

The Management Standards on Work Related Stress

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HSE Management Standards website:
www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards

The Management Standards

Intend to outline:

- Why tackle work related stress?
- The legal obligation
- The benefits
- The Management Standards

The Management Standards

First; what is stress?

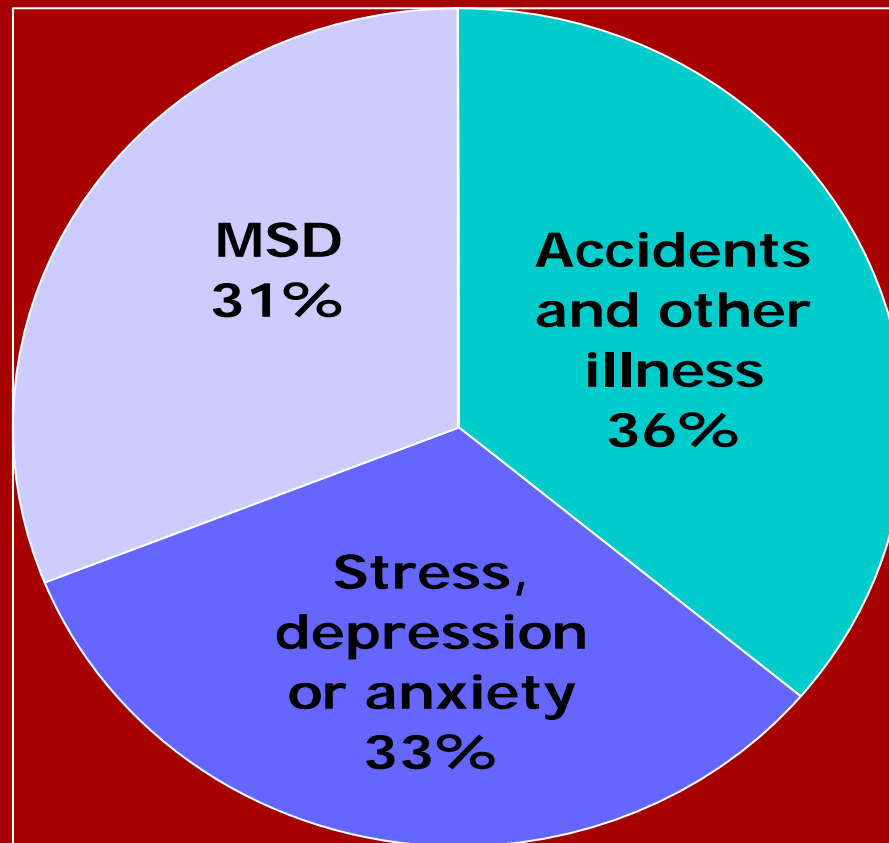
- A natural reaction to excessive pressure;
- When perceived demands exceed the individual's ability to cope;
- It is not a disease but if excessive/prolonged can lead to mental and physical ill health;
- There is no such thing as positive stress (only positive pressure), stress is always negative;
- Stress is not a recognised medical condition

HSE definition of stress: Stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.

Why tackle work-related stress?

- Stress costs UK economy £3.7-3.8 billion pa (HSE estimate 1995/96 prices - Bristol Stress and Health at Work Study 1998)
- 13.4 million working days lost in 2001 due to stress, depression and anxiety
- 1 in 5 people find work either very or extremely stressful
- Sectors with highest incidence are: health & social services, education, local government, central government and financial services.

Number of working days lost: All work related injury and ill health



Legal requirements

- **The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act (1974)**
 - places a general duty on employers to protect the health of their employees.
- **The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)**
 - place a duty on employers to risk assess for health and safety risks, including risks to mental health.

