

Bradford & Bingley[®]

Work-related Stress :
Empowering the Line Manager

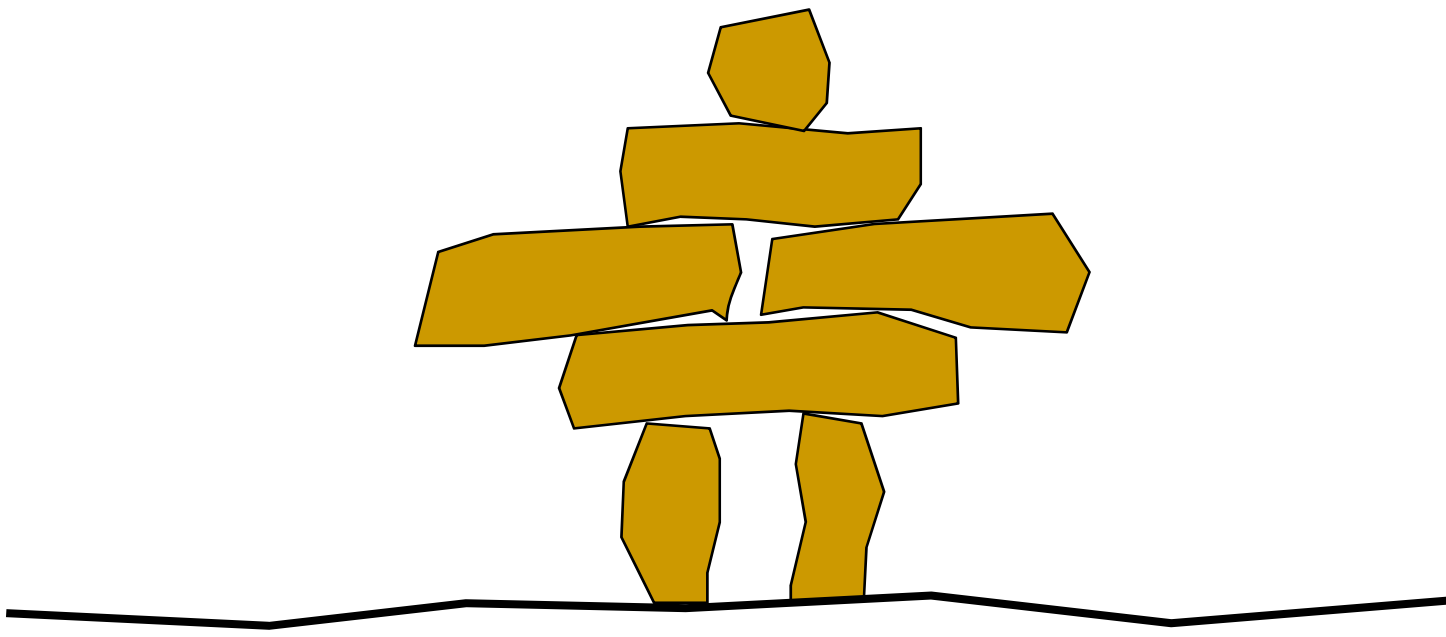
John Hamilton
Head of Group Health & Safety

Group Health & Safety

Bradford & Bingley - Who Are We?

- Founded in 1851 - converted from building society to plc in 2000.
- A specialist mortgage lender and retail financial services provider.
- 207 branches and 145 franchise outlets nation-wide.
- Operational centres in Bingley & Borehamwood
- 3,250 staff.

*Culture in transition from building society
paternalism to plc intensity*



What Was the Catalyst?

- A member of staff made a complaint to the local authority about our management of stress.
- Investigation by EHO did not result in formal action, but helped us to see that stress management was an important issue.
- Initial approach was to undertake a group level stress audit, following the HSE management standards & guidelines.

Group Stress Audit - What Did We Find Out ?

