

PART 7 A Appendix

MANAGING STRESS

After going through a series of stressful incidents, a successful Buffalo, New York, lawyer killed himself. The man had no history of instability, but a combination of his father's recent death, hard-to-handle payments on his home, and fear that he'd made a serious error at work were enough to push him over the edge. The New York workers' compensation board agreed that he'd sustained an accident from pressures on the job and awarded his widow weekly disability checks, as well as funeral expenses.¹ This incident, while extreme, highlights a few important points about stress. First, stress has multiple causes, some work-related and others not. Those causes may have cumulative effects. Second, stress can have severe negative consequences. Third, job pressures are increasingly being held responsible for many of those consequences.

People at work are faced with a wide variety of stressors. As shown in Figure 1, stressors are environmental factors such as deadlines, noise, rules, and demanding bosses that influence stress levels. **Stress** is a physiological state resulting from stressors. It is caused by a complex set of reactions which result in the coursing of adrenaline into the bloodstream and then to muscles and organs. **Stress reactions** are mental and physical responses to stress. They might include psychological health reactions such as depression and anxiety, physical reactions such as backaches and high blood pressure, affective reactions such as job dissatisfaction, and behavioral reactions such as absenteeism and high turnover.²

Figure 1 **STRESS MODEL**



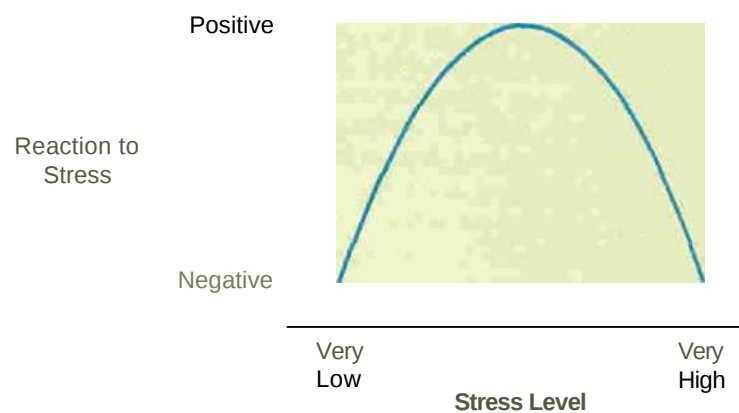
1. S. Antilla and H. Serder, "Paying for Stress on the Job," *Dun's Business Month* (January 1982), 72.

2. A pioneer in the area of stress research is H. Selye, *The Stress of Life*. [New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1956]. For other overviews of stress, see A. P. Brief, R. S. Schuler, and M. VanSell, *Managing Job Stress* (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1981); C. L. Cooper, *Stress Research: Issues for the Eighties* [Somerset, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 1983]; T. Cox, *Stress* [Baltimore, MD: University Park Press, 1978]; f. M. Ivancevich and M. T. Matteson, *Stress and Work: A Managerial Perspective* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman & Company, 1980); and J. C. Quick and J. D. Quick, *Organizational Stress and Preventive Management* [New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1984].

Stress is not without its benefits. At low levels, it is an activating force, called eustress from the Greek *eu*, meaning good. However, as shown in Figure 2, excessive levels of stress—called distress—lead to negative consequences. It is probably the case that most workers already face at least moderate levels of stress: More than 30 million prescriptions are written in the United States each year for Valium alone, and over 150 million for all tranquilizers.³ So, almost any increases in organizational stressors are likely to cause distress.

Figure 2.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRESS LEVEL AND REACTIONS



COSTS OF STRESS

Stress results in a variety of costs for firms. First, as suggested by the preceding discussion of stress reactions, it is a threat to employee health. Stress has been associated with coronary heart disease, ulcers, diarrhea, high blood pressure, backaches, gastrointestinal distress, headaches, and the related use of alcohol and other drugs. Workers are also more likely to incur accidents on the job when under stress. It has been estimated that the cost of executive stress, alone in the United States

3.H. Peyser, "Stress and Alcohol" in L. Goldberg and S. Breznitz, eds., *Handbook of Stress* (New York: Free Press, 1982). The idea of a curvilinear relationship between stress and outcomes was first proposed by R. M. Yerkes and I. D. Dodson, "The Relation of Strength of Stimulus to Rapidity of Habit Formation," *Journal of Comparative and Neurological Psychology* 18 119081, 459-82.

