

# FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE 5

FACILITATOR GUIDE



**FIM 5:**

**UNDERSTANDING  
STRESS  
TRIGGERS:**

**JOB  
CHALLENGES  
AND PRACTICAL  
STEPS TO  
COUNTERACT  
THOSE  
STRESSORS**



**AANP  
2007**

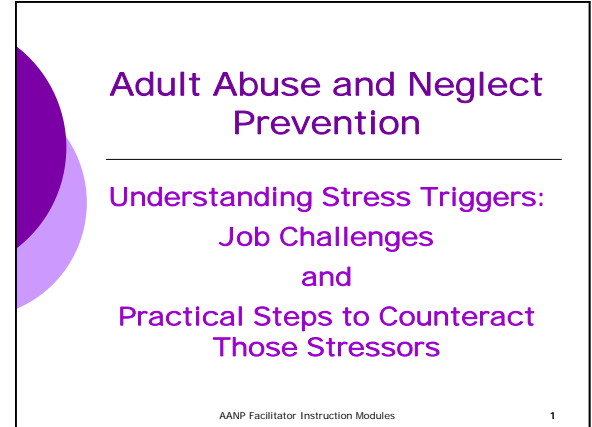
## FIM 5: JOB CHALLENGES

### UNDERSTANDING STRESS TRIGGERS: JOB CHALLENGES AND PRACTICAL STEPS TO COUNTERACTING THOSE STRESSORS<sup>2</sup>

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- State how job challenges can potentially be triggers for abusive behavior
- State how to minimize the negative effects of job challenges



#### INTRODUCTION:

This module introduces the concept that caregivers (regardless of the specific role they play in a long-term care organization) are often at risk to abuse because of the significant day to day stressors in their work environment. These stressors have the potential to impact our overall well-being and ability to cope with difficult situations at work. We often hear people talk about spending more hours with your co-workers than with your family. If that is the case, it is important to both acknowledge the job stressors that impact staff as well as strategies for equipping direct access staff (DAS) to cope with these stressors so they can provide quality care for the clients.

Job Challenges are broken into 6 categories:

1. Physical plant and environmental issues
2. Training and preparation
3. Public opinion and inspections
4. Client family expectations
5. Relationship issues with co-workers
6. Relationship issues with supervisors

#### PREPARATION:

Arrange the room so each participant can see the trainer and other participants.

#### TIME:

5 minutes for the title page welcome and review of the session goals

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

Warmly welcome participants to the session, and say the title.

**Session Goals**

- To understand the stress of job challenges impacting our lives
- Recognize the role these challenges can play in provoking abusive responses
- To learn new strategies for counteracting job challenges that stress us

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 2

**LEARNING TECHNIQUES:**

This module uses several learning techniques: team brainstorming, partnered discussion, self reflection, and group processing.

**OUTLINE:**

The module is 60 minutes. It is divided into four parts:

- Group warm-up activity
- Job challenges stress triggers discussion and brainstorming
- Job challenges stress trigger busters discussion and brainstorming
- Wrap up

**SUPPLIES:**

Flip chart and markers

LCD projector and computer

Screen or wall space

PowerPoint slides

Masking tape

“Individual Trigger Busters – What helps prevent abuse” worksheet

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Review the session goals with the participants. Answer any questions that are raised at this time.

**NOTES:**

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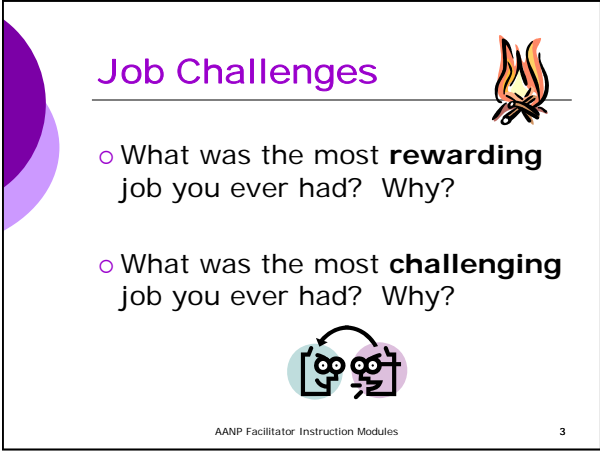
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**Job Challenges** 

- What was the most **rewarding** job you ever had? Why?
- What was the most **challenging** job you ever had? Why?



AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 3

**NOTE:**

This module begins with a group warm-up. A group warm-up is like an icebreaker. It is an opportunity for participants to get to know each other, get comfortable sharing with one another, and to get acquainted with active participation in the session. This group warm-up is a partner activity discussing two questions.

**TIME:**

10 minutes for the group warm-up which includes slide 3

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Explain that a group warm-up, like an icebreaker, is an opportunity to get to know each other. Ask the participants to partner with the person seated next to them. Introduce the topic of job challenges and ask the partners to take turns answering the questions:

1. What was the most rewarding job you ever had? Why? (This can be in or outside of health care.)
2. What was the most challenging job you ever had? Why? (This can be in or outside of health care.)

Give the groups 5 minutes to discuss as partners and then ask for a couple of volunteers to share their responses to the questions. A volunteer may answer one, but is not expected to answer both of the questions.

**DEBRIEF:**

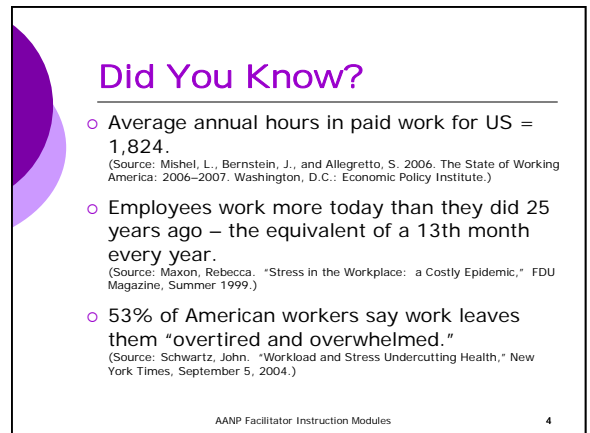
Work is a significant aspect of our lives. It is important to acknowledge both good experiences as well as challenging times. Both types of experiences shapes us into the person we are.

**TIME:**

5 minutes for slides 4 - 5

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Review the facts listed on the slides with the participants. The purpose of these statistics is to segue into the topic of job challenges as one of the stressors that places DAS at risk to abuse or neglect their clients.



**Did You Know?**

- Average annual hours in paid work for US = 1,824.  
(Source: Mishel, L., Bernstein, J., and Allegretto, S. 2006. The State of Working America: 2006–2007. Washington, D.C.: Economic Policy Institute.)
- Employees work more today than they did 25 years ago – the equivalent of a 13th month every year.  
(Source: Maxon, Rebecca. "Stress in the Workplace: a Costly Epidemic," FDU Magazine, Summer 1999.)
- 53% of American workers say work leaves them "overtired and overwhelmed."  
(Source: Schwartz, John. "Workload and Stress Undercutting Health," New York Times, September 5, 2004.)

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 4



**NOTE:**

Prior to the session label six flip charts with the headings listed below (and on the slide) and place them around the room.

**TIME:**

25 minutes for the team brainstorming including slides 7 - 17

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Explain the six categories of job challenges:

1. Physical plant and environmental issues (too hot, too cold, rooms too small, etc.)
2. Training and preparation (handling difficult clients, uniforms, supplies, etc.)
3. Public opinion and inspections (how your organization is viewed by the community, “survey mode,” etc.)
4. Client family expectations (wanting one-on-one care, never saying thank you, etc.)
5. Relationship issues with co-workers (working short, taking long breaks, gossip, etc.)
6. Relationship issues with supervisors (demanding overtime, staffing issues, expectations, etc.)

### Job Challenges



1. Physical plant and environmental issues
2. Training and preparation
3. Public opinion and inspections
4. Client family expectations
5. Relationship issues with co-workers
6. Relationship issues with supervisors

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 7

### Job Challenges

**Teams one to six:**

- Go to your assigned flip chart listing one of six job challenges
- Brainstorm job challenges related to your topic
- Take 3-5 minutes for brainstorming

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 8

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Divide the participants into six teams and hand each team a different color marker. Explain that this is a brainstorm activity in which teams build on what other teams have written. Each group will start at a different flip chart and brainstorm the job challenges related to that category. Remind the participants in brainstorming there is no wrong answer. Invite them to think of stressors from their work or the work experiences of others they have worked with and known.

