

**ORGANIZATIONAL
MECHANISMS**

Organizational
Culture

Organizational
Structure

**GROUP
MECHANISMS**

Leadership:
Styles &
Behaviors

Leadership:
Power &
Negotiation

Teams:
Processes &
Communication

Teams:
Characteristics &
Diversity

**INDIVIDUAL
CHARACTERISTICS**

Ability

Personality &
Cultural Values

**INDIVIDUAL
MECHANISMS**

Job
Satisfaction

Stress

Motivation

Trust, Justice,
& Ethics

Learning &
Decision Making

**INDIVIDUAL
OUTCOMES**

Job
Performance

Organizational
Commitment

Chapter Five: Stress

Learning Goals

- What is stress, and how is it different than stressors and strains?
- What are the four main types of stressors?
- How do individuals cope with stress?
- What are the different types of strains?
- How does stress affect job performance and organizational commitment?
- What steps can organizations take to manage employee stress?

Stress

Stress is defined as a psychological response to demands that possess certain stakes and that tax or exceed a person's capacity or resources.

- The demands that cause people to experience stress are called **stressors**.
- The negative consequences that occur when demands tax or exceed one's capacity or resources are called **strains**.

Jobs Rated from Least Stressful (1) to Most Stressful (250)

Adapted from Table 5-1

Least Stressful Jobs	Stress Level	Most Stressful Jobs	Stress Level
1. Musical Instrument Repairer	18.77	245. Surgeon	99.46
8. Librarian	21.40	246. Taxi Driver	100.49
12. Janitor	22.44	248. Senior corporate exec	108.62
18. Barber	23.62	249. Firefighter	110.93
32. Pharmacist	25.87	250. U.S. President	176.55

Why Are Some Employees More “Stressed” than Others?

