



Unit 5 – Stress

CASE STUDY WRITING TASK: MODEL ANSWER

str. 50 u knjigama

5

Case study

DAVIES-MILLER ADVERTISING

Too much stress is damaging work
at a large advertising agency



Background story of each case study

Background

Davies–Miller is a large advertising agency on Madison Avenue in New York. It has expanded rapidly in recent years and has a number of famous companies as its clients.

There is very strong competition in the US advertising industry. Agencies compete to win new contracts or take clients away from their rivals. Advertising staff are well paid, but they work long hours. They worry about job security and become anxious if their company loses an important client.

Recently, Davies–Miller lost two of its major accounts. This had a significant effect on the employees. The agency decided to carry out a survey of the staff's opinions about their working conditions. It showed that 65% of staff felt 'highly stressed' in their jobs.

Discuss how the high levels of stress could affect the performance of the agency.

Listen to / read on page 51 about four incidents at Davies–Miller which involved stress. In each case, note down briefly the key points of each incident.

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2

Birgitte,
Schedule Coordinator

**Summary of an interview with
Birgitte by a member of staff (HR)**

Birgitte regulates the flow of work, coordinates scheduling and prepares cost estimates. According to her, she is stressed because she is often interrupted at work by visits from other members of staff. She believes there is too much gossiping in the office, which stops her from doing her work.

She says that her supervisor favours certain members of staff and does not want to send her on training courses.

She lives a long way from work. Because of this, she gets back home very late and has no time to relax.



3

Juliana, Art Director

**Extract from an e-mail
sent to Head of HR**

I've never been under such pressure in my work since I joined the agency. I have no time to listen to the problems of my colleagues. I spend all my time trying to meet impossible deadlines to produce designs for the Account Executives. We're competing for too many contracts, that's the problem. I just don't understand the policy of the agency. It won't help to hire more staff. Most of the creative ideas in the agency come from me. Sometimes I wonder if they want me to leave and bring in someone younger. I'm worried because the situation's beginning to affect my health. I can't seem to relax when I get back home.



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4 Jolanta, Assistant to Art Director

Part of an informal conversation between Jolanta and a member of the HR department

"I'll be looking for another job soon. I feel really stressed out. Juliana never tells me anything. She never asks for my opinion. It's incredible. I've got a Master's in advertising, but it doesn't seem to impress her. She only gives me boring jobs and shouts at me if I make a mistake. I think she'll have a nervous breakdown soon. She never praises anything I do – it really upsets me. I was hoping to have a career here. No chance of that."



Task

- 1 You are members of the HR department. Work in small groups and discuss these questions.
 - 1 What are the main reasons why the staff mentioned above are highly stressed or demotivated?
 - 2 What action(s) should the HR department take in each case?
- 2 Compare the results of your discussion with other groups.
- 3 Meet as one group. Make suggestions for practical ways of reducing the stress levels of staff in the agency.

*Watch the Case study commentary on the **DVD-ROM**.*



E-mails can have a formal business style or a very informal style, similar to spoken English.

This semi-formal style is similar to a standard business letter, but less formal and usually shorter. The ending is *Best wishes* rather than *Yours sincerely*. This style is best used when you are sending an e-mail to somebody who is outside your company, or whom you do not know very well. The focus is on giving or asking for information quickly.

To: tony.randall@pricerise.aus

From: alison.mcdermott@hasbro.com

Subject: Cooperation agreement

Dear Tony,

To celebrate the signing of the agreement between our two companies, we would like to invite you to participate in our annual sales meeting, which is taking place this year in Honolulu, June 7–10.

Please feel free to bring another person with you as our guest if you would like to join us.

I hope this will be possible. Please let us know.

Best wishes

Alison

Alison McDermott
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Chicago IL 60644

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e-mail: alison.mcdermott@hasbro.com

The informal style is most suitable for e-mails within your company and for people whom you know well. The greeting is often *Hi*, *Hello* or even *How are you?* *Cheers* is a common ending, or sometimes the ending is omitted. Sometimes the writer won't use capital letters. The style is much closer to spoken than to written English.

Sometimes people use abbreviations if they want to save time:

CU = see you

thx = thanks

RUOK? = are you OK?

To: tony.randall@pricerise.aus

Subject: Goodbye party!

Hi Tony

It's my last day in the office on Friday, and I'm giving a small goodbye party, 16.30 in room 122. Hope you can come.

CU

Jenny

Resource bank – Writing – zadatak u vezi sa pisanjem

A

Write an e-mail from one of the people (2–4) on page 51 of the Course Book– Birgitte, Juliana or Jolanta – to a friend who works outside the agency.

(See the Writing file, Course Book page 126, for the format of e-mails.)

- Briefly outline two of the changes that will affect you.
- You think you will be less stressed as a result – give reasons.

End suitably.

B

Write an e-mail from another of the people (2–4) on page 51 of the Course Book to a friend who works outside the agency.

- Briefly outline two of the changes that will affect you.
- You do *not* think you will feel less stressed as a result of the changes – give reasons.
- Tell your friend that you are looking for another job – give details.

End suitably.

Recommendations

The management team met on July 5 to discuss ways of dealing with stress in the company.

The following recommendations were made:

Title page – naslovna strana

- naziv institucije – **Novi Sad School of Business**
 - **Case Study Name:**
- **Unit 5 – Stress, DAVIES – MILLER ADVERTISING** (naziv je dat samo kao primer)

• Student:

Professor:

Assistant:

mesec (month) / datum (date)

Recommendations

The management team met on July 5 to discuss ways of dealing with stress in the company. The following recommendations were made:

Anti-stress training

All staff members will go on a weekend course that gives ideas and techniques for reducing feelings of stress. All staff will go on this course together, to allow employees to discuss the things that cause stress. This will also be a good opportunity for team building. Dates to be announced.

Free gym membership

All employees will be able to go to a nearby gym to 'de-stress' at the end of the day. The agency will pay for this gym membership.

Work-life balance

This will be a new priority. We will encourage employees to go home on time at 6p.m. We will no longer expect staff to work at home in the evenings or at weekends.

Recruitment

Enough staff will be recruited to deal with the work that needs doing at any one time. If necessary, we will use more temporary staff.

Job evaluation

All jobs in the agency will be evaluated so that people are doing jobs for which they are qualified, but not over-qualified. (Some will be promoted, and no one will lose their job as a result of this!)

Positive work environment

We hope that the actions above will improve morale at the agency. We know that it's impossible to stop gossip, but we hope the gossip will be more positive in the future. There will also be a new rule: please do not interrupt colleagues when they are working, unless necessary.

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- **The end!**