

Entrepreneurs who manage occupational stress perform better

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Many entrepreneurs work hard, day in, day out. Entrepreneurship causes a lot of stress. How does this impact entrepreneurs? Can training and coaching programs reduce that stress? In her PhD thesis, Josette Dijkhuizen concludes that entrepreneurs can create a competitive edge if they learn how to deal with work-related stress. Dijkhuizen, herself an entrepreneur, will defend her PhD thesis on Thursday, June 25, at Tilburg University.

Josette Dijkhuizen is one of the few researchers investigating the phenomenon of [stress](#) among [entrepreneurs](#). A study among 277 Dutch entrepreneurs showed that specific job demands like uncertainty, risk, responsibility, and 24/7 availability greatly affect the way in which stress is experienced.

Dijkhuizen also explored the relationship between stress and performance. The amount of stress is inversely proportionate to the entrepreneur's performance, on both financial and personal levels. In the Job Demands-Resources Model used by Dijkhuizen, work engagement (commitment) is the opposite of stress. That 'passion' is much higher among entrepreneurs than among employees. Dijkhuizen argues that an entrepreneur must have a minimum level of work engagement to be successful. Although this work engagement positively affects subjective personal success, it does not by definition lead to better financial success.

Dijkhuizen's findings are important information for entrepreneurs,

advisors, policy officers, mentors, and coaches. Entrepreneurs can create a competitive edge if they learn how to deal effectively with the demands of their jobs and with work-related stress by means of training and coaching programs. Since [work engagement](#) is an important precondition for professional success, advisors and coaches need to challenge entrepreneurs to keep that commitment at a high level.

Josette Dijkhuizen is an entrepreneur herself. At the end of 2012, she was appointed by the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs as Women's Representative in the Netherlands Delegation to the United Nations' General Assembly. She is the author of various management books and lectures on entrepreneurship, both in the Netherlands and abroad. In addition to earlier nominations and awards, she has recently been voted 'Top manager of South-East Brabant'.

Provided by Tilburg University

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