exceeds \$20 billion annually.⁴ Second, stress is likely to impact on long-term organizational effectiveness. Stress is associated with dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and high turnover. It may also result in a climate which stifles creativity. Such factors may more than offset any short-term gains associated with stress.⁵ Third, organizational stressors could lead to legal liability on the part of firms. Courts are increasingly ruling that firms are responsible for worker depression, anxiety, or other mental problems resulting from on-the-job stressors. The California labor code now allows compensation for injuries caused by "repetitive mentally or physically traumatic activities extending over a period of time, the combined effect of which causes any disability or need of medical treatment."⁶

CAUSES OF STRESS

What causes stress? Basically, almost anything can be a source of stress—job insecurity, noise, too much responsibility, office politics, family concerns, and so on.⁷ Three very important factors seem to be;

A Whether the individual exhibits a Type A or Type B behavior pattern.

A The amount of change (good or bad) that the individual is facing in life.

A Conflicts and uncertainties faced at work.

The assessment scales which begin on page A-B can help you assess your standing on these factors. The research findings relating to these factors seem clear:

4. J. W. Greenwood, "Management Stressors" in A. McLean, ed., *Reducing Occupational Stress*, NIOSH Publication No. 7~140. (U.S. Department of H.E.W., 1978). See also M- T. Matteson and I. M. Ivancevich, "Organizational Stressors and Heart Disease: A Research Model," *Academy of Management Review* 4 (1979), 347-57.

5. For discussions of the consequences of stress, see T A J and e:h:r-aix; i E .Mwran 'fif&Jeresb- cinpihyve tteaitri, and Organizational Effectiveness: A Facec Analysis, Model and Literature Review," *Personnel Psychology* 31 (1978), 665-99; C. L. Cooper and J. Marshall, "Occupational Sources of Stress: A Review of the Literature Relating to Coronary-Heart Disease and Mental III Health," *Journal at Occupational Psychology* 49 (1976), 1] -28; L E, McGrath, "Stress and Behavior in Organization" in M. D. Dunnettu*, cd. *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Chicago; Rand McNally, 1976], 1.351^398; and the sources noted in footnote 2.

6. r. M. Ivancevich, M. T. Matteson, and E. P. Richards, III, "Who's Liable for Stress on the Job?" *Harvard Business Review* [March-April 1985], 60. See also J. M. Ivancevich and M. T. Matteson, "Employee Claims for Damages Add to the High Cost of Job Stress," *Management Review* [November 1982], 9-13; and J. S. Lublin, "On-the-Job Stress Leads Many Workers to File—and Win—Compensation Awards," *The Wall Street Journal* (September 17, 1980).

7. The references in footnote 2 each provide discussions of the causes of stress.

▲ The **Type A behavior pattern** is characterized by feelings of great time pressure and impatience. Type A's work aggressively, speak explosively, and find themselves constantly struggling. The opposite pattern—relaxed, steady-paced, and easygoing—is called the **Type B behavior pattern**. Individuals with Type A behavior patterns are much more likely than others to experience high stress levels and to show a variety of symptoms of stress, including coronary heart disease. One study of 3,500 men over an eight and one-half year period found Type A individuals to be twice as prone to heart disease, five times as prone to a second heart attack, and twice as prone to fatal heart attacks as Type B individuals. The same patterns are now appearing among women.⁸

▲ Individuals experiencing high rates of life change—*whether or not the changes are desirable*—experience elevated stress levels and many health problems. Note that many organizational actions, such as geographical reassignments, promotions, early retirements, reprimands, and firings, can have a tremendous *cumulative* life change impact.⁹

A Jobs in which there are conflicting or unclear expectations concerning what an employee is supposed to do lead to high stress levels. Such role conflict and role ambiguity, discussed in Chapter 15, translate into low satisfaction with work, high absenteeism and turnover, and somatic tension.¹⁰

STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

There are some techniques that individuals and organizations can practice in order to reduce stress. They are discussed in the next two sections.