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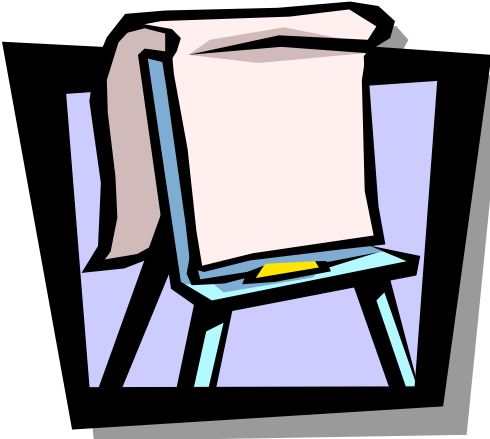
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**INSTRUCTIONS:**

After three to five minutes you will instruct the teams to rotate clockwise to the next flip chart. Each group is to take their marker with them. Upon arriving at the next flip chart the team will review what the previous team(s) have written. They will then add to the list their own ideas. Teams will have 2-3 minutes to add to the list before rotating to the next chart. The groups continue rotating until each team has been to every flip chart.





Invite one member of each team to stay by the flip chart to report back to the full group.

### Job Challenges

**All teams:**

- Rotate clockwise to the next flip chart
- Review brainstormed list and add your own ideas
- Take 2-3 minutes at each flip chart
- Continue rotating until you have added to each flip chart





AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 9

### Job Challenges

**All teams:**

- Select one member to stay at his/her current flip chart
- Selected members report back the contents of flip chart



AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 10

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Ask for the person standing at each flip chart to report back to the full group what is listed. It is helpful to do them in order. After the first group has reported physical plant and environmental issues, move to the next slide to review additional ideas.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Do not spend a lot of time on the list. Highlight only those that the group missed. Move on to the next group.

### Physical Plant and Environmental Issues

Did we think of these?

- Temperature
- Air circulation
- Physical layout
- Small room and even smaller bathroom
- Lack of storage
- Smells, sounds
- Colors of the environment
- Lack of privacy

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 11

**Training and Preparation**

Did we think of these?

- Expected to perform duty or task without training
- Physical demands of the job – standing for prolonged periods of time, lifting
- Emotional and mental demands
- Supplies and equipment
- Never enough time

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 12

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Prior to revealing the slide, review the corresponding flip chart. Do not spend a lot of time on the list. Highlight only those that the group missed. Move on to the next group.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

This slide is a continuation of the previous slide. Highlight only those that the group missed. Move on to the next group.

**Training and Preparation**

Did we think of these?

- Task oriented
- Fear of unknown – we didn't really know what was expected we when accepted the job or responsibility
- Poor communication of expectations
- Short staffing
- Conflicting information from managers and co-workers

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 13

**Public Opinion and Inspections**

Did we think of these?

- Negative
- Fault finding
- Anxiety producing
- Everyone on-edge during survey
- Never good enough
- Lack of respect
- Critical
- Lack of appreciation

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 14

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Prior to revealing the slide, review the corresponding flip chart. Do not spend a lot of time on the list. Highlight only those that the group missed. Move on to the next group.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Prior to revealing the slide, review the corresponding flip chart. Do not spend a lot of time on the list. Highlight only those that the group missed. Move on to the next group.

**Client Family Expectations**

Did we think of these?

- Lack of respect
- Lack of appreciation
- Wanting special treatment
- Unrealistic expectations
- What family wants conflicts with client wants
- Complaining
- Dysfunctional family systems

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 15

### Relationship Issues with Co-Workers

Did we think of these?

