

ET Business Daily

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Stressed? It will only get worse



By JOHN KRALEVICH

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THE recession has left many employees with high levels of stress, but with the East likely to be badly affected by Government cuts, the situation could get worse.

That's the view of Michael Coates (44), a former Orton Longueville School pupil and now MD of a UK management consultancy which has produced a booklet described as a "small step towards addressing workplace stress".

Mr Coates runs Durham-based Protostar Leadership Development with an international reputation for supporting leaders through difficult times, a far cry from when he started as a management trainee, aged 19, at John Lewis in Queensgate, Peterborough.

He may also be well-known to many *Evening Telegraph* business readers as he trained hundreds of local managers



POSITIVE:
Michael
Coates.

during the '90s while working for both Peterborough Regional College and Stamford College.

"When I was training managers in Peterborough, the word stress very rarely came up, but now it seems to be on every manager's lips," he said.

With demand for training and consultancy on stress management growing rapidly, Mr Coates' company has produced a free eight-page booklet for employers to give to their staff.

The booklet, called Let's Talk About

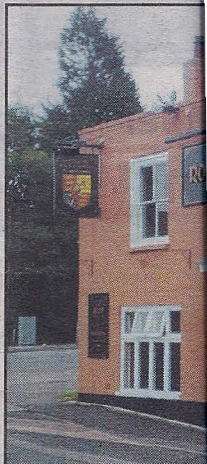
Stress, covers topics such as how to identify if someone is suffering from stress, practical steps to avoid or reduce it and a list of resources that employees can use to help themselves. Employers can brand it as their own and insert relevant contact details.

With common causes of stress being too much work, fear of change, job insecurity and change of management, the likely cuts in the public sector are predicted to cause an increase in employees showing such symptoms and employers are urged to look out for the early signs and offer support.

"Private companies are also at great risk, as the cumulative effects of a recession, job cuts, wage freezes and fear of a double dip recession, are just as likely to cause stress," said Mr Coates.

When asked what was the most stressful job he has ever had, Mr Coates winced and said: "Age 12, delivering *The Evening Telegraph* for 50p a week."

■ To download the free stress booklet, visit www.protostar-uk.com/stress.aspx



'SPARKLING': Pub upgrading The Royal

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THE Royal Standard Wisbech is set to re-following an extensive investment.

Owned by Punch and run by Wayne B it has undergone redevelopment as part of a chain's Investing for scheme, which involves £20 million on 450 across the UK, to help drive trade and grow businesses.

Following the £37, the Royal Standard new look and fresh c As well as the trad