

# Stage Fright! Team Exercise

by

Steven L. McShane  
University of Western Australia  
Perth, Australia

This case may be used by current adopters of:

S. L. McShane *Canadian Organizational Behaviour*, 5th ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2004); S. L. McShane & M. A. von Glinow, *Organizational Behavior*, 3rd ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005); S. L. McShane & T. Travaglione, *Organisational Behaviour on the Pacific Rim*, 1st ed. (Sydney: McGraw-Hill Australia, 2003)

Copyright © 2005 The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

# Stage Fright! Team Exercise

By Steven L. McShane, The University of Western Australia

## Purpose

This exercise is designed to help you to diagnose a common stressful situation and determine how stress management practices apply to this situation.

## Background

Stage fright – including the fear of public speaking -- is one of the most stressful experiences many people have in everyday life. According to some estimates, nearly three-quarters of us frequently get stage fright, even when speaking or acting in front of a small audience. Stage fright is an excellent topic for this team activity on stress management because the psychological and physiological symptoms of stage fright are really symptoms of stress. In other words, stage fright is the stress experience in a specific context involving a public audience. Based on the personal experiences of team members, your team is asked to identify the symptoms of stage fright and to determine specific stress management activities that effectively combat stage fright.

## Instructions

*Step 1:* Students are organized into teams, typically 4-6 students per team. Ideally, each team should have one or more people who acknowledge that they have experienced stage fright.

*Step 2:* Each team's first task is to identify the symptoms of stage fright. The best way to organize these symptoms is to look at the three categories of stress outcomes described in the textbook: physiological, psychological, and behavioral. The specific stage fright symptoms may be different from the stress outcomes described in the textbook, but the three broad categories would be relevant. Teams should be prepared to identify several symptoms and to present one or two specific examples of stage fright symptoms based on person experiences of team members. (Please remember that individual students are not required to describe their experiences to the entire class.)

*Step 3:* Each team's second task is to identify specific strategies people could or have applied to minimize stage fright. The five categories of stress management presented in the textbook will likely provide a useful template in which to organize the specific stage fright management activities. Each team should document several strategies to minimize stage fright and be able to present one or two specific examples to illustrate some of these strategies.

*Step 4:* The class will congregate to hear each team's analysis of symptoms and solutions to stage fright. This information will then be compared to the stress experience and stress management practices, respectively.