

## Q&A Column

Author: Mark Swartz, MBA, M.Ed.

**Email Subject Line: Dealing With Holiday Stress at Work**

[workopolis.com](http://workopolis.com) EN home page

**Headline : Dealing with Workplace Stress at Holiday Time**

### Summary:

Question: There's so much happening this time of year it's hard to keep up. On top of work I'm planning for the holidays, buying presents, attending parties, etc. It's stressing me to the max. Any advice?

**Landing Page copy**

**Headline : Dealing with Workplace Stress at Holiday Time**

**Dear Mark,**

Question: Who on earth said that late December is a time to relax? I don't know about you, but for me there's so much happening this time of year it's hard to keep up. On top of work I'm running around planning for the holidays, buying presents, attending parties, getting in touch with my family, etc. I hate to admit it but It's actually stressing me out to the max. Any advice?

Peter T., Churchill, Manitoba

**Dear Peter,**

It's true that end-of-year can be a demanding time. You not only have to keep up your performance at work, but also juggle expectations and demands of family and friends. Plus there's the financial pressure that gift giving can add.

And let's be real: overeating and over-indulging in alcohol can leave us feeling lethargic the day after, just when you may need to be sharp.

Fortunately there are ways to reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed by it all.

a) Getting Organized.

Rather than flying into a frenzy of activity, try to take some time early in the morning or later in the evening to plan your activities into manageable chunks of time.

b) Setting Your Priorities at Work

Have a talk with your supervisor about which of his or her priorities *must* be handled before you head out for vacation. Then put the lesser stuff on hold for the time being. If you try to do it all you may just burn yourself out.

c) Knowing Your Limits

Consider restricting your partying to nights before the workdays you know will be less demanding. And let your friends and family know if your work obligations have to come before celebrating (they'll especially understand if they themselves are employed).

d) Be Aware of Your Stress Signs

Are you a little quicker to anger than usual? Is there more tightness between your shoulder blades? Noticing you're a little short of breath, or having a restless sleep? If you know your own symptoms of being stressed out you can use these as warning signals to give yourself a bit of a break.

Also keep in mind that others around you may be strained as well, and with all these trigger points lowered the chances for blow-ups increase. Finally, if you really do feel overburdened and the place you work for has an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), you can contact them for help.

Otherwise just keep in mind the seasonal crunch will soon be over – and then we're into a whole new year.



*Mark Swartz, MBA, M.Ed., is a [speaker](#), [career coach](#) and [author](#). He can be reached via his website, [www.careeractivist.com](http://www.careeractivist.com). The above article may contain material not included in the edited version.*

© Mark Swartz, 2003, 2007. All Rights Reserved. No part of this article may be reproduced, republished or redistributed without the prior written consent of the copyright holder. See [Reprint Policy](#) on [www.careeractivist.com](http://www.careeractivist.com) for details. Not-For-Profits exempted and may use the article in part or in full without contacting me - but please do, and kindly credit me as shown in the [Reprint Policy](#).