



Lesson Guide

Climbers learn how to build self-efficacy and improve their well-being by practicing strategies for managing stress and handling workplace challenges. By the end of the lesson, Climbers will have practiced choosing and applying stress management techniques to common workplace scenarios and reflecting on how those strategies enabled them to manage their emotions effectively.

Learning Objectives	<p>Understand self-efficacy and learn strategies to build confidence in facing challenges.</p> <p>Discover techniques to manage emotions effectively and maintain self-control.</p> <p>Identify stress triggers and apply strategies to reduce stress in professional settings.</p>
WIOA Program Elements	<p>E6. Leadership Development Opportunities. Enhances self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, relationship skills, and conflict resolution through community service and peer-centered activities.</p>
Key Concepts	<p>Stress: The body’s natural response to any kind of demand or change. Stress is a normal part of life, which is why it’s important to learn to manage it.</p> <p>Self-Efficacy: The belief in one’s ability to successfully complete tasks and achieve goals in specific situations.</p>
Materials	<p>Coach Deck: Stress Less Lesson Deck</p> <p>Internet-ready devices with Hats & Ladders access</p> <p>Activity: Stressed Much?</p> <p>Rubric: Stressed Much?</p>

Coach Prep

1. Review lesson instructions and activity materials, including the **Coach Deck**, an optional resource to guide Climbers through the lesson and digital Career Climb.
2. Arrange a computer lab or laptop cart, or instruct your group to bring their own devices with internet connectivity.
3. *Optional:* From the Coach platform, assign the **Stress Less** Career Climb to your group. This will allow you to track their progress from your dashboard.

Warm-Up

1. Begin by asking climbers to share one word that describes how they feel today. This will get Climbers involved, opening the discussion about emotions, stress, and well-being at work.
2. Briefly define stress to climbers as “Stress is the body’s natural response to any kind of demand or change. It is a normal part of life and the workplace, which is why it’s important to learn strategies to manage it effectively.” Then, facilitate a brief discussion with Climbers about stress. Suggested prompts:
 - **What does stress mean to you?**
 - **What are some stressors you face as a Climber preparing for the workforce?**
Job interviews, work-life balance, dealing with workplace conflicts?
3. Build on Climber’s responses by introducing self-efficacy as “The belief in one’s ability to successfully complete tasks and achieve goals in specific situations.”
4. Explain that the lesson will help them understand stress and its effects on well-being. Briefly outline what will be covered, including:
 - **Building confidence in facing challenges.**
 - **Strategies to manage stress and build self-efficacy.**
 - **Stress triggers and applying strategies to reduce stress in professional settings.**

Guide a Career Climb

1. Introduce the concept of self-efficacy and its role in maintaining well-being. Explain that self-efficacy plays a significant role in handling stress. It impacts well-being and success at work. Suggest prompts:
 - *Can you share an example of when you felt high or low self-efficacy while learning a new skill?*

- *How did your self-efficacy impact your well-being in that moment?*
- 2. Explain that developing strategies to manage stress will build their self-efficacy, contributing to improved well-being at work and greater confidence in meeting goals and overcoming challenges.
- 3. Direct Climbers to the Hats & Ladders platform to complete the **Stress Less** Career Climb, which consists of four Ladders:
 - **What is Self-Efficacy?** (7 Mins.)
 - **Practice Self-Efficacy: Master Emotions** (7 Mins.)
 - **Managing Stress** (8 Mins.)
 - **Well-being Strategies in Action** (8 Mins.)
- 4. Climbers can complete the entire Career Climb **at once**, or they can **pause** to share out takeaways and questions along the way.
- 5. Upon completion of the Career Climb, lead Climbers through a brief discussion of the benefits of self-efficacy, such as boosted resilience, higher motivation, and improved stress management techniques. Then, explain the three techniques for managing emotions and stress: deep breathing, mindfulness, and time management.
- 6. Climbers can then apply what they learned to manage stress in workplace scenarios by completing the activity.

Activity: Stressed Much?

1. Have Climbers independently read through the instructions on the **Stressed Much? activity handout**.
2. Climbers complete the activity.
3. Climbers participate in a brief pair-share activity where they discuss and reflect on the following questions:
 - How did the chosen technique help you manage stress and emotions?
 - Do you think it was effective in altering the scenario's outcome?
 - What would you do differently next time? How might other techniques work in these scenarios?

Wrap-Up

1. Facilitate a brief **call-and-response** discussion about how stress can impact workplace interactions. Focus on the benefits of understanding and managing personal emotions,

drawing attention to how one's reaction to stressful situations has an impact. Suggested prompts:

- a. *Think about a time when you felt stressed at work. How did that stress affect how you communicated with a coworker or handled a task?*
 - b. *When someone reacts negatively in a stressful situation, how does it impact the team or work environment?*
 - c. *What are some strategies you use (or could use) to manage stress before it impacts how you interact with colleagues?*
2. Have a few Climbers share their reflections.
 3. Review key lesson concepts, including:
 - a. Stress management helps improve self-efficacy and well-being. Through guided
 - b. Identifying stress triggers, applying stress management techniques, and reflecting on these strategies can enhance confidence and emotional control in professional settings.

