentee costs, yielding a total projected annual cost savings of \$1,179 per employee.

HeartMath resilience programs are based on physiology, science-based tools, technology and assessments, training employees to use simple, quick techniques on the job or at home to shift their physiology and regulate their emotional response when they feel stressed. More importantly they increase employees' capacity for resilience which is essential to stress prevention and the ability to recoup quickly after stressful events.

Using a psychometric called the Personal and Organizational Quality Assessment (POQA), data collected before and approx. two months after HeartMath training show a 44-65% reduction in the number of employees reporting chronic levels of stress symptoms, including exhaustion, anxiety, depression, anger, inadequate sleep, headaches and rapid heartbeats. These symptom improvements have a direct impact on the workplace, resulting in reduced tension between management and staff and better time management, listening to each other and cooperation. HeartMath's *ROI White Paper* provides more data and references on this topic. It is available for free download at www.heartmath.com/roi.

"The HeartMath program has allowed me to easily de-stress myself amidst the numerous challenges and opportunities that are part of any leader's daily regimen," said Jack Peterson, Vice President of Sierra Providence Hospital Network. "Since the HeartMath training, I find I can respond to the deluge of demands and priorities with more focus and near absence of agitation, and therefore far more readily make well-reasoned, thoughtful decisions."

HeartMath® LLC was honored just this past month as [one of the top three finalists](#) for the 2009 ABBY Award: Innovative Approach to the Delivery of Healthcare. According to HeartMath experts, we need to wake up to the fact that chronic stress is a serious health and productivity crisis affecting millions of us as well as the companies we work for. The good news is that HeartMath's science-based resilience programs have proven their benefits time and time again.

In today's changing times, ROI-driven resilience building and stress intervention programs are as important as weight and cholesterol management, smoking cessation, and other kinds of wellness education to help keep our workforce healthy and productive.

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About HeartMath®:

HeartMath LLC (www.heartmath.com) is a cutting-edge performance company providing a range of unique services and programs, products, and technology to improve health and well-being, while dramatically reducing stress and boosting performance and productivity. HeartMath clinical studies have demonstrated the critical link between emotions, heart function, and cognitive performance. HeartMath studies have been published in numerous peer-reviewed journals such as American Journal of Cardiology, Stress Medicine, Preventive Cardiology and the Journal of the American College of Cardiology. Their organizational clients include Stanford Business School, Stanford Hospital, Mayo Clinic, Scripps Center for Integrative Medicine, Kaiser Permanente, as well as dozens of school systems and thousands of health professionals around the world.