8. See M. Friedman and R. Rosenman, *Type A Behavior and Your Heart* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974); K. A. Matthews, "Psychological Perspectives on the Type A Behavior Pattern," *Psychological Bulletin* 119(1982), 293-323; V. A. Price, *Type A Behavior Pattern* (New York: Academic Press, 1982); and J. Sparacino, "The Type A Behavior Pattern: A Critical Assessment," *Journal of Human Stress* (December 1979), 37-51.

9. See B. S. Dohrenwend and B. P. Dohrenwend, "Some Issues in Research on Stressful Life Events," *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 166 (1978), 7-15; T. H. Holmes and M. Masuda, "Life Change and Illness Susceptibility" in B. S. Dohrenwend and B. P. Dohrenwend, eds., *Stressful Life Events: Their Nature and Causes* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974), 45-72; T. H. Holmes and R. H. Rahe, "The Social Readjustment Rating Scale," *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 11 (1967), 213-18; and S. M. Monroe, "Major and Minor Life Events as Predictors of Psychological Distress: Further Issues and Findings," *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* 1 (1983), 189-205.

10. See Brief, Schuler, and VanSledright, *Managing Job Stress*; J. R. P. French and R. D. Kaplan, "Organizational Stress and Individual Strain" in A. J. Marrow, ed., *The Failure of Success* (New York: AMACOM, 1973); and R. I. House and R. R. Rizzo, "Role Conflict and Ambiguity as Critical Variables in the Model of Organizational Behavior," *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 7 (1972), 467-505.

Individual Strategies

A Develop social support networks. Individuals who have the support of friends and loved ones experience many fewer symptoms of stress than do those without social support. If you feel you are lacking social support, seek it out. Social groups, churches, and local support organizations are possibilities.¹¹

A Try to reduce Type A tendencies. Try to reestablish priorities. Allow more time for activities. Ask which activities can be curtailed. Learn to say no.

A Develop effective coping strategies. Some coping strategies seem to work. Others only make matters worse.¹² In general:

Those who cope with a stressful situation by treating it as an opportunity to show skills and abilities tend to do best.

Those who simply try to run away from stressful situations usually find they can't.

Those who deal with stress by treating its symptoms—especially by use of alcohol or drugs—often find themselves in a downward spiral.

A Get fit. Stay fit. Exercise reduces tension and strengthens the cardiovascular system. Physically fit individuals are better able to master stressful situations.

A Learn to relax. A variety of relaxation techniques have been developed. Some of them seem a bit mystical, but most do seem to be useful. They include the following:¹³

The relaxation response is an anti-stress response in which muscle tension decreases, heart rate and blood pressure decrease, and breathing slows. It is brought about by (a) a quiet environment, (b) closed eyes, (c) a comfortable position, and (d) a repetitive mental device.

11. For discussions of social support, see S. Cobb, "Social Support as a Moderator of Life Stress," *Psychosomatic Medicine* 38 (1976), 300-14; A. Dean and N. Lin, "The Stress-Buffering Role of Social Support," *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 165 (1977), 403-17; and B. H. Gottlieb, *Social Support Strategies* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1983).

12. For discussions of coping strategies, see S. Folkman and R. S. Lazarus, "An Analysis of Coping in a Middle-Aged Community Sample," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 21 (1980), 219-39; J. C. Latack, "Coping with Job Stress: Measures and Future Directions for Scale Development," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, in press; L. I. Pcarlin and C. Schooler, "The Structure of Coping," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 19 \ 1978, 2-21; and R. S. Schuler, "An Integrative Transactional Process Model of Coping with Stress in Organizations" in T. A. Beehr and R. S. Bhagat, eds., *Human Stress and Cognition in Organizations: An Integrated Perspective* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1985).

13. For more on the relaxation response, see H. Benson, *The Relaxation Response* (New York: Avon Books, 1975); and H. Benson and R. Allen, "How Much Stress Is Too Much?" *Harvard Business Review* (September-October 1980), 86-92. On meditation, see P. Carrington, *Freedom in Meditation* (New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1978). For discussions of biofeedback, see G. D. Fuller, "Current Status of Biofeedback in Clinical Practice," *American Psychologist* 33 (1978), 39-48; and L. Tarler-Bcnlolo, "The Role of Relaxation in Biofeedback Training: A Critical Review of the Literature," *Psychological Bulletin* 85 (1978), 727-55.

