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Peer Influence: A Method to Help Manage Stress

Ronald Cameron Zurcher
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M.S. Degree, Field Experience Program

Ronald Cameron Zurcher

Lombard XI

Peer Influence

(A Method to Help Manage Stress)

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Date
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ABSTRACT:

Purpose:

The purpose of this project was to find a difference between middle managers' and blue-collar workers' episodic non-work related and work related stress events. The information that was found was to be developed into a "peer influence" program to help prevent the workers from experiencing chronic stress symptoms.

Method:

From research it was determined that there is a significant difference between middle managers' and blue-collar workers' episodic non-work and work related stress events. The material that was reviewed showed a difference in five areas: threat of job loss, lack of authority, new social values (sociability), personal life (satisfaction), and stressful life events.

A survey by the use of a questionnaire was distributed to middle managers and blue-collar workers at two large corporations. When they were returned, they were coded, and an analysis by the Mann-Whitney U-Test was done. This methodology found six events where middle managers and blue-collar workers showed a trend toward, or a significant difference at the <.05 level of significance.
Because of the low blue-collar response and the Mann-Whitney U-Test findings, the questionnaire was also used as a needs analysis. This was done to find any relationship between the samples. Three events were found to show this relationship.

These findings, from both methodologies, were researched and the results were recorded.

Results:

The results of this project are that the middle manager is affected by stress when confronted with work related events (activity level of work, change in work schedule). The blue-collar worker is affected by stress when confronted by non-work events (serious illness, arguments with spouse, marriage). Both samples experience stress when confronted by three events that can cause stress for the individual concerned (death of a family member, serious illness suffered by a family member, being transferred to a new position or assignment).

Conclusions:

Two conclusions can be drawn from this project:

1. The problems (events) that occur away from the work environment can affect middle managers' and blue-collar workers' performance on the job.

If something is not done to help the individual,
chronic stress symptoms could surface.

2. The blue-collar stress is part of the worker's home environment. Without a release of some kind, the result could be: absenteeism, drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, etc.

Because of these results and conclusions, the Peer Influence Program (PIP) was developed.
Introduction

A manager tells one of his workers to complete a task. However, the worker's daughter ran away from home last night. Rather than listening to the manager, he just ignores him. The manager gets upset and starts yelling at the worker. An argument ensues, and the worker is sent home for the rest of the day. The worker is experiencing an episodic non-work related stressor, but the manager is uninformed about this problem at the worker's home. What can be done to train managers how to deal with these situations? How can managers and subordinates learn to communicate with each other?

"Peer influence" can help in many of these situations. At this point, you might ask, what is "peer influence"? A peer is someone around your own age or has some of the same interests. This can be someone you are closely associated with or someone you might not know. By bringing a group of peers together for a common cause, many positive outcomes can occur. Because of the diverse values, beliefs, and attitudes of this group views can be discussed with many alternative solutions to problems. Through consensus and exploration a problem can be realistically resolved by the use of a "peer influence" group. (Also see Appendix A: Definition of Terms)

This project will study the episodic work-related stressors and the episodic non-work related stressors of middle managers and blue-collar workers. It is hypothesized that a difference will be found between the two groups. From this,
a program will be developed to manage the stressors of middle managers and blue-collar workers using "peer influence".

Description of the Problem

The stressors that the middle managers and blue-collar workers experience are the same. This researcher has found through observations and discussions with people from both groups, that this assumption is true. We are all people, we have good and bad feelings, we hurt and we all laugh. No matter, if we are being pressured to raise production to a higher percentage or we are supposed to assemble more hydraulic jacks per month, we feel stress. People handle it in different ways, and some aren't even bothered. If the problem of stress is wide-spread in a corporation, can the task of each worker be accomplished? Probably not. This wide-spread problem would have a negative effect on the attitudes of the middle managers and blue-collar workers. There would be more energy spent by individuals working to manage their stress, rather than working as a team to accomplish a task.

The cost of stress to the corporation is phenomenal. However, this cannot be estimated accurately to the dollar. Based on a variety of estimates and projections from government, industry and health groups, the cost of stress is approximately $75 - $90 billion annually. This figure takes into account the dollar effects of reductions in operating effectiveness resulting from stress in the form of poorer decision making and decreases in creativity. It also takes into account
costs of mental and physical health problems arising from stress conditions. These figures also reflect the quality of life; strains on marriage and the family and friendships. (Ivancevich, Matteson, 1980)

Statement of Purpose

What is the importance of a peer group concept to establish a particular task? The peer group is developed through the use of "peer influence". A selected group of middle managers and blue-collar workers are able to communicate with each other through the use of a group meeting. This eliminates poor lines of communication between the two groups. They are able to sit down in a "safe place" and discuss issues that are important to both groups. Because of this, a good overall environment in the corporation is established. This becomes cost effective because both groups know what is expected of each other. Productivity will increase, absenteeism will decrease, and lines of communication will open up.

Stress can be determined by the amount of stress signals people display. The following are clues of behaviors displayed by a person who is experiencing high levels of stress:

1. Disregarding low (or high) priority tasks.
2. Giving reduced amount of time to each task.
3. Redrawing boundaries to shift or avoid responsibilities.
5. Being superficially involved; appearing to give up.
6. Expressing negative or cynical attitudes about customers/clients.
7. Appearing depersonalized, detached.
8. "Going by the book".
10. Displaying inappropriate humor.
11. Stealing or using other means of "ripping off" the organization.
12. Obviously wasting time; being unavailable most of the time.

This project will focus on the episodic non-work and episodic work-related stressors of middle managers and blue-collar workers. Their stress signals should be the same. People experience levels of stress differently; however, they show their stress similarly. A middle manager can have "real problems" at home and this will reflect at work by how he treats his subordinates and colleagues. This can also work in the opposite way. Problems on the job can cause problems at home. There is no difference for a blue-collar worker. However, at this point in the researcher's investigation, there has been no prior research found to prove this.

The main intervention of the project is to develop a program to deal with stress. The program will be developed to work with a variety of "real problems". However, for the purpose of this project, the middle management stressors and blue-collar workers stressors will be emphasized. Because of the assumptions made concerning the stressors of both groups, the program will be developed to accommodate them. If they are able to sit down and discuss feelings about themselves and others, discuss the work environment, or discuss how to complete a task, they will feel less pressure. This will enable them to work together, not against each other.
Statement of Specific Objectives

There are three major objectives of this project:

1. Determine if there is a significant difference between middle manager stressors and blue-collar worker stressors.
2. Development of a "peer influence" program to help manage the stress.
3. Identify the specific content which should be included in the program and training manual.

Population to be Studied

The population that will be studied in this project are middle managers and blue-collar workers from two large manufacturing environments. The corporations are located in Southwestern Michigan.

Corporation A

This corporation was founded in 1911. At this time it produced electric motor driven washing machines. In 1925 the corporation became the sole supplier of washing machines to Sears, Roebuck and Company. In 1929 the corporation merged with another. In 1950 the corporation was renamed to the present corporate name. Today, corporation A is a leading manufacturer of major home appliances with plants in seven states and Mexico. The corporation has eight manufacturing divisions that are organized into two operating groups; Laundry and Refrigeration.
This project will focus on one of these divisions. Here is located both the laundry group headquarters and the manufacturing plant. About 300 employees work at the laundry group providing engineering, purchasing, and testing support for the other divisions engaged primarily in the manufacturing of laundry equipment.

The division is located on the original site of the founding corporation. Washers, compact washers, and parts for other corporation A divisions are manufactured here. The division employs 1,500 people.

The selection of the population to be involved with the project is being done by one of the human resources manager. This will be done randomly by him. He will also give an explanation of the reasons for the questionnaire. The middle managers will be selected from general supervisors and managers. The blue-collar workers, or workers "on the floor", will be selected on a volunteer basis.

Corporation B

This corporation was founded in 1909. The first product this corporation manufactured was a holder for canvas car tops. The board chairman stated, "During the peak years we produced 18,000 units a day. But when the closed car became popular, we had to find other products that would keep the factories going."

The search for new products was successful. By 1922 the corporation was heavily involved in supplying jacks and malleable
iron castings to the fast expanding automotive industry. By 1938 the corporation began producing self-energizing double disc brakes for tractors, military aircraft and off-highway vehicles and equipment for all types.

The jack group, started in 1917 with a screw jack that quickly became original equipment on most automobiles in production at that time, today furnishes jacks to most domestic automobile and truck manufacturers. It also supplies a full line of hydraulic and mechanical jacks and other service equipment for professional automotive repair shops, do-it-yourself home workshops and for general farm and industry.

Corporation B employs nearly 500 people and has manufacturing and distribution facilities in Michigan, Ohio, Texas, North Carolina, and California.

The selection of the population to be involved with the project is being done by the industrial relations manager. This will be done randomly by him. He will also give an explanation of the reasons for the questionnaire. The middle managers will be selected from general supervisors and managers. The blue-collar workers will be selected on a volunteer basis.

The population will total approximately 150 - 250 people. This will be a large enough population to prove or disprove that middle managers and blue-collar workers experience the same episodic work-related and episodic non-work related
stressors. From this information a program can be developed.

Design of Experiment

The design of this project limits it to the three objectives discussed earlier. 1) Determine if there is a significant difference between middle managers and blue-collar worker stressors. This can be proven only by research of other projects in this area. However, assumptions can be drawn by the use of the data collected from the questionnaires. These data can be compared to other data that has been documented. 2) Development of a "peer influence" program to help manage stress. When the areas of episodic work-related and episodic non-work related stress are proven to be applicable for program development, it will be developed. This will be done with a survey by means of a questionnaire. 3) Identify the specific content which should be included in the program and the training manual. The questionnaires will indicate the important variables that need to be developed. The development of the program will take the important variables and incorporate them into the group meeting structure and the training design.

General Outline of Procedures

Internal validity will be safeguarded because of the type of experiment being done. Donald Campbell and Julian Stanley (1963) point out eight sources of internal validity. They are as follows:
1) **History** - Historical events may occur during the course of the experiment that will confound the experimental results.

2) **Maturation** - People are continually growing and changing, whether in an experiment or not, and those changes affect the results of the experiment.

3) **Testing** - Often the process of testing and re-testing will influence people's behavior, thereby compounding the experimental results.

4) **Instrumentation** - If different measures of the dependent variable, how can we be sure that they are comparable to one another?

5) **Statistical Regression** - Are the groups in the experiment so low that they can't get worse but only better? There is a danger, then, that changes occurring by virtue of subjects starting out in extreme positions will be attributed erroneously to the effects of the experimental stimulus.

6) **Selection Biases** - Where subjects have been selected for what they represent not who they are. Comparisons don't have any meaning unless the groups are comparable.

7) **Experimental Mortality** - Where experimental subjects drop out of the experiment before it is completed, and the statistical comparisons and conclusions drawn can be affected by that.

8) **Selection - Maturation and other Interactions** - Besides each of the individual sources of internal invalidity described above, it is always possible that some combination of two or more sources may present a more sophisticated problem. (Campbell and Stanley, 1963, PP. 5-6)

The project will only be done with a small population. There are no experimental or control groups and pre or post tests; so, the internal validity is safeguarded. The only problem is that the population sample might not return the questionnaire which will effect the objectives. A 50% return of the questionnaires from both samples would lend
credence to the development of the program.

Note: Fifty percent was selected as a return rate due to the type of program being developed. Having half of each group responding gives the project sound evidence for its need in a manufacturing environment.

This project will concentrate on two of the four areas for diagnosing stress. The shaded boxes in Figure 1 will be the areas of stress that will be explored in this project.

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<th>Nonwork Related</th>
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<td>Type I</td>
<td>(reorganization)</td>
<td>Type II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type III</td>
<td>(too much work, too little time)</td>
<td>Type IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(marriage)</td>
<td>(concern over the economy)</td>
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Figure 1. Sources of Stress

Episodic stress, work-related and nonwork-related, can be deadly to an individual. These two areas cause disruptions, trigger a chain reaction, and requires a certain amount of personal adjustment. Of course, there are other serious implications of stress that are associated with the chronic stress areas for diagnosing stress. However, this project will only concentrate on the episodic work-related and episodic non-work related areas of stress.

The peer group will be preventative not "crisis" orientated. So, the group's concentration will be focused on the episodic stress areas, not the chronic areas. A group member will be referred to another professional (cardiologist, psychiatrist, etc.) for individual treatment if a chronic
stress area is diagnosed by the group or facilitator.

Plan for Gathering Empirical Data

A questionnaire will be used to test the significant difference between the middle managers and blue-collar workers stressors. This being a quantitative study, the information will be used to develop a program using "peer influence". This program will include; concepts, structure for the meeting, and general discussion areas for the group. A manual will also be included as part of the program, for future facilitator training. The training will be part observation and hands-on group facilitation. The trainee will learn concepts, etc. that are being taught to the group.

Instrumentation

The instrument being used for this project is a survey by means of a questionnaire. (See Appendix B) The two stress areas, episodic work-related and episodic non-work related, are the focus of this project. The results of the questionnaire will help prove or disprove the main objective of this project: Prove if there is a significant difference between middle managers stressors and blue-collar workers stressors. This is done by distributing the same questionnaire to both groups. Secretarial markings will be used to separate the two groups: MM/rcz - middle managers and BC/rcz - blue-collar workers.

