

Creating your ideal work life balance

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We've all heard how important it is to achieve worklife balance. But what does that actually mean?

For starters, it suggests there is such a thing as a perfect balance between your work life and personal life. Also, it implies you should be able to find the precise balance if you try hard enough.

But let's be real: The idea of balance is different for everyone. What feels like too much work and too little play for one person may be fine for someone else. In addition, balance — like life itself — is dynamic. Needs and demands are always changing.

Go for what works for you

It may be better to set your goal as whatever works for you right now. And realize it may change later.

In other words, how much work and how much personal time do you need to feel happy and accomplish what you want? Here are some tips that may help you find an answer:

- **Make a formula.** Work and personal life rarely occupy exact 50-50 time slots. So start by trying to think of time allotments you need for work/home/family/personal life. Remember: The objective is to feel satisfied and less stressed while still meeting your goals.

- Have a definition of success. How will you know when you've achieved your ideal worklife balance? What will your life feel like when you "get there?" It may help to look back over each day. Write down achievements that made the day satisfying and obstacles that made it stressful. It's easier to work on any goal when you define it.
- **Keep a sense of control.** Feeling out of control is a basic reason for unhappiness. If you're working too much, is it in your control to figure out ways to delegate more of your work? Would it help if you could change your hours? Can you speak to your manager about the issue? Can you think of other positive actions you can take?
- **Enlist friends and family members.** Let those close to you know you're trying to create more balance. Get their feedback and help as you try to achieve your goals.

Keep these tips in mind as you work toward satisfaction. It can be a challenge to juggle the demands of work and life, but with effort, support and a positive attitude, you can do it!