



## Work Life Balance; Prioritizing between "Work" and "Lifestyle"

MS. RUPAL ARORA

Assistant Professor,  
Mata Sundri College, University of Delhi  
Delhi (India)

MS. SHILPA GARG

M. Phil. Scholar,  
Department of Commerce  
Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi  
Delhi (India)

### Abstract:

*Life is the result of all actions taken by choice over the course of time while fulfilling one's purpose in life. Stress forces us to deviate from normal functioning. Work life balance means healthy and satisfying lives both personally and professionally. It has gained increasing prominence in recent years and working hours emerge as one the issues of great concern.*

*This paper helps is to understand the concept of work life balance and see whether a company employees get necessary conditions to achieve such balance in their lives.*

**Keywords:** Life style, Prioritizing, WLB

### 1. Introduction

The concept of "work life balance" is important because learning to create work/life balance can help by clearing the mind and body, which in turn can help to identify which goals are the most important to one self and define success using those objectives.

The best work-life balance is different for each of us because we all have different priorities and different lives. Achievement and Enjoyment are the front and back of the coin of value in life. At work you can create your own best Work-Life Balance by making

sure you not only Achieve, but also reflect the joy of the job, and the joy of life, every day.



#### 1.1 Three things necessary to obtain a balance between work and life

- understanding time
- understanding choice
- understanding purpose.

Life is the result of all actions taken by choice over the course of time while fulfilling one's purpose in life. Therefore, finding a balance between work and life is essential to being happy and fulfilled. Work and life balance can be defined as the ability to make choices that fulfills one's purpose over the course of time. Getting the work-life balance right also means that you are able to fuel other important parts of your brain and social skills. It means you can re-charge and take time when needed to be in the office sorting things out. Being flexible and getting the balance right allows you to prioritize. Sometimes, our families need us more than the next big deal and sometimes the office calls us and

preoccupies our thoughts more than the family but it is vital not to allow either of the two become dominant and maintain that balance.

## 2. Policies followed by companies

### 2.1 Flextime Policy

Flex-time is a work schedule which allows employees to work hours that are not within the standard 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM range, while maintaining a high level of service during the organization's peak operating hours (typically 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM). With a flex-time schedule, non-exempt employees are still subject to all requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Employees who are exempt from FLSA are expected to work whatever number of hours are required in order to accomplish their duties and may be permitted to set their own schedules. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to verify and ensure performance of employees with flex-time schedules. Flex-time schedules will need to be placed in a central location so that all employees stay aware of who is covering department services. Good relationships among everyone involved are important for a successful flex-time policy. There are three types of flex schedules from which to choose:

- **Peak-Hour Flex-Time:** This flex-time schedule shifts daily work hours while still working an 8 hour day. Working any arrangement of hours within an 8 hour day constitutes a valid work day. It is important to remember that the level of service must be maintained during peak hours, which are from 10:00 to 3:00.
- **Adjusted Lunch Period:** This allows employees to adjust the length of their lunch period, while still working an 8-hour day. An employee can take a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of two hours for lunch.
- **Compressed Work Week:** To maintain this flex-time arrangement, an employee works a full 40 hour work week in less than five days.

### 2.2 Flexiplace Policy

Flexi-place policies that allow for alternative work locations permit staff to schedule either occasional or regular work times outside the office. New information and communication technologies make it possible to access datasets, information sources and people without being at the office. Examples include e-mail, Internet, computers with remote access, video-conferencing and voice mail. Unless there are overwhelming reasons to the contrary (e.g. service delivery needs), all employees should have access to flexi-place. To be successful, flexi-place arrangements require the staff member and her/his manager to be clear from the beginning about expectations. It is also necessary for the staff member to ensure that all responsibilities will be covered.

### 2.3 Policies on working time and time off

A policy on working time and time off cover a number of areas:

- **Leave and absence:** Occasionally, workers need time off. In certain circumstances, companies are legally obliged to give workers time off, eg. to take annual leave, attend health and safety training, etc. In other circumstances employer use their discretion, eg. requests involving moving house or looking after a sick relative.
- **Working hours:** Workers aged 18 or above may only work an average of 48 hours per week. However, they have the right to sign an opt-out agreement, which allows them to work more than this.
- **Overtime:** Any overtime policy should still set out the rules on overtime. Rates of overtime pay should be agreed with employees, as no minimum statutory levels apply.
- **Work-life balance:** Encouraging work-life balance is important for business. To achieve this, company should have policies on:

-parental leave  
-flexible working  
-maternity, adoption and paternity leave and pay

### ***2.4 Paid Time off Policy (PTO)***

The purpose of Paid Time off (PTO) is to provide employees with flexible paid time off from work that can be used for such needs as vacation, personal or family illness, doctor appointments, school, volunteerism, and other activities of the employee's choice. The company's goal is to reduce unscheduled absences and the need for supervisory oversight.