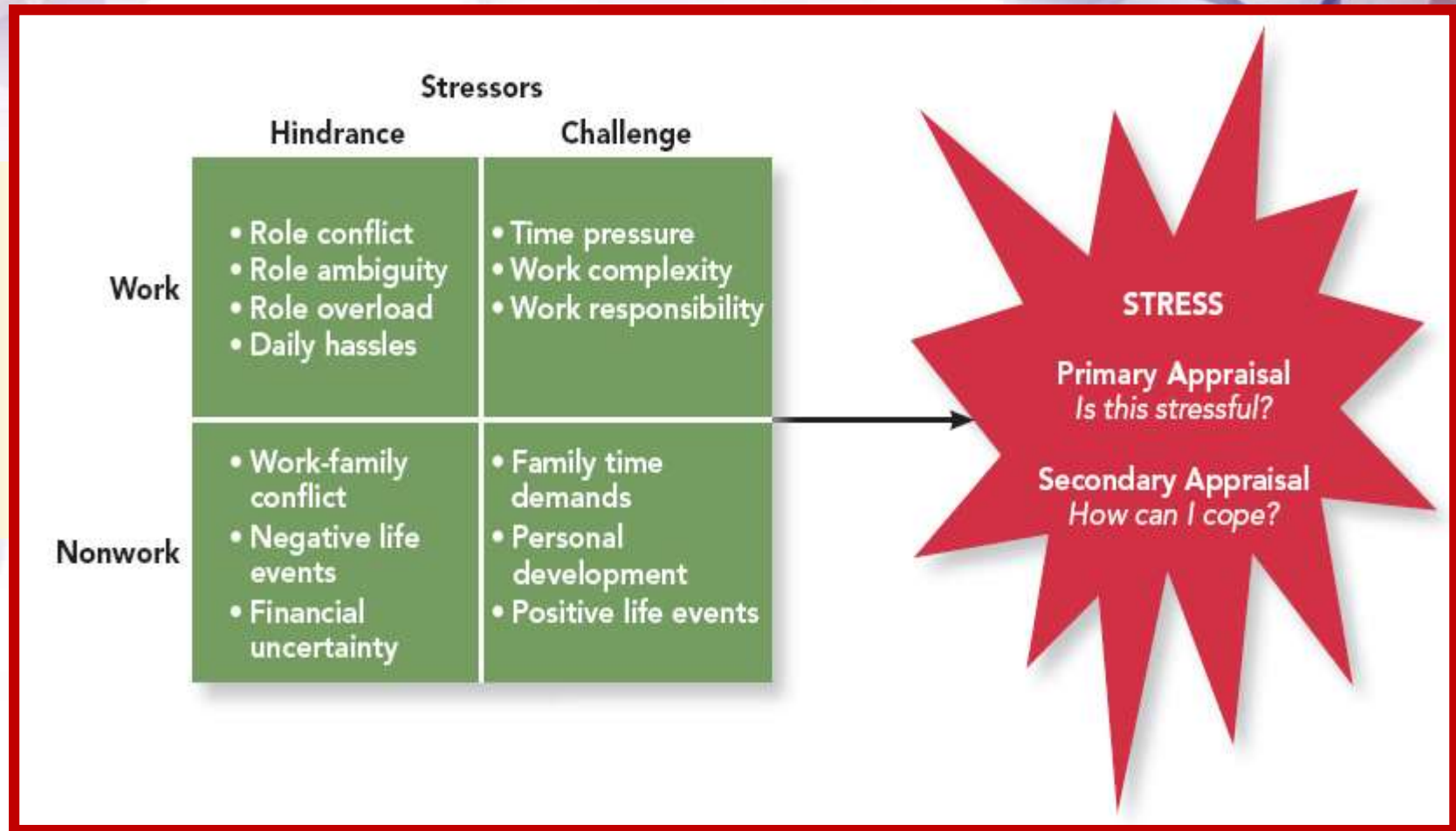
Transactional Theory of Stress

When people first encounter stressors, the process of ***primary appraisal*** is triggered. It occurs as people evaluate the significance and the meaning of the stressors they are confronting.

- First consider whether a demand causes them to feel stressed, and if it does, they consider the implications of the stressor in terms of their personal goals and overall well-being.
- Job demands that tend not to be appraised as stressful are called ***benign job demands***.

Transactional Theory of Stress

Figure 5-1



Types of Stressors

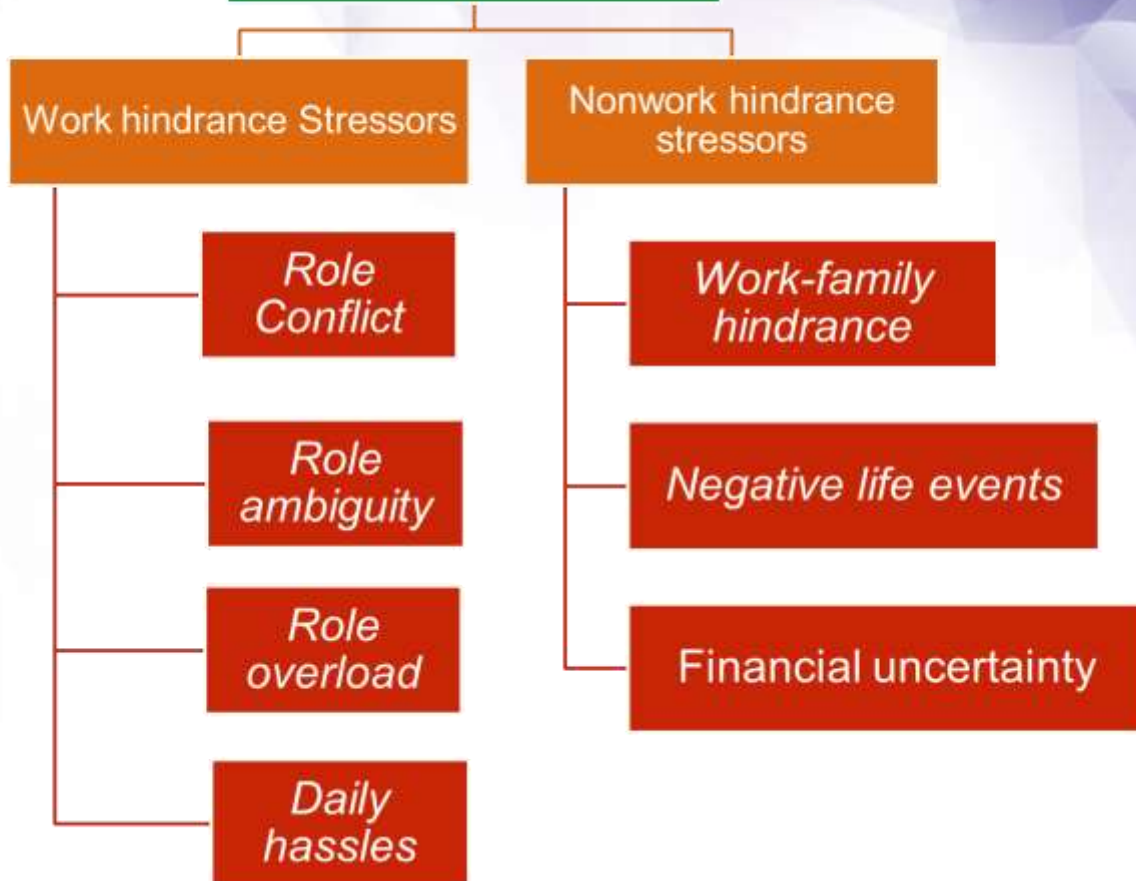
Hindrance stressors — stressful demands that are perceived as **hindering** progress toward personal accomplishments or goal attainment.

