
Resilience Under Pressure Training Course: Stress, Conflict and Recovery in Complex Programmes

7 – 11 December 2026
Barcelona





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Ref: 503_27574 **Date:** 7 – 11 December 2026 **Location:** Barcelona **Fees:** 4800 GBP

Programme Summary

Resilience under pressure is the subject of this one-week training course for senior project, programme and PMO managers working under sustained delivery pressure, ending in a personal and team resilience plan for one live programme. Deadlines, conflicting sponsors and long hours erode judgement long before a project fails on paper. The programme moves from the sources of strain, through self-diagnosis and difficult conversations, to recovery and workload design, then applies each tool to one programme. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on resilience under pressure for mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Programme leaders absorb pressure from sponsors, suppliers and teams, and unmanaged strain shows up as slow decisions, avoidable conflict, sickness absence and burnout among the people who deliver. Leaders who recognise their own reactions, hold hard conversations early and plan recovery into the schedule keep judgement steady through peak periods and protect the capacity of their teams. Left alone, the same pattern repeats from one programme to the next.

- **Decision Quality:** Improves as stress reactions are recognised and checked before major calls.
- **Team Sustainability:** Strengthens as workload and recovery are planned against the delivery calendar.
- **Stakeholder Conflict:** Reduces as pressure points are raised and negotiated early.

Principles and Evidence Base

- **ISO 45003 on psychological health and safety at work:** It frames the psychosocial risk checklist in Session 1 and the team early-warning work in Session 4.
- **Psychosocial risk management cycle of identifying, assessing, controlling and reviewing:** It structures the workload and pressure audits in Sessions 1 and 4.
- **Occupational psychology principles on recovery and workload balance:** They guide the recovery routines and peak period protocol in Session 4.

Intended Participants

- Senior project managers who carry delivery accountability for large, time-bound work.
- Programme managers who balance competing sponsors, suppliers and dependencies.
- PMO leaders who support several project managers under reporting pressure.
- Delivery directors who set workload and expectations for project teams.

Typical sectors include construction, telecommunications, public infrastructure and technology delivery.



Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to diagnose the sources of strain in a live programme and rank them by effect.
2. Participants will be able to evaluate their own stress reactions and the effect on decisions.
3. Participants will be able to construct a plan for a difficult conversation with a sponsor or supplier.
4. Participants will be able to prioritise recovery and workload changes for a peak period.
5. Participants will be able to justify a personal and team resilience plan to a sponsor.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Resilience Under Pressure: Sources of Strain in Programmes

What creates strain in complex programmes, and who carries it?

- Pressure Source Map
- Psychosocial Risk Checklist under ISO 45003
- Personal Stress Signal Log
- Workload and Decision Load Audit
- Resilience Self-Assessment Profile

Day 2: Reading Your Own Reactions Under Stress

How do stress reactions change judgement and conduct on a project?

- Reaction Pattern Diary
- Trigger and Response Chart
- Decision Quality Review Under Strain
- Cognitive Reappraisal Worksheet
- Escalation Threshold Card

Day 3: Conflict, Stakeholders and Hard Conversations

How are difficult exchanges held without losing control or trust?

- Stakeholder Pressure Matrix
- Difficult Conversation Planning Sheet
- Boundary Setting Script
- De-escalation Step Sequence
- Sponsor Pushback Rehearsal Plan

Day 4: Recovery, Workload and Team Sustainability

How are recovery and workload designed into delivery rather than left to chance?



- Recovery Routine Planner
- Workload Rebalancing Table
- Team Strain Early-Warning Indicators
- Peer Support Arrangement
- Peak Period Protocol

Day 5: Applying the Tools and Completing the Resilience Plan

Does the plan hold when tested on one live programme?

- Applying the Session 1 Pressure Map to the Programme
- Testing the Session 2 Response Chart on a Recent Incident
- Rehearsing the Session 3 Pushback Plan
- Checking the Session 4 Rebalancing Table Against Real Workload
- Completing the Personal and Team Resilience Plan

Methodology

The programme uses a structured exercise method built on anonymised programme calendars, workload records, stakeholder maps and short written cases from construction, telecommunications and public delivery. Participants work in small groups on one live programme, rehearse hard conversations with peers acting as sponsors, and receive facilitator feedback on each work product. The programme is professional development, not clinical or therapeutic support.

- Suggested activity: Mapping every pressure source on a live programme and ranking the top three.
- Suggested activity: Rehearsing a conversation that pushes back on an unrealistic deadline.
- Suggested activity: Rebuilding a peak period schedule with recovery blocks.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a personal and team resilience plan for one live programme. It holds a pressure map, a reaction and trigger profile, a conversation plan, a workload rebalancing table and a recovery routine. The plan is used at work to brief sponsors, agree workload limits and guide how strain is spotted and answered in later programmes.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is resilience under pressure suitable for managers with no background in psychology?

Yes. Resilience under pressure is taught as a practical management skill and assumes responsibility for delivery, not any training in psychology.



Which guidance does resilience under pressure rest on in this programme?

Resilience under pressure here rests on ISO 45003 on psychological health and safety at work, a psychosocial risk management cycle and occupational psychology principles on recovery.

How is the resilience plan for resilience under pressure used at work?

You use the plan to brief sponsors, agree workload limits with your team and guide how strain is spotted and answered in later programmes.

How does resilience under pressure differ from a programme on time management?

It centres on reactions, conflict, recovery and workload under strain, while time management centres on prioritising tasks and scheduling personal effort.