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# Handling examination stress

**By: Prasanna Perera, Marketing & Management Consultant, Chartered Marketer, CIM, U.K.**



Many students, both young and old, suffer from examination related stress, before, during and after examinations. Stress is not always harmful. In fact a certain level of stress is required to perform optimally in an examination. In this brief article, I will provide some tips for students to overcome examination related stress.

**What is Stress?**  
The Webster's Dictionary defines stress as an "emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension." A practical way of defining stress is the feeling one gets from prolonged pent up emotions. If the emotions you experience are pleasant and desirable - joy, ecstasy, delight - you usually feel free to let them show. Therefore, positive emotions do not usually cause stress. Negative emotions, on the other hand are more often held inside. They are hidden and you suffer quietly and experience stress.

Now that you have an understanding of stress, it is important to identify the signals of stress. The chances are that if you are experiencing long term stress, you may or may not be aware of it. Even if you are, you may choose to avoid facing up to your problems.

Students follow this method and succeed at their exams with flying colours. Maintaining good health also helps to effectively deal with stress. Regular exercise can help to relieve stress. Activities such as moderate walking, can relieve tension and relax your body.

**Symptoms of examination related stress**  
Firstly there are a host of physical symptoms such as dryness of the throat or mouth, insomnia, feeling constantly tired, inability to concentrate, pounding of the heart, chronic pain in the neck or back and difficulty in breathing.

In addition to physical symptoms there are also mental ones. Moodiness, and depression are the two most common. You may be depressed and not realize it. Depression is an emotional disorder, that is marked by unexplained sadness, inactivity and a feeling of emptiness.

**Tips and Techniques to handle examination related stress**  
The most important technique is to be well prepared, well in advance of the examination. Regular self study, answering past questions, mock examinations etc., are great ways to be well organised and prepared. Remember that many stu-

dent's follow this method and succeed at their exams with flying colours. Maintaining good health also helps to effectively deal with stress. Regular exercise can help to relieve stress. Activities such as moderate walking, can relieve tension and relax your body.

Meditation and/or yoga is a good way of relaxing the mind. Mind related stress is quite often more difficult to handle than body related stress. Meditation is ideal when you wake up in the morning or as the last thing before going to bed. 15 - 20 minutes is adequate, if you have a proper mind focus.

A healthy diet is another important element of stress reduction. Most medical experts agree that cutting down on fatty meats, dairy products, sweets and salt will help to relieve stress. It is generally recommended that eating more fruits, veggies, poultry and fish has a calming effect on a stressed person.



**just before and during the exam**

The last few hours before an examination can be a very anxious period. Many negative thoughts spring up - will I fail? What if I get questions, I have not prepared for? Will I be able to manage the time given? These are normal, but clever students quickly convert them to positive thoughts, by reflecting on their efforts and preparation. What is the worst thing that can happen at an exam? Failure. Fear of failure is the most significant cause of pre-examination and post examination stress. Always remember that failure teaches you more than success. Failures are pillars of success. It is better to love and lose than not love at all.

At the exam you can reduce the stress levels by arriving early and settling down in the examination hall. Keep thinking about positive aspects as you await the examination paper, such as success, happiness and career development.

**Handling examination stress** **Contdon Page 4**

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## Understanding marketing

**By Ranjan Saheed**



**Ranjan Saheed**

The term marketing could mean anything from advertising. Promotions or may be even the process going to the weekend fair to purchase the week's day rations. But it's not so. The term marketing means a much broader and complex discipline. Advertising and the promotions are just the tip of the subject matter. It involves a complex of identifying needs and wants of customers and providing products and services that will satisfy them. Marketing isn't a new subject to many of us. As customers, we live and relive the marketing concept day in and day out. From the time you get up in the morning, till you retire to bed at night, you are exposed with decisions that you have to take in order to satisfy your needs and wants.

A need can be defined as a gap or a state where we have unsatisfied desires. In a more simple term a need is the difference between the present state and the desire state. When someone say he is hungry, that person is referring to his present state that he has no food in his stomach and that he would prefer to have some thing to eat.

A need can be better defined as a state of unfulfilled desire of a state of felt deprivation (Kotler 1999). Needs are a part of the human make up and it cannot be created by a marketer. Needs are within oneself. No one can create hunger in a person or the desire to pass an exam. It has to come from his own initiative.

But what is more important to a marketer is the customer' want. When we have needs we as customers seek alternatives to satisfy our needs or our desires. When we have the urge to reach for success and get a better job, we inquire from many of our friends as to what are the best professional qualifications that you can study for. Until we satisfy our needs we many feel uncomfortable or insecure. To secure our needs we may desire certain forms of tangible as intangible items. These desires are wants. In other words, wants are alternatives that we have to satisfy our needs. Look at the following example.

The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) the apex body of marketing defines marketing much more broadly. In the definition by CIM, it encapsulates the organization responsibility to make profits but in an ethical manner or in a manner that is conducive to society. The Chartered Institute of marketing.

**Defines:-**  
"A management process of identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer needs and wants at a profit in a socially responsible manner"

Marketing, more than any other business function, deals with customers. Understanding, creating, communicating, and delivering customer value and satisfaction are at the very heart of modern marketing thinking and practice. Marketing is the delivery of customer satisfaction at a profit. The twofold goal of marketing is to attract new customers by promising superior value and to keep current customers by delivering satisfaction.

**Role of marketing in the modern business world**  
Marketing places the compass on customer satisfaction. **contdon Page 4**