- Tend to trigger **negative emotions** such as anger and anxiety.

Challenge stressors — stressful demands that are perceived as **opportunities** for learning, growth, and achievement.

- Often trigger **positive emotions** such as pride and enthusiasm.

Hindrance Stressors



Work Hindrance Stressors

1. Role conflict refers to conflicting expectations that other people may have of us.

- **Call center operator** is expected to spend little time with people online and answer all their questions at the same time.

2. Role ambiguity refers to the lack of information regarding what needs to be done in a role, as well as unpredictability regarding the consequences of performance in that role.

- **Students** working on projects with few guidelines.

Work Hindrance Stressors, Cont'd

- 3. Role overload** occurs when the number of demanding roles a person holds is so high that the person simply cannot perform some or all of the roles very effectively.
- 4. Daily hassles** reflects the relatively minor day-to-day demands that get in the way of accomplishing the things that we really want to accomplish.

*Examples **paper work**, annoying interactions and useless communications.*

- The Devil Wears Prada



Nonwork Hindrance Stressors

- 1. *Work–family conflict*** refers to a special form of role conflict in which the demands of a work role hinder the fulfillment of the demands in a family role (or vice versa).
- 2. *Negative life events***
They hinder the ability to achieve life goals and are associated with negative emotions.
 - Divorce, death of family member
- 3. *Financial uncertainty*** refers to conditions that create uncertainties with regard to the loss of livelihood, savings, or the ability to pay expenses.

Challenge Stressors

Work Challenge Stressors

*Time
pressure*

*Work
Complexity*

*Work
responsibility*

Nonwork challenge stressors

*Family
hindrance*

*Personal
development*

Positive life
events

Work Challenge Stressors

1. **Time pressure** refers to a strong sense that the amount of **time you have to do a task is just not quite enough**.

When you manage to succeed, the outcome is satisfying.

2. **Work complexity** refers to the degree to which the **requirements of the work**, in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities, tax or **exceed the capabilities** of the person who is responsible for performing the work.

Being stretched beyond your capacity is well worth the discomfort.

Work Challenge Stressors, Cont'd

3. *Work responsibility* refers to the nature of the **obligations** that a person has to others.

- Generally speaking, the level of responsibility in a job is higher when the number, scope, and importance of the obligations in that job are higher.

*The high demand of a **traffic controller** maybe positive although he is responsible of lives of people.*

Nonwork Challenge Stressors

1. *Family time demands* reflect the time that a person **commits** to participate in an array of **family activities and responsibilities**.

- Traveling, hosting parties

2. *Personal development*

Participation in formal education programs, music lessons

3. *Positive life events*

- Marriage, pregnancy

Stressful Life Events

Adapted from Table 5-2

Life Event	Stress Score
Death of a spouse	100
Divorce	73
Jail term	63
Marriage	50
Vacations	13
Minor violations of the law	11

How Do People Cope with Stressors?

Coping refers to the behaviors and thoughts that people use to manage both the stressful demands that they face and the emotions associated with those stressful demands.

- **Behavioral coping** involves the set of physical activities that are used to deal with a stressful situation.
- **Cognitive coping** refers to the thoughts that are involved in trying to deal with a stressful situation.