The questionnaire being used for this project has been
used before, but in a different format. The original questionnaire was used for training and workshops for the management of stress. It was used for the participants to rate themselves during a workshop. (Adams, 1980) This questionnaire encompasses some of the original questions. However, the researcher developed a system of rating each question as to how stressful each event is to the individual. Because of this design, the questionnaire will help get results to develop the program.

Limitations of the Project

The project can possibly be implemented in any large corporation. However, the researcher will be unable to test the program, because he does not work in a large corporation. Permission has been given to conduct a survey by means of a questionnaire. The only indicator that the program works is the researcher's expertise in facilitating and training teachers and college students in institutions and schools. This training includes some of the program development aspects included in this project.
CHAPTER II
Introduction

The first objective of this project is to establish that there is a significant difference between middle manager stressors and blue-collar worker stressors. To do this, the emphasis of this chapter will be middle manager and blue-collar worker episodic non-work related and episodic work related stressors. An explanation of both is as follows:

Episodic Non-Work Related - Recent events away from work include changes for an individual, such as:
1. Restrictions of social life;
2. Marriage;
3. Death of family member;
4. Serious illness;
5. Etc.

Episodic Work Related - Recent events on the job include changes for the individual, such as:
1. Major changes in instructions, policies, or procedures;
2. A requirement to work more hours per week than normal;
3. A sudden significant increase in the activity level of pace of work;
4. Major reorganization;
5. Etc.  (Adams, 1980, p. 166)

This chapter is divided into specific areas of research. The first area is the Participants, which describes the middle manager and the blue-collar worker and how they are effected by: threat of job loss, lack of authority, new social values (sociability), personal life (satisfaction), and stressful life events.

The second part of this chapter is a Comparison and Contrast of Literature. Within this part, prior research is discussed concerning the specific areas listed above.
However, some of this information is primarily from research of the specific groups, not research comparing one group to the other. The summaries of each section will draw on differences that have been found in the literature.

The two final objectives of this project are; (1) development of a "peer influence" program to help manage stress and (2) identify the specific content which should be included in the program and the training manual. Due to the content of these two objectives, they will be explored at a later point in the development of this project.

Note: Leonard Moss and Arthur Shostak are two authors that look at stressors by focusing on the episodic stress events. Because of this, they are quoted extensively in this project.
The Participants

Middle Manager Stress

The Position

The middle manager is defined as:

One who manages managers, supervisors, or professional and technical people, but who is not a top executive (who sets policy and deals with the total resources of the organization); is not a general manager (with profit and loss responsibilities); and is not a supervisor (who is often closely related to the employees supervised in terms of background and experience). (Moss, 1981, p. 130)

A middle manager has a position that has many responsibilities, but really none. He/She is responsible for the interpretation and implementation of organizational policies and goals established by top executives. This makes them vulnerable in today's organizations compared to their security of 20 years ago.

Threat of Job Loss


Stress: The significant thing about the 1970-71 recession with regard to the middle managers is that they suddenly went from a traditionally low unemployment rate to a relatively high one. For the first time in many years, they felt threatened with the loss of a job. This experience and its attendant publicity will be a source of continuing concern for many middle managers for years to come. To them it is grim evidence that they are not in a uniquely favored and protected position because they are the echelon immediately below the top executives. (Kay, 1974, pp. 110-111)
This insecurity causes the middle manager to feel as if they are boxed in because of the specialization and departmentalization. They were trained and developed in a specific area of the organization. Due to the middle manager's performance as a manager, a promotion was granted. However, after a few years, Moss (1981) states:

Middle managers, feel the need for change, may want to move laterally to a less crowded, more satisfying or promising career pathway. But they are now hemmed in either by lack of experience in other areas, or salary that is too high for the experience level at which they will enter other functional areas. (Moss, 1981, p. 131)

Lack of Authority

A middle manager has no real authority as Leonard Moss (1981) pointed out:

Middle managers in this middle, suffering and dissatisfied, receive no sympathetic understanding from below or above. Subordinates view middle managers as without influence, indecisive, inflexible, burdened with undesirable jobs, or occupying positions to be avoided at all costs. (Moss, 1981, p. 133)

This whole syndrome causes stress by itself. This power distribution causes obsolescence, apathy, demoralization, and defeat. The middle manager does not feel in control because of this.

New Social Values

Middle managers in today's organizations are confronted with social developments which infringe on their own values and job demands. Some of these social factors are:
1) A growing emphasis on humanism and quality of work life at the expense of profitability and productivity.

2) Greater demands for involvement in the decision-making process by younger and better educated managers who are willing to accept close control and authoritarian practices.

3) Shifting social mores at work due to a greater representation of minority groups in management ranks, as well as an increasing number of assertive women managers who are challenging roles or behaving in ways heretofore reserved only for men.

4) A trend toward corporate social responsiveness and accountability initiated through the efforts of business critics, environmentalists, consumer advocates, and public interest groups. (Moss, 1981, p. 164)

**Personal Life**

Most often stress and crisis result from interaction of organizational factors and other important influences in the manager's total life sphere, such as:

1) Competing personal, family, or social interests, goals and responsibilities.


**Stressful Life Events**

A middle manager sees many changes going on around him/her. "Stressful life events are the factors that require adaptive responses from the individual involved." (Moss, 1981, p. 176) However, the middle manager's lack of authority causes him/her to have no control over this.

Due to this, four areas can be predictors of stress for middle managers:

1) **Intensity (Rate of Change)** - There is a positive correlation between perceived rate of change and the experience of anxiety and stress, par-
particularly when that change will be perceived as more stressful than similar changes initiated when internal conditions are more stable.

2) **Magnitude and Duration** - The magnitude of the stressful event (degree of departure from average conditions) directly corresponds to the impact on the individual and the extent of consequent disability.

3) **Predictability and Novelty** - Unpredictable events have more adverse effect than those that are anticipated or for which individuals are prepared on the basis of prior experiences. (Rabkin and Struening, 1977) If a manager can predict what to expect and when to expect it, or what is safe and what is not safe less panic or fear responses and eventual stress consequences will occur. Thus, learning what to expect can result from observation of others; instruction by others, including a godfather or mentor; organizational training programs with a managerial stress component; group cohesiveness, and peer group or personal support systems within as well as outside the organization.

4) **Timing and Contest** - Numerous stressors operating simultaneously or in sequence have greater impact than stressors that occur singly. Stressful life events or a poor state of health are potential contributors to overload when these occur simultaneously or in sequence with stressors at work. Brown (1974) found that the biographical circumstances surrounding an important stressful life event predicted such consequences as depression as well or better than the individual's self-reported measure of threat. Thus a scientific rationale exists for delaying relocation or job change, (including promotion or favorable change) until the manager's life situation and/or health improve sufficiently to prevent stress overload by the addition of managerial stress. (Moss, 1981, pp. 177 - 178)

It is better to delay a promotion if stressful life events or health is in jeopardy. Most middle managers are afraid to mention this if they are being considered for a promotion or transfer for fear of being considered disloyal or poorly motivated and possibly will not be considered in the future. Thus, middle managers who could possibly gain
status, but are experiencing non-work related stressors and health problems most likely will be promoted or transferred. However, the new responsibilities will cause more stress to occur and will eventually jeopardize the organization.

**Blue-Collar Stress**

**The Position**

The blue-collar worker is defined as being of or pertaining to factory workers or manual laborers. Thus, a blue-collar worker is usually paid by the hour for the services he/she performs for the organization.¹

**Threat of Job Loss**

The blue-collar worker has one area of fear concerning job loss, unemployment. This encompasses two highly accepted social needs the blue-collar worker has; acceptance by a powerful other (employer) and membership in the community of respectable peers the gainfully employed mass of fellow beings.

Sociologist E. E. LeMasters offers five explanations of why blue-collar workers become stressful in a job loss situation:

1) The men resent the fact that if it is not of their choosing, and thereby points up their lack of control over their fate.
2) They can get bored to the very edge of sanity.

¹The Random House College Dictionary, 1980, "blue collar"
3) They tend to drink more when they are not working. "Many of these men might have what might be called a drinking problem, which they control, or least in part, by not drinking on the job eight hours a day, five days a week. Unemployment upsets the delicate balance of their drinking program -- partly because they spend more time at the tavern when they are not working."

4) Their marriages may become tense, as the wives are unaccustomed to having the husbands underfoot all day. "The husbands, being upset by his inability to work, is not, of course, at his best in his marital role during this period."

5) The financial squeeze can be excruciating. Unemployment benefits help, but the gap between relief and earnings is very hard to accommodate -- when the "fault" is not your own! (LeMasters, 1975, p. 26)

Arthur B. Shostak, in Blue-Collar Stress, lists four areas that are objective stressors for the blue-collar worker. They are as follows with some explanation of each area:

1) **Compensation**
   a. Inflation erodes purchasing power. "Cures" for inflation may spur unemployment.
   b. Workers feel they are being scapegoated for the inflationary spiral.
   c. Compensation has no assuredness of continuity.
   d. Sectors of the blue-collar work force vie with one another for economic advantage.
   e. Gains are secured by reliance on "category" rather than on individual merit.

2) **Health and Safety Hazards**
   a. Use of inadequately tested components and processes leaves all uneasy.
   b. Fatalism, as a depressor of concern and prevention, assures uneven preventative measures.
   c. Pervasive anxiety haunts high-risk situations.
   d. Employer evasion of OSHA spirit and rules demoralizes employees.
   e. Industry opposition to spread of OSHA regulations casts industry in a cold light.
   f. Predominance of pressures of production encourages cynicism about employer motives.
   g. Media preoccupations with industrial hazards spread anxiety.
3) Work Setting
   a. Physical discomfort (noise, odors, general neglect) is commonplace.
   b. Double standard in the care given to white-collar settings stirs jealousy.
   c. Out-of-doors exposure increases risk of illness.
   d. Extreme variations in inside work conditions increases risk of illness.
   e. Indifference to worker comfort (air drafts, dull walls, potholes in parking lots, etc.) deflates pride in employment.

4) Work Loss
   a. Dread of layoffs pervades work life.
   b. Anger at contracting work within a plant connects to intense inter-worker rivalries.
   c. The experience of unemployment leaves all endlessly looking over their shoulder, fearing that job loss will catch them again.
      (Shostak, 1980, pp. 33-34)

Lack of Authority

The blue-collar worker has authority within his/her own job responsibilities. However, due to rules and production pressures, this is as far as their authority goes.

Arthur Shostak (1980) remarked about some of these concerns:

Rules:
While the situation varies widely, many and perhaps most blue-collar work settings are laced through with "dos and don'ts" that resemble nothing so much as the regulations of primary school, Sunday school, or boot camp. There are rules about where to park, when to arrive, when to eat, how often to use the bathroom, where to smoke, whether or not to talk with co-workers, whether or not to stretch or stroll a bit, when to wash up before the day's end, when to line up at the time clock, how fast to move on the way out, and so on and so forth. (Shostak, 1980, p. 49)

The blue-collarite looks at some authority as the "enemy camp". Because of this they sometimes take a stance against
the organization through retaliation which includes:

1) Spreading rumors and gossip to cause trouble at work.
2) Doing work badly or incorrectly.
3) Stealing merchandise, supplies or equipment.
4) Damaging the employer's property, equipment, or products accidentally, but not reporting it.
5) Damaging the employer's property, equipment, or product on purpose. (Shostak, 1980, p. 50)

The stress is then incurred by the production levels that the blue-collar worker has to maintain. Carroll Brodsky (1976) observed:

"Techniques for "keeping the heat on" are many and varied, though most, as forms of harassment, entail ways of pressuring a person or keeping him in a corner. Certain supervisors about whom I have heard colorful stories provoke, frighten, browbeat, intimidate, or in other related ways push productivity goals -- and not incidentally, stir considerable (debilitating) stress." (Brodsky, 1976, p. 52)

Thus, the blue-collar worker is pressured to produce more, but if production is high, the only reward he/she gets is to continue to produce at the same level. The end result is pressures from above which causes stress to develop.

**New Social Values (Sociability)**

The blue collar worker enjoys the fellowship of fellow workers. Arthur Shostak states: "To remain comfortable as one of the crowd while enjoying acceptance by 'significant others' among one's co-workers is perhaps the highest-order workplace need of the largest number of employees." (Shostak, 1980, p. 53)
Blue-collar workers enjoy the fellowship that they have on and off the job. This is regarded by many blue-collar workers as an absolutely indispensable prerogative of working men and women. However, Arthur Shostak states:

Distress enters, however, when the common need to be part of a community of work is thwarted by sharp-edged divisiveness. Men endlessly succumb to the temptation to arbitrarily exclude, isolate, and denigrate certain of their own co-workers. In the aftermath of such internecine warfare, work force harmony is replaced by numerous cliques that may divide blue-collarites by age, sex, race, lifestyle, religion, educational attainment, region, ethnic origin, marital status, political attitudes, leisure preferences, standards of morality, or occupational attitudes and aspirations ...

(Shostak, 1980, p. 54)

Another area of concern at the workplace for blue-collar workers are minority workers and female workers. This threat, especially on seniority workers, causes a fear of job security.