Transcendental meditation, or TM, is one popular form of meditation which involves sitting comfortably with eyes closed and engaging in the repetition of a special sound for 20 minutes twice a day. Studies show TM to be related to reduced heart rate, lowered oxygen consumption, and decreased blood pressure.

With biofeedback, small changes in the body and brain are detected, amplified, and displayed to the person. For instance, heart rate, blood pressure, temperature, and brain-wave patterns can be displayed. The ability to understand and perhaps control one's bodily processes may be helpful. Hardware and software packages are now available that make it possible to use your personal computer as a biofeedback device.

▲ Avoid unnecessary change. Remember that change is stress inducing. Think through the cumulative impact of planned changes.

▲ Seek counseling. Especially if stress is severe, seek out professional guidance. Most campuses and many firms have people whose key role is to provide assistance in times of stress. Take advantage of them,

Organizational Strategies

Emphasis on Wellness. Some organizations are now placing great emphasis on the physical and mental wellness of their employees. For example, the Sentry Insurance Company has extensive physical fitness facilities at its corporate headquarters that its employees can use at any time. There is also a pleasant "quiet room" where employees can go to meditate, think, cool down, or simply be alone.

Control Data Corporation has an elaborate program called Stay Well. Employees in the program have a screening session in which a team of professionals collects data on health and life-style and then develops a health risk profile. This computer-generated profile analyzes the employee's health condition and provides a report that includes the chronological age, the risk age (how old the employee is in terms of risk), and the achievable age (how old the employee could expect to become if appropriate changes in health-related behavior were made). Employees then choose from a variety of activities related to their individual needs, including wellness education and life-style change courses. CDC hoped to have 63,000 employees and their spouses signed up by 1984, almost total participation.¹⁴

In a related vein, Verbatim Corp., a maker of computer disks, developed an exercise booklet called "Tune Up at the Terminals" for workers who use computers and word processors. It distributed 500,000

14. M. P. Naditch, "They 'StayWell' at Control Data/" *Sales and Marketing Management* [May 18, 1981], 60-62.

copies in five languages to workers and employers. It now offers a ten-minute video program, "Taming Technotension," that teaches the exercises.¹⁵

Family-Sensitive Work Practices. A variety of work practices, some of which were discussed in Chapter 9, "Job Design," can substantially reduce stresses for many employees, especially those with conflicting family responsibilities. These include flextime, job sharing opportunities, and provision of child care facilities.

Programs to Develop Stress Management Skills. Many organizations are providing relaxation training, training in coping and social skills, and other programs to enhance employee stress management skills. For instance, with the merger of Gulf Corporation with Standard Oil Company of California, now called Chevron, it became clear that many Gulf employees at the Pittsburgh headquarters would have to be terminated involuntarily. Needless to say, the threat of such termination is highly stress inducing. To help employees cope with that stress, Gulf hired a psychiatrist, a special psychologist, and a nurse to teach stress management techniques to employees on company time. A third of the 700-person staff signed up for the stress management classes.¹⁶

Selection and Placement. Firms can recognize individual differences in family situations, degree of Type A behavior, and other dimensions and consider them when making selection and placement decisions.

Career Management. Career management programs can be designed with stress in mind. The probable impacts of job changes and other career elements can be taken into consideration in career planning.

Job Redesign. Studies show that enriched jobs, characterized by use of a variety of skills, feedback about performance, and the completion of a large part of the task, tend to have lower stress levels and to permit use of more effective coping strategies than do specialized jobs.¹⁷

15. *The Wall Street Journal* [January 9, 1985], 1.

16. *The Wall Street Journal* (August 17, 1985), 15.

17. For instance, see A. P. Brief and R. J. Aldag, "Correlates of Role Indices," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 61 1197-1198; and R. J. Aldag, H. J. Joseph, and J. C. Latack, "An Examination of Determinants and Consequences of Coping Behaviors," paper presented at the 16th Annual Meeting of the American Institute for Decision Sciences (Toronto, November 1984).

TYPE A PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT Instructions: Read

the following statements and circle the answer that is true for you.

