

How to improve your work-health balance

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Your task list is growing by the day, your wife is reminding you about the roof leak for the sixth time, and the laundry is stacking up. If you feel overwhelmed by the number of things you still need to do, you are not alone.



Work-life balance has always been a struggle; we want to do our best and perform well in each area of our lives. Although your career is the bread and butter for your home, it is important to remember that your personal life dramatically affects your capability of optimal performance at work and at home.

What is a work-health balance?

Simply put, it is the equal prioritisation of work demands and your personal life. It's not about splitting your time 50/50, but about the feeling of content in both areas. A good work-health balance has various positive outcomes, including better stress management, lower risk of burnout, and a greater sense of well-being and performance.

How do I know if my work-health balance is unhealthy?

We tend to normalise with co-workers; habits around work can become the new norm. Working until late to catch up on that dreaded admin, working during your lunch break, checking your phone for emails at the dinner table. You might work for yourself or have a managerial position and believe that you need to put in longer hours for success.

Here's your friendly wake-up call. Albert Einstein said, 'Try not to be a man of success, rather become a man of value.' Success is not dependent on the number of hours we work; it is about the quality of work.

Mistakes happen when we are near or in burnout. Our tanks are empty, our thoughts, ethics, and creativity dry up, and productivity decreases. Signs of burnout include exhaustion, negative behaviour, feeling undervalued, more emotional or agitated than usual, stomach pain, headache, and higher blood pressure.

7 tips for a better work-health balance

1. Break the habit of negative thoughts. Instead of saying I have too much work, say, 'I can manage my workload.'

Positivity in the workplace leads to higher motivation and performance and decreases stress levels.

2. Set plans in motion for family and personal time. As a family, decide what evenings you will eat dinner together, schedule date nights, and organise a babysitter in advance. The key is to schedule your time wisely and stay committed to it.
3. Take stock of habits and activities that does not add value to your personal life or career. Maximise your time and be intentional with it. You don't have to join that 5-minute gossip session during your break, and Netflix is not necessarily a better recharge than a warm destressing bath.
4. Exercising doesn't only increase your endorphins but also relieves stress and improves your mood. Wake up early for a run before the family wakes up or ask the family to join in after work.
5. You can make 10-15 minutes to do something that recharges your batteries even during a busy day. Take a bath, listen to music, read an inspirational book.
6. Let go of perfectionism. That research document can always improve, and your hair will have a bad day. Get the job done productively and effectively, not in a perfected way.
7. Calculate your tasks and allocate time accordingly. Be honest with your superior about what you can achieve and ask for an extension when you know you cannot meet a deadline.

Resources

<https://www.webmd.com/women/features/balance-life>

<https://www.webmdhealthservices.com/blog/8-ways-to-improve-work-life-balance-at-your-organization>

<https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/5244-improve-work-life-balance-today.html>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/deborahlee/2014/10/20/6-tips-for-better-work-life-balance/?sh=6279993529ff>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/w/work-life-balance>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/work-life-balance/art-20048134>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/exercise-and-stress/art-20044469>

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