Building Personal Resilience in the Workplace

A webinar for ACA students in partnership with ICAEW
Introductions

The Chartered Accountants’ Benevolent Association
caba.org.uk

Your presenter
Carol McLachlan, FCA
CABA - who we are and who we support

A Registered Charity for:
• ICAEW members and ACA students in training contract

Providing support:
• To reduce the impact of physical and mental ill health
• Addressing causes, not just symptoms
• By offering quality advice, information and signposting
• And by running training and events
Carol McLachlan, FCA
CABA Trainer

Carol is a Chartered Accountant with nearly 20 years in-house Big 4 experience.

She’s also an executive coach and NLP Practitioner, currently studying for a Master’s degree focussed on thinking and learning within the accountancy profession.
Webinar Objectives

• Acquire a clear understanding of resilience and why it is so important

• Understand how your mind works and the difference between pressure and stress

• Provide strategies enabling you to improve your resilience and performance

• Equip you with the resources to design your own plan to get physically and mentally healthier and develop your resilience
What is resilience?

The ability, in the face of difficulty, to retain flexible cognitive, behavioural and emotional responses

*Neenan and Dryden 2002*

The ability to mitigate the effects of stress ie factors such as emotional, cognitive, physiological, behavioural responses to work, the work environment or the organisations

*Levi, 2000 EU Guidance on Work Related Stress*
What is resilience?

• Ability to “bounce back” and “roll with the punches”

• Ability to deal with perceived adverse situations in a positive and creative way
  ▪ To transform challenge into an opportunity
  ▪ To absorb any learning offered by setbacks quickly and at the minimum physical and mental cost
Why is resilience so important?

When you experience adversity or stress you may feel:

• Anger
• Grief
• Pain

Resilient people can keep functioning both physically and psychologically

Resilience helps us to survive – it also helps us to grow and develop
Why is resilience so important?

Resilient people:

• Have lower levels of depression
• Develop personally as a result of adversity
• Harness inner strength that helps them rebound
• Resilience = a core competency for stress management
What is stress?

Health & Safety Executive Definition of Stress:

“Adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them…”
**Fight or flight response**

- Pupils dilate
- Muscle tension
- Increased sweating
- Increased breathing
- Increased heart rate
- Immune system repressed
- Action of digestive system decreases
- Reduced sexual function
- Increased blood flow to muscles
Acute Stress and Chronic Stress

**Acute stress reaction**
- Triggered by a threat to personal safety
- Survival response
- The body quickly returns to normal

**Chronic Stress Reaction**
- Triggered at a lower level
- Remains active for long periods of time
- Allows toxins to build up
Challenges

- Time constraints
- Complex problems
- Unrealistic expectations
- Competing demands
- Limited resources
- Limited control
Performance vs pressure

- Healthy tension
- Fatigue point
- Actual Performance
- Ill Health
- Exhaustion
- Breakdown

The point at which even minimal pressure could produce breakdown.

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The difference between pressure and stress
How the human mind functions

**Pressure**
- Increased adrenaline
- Focus
- Desire to achieve
- Motivation “buzz”
- Optimum performance
- Energy
- Enjoyment
- Clear thoughts
- Intensely creative
- Deep concentration
- Decisive

**Stress**
- Poor concentration
- Focus narrows
- Brain overloaded
- Distracted
- Anxious
- Negative thoughts
- Inability to deal with information
- Impaired decision making
- Lack of creativity
- Unable to handle demands
- Self doubt / lack of confidence
Potential symptoms of stress

Tiredness and irritability
Mood swings, emotional outbursts
Disputes with work colleagues
Reduced quality of work
Indecisiveness, poor concentration and poor judgement
Reduced motivation, self determination, drive
Loss of sense of humour
Feeling jumpy or ill-at-ease, insecure or poor self esteem
Sleeping badly
Increased sick leave or poor timekeeping
Avoiding difficult situations
Working late, taking work home, missing deadlines
Needing alcohol or medication
Where does your stress come from?

Work

Home

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Possible causes of stress at home

Family
Relationships
Friendships
Cohabitants
Money, financial problems
Home maintenance
Health and Illness
Work-life balance
And many more...
**Possible Causes of Stress at work**

Lack of information about significant changes to business
A lack of control over work activities
A lack of interpersonal support or poor working relationships
Doing a job for which you feel you have insufficient experience or training
Peak periods in the business
Problems settling into a new promotion
Bullying or harassment or conflicts at work
Ineffective management resulting in lack of sense of direction
A poor physical working environment
Inherent personality
7 Things to remember about stress

1. It is not ‘all in the mind’.
2. It can happen to any of us – do not feel ashamed to admit that you are feeling stressed.
3. Stress is a contributory factor in many other illnesses – so don’t just ignore it!
4. Recognising the signs and symptoms early on is important – so be vigilant – all the time!
5. We cannot stop stress happening but we can minimise its effects.
6. Take time off for hobbies and set aside a small amount of time each day to do something that is important to you.
7. Laughter is good for you!
Stress and lack of resilience affect one another
Building personal resilience

ACHIEVEMENT

Success is not measured by what you have accomplished, but by the opposition you have encountered, and the courage with which you have maintained the struggle against overwhelming odds...

Orison Swett Marden

How resilient are you?

Do you keep a positive attitude during difficult situations?

Do you have skills to help you relax and manage stress?

Do you have a network of people who offer you support?

Do you take good care of yourself?