The Management Standards

The benefits

- A more content and effective workforce
- Reduced sickness absence
- Lower staff turnover
- Improved business image/reputation
- Improved financial performance

Plus meet your legal obligations under the

- Health & Safety at Work Etc Act 1974 and
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The benefits

Case study 1 : Somerset County Council

- Cost of sickness absence £3.7m 2001/02
- Wellbeing/Quality of Working Life initiative
- Stress audit carried out
- 50 Interventions aimed at the individual, team and organisation identified
- Reduction in cost of sickness absence £1.9m over two years.
- Net saving after costs of interventions etc. £1.57m

For further details see Research Report 295 at www.hse.gov.uk

The benefits

Case study 2 : NHS Trust

- '0' Star rating 2002
- Organisation Development Programme
- Stress audit carried out
- Sickness absence reduced by 30%
- Significant reductions in staff turnover
- '2' Star rating 2004

For more information visit HSE web site: [work related stress from experience](#)

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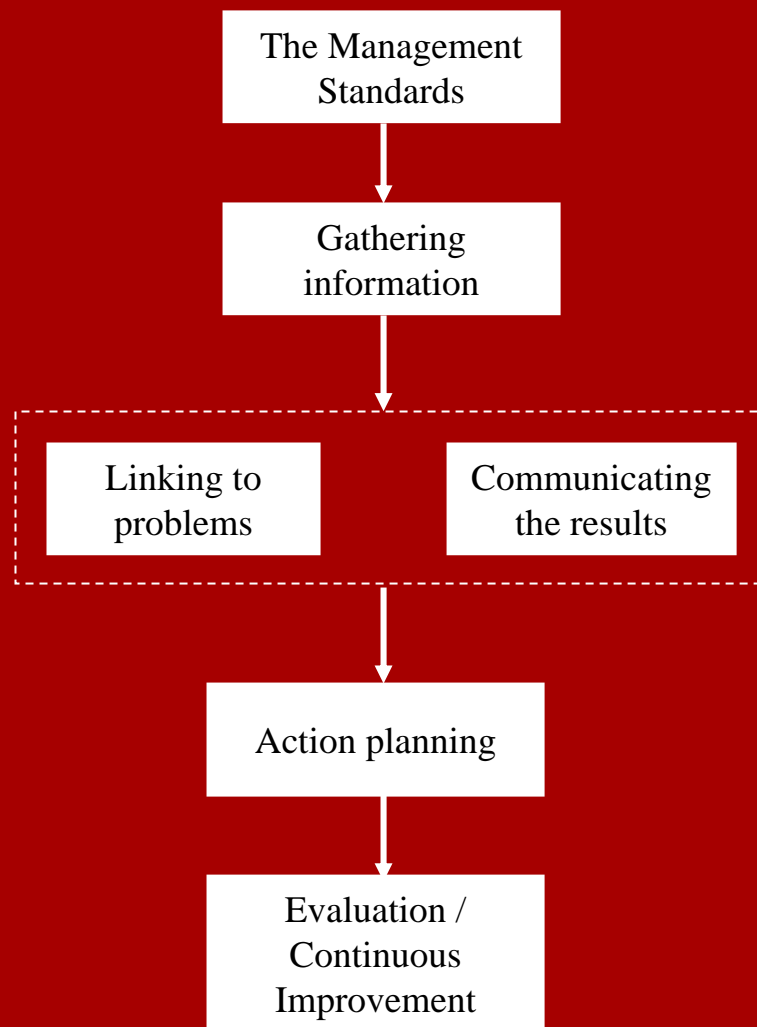
Step 1: Identify the hazards

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

Step 3: Evaluate the risk and take action

Step 4: Record your findings

Step 5: Monitor and review



Management Standards

The six areas are:

- **Demands:** workload, work patterns, and the work environment
- **Control:** How much say the person has in the way they do their work
- **Support:** encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues
- **Relationships:** promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- **Role:** Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles
- **Change:** How organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation

Management Standards

DEMANDS:

The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

States to be achieved are:

- The organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work;
- People's skills and abilities are matched to the job demands;
- Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees; and
- Employees' concerns about their work environment are addressed

