



Is this stress or pressure?

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET

This is a quick, simple diagnostic tool for hospitality leaders, with seven questions to ask yourself. Use it before a busy service, or after a difficult one.

Stress and pressure are not the same thing. Knowing which one you're experiencing changes how you respond.

PRESSURE

When demand is matched with the right resources and support, pressure can sharpen performance.

- Demand is high but manageable
- Team has the resources to meet it
- People feel challenged - not overwhelmed
- There is meaning and support in the work
- People recover between hard periods

STRESS

When demand consistently outstrips capacity, stress will deplete and harm over time.

- Demand consistently exceeds capacity
- Resources (time, staff, support) are insufficient
- People feel overwhelmed and without relief
- No recovery between hard periods
- Struggling feels like weakness, not a signal

The diagnostic

	ASK YOURSELF – right now, about this shift or period	YES	NO
1	Does the team have enough people on shift to meet tonight's demand?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2	Has everyone been clearly briefed on what's expected of them today/tonight?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3	Is there a way for staff to flag problems to me mid-service without it being a big deal?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4	Has this team had adequate recovery since the last hard period?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5	Do staff have what they need - equipment, information, support - to do their job well?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6	Is the demand matched to the team's actual capacity? Not the ideal team, this team?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7	Would I be comfortable if a staff member told me today/tonight was too much?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No



What your answers mean, and what you should do

Mostly YES

- This is pressure.
- Your team is challenged but resourced.
- Keep watch - pressure can tip into stress quickly if conditions change.

Mixed answers

- Some stress conditions are present.
- Address the NO answers before the next service.
- Each one is a gap in your team's capacity to cope.

Mostly NO

- This is chronic stress.
- Your team is operating without adequate resources. This is a hazard.
- Address it today, don't wait for the next review.

Remember: If the same demands affect your whole team, it's a system issue. If one person is consistently struggling with what others manage, that's an individual conversation. Both deserve a response, they just need different ones.

