

## CONSIDERATIONS ON STRESS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES, REGARDING THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

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**Abstract:** *Communication is a process of transmitting information, under the form of symbolic messages, between two or more people, some with broadcaster status, and others with receiver status, by means of some specific channels. In the communication process context there appear some perturbation factors, which manifest on the broadcaster - receiver route and which may cause major disfunctionalities. Stress represents the conjunction state resulted from the action of the stressful agent and the adaptation capacity of the organism. To have an efficient managerial communication we must diminish and eliminate the causes that generate stress both at the managers' level, as broadcasters, and at the subordinates' level, as receivers.*

**Key words:** *stress, communication process*

### 1 GENERAL ELEMENTS REGARDING STRESS

The term stress has generally two meanings:

- a) *situation, stimulus*, which puts the organism in a tension state;
- b) *the state itself of special tension of the organism* through which it rallies all its resources of defense in order to face a physical or psychical aggression.

*If the accent is on the situation*, on the factors generating stress, we take into account its unusual, unexpected, even aggressive character which threatens the normal state of organism. Two American researchers, sociologist *D. Mechanic* and psychologist *T. Holmes*, had the ingenious idea to form a scale containing the intensity of shocks susceptible of generating stress, therefore psychosomatic reactions of adapting the organism to those shocks.

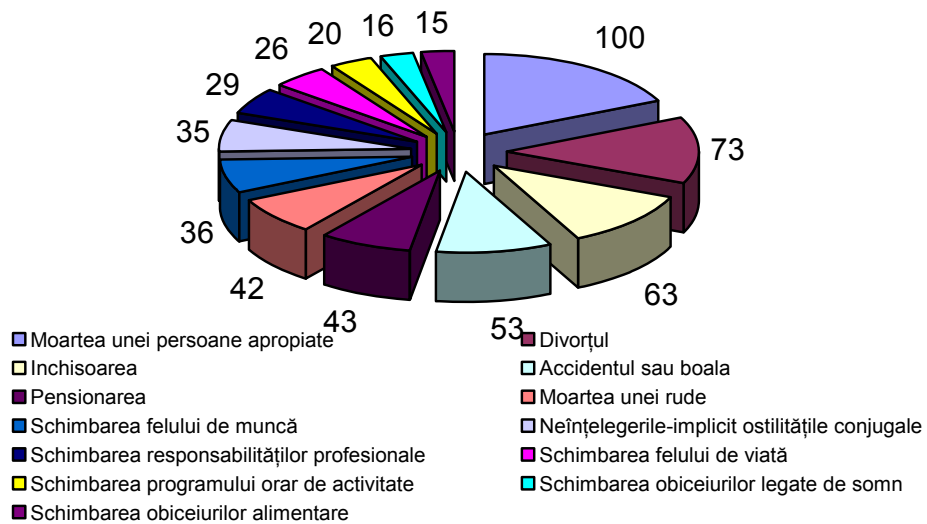
*In case the accent is on the state of the organism, on its reaction at stressing agents* we take into account the emotional answers in excess. These emotional answers are expressed visibly in man's behavior, language and communication, motor activity, and in the deviation of different psychological and physiological constants.

**General syndrome of adapting to stress** (GSA) is characterized by three stages [2]:

**Reaction of alarm** represents the first answer of the organism – general rallying of the organism defense forces. This first stage contains two phases: the shock phase (characterized by hypotension, hypothermia, nervous depression etc.), with sudden systematic (general) harm, followed then by a counter shock phase, in which there appear defense phenomena (hyperactivity of cortico-suprarenal, involution timico-lymphatic apparatus etc.). The causes that produce this alarm can be: of unique nature: one stress source, of polymorph nature: different situations that interact and produce stress.