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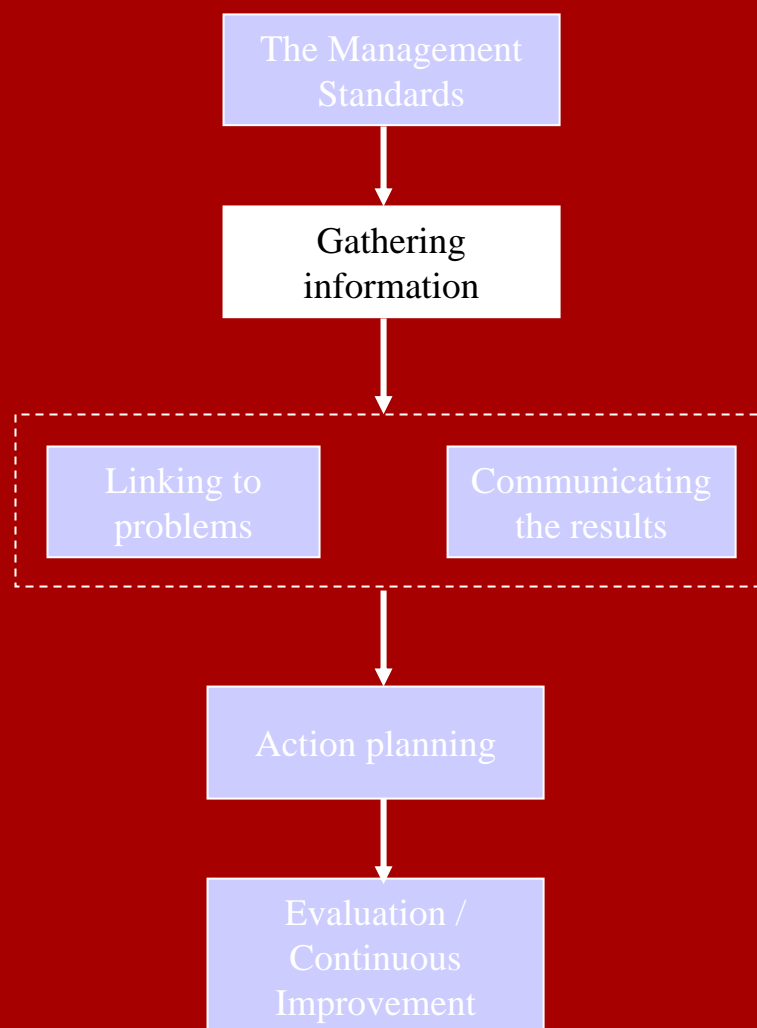
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Gathering Information

Who can be harmed?

- Work-related stress can affect any employee, even though some may cope better with work pressures than others
- At particular times, individuals may be more vulnerable to work-related stress

How?

- Exposure to the six areas covered by the Standards can affect employees in different ways
- Finding out how the factors are affecting your employees requires a partnership approach based on openness, honesty and trust

Gathering information

Sources of information include:

- Sickness absence data
- Employee turnover
- Exit interview
- Productivity data
- Performance appraisals
- Informal talks with employees
- Focus groups
- Return to work interview
- Surveys

