

Staff Learning and Career Development NEWSLETTER



November 2025, in this edition

[Upcoming Workshops and Events](#)

[International Stress Awareness Week](#)

[Stress Awareness Training for Managers](#)

[New: Coaching Fundamentals: Having better conversations at work](#)

[Want to become an 'AI-enabled' manager?](#)

[5-Minute Focus - One subject. Five minutes. More effective you!](#)

[Online resources](#)

[Keeping in touch](#)

[Dates for the Year](#)

Dear colleague,

This month's edition focuses on Stress Awareness in recognition of International Stress Awareness Week. We highlight various relevant resources, including Stress Awareness training for all managers.

The Organisational Effectiveness and Development Team

Upcoming Workshops and Events

This is a list of the activities happening between now and the **end of December**. For a full list of our events for the academic year, see the [appendix](#) at the end of this newsletter. You can also find details of all events via the [Calendar of upcoming events](#) in Staff Learning.

Click on the links for more information and how to book.

For new starters:

- [Headington Campus tour](#), **face-to-face**, Tuesday 4 November 2025, 12.00pm - 1.00pm or Tuesday 10 February 2026, 1.00pm - 2.00pm

For line managers:

Bite-size and one-day courses:

- [Occupational Health Awareness for Line Managers](#) **online**, Thursday 13 November 2025 or Wednesday 10 December 10.00am-11.30 am.

For everyone:

Bite-size & one-day courses:

Essential Skills

- [Enhancing Emotional Intelligence](#) **online**, Friday 27 February 2026, 9.30am - 12.00pm
- [Coaching fundamentals: Having better conversations at work](#) **face-to-face**, Wednesday 12 November 2025, 9.30am - 4.30pm, **or online**, Wednesday 4 March **AND** Tuesday 17 March 2026, 9.00am - 1.00pm
- [Effective Communication](#) **online**, Friday 14 November 2025, 9.30am - 12.00pm
- [Courageous Conversations](#), **online**, Wednesday 3 December 2025, 1.00pm - 3.30pm

Wellbeing

- [Coping with Change](#), **online**, Thursday 6 November, 11.00am - 12.30pm
- [Stress and Resilience](#), **online**, Thursday 6 November, 9.00am - 10.30am
- [Reframing negative thoughts](#), **online**, Thursday 20 November, 1.00pm - 2.00pm
- [Mental health aware workshop](#), **online**, Thursday 4 December, 9.00am - 2.00pm

International Stress Awareness Week

This month sees International Stress Awareness Week, and this year's theme is *Optimising Employee Wellbeing through Strategic Stress Management*.



The International Stress Management Association emphasises that 'a workplace culture that prioritises growth, support, recognition, and psychological safety is not just advantageous — it's essential'. They highlight that by actively fostering and sustaining such a culture, organisations empower individuals to succeed while reaping the benefits of a healthier, more productive workforce, creating a win-win for employees and the organisation alike.

There is a range of resources to support this type of culture, including psychological safety, available in [Staff Learning](#). We also have various [resources to support stress awareness and stress management](#).

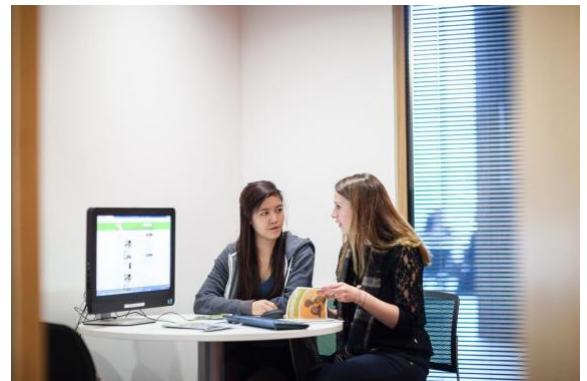
For further information, see the dedicated [Stress Awareness Week Google Site](#).

Stress awareness training for managers

Managers at all levels play a critical role in the prevention and management of work-related stress. The good news is that much of this comes down to everyday management practices such as keeping people informed and equipped to do their job, and ensuring a safe, supportive and fair working environment.

