

Psychological Demands

Think about your job. What type of a setting do you work in? Do you interact with a lot of people? Do you have to travel a lot, or work in shifts?

Now try thinking about another job. Maybe it's paramedic services. If you were a paramedic would you struggle seeing people in distress? Maybe it's a job in sales. Would you find it hard to deal with the pressure of meeting sales targets? Or maybe it's a job in construction. Would the thought of working outdoors, around a lot of noise or dust, be stressful?

Every person has different things that cause them stress. Depending on your own fears, preferences and personality, you may be suited for certain types of jobs more than others. Every job has its own set of psychological demands. Psychological demands are aspects of our jobs that could be a hazard to our health and well being if not properly matched to our skills, knowledge, personality and emotional intelligence. When you are aware of the psychological demands of your job, it will give you the chance to prepare and respond to those demands.

Let's look at an example. This is Pierre. Pierre works in a small business where he is expected to perform multiple tasks. In his current role, Pierre already has a lot of responsibilities with client accounts. Because Pierre has such a good relationship with his current clients, Pierre's manager has asked him to also take on a new task of handling COMPLAINTS. Pierre handled customer complaints in his previous job... The lack of support from his previous manager led to increased anxiety at work... which was one of the reasons why he left. Pierre is anxious that he will find himself in the same situation...AGAIN. He's afraid that he might start to dislike his new job.

So what could Pierre's workplace do to support him?

Pierre's manager could book a meeting with him to look at the psychological demands of his new role. This could include Pierre's manager telling him the things that others have found demanding about the job. This will give Pierre and his manager an opportunity to review the new job expectations...They could discuss what Pierre needs to feel supported in his new role... perhaps he might need some job training. They can also compare the workload between his current and future roles. Pierre and his manager can talk about how his workload expectations will change, but still feel balanced, by taking on client complaints.

It's important to Pierre's manager that Pierre feels supported in his new role so that it doesn't affect the great relationships Pierre has already built with his clients.

As an employee, Pierre can also ask his manager for the support that he needs. Sometimes, the manager is not aware what someone finds demanding.

We all have different personalities and different experiences that shape how we see the world.

If you need any accommodation to do your job safely, be sure to let your manager know.

Try making a list of the psychological demands of your job. Are there areas that can be made less stressful? How can you make this happen for yourself?

Psychological demands is one of 13 factors that support psychological health and safety in the workplace. Learn more at: [MentalHealthCommission.ca/NationalStandard](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/NationalStandard)

For more resources for your workplace, check out *haveTHATtalk.ca*

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