Gathering information

HSE Indicator Tool

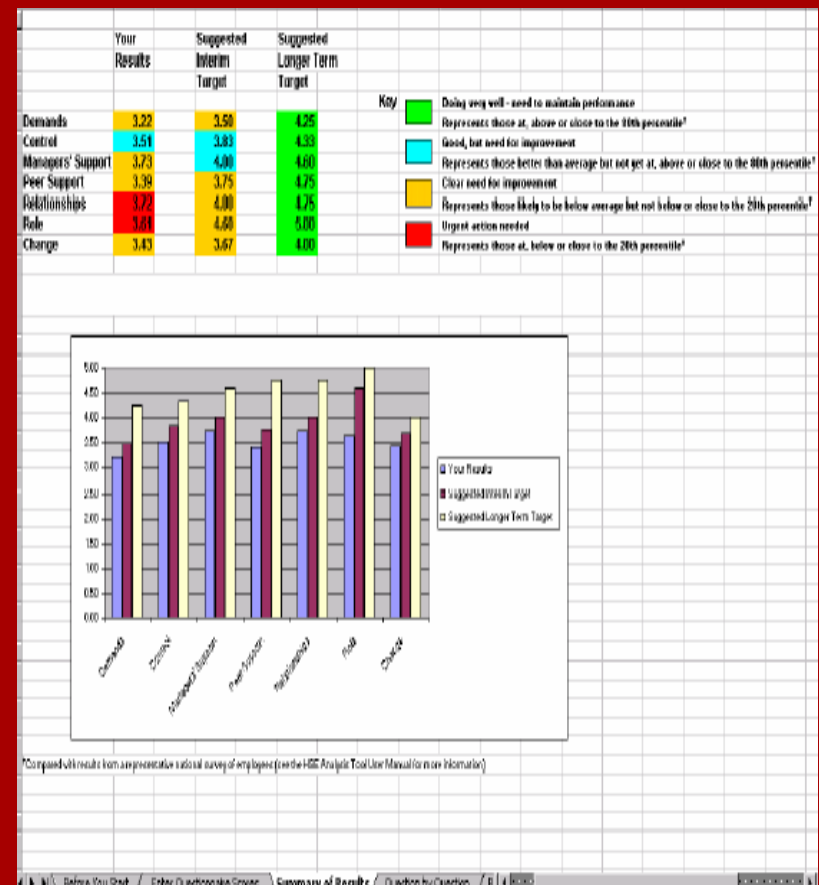
- 35 item questionnaire
- Validated in a large organisation and in a national household survey
- Questions are designed to look at the six areas of work related stress
- A user manual download is provided on the website

24	I get help and support I need from colleagues	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> 5
25	I have some say over the way I work	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> 5
26	I have sufficient opportunities to question managers about change at work	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> 5
27	I receive the respect at work I deserve from my colleagues	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> 5
28	Staff are always consulted about change at work	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> 5
29	I can talk to my line manager about something that has upset or annoyed me about work	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> 5
30	My working time can be flexible	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> 5
31	My colleagues are willing to listen to my work-related problems	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> 5
32	When changes are made at work, I am clear how they will work out in practice	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Agree <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> 5

Gathering information

HSE Analysis Tool:

- Presents a summary of the data in graphical form
- Colour coding helps to identify hotspots
- Interim and longer term targets suggested
- A user manual download is provided on the website



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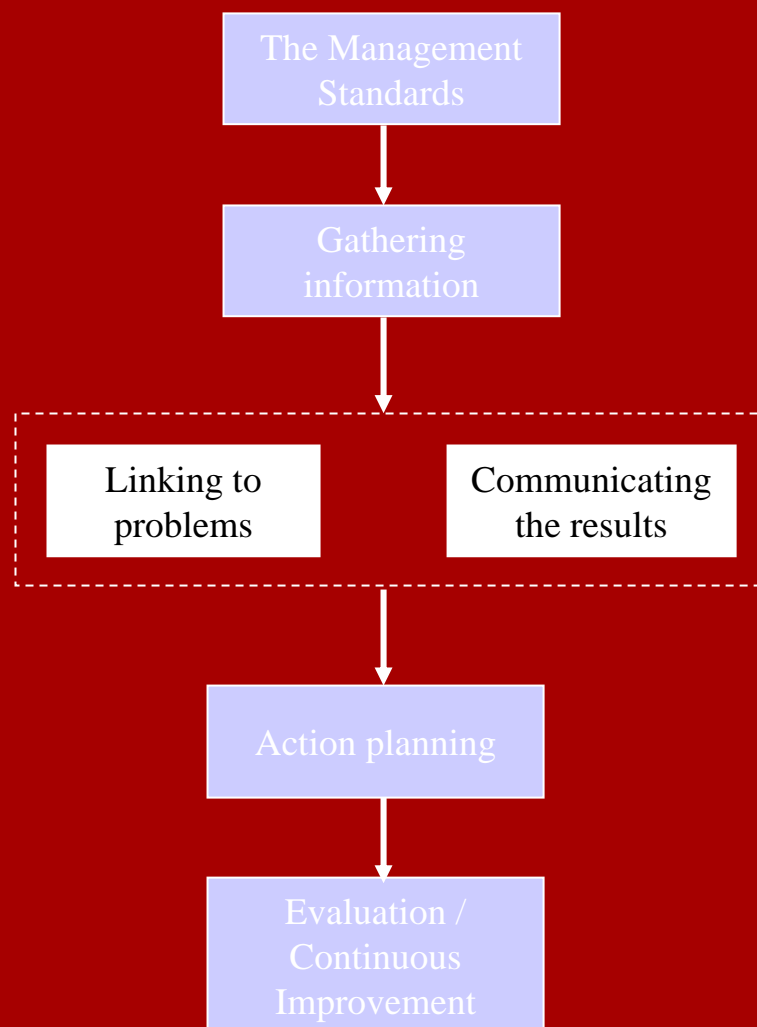
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Linking problems to solutions

