



How to be a **less-stressed LEADER**

In today's complex and rapidly changing health care environment, stress management has become a must-have leadership skill. As a leader, you have more control over your stress levels at work than you might think. There are four personal strategies you can use to be a less-stressed leader and model healthy behaviors for your team:

- » Respond productively to stress in the moment
- » Clarify your priorities
- » Advocate for yourself
- » Build supportive relationships

RESPOND PRODUCTIVELY TO STRESS IN THE MOMENT

Stress is contagious...

30%

People who experience "secondhand stress" from others' stress

...but so is wellness

20%

Increase in well-being when people's colleagues have healthy stress habits



IDENTIFY how you respond to stress

What's your stress tendency?

Avoidance

Tendency to distract yourself from your stressors and procrastinate

Complaint

Tendency to externalize your stress and negative emotions onto others

Obsession

Tendency to focus all of your time and energy on your stressors

Self-doubt

Tendency to internalize your stress and blame yourself

and practice a **HEALTHIER STRESS** response



Avoidance → **Engage more** with your stressors



Complaint → Get an **objective** view of your stressors



Obsession → **Take breaks** from your stressors



Self-doubt → Give yourself the **benefit of the doubt** when stressed

CLARIFY YOUR PRIORITIES

Identify your **TOP THREE** priorities at work



What counts as a priority?

- **Directly supports** a strategic initiative or business need
- Is **top-of-license** for your level and skill set
- Can be significantly **advanced** in the **next month**

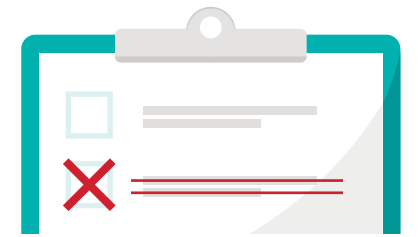
Narrow your **TO-DO LIST**



Defer: Reschedule tasks to a later date on your calendar



Delegate: Hand off tasks to a colleague or a different team



Eliminate: Cross off tasks from your to-do list entirely

CONFIRM with a leader

- **Pressure test** what your priorities are
- **Agree** on what you can de-prioritize



Define your **PERSONAL** priorities

Block **DEDICATED TIME** for each of your priorities

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8 ^{AM}	Dedicated work blocks for business priorities				
9	Department leadership meeting	Meeting with Matt	Work on staffing report	Candidate interview	Call with David
10	Meeting with HR	Budget committee		Meeting with Rachel	All staff meeting
11					
12 ^{PM}	Lunch with mentor	Contract review		Roundup	
1	Meeting with Steve	Work on service plan	Program evaluation meeting		Prepare for budget presentation
2	Team talk		Meeting with Francis		Budget presentation
3		Revise budget	Project review	Meeting with Paul	Pro-bono project
4	Roundup		Time for personal priorities		Outreach meeting
5	Facilities training			Baseball game	

ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF

Ask for **HELP**



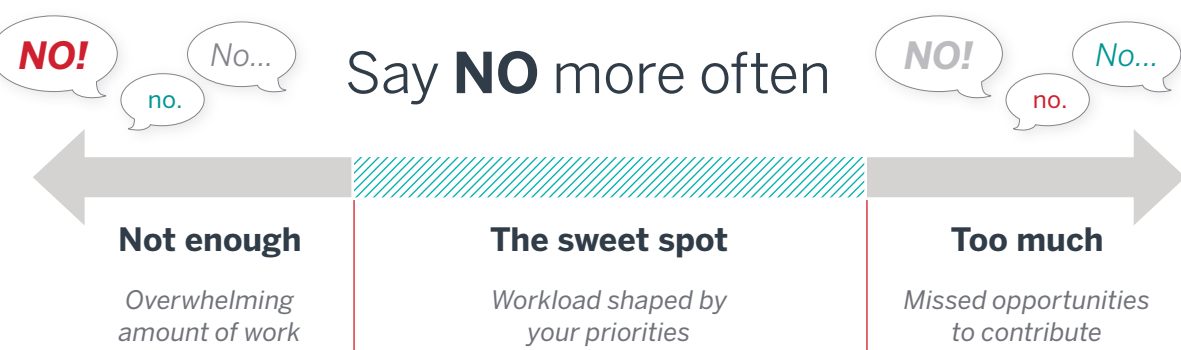
What type of support do you need?

- Material** → Staff, money, technology, templates, collaboration
- Informational** → Expertise, facts/information, feedback, training, buy-in
- Emotional** → Listening, productive venting, humor, perspective, advice

BUILD SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Create a personal **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Peer leaders in **other departments**
- People with **different expertise** than you
- Senior leaders and **mentors**
- People with **similar goals** as you



- Practice POSITIVE venting**
- Create an **appropriate forum**
Agree on a specific time and place—with the appropriate people—to get stress off your chest
 - Set a **time limit**
Restrict the amount of time you and your colleagues vent—and try not to go over time
 - Focus on **solutions**
Reserve time at the end to brainstorm some potential solutions—end on a positive note