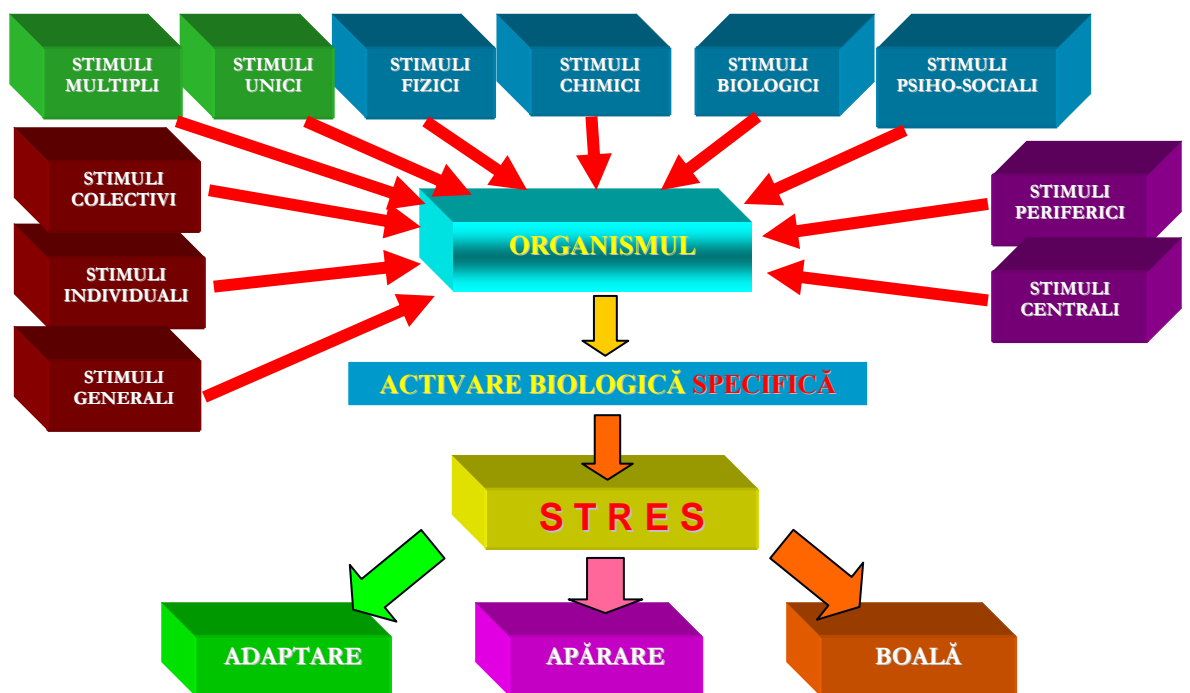
**Resistance stage** in which the mechanisms of self-regulation are activated. It contains the assembly of systemic reactions provoked by a prolonged exposure to stimuli at which the organism has elaborated means of defense.

**Exhaustion stage** is very resembling to the alarm reaction, when due to the prolongation of the actions of harmful agents, the adaptation of the organism fails. It is characterized by tiredness, restlessness, depression.



**Fig. 1** Intensity of shocks to generate stress [9]

## 2. REACTION OF ORGANISM TO STRESS



## 3 EFFECTS OF STRESS

Some persons have an acute reaction to stress, others can have symptoms in time, these being cumulated with different health problems. The immediate acute reaction is of panic, anxiety, pulse increase, perspiration, and sensation of dry mouth or trembling. The stress state on a longer period can cause headaches, vertigos, sight troubles (foggy sight), pains in the nape and shoulders, itching of skin etc.

### **3.1 Physical symptoms**

- *Headaches:*
- *Muscular and joints pains*
- *Palpitations*
- *Skin irritations*
- *Unexpected hair falling (Alopecia Areata):*
- *Teeth and gums:*
- *Constipation or diarrhea*
- *Rapid putting on or losing weight*
- *Diabetes*
- *Fertility*
- *Chronic pains caused by arthritis and other illnesses can be intensified by stress.*
- *Tension, state of tiredness; State of indigestion*
- *Breathing difficulties; State of vomit, of fainting; Excessive perspiration*

### **3.2 Psychic symptoms**

- *Difficulties in taking decisions;*
- *Memory troubles*
- *Incapacity of concentration*
- *Alteration of communication capacity*
- *Sleep troubles (insomnia),*
- *State of worry,*
- *Lack of order in thought, errors,*
- *Low intuition,*
- *Persistence of negative thinking,*
- *Hurried decisions,*
- *Decrease of interest and initiative*

### **3.3 Symptoms on emotional plan**

- *Nervousness irritability, anxiety,*
- *Emotional instability,*
- *Feeling of insecurity,*
- *Bad mood, depression,*
- *High sensitiveness to critics,*
- *More suspicion,*
- *Feeling of nervous strain ,*
- *More worry without reason,*
- *Lack of enthusiasm, of sense of humor,*
- *Alienation,*
- *Less satisfaction in life, lack of motivation,*
- *Under-esteem, loss of self-confidence*
- *Lack of work satisfaction*

### 3.4 Effects of stress on behavior change

Studying the stress effects in behavior change we determined the following:

- Stress can affect behavior also by *the risk of accidents*.
- *Suicidal* behavior can be correlated to stress.
- *Loss of appetite or over-eating*
- *Neglecting one's own person*: Too preoccupied with the job problems to relax and care about his/her own person

- *Tendency to lie* in order to cover mistakes
- *Inappropriate verbal behavior or alteration of communication capacity (tendency to argue, verbal abuses, etc.)*
- *Difficulties in speaking (stutter, voice trembling)*
  - *Restlessness, agitation; Reduced sociability; Insomnia;*
  - *Higher consumption of alcohol, cigarettes; Continuing work at home;*
  - *Reduced productivity*

## 4. STRESS AND MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION. CAUSES GENERATOARE OF STRESS AT THE LEVEL OF MANAGERS

