

**FOR DISCUSSION**

# **ORGANISATIONAL STRESS TEST**

**OST**

**Brief Test**

# THE ORGANISATIONAL STRESS TEST

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# Organisational Stress Test

## Background

Stress has an impact on goal achievement by effecting perceptive ability and the capacity to respond by influencing, either positively or negatively, both cognitive (intellectual) and affective (emotional) state. Therefore stress impacts on physical, emotional and mental well-being of both people and organisation's.

In terms of people's health and well-being, stress is an OHS issue which, if not addressed, can expose organisation's to legal risk.

Being both cognitive (intellectual) and affective (emotional), stress is an emotional intelligence (EI) issue. However, resilience and coping is also related to existential issues and so is also a Noetic or Self-Actualising Issue. NI (Noetic Intelligence) and SAI (Self-Actualising Intelligence) are capacities which, when combined with EI, can enable stress management and can convert stress from a performance inhibitor to a performance benefactor.

There are a number of stress issues crucial for organizations to understand and attend to, these are:

1. the stress cycle – how stress triggers stress;
2. inherited stress – the way in which a stressed person stress others;
3. the J curve of stress – the multiplying impact of stress i.e. stress is more than cumulative because it can increase logarithmically with the combination of increasing stress issues and the impact of stressed people stressing others through stress reactions;
4. stressors – the stress triggers such as events, circumstances, environment etc.; and
5. stressees – those who tend to be stressed.

Kinematic is unique in that it provides services and training programs that combine EI, NI and SAI to enable better stress management, improved well-being and the capacity to respond to stress rather than manipulated by it.

The following Organisational Stress Test can help you determine the Organisational Stress and the importance of action.

Please feel free to email [leigh@kinematic.com.au](mailto:leigh@kinematic.com.au) for advice regarding what action to take.

**Please note that :**

**Whilst the OST is soundly based in theory and research it is still under development;  
and**

**This test is no substitute for professional advice.**



## The OST

# Stressees-Stressors Score

Please place a tick or x in the box that indicates your level of agreement with the statement

Statement	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 You neither agree nor disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Our organization faces heavy demands in meeting client needs					
Our organization is challenged to keep pace with change					
We constantly undergo internal review					
Bottom-line pressures are high					
External pressures are increasing OUTPUT performance demands					
Change is ongoing					
In the last three months we have undertaken operational reviews that have resulted in significant change involving staff roles and job security.					
External pressures are increasing performance demands					
Our clients are difficult to manage					
We rely heavily on resources and /or relationships external to our team					
<b>Total Number of ticks in each column</b>	x2 =	x 1 =		x 1 =	x 2 =

To determine your context score, multiply the ticks or x's by the number indicated at the bottom of the column and then complete the Context Score equation as indicated below.

Stressors Score : \_\_\_\_\_ (Total of first two columns) SUBTRACT (Total of last two columns) = \_\_\_\_\_ Total Stressors Score

## The OST

### Orgnaisational Context Score

Please place a tick or x in the box that indicates your level of agreement with the statement

Statement	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 You neither agree nor disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
1. Our people have high Emotions Management competencies and skills					
2. Stress is not an issue in this organisation					
3. We have high absenteeism which can be attributed to stress					
4. Our leaders discount mental health issues					
5. Our culture does not enable emotional expression					
6. Our staff have career plans that much enable their life plans					
7. Work-Life Balance is instituted in organizational policy					
8. Work-Life Balance is instituted in the practices of our leaders					
9. Work goals and actions are matched to people's personal visions, beliefs and goals.					
10. Our leaders are good at managing high emotions particularly anxiety, dissatisfaction and anger					

#### Questions 1, 6,7,8,9,10

Score : - 2 for Strongly agree, - 1 For Agree, + 1 for Disagree and +2 for Strongly Disagree

#### Questions 2,3,4,5

Score : + 2 for Strongly agree, + 1 For Agree, - 1 for Disagree and -2 for Strongly Disagree  
Column Three Scores 0

