



# Leading from the Edge: A School Leader's Guide to Recognising and Overcoming Stress

*James Hilton*

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## **Leading from the Edge: A School Leader's Guide to Recognising and Overcoming Stress** James Hilton

A guide to recognising, managing, overcoming and surviving the work-related stress suffered by so many teachers and school leaders working in schools today. This unique, honest, provocative and humorous analysis of the challenges of leading a 21st century school is filled with scenarios and strategies guaranteed to inspire, reassure and help leaders overcome the pressures on them. In addition to helping school leaders recognise and manage stress in themselves, the book covers how to help and support members of staff to manage stress levels and the pressures of their job.

School staff suffering from and not being able to manage high-levels of stress is a huge barrier to school improvement as well as successful sustainable educational leadership. Stress in schools is on the increase as teachers and leaders have higher imposed targets than ever before and feel like they have less support. A recent report stated that two-fifths of teachers are leaving the profession within five years of starting and teachers taking leave due to stress is also on the increase (it was reportedly up 10% over the last 4 years in 2012 and on the increase). Stress in the teaching profession has often gone untalked about and headteachers especially feel unable to talk about it openly, however it is very prevalent in the news at the moment, especially since the head of Ofsted Sir Michael Wilshaw caused outrage when he said that teachers do not know what stress is.

*Leading From the Edge* is unique because it looks at work related-stress from a school leader's personal experience. James Hilton worked as a headteacher for 15 years in large schools. Following a nervous breakdown, brought on by work-related stress in 2006 and after a significant period of absence, he returned to headship, more self-aware than before. Chris Roome, the mental health therapist who taught him many of the positive strategies he learned in his recovery will act as a consultant on the book adding significant credibility to the work. Each chapter will conclude with learning points and a wealth of practical self-help strategies.

Foreword by Richard Gerver.

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