Arthur B. Shostak, the author of Blue-Collar Stress, sums it up as follows:

Blue-collar camaraderie today appears to be a source of demoralizing strains that mix hostility with patronizing compassion:

1) The men pity the women because they do the slighter tasks.
2) The blacks pity any white who'd have to take a job like that.
3) The whites pity the blacks who won't get anything better.
4) The old people feel sorry for the young people who are so unsettled. (Shostak, 1980, p. 56)

Personal Life (Satisfaction)

The characteristic blue-collar response to the challenge of finding satisfaction in work entails reducing one's goals
so far that one can appear to be satisfied. Blue-collar work-
ers experience what is called "blue-collar blues". This is
basically associated with working conditions that discourage
good work performance, impedes personal growth, and stifles
autonomy and creativity.

Where stressors are concerned, work satisfaction is
comprised by a large number of deterrents, including some
that are commonly overlooked, such as busywork, "the empty
task assigned only to fill time until regular work is again
available." (Shostak, 1980, p. 58)

A typical blue-collarite's workday is involved with
lulls that are times for horseplay, turning off the mind to
help the time pass, and generally find some way to make the
task completion bearable. Without this, the blue-collar
worker would become bored with the task completion and slow
production, but primarily this helps him/her cope with the
stress of the day.

Low morale, alienation, and discontent are determinates
of "blue-collar blues". Following is a comparison of the
antisatisfaction stressors that determine "blue-collar blues":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High &quot;Blues&quot; Level</th>
<th>Low &quot;Blues&quot; Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had some skills they would like on their job but can't.</td>
<td>Skills were fully used on the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had little chance on their job to learn new things.</td>
<td>Received enough help to do their work best.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Had enough tools, machinery or other equipment to work their best.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Received few fringe benefits.  
Received many fringe benefits.  
(Shostak, 1980, p. 59)

Assembly line workers and occupations that involve similar types of work experience the greatest amounts of boredom and job dissatisfaction. This group also has the highest levels of anxiety, depression, irritation, psychosomatic disorders. (Weaver, 1975, p. 169; Kelly, Cooper, 1978, p. 19; Shostak, 1980, p. 61; Axelrod, Gavin, 1980, p. 46)

Stressful Life Events

The blue-collar worker is subjected to many stressors on and off the job. Arthur Shostak says:

Stressors in the work setting are no puzzle or any subtle sort of "closet matter". They are as plain as the factory windows that haven't been cleaned for years, a toolshed floor that bears traces of everything dropped in it in recent weeks, ........... and the incessant cacophony or roaring, whirring, pounding, and whistling noises that bring both headaches and the risk of sustained hearing loss. (Shostak, 1980, p. 27)

The non-work related stressors of the blue-collar worker are many, but not any different than the white-collar worker. Both groups experience problems with marriage, parent-child conflicts, in-law problems, alcoholism, etc.

Arthur Shostak explains six stressors concerning the economic (material stressors) security that blue-collar workers have. These stressors are:

1) The struggle not to lose ground to inflation's erosion of purchasing power.
2) The fear that "cures" for inflation may prove more costly for blue-collarites than the ill itself.
3) The discomfort over being blamed for the wage price spiral.
4) The irregular character of non-salaried compensation.
5) The anxieties that accompany the jockeying for position among jealous blue-collar occupations.
6) The ambivalence that accompanies reliance on compensation gains through "category" bargaining wins rather than through individual effort. (Shostak, 1980, p. 12)

Comparison and Contrast of Literature

The following is a comparison and contrast of the literature concerning the middle manager and blue-collar worker episodic non-work related and work related stressors. This section will follow the same format as the previous section.

Threat of Job Loss

Several studies have been conducted which measure the extrinsic and intrinsic job factors of white and blue-collar workers. Extrinsic job factors (e.g. sense of accomplishment, value of work) are in reference to white-collar workers (middle managers). Intrinsic job factors (e.g. pay, security) are in reference to blue-collar workers. (Friedlander, 1965; Center, Gugenthal, 1966; Locke, 1973; Harris, Locke, 1974; Weaver, 1975)

This research indicated that there was no significant difference between white-collar and blue-collar workers. To summarize and support this, Charles Weaver says:

There is little doubt that in the early stages of industrialization there was a sharp disjuncture
in attitudes and behavior between manual workers and the middle class, but forces such as increased purchasing power, growing job security, increased leisure time, better education, and the common influences of mass media have resulted in the acceptance of the white collar life style by a large part of the working class.

(Weaver, 1975, p. 174)

In today's competitive environment, middle managers have a fear about mergers. E. Kay states:

A significant number of middle managers believe that mergers have a negative effect and although this may be one of the myths that has crept into the management folklore from the perspective of dissatisfaction and job insecurity this perception is a "fact" and must be dealt with as perhaps as important as the actual statistics.

(Kay, 1974, p. 111)

As the white-collar worker is faced with unemployment, so is the blue-collar worker. Blue-collar workers will fantasize to relieve themselves from the anxiety of confronting layoffs:

Many of the workers I met [in five months as a factory hand] know that the labor market for them is limited. However, they maintain the illusion of a different situation...[by] talking about someday leaving the shops. I heard workers with as little as six months' experience, and as much as twenty-five years, talk about leaving the company and taking other, more interesting, challenging jobs. Relatively few of them will leave...

(Balzer, 1976, p. 143)

As Alan McLean puts it, "Unemployment and the threat of job loss are exquisitely threatening to many; seriously disrupting to others." (McLean, 1979, p. 55)

Middle managers and blue-collar workers have the fear of being unemployed. This fear in an intrinsic issue;
security of a job to help support a family or oneself. They both feel the insecurity of the position in the company, whether they are a top executive or a machine operator. Because of this, the episodic work-related stressor for each group are the same.

Lack of Authority

Both groups, (middle managers and blue-collar workers) experience a lack of authority. The middle manager experiences this because of his/her leadership style. It has been noted in several studies that a supportive leader behavior will increase performance and morale. (Argyris, 1964; Ivancevich, Matteson, 1980) However, the middle manager does not experience this ability because of his position in the hierarchy.

This is exemplified by Leonard Moss in his book, Management Stress:

We have responsibility but not authority, lament middle managers. We are expected to produce results but have little influence over the policies and events that determine these results. Top management does not ask us for our input when they establish policy or make certain decisions, even those that affect us directly. They do not value our opinions. Decision making is seen as the prerogative of top management. They will relinquish none of their influence or control. Those of us who have been around a long time know the ropes and get things done in our Machiavellian ways. Some of us stick our necks out occasionally and usually get our heads chopped off. Others play it safe and never take any initiative at all. Those who are more self-confident leave for other jobs where they can feel more effective. When something unexpected happens, top management takes over and we just wait for them to make a decision.
or take action. We're ashamed to let our subordinates see how little power we have to do things we are being held responsible for.  
(Moss, 1981, pp. 132-133)

The blue-collar worker is faced with a similar situation. It has been noted that, "No other segment of the workforce has its days so closely policed as do blue-collar workers". (Kelly, Cooper, n.d., p. 18; Shostak, 1980, p. 49)

Richard Balzer in his book, Clockwork: Life in and Outside an American Factory, says:

It's the hypocrisy that gets to you, the double standard. They try to sell you this crap about how you are important, and then you find it's only the people in the shop who have to punch in and punch out. We can't smoke, we can't do this or that, but they can. (Balzer, 1976, p. 142)

Middle managers and blue-collar workers have no authority as to the outcomes of their actions. Both groups are caught in the middle with no decision making power. They have to wait for others to make their decisions for them. Because of this, their episodic work-related stressors are the same.

New Social Values (Sociability)

A new value system has created a new outlook for middle managers as observed below:

Social changes are creating new expectations among employees as to how they are to be treated by their managers. In short, evolving ethics and values related to the quality of life (including the quality of work life) are redefining what the organization can require of the individual and what the individual can expect from the organization. (Moss, 1981, p. 164)
This change has caused some managers to completely change their management style. But, it has been proven that the change in style has a positive effect on job stress. The social support that is now being used in organizations between peers and superiors represents one of the most likely and effective means of alleviating the negative effects of job stress. (Caplan, 1972; Caplan, French, 1972; Caplan et al, 1975; Cobb, 1976; Abdel-Halim, 1982)

For the middle manager and the blue-collar worker, a strong work-group (support system) is needed. The middle manager has little opportunity to do this at work because of his position in the organization. However, if the work-group (support system) was developed, it has been found that known occupational stressors can be reduced.

In several studies, this has been found to be true. In an occupational setting, individuals' supportive social relationships with supervisors, colleagues, and/or subordinates at work have been shown to reduce known occupational stressors, such as:

1) Role conflict and role ambiguity.
2) Job dissatisfaction.
3) Low occupational self-esteem.

Social support also helps to soothe the effect of potentially stressful objective situations, such as:

1) A boring job.
2) Heavy work loads.

The blue-collar worker strives on the commonality of the peer group. Barbara Garson observed:

Blue-collarites heavily invest in work group affiliations, especially as adult counterparts of yesteryear's valued teen-age gang or warmly remembered neighborhood "corner boy" group. (Asked to explain their practice of going together, twenty men strong to successfully protest the firing of another worker, a sawmill group explained: "... we work together, we drink together, we play poker together, we lie to our wives together. So we got some practice sticking together.)

(Garson, 1975, p. 112)

The new social values have helped and hindered the middle manager and the blue-collar worker. It has made the middle manager take a look at his/her leadership style and has emphasized the need of the blue-collar worker to have an even closer woven work group. Because of this, their episodic work-related stressors are the same. But, the research also indicates that the middle manager would have less stress if the group affiliation was as wide spread as it is for the blue-collar worker.

**Personal Life (Satisfaction)**

The middle manager's stress and personal crisis is rarely related to the pressures and dynamics of the work environment. Leonard Moss states"

Most often stress and crisis result from the interaction of organizational factors and other important influences in the middle manager's total life sphere, such as:
1) Competing personal, family, or social interest, goals, and responsibilities.

Other research concerning management stress have also stated that the manager's personal life is rarely related to the pressures and dynamics of the work environment. (French, Rogers, Cobb, 1974; Caplan et al., 1975; Harrison, 1978; Cooper, Payne, 1980)

The blue-collar worker is primarily concerned about status and prestige. Arthur Shostak sums it up by stating:

Low status, then, finally edges out almost every possible antidote -- save one of a time honored nature: The abandonment of interest in work in favor of interest in the things work can help one consume. Troubled by the conviction that society insists on undervaluing their work, blue-collarites seek status and prestige, instead, from the fact that their inflation-driven earnings are "more than the old man ever brought home", this is a flimsy dodge most finally recognized as inadequate to beat their own "low-status blues." (Shostak, 1980, p. 63)

Middle managers and blue-collar workers both compete for status and prestige outside the workplace. It might be materialistic for the blue-collar worker, whereas, the middle manager does this by competing to make him and his family members "happy". This is the middle manager's way of achieving status and prestige just as the blue-collar worker does. Because of this, their episodic non-work related stressors are the same.
Stressful Life Events

Leonard Moss defines stressful life events as, "Life events that require adaptive responses from the individual involved." (Moss, 1981) Any changes causes this individual's personal work life patterns to be threatened.

The middle manager is caught in many personal and work-related life events that cause stress. His/Her position in the community is considered worthwhile, whereas at work he/she is considered only as a figurehead with no real authority. Because of these differences, a middle manager is continuously exposed to various stressors. Moss says:

Prolonged exposure to stressors of sufficient magnitude (job insecurity, job loss, uncertainty, job complexity, or ambiguity) is likely to induce severe or pervasive illness consequences in a large segment of the population so exposed. (Moss, 1981, p. 177)

The middle manager is also exposed to unpredictable events; production problems, management problems, crisis situations, etc. Due to these unanticipated events, stress can be overwhelming. "Unanticipated or unpredictable events evoke a sense of helplessness or uncertainty (a state of hesitation or doubt about the appropriate response), which magnify the stress reaction." (Moss, 1981, p. 177)

The blue-collarites' stressful life events are different from those of the middle manager. However, there are some similarities. H. T. Halse proposed two relevant stressors of blue-collar workers, "(a) uncertainty about personal worth
in a job and (b) fear of ridicule or criticism from co-
workers." (Halse, 1977, p. 19)

Other areas that concern the blue-collarites are the
physical environment factors. This is lamented in a study
done at a United Kingdom caster plant. The researchers found
that, "Very high on the list of stressors associated with
casting came those relating to physical environment. Noise,
fumes, heat and the hazards of the job were uppermost in the
minds of the casters." (Kelly, Cooper, 1978, p. 21)

The blue-collar worker is faced with the changing envi-
ronment within the workplace. This also has a direct effect
on being employed or unemployed. Everett Ladd sums this
problem up by directly approaching this issue:

Many manual workers fear that environmental pro­
tection measures come only, or come especially,
at the cost of their jobs. Few men of this per­
suasion believe anyone else gives a damn about
the worker and his post-employment plight or much
less cares to hear the worker's side of the story
before the government takes some precipitous job­
cancelling action. (Ladd, 1978, p. 22)

The middle manager and blue-collar worker do experience
some of the same stressful life events that can cause stress.
Both groups are concerned about job security, job complexity,
and the unpredictable events that can trigger these concerns.
Because of this, their episodic work related stressors are
the same.
Summary

There is a difference between middle manager and blue-collar worker episodic work related (increase in work activity) and episodic non-work related (serious illness, death of family member) stressors. This has been found to be true in the areas studied in this chapter; threat of job loss, lack of authority, new social values (sociability), personal life (satisfaction), and stressful life events.

