

The Increasing Call for Work-Life Balance

5 Tips for Better Work-Life Balance

- Figure Out What Really Matters to You in Life
- Drop Unnecessary Activities
- Protect Your Private Time
- Accept Help to Balance Your Life
- Plan Fun and Relaxation

Source:

<http://www.webmd.com/balance/guide/5-strategies-for-life-balance>



Work-life balance is now the second most important driver of employee attraction and commitment.

The economic downturn has placed tremendous pressure on employees over their long-term job security. Employees are responding by seeking out employers that offer a better work-life balance, and research shows they work harder for those that do. In the current economic environment, work-life balance now ranks as one of the most important workplace attributes—second only to compensation, according to research conducted by the Corporate Executive Board among more than 50,000 global workers. And employees who feel they have a better work-life balance tend to work 21% harder than those that don't.

The critical need to ensure an adequate work-life balance for employees in the downturn is largely being neglected by employers as more and more pressure is put onto employees. In 2006, 53% of employees felt they had a good work-life balance; that number fell to 30% in the first quarter of 2009.

Several misconceptions prevent organizations from optimizing their ability to deliver on the work-life balance promise. For example, most organizations mistakenly provide costly services, such as an on-site gym or health-care services when, in fact, fewer than 20% of employees actually value these types of benefits.

Instead, the best organizations recognize that the most appreciated service they can provide their employees is the "gift of time." In fact, more than 60% of the employees polled in the CEB study identified flexible schedules as the most important work-life practice their employer could provide.

In addition, most organizations focus on the actual consumption of work-life services they offer. Ironically, boosting workforce productivity does not hinge on employees actually participating in the work-life services offered by their employer. Employees just need to be reassured that the service is there and that they have the option to participate if they want to. In other words, the option value of work-life balance practices is more important at improving employee effort than the actual consumption of those same work-life balance practices.

Source: The Staff of the Corporate Executive Board

http://www.businessweek.com/managing/content/mar2009/ca20090327_734197.htm?chan=careers_special+report+---+work-life+balance_special+report+---+work-life+balance



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Manage Your Fear of Public Speaking

Most supervisors and managers will, at some point, need to speak or give a presentation to a large group. If just the idea of standing in front of a room full of people makes you break into a cold sweat, you are not alone. Most people who fear speaking in front of groups simply avoid it or spend sleepless nights ahead of the dreaded event. But there are effective ways to prepare yourself. The key is not to try to completely eliminate fear but to accept it, reframe it, and control it.

Accept your fear.

To start to manage your fear, you need to acknowledge and accept the fear as something that is hard-wired in all of us. In fact, new research finds that you would be abnormal if you experienced no anxiety at all. Fear of public speaking is an extremely common trait in human beings that can be traced back to our early evolution to help track what others think of us. Our goal should not be to try to eliminate something that is a part of who we are as people. A more reasonable approach is to examine the situations that set off our fears and try to prevent them.

Reframe your fear.

One of the situations that sets off public speaking fear is a negative perception of self. For example, imagine you are a person with extremely low self esteem, and your new job requires you to present your company's product to large groups. In fact, not only do you not like being the focal point of attention, but even leaving voice mails causes you to panic. This is an example of having a negative perception of self. Although you may be the most knowledgeable about your company's product, until you reframe your perception of the task you will never be able to transfer that knowledge. This simply means replacing negative emotions with positive ones. By doing this, you may be able to build your confidence and reframe every negative thought about your abilities and turn them into positives. While the fear may never subside, you can learn to control it.



Control your fear.

There was a CEO of a large public company who dreaded giving presentations at large conferences and got nervous before every one of them. Yet this man was considered a brilliant speaker. His secret was practice. Lots of it. Your fear of public speaking must be addressed. It has implications on your ability to sell your ideas as an aspiring entrepreneur, small business owner, or business leader. Once you acknowledge, reframe, and control your fear, you may still experience the anxiety but you will have the tools to manage it and make your presentations easier on yourself—and your audience.

- For more information on managing your fear of public speaking, read "Fire Them Up" By Carmine Gallo; a communications coach for the world's leading brands.

Source: http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz/content/dec2008/sb20081230_141498.htm