Professional stress has always existed. It is not a characteristic of the modern epoch, of the last years, but as work got new valences with accents on psychological charge, and work problems superposed over those of socio-economic and political nature with negative connotation, occupational stress amplified its penetration force, and its consequences have become more and more devastating for the individual. That is why in the last 30 years most of the researchers – physicians, ergonomists, psychologists, have dealt with the problem of occupational stress. Most employers and employees consider stress as normal at the work place. There are certain employees who feel the stress effects much more severe than their colleagues, and when its effects overtake the resistance and adaptation capacity, the employees get ill and need medical leave and medical treatments to recover their health. The transition stage to the market economy characterized by reconsidering the role of management as main vector of economic – social efficiency, brings to actuality *the communication between manager and subordinates as dynamic element of managerial processes and meanwhile condition of an organizational and motivational climate adequate for objectives achievement*. The manager predicts, organizes, coordinates, motivates, controls and evaluates only if he has information in the wanted volume and quality. For this he must communicate permanently with the subordinates, with collaborators and managers who are in 'ascent of his position, , and the communications efficiency depends on the communication system thought, achieved and used within the company.

*Communication* is a process of transmitting information, under the form of symbolic messages, between two or more people, some with broadcaster status, and others with receiver status, by means of some specific channels. At the company level there are several

networks of communications - respectively groups of communication channels, found in specific configurations – that make up the communication system. Its special role in ensuring the functionality and efficiency of the company is generated, mainly, by:

a) appreciable volume, complexity and diversity of the company's objectives and its subsystems, due to the impact of variables of national and international environment;

b) deep mutations appeared in the dimensional and functional characteristics of the Romanian company, started by the transition to market economy. Change and implementation of economical, managerial, technical, and technologic new have become the organization state of spirit, with appreciable consequences over the complexity and configuration of communications;

c) groups and the way of concept and functioning of them. Communications have the role of some decisions, to amplify the links among the groups' components, to consolidate their cohesion;

d) managerial activity, the structure way of their work time in sequences to allow decisional and operational solving of problems the lead field faces with. From this point of view the appreciation according to which a manager affects approximately 80% of his time to communicate is unanimous, situation that justifies the multiple roles it plays within the company: an interpersonal role (symbol, leader, connection agent); an informational role (active observer, loudspeaker, spokesman); a decisional role (entrepreneur, regulator, divider of resources, negotiator)

Also, in the communication process context there appear some *perturbation factors*, which manifest on the broadcaster - receiver route and which may cause major disfunctionalities in their development, like filters, distortions, blockages.

Such *perturbation factors* are:

*Objective*: deficit quality of means of communication - telephone, interphone, videophone, TV, installations of administration, computer, fax, reduced capacity of communication, use of some inadequate material supports

*Subjective*: lower attention paid to transmitting and receiving the informational message, instruction level of managers and executors, intervention of some people to deform the content of the transmitted information, stress.

***Causes generating de stress at the managers' level are:***

- Complexity, diversity and the character of frequent novelty of tasks the manager faces. Contradictory solicitations come from the high degree of difficulty and emergency of tasks and the lack of time and/or updates professional knowledge requested for task solving.
- The high responsibilities the functions of management include, case in which pressure can appear from the wish to link the organization interests with those of different categories of people like: shareholders, employees, clients, suppliers etc. Most times a manager has to choose and sacrifice some interests in favor of others. All these responsibilities being always accompanied by strong emotions and feelings.

- Preoccupation for the organization future. Most of his time, the manager must solve in a short time a series of complex and very important problems. We can easily notice the fact that some managers have the tendency to let themselves overwhelmed by a series of urgent daily problems, but which are not so important but to be solves they need very much time in detriment of the preoccupations for perspective problems
  - The pressure exercised by frequent changes of environment lead to more and more situations in which taking decisions is done in an alert rhythm. The stress state can appear, in this case, by acknowledging possible affects of an insufficiently elaborated decision.
  - The inadequate management style, fact that reflects the existing conflict between the type of manager who uses a certain style of management and the different characteristics either of the activity, or of the group he leads.
  - Excessive centralization of authority. Stress is generated by the conflict between the wish to lead and control as many activities as possible and the physical, psychic, intellectual capacities and limited time resources.
  - The existence of some subordinates badly prepared from the professional point of view. In this situation stress is due to the conflict between the wish of achieving the group's objectives and the lack of authority necessary for selecting or firing the subordinates.
  - Prolonging the working program due to the apparition of some situations like: deadlines, frequent changes in the organization's priorities etc.
- All these sources of stress of objective or subjective nature have negative effects on the process of managerial communication.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

- Stress represents the conjunction state resulted from the action of the stressful agent and the adaptation capacity of the organism. The more frequent a person is in an alarm or resistance state, the higher the risk of exhaustion installation with all the negative consequences over the physical, psychical, behavioral activity of the individual.
- To have an efficient managerial communication we must diminish and eliminate the causes that generate stress both at the managers' level, as broadcasters, and at the subordinates' level, as receivers.

We also recommend developing some pleasant, relaxing activities, at individual or collective level, to eliminate or reduce the devastating.

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