The middle manager and the blue-collar worker experience these stressors from different perspectives, but the outcomes are similar. Both groups experience job insecurity, job loss, uncertainty, job complexity, and ambiguity. They are both caught in the middle with no real "power" to have control over what their future holds.

The differences for both groups concerning the threat of job loss is similar. They are both afraid of being unemployed due to some changes that may occur over which they have no control. This is also significant for the other areas of the episodic work related and episodic non-work related stressors. However, these differences are not as evident in this research.

The significant difference between middle managers and blue-collar workers are few. Both groups experience some intensity of each area studied in this chapter. They actually experience jealousy between each other in respect to working conditions and spending power. However, during the
last several years the blue-collar worker has better wages, conditions, and relationships with superiors than they have ever had. This would help close the gap between the two groups, which would be ideal, and help with production problems. In order to have good production it takes good human management as well as product management.

This project has studied the following areas of stress events. These areas are listed below and the type of stressor they produce:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Stressor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threat of Job Loss</td>
<td>Episodic Work Related Stressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Authority</td>
<td>Episodic Work Related Stressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Social Values</td>
<td>Episodic Work Related Stressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sociability)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Life</td>
<td>Episodic Non-Work Related Stressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Satisfaction)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stressful Life Events</td>
<td>Episodic Work Related Stressor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The original intent of this project was to determine if there is a significant difference between middle manager and blue-collar worker stressors. If this were found to be true, a "peer influence" program could be developed to help manage stress.

The focus of this project are two episodic areas of stress, non-work (marriage) and work (reorganization). These are stress signals before a person starts to experience chronic stress, non-work (pollution, noise, concern over the economy) and work (too much work, too little time). So, the program development is designed to become preventative in order to prevent an episodic stress client from developing chronic stress symptoms.

A questionnaire was distributed to members of each sample -- middle managers and blue-collar workers -- who participated in the study. The questionnaires were then returned to the researcher for coding and analysis.

The sample was taken from two manufacturing environments. One is a major appliance manufacturer. The other is a manufacturer that produces jacks, brake shoes, and other automotive products for the automobile industry and retailers. A total of 120 workers (60 blue-collar workers and 60 middle managers) were randomly selected from each corporation. The middle manager sample was taken from general supervisors and managers. The blue-collar worker sample was taken from
"floor workers", assembly personnel, janitors, etc.

The procedures that were followed for this project are outlined in seven steps:

1. Determine if there is a significant difference between middle manager and blue-collar worker stressors.
2. Gather research material from numerous published books and articles.
3. Review the research and select pertinent data for this project.
4. Distribute the questionnaires to the corporations.
5. When they are returned, analyze and interpret the data to determine if a significant difference exists.
6. Develop a "peer influence" program if the questionnaire responses indicate a need for it.
7. Identify the specific content which should be included in the program and training manual.

Methodology

The sample for this study was selected from middle managers and blue-collar workers. A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed to each corporation, 60 for middle managers and 60 for blue-collar workers. (see table 1)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Distributed</th>
<th>Returned</th>
<th>Percent Returned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporation A</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporation B</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Mng.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-Collar</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution and Return

The questionnaire used for this study was developed for stress workshops by John D. Adams. This researcher developed a value system, with: 0 = does not apply, 1 = mildly stressful, 2 = sometimes stressful, 3 = stressful, 4 = very stressful, and 5 = extremely stressful. These values were rated by the participants as how stressful particular events are to them. The events were listed as episodic non-work related (35) and episodic work related (29). (Also see Appendix B)

The questionnaires were distributed by key personnel at both corporations:

**Corporation A** - Questionnaires were distributed by a manager in the human resources department. They were returned by the participants in a self-addressed and stamped envelope to the researcher's home.

**Corporation B** - Questionnaires were distributed by the industrial relations manager. They were returned to the industrial relations manager and the researcher would pick-up the questionnaires periodically from him.
The information gathered from the questionnaires was then coded, using the value system mentioned above. The statistical procedure used to find a significant difference between variables was the "Mann-Whitney U-Test". This test is used when there are two samples independently drawn from one or several populations with or without an equal number of cases. The steps of this type of analysis of variance test (anova) are as follows:

1. Rank the two distributions into one distribution with the lowest score being given the rank of one.
2. The two columns of ranks are summed.
3. The two statistics $U_1$ and $U_2$ are found.
4. When testing for significance only the smaller of the two $U$'s is considered.
5. This is a two-tailed or nondirectional test.
6. This test was used because the samples were small in some instances. (Downie, Starry, 1977)

This test was used to prove or disprove the hypotheses that there is a significant difference between middle manager and blue-collar worker stressors. The results are: (see ex. 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W-N</th>
<th>B-N</th>
<th>U-1</th>
<th>U-2</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>152.50</td>
<td>51.50</td>
<td>-1.91</td>
<td>.0530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 1: Question #26 - Experiencing a major change in my work schedule

* If $P<.05$ then the two groups are significantly different.
** The smaller value of $U$ is reported
A change in the procedures was made to determine the need for the "peer influence" program. The questionnaire was used as a needs analysis. The procedures for this methodology are as follows:

1. Each event is evaluated for the participant's response to the non-work and work related items.
2. The average response is observed.
   a. 3.00 and above responses are recorded as being stressful.
   b. The percent is found by dividing the number of 3.00 responses by the total number of responses.
   c. This is done for both samples.
3. The number of respondents for middle managers and blue-collar workers is compared.
   a. 5 or more workers, from each sample, for the same question, need to rate this question at 3.00 or above to prove significance.

**Findings**

**The Mann-Whitney U-Test**

The main reason for statistically testing the first objective of this study was to determine if a need existed for the development of a "peer influence" program to help manage stress. That objective is: Determine if there is a
significant difference between middle manager and blue-collar worker stressors.

Episodic non-work and work related events were measured by the Mann-Whitney U-Test to find the difference. The level of significance for each of these questionnaire items was set at <.05 level. Six of the events were statistically proven to be significant, or showing some direction toward significance.

These findings are as follows:

Non-Work Related Events

Question #16 - Serious illness suffered by immediate family member.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worker</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>V-1</th>
<th>V-2</th>
<th>V-3</th>
<th>V-4</th>
<th>V-5</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Level of Signif.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>.0962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-Collar</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Number, percent and level of significance for how workers valued the question.

* % of workers who answered this value on the questionnaire.

V-1 = Mildly Stressful
V-2 = Sometimes Stressful
V-3 = Stressful
V-4 = Very Stressful
V-5 = Extremely Stressful
V-0 = Does not Apply (not counted in the research)

It was found that a serious illness suffered by an immediate family member was not an event that caused significant stress for each group.

The middle manager is affected by this event at an average level of stress, 30% responded to this event as
being stressful. Whereas, the blue-collar worker is affected by this event at a high level of stress, 40% responded to this event as being extremely stressful. This indicates that both samples do not experience the same amount of stress for this particular event. However, the blue-collar (N=10) response is only 43 percent of the total sample, which could have a positive or negative effect on the outcome. This indicates that the blue-collar worker response is the smallest of the two samples. Their response could alter the results if a larger number of blue-collar workers responded to this question. A larger blue-collar sample would give a more realistic view of how the entire blue-collar worker population responds to this event. (Also see table 2 and exhibits I, III, IV)

Because of the trend toward a significant difference, this event would not be discussed extensively in the "peer influence" program. However, if the event was brought to the attention of the facilitator, it could not be ignored.

Question #19 - Sudden increase in number of arguments with spouse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worker</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>V-1</th>
<th>V-2</th>
<th>V-3</th>
<th>V-4</th>
<th>V-5</th>
<th>Tot.</th>
<th>Level of Signif.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>.0651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-Collar</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Number, percent, and level of significance for how workers valued this question.

* 1% due to rounding.
It was found that a sudden increase in the number of arguments with the worker's spouse was not an event that caused significant stress for each group.

The middle manager is affected by this event at an average level of stress: 35% responded to this event as being stressful. Whereas, the blue-collar worker is affected by this event at a high level of stress: 44% responded to this event as being extremely stressful. This indicates that both samples do not experience the same amount of stress for this particular event. However, the blue-collar (N=9) response is only 39 percent of the total sample, which could have a positive or negative affect on the outcome. This indicates that the blue-collar worker response is the smallest of the two samples. Their response could alter the results if a larger number of blue-collar worker's responded to this question. A larger blue-collar sample would give a more realistic view of how the entire blue-collar worker population responds to this event. (Also see table 3 and exhibits I, V, VI)

Because of the trend toward a significant difference, this event would not be discussed extensively in the "peer influence" program. However, if the event was brought to the attention of the facilitator, it could not be ignored.
Question #22 - Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worker</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>V-1</th>
<th>V-2</th>
<th>V-3</th>
<th>V-4</th>
<th>V-5</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Signif.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>.0338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-Collar</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Number, percent and level of significance for how workers valued the question.

It was found that marriage does show a significant difference between both samples.

The middle manager is affected by this event at a low level of stress: 82% responded to this event as being mildly stressful or sometimes stressful. Whereas, the blue-collar worker is affected by this event at two extremes: 50% responded to this event as being sometimes stressful and 33% responded as it being extremely stressful. (Also see table 4 and exhibits I, VII, VIII)

The significant difference of .0338 indicates that this event would not be discussed in the 'peer influence" program.

Question #28 - Decrease in number of family members because son or daughter leaves home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worker</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>V-1</th>
<th>V-2</th>
<th>V-3</th>
<th>V-4</th>
<th>V-5</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Signif.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>.0417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-Collar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Number, percent and level of significance for how workers valued this question.

It was found that a decrease in the number of family
members because a son or daughter leaves home does show a significant difference between both samples.

Due to the small sample of blue-collar respondents (N=4), it is difficult to determine if the significance level (.0417) is distributed between the two samples or is mostly due to the middle manager responses. The middle manager is affected by this event at a medium to low level of stress. Thirty-five percent responded to this event as being stressful and 35% responded as it being mildly stressful. Whereas, the blue-collar worker is affected by this event at a low level of stress: 100% responded to this event as being mildly stressful. (Also see table 5 and exhibits I, IX, X)

The significant difference of .0417 indicates that this event would not be discussed in the "peer influence" program.

Work Related Events

Question #19 - A sudden increase in the activity level or pace of my work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worker</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>V-1</th>
<th>V-2</th>
<th>V-3</th>
<th>V-4</th>
<th>V-5</th>
<th>Tot.</th>
<th>Level of Signif.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-Collar</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Number, percent, and level of significance for how workers valued this question.

It was found that a sudden increase in the activity level or pace of my work does show a significant difference
between both samples.

The middle manager is affected by this event at an average level of stress: 30% responded to this event as being sometimes stressful and 26% responded as it being stressful. Whereas, the blue-collar worker responded to this event at a low level of stress: 62% responded to this event as being mildly stressful. However, the blue-collar (N=13) response is only 26% of the total sample, which could have a positive or negative effect on the outcome. This indicates that the blue-collar worker response is the smallest of the two samples. Their response could alter the results if a larger number of blue-collar workers responded to this question. A larger blue-collar sample would give a more realistic view of how the entire blue-collar worker population responds to this event. (Also see table 6 and exhibits II, XI, XII)

The significant difference of .007 indicates that this event would not be discussed in the "peer influence" program.

Question #26 - Encountering a major change in my work schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worker</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>V-1</th>
<th>V-2</th>
<th>V-3</th>
<th>V-4</th>
<th>V-5</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Level of Signif.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>.0530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-Collar</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Number, percent, and level of significance for how workers valued the question.
It was found that encountering a major change in my work schedule was not an event that caused significant stress for each sample.

The middle manager is affected by this event at an average level of stress: 43% responded to this event as being stressful or sometimes stressful. Whereas, the blue-collar worker is affected by this event at a low level of stress: 83% responded to this event as being mildly stressful. This indicates that both samples do not experience the same amount of stress for this particular event. However, the blue-collar (N=6) response is only 18% of the total sample, which could have a positive or negative effect on the outcome. This indicates that the blue-collar worker response is the smallest of the two samples. Their response could alter the results if a larger number of blue-collar workers responded to this question. A larger blue-collar sample would give a more realistic view of how the entire blue-collar worker population responds to this event. (See also table 7 and exhibits II, XIII, XIV)

Because of the trend toward a significant difference, this event would not be discussed extensively in the "peer influence" program. However, if the event was brought to the attention of the facilitator, it could not be ignored.

Summary of Mann-Whitney U-Test

The six events that were found to be significant at <.05, or showing a trend toward significance by the
Mann-Whitney U-Test, indicate some difference between the middle managers and blue-collar workers. However, the blue-collar sample is small and it is difficult to determine if the significance levels are distributed between the two samples or is mostly due to the middle manager responses.

These findings would indicate that only six events would not have any relevance to the "peer influence" program, because of the differences between the samples. However, this would also indicate that all the other events would be ideal events for discussion within the group setting. Again, the blue-collar response would cause some problems concerning the outcome of these findings.