1. Do you walk, talk, eat, etc., *apd4iy*?-
yes BO
- % Do you find yourself thinking about or doing two different things at the same time? (If you can do *more* than two different things at the same time, give yourself two yesses.) yes no
- :\$. Does life move too slowly for you?
:yes no
4. When people speaking to you hesitate, do you find¹ yourself coiripleting their sentences for them?
yes no
5. Do you often preteiid to be listening to someone talk.^wfeile you are thinking about something eke*
yes .fro
it hard for ydu not to talk about things that are of interest to you? [In other words, is it hard for you to keep quiet?), yes no
7. Do yQu.feeJ. guilty if you have; free time or .a vacation?
8. Have you been accused of not being observant of people and things around you?
yes no
- 9, -De you try to do more and more in less and less time?
yes no
10. Do you iudge yourself and others in terms of numbers? (For example, "I brought in 30 new accounts to the firm last year, but Jean brought in 34.") yes no
- 11. Do you think your success inlife is due to being able to do things faster or more efficiently than others?
yes no
12. Do you hate to wait in lines, at traffic lights, for buses, for anything?
yes no
- 13, Ejp you find yourself talking about your successes and achievements?
j|6s no
- 1#, Do your hobbies or sports become a proving ground for your skills and talents, so that you don't relax with them? (In other words, do you "play to win"?) yes no
15. Do you hate giving up before you're absolutely sure you're licked?
yes no

16. So you sometimes feel that you shouldn't be working since you're scared, but something drives you on? **yes**
no

17. Do you thrive on challenges [i.e., the more challenges you have, the better)?
yes **no**

18. In comparison to most people you know, are you very involved with your work?
yes **no**

19. Even if you need 30 hours a day to finish, all the things you have to do? **yes**
no

20. In general, do you approach your work more seriously than most people you know?
yes **no**

21. Are your achievements considered to be significantly better than those of most people you know?
yes **no**

22. Are you often asked to be a leader of groups?
yes **no**

If you circled "yes" more often than "no," chances are you're more like a Type A person than a Type B person. If you circled "no" more often than "yes," chances are your stress reactions are more like those of a Type B person.

If you have trouble determining answers to these questions, ask your spouse, friend, co-worker, or another individual how he or she would rate you. Many times, people practice Type A behaviors without even knowing it.

LIFE CHAISE ASSESSMENT

Instructions: This scale asks about changes that may have occurred in your life within the past year. Write the appropriate number in the space to the left of each item, using the scale below:

	Has Not Occurred within the Past Year 1	Occurred 0-6 Months Ago 2	Occurred 7-12 Months Ago 3	Occurred in Both Periods 4
			Personal and Social	
Health	— 1. A major illness or injury? — 2. A major change in eating habits? — 3. A major change in sleeping habits?		21.. T)he death of a close friend? 22. An outstanding personal ment? 3ij&. A change in your personal habits (e-.g., dress, friends, life-style]- 24. Sexual difficulties? 25. Beginning or ceasing school or GQI-lege? 26. A vacation? 27. A change of school or college? 28- A change of your usual type and/or amount of recreation? 29. A change in your social activities? 30. A rflinoj: violation of the law? 31. Legal problems lessultiag in your being in jail? 32. A new, close, personal relationship! 33. An engagement to marry? 34. The falling out of a close relation ship?	
	and Family 4. A change in residence? 5. A change in family get-togethers? 6. A major change in the health or behavior of a family member (e.g., illnesses, accidents, drug or disciplinary problems)? 7. A major change in your living conditions (e.g., home improvements or a decline in your home or neighborhood!? 8. The death of your spouse? 9. The death of a close family member? 10. Marriage? 11. A change in the number of argu^ments with your spouse? 12. In-law problems? 13. A marital separation? 14. A marital reconciliation? 15. A divorce? il6. The gain of a new family member (e.g., adoption or birth of a child or a relative moving in)? 17. Spouse beginning or ceasing work outside the home? 18. Becoming pregnant or wife becoming pregnant? W. A child leaving home? 2Q. Having a miscarriage or abortion or wife having a miscarriage or abortion?		Financial 35. A major purchase or a mortgage loan, such as a home, business, property, etc.? 36. A foreclosure on a mortgage or loan? 37. A major change in finances (e.g., increased or decreased income)? 38. Credit rating difficulties?	
			Work	
			39. Trouble with boss? 40. Business adjustment? 41. Change in responsibilities at work? 42. Change in work hours or conditions? 43. Retirement? 44. Change to a different line of work? 45. Fired at work;?	

