



Reduce harmful work stressors

Improve job quality and health

Work Stress Solutions

Increasing job control

Low job control is when workers do not have adequate say over how they complete their work tasks, sometimes finding every step “micro-managed” by supervisors. The nature of some jobs include tasks that are highly routine, leaving very little autonomy or creativity, which can affect the ability to learn new things and use or develop skills. This is significantly related to poor mental and physical health. Combined with high job demands, it is known as “**job strain**”, a source of stress which can increase your risk for high blood pressure, depression, and cardiovascular disease.

I. Workplace Policies & Practices¹

These recommendations and resources can reduce low job control, even in highly routinized jobs, where employees can be listened to by managers, and jobs can be rotated to enhance skills and relieve monotonous work.

- **TRAIN MANAGERS** to encourage employee participation in decision making, discussing problems and solutions.
- **COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY** by training managers in safe communication and management styles to include employees in making important decisions and future plans.
- **PLAN WORK** with employee input to agree on achievable deadlines and work pace.
- **PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES** for learning and skills development, being mindful of increasing workload and demands.
- **ENCOURAGE AUTONOMY** by allowing workers the ability to carry out

tasks with more independence.

- **EVALUATE** manager performance in the above steps.

¹ Adapted from the [Job Stress Intervention Guide](#), TWH Center for Promotion of Health in the New England Workplace, 2015

II. Healthy Work Strategies Case Studies and Resources

- [Increasing job control and reducing other job stressors among call center workers in England](#)
- [Intervention to reduce job stress among urban bus drivers in Stockholm, Sweden](#)
- [Job redesign at a sweets manufacturing company in England](#)
- [Redesigning the jobs of postal workers in Uppsala, Sweden](#)
- [Reducing work stress and improving the mental health of hospital workers \(Quebec, Canada\)](#)
- [Action research intervention with urban bus drivers in Copenhagen, Denmark](#)

III. Making Changes Beyond the Workplace

Laws and regulations are widely-used strategies for reducing sources of stress at work including low job control.

- [Trade union actions to prevent psychosocial risks in healthcare \(E.U.\)](#)
- [A national standard for psychological health and safety in the workplace in Canada](#)
- [Job redesign and national labor protections have positive effects on worker health and the economy](#)
- [Stress Check: A national policy in Japan for prevention of workplace stress](#)