Analytic and anecdotal evidence reviewed, showing:-

- No major systemic problems with work-related stress, but plenty of localised issues.
- Absence rates above industry average, with a third of reported absences due to ‘anxiety, stress or depression’
- In many cases, stress caused by work factors and personal factors cannot be separated
- Particular hazards identified in the areas of “demand” and “change”
- We needed a Stress Management Plan!

Stress Management Plan

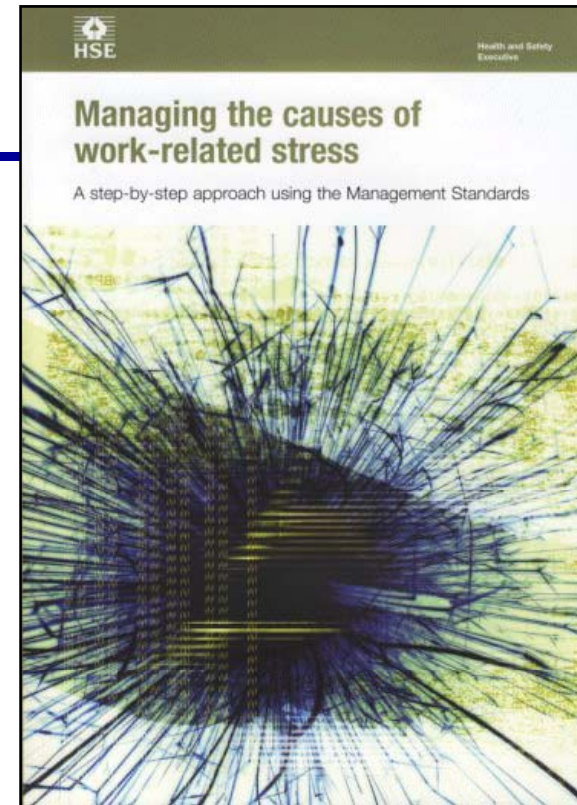
- Bespoke plan for Bradford & Bingley
- Bespoke plan adopting management system format
 - Policy Statement
 - Organisation & Responsibilities
 - Arrangements
- 6-month consultation & development period
- Risk assessment tool is cornerstone of the plan, empowers managers to tackle issues at a local level.
- Based on HSE Management Standards

HSE Management Standards

- Simplifies a complex and varied hazard
- Clear guidance on 'states to be achieved'
- Emphasis on everyday 'management' solutions
- Assisted by HSE/CIPD Competency Framework

However:-

- Requires development of local management tools
- End state solution unique to each organisation



Plan Implementation (2006)

- Plan approved by Executive Directors
- Implemented through face-to-face training programme;
 - 550 Line Managers + 30 Project Managers
 - Top-to-bottom through the organisation
 - 63 courses UK-wide in 6-months
- Incorporated into new starter health & safety management training

Training Course Messages (2006)

- Context of stress within wider health & safety issues
- Pressure vs. Stress
- Personalisation of stress through case studies, examples, analogies, and group discussions
- Many control measures are Good Management Practice
- Risk Assessment used to identify and action what's required
- Adherence to existing Group policies & procedures e.g. performance management, bullying & harassment

Pressure vs Stress

Pressure



Everyone experiences pressure in the course of their daily lives.

Pressure creates a 'buzz' that can be good for people, helping them concentrate, focus on achieving their objectives, and result in them doing a better job.

Pressure vs Stress

Stress



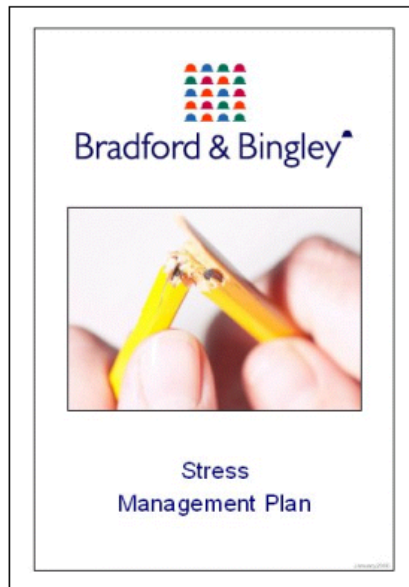
Stress is the adverse reaction people suffer through exposure to prolonged or excessive pressure.