The PTO days you accrue, effective (date) replace all existing vacation, sick time, and personal business days that you have been allotted under prior policies. The vacation time you accrued in the past will carry over, in excess of the PTO policy, per the company's guidelines at the time.

### ***2.5 Paid vacation days***

Paid vacation days are time off work an organization voluntarily provides employees as a benefit. The number of paid vacation days is generally accrued by employees based on years of service to the organization and the level of their position. While there are no Federal laws in the United States that require an employer to offer paid vacation days as a benefit, employers of choice offer employees paid vacation days. In fact, paid vacation days as a benefit are so common that potential employees expect paid vacation days as part of a comprehensive benefits package. Most organizations use a formula that assigns a certain number of hours accrued during each pay period based on time with the company. Paid vacation days in the United States range from five to 30. In Europe and other parts of the world, paid vacation days are more liberal.

## **3. Work schedule policy**

To allow employees to accommodate both work and personal life as predictably as possible, the Company will assign employees to work schedules that, to the extent possible, will remain constant from week to week. However, to meet the needs of its customers and the demands of a changing workplace, the Company may need to change an employee's usual hours of work at times and for periods that may be hard to predict, or in some cases, on an ongoing basis. No particular work schedule or number of hours is guaranteed to any employee. For that reason, the Company reserves the right to modify the hours of work for any employee at any time, and by virtue of accepting employment with the Company, employees agree to be available for whatever hours of work the needs of the Company may require.

- **Full-time Employees:** A normal workweek consists of five eight-hour days for a total of 40 hours per week, unless the employee and the Company agree to other hours. Normal pay includes a 40-hour workweek. No additional pay will be owed for time worked unless the employee actually works more than 40 hours in the workweek. Normal working hours and lunch periods may vary from one work location to another.
- **Part-time Employees:** Regular working hours of part-time employees are established at the time of employment and may be changed only after permission has been obtained from the supervisor and the president.
- **Temporary Employees:** Under some circumstances, the Company may hire temporary, seasonal, or as-needed employees. The work schedules of such employees will vary according to Company needs and may be subject to change at any time.

### ***3.1 Job Share Policy***

Job Sharing is an arrangement whereby two people divide the duties and responsibilities of one full-time post between them. It requires both sharers to take joint responsibility for the whole job, not just the duties undertaken individually. The salary and conditions of service of the full-time post are divided between the job share partners according to the hours that they work.

## **4. Literature review**

**Sharma (2008)** Rajeshwari Sharma studied the Nielsen Global Online Consumer Survey, conducted by Nielsen Customized Research, conducted in April 2008 among 28,253 Internet users in 511

countries from Europe, Asia-Pacific, North America and West Asia. This research was carried out to study the attention paid to work and life by different people in different countries. Indians' concerns over balancing work and life have surpassed worries about a slowing economy, according to the bi-annual global consumer opinion survey by market research company The Nielsen Co.

About 20% of Indians cite achieving this balance as their main worry; 13% cite the economy as the second biggest. Globally, the state of the economy is the biggest concern, with 20% of the respondents citing it. Interestingly, booming emerging markets across Eastern Europe, West Asia and Asia seem to feel the same. Globally, respondents rated job security (10%) as their third biggest concern, followed by health (9%), children's education/welfare (9%) and debt (8%). But concerns differ across regions. While Americans are more worried about finance, respondents from the Asia-Pacific region are more bothered about emotional and physical well-being. Europe is anxious about the environment and for people in West Asia/Africa, it is politics and terrorism.

Explaining the reason behind differing concerns, Janet Gasper Chowdhury, managing consultant, people and change practice, PricewaterhouseCoopers India, says, "With recession setting in the US and job cuts across companies, Americans' obvious concerns are finance and debt, while people in a mature economy are concerned about environmental issues." "All this has meant that employees are working harder at the expense of their personal lives to meet targets," she says. The third biggest concern for Indians (12%) is parent's welfare and happiness, the highest for any Asian country.

**Mahtani (2006)** conducted a research commissioned by Community Business and undertaken by the Public Opinion Programme at the University of Hong Kong on the state of work-life balance in Hong Kong exposes some disturbing facts.

The research is based on a random telephone survey of 1,519 employees in Hong Kong. The CBLT formed a work-life balance taskforce whose aim was to commission research on the state of work-life balance in Hong Kong. This taskforce decided to appoint Dr Robert Chung, Programme Director, and his team at the Population Opinion Programme (POP) to conduct the research and both parties worked together to identify the scope of a work-life balance survey. This was a random survey conducted by telephone interviewers between 17 July and 9 August 2006. The target population was a full time worker of age 15 or above who speaks Cantonese, English or Mandarin. A full time worker is defined as an employee who works at least 5 days a week or total working time of not less than 40 hours per week. In total 1,519 workers were successfully interviewed.