Table 5-3

	PROBLEM-FOCUSED	EMOTION-FOCUSED
Behavioral Methods	• Working harder • Seeking assistance • Acquiring additional resources	• Engaging in alternative activities • Seeking support • Venting anger
Cognitive Methods	• Strategizing • Self-motivation • Changing priorities	• Avoiding, distancing, and ignoring • Looking for the positive in the negative • Reappraising

How Do People Cope with Stressors? Cont'd

Problem-focused coping refers to behaviors and cognitions intended to manage the stressful situation itself.

Emotion-focused coping refers to the various ways in which people manage their own emotional reactions to stressful demands.

Coping Strategies

How do people choose a particular coping strategy?

- The set of beliefs that people have about how well different coping strategies can address different demands.
- The degree to which people believe that a particular strategy gives them some degree of control over the stressor or how they feel about it.

The Experience of Strain

Physiological strains

- Illness, high blood pressure, back pain, stomach aches

Psychological strains

Burnout is the emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion that results from having to cope with stressful demands on an ongoing basis.

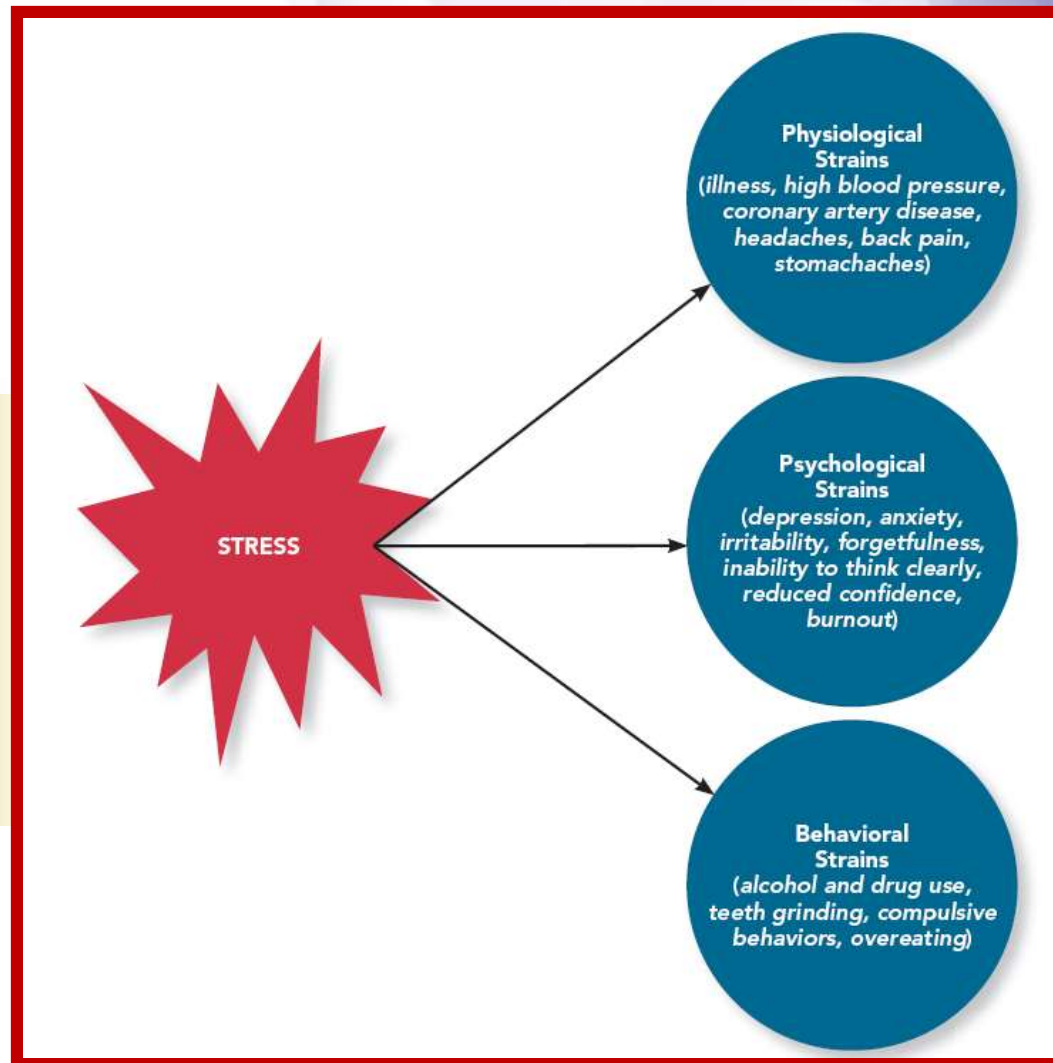
- Depression, anxiety, anger, hostility, irritability, inability to think clearly, forgetfulness