It is a clinical reaction with both psychological and physiological symptoms beyond the control of the sufferer.

As such there is no good stress.

Training Course Messages (2006)

The Solution



This does not mean;

- not setting targets
- not managing poor performance
- not changing

Its about how we do these things

Training Course Learning (2006)

- Course attendance was a deeply personal journey for many.
- Classic 'silent/violent' reaction during early part of course
- Controversial subjects met head-on;
 - unreasonable behaviours
 - poor implementation of change
 - resourcing constraints & working hours
 - managing poor performance

Training Course Learning (2006)

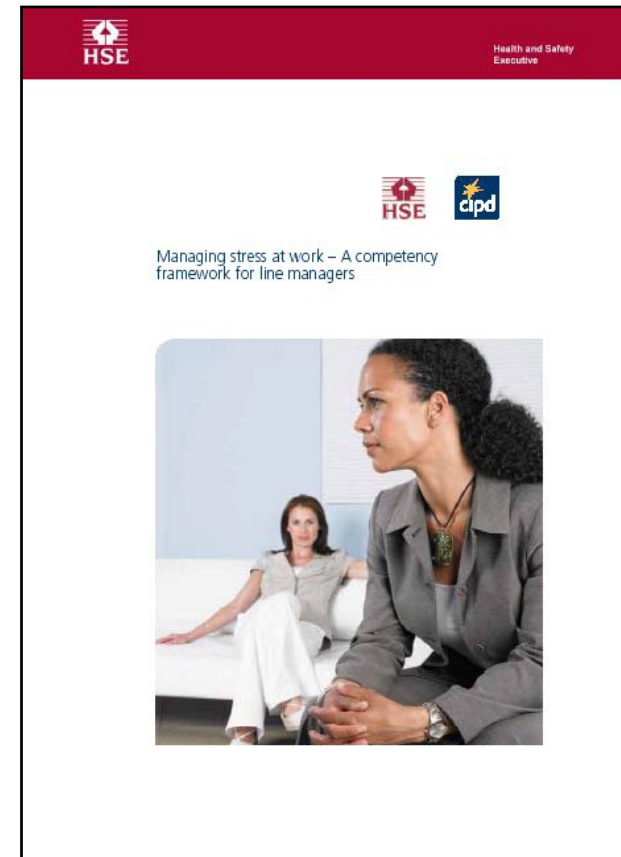
Case Study 1



“Over the last few months I have been getting terrible stress. This has come mainly from Senior Execs shouting at me, demanding all sorts of things. In a recent meeting I was subject to a tirade of foul and abusive shouting, and the meeting ended with a thinly veiled threat to my job...”

Follow-up Training (2007)

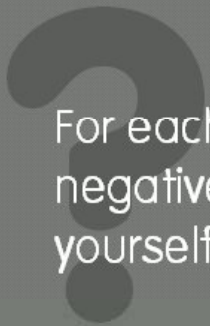
- Online module
- Mandatory for all line managers
- Part of general H&S management training
- Incorporates HSE/CIPD stress competency framework
- Focus on continuous improvement i.e. managers being better managers
- Written test



Follow-up Training (2007)

me&my healthy workplace

Management Standards



For each standard, we have given examples of positive and negative management behaviour. As you review them, ask yourself which behaviours your team see in you?

role control demands support
relationships change next

What's new

Stress

Risk Assessment

Workstations

Training

Audit

Follow-up Training (2007)

me&my healthy workplace

Change

Good communication is crucial to the effective management of change. Good managers do this by:

- keeping the team informed of what is happening in the organisation
- communicating clear milestones and progress in meeting them
- explaining clearly what is happening and why
- making time for employee opinion and consultation on plans