The Questionnaire as a Needs Analysis

To see if there is some relationship between the samples, the questionnaire was used as a needs analysis. The steps for this process are:

1. Each event is evaluated for the participant's response to the non-work and work related items.

2. The average response is observed.
   a. 3.00 and above responses are recorded as being stressful.
   b. The percent is found by dividing the number of 3.00 responses by the total number of responses.
   c. This is done for both samples.
3. The number of respondents for middle managers and blue-collar workers is compared.
   a. Five or more workers, from each sample, for the same question, need to rate this question at 3.00 and above to prove significance.

These findings are as follows:

Non-Work Related Events

Question #6 - Death of immediate family member.

Middle managers and blue-collar workers feel this event is stressful. Ninety-three percent (N=14) of the middle managers responded at an average of 4.00, very stressful, one-hundred percent (N=6) of the blue-collar workers responded at an average of 4.66, very stressful. This indicates that middle managers and blue-collar workers experience the same amount of stress when an immediate family member dies. (Also see exhibit XV)

The blue-collar sample was small (N=6) compared to the middle manager sample (N=12). However, the findings do indicate a need for the "peer influence" program.

Work Related Events

Question #1 - Being transferred against my will to a new position or assignment.

Middle managers and blue-collar workers feel that this event is stressful. Sixty-seven percent (N=8) of the middle
managers responded at an average of 3.16, stressful, 100% (N=5) of the blue-collar workers responded at an average of 4.00, very stressful. This indicates that middle managers and blue-collar workers experience the same amount of stress when they are being transferred against their will to a new position or assignment.

The middle manager (N=8) and blue-collar worker (N=5) samples are small. Only 10% of the middle managers answered this question and 20% of the blue-collar workers. However, the findings do indicate a need for the "peer influence" program. (Also see exhibit XVI)

Summary of Questionnaire as a Needs Analysis

The three events that were found to be significant based on the questionnaire findings as a needs analysis, indicate some need for the "peer influence" program. However, the samples of both groups are small and it is difficult to determine if the real need exists.

Two events in the non-work related category concern personal problems due to traumatic experiences. The one event in the work related category concerns the ability to adapt to a new environment. These are all important events to the worker. The results of these events could lead to more serious problems, if something wasn't done for the individual. Because of this, the need for the "peer influence" program becomes a critical factor for these workers.
Findings: Conclusion

The findings were done by using two types of methodology. A difference between the middle managers and blue-collar workers was done by using the Mann-Whitney U-Test. To find if both samples agreed about any of the events, the questionnaire was used as a needs analysis.

The Mann-Whitney U-Test found six events that middle managers and blue-collar workers had different opinions about. These findings indicated that the six events had no relevance to the "peer influence" program. However, if these events were brought to the attention of the facilitator, they could not be ignored.

The questionnaire as a needs analysis found three events that both samples showed as being stressful. These areas were primarily dealing with traumatic events occurring to family members and a change in the environment at work. These events support the need for the "peer influence" program, especially to help the workers discuss how they feel about these particular events.

The blue-collar response hinders these findings. The blue-collar sample, which was only 21% of the study, is too small to validate equal distribution of the entire evaluation. Because of this, it is difficult to determine if the significant levels of both samples are distributed between the two samples or is mostly due to the middle manager responses.
Both groups responded to the non-work related events more than work related events. This indicates that if a family member is sick, dies, abuses drugs or alcohol, etc., no matter if they are a middle manager or a blue-collar worker, you are concerned about that family member. We all have feelings and more non-work related events cause stress to occur, which could result in more serious problems for the individual.

**Results**

One of the objectives of this study was to develop a "peer influence" program to help manage stress. This was contingent on the outcome of the findings. By the use of a questionnaire, these findings indicated some need for the "peer influence" program.

The findings showed, by the use of the Mann-Whitney U-Test, that middle managers and blue-collar workers respond differently to six events that lead to episodic stress, which says, that all the other 58 events are experienced by both samples. The questionnaire, used as a needs analysis, was used to see if both samples experience some of the same episodic events, using a pre-determined level of significance set by this researcher. This was used, because of the small samples, to see if the 58 events that were found not to show a difference, were significant.

The results of the findings of both methodologies are explained below:
Non-Work Related Events

Question #6 - Death of immediate family member.

This event was found to be significant for the development of the "peer influence" program by the use of the questionnaire as a needs analysis. There was no difference found between the middle managers and blue-collar workers on the Mann-Whitney U-Test.

The middle manager feels that this episodic non-work related event is stressful. It is difficult for anyone to adjust to events that occur suddenly. However, if there is a prolonged illness associated with the death, being prepared will help a middle manager adjust to the event.

The middle manager has virtually no one to go to for consultation about certain fears they might have concerning the death of an immediate family member. Cary Cooper and Judi Marshall state in their book, Understanding Executive Stress:

Occasionally, an organization will have in its ranks a professional psychologist whose job is to be available to discuss personal problems with employees. His services could be extremely helpful in providing a means twoard stress mitigation for individuals. The problem lies in the reluctance of the individual to be seen seeking assistance. (Cooper, Marshall, 1977, p. 178)

If no help is asked for by the middle manager, he/she might escape from stress by:

1. Drinking liquor.
2. Frequent or heavy eating, especially sweet foods.
3. Smoking
4. Drinking coffee, colas, or other high-caffeine drinks.
5. Using marijuana, heavy drugs, or mind-altering pills.
6. Using prescription drugs such as tranquilizers and pain pills.
7. Using patent medicines to suppress specific symptoms.
8. Using sleeping pills.
9. Withdrawing psychologically; robotizing one's behavior; self-destructive behaviors.
10. Lashing out at others, displacing anxiety and anger onto other people. (Albrecht, 1979, p. 36)

The blue-collar worker feels that this episodic non-work related event is also stressful. Family problems are usually counseled by a foreman or union representative. Steven Brill, in his book, The Teamsters, says, "They are asked to hear out and offer advice on marital problems, parent-child conflicts, in-law problems, alcoholism, and scores of other personal difficulties." (Brill, 1978, p. 178)

So, the middle manager and blue-collar worker samples do experience stress from the death of an immediate family member. This can become a devastating occurrence for both samples, especially if they do not seek the help which is available to them. The problem is that they have to seek this help on their own, since many manufacturing environments do not have the experienced personnel to work with these individuals. The result is, that many of them will not seek the help they need and the episodic stress will become chronic.

Question #16 - Serious illness suffered by immediate family member.
This question showed a difference between the middle managers and blue-collar workers on the Mann-Whitney U-Test. However, when the questionnaire was used as a needs analysis, there was a positive need for the program. This is due to the sample size and that the analysis by the Mann-Whitney U-Test did not reach <.05 level of significance.

The middle manager feels that this event causes stress. The source of stress for the middle manager has the following characteristics; "events over which an individual has no control, undesired events, or events that represent a loss of someone valued or important are perceived as particularly stressful." (Moss, 1981, p. 6)

This characteristic takes into focus several other non-work and work related events. The middle manager has to put on a "front" in order to maintain his status. As Ari Kiev, states in his book, A Strategy for Handling Executive Stress, Emotional crises in business settings relate to interpersonal conflict -- home problems, peer conflicts, conflicts with authority, role conflict (incompatibility of personality and job) -- or crises produced by major organizational shifts (conglomeration, expansion, and reduction in size). (Kiev, 1974, p. 168)

The blue-collar workers feel that this episodic non-work event is also stressful. They have a long history of this concern. Some of their immediate family members work or have worked in the same environment. They are concerned about their family member's health and sometimes ignore their own. "Health remains very problematic in the life histories
of blue-collarites - and much of the uncertainty here is increasingly being traced back to the workplace conditions."
(Shostak, 1980, p. 114)

This growing concern takes into effect the cancer causing substances in the workplace; asbestos, chemicals, etc.
Dr. Enrique Vasquez has done a study with wives and children of asbestos insulation workers. These men bring asbestos contaminated clothes home, which causes a type of exposure called "household contact". Dr. Vasquez discusses this phenomenon as follows:

626 wives and children of asbestos insulation workers who did not shower or change work clothes after work. When their work clothes were shaken out prior to home washing, thousands of asbestos fibers were released into the home climate. In 1978, a full twenty-four years after the plant in question closed, one-third of the relatives of the workers were found to be ill with asbestosis (lung scarring). (Vasquez, 1978, p. 3)

Episodic non-work related events that occur suddenly, such as death and serious illness have a stressful impact on the middle manager and blue-collar worker. These are frustrating to anyone. The middle manager puts on a "front" to cover the feelings he/she might have concerning these events, whereas the blue-collar worker uses the foreman or union representative for discussing these events. In the long run, it would be best for both samples to have a place to discuss these events.

Question #19 - Sudden increase in number of arguments with spouse.
This question showed a difference between the middle managers and blue-collar workers on the Mann-Whitney U-Test. However, when the questionnaire was used as a needs analysis, there was no need for the program. However, this question did not reach <.05 on the Mann-Whitney U-Test.

Both samples are effected by this event, but in different ways. The middle manager is affected because of being relocated and the blue-collar worker is affected by many factors. Some of these factors are: "Benefit inadequacies, health maladies and bills, home and family strains, and financial obligations and risks." (Shostak, 1980, p. 4)

The middle manager has some of the same problems, but compared to the blue-collar worker, only one area causes an increase in arguments: being relocated. Some corporations are starting to realize the problems relocation causes and are trying to do something about it. Leonard Moss (1981) states, "Problems involving the relocation of employees and their families have become a serious management concern." It has become more and more of a challenge to transfer qualified people to other locations because of the role the family has in making this decision. A lot of times a less qualified person is relocated, which can cause some problems for the corporation.

The middle manager and blue-collar worker experience different events that can cause arguments with a spouse. However, when these arguments persist, the mental health of
the person can be affected. Thomas Martin and John Schermerhorn, Jr., report in their research, "Work and Non-Work Influences on Health", that, "Family relations include marital conflict, childrearing practices, and family career structures. Marital conflicts that result in divorce and broken home situations have been shown to produce consequences of mental health." (Martin, Schermerhorn, 1983, p. 654)

Question # 22 - Marriage

This event was found to show a significant difference between the middle managers and blue-collar workers by the use of the Mann-Whitney U-Test. However, when the questionnaire was used as a needs analysis, there was no need found for the development of the "peer influence" program.

This can be due to the way in which marriage is interpreted by the middle manager and the blue-collar worker. Raymond Cohrane and Alex Robertson developed the "Life Events Inventory", in 1973, and found in their results that, "Marriage is not necessarily a negative event, but presumably a pleasant one." So, marriage could be rated by both samples as negative or positive. (Cohrane, Robertson, 1973)

The middle manager and blue-collar worker can be affected by this event, but the contributing circumstances can cause a negative response to this event. For both samples the negative response could be circumstances that occur on the job. John Ivancevich and Michael Matteson, in their book,
Stress and Work, explain this problem as follows:

As a consequence of stressors experienced during the working day, the manager may come home irritable, noncommunicative, or even abusive toward his or her spouse, thereby subjecting the marriage relationship to strain. This strain may be a source of subsequent stress that in turn negatively affects job performance and causes even more work-related stress. (Ivancevich, Matteson, 1980, p. 18)

The blue-collar worker is subjected to the same problems, but most of the research describes unemployment as the main factor that causes strain on a marriage. (LeMasters, 1979, p. 26; Shostak, 1980, p. 30)

The results that were found for this particular event are difficult to define. It is based primarily on how the worker was feeling the day he/she took the survey. If the middle manager were not involved in an argument with his wife the night before, he/she answered less stressful. This would be the same for the blue-collar worker. If either sample was contemplating a lay-off, or reorganization and this was causing problems with the individual's marriage, he/she would answer more stressful.

Question #28 - Decrease in number of family members because son or daughter leaves home.

This event was found to show a significant difference between the middle managers and blue-collar workers by the use of the Mann-Whitney U-Test. However, when the questionnaire was used as a needs analysis, there was no need found for the development of the "peer influence" program.
The middle manager is more concerned about this particular event. The blue-collar worker does not seem to worry about a son or daughter leaving home. The middle manager has most likely had a life of moving if he/she works for a large corporation. Because of this,

Many do express some concern that they will never settle down anywhere and that they are not providing a stable focus for their, now also mobile, children and grandchildren to refer to and visit. (Cooper, Marshall, 1977, p. 50)

The blue-collar worker does not worry about this event as much as the middle manager. The research information does not pinpoint any specific reason for this, but the blue-collar worker is not usually as mobile. This would make the family more accessible to parents, grandparents, etc.

Work Related Events

Question #1 - Being transferred against my will to a new position or assignment.

This event was found to be significant for the development of the "peer influence" program by the use of the questionnaire as a needs analysis. There was no difference found between the middle manager and blue-collar worker on the Mann-Whitney U-Test.

Most people become comfortable with the responsibilities of their position in a corporation. However, when production increases, stress also increases. Ari Kiev says,

There has developed over the past several years, increasing recognition of the need to assist
individuals in coping with increased number of responsibilities as well as with stressful situations which develop in the course of new responsibilities or in experiencing the stresses of transition during transfers or retirement.  
(Kiev, 1974, p. 60)

The blue-collar worker is faced with this because of many factors. Some of these are; due to the lack of work in a particular department, environmental issues, and unemployment. A lot of blue-collar workers are transferred or laid-off because of a lack of work. This was discussed in Chapter II.