- Some appear to not carry their weight
- Working short
- Lack of respect
- Lack of appreciation
- Negativity
- Smokers vs. non-smokers
- Cliques
- Backbiting

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 16

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Prior to revealing the slide, review the corresponding flip chart. Do not spend a lot of time on the list. Highlight only those that the group missed. Move on to the next group.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Prior to revealing the slide, review the corresponding flip chart. Do not spend a lot of time on the list. Highlight only those that the group missed. Move on to the next group.

### Relationship Issues with Supervisors

Did we think of these?

- Lack of power
- Lack of respect
- Lack of appreciation
- Feeling not listened to
- Violating confidentiality
- Favoritism
- Supervisor knows less about job content than we do
- Overly critical

AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 17



**TIME:**

1 minute for slides 18 - 19

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

To add humor to the session, show this slide and say, “sometimes this is how we feel!”

**NOTES:**

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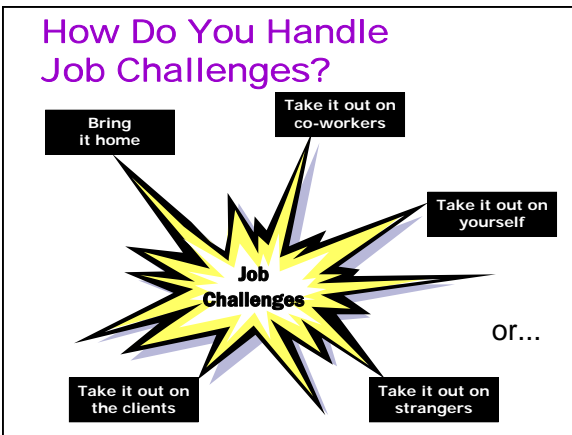
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**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Ask participants if the brainstormed list of job challenges impact us as workers. How?

Explain that if job challenges are not acknowledged and addressed a person is at-risk of being an abuser.

Discuss with the participants that some job challenges can be changed by an individual and some cannot. For example, one cannot change the fact that it feels like it is 100 degrees in the building. However, if negativity is an acknowledged job challenge, one can counteract that trigger by choosing to not participate in negative talk, and perhaps even walking away from a group when negativity begins.



**TIME:**

1 minute for slide 20

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Give participants a minute to look at the slide. Ask the question, “how do you handle the inevitable job challenges?” Review the list of options:

- Do you bring your frustration home to your family?
- Do you take it out on your co-workers by being short or rude to them or choosing to not be a team player?
- Do you take your job challenges and frustrations out on strangers (road rage)?
- Do you take it out on yourself? Do you neglect yourself, further depleting yourself of energy to properly manage job challenges?
- Do you take it out on the clients?

None of these are healthy responses to job challenge stressors.

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**TIME:**

5 minutes for the group brainstorming including slides 21 - 22

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Pass out the worksheet, “Individual trigger busters: job challenges.”

Go to one of the flip charts and ask the group to choose two job challenges they would like to brainstorm together how to fix or eliminate them.


For example, if one of the job challenges under relationship issues with co-workers is negativity, one of the ways to respond to that stressor is to not partake in the talk and just walk away. Or if the stressor is unrealistic expectations, accept what you can and cannot accomplish and make sure others do as well.

Instruct the participants to write down five of their top job challenges from any of the flip charts (in the left column) and then five ways to combat these stressors (in the right column). They should feel free to discuss this with a few individuals seated near them.

If time allows, ask the group to think about ways the organization can help reduce or eliminate the job challenges.

### Job Challenges - Trigger Busters

- First, we identified the job challenges that impact our daily lives. Let’s move on to step two: busting the stresses.
- Let’s practice together identifying busters for two job challenges.
- Individually list on your worksheets five stressors and five or more busters.



AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 21

### What Do You Think About This?

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We judge ourselves by our **intentions.**  
We judge others by their **behaviors.**



AANP Facilitator Instruction Modules 22

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Ask participants to think about this statement. What does it mean to judge others’ behaviors? How does it apply to the work environment? How might our “judgments” impact working with others? Invite one or two responses.

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## Acknowledgements

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- These materials were produced by BEAM in cooperation with Michigan State University and the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging through the Michigan Department of Community Health Grant No. \*11-P-93042/5-01 awarded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.
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Session Title: FIM 5 Facilitator Guide	AANP	
Revision Date: November 28, 2007		