

Stamina, Strain & Stress

By Audrey McGibbon, 2015

Beyond reasons of materialism, managers have been shown to be predisposed to elevated anxiety because of the inherent nature of their work and perceived differences in responsibility and accountability levels (Hosie, Forster, & Sevastos, 2004).

Studies of affective wellbeing in organisations have shown that executives are operating under more strain than ever before (Forster & Still, 2001), the incidence of stress and burnout is increasingly common (Reinhold, 1997), and that emotional exhaustion is prevalent in managers' workplaces (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Organisations therefore need to develop strategies to help avoid burnout, monitor wellbeing levels more effectively and assist senior leaders in reaching and sustaining the heightened performance expectations that are integral to survival in the post global financial crisis corporate world (Hosie, Forster, & Sevastos, 2004).

Executive development is being increasingly seen as involving personal development related to how the individual deals with work/life issues, stress and health (Hall, 1995). Building on what has become universally referred to as the 'happy-productive-worker thesis' which examines the link between positive affect, employee engagement and business outcomes generally, Hosie et al (2013) investigated the relationship specifically within a management population and found that self-reports of affective wellbeing were positively associated with enhanced managerial and leadership performance and diminished affective wellbeing associated with poorer managerial performance (Hosie, N., & Sevastos, 2003) – investing in wellbeing makes good sense, for individuals and organisations for both social and economic reasons.