

The ABC's of Work-Life Balance

What is work-life balance?

Work-life balance refers to the 'golden medium' or a state of perfect equilibrium where a person attaches equal priority to their personal and professional lives. While this seems fairly straightforward to understand and implement on paper, it is one of the most complex aspects to follow in real life.

Why is it so difficult to strike the perfect balance between our personal and professional lives?


In today's competitive and fast-paced world, maintaining a good work-life balance is not easy to accomplish. As technology grows by leaps and bounds, connecting us with people around, it is becoming increasingly difficult to draw a line between our personal and professional lives. The concept of leaving your work at your office doesn't exist anymore. We all carry work home, often log on later in the day to answer emails or catch up on unfinished work. The cut-throat competition makes employers expect a lot from their employees, which in turn has led the workforce to burn out.



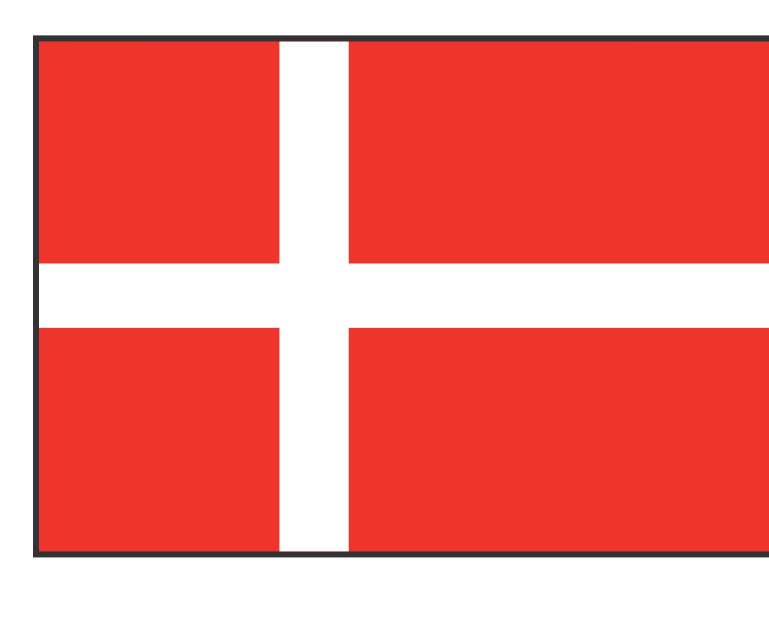
What are the five primary components of time?

- Professional time i.e. work, meetings.
- Family time i.e. time for spouse, children, parents, pets.
- Chores i.e. work around the house, errands, appointments.
- Social life i.e. meeting up with friends, partying, social obligations.
- Own time i.e. skills upgradation, hobbies, vacation.

Countries with the best work-life balance

 **Netherlands**
0.4% work long hours.
16.1 hours a day dedicated to personal life


 **Italy**
4.1% work long hours.
16.5 hours a day dedicated to personal life


 **Denmark**
2.3% work long hours.
15.9 hours a day dedicated to personal life


 **Spain**
4% work long hours.
15.9 hours a day dedicated to personal life

 **France**
7.7% work long hours.
16.4 hours a day dedicated to personal life

...And countries with the worst

 **Colombia**
Highest number of people working > 12 hrs a day

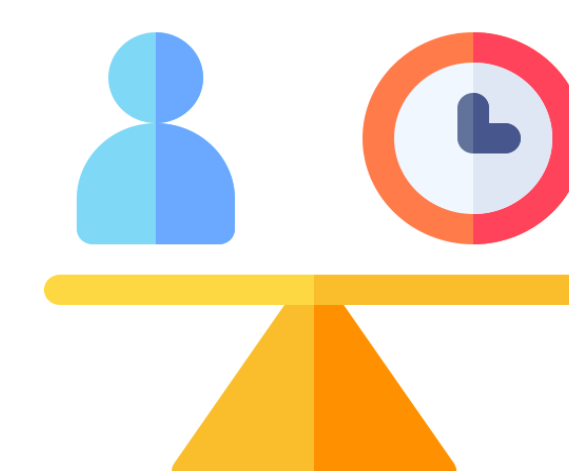
 **Mexico**
29% work long hours, much higher than OECD's average

 **Turkey**
33% of workers report having long hours on the job, last on OECD's list.

 **Korea**
25% of employees in Korea work long hours, double the OECD average of 11%.

 **Japan**
Japan, famous for its work ethic, has 17.9% of all employees work long hours.

“You can't truly be considered successful in your business life if your home life is in shambles.” — Zig Ziglar, motivational speaker



HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- Love your job!
- Plan your day better
- Don't feel guilty about unplugging from work
- Take vacations! Use your time off
- Set fixed work hours and an office space
- Work remotely and reduce your commute time
- Prioritize your health and personal time
- Ask for 'Flex Hours' at work
- Spend time with people who matter the most to you (i.e. family, friends and inspirational people)
- Spend time on personal development and upskilling
- Make optimal use of the amazing technologies available like video conferencing, time tracking software etc.
- Invest time in networking with like-minded people

Ultimately, it is important to remember that there is no such thing as the perfect work-life balance, no perfect schedule and no ideal routine. The crucial thing to bear in mind is to always strive to achieve a realistic balance over a period of time. It cannot be done overnight. Different responsibilities beckon at different times. Making oneself available for each of them is what will decide how you balance your life.

Sources:

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