Assessment

- To evaluate the **Climbers' understanding** of the lesson, use the provided **rubric** to score activity submissions on a scale of 1 to 4 for each criterion.

Modifications

- If you do not have access to devices, have Climbers complete the digital Career Climb at home.

Activity: Stressed Much?

In this activity, you'll practice applying stress management techniques to real workplace scenarios. Stress and anxiety are natural responses to challenges, but how we handle them can impact our well-being and interactions at work. By learning to recognize and regulate strong emotions, you can stay focused, communicate effectively, and navigate workplace challenges with confidence.

Part 1: Practice Stress Management Techniques.

Step 1: Review the scenario and stress-management techniques.

Scenario 1: Deadline Pressure

You're working under a tight deadline and need specific information from a co-worker to complete your part of the project. Despite multiple follow-ups, five requests so far, they have not responded or acknowledged your messages. As the deadline looms, you feel increasingly frustrated, stuck, and unsure of how to proceed without their input. The lack of communication is adding unnecessary stress, and you're struggling to stay focused and productive.

Step 2: For each scenario, practice applying the stress-management techniques to the scenario by acting them out with your partner.

- **Deep Breathing:** Take a moment to focus on your breath, inhaling deeply and exhaling slowly to calm your nervous system.
- **Using 'I' Statements:** Communicate your needs and feelings to your colleague clearly and calmly. *le: I want this project to go well and I feel stressed and ignored because I don't have the documents I need.*
- **Stepping Away:** Briefly remove yourself from the situation to gather your thoughts and return with a clearer perspective.

Step 3: Together, reflect on which technique worked best for you and why?

Step 1: Review the scenario and stress-management techniques.

Scenario 2: Overbearing Supervisor

Your supervisor frequently checks in on your work, offering constant feedback and making changes before you have a chance to complete tasks on your own. They often ask for status updates multiple times a day. Over time, this leaves you feeling stressed, frustrated, and undervalued, as if they don't trust your abilities. You start to second-guess your work and feel less motivated.

Step 2: For each scenario, practice applying the stress-management techniques to the scenario by acting them out with your partner.

- **Deep Breathing:** Take a moment to focus on your breath, inhaling deeply and exhaling slowly to calm your nervous system.
- **Using 'I' Statements:** Communicate your needs and feelings to your colleague clearly and calmly. *le: I want this project to go well and I feel stressed and ignored because I don't have the documents I need.*
- **Stepping Away:** Briefly remove yourself from the situation to gather your thoughts and return with a clearer perspective.

Step 3: Together, reflect on which technique worked best for you and why?

Step 1: Review the scenario and stress-management techniques.

Scenario 3: Disagreement with a Coworker

During a team meeting, a co-worker openly challenges your approach to a project, using a harsh tone and dismissing your ideas without offering constructive feedback. Their body language and choice of words feel confrontational, making it difficult to have a productive discussion. You feel caught off guard, disrespected, and frustrated, unsure of how to respond.

Step 2: For each scenario, practice applying the stress-management techniques to the scenario by acting them out with your partner.

- **Deep Breathing:** Take a moment to focus on your breath, inhaling deeply and exhaling slowly to calm your nervous system.
- **Using 'I' Statements:** Communicate your needs and feelings to your colleague clearly

and calmly. *le: I want this project to go well and I feel stressed and ignored because I don't have the documents I need.*

- **Stepping Away:** Briefly remove yourself from the situation to gather your thoughts and return with a clearer perspective.

Step 3: Together, reflect on which technique worked best for you and why?

📌 Part 2: Reflection

With your partner, discuss and reflect on the following questions:

- How did the chosen technique help you manage stress and emotions?
- Do you think it was effective in altering the scenario's outcome?
- What would you do differently next time? How might other techniques work in these scenarios?

Rubric: Stressed Much?

Criteria	1: Needs Improvement	2: Developing	3: Proficient	4: Exemplary
Technique Application	Does not attempt or struggles to apply any technique effectively.	Attempts at least one technique but lacks clarity or effectiveness in its application.	Applies and demonstrates at least two techniques, selecting a suitable one for the scenario.	Accurately applies and demonstrates all three stress management techniques, effectively choosing the most appropriate one for the scenario.
Engagement	Minimal or no participation in discussions or role-playing.	Shows limited participation, only partially engaging in discussions or role-playing.	Participates in discussions and role-playing with moderate engagement.	Actively participates in discussions and role-playing, engaging with the scenario and partner/group.
Communication and Self-Reflection	Provides little to no reflection or struggles to articulate the technique's impact.	Offers a limited reflection with minimal insight into the technique's effectiveness.	Provides a basic reflection on the technique's effectiveness and considers alternative approaches.	Clearly articulates how the technique helped manage stress, thoughtfully reflects on its effectiveness, and considers alternative approaches.
Collaboration	Struggles to collaborate or engage with partner/group in a meaningful way.	Shows some collaboration but may not fully engage with partner/group responses.	Collaborates with a partner/group, responding appropriately to the scenario.	Works well with a partner/group, actively listens, and thoughtfully responds to different perspectives in the scenario.