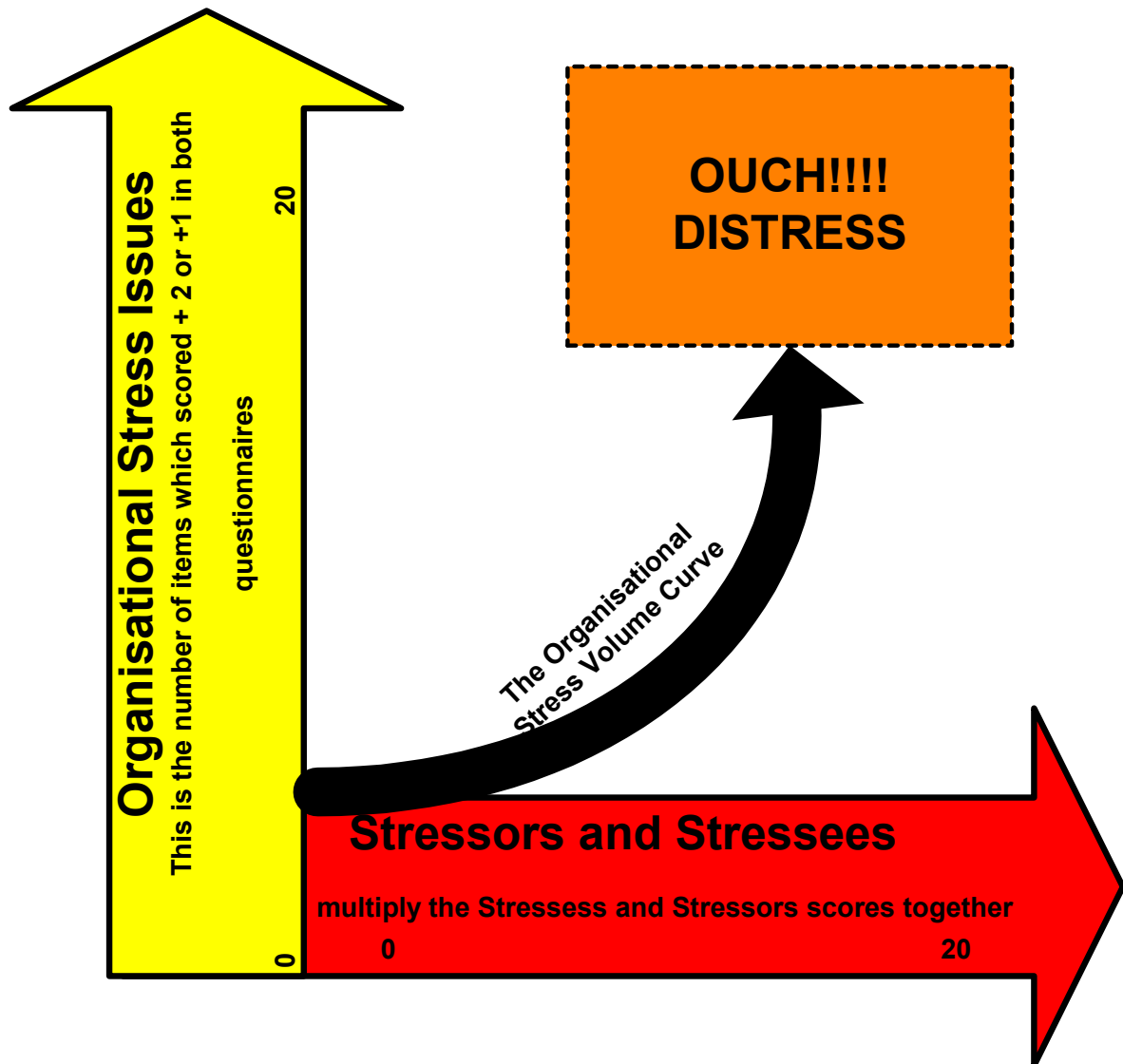
Org Context Score : \_\_\_\_\_ (Write your total Score here)



## OST Score Card

Graph your score using the scoring system indicated in the coloured axis.

For negative scores, please contact the provider of the test.



# Implications and Recommendations based on the OST Score

## Breaking the Stress Cycle

- Develop the Emotions Management Competencies of Managers and Leaders (e.g. ERA and EBB – see <http://www.kinematic.com.au> )
  - Solve the “Work-Life” Issue
    - Utilise “Making Meaning” processes for developing staff
  - Consider training staff in emotions management competencies
    - Train HR staff in Emotions Management Competencies
  - Consider a Work-Life Meaning program (e.g. Making Work Work)
    - Develop a “Making Meaning” approach for :  
Work-Life Balance  
Team Plans  
Business Plans
- Consider Emotions Management Competencies for managing clients and providers
  - Develop a “Making Meaning” strategy for :  
LEADERSHIP TEAM  
MANAGEMENT TEAM  
WORKPLACE LEADERS

## Other Indicators that might be associated with stress

Cynicism  
Low job satisfaction  
Low desire for feedback or resistant to feedback (all directions)  
Tardiness – arrival and deadlines  
Withdrawal or disruptiveness  
Poor accuracy / Low quality  
“Silo” mentality  
Labeling of teams or individuals  
Inconsistent messages  
Low desire for STRETCH performance goals  
Excellence is a four letter word  
Low acceptance of diversity or difference  
High focus on contingent reward i.e. pay levels and bonuses

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