What's new

Stress

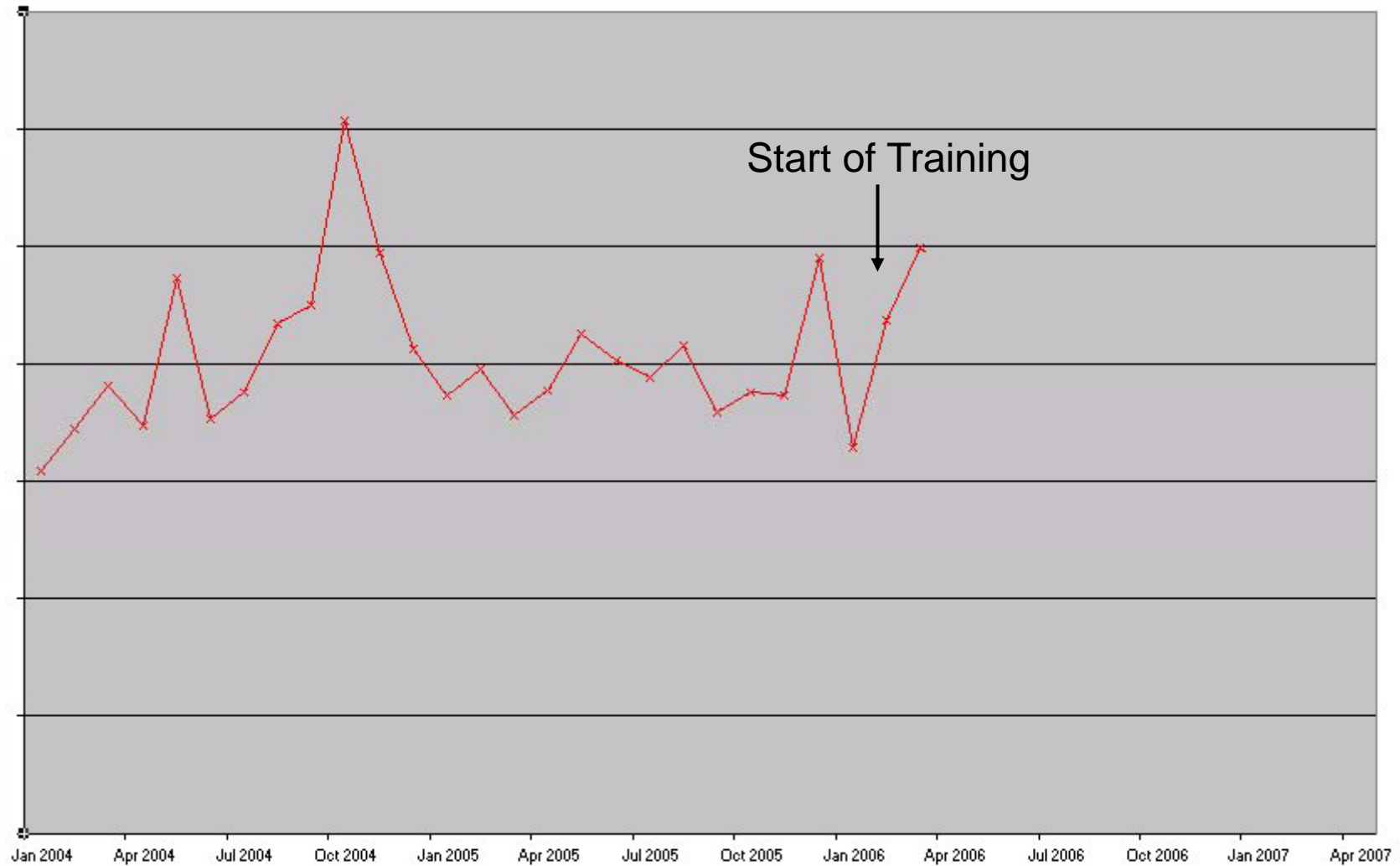
Risk Assessment