Behavioral strains

- Grinding one's teeth at night, being overly critical and bossy, excessive smoking, compulsive gum chewing

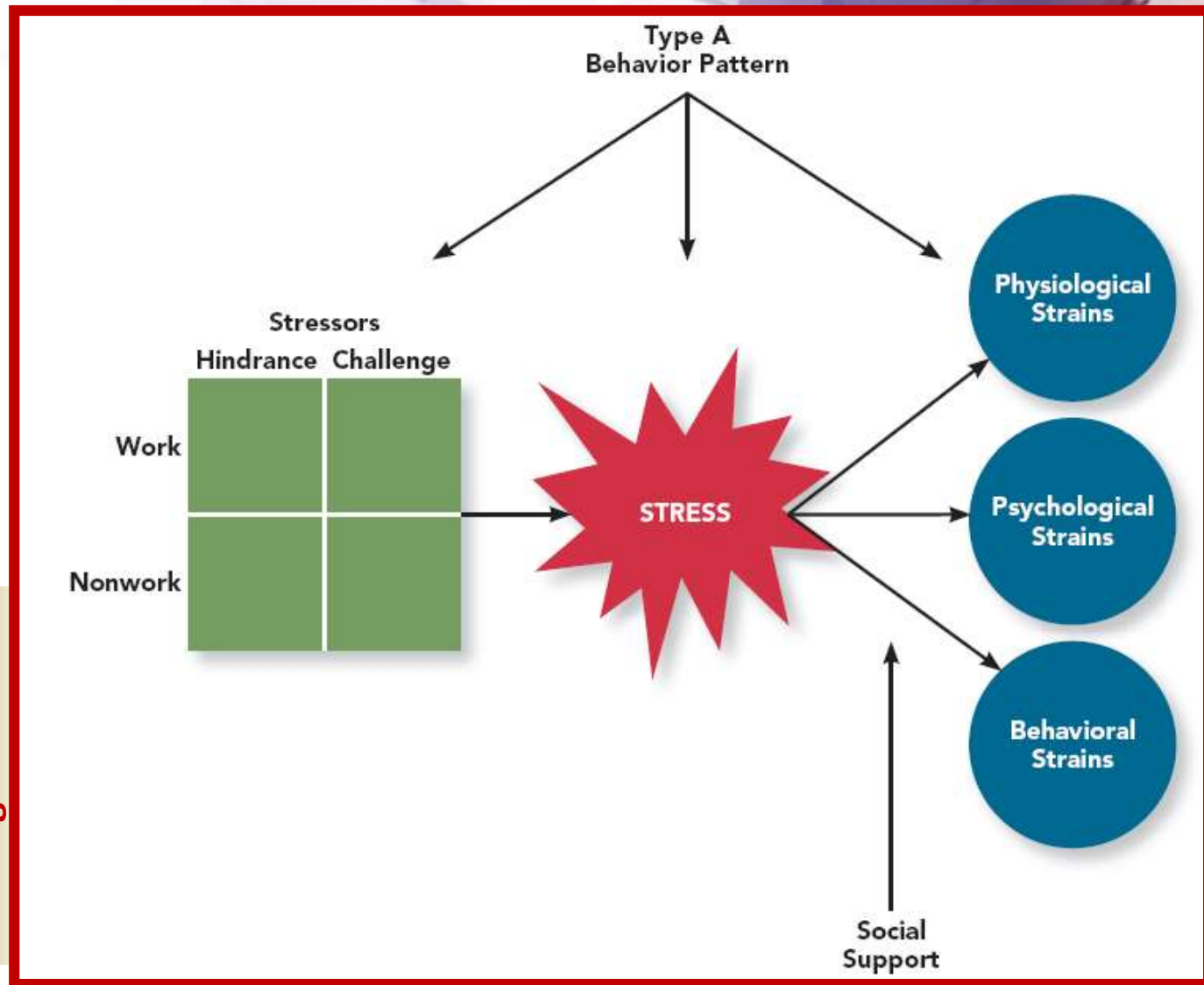
Examples of Strain

Figure 5-2



Why Are Some Employees More “Stressed” than Others?