Do you keep your eyes on the big picture even in challenging situations?
Useful & maladaptive behaviours
Feeding your body

Exercise regularly
Healthy Eating
Good sleep
Watch caffeine intake
Stop smoking!
Moderate alcohol intake
Drink plenty of water
Relax
Exercise

30 minutes of moderate physical activity five days a week

Benefits: fitness promotes “happy hormones”
Diet

Avoid or reduce
Caffeine
Sugar
Chocolate
Alcohol
Smoking

Balanced diet
5 a day
Alcohol

We all know that the suggested weekly alcohol limits are:

- 14 units for women per week
- 21 units for men per week
Alcohol

But did you know how to calculate how many units there are in your drink?

\[
\text{Alcohol strength (abv)} \times \frac{\text{Volume (ml)}}{1000} = \text{Total number of units}
\]
Alcohol

For example:

Pint of Stella Artois

\[
5.2 \text{ ABV} \times 568\text{ml} \div 1000 = 2.95 \text{ units}
\]

Medium Glass of Wine

\[
12 \text{ ABV} \times 175\text{ml} \div 1000 = 2.1 \text{ units}
\]
Sleep

We need 6-8 hours, but did you know that QUALITY is as important as quantity...

• Keep a routine
• Wake to daylight
• Banish electrical gadgets
• Eat a light meal
• Don’t smoke
• Avoid alcohol and caffeine
Water

We need 2 litres a day from drinks and our food. The body is make up of 90% water. Maintaining good levels of hydration improves:

- Alertness & concentration
- Feeling of wellbeing
- Radiant hair, nails and skin
Positive coping strategies

- Being physically active
- Enjoying the outdoors
- Eating healthily
- Improved hydration
- Reduced caffeine intake
- Reduced alcohol consumption
- Getting a good nights sleep
- Talking therapies
- Relaxation therapies
- Relaxing exercise
- Having a support network
The evidence and research
What the research tells us about resilience

Coping is not resilience
It’s not all nature. We can learn and develop it
We all have it some of the time
It’s about support and staying connected
It’s about meaning and creating purpose
We don’t necessarily transfer resilience from one situation to another
The main ingredients for resilience

The Robertson Cooper Model has 4 key components:

- **Confidence**: Having feelings of competence, effectiveness in coping with stressful situations and strong self-esteem are inherent to feeling resilient. The frequency with which individuals experience positive and negative emotions is also key.

- **Purposefulness**: Having a clear sense of purpose, clear values, drive and direction help individuals to persist and achieve in the face of setbacks.

- **Social Support**: Building good relationships with others and seeking support can help individuals overcome adverse situations, rather than trying to cope on their own.

- **Adaptability**: Flexibility and adapting to changing situations which are beyond our control are essential to maintaining resilience. Resilient individuals are able to cope well with change and their recovery from its impact tends to be quicker.
The i-Resilience Questionnaire

At the end of this webinar we will invite you to complete the i-Resilience Questionnaire.

The results will look at how your score in
4 key areas:
Social support
Confidence
Adaptability
Purposefulness
Self awareness
### How resilient are you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional awareness</th>
<th>Purposefulness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Social support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination</td>
<td>Perseverance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>Adaptability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Self reliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Equanimity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self confidence</td>
<td>Willing to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Values</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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What is Emotional Intelligence?

E.I. is an awareness based intelligence, and to be highly developed in E.I. it requires us to:

• stop and think
• control our impulses
• use our innate intuition
• be authentic with ourselves and others

It is no soft option since it deals with our hidden areas and gets to the root cause of any unproductive behaviour.
Support

Individuals can overcome adverse situations in a more effective way when they feel supported.

Where does support come from?

- Your firm
- Family
- Friends
- Workmates
- Peer group
- Online forums

Remember! It is *strength* - not a weakness - to seek help.
Support available from CABA

- Debt management & advice
- Benefits assistance
- Health & carer support
- Career coaching
- 24 hour counselling & legal helpline
- Online support

Current and former ICAEW members, their spouses and dependants
ACA students in a training contract
Summary

You now have:

A clear understanding of resilience and why it is so important

An insight into stress, why it is important and the difference between pressure and stress

Strategies and resources to design your own plan to get physically and mentally healthier and develop your resilience
Any questions?
Further help and resources

We now recommend you complete the i-Resilience questionnaire!
Please allow yourself at least 20 minutes.

www.robertsoncooper.com/iresilience/

When you have finished you will be sent your results.

The results PDF includes a template for you to complete your Personal Action Plan.

The results will be seen ONLY by you.
Personal action plan
Using resilient strategies

The resilient strategy I choose to action.

How will I implement this strategy?

Recording what happens when I use this strategy.

Checking the number of days I have applied this strategy.
# Personal action plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Support Needed</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take the <em>i-resilience</em> test</td>
<td>Link</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify all my sources of support and how they can help me</td>
<td>Line manager</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify stressors, at home and at work, consider my tipping point</td>
<td>Resilience slides</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book on the Stress Management and Wellbeing Course</td>
<td>CABA</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule 5 weekly slots for exercise</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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CABA website

- Interesting
- Interactive
- Accessible
- Resources
- Case studies
- News
- Blog
- 24/7 live chat
- Online booking

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Contact us

Free independent support and advice

Practical support & guidance
+44(0)1788 556366

24 hour counselling & legal advice helpline
0800 107 6163

E: enquiries@caba.org.uk
W: www.caba.org.uk

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Call our 24 hour helpline for confidential advice:
0800 107 6163