Workstations

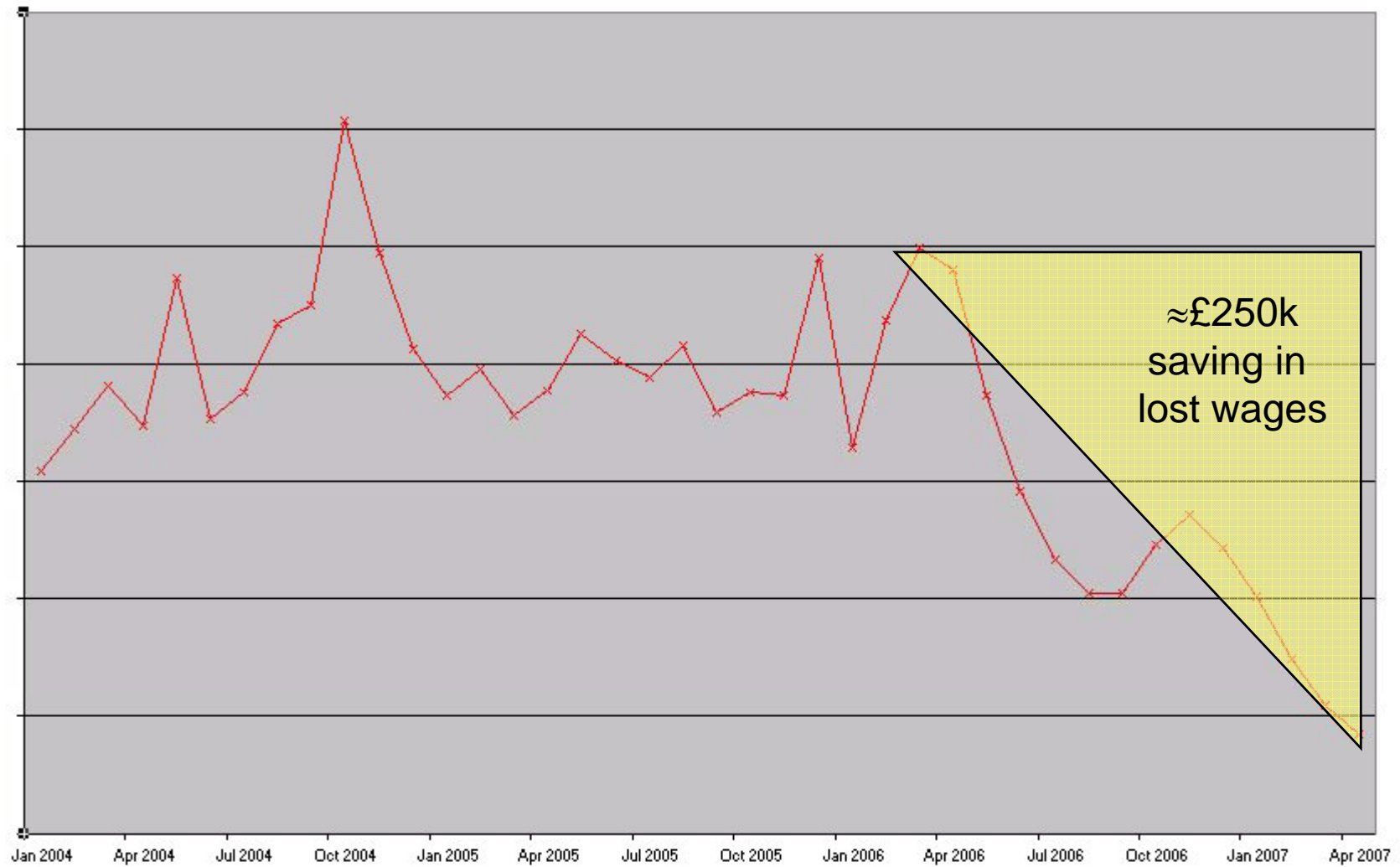
Training

Audit

