

# Sources of Work Stress Inventory (SWSI)

Author/s: Nicola Taylor, PhD and Gideon P. De Bruin, DLitt et Phil

PURPOSE	To measure occupational stress and identify sources of stress in the workplace
ADMINISTER TO	Individuals 16 years and older
READING/EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	Grade 8 (NQF Level 1)
ADMINISTRATION TIME	20-30 minutes (59 items)
SCORING OPTIONS	Data Capturing by Client Services
PUBLICATION DATE	2006
HPCSA	To be submitted
TRAINING	None
LANGUAGES	English and Afrikaans
SA NORMS	Yes

The Sources of Work Stress Inventory (SWSI) helps professionals determine general levels of occupational stress and identifies possible key sources of stress. These sources of stress in work environments can then be isolated in order to address them.

The SWSI can contribute to organisational diagnosis and provides an additional evaluation in terms of organisational climate. The SWSI can be used within the context of a comprehensive organisational evaluation, or as part of a structured employee wellness programme. Professionals may also use it as a screening test for the individual or the organisation when assessing employees' mental and physical health, as the two are often related.

## ASSESSMENT SCALES

The SWSI appraises 8 sources of work stress, namely:

**Role Ambiguity:** relates to the amount of stress experienced by an individual due to vague specifications or constant change regarding the expectations, duties, and constraints that define the individual's job.

**Relationships:** refers to the stress experienced by an individual as a result of having poor interpersonal relationships with colleagues and superiors, as well as being subjected to interpersonal abuse.

**Tools and Equipment:** relates to the stress experienced by an individual due to a lack of relevant tools and equipment needed to do a job properly, or working with inappropriate, broken, or complex machinery.

**Job Security:** relates to the amount of stress experienced by an individual due to uncertainty about his or her future in the current workplace.

**Career Advancement:** refers to the stress experienced by an individual as a result of a perceived lack of opportunity to further his or her career prospects within the organisation for which they work.

**Lack of Autonomy:** refers to the amount of stress experienced by an individual due to a lack of decision-making authority in the workplace. This can be due to either job constraints or workplace constraints.

**Work/Home Interface:** refers to the stress experienced by an individual as a result of a lack of social support at home or from friends, and work/non-work additivity, spill over, and conflict with regard to stress within and outside the workplace.

**Workload:** refers to the amount of stress experienced by the individual due to the perception that he or she is unable to cope or be productive with the amount of work allocated to him or her.

## AREAS OF APPLICATION

The SWSI can be used for the following purposes:

- Individual assessment can provide important information about the individual's level of work stress, and identify the sources of this stress for counselling purposes.
- Organisational assessment can allow the organisation to identify problem areas in the workplace and to plan and implement interventions to improve employee well-being.
- The SWSI can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of individual- or organisational intervention programmes.

## REPORT OPTIONS

The SWSI has the following software reports available:

- **SWSI Individual Report:** Tabled individual T-scores and interpretive comments.
- **SWSI Group Report:** Tabled average group T-scores and interpretive comments.