Focus groups:

- Consider desired state retrieved from standards
- Confirm / challenge current state from Indicator Tool and other data sources
- Discuss / agree how to make practical improvements
- Agree next steps and timings

Communicate results

Provide feedback :

- Survey findings
- Agreed solutions
- Action plans
- Timetable

Individual concerns:

- Develop ways for employees to raise concerns
- Provide employee assistance programs
- Use mentoring or other forms of co-worker support
- Encourage employees to talk about concerns to managers, union representatives, HR etc.

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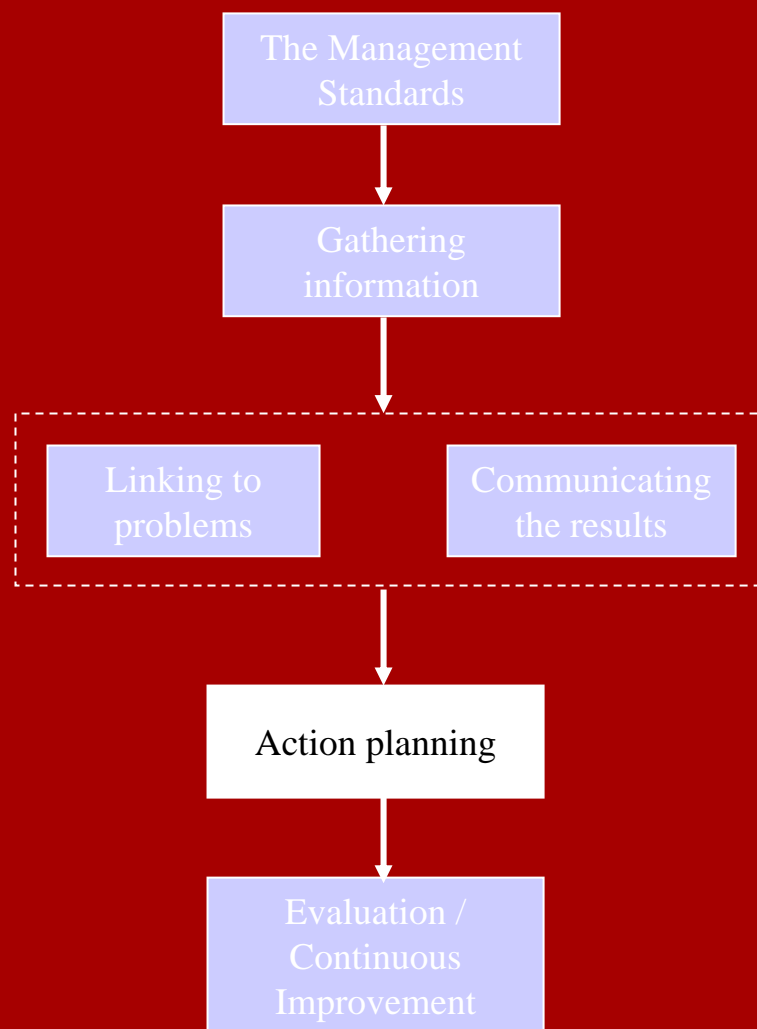
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Action plans - share with staff