The results were some worrying facts about the state of work-life balance in Hong Kong. Not only do employees work long hours and frequently work overtime, but over 25% of them do so because they cannot be seen to be the first to leave work and cannot leave before their boss. This work culture is regressive and can potentially backfire against employers, particularly in tight labour markets.

**Gordon** wrote article by surveying the executives of her own co. MCC when she started facing problems after declaring some audacious goals for her co. She came up with 9 ideas to maintain work life balance. I like working with independent professionals and artists because of the way the work life balance shows itself in our lives - for us, life, work, and business exist in a nexus from which we cannot easily extract our ways of loving, relating, and making meaning. The challenges we face in business inform our personal lives and personal challenges affect our businesses. The relationship between personal and professional life can be rocky and maintaining the work life balance is often a tricky issue.

## **Nine strategies that, taken together, can help to change course without abandoning the destination & help to restore your work life balance:**

### **1. Don't panic.**

Even if you feel panicky, you can choose modest, recoverable steps to address the situation. This is no time to get a divorce, fire an employee, or buy a new computer system. *Tip:* Talk with a coach or therapist to get perspective.

### **2. Return to Source.**

Whatever your spiritual orientation or tradition, connect with what for you is the Source of life or spirit. Know that there is something larger than you that encompass you. Spend at least 15 minutes each day connecting with that Source.

### **3. Take a body inventory.**

Are you sleeping well? How are you eating? What's your energy level? If these are not up to par, get a professional evaluation and take the steps that will restore your well being.

### **4. Tell the truth.**

Sometimes energy flags when we've gotten into a pattern of pleasing others or living according to standards that are not our own. Notice if there is any imbalance. Notice where you're being less than forthright and get clear about your motives, then clean it up.

**5. Keep good company.** Are you stimulated and encouraged by your peers and clients? Do you have great playmates? Playing on the wrong playground with the wrong kids is neither fun nor productive.

### **6. Tune Up Your Thinking.**

There's substantial evidence that managing the way we think can have a profound and lasting effect on mood and motivation.

### **7. Set Healthy, Flexible Boundaries.**

Yes, real life and real business are intimately connected, but that doesn't mean that you need to give up your privacy. To find your work life balance, set boundaries so that you can feel generous without feeling depleted and available without feeling invaded. Keep them flexible, because things change.

### **8. Create or Refine Systems.**

We can't manage real life and a real business or hope to achieve meaningful balance without good systems. Look at where things feel most out of sorts and resolve to create or improve a system to get things on track.

### **9. Keep the Goal, Drop the Plan.**

Sometimes the best way to achieve a goal is to let go of our plans. Promptly and clearly revise commitments and offers as necessary to bring current activity in line with current resources. Why abandon ship when you can drop anchor while you make some repairs.

## **5. Conclusion**

Maintaining a balance between work and life has never been an easy task. It is a challenge that all workers face. Families are particularly affected .maintaining a proper work life balance varies from person to person .But the companies are now following flex time policies, work schedules which are serving a great help to the employees resulting in maintaining a balance between work and life. Sports complex idle hours are some of the ways wherein an employee can relax for bit and get away from stress. The companies should also think of innovative policies and activities to reduce stress among the employees. Suggestions from the employees should always be welcomed. Work life balance is important for country development also as the human capital is the utmost important factor contributing to it. Achievement and Enjoyment are the front and back of the coin of value in life. At work you can create your own best Work-Life Balance by making sure you not only Achieve, but also reflect the joy of the job, and the joy of life, every day.

## **References**

1. Gordon molly (2004). Life could be a dream

5 Online & Print International, Refereed (Reviewed) & Indexed Monthly Journal

[www.raijmr.com](http://www.raijmr.com)

RET Academy for International Journals of Multidisciplinary Research (RAIJMR)

2. Joshi Sunil, Leichne John, Melanson Keith, Pruna Cristina, Sager Nicolai, Jo Cathi, Williams Kevin (2002). [www.worklifebalance.com](http://www.worklifebalance.com)
3. Mahtani Shalini (2006). [Www.communitybusiness.org.hk](http://Www.communitybusiness.org.hk)
4. Panel of experts (2007). [rediff.com](http://rediff.com)
5. Panel of Wall Street Executives (2008). Wall street journal
6. Sharma Rajeshwari (2008). Wall street journal, [livemint.com](http://livemint.com)