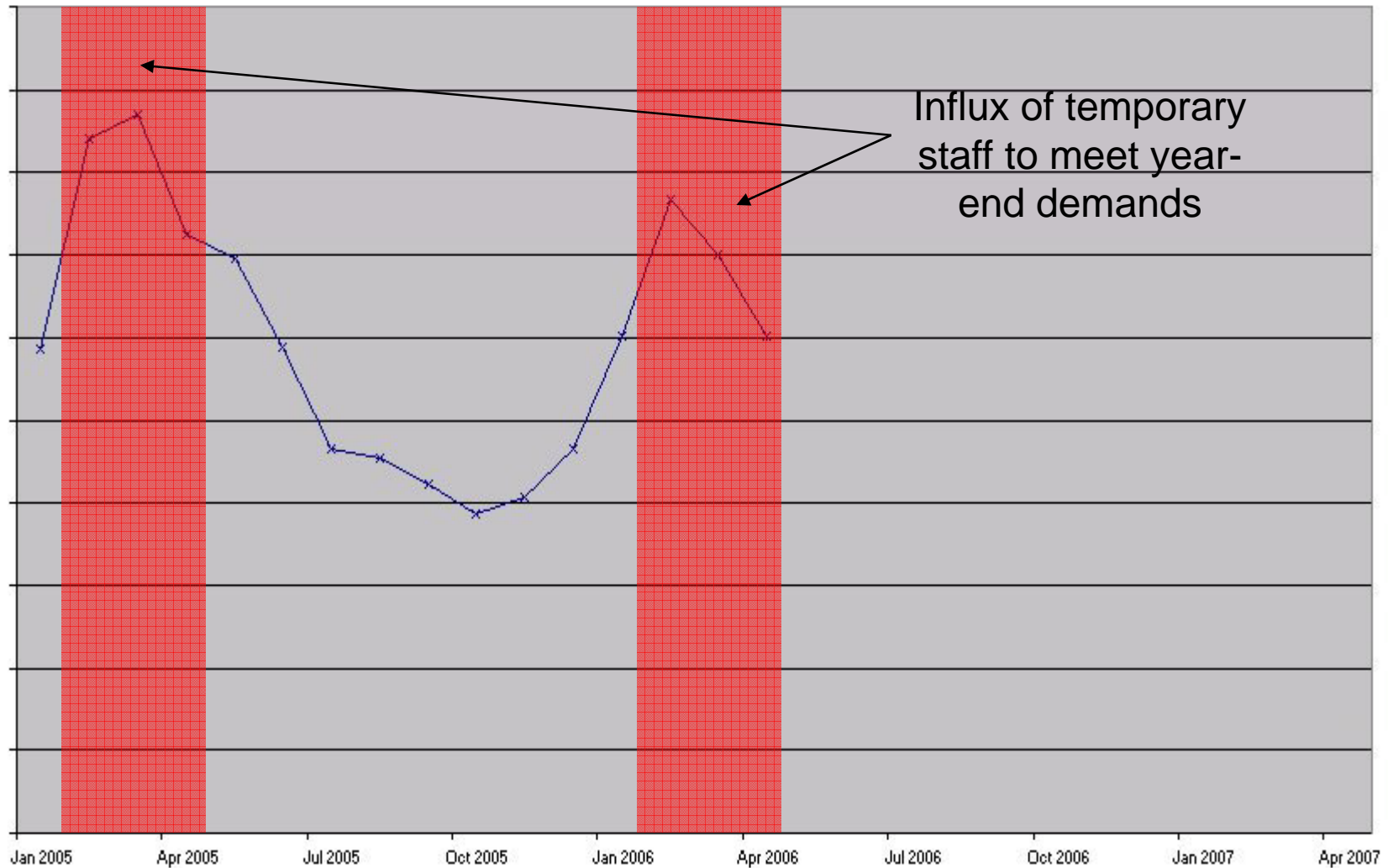
Business Benefit - Stress Related Absence