To support managers in their roles we have developed a short [e-learning module: Stress Awareness training for managers](#) to support them to:

- Gain an understanding of what work-related stress is and how it can impact individuals and teams
- Learn about your responsibilities as a manager in identifying and managing stress at work
- Become familiar with the tools and resources available to help you support your team effectively



We are asking that all managers with line management responsibility for one or more members of staff complete this training - it should take no more than 10 minutes.

The University also provides various resources to support managers to understand their roles and responsibilities and develop the necessary knowledge and skills - see the [Leadership and Management area in Staff Learning](#).

NEW: Coaching Fundamentals: Having better conversations at work

A reminder that we've launched a brand-new workshop as part of our commitment to create a more collaborative and empowering culture across the University. It will help you develop coaching skills you can use every day – whether you're a manager, a colleague, or working with students.



Why coaching skills?

Because the best conversations aren't about giving answers – they're about helping others think clearly, make good decisions, and grow.

Coaching techniques give you simple tools to do just that. They make interactions more effective, reduce pressure on you to “solve” problems, and create space for others to take ownership.

What you'll gain

- Practical coaching techniques you can use straight away.
- Confidence to support others without creating dependency.
- Stronger listening and questioning skills for everyday workplace situations.
- Less pressure to “have all the answers” – and more rewarding conversations.

Dates

We're running the workshop twice. A full-day, face-to-face workshop on campus (Wednesday 12 November 2025, 9.30am - 4.30pm) or alternatively, two half-day online sessions for those who prefer virtual learning (Wednesday 4 March and Tuesday 17 March 2026, 9.00am - 1.00pm).

For more details and how to book, see [Staff Learning](#).

Want to become an ‘AI-enabled’ manager?

Looking to sharpen your skills but short on time? Our [Mind Tools “Skill Bites”](#) are designed to help you build essential capabilities quickly and confidently - from giving feedback and managing conflict to critical thinking and personal effectiveness.

Each Skill Bite uses a series of bite-sized modules to take you step-by-step through practical tips and techniques, lets you assess your current strengths, and awards a digital badge.



[New to Skills Bites: Mastering AI for Managers](#): a seven-part, 15-minute-per-session course exploring how managers can safely and effectively use AI to strategise, write, innovate, collaborate, and lead their teams to success.

5-Minute Focus - One subject. Five minutes. More effective you!

Each month, we highlight one practical article, tool, or tip from our [MindTools catalogue](#) - great if you're curious, short on time, or just want to try something new. Whether you're looking to build confidence, manage time better, or develop your leadership skills, there's always something useful to explore.

Mindtools

You can find previous highlights in the [5-Minute Focus Archive](#).

This month's pick: Stress Diaries - Identifying Causes of Short-Term Stress

This month, we continue the theme of stress awareness. Many of us deal with stress in some form every day — tight deadlines, difficult conversations, competing priorities. Left unchecked, these small pressures can build up and affect our focus, performance, and wellbeing.

The article suggests that keeping a simple Stress Diary can help you spot patterns in what triggers stress and how you respond. By recording details such as the time and cause of each stressful moment, how you felt (for example, on a 0–10 scale), and how effectively you were working at the time, you start to build a picture of how stress shows up in your day.

Over several days or weeks, reviewing your diary can highlight:

- the situations or people that most often create stress;
- how your reactions help or hinder you;
- the level of pressure at which you work best; and
- where small changes could make a big difference.

The approach is simple yet surprisingly revealing, helping you move from feeling reactive to taking control. Once you can clearly identify your stress triggers, you can plan more effective ways to manage them, such as improving time management, adjusting your workload, or using relaxation techniques.

Read the full article: [Stress Diaries - Identifying Causes of Short-Term Stress](#), which includes a [downloadable Stress Diary template with a completed example and analysis](#).

You will also find a range of resources related to [wellbeing and personal resources in Staff Learning](#).