Action plans:

- What is the problem
- How the problem was identified
- What are you going to do in response
- How you arrived at this solution
- Key milestones and dates
- Provide feedback to employees on progress
- A date for reviewing progress against the plan

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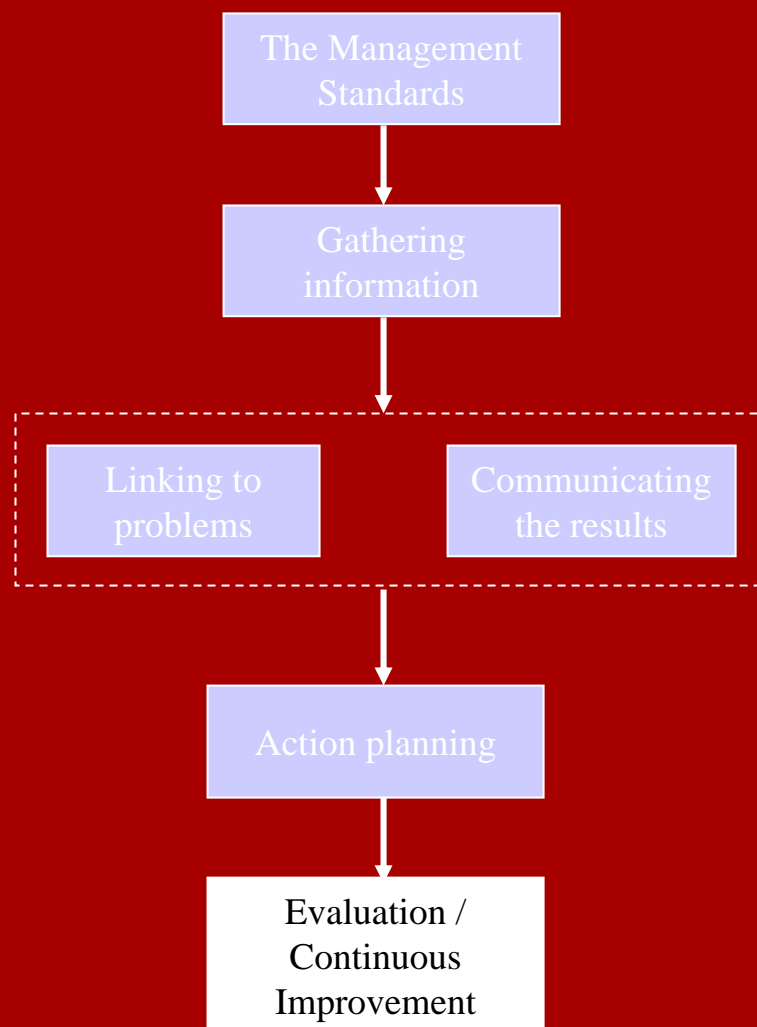
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Review - set dates

Monitor and review:

- This is not a one off process, review periodically
- Monitor against action plan
- Evaluate effectiveness of solutions
- Review if significant changes are planned
- Repeat process at agreed intervals

The Management Standards

Help and resources available at:

www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/downloads

- RA steps 1 to 5
- Overview of the process (diagram)
- The Management Standards
- Example Stress Policy
- Securing management commitment
- How to run focus groups
- HSE Indicator tool & user manual
- HSE Analysis tool & user manual
- Are you doing enough? (suggestions)
- Example action plan

The Management Standards

What next to implement?

- Familiarise key people with Management Standards
- Get Senior Management Commitment
- Ensure employer/employee partnership
- Dedicate adequate resources
- Adopt the Management Standards approach:
 - Proactively engage with all staff
 - Develop locally relevant and sustainable interventions
 - Implement action plans to agreed timescales
 - Reassess risk at agreed intervals



The Management Standards

Thank you for listening

For more information visit

Management Standards website at:

www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards

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