Source: Reprinted with permission from *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* vol. 11, T. H. Holmes and R. H. Rahe, "The Social Readjustment Rating Scale," Copyright 1967, Pergamon Press, Ltd.

LIFE CHANGE SCORING: If you **scored a 2 or 3** for any item, add the appropriate number of points to your life change total using the following key. If you scored a 4, add double the number of points.

1. 53	8. 100	15. 73	22. 28	29. 18	36. 30	43. 45
2. 15	9. 63	16. 39	23. 24	30. 11	37. 38	44. 36
						45. 47
3. 16	10. 50	17. 26	24. 39	31. 63	38. 30	4
4. 20	11. 35	18. 40	25. 26	32. 25	39. 23	
5. 15	12. 29	19. 29	26. 13	33. 40	40. 39	
6. 44	13. 65	20. 40	27. 20	34. 35	41. 29	
7. 25	14. 45	21. 37	28. 19	35. 31	42. 20	

Life Change Interpretation:	0 - 149	Very low
	150- 199	Low risk
	200 - 299	Medium risk
	>300	High risk ¹⁸

In one typical study, 49% of the high-risk group, 25% of the medium-risk group, and 9% of the low-risk group reported illness in the 8-month period following completion of the questionnaire.¹⁹

18. R. H. Rahe, "Life Change and Health Change" in P. R. A. May and J. K. Wittenbom, eds., *Psychotropic Drug Responses, Advances in Prediction* [Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1969], 92-125.

19. *Ibid.* See also J. Petrich and T. H. Holmes, "Life Change and Onset of Illness," *Medical Clinics of North America* 61 (1977), 825-38 for a good review of studies on the impact of life change.

ROLE CONFLICT AND AMBIGUITY ASSESSMENT

Instructions: The following statements will describe some specific characteristics of your particular job. For each statement, you are asked to rate how true the job characteristic is of your job. Read each characteristic and indicate how true it is based on the scale below. Fill in the appropriate number in the space to the left of the statement.

Definitely Not True of My Job.	Moderately Untrue of My Job	Uncertain	Mostly True of My Job	Extremely True of My Job
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1. I have to do things that should be done differently.
2. I know that I have divided my time properly.
3. I know what my responsibilities are.
4. Explanations are clear of what has to be done.
5. I have to break a rule or policy in order to carry out
6. I feel certain about how much authority I have.
7. I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.
8. There are clear, planned goals and objectives for my job.
9. I receive assignments without the manpower to do them.
10. I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not by others.
11. I receive an assignment without adequate materials and resources to execute it,
12. I work on unnecessary things.
13. I know exactly what is expected of me.
14. I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.

Source: J. R. Rizzo, R. J. House, and S. J. Lirtzman, "Role Conflict and Ambiguity in Complex Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 15 (1970), 150-63.

Role Conflict and Ambiguity Scoring: This scale measures two dimensions of role stress—role conflict (conflict between various role expectations) and role ambiguity (uncertainty about role expectations),

A ROLE CONFLICT: Sum Items 1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 14. Divide by 8.

A ROLE AMBIGUITY: Sum Items 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 13. Subtract that sum from 30. Divide by 6.

Role Stress Norms:²⁰ Here are norm scores for role conflict and ambiguity for groups the authors have tested and for two national samples:

20. The first five sets of norms are based on R. S. Schuler, R. J. Aldag, and A. P. Brief, *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 20 [1977], 111-28. The last two sets are drawn from J. R. Rizzo, R. J. House, and S. J. Lirtzman, "Role Conflict and Ambiguity in Complex Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 15 [1970], 150-63. Scores have been adjusted to reflect a 5-point scale.

Sample	Role Conflict	Role Amb
Nurses	2.50	2.06
Utility workers	3.02	2.57
Manufacturing workers	2.86	2.57
Custodial workers	2.71	1.26
Nursing aides	2.42	1.14
Norm group A	3.13	2.86
Norm group B	2.91	3.02