

Stress Signal Early Warning Log

Use the method

Notice your own recurring signals and the situations around them early enough to change the work. Use a short private log rather than trying to remember a difficult week. The result is a pattern to discuss, a manageable work adjustment, and a check date. This tool does not diagnose stress, anxiety, or another condition.

- 1. Choose observations.** Pick a few signals you personally notice, such as difficulty concentrating, irritability, or repeated checking. Record your words without treating the signal as proof of a particular cause.
- 2. Record the context.** Write the date, situation, demand, signal, and effect on the task. Avoid collecting unnecessary personal information about other people.
- 3. Choose a safe response.** Pause if needed, clarify priorities, reduce interruptions, or ask for help with the work. Record what you actually tried rather than what you think you should have done.
- 4. Review a small pattern.** After a few entries, ask what conditions recur. Distinguish observation from interpretation; several entries do not establish a medical cause.
- 5. Change one condition.** Choose a practical workload or communication change within your authority. If others must decide, make a specific request and record the response.
- 6. Check and seek support.** Review whether the change helped the task. When concerns persist or interfere with daily life, contact a qualified professional. If there is immediate danger or you cannot stay safe, seek urgent help.

Worked example

Illustrative observation: on three days the operator notices repeated rereading during late-afternoon handoffs. Each entry names the task and interruptions; no diagnosis is attached.

The operator tries a quieter handoff period and asks the team to route nonurgent questions to one list. The record separates the observed interruptions from the interpretation that they may contribute.

At the next check, fewer interruptions occurred and one handoff needed less rework. The operator records that limited result rather than claiming the change solved stress.

If difficulty continues outside this work context or interferes with daily life, the operator seeks professional support. The log is optional and private; a workplace discussion can share only the needed workload change.

Before you put it to work

[] Entries describe observations and context without diagnosis.

[] The response is practical and within the user's authority.

[] One change has a check date and a limited result.

[] Privacy and professional support remain available.

If the problem keeps returning

If logging becomes another burden, shorten it to one observation and one action. Do not use a score to decide whether help is deserved; persistent concerns can be discussed with a professional.

Connect the tools

Use PW-01 for capacity planning and PW-06 for a workload request.

Background reference

Self-management background: National Institute of Mental Health, I am So Stressed Out fact sheet, <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/so-stressed-out-fact-sheet> (checked September 29, 2026).

Working worksheet

Name or team _____ Date _____

Scope and setup

Private record location, observation period, chosen signals, and review date. Share only what you choose.

Reusable record

Date and situation	Observed signal	Task effect	Response tried	Follow-up result

Duplicate rows or this worksheet for additional records.

Use your own records. The examples on page 2 are illustrative. Continue on a duplicate worksheet when you need more space.

Personal observations are optional. Keep this worksheet in a private location and share only the work decision you choose to share.

Complete and review

Pattern and uncertainty

Recurring condition, observations supporting it, and what remains unknown.

One work adjustment

Change, authority or person to ask, communication, start date, and review date.

Review and support

Observed task result, continue change or stop, support wanted, and next step. Personal details are optional.

Review after use

What recurring condition was visible? _____

What limited change did you test? _____

What support or priority decision is still needed? _____

Next action _____ Owner _____ Due _____