Online resources

Many of our learning and development resources are now online making them easier to access at a time and place that suits you. We have created dedicated areas on the Staff Learning platform to help you find the development that suits your needs:

- [New starters](#)
- [Leadership and management](#)
- [Wellbeing and personal resources](#)
- [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion](#)
- [Essential skills](#)
- [Risk and Compliance](#)
- [Professional and career development](#) (including [apprenticeships](#))
- [Customer service](#)

Keeping in touch

Learning and Organisational Development

Email: staff-learning@brookes.ac.uk

Twitter: [@Staff_Learning](https://twitter.com/Staff_Learning)

Website: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/staff/people/teams/Organisational-effectiveness-and-development>

Dates for the year

Click on the links for more information and how to book.

For new starters:

- [Headington Campus tour](#), **face-to-face**, Tuesday 4 November 2025, 12.00pm - 1.00pm
- [Headington Campus tour](#), **face-to-face**, Tuesday 10 February 2026, 2.00pm - 2.00pm
- [Headington Campus tour](#), **face-to-face**, Tuesday 12 May 2026, 1.00pm - 2.00pm
- [Headington Campus tour](#), **face-to-face**, Tuesday 18 August 2026, 11.00am - 12.00pm

For line managers:

Bite-size and one-day courses:

- [Conflict Resolution Skills for Managers](#) **face-to-face**, Wednesday 28 January, 9.30am - 4.30pm
- [Mental Health - one day for line managers](#) **online**, Tuesday 3 February 2026, 9.00am - 5.00pm
- [Creating Psychological Safety in your Team](#) **face-to-face**, 20 May 2026 9.30am - 4.30pm
- [Effective Career Conversations](#) **online**, 9 June 2026, 9.30am - 12.30pm
- [Wellbeing conversations in the workplace](#) **online**, dates tbc

More in-depth programmes:

- [Building high performing & resilient teams](#) **5 x half-day programme**, 27 January (**face to face**), 11 February (**online**), 24 February (**online**), 9 March (**online**) and 25 March 2026 (**face to face**). All 11.00am - 2.30pm.
- [The Coaching Manager](#) **4 x 1-day programme (face to face)** 25 February, 26 March, 22 April, 3 June 2026. All 9.15am - 4.15pm.

- [Mediation and Resolution Skills for Managers](#) **5 x half-day programme**, 19 May (face to face), 5 June (online), 15 June (online), 8 July (online), 21 July 2026 (face to face). All 11.00am - 2.30pm.

For everyone:

Bite-size & one-day courses:

Essential Skills

- [Coaching fundamentals: Having better conversations at work](#) **face-to-face**, Wednesday 12 November 2025, 9.30am - 4.30pm, **or online**, Wednesday 4 March **AND** Tuesday 17 March 2026, 9.00am - 1.00pm
- [Effective Communication](#) **online**, Friday 14 November 2025, 9.30am - 12.00pm
- [Courageous Conversations](#), **online**, Wednesday 3 December 2025, 1.00pm - 3.30pm

Career & Professional Development

- [Taking control of your career direction](#) **online**, Wednesday 21 January, 1.30pm - 4.30pm
- [Discovering and using your strengths](#) **online**, 28 January 2026 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Wellbeing

- [Coping with Change](#), **online**, Thursday 6 November, 11.00am - 12.30pm
- [Stress and Resilience](#), **online**, Thursday 6 November, 9.00am - 10.30am
- [Reframing negative thoughts](#), **online**, Thursday 20 November, 1.00pm - 2.00pm
- [Mental health aware workshop](#), **online**, Thursday 4 December, 9.00am - 2.00pm

More in-depth programmes:

- [Mental Health First Aid](#) **4 x half-day programme (online)**, Tuesday 23, Wednesday 24, Thursday 25 and Friday 26 June 2026. All 9.00am - 2.00pm.
- [Hear and be heard programme](#) **online 4 x half-day programme**, Tuesday 24 February, Thursday 5 March, Tuesday 10 March and Thursday 19 March 2026 **all 10.00am - 1.30pm**.