



August 2007

MasterfulMentoring

▼ TIP

Tip of the Month

Give your partner permission to assess your work/life balance as time goes on, providing you with an impartial point of view from someone who has your best interests in mind.

▼ WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Work/life balance is a global topic of growing importance and frequent discussion. The reality is that most of us are facing increasing competition for our time and energy. In today's fast-paced world, how can we have a satisfying work experience and a healthy personal life? How can we utilize our mentoring relationships to examine our lives for balance and harmony? In this article, we will discuss the meaning of a balanced life, how to determine if you need it, and techniques for regaining equilibrium.

The Concept of Balance

By definition, work/life balance is investing equal amounts of time and energy between your work and your personal life. In application, work/life balance is best viewed as a desired state rather than a sustained state of being. In general, it is elusive and difficult to maintain. Compromises must be made, with the scales of balance shifting along with the occasional long workday or work assignment, family obligations, or any one of a number of life's little surprises.

Work/life balance is more of a practiced art than a definitive science. It's more than simply ensuring that for every waking hour you spend half of it at work and half of it on personal pursuits. For some it will look more like a 70-30 split rather than a 50-50 divide. This is because work/life balance is associated with a feeling. When we feel fully satisfied with both our personal life and our career it can be said that we are balanced. In this regard we are not balancing our time and energy investments, but rather we are striving for equal amounts of satisfaction in our personal and professional arenas. In turn, the concept of work/life balance can serve as a measure of personal and professional focus.

Assessing Your Balance

Assessing your balance is as simple as determining how satisfied you are in your given profession/career and in your personal life. The Work/Life Assessment on the next page is a personal exercise that can help you gain some insight about your work/life balance. Consider using this assessment with your mentoring partner to help you gain the view point of someone who cares about you and your work/life balance.

WORK/LIFE ASSESSMENT

Job or Career

List the top 3 benefits that you receive from your job or career:

Prioritize your list in order of importance to you and rank the amount of value that you get from each benefit:

	No Value	Great Value
1 _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
2 _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
3 _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

Assign a satisfaction rating to your job or career by circling one of the following:

Not Satisfied Somewhat Satisfied Moderately Satisfied Mostly Satisfied Fully Satisfied

Personal Life

List the top 3 benefits that you receive from your personal life:

Prioritize your list in order of importance to you and rank the amount of value that you get from each benefit:

	No Value	Great Value
1 _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
2 _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
3 _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

Assign a satisfaction rating to your personal life by circling one of the following:

Not Satisfied Somewhat Satisfied Moderately Satisfied Mostly Satisfied Fully Satisfied

Harmony

Determine how much harmony you have in your life by selecting the statement that most closely sums up your assessment:

- _____ I need to focus more on my job or career.
- _____ I need to reduce stress related to my job or career.
- _____ I need to focus more on my personal life.
- _____ I need to reduce stress related to my personal life.
- _____ I need to maintain the balance that I currently have.



RESOURCES

Triple Creek offers many free resources on our web site, including booklets, research papers, and an archive of past newsletters.

Visit www.3creek.com for access to these additional mentoring resources.

WORK/LIFE BALANCE (cont.)

Techniques for Improving Balance

If you find that your work/life harmony is unbalanced, there are many proven techniques you can apply to restore equilibrium. As you read over the list below, you may find that you have already tried some of the techniques in the past. This is okay, as these suggestions can be employed over and over again. The key is finding methods that work for your current situation. You will also notice that these techniques can be focused toward increasing satisfaction for either work or personal life. Use them as your circumstances require.

- *Get rid of a few distasteful activities.* We all have to do things that we don't like to do; this is a reality of life that has to be accepted. Yet, if we could eliminate (delegate or hire out) one or two activities, this simple act could immediately restore a sense of well-being.
- *Envision your future.* Plan a small getaway to capture or clarify your vision for a preferred future. Contemplate and journal about what you would like your life to look like in 3-5 years: What brings you energy? How can you get more? What legacy do you want to leave to the world? The object is to think big and without restrictions in order to discover (or rediscover) your core purpose.
- *Reduce your clutter.* Clean your desk once a week, set up a family calendar of important events, or just reorder your chaos. These activities can help you feel a better sense of control over all aspects of your life.
- *Limit distracting activities.* Consider your priorities and limit all activities that do not bring these priorities closer to attainment. Mindless television time, web-surfing, or shopping for things that are out of reach can rob us of precious time and energy that could be spent in more meaningful ways.
- *Engage in a meaningful hobby or project.* Participating in leisure activities or special work projects that bring personal pleasure and connect strongly with your passions can add a high sense of value and worth to your life.
- *Plan "me" time.* Make personal time a sacred practice on a routine basis. A mid-day workout session, thoughtful reading, meditation, or a relaxing soak in the tub are examples of alone time activity that can inspire creativity and imagination, as well as stimulate healthy thought.

Overall, the activity that restores a sense of balance and harmony needs to be focused on clarifying and focusing core priorities. We begin to feel out of balance when we sense that we are failing to live up to our personal expectations of where we should be in our professional or personal life. Typically when we are able to refocus our time and energy demands on the things that mean the most to us, we feel a greater amount of life satisfaction. Asking your mentoring partner to assess your situation with you can help you see a perspective of someone you trust and can help you find your work/life balance.



CONTACT

Triple Creek Associates, Inc.
7730 E. Belleview Ave.
Suite 200A
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

info@3creek.com

800-268-4422
303-707-0800
303-734-4291 (fax)

WORK/LIFE BALANCE (cont.)

Practice Exercise

The following exercise can help you and your partner address work/life balance concerns.

1. Complete the Work/Life Assessment in preparation for a discussion with your mentoring partner.
2. Ask your mentoring partner for feedback on your assessment results.
3. Discuss techniques that you can apply to improve or maintain your balance.
4. Establish a time in the future when you will discuss progress or reassess your work/life balance.