

The strategies suggested below can help internal appeal panel members effectively manage stress during the appeal process.

Avoid Denying or Ignoring your Stress:

- You have been given a big responsibility and it is normal to experience feelings of stress. Accepting the stress and channeling the energy into your preparation for the proceedings will enhance your chances of delivering on the expectations of an appeal panel.

Identify the Sources of your Stress:

- Take some time to reflect on what concerns you the most. For example, the notion of the potential consequence of your decision on one or the other party may be a source of stress for you. Obviously, you would not want your decision to cause detriment to one of the parties, but given the nature of an adjudication process it is unlikely that it will satisfy everyone. You therefore need to do everything in your power to make sure you render a fair decision by leading an equitable process. Even when rendering a difficult decision, it will be comforting for you to know that it was well founded.

Be Well Prepared:

- Proper preparation is a confidence builder. If your stress comes from your inexperience or limited experience as an appeal panel member, you may find that reading on the subject, or talking to someone with more experience or even consulting a lawyer during your preparation will help you feel better equipped to handle the challenge. Some of the information provided in this orientation program may steer you in the right direction. However if there are more specific aspects of the appeal process that worry you, it is suggested that you read on the subject, or speak to someone with experience or legal training. If you are part of an appeal panel (as opposed to being a sole arbitrator), you may share your concerns with the other panel members who may already have some solutions or be able to suggest some. The other important part of your preparation involves becoming familiar with all the written evidence and exhibits submitted by the parties in advance of the hearing, in order to avoid surprises on the day of the hearing.

Use Stress Management Techniques:

- Think back to stress management techniques that have worked for you in the past, for example as an athlete before a competition, a student before an exam, a job candidate before an interview, etc.

Suggested reference:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/life-vie/stress-eng.php>

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm

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