

4 GET FIT IN WORK TIME

Did you know that work is the biggest cause of stress? Research by the mental health charity Mind reports that one-in-three people claim their job is either very or quite stressful. A further one-in-five people have taken a day off sick because of stress, despite often citing a different reason for their absence.

'Companies that do not address employee stress face substantial costs. Stress and mental health issues cost the UK approximately £70bn annually,' reveals Dana Zelicha, organisational psychologist and founder of OWBA – The Organisational Well Being Agency (wellbeingagency.com). 'But workplace wellness programmes can increase employee wellbeing and generate considerable savings.'

Wellness programmes vary – they might include yoga classes or lunchtime stress management workshops; some companies offer weight-loss or quit-smoking initiatives. Zelicha provides mindfulness workshops for corporations. 'With all the pressures and distractions of modern society, it's very difficult to maintain inner balance,' she says. 'By encouraging employees to practise key strategies, science shows that they will decrease stress and anxiety, enhance focus and attention, and increase productivity and happiness.'

It's not only about looking after the health of staff today, but also a matter of investing in the future health of employees. A Government report says there's an ageing workforce and, by 2024, nearly 50 per cent of the adult population will be 50 plus. A wellness programme is one way of retaining employees and keeping ageing staff healthy. ■

Beat work stress

MINDFUL MEDITATION

A meditation session may take a mere few minutes. It could be just what the doctor ordered to help you re-focus. Try the Headspace Guided Meditation and Mindfulness app (free from iTunes).

UNI-TASK

Don't multitask. Multitasking can reduce productivity by up to 40 per cent. Plan your day and focus your attention on one task at a time. By prioritising jobs, you'll perform far more effectively.

MINDFUL EATING

Eat with intention. Cultivate an awareness of how your body and mind are feeling, or if you're using food to satisfy your needs. Before snacking, ask yourself whether you're physically hungry or just stressed.

