

7 Tips for a healthier work-life balance



Understanding the importance of work-life balance



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In today's fast-paced world, maintaining a healthy work-life balance is not just an ideal, it's a necessity.

Balancing work, personal life, and family responsibilities is crucial for our overall wellbeing. A skewed work-life balance can lead to stress, burnout, and dissatisfaction in both professional and personal spheres. It's not just about time allocation, but also the quality of time in each domain. Understanding strategies for healthier living is key to achieving a balanced work-life dynamic.

When your work-life balance is in balance:

When work and personal life are in balance, they complement each other, leading to a positive impact on overall wellbeing. Achieving balance involves several key aspects that contribute to a harmonious work-life integration:

- **You have time for personal responsibilities outside of work hours:** Having dedicated time to attend to personal commitments, such as family, hobbies, or self-care, helps maintain a healthy work-life balance.
- **You have the ability to switch off from work and enjoy leisure time:** Being able to disconnect from work-related responsibilities and engage in activities that bring joy and relaxation is crucial for rejuvenation and mental wellbeing.
- **You have the flexibility to handle unexpected issues:** Having the flexibility to adapt and manage unforeseen challenges or emergencies without compromising personal or professional obligations is essential for maintaining overall balance.
- **You are able to manage workload within regular working hours:** Striking a balance between productivity and working within regular hours helps prevent excessive workloads and burnout, allowing individuals to maintain a sustainable work pace.

When your work-life balance is out of balance:

When work and life are out of balance, it can create stress and exacerbate existing issues. It is important to be mindful of the signals that indicate when a person needs help in managing their workload. The following are some warning signs that suggest your work-life balance may need some attention:

- **You are regularly working outside of normal hours:** Consistently working beyond the designated work hours can lead to prolonged stress and hinder personal time, affecting overall wellbeing.
- **You are unable to disconnect from work:** Finding it challenging to mentally switch off from work and constantly being preoccupied with work-related thoughts can strain personal relationships and hinder relaxation.
- **You are neglecting personal responsibilities due to work demands:** Prioritising work excessively over personal commitments can result in feelings of guilt and dissatisfaction, impacting both personal and professional spheres.
- **You are regularly having to take extra time off work for personal responsibilities.** If things at home keep cropping up and causing an individual to leave early or use unplanned leave this can cause stress and lead to falling behind at work.

Recognising imbalance in your work-life dynamics is the first step. However, the key to achieving a healthier lifestyle lies in adopting a proactive approach to rectify the situation. Drawing from the knowledge of when your work-life balance is out of sync, let's explore ways to navigate these challenges and restore balance.

Tips for achieving work-life balance

Here are some practical strategies on setting boundaries, managing time effectively, and utilising wellness resources to improve your work-life balance. These tips will empower you to bring about healthy changes, fostering a better work-life balance:

- 1 Set boundaries:** Try to establish a clear separation between your work and personal life by implementing a pre and post-work routine. This could include activities like going for a walk or making a to-do list before work and logging achievements after, and formally logging on and off so work starts and stops instead of being always on. By creating a physical and mental boundary between work and personal life, you can better prioritise your time and avoid burnout.
- 2 Use leave:** Ensure you take advantage of your annual leave to rest and recharge. Taking time off from work allows you to rejuvenate, relax, and engage in activities that bring you joy and fulfilment. Try to disconnect from work during your leave and fully immerse yourself in activities that promote wellbeing.
- 3 Take breaks:** Make sure to take short breaks throughout the day to enhance your focus and productivity. Step away from your workstation, stretch, and engage in activities that help you recharge. Whether it's a short walk, a quick meditation session, or a chat with a colleague, these breaks can help alleviate stress and improve overall wellbeing.
- 4 Manage stress:** Address stress as a symptom and a cause of poor work-life balance. Take a look at resources that explain how to help manage stress effectively. This could include attending stress

management workshops, checking out mental health resources, or trying activities like yoga or mindfulness exercises. By addressing stress proactively, you can go some way to maintaining a healthier work-life balance.

- 5** **Healthy home working:** If you work from home try to maintain a separate workspace and establish boundaries between work and personal life. Having a dedicated space for work helps create a physical separation and signals the start and end of the workday. Consider setting out and packing away your temporary work space if you don't have a door you can close on the home-office. Think about how you can establish a routine and stick to regular working hours to maintain a sense of structure and balance.
- 6** **Embrace flexibility:** Find out about your company's flexible working policies and procedures to support a healthy work-life balance. Flexibility can come in various forms, such as flexible working hours, remote work options, or compressed workweeks. By embracing flexibility, you can better manage your personal commitments while meeting work requirements.
- 7** **Seek support:** Make use of the availability of any employee health benefits, such as employee assistance programs for guidance on personal and family matters. These programs can provide resources, counselling, and support to help you navigate challenges and maintain a healthy work-life balance. Talk to your manager if you are having issues, before they become a bigger problem.

Like most things in life, a healthy work-life balance might not just happen on it's own, you might need to work at it. Every small change you make towards balancing your work and personal life counts. These tips are not quick fixes but rather steps towards a journey of healthier living. Remember, the key is not to strive for a perfect balance but a 'right' balance that resonates with your individual needs and priorities. You are empowered to take control of your work-life dynamics, and there are plenty of resources available to support you on this journey. **Here's to a happier, healthier, and more balanced you.**

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