The middle manager is fearful of being transferred to another department or a plant in another area. They feel that, "Any change - such as firing, hiring, transfers, new tasks, new assignments or new liaisons - is generally felt to be threatening." (Kiev, 1974, p. 115) The transfer, or relocation, used to be only the decision of the middle manager without considering the family. Leonard Moss described this:

In the 1960's it was not clear to the manager whether turning down a position for personal reasons would jeopardize career prospects. The manager assumed it would. Conflicted and uncertain, the manager might engage in decision-making discussions with the family feeling damned if he did move (against the wishes of some family members) or damned if he did not move (against the wishes of the superiors).  
(Moss, 1981, p. 169)

However, since the 1960's, there has been some changes concerning being relocated. Four areas of consideration are viewed first, even if it's against the manager's will. These
areas are:

1. The wife's need to have roots within the community, her social adjustment, her career, or other personal interests are now given greater weight than they were ten or fifteen years ago.

2. The educational and social adjustment of teen-aged children has become a serious concern since the upsurge in drug abuse and the challenge to establishment, sexual, and family values of a decade or two earlier.

3. Younger employees often present a complicated relocation problem because the career of both husband and wife must be taken into consideration when changes are contemplated.

4. The monetary rewards of promotion are often negated by the rising expenses of relocation, the costs of sending children to appropriate schools and inflation. (Moss, 1981, p. 168)

The middle manager and blue-collar worker are concerned about being transferred to a new location in the plant, office, or to another state. The total frustration of this event makes the person uneasy and if not dealt with correctly can cause stress for the individual concerned.

Question #19 - A sudden increase in the activity level or pace of my work.

This event was found to show a significant difference between middle managers and blue-collar workers by the use of the Mann-Whitney U-Test. However, when the questionnaire was used as a needs analysis, there was no need found for the development of the "peer influence" program.

In 1973, Edwin Locke did a study between white-collar and blue-collar workers. This study is titled, Satisfiers
and Dissatisfiers Among White-Collar and Blue-Collar Employees.

He found that:

In no case did any of the tests reach statistical significance. In other words, there was no evidence that good (satisfying) incidents were produced by different classes of events than bad (dissatisfying) incidents. In all of the samples the majority of both good and bad events were produced by motivator factors. On the average, about half of the white-collar events were task events, while the figure was closer to 30% for blue-collar employees. (Locke, 1973, p. 71)

These motivator factors are:

1. Task Activity
2. Amount of Work
3. Smoothness
4. Success
5. Promotion
6. Uncodable or other
7. Verbal (or implied verbal) recognition of work
8. Money
9. Interpersonal atmosphere
10. Physical working conditions

Workers were interviewed to see how they would classify the events into good (satisfaction) or bad (dissatisfaction). This system was developed by Schneider and Locke in 1971 based on the study Herzberg did in 1959. This system found that the self for good (satisfaction) and others (dissatisfaction) were responsible for the responses to the motivators. The findings implications of this study are:

First, it suggests that satisfying and dissatisfying job incidents are not solely a reflection of "human nature" as such, but that they also reflect differences in both the actual structure of jobs and people's experiences in different jobs. Second, it suggests that if future studies compare white-collar and blue-collar employees within specific occupational groups, more consistent results will be found. (Locke, 1973, p. 76)
The blue-collar worker is mostly concerned about this event. It has some good aspects; overtime, job security, etc. However, some of the bad aspects can be devastating. When a sudden increase in production occurs, the stress on the workers also increases. Barbara Garson (1975) states in her book, All the Lifelong Day: The Meaning and Demeaning of Routine Work, about how a worker reported to her, "Look how they call us in weekends, hold us extra, send us home early, give us layoffs. You'd think we were machines the way they turn us on and off."

The supervisors and managers keep this type of harassment continuing and this can eventually turn into a stress situation. Ivar Burg says,

Some of the actual causes ... are those created by new managers, by excessive emphasis on production, by disregard of the needs of the workers, by the tediousness of the task involved and resultant boredom, by lack of management, appreciation of extra effort and application, and by the effects of the aging process that the workers have not recognized.

(Burg, 1978, p. 27)

The middle manager has a different type of increase in his/her work activity. His pace, during a high production period, is dependent upon the people under him. His greatest concern is to keep the people under him trained, motivated and productive. The stress is not directly associated with the middle manager, but with the people under him. The only stress that the middle manager experiences is when the people under him/her are not performing. The result of
this is a poor rating by the top executives. The stress on the middle manager is then associated with not enough work to do. Albrecht (1979) says, "A worker without adequate work to do usually begins to feel frustrated, anxious about his worth and position in the social order of the organization, and distinctly unrewarded."

The middle manager is affected by this event at a low level compared to the blue-collar worker. The blue-collar worker becomes very frustrated with a sudden increase in the activity level or pace of work. However, managers at other levels of the corporate structure might respond close to the blue-collar sample because they are the subordinates of the middle manager.

Question #26 - Encountering a major change in my work schedule.

This question showed a difference between the middle managers and blue-collar workers on the Mann-Whitney U-Test. However, when the questionnaire was used as a needs analysis, there was no need for the program.

The results of this question are the same as question #19. This event also involves the differences between the two samples, productivity levels. When productivity is up, the middle managers are affected by the work schedule to keep his subordinates on task, which affects their subordinates. The blue-collar worker, the supervisor or manager's subordinate, is pressured to produce the product. The
result is an increase in episodic stress.

Conclusion

One of the objectives of this project was to develop a program using "peer influence" to help manage stress. To see if there was a need for this type of program in a manufacturing environment, a statistical test, the Mann-Whitney U-Test, was used. This test was used to find a difference between the middle managers and blue-collar workers. The questionnaire was also used as a needs analysis to see how many of the events would result in a relationship between the samples.

The differences, by the use of the Mann-Whitney U-Test, that were found to be moving in a direction towards significance or were significant are as follows:

1. Serious illness suffered by a family member.
2. Sudden increase in the number of arguments with spouse.
4. Decrease in number of family members because son or daughter leaves home.
5. A sudden increase in the activity level or pace of my work.
6. Encountering a major change in my work schedule.

Items one through four are events that occur away from work, or episodic non-work related events. They are all items that take time to adjust to.
The middle manager has the same concerns, however, they are not as devastated economically. The middle manager is able to cope with these situations, or, he/she puts on a "front" to cover the real feelings about these situations.

Items five and six are events that occur at work, or, episodic work-related events. These events are current to today's woes in industry because of the economy being unstable, mergers, bankruptcy, etc.

The real problem here is the type of responsibilities the blue-collar worker has compared to the middle manager. The blue-collar worker is responsible for the actual production, whereas, the middle manager is responsible for the people who supervise and manage the production.

The use of the questionnaire as a needs analysis found three events that showed a relationship between the middle managers and blue-collar workers. These events are:

1. Death of immediate family member.
2. Serious illness suffered by immediate family member.
3. Being transferred against my will to a new position or assignment.

Items one and two are events that occur away from work, or, are episodic non-work related events. The same circumstances occur for the middle manager and blue-collar worker for this event.

Item three is an event that occurs at work, or, an
episodic work-related event. The same circumstances occur for the middle manager and blue-collar worker for this event.

Limitations

The limitations that this project encountered were many:

1. The questionnaire return was not as large as the researcher wanted.

2. The blue-collar questionnaire response was considerably smaller than the middle manager response.

3. The research materials were not specific and limited concerning this project.

4. The findings were few which does not give a positive indication that the program needs to be developed.

In most cases the blue-collar worker response was lower than the middle manager response. The 60 to 70 percent return of the questionnaires was not accomplished for this sample. Only 21 percent of the questionnaires were returned. This indicates some problems for the operationalization of the "peer influence" program because of this low response.

This was due in part to logistics. The researcher was not employed by either Corporation A or Corporation B. If this researcher was known and had some relationship with the blue-collar workers at both corporations, the blue-collar questionnaire return might had been more statistically balanced.

Another area that may have occurred and resulted in a
low response from the blue-collar workers was their lack of interest to participate in a project such as this one. Because of this, many of them might have disregarded the questionnaire.

**Recommendations**

The conclusions determined from this project indicate that there is a difference between middle managers and blue-collar workers. However, due to the limitations listed above, it is difficult to determine this. The blue-collar worker response was not large enough to see if the significant levels are distributed between the two samples or is mostly due to the middle manager responses.

The original intent of this project was to determine if a program can be developed to bring blue-collar workers and middle managers together to discuss work and non-work events that cause stress. If it was found that they experience some of the same events, the program would be developed.

The program, but not the training aspects, was developed. (See Appendix F) This researcher did not find a real need for the program because of the limited amount of findings. However, due to the importance of stress research and the researcher's expertise in peer counseling, the program was developed.

This researcher will continue research in this area of stress management, or have someone research the area of
middle manager and blue-collar stress. There is little research material available in this specific area of stress research. Because of this, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. This research needs to be done by someone in a manufacturing setting.
2. If the sample sizes are larger, a different statistical test needs to be used.
3. The questionnaire could be modified.
4. There needs to be better access to books, periodicals, etc., to research this area of stress.

There was a limited amount of prior research in:

a. Middle Manager Stress - Most of the research focuses on executive stress, manager stress, and white-collar stress.

b. Blue-Collar Worker Stress - There is a limited amount of materials available concerning blue-collar stress.

Both of these areas of research were not specific when researching materials for the non-work areas of episodic stress. It is recommended that any research be done in corporation libraries, union libraries, and at major universities. This is where a good selection of materials could be found on this subject.

Summary

This project was designed to find a need for a "peer
influence" program in industry. The "peer influence" program would deal with episodic non-work and work-related stressors. To accomplish this, several steps took place:

1. Research was done to find an appropriate survey to be used for this project.
2. Objectives were established:
   a. Determine if there is a significant difference between middle managers and blue-collar worker stressors.
   b. Development of a "peer influence" program to help manage stress.
   c. Identify the specific content which should be included in the program and training manual.
3. Corporations were canvassed to see if they would participate in the project.
4. Prior research was evaluated for its content and how it related to the objectives of this project.
5. The corporations were selected and the survey by use of a questionnaire were distributed by key personnel.
6. The questionnaires were collected and an analysis was done by using the Mann-Whitney U-Test.
7. The questionnaire was also used as a needs analysis to find a relationship between the two samples.
8. The findings were illustrated and explained for both methodologies.
9. The results were recorded and more research was done.
There was a difference found between middle managers and blue-collar workers by the use of the Mann-Whitney U-Test. Six episodic events were found: four non-work related and two work related, as having a trend toward a difference or a difference between the samples at <.05 level of significance. These findings indicated that the other 58 events were important for the development of the "peer influence" program.

To see if there was a relationship between the two samples, the questionnaire was used as a needs analysis. Responses of 3.00 and above of five or more workers from each sample were considered significant for the development of the "peer influence" program. This method found that three events showed a relationship: two non-work related events and one work-related event.

The results of both tests are as follows:

The Mann-Whitney U-Test - Both samples experienced a trend toward or a difference at <.05 level of significance in six events. The middle manager is affected by stress primarily when confronted with work related events. The events that the middle manager experiences more than the blue-collar worker are:

1. Decrease in number of family members because son or daughter leaves home.
2. A sudden increase in the activity level or pace of my work.
3. Encountering a major change in my work schedule.
The blue-collar worker is affected more by stress when confronted by non-work events. The events that the blue-collar worker experiences more stress than the middle manager are:

1. Serious illness suffered by immediate family member.
2. Sudden increase in number of arguments with spouse.

**Needs Analysis** - A relationship between the middle manager and blue-collar worker was found in the following events:

1. Death of immediate family member.
2. Serious illness suffered by immediate family member.
3. Being transferred against my will to a new position or assignment.

These results show that the middle manager and blue-collar worker experience more stress when confronted with non-work related events. Two conclusions can be drawn from this:

1. The problems (events) that occur away from the work environment can affect middle managers' and blue-collar workers' performance on the job. If something is not done to help the individual, chronic stress symptoms could surface.
2. The blue-collar worker stress is a part of his/her home environment. Without a release of some kind, the result could be: absenteeism, drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, etc.

The only ideal place to "help" with this situation is the environment where the middle manager and blue-collar worker are together most of the day, the manufacturing environment. They can come together, discuss what the problems are, and "help" each other. The results would be an environment where: production is a priority, both groups learn to get along with each other, and both groups can communicate with each other to produce results.
Definition of Terms

Episodic Non-Work Related Stressors - These are events that occur outside of the workplace. (family problems, personal problems, etc.)

Episodic Work Related Stressors - These are events that occur at the workplace. (problems with the environment, being transferred against your will, etc.)

Floor Workers - This is the term used by Corporation A for blue-collar workers in the plant.

Peer Influence - The power of a group of individuals to make changes for self and others. A person is more responsive to peers than to non-peers. There is power in numbers.

Safe Place - This is a room that a group of employees can sit down and discuss problems. It is a room that people feel comfortable in. Thus, the environment encourages people to discuss problems, without the fear of someone listening from the outside.