Figure 5-3



How Important is Stress?

Hindrance stressors have a weak negative relationship with **job performance**.

- Hindrance stressors result in strains and negative emotions that reduce the overall level of energy and attention that people could otherwise bring to their job duties.

Hindrance stressors have a strong negative relationship with **organizational commitment**.

- Hindrance stressors evoke strains, which are generally dissatisfying to people, and satisfaction has a strong impact on the degree to which people feel committed to their organization.

Effects of Strains on Performance and Commitment

Figure 5-4



Hindrance stressors have a weak negative relationship with job performance. People who experience higher levels of hindrance stressors tend to have lower levels of task performance. Not much is known about the impact of hindrance stressors on *Citizenship Behavior* and *Counterproductive Behavior*.



Hindrance stressors have a strong negative relationship with *Organizational Commitment*. People who experience higher levels of hindrance stressors tend to have lower levels of *Affective Commitment* and *Normative Commitment*. Relationships with *Continuance Commitment* are weaker.



Represents a strong correlation (around .50 in magnitude).

Represents a moderate correlation (around .30 in magnitude).

Represents a weak correlation (around .10 in magnitude).

Application: Stress Management

The following are some approaches that organizations use to manage employee stress:

1. Assessment:

- Stress audit - Managers ask questions about the nature of the jobs in their organization to estimate whether high stress levels may be a problem.

2. Reducing stressors:

- Organizations could try to eliminate or significantly reduce stressful demands.
 - **Job sharing** occurs when two people share the responsibilities of a single job.
 - **Sabbatical** gives employees the opportunity to take time off from work to engage in an alternate activity.

Stress Management, Cont'd

3. Providing resources:

- ***Training interventions*** aimed at increasing job-related competencies and skills.
- ***Supportive practices*** help employees manage and balance the demands that exist in the different roles they have.
 - Flextime, telecommuting, compressed work week

4. Reduce strains:

- **Relaxation techniques** (muscle relaxation, meditation, taking walks, writing in a journal, deep breathing)
- **Cognitive-behavioral techniques**
 - Attempt to help people appraise and cope with stressors in a more rational manner (prioritize demands, manage time, communicate needs, seek support)
- **Health and wellness programs**

Examples of Supportive Practices Used by Organizations

Table 5-4

PRACTICE	% OF SMALL ORGANIZATIONS	% OF MEDIUM ORGANIZATIONS	% OF LARGE ORGANIZATIONS
Flextime	57%	56%	56%
Part-time telecommuting	36	33	43
Compressed workweek	27	30	41
Bring child to work if needed	43	25	18
Full-time telecommuting	14	18	24
Lactation program	8	20	28
On-site child care	1	3	13
Company-supported child care center	0	1	11

Takeaways

- Stress refers to the psychological response to demands when there is something at stake for the individual and coping with these demands would tax or exceed the individual's capacity or resources. Stressors are the demands that cause the stress response, and strains are the negative consequences of the stress response.
- Stressors come in two general forms: challenge stressors, which are perceived as opportunities for growth and achievement, and hindrance stressors, which are perceived as hurdles to goal achievement. These two stressors can be found in both work and nonwork domains.