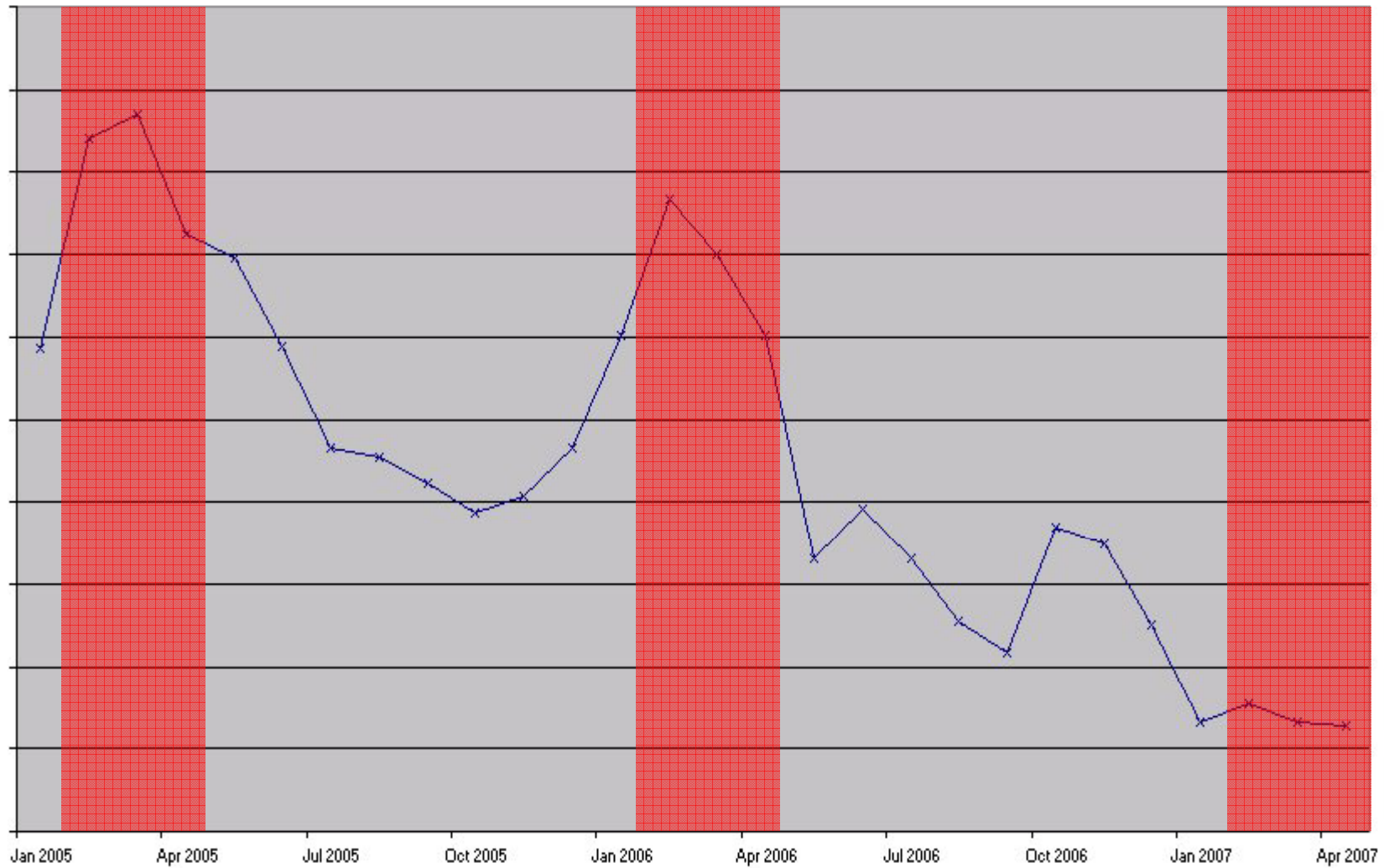
Business Benefit - Stress Related Absence



Example - Processing Department



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Final Thoughts

- Use the full range of measures to determine the problem
- Make everyone in the organisation accountable for stress management
- Equip managers with knowledge and tools to manage stress at a local level
- Put the most amount of effort possible into implementation
- Keep it going



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