Real Problems - Problems that have meaning to oneself. The problems are reality based and can be understood by all participants.
This is a questionnaire to help determine what type of stress people experience on and off the job. Do not put your name on this questionnaire. The information obtained from this questionnaire will only be used for a graduate school thesis/project. The information will not be shared with your employer.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: Either a pen or pencil may be used to complete this questionnaire. All the questions can be answered by placing an X in the appropriate box. At the beginning of each section a brief explanation will be given. Please read and answer all questions. There are no right or wrong answers.

Please turn the page and begin the questionnaire.
This is a questionnaire to help determine what type of stress people experience on and off the job. Do not put your name on this questionnaire. The information obtained from this questionnaire will only be used for a graduate school thesis/project. The information will not be shared with your employer.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: Either a pen or pencil may be used to complete this questionnaire. All the questions can be answered by placing an X in the appropriate box. At the beginning of each section a brief explanation will be given. Please read and answer all questions. There are no right or wrong answers.

Please turn the page and begin the questionnaire
The following 35 questions concern events that some of us experience. If you have experienced any of these events in the last twelve months please indicate how stressful each event was to you. Please place an X in the appropriate box using the following answers:

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>MS</th>
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<td>MS - Mildly Stressful</td>
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<td>SS - Sometimes Stressful</td>
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<td>S  - Stressful</td>
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<td>DNA - Does Not Apply</td>
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<td>Death of spouse</td>
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<td>Divorce/breakup of family</td>
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<td>Jail Sentence</td>
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<td>Marital separation</td>
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<td>Pregnancy</td>
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<td>Death of immediate family member</td>
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<td>Unemployment of head of household</td>
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<td>Attempted suicide of immediate family member</td>
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<td>Incurrence of debt beyond means of repayment</td>
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<td>Onset of heavy drinking problem of immediate family member</td>
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<td>Miscarriage</td>
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<td>Serious illness or injury requiring hospitalization</td>
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<td>Abortion (voluntarily induced)</td>
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<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>AMOUNT OF STRESS EXPERIENCED</th>
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<tr>
<td>All sentence imposed on immediate family member</td>
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<td>New problem related to alcohol or drugs</td>
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<td>Serious illness suffered by immediate family member</td>
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<td>Sex difficulties with partner</td>
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<td>Death of close friend</td>
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<td>Sudden increase in number of arguments with spouse</td>
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<td>Period of not being able to stay at home</td>
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<td>Breakup with steady boyfriend/girlfriend</td>
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<td>Marriage</td>
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<td>Serious restriction of social life</td>
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<td>My own/my wife's pregnancy</td>
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<td>Problem with my children</td>
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<td>Onset of prolonged ill health requiring treatment by my own doctor</td>
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<td>New job in new line of work</td>
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<td>Decrease in number of family members because son or daughter leaves home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sudden increase in number of family arguments</td>
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<td>Addition of new immediate family member</td>
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<td>Purchase of home (taking out mortgage)</td>
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<td>Move to new house</td>
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<td>Involvement in physical fight</td>
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<td>Spouse's job begun or ended</td>
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<td>Change of hours or conditions in present job</td>
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The following 29 questions concern events that some of us experience at work. If you have experienced any of these events in the last twelve months please indicate how stressful each event was to you. Remember there are no right or wrong answers. Please place an X in the appropriate box using the following answers: Please place an X in the appropriate box using the following answers: 

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<th>Event</th>
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<td>Being transferred against my will to a new position or assignment</td>
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<td>Being shelved (moved to a less important job)</td>
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<td>Experiencing a lowering of status (either work status or in relationship to my fellow workers)</td>
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<td>Being disciplined or seriously reprimanded by my supervisor</td>
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<td>Having my request to transfer to a new, more satisfying job rejected</td>
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<td>Sudden change in the type of work I do</td>
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<td>Cancellation of an important job/project I was involved with</td>
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<td>Too many changes in instructions, policies, or procedures</td>
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<td>Being promoted or advanced at a slower rate than I expected</td>
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<td>Being transferred voluntarily to a new position or assignment (not promotion)</td>
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<td>Looking forward to my retirement</td>
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<td>Undergoing a major reorganization (at least throughout my department)</td>
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<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>AMOUNT OF STRESS EXPERIENCED</th>
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<tr>
<td>Experiencing a sudden decrease in the number of positive recognitions of my accomplishments (from any source)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encountering a major change (increase or decrease) in the technology affecting my job (computers, techniques, and so on)</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving a major briefing or formal presentation</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affected by the changes in the plant/office (lighting, noise, temperature, space and so on)</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring a new boss or supervisor</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sudden decrease in the activity level or pace of my work</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sudden increase in the activity level or pace of my work</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergoing a major relocation of my work place</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing an increase in status (either work status or in relationship to my fellow workers)</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being required to work more hours per week than normal due to crises or deadlines</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing the transfer, resignation, termination, or retirement of a close friend or valued colleague</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being promoted or advanced at a faster rate than I expected</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring new subordinates</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encountering a major change in my work schedule</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring new co-workers</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing an increase in the number of positive recognitions of my accomplishments (from any source)</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergoing a minor relocation of my work place</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The End, Thank You)
## Work Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Estimated Time</th>
<th>Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write concept statement</td>
<td>2 wks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/21/84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept statement approved</td>
<td>1 wk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/28/84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail letter for permission to do questionnaire.</td>
<td>2 wks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/13/84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Get permission to distribute questionnaire.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Contact and talk to the people in departments to be surveyed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with personnel directors.</td>
<td>1 wk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/16/84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Discuss population for questionnaire.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Select population.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify variables.</td>
<td>6 wks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/23/84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design questionnaire.</td>
<td>3 wks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6/4/84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print questionnaires.</td>
<td>2 wks</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6/25/84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administer questionnaires.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Boxes for collection of questionnaires.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze data from questionnaires.</td>
<td>3 wks</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7/30/84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run data.</td>
<td>1 wk</td>
<td>$20</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8/13/84</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Write report and develop program.</td>
<td>19 wks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12/20/84</td>
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# Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>May 1984</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Dec. 1984</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select population.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify variables.</td>
<td>[----------]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribute questionnaire.</td>
<td>[--------]</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyze data from questionnaire.</td>
<td>[--------]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run data.</td>
<td>[--------]</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Summarize results.</td>
<td>[--------]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpret results.</td>
<td>[--------]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write report.</td>
<td></td>
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Work time, in months
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printing/Duplicating cost.</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing data</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data processing</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxes</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$165.60</strong></td>
</tr>
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Peer Influence Program

(PIP)

Introduction

The Peer Influence Program is a peer group methodology that has not been tested in the manufacturing environment. The only test has been the use of some of the elements in public schools. The information in the PIP methodology is from: the school program, the researcher's expertise in this field and research materials.

The need for this program was an idea of this researcher. It was proven (see findings and results, this report) that there was some need for the program. It was felt that an introduction to the program would encourage this researcher, or others, to pursue research in the area of "peer influence" in a manufacturing environment.

The program is designed primarily for dealing with stress; however, it is only one aspect that the PIP program can be used for. It can also be used for the problems listed below:

- Drug abuse
- Alcohol abuse
- Counseling
- Crisis intervention
- Family problems
- Absenteeism

The PIP program is for all workers in the manufacturing setting, who would like to help their peers. When the program is properly implemented, program participants will help each other have a different perspective about themselves.
and others. This will be done by their internalization of a problem solving process.

Theory

Adults form peer groups -- cliques, social groups, clubs, etc. They exert pressure on members to behave in ways customary or normative to the group. Group influences vary depending on the group, but their customs can influence every behavior from dress to communication style. Groups within the manufacturing setting with their associated customs and norms, represent subcultures within the whole of the corporation.

The peer influence sometimes causes problems that get out of hand: rumors, stealing, work stoppage, insubordination, etc. The PIP group will help to make some impact on these problems. The basic foundations to accomplish this are as follows:

1. **Power of Peers** - As stated above, peers have tremendous influence on one another.

2. **The Reward of Giving** - Human beings derive a great amount of their self-concept through being of service to others. "In order to feel worthy, I must perceive myself as worthy in the eyes of others."

3. **The Strength of the Reformed** - When a person with problems solves his problems, his power to help others is enhanced greatly. Thus, a person with
high levels of episodic stress may work through their problem and apply that insight and strength to similar problems of others.

The fundamental issues that are resolved through PIP have to do with the atmosphere in which the program functions:

1. **Trust and Openness vs. Confrontation and Exposure** - Though the program can become very confrontive at times, no part of the helping process is attempted until and unless the recipient has reached an adequate trust level with the group. In addition, confidentiality is continually stressed as being of utmost importance to the group setting.

2. **A Climate of Change** - Due again to peer pressure, it is difficult for change to take place outside of a climate which is conducive to change. Therefore, it is necessary to develop this climate throughout the corporation. When reached, this climate is evidenced when workers (management and blue-collar workers) say to one another, "I know you have been having some problems at home with your wife having cancer, why don't you do what you can today, leave at 1:00 p.m., and go home and see how your wife is doing."

3. **The Problem of the Here and Now** - The PIP program deals with the here and now in order to allow a positive behavior and "value system" change. PIP believes that most people's problems are not aided
by delving into the past (as a major treatment goal). Therefore, the group concentrates on what is happening now. This adds personal responsibility to behavior, rather than merely labeling it a result of long or short term problems that have caused the results of poor stress management. Thus, the group can say, "Yes, you have been missing too many days of work recently, but why do you still persist that your drinking is going to make the problems go away."

The PIP will be a group that is concerned with the growth of its members. This can be accomplished by members learning about themselves in supportive ways. Five major growth processes to accomplish this are: "self-assessment, self-disclosure, feedback, risk taking, and consensual validation." (Jones, 1982, p. 128) The goal is to assist individuals in making "wise" choices - based on three criteria: "awareness of self, awareness of options, and willing to take responsibility for consequences." (Jones, 1982, p. 128)

The end product will be to have employees feeling better about themselves, their superiors and subordinates, and family life. They will have some positive motivation to make a "choice" to avoid, or at least, be aware of what causes their stress or other problems. The final outcome will be a better environment which will result in more production and profits because of this humanistic approach.
Program Goals

The PIP program will involve individuals that have various personal goals. The overall goal of the PIP program is to involve employees in improving their own environment. Manufacturing is a major function of our economy. If the people are more comfortable with each other, employee relations, conflict and power struggles are reduced, production is increased as an end result.

PIP feels that no other single factor rates more important than providing a healthy, positive atmosphere "climate" in a manufacturing environment. "Climate" is an intricate, multi-faceted phenomenon. It involves inter-relationship between all subgroups in the manufacturing environment. When the inter-group climate is out of control, the climate is no longer positive and conducive to the goals of the corporation, production and overall profit which benefits all parties.

PIP works directly with issues and problems that affect employee/employee and employee/supervisor (manager) relations, thereby creating understanding and mutual respect and support.

This works to increase the self-esteem of the employees. When the employees begin to feel involved and worthwhile, they help themselves
and affect others positively. PIP groups attempt to do this.

There is also a proportional increase in the employees' self-reliance and sense of responsibility.

PIP group involvement aids the employees in self-awareness and fosters honest self perception. There is accountability for group members in the presence of their peers and they are encouraged to think independently.

Program Objectives

1. Decrease the factors leading to chronic stress symptoms.
2. Decrease the conflict between employees/employees and employees/supervisors/managers.
3. Decrease absenteeism.
4. Increase employee motivation.
5. Increase production.

Need for the PIP Group Program

There are three basic areas that need to be evaluated before this program can be implemented.

1. Why the Group? - Due to the pressures on and off the job, more and more people encounter problems with stress. Some people take this frustration out on their families or on themselves, some by using excessive amounts of drugs and alcohol.
The result is absenteeism, quantity and quality of work is substandard, unnecessary disputes, problems at home being taken into the workplace, and problems at work being taken home. To realistically deal with these problems the here and now has to be an important part of the program. The group can be cost effective by helping to reduce stress and other related problems, which will in turn increase production, help limit absenteeism, and other related problems.

2. What Types of Problems? - The Types of problems that the PIP group will work with are many. The episodic non-work and work related stress events will be evaluated. Another area that relates to these problems is the drug and alcohol abuse that is sometimes a contributing factor to stress.

(Kiev, 1974, p. 52; Cooper, Marshall, 1977, p. 21; Albrecht, 1979, p. 36; Shostak, 1980, p. 128) A short explanation of how drugs and alcohol abuse affect work efficiency, turnover, cover-up, absenteeism and on the job accidents follows:

Work Efficiency - Declining work performance and disruption of the activities of fellow workers and supervisors are the most direct effects of deviant drinking and drug abuse in work organizations.

Turnover - A study conducted by Alcoholics Anonymous said, "There was less turnover among managers while the service category has a high concentration of changes." The least job freedom contributed to these changes. The drug abuser quantity and frequency of use had an effect on the amount of turnover. While true "heads" will only be sporadically employed, the possibility of relatively heavy
turnover is among moderate marijuana users is more significant for employers. Turnover in these instances may not be a direct result of drug use, but rather of social values that tend to be strongly associated with drug use.