Takeaways, Cont'd

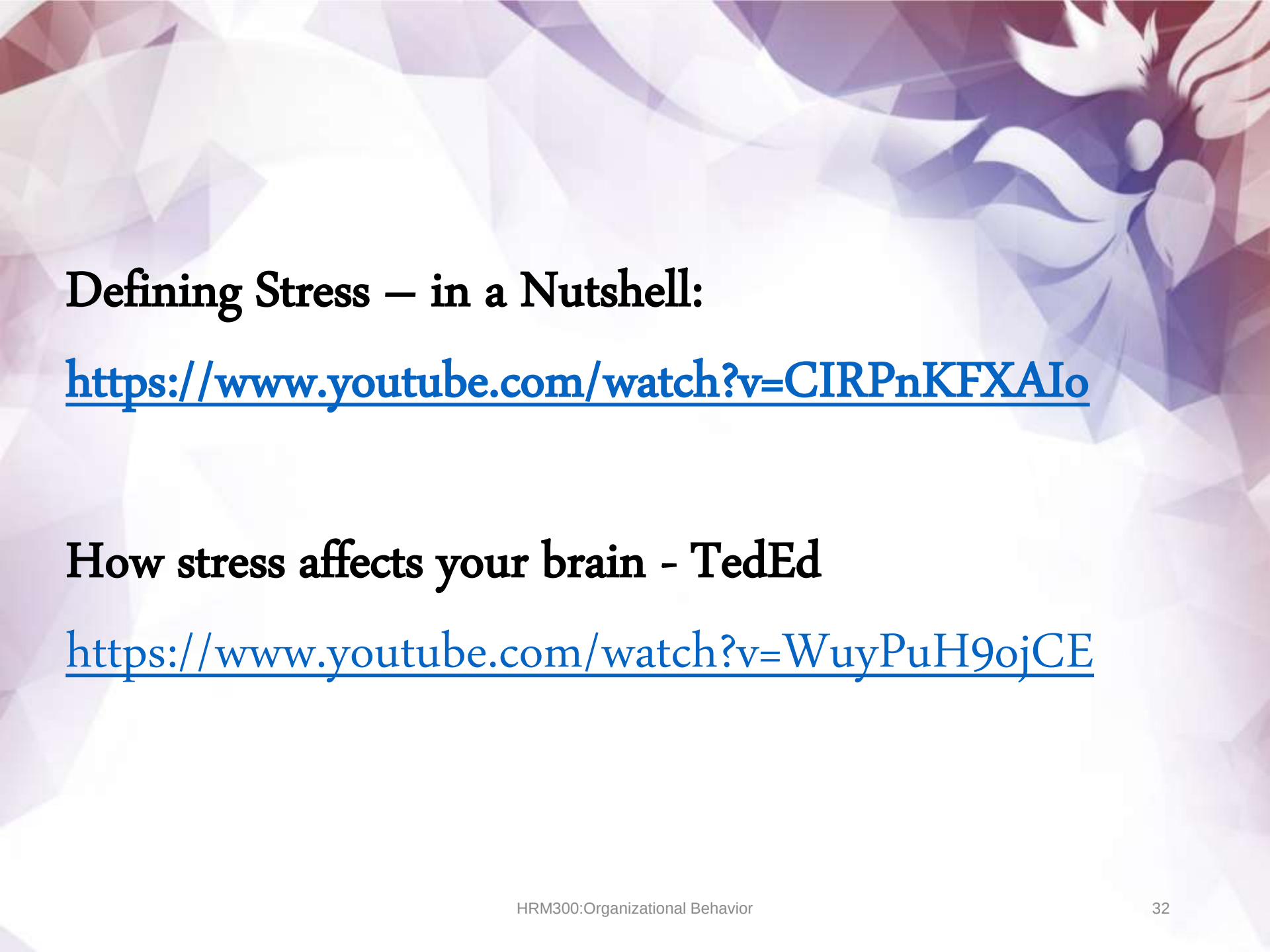
- Coping with stress involves thoughts and behaviors that address one of two goals: addressing the stressful demand or decreasing the emotional discomfort associated with the demand.

Takeaways, Cont'd

- The effects of stress depend on the type of stressor. Hindrance stressors have a weak negative relationship with job performance and a strong negative relationship with organizational commitment. In contrast, challenge stressors have a weak positive relationship with job performance and a moderate positive relationship with organizational commitment.

Takeaways, Cont'd

- Because of the high costs associated with employee stress, organizations assess and manage stress using a number of different of practices. In general, these practices focus on reducing or eliminating stressors, providing resources that employees can use to cope with stressors, or trying to reduce the strains.



Defining Stress – in a Nutshell:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIRPnKFXAIo>

How stress affects your brain - TedEd

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuyPuH9ojCE>