Cover-Up - Roland Stamps (1965) did a study of alcoholics. He found that occupational status contributed to the type of cover-up the worker used. While a high percentage of high status workers (white-collar workers) received help from persons working under them, low status (blue-collar workers) received help from their supervisors and peers who make excuses for them or ignored their deviance altogether. Low status workers also indicated that co-workers frequently did their work for them. Workers with job freedom came to work and used cover-up methods on the job, avoiding "moving about" and other physical activity, whereas persons with little job freedom stayed away from the job until they were in better shape. Drug abusers tend to cover-up by protecting each other from being caught. Marijuana can be smelled and is not easily covered-up. However, the barbituate, "pill" users, can cover-up their abuse quite easily.

Absenteeism - The upper and lower status workers have different patterns of absenteeism due to the types of jobs they are required to do. Upper status employees come to work and continue drinking, fake job performance and fail to perform on the job. On the average the alcoholic is absent from work three times more than the non-alcoholic. The drug abuser does not have the same adverse effects as the alcoholic, hangover, etc. The only type of absenteeism for the drug abuser are: physical disorders that produce more than ordinary sick absences and commitment to a way of life in which work accomplishments are not valued.

On the Job Accidents - There is not any actual data stating that alcohol and drugs cause accidents on the job. However, from all indications of the symptoms and behaviors of abusers, there is an assumption that accidents are more likely to occur to these people. There are also indications that many of these people are involved in more automobile accidents while going to or from work.

(Zurcher, 1981, pp. 13-14)
3. **Statement of Agreement by the Company** - This will be an agreement between the facilitator and an executive (officer of the company, president, division president, etc.). This will allow the facilitator to implement the program with the agreement from the top down. This also needs to be signed by the head of the union, to show support for the program.

Included in this agreement, statements concerning: permission to speak to groups of workers, access to interview workers, date, time and length of meetings, and an adequate meeting room needs to be stated.

When the facilitator feels that these three steps have been completed and all the paper work has been reviewed and signed, the facilitator can conduct a sound program. Without this the company could have too many controls over the facilitator and the program would not achieve the same results.

The PIP program needs to affect white-collar as well as blue-collar workers of the company. The facilitator needs to design a program that will help with the various personalities from both of these working classes. The first step will be to establish the value of the program in the manufacturing environment. The following two steps will help to establish this need:

1. **A Meeting** - The group of people the facilitator will initially want to talk to are all department
heads, administrators, and union representatives. This meeting is to tell the group what you want to do and why. Also how the PIP group will work and what the facilitator would like them to do. It would also be helpful to tell this group that you will be in the various departments and would like the freedom to talk with the workers. A working relationship needs to be established as well as permission to attend department meetings to explain the program.

The meeting should only last about one-half hour with enough time for a question and answer period to clarify any doubts about the need for the program. A second meeting needs to be set at this time to distribute the questionnaire to the workers.

2. **The Non-Work and Work Related Questionnaire** - See Appendix B. This questionnaire can be distributed by the facilitator or it can be distributed by the department heads. A few days after they have been distributed and returned to the department heads the facilitator can collect them. The answers need to be evaluated and the results used in the next major presentation. This information can establish the need for the program.

The following steps will be used to guarantee that a sound productive program is maintained:
1. **Referrals** - To guarantee that "key" workers are involved, the facilitator will obtain referrals from: directors of departments, supervisors, and union representatives. The facilitator will interview these referred workers and attempt to convince them to participate in the PIP group.

2. **Interviews** - All volunteers will be interviewed by appointment. This will eliminate problems with production, other meetings, etc. The interviewee will be challenged to be a group member and make a decision to help his/her peers with their problems. He/She will also be challenged to a commitment to help oneself. The prospective group members will be categorized into one of the following areas:

   - **P1P** - Positive Leader, shows ability to stand up to others and challenges others in a positive manner. People look up to this person for positive leadership.
   
   - **P1N** - Negative Leader, shows ability to stand up to others and challenges others in a negative way. People look up to this person for negative leadership.
   
   - **P2** - Person that has problems, stress alcohol, drugs, social, motivational, etc. People view this person as having many problems.
P3 - Person that does not have many problems, but is not a positive or negative leader. People look at this person as being a follower.

3. **Selection of Group Members** - The above criteria will be used to select the 12 - 15 group members for each group. The groups also need to be a microcosm of the plant, office, etc. There needs to be a balanced mixture of: managers and blue-collar workers, racially balanced, males and females, and a similar age grouping.

4. **Time/Day/Place of Meeting** -
   
   **Time** - This can be arranged before or after the workday, or during the workday. The meeting should last no longer than one hour.
   
   **Day** - Wednesday would be the best day.
   
   **Place** - This needs to be a room that can adequately hold 20 people, have good lighting, have room for a large desk and 20 chairs, a chalkboard, presentation pad, and be a safe place that everyone will feel comfortable meeting in.

5. **Confidentiality** - This is one of the most important aspects of any program. To maintain a good level of care, concern and trust, confidentiality has to
be stressed as a main ingredient of the program. Nothing can be talked about outside of the meeting.

6. **Type of Group Activity** - The group will be a short-term group, less than 24 weekly sessions. The group will have an open-ended environment. This allows members to work with one another for a period of time. At the time the group feels a member is "well" and does not need the group any more, he/she may leave. The responsibility of the group will be to find other people to join the group. They will then: interview the potential member, make a decision to have the person as a member or not, and help with the inclusion process. The member that is leaving will also be responsible for staying approximately two weeks to help with the inclusion process.

**Group Atmosphere and Functions**

When PIP groups begin, the first steps are to establish an atmosphere and teach the group how to function.

1. **Group members are introduced to each other** using "icebreaker" techniques.

2. **Group members are introduced to the concepts** of caring and confidentiality which provide the cornerstone of the PIP group helping process. **Caring** - "You have no right to hurt yourself and others; you have an obligation to help others."
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Nothing can be talked about outside of the meeting.

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   cornerstone of the PIP group helping process.
   **Caring** - "You have no right to hurt yourself and
   others; you have an obligation to help others."
   **Confidentiality** - (see step 5, page 101)
3. **Group members set guidelines and responsibilities.**
   Each group sets its own standards as to how they will function. A few basic rules are established like:
   a. Everyone must be here on time.
   b. Everyone should participate.
   c. No one leaves until the end of the meeting.

4. **Group members recite "life histories".** This consists of a general discussion of who the group member is and where he/she comes from. It may include:
   a. Where he/she was born.
   b. Number of family members.
   c. What he/she likes to do, etc.
   This is to remain fairly basic without delving into too much threatening information.
   
   **Note:** Later on in the process more self-disclosure is required in order to help group members solve their problems. However, potentially threatening self-disclosure must only take place after trust is established within the group.

5. **Group members set group and individual goals to be attained by the end of the group involvement.** Their goals are the behavior objectives that they wish to reach, whether individually or as a group. This sets a standard by which the group may measure their success for themselves.

6. **Trust and openness are contrasted with Confrontation and Exposure.** Helping groups must have a high level of trust in order to permit self-disclosure. Openness evolves out of trust. Therefore, groups must work at developing mutual trust. When achieved, group
members will expose themselves to personal scrutiny.

Confrontation which generated exposure without trust being present, is the equivalent of verbally beating someone into submission. This must not be allowed to occur.

7. Introduction to Group Process and Structure - PIP groups utilize a specific structure (format) that is designed to move the groups toward and through the helping process. Each aspect of the group meeting format has several overt and several covert group development goals and strategies. Group meetings are divided into four parts. Each part of the meeting is utilized. No part is skipped or glossed over. The parts are:

a. Presentation of Problems - Each group member reports significant problems that have occurred since the last group meeting. They may also report "no problems". The goals and strategies are:

Overt

To find out which members have had a problem.

To allow members to publicly ask for help.

To find out the kind and magnitude of problems in the plant, office, etc.

To compare relative seriousness of problems in order to set priorities.
Covert

To allow group members to "lie" about (avoid) problems. This is the key motivator for bringing groups from the level of the intellect to "gut level". In other words, people help one another because they understand it in their minds.

When a person is allowed to avoid his/her problems time and time again, he/she is making a statement more meaningful than any verbal statement. Once the group finds out (and they most always do) that a member has hidden his/her problem, after having had numerous opportunities to disclose it and ask for help, their awareness of their group member's problem is heightened.

b. Awarding the Meeting - Subsequent to the problems presentations, a determination of which problem is most important and needs attention is made. The meeting will be awarded to the most urgent problem (person). The group must choose one problem. This is done through a process of consensus. Consensus, by its nature, causes conflict and competition between the various problems presented. This competition promotes in-depth reasoning and justification as to why one problem is more
important that the other. Value discussion and determination builds group cohesiveness and problem solving skills as well as promotes investment in the process. Therefore, the reasons for using this part of the meeting everyday are:

Overt

To see that the appropriate problem (person) gets the meeting for help.

Covert

To promote consensus, value discussions and determinations as described above.

c. Discussion of Problem (Meeting Body)

This part of the group is devoted to the group member or problem which received consensus during the previous part of the meeting.

Groups now begin to develop and use confrontational skills within the context of the PIP structure. Over a period of time confrontation becomes the problem solving mode.

Groups confront behavior by:

1. Examining the situation in the form of the problem.

2. Examining behavior related to the problem.

3. Identifying the focus of the problem,
who owns the problem, the group member or someone else.

4. Examining the short term and long term consequences of their behavior.

5. Examining alternatives, this includes a review of the consequences of various alternative behaviors.

6. Clarifying goals, which is exploring with the group member what he/she really wants in the situation.

7. Securing a commitment to some alternative behavior. This includes any and all alternatives. In other words, the commitment can take the form of any option. For example, he/she may commit to continuing the present course, altering it positively or negatively or even not consider what the group said. However, he/she must commit to something that can be monitored by the member and the group.

PIP groups must be viewed as a place where reality exists, options are open and the group is not easily tricked into accepting pressured confessions and catharses.

d. Summary - This is the group facilitator's time to tie the meeting together and bring out key issues, successes, failures and things to
consider. It is the time the group facilitator can bring the group meeting into some order, to help the group become more productive, feel good about what they accomplished, and a deprogramming time for all the participants.

References


**EXHIBIT I**

Questionnaire Responses for Episodic Non-Work Related Stress
(Between Blue-Collar Workers and Middle Management)

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* N-B - Number of Blue-Collar Workers that answered the Question
** N-M - Number of Middle Managers that answered the question.
*** The lowest result of U-1 and U-2 is reported. ( ) indicates the lowest response.
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## EXHIBIT II

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* N-B - Number of Blue-Collar Workers that answered the question.
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Quest. #16 - Serious illness suffered by immediate family member.

Mean Response of Workers

Non-Work Related Event

Mean

4.1

Mean

3.17

Blue-Collar Workers

N = 10

P = .0962

Middle Management

N = 23
Quest. #16 - Serious illness suffered by immediate family member.

Distribution of Workers by Responses

Non-Work Related Event

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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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Legend:
- MM
- BC
Question #19 - Sudden increase in number of arguments with spouse.

Mean Response of Workers

Non-Work Related Event

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Mean: 3.77 for Blue-Collar Workers, 2.95 for Middle Management

N = 9, 23

P = 0.0651
Quest. #19 - Sudden increase in number of arguments with spouse.

Distribution of Workers by Responses

Non-Work Related Event

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EXHIBIT VII

Qest. #22 - Marriage

Mean Response of Workers
Non-Work Related Event

Mean 3.16

Mean 1.76

Blue-Collar Workers
N= 6

Middle Management
N= 17

P= .0338
EXHIBIT VIII

Quest. #22 - Marriage

Distribution of Workers by Responses

Non-Work Related Event

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0
Quest. #28 - Decrease in number of family members because son or daughter leaves home.

Mean Response of Workers

Non-Work Related Event

Blue-Collar Workers
N = 4

Middle Management
N = 20

P = .0417
Quest. #28 - Decrease in number of family members because son or daughter leaves home.

Distribution of Workers by Responses

Non-Work Related Event
Quest. #19 - A sudden increase in the activity level or pace of my work.

Mean Response of Workers

Work Related Event

Blue-Collar Workers
N = 13

Middle Management
N = 50

Mean 2.62

Mean 1.61

P = .007
Quest. #19 - A sudden increase in the activity level or pace of my work.

Distribution of Workers by Responses

Work Related Event

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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

MM MM MM MM MM BC BC BC BC MM
Quest. #26 - Encountering a major change in my work schedule.

Mean Response of Workers

Work Related Event

Blue-Collar Workers
N = 6

Middle Management
N = 34

P = .0530
Quest. #26 - Encountering a major change in my work schedule.

Distribution of Workers by Responses

Work Related Event

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Note: MM and BC represent different categories or responses within the distribution.
### Needs Analysis

**Episodic Non-Work Related Events**

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<td>16</td>
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<td>3.17</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Average Response - Average answer to the question on a 0 - 5 scale.

** N - Respondents who answered the question as being stressful to extremely stressful. 3.00 and above/total number of respondents to question. (6/10)

*** %BCW/MM as stress - Percent of workers that answered questions as being stressful to extremely stressful. (3.00>)

**** 5 or more workers, from each sample, for the same question, need to rate this question at 3.00> to prove significance.
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</tr>
<tr>
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## Needs Analysis

### Episodic Work Related Events

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