



WORK-LIFE BALANCE

“The most successful people are those who take pride in their work, pride in their family...” — Kemmens Wilson

Whether we get to spend time with family and friends, enjoy some personal down-time or undertake travel, the holidays are a perfect time to reflect on the topic of work-life balance. Work-life balance is an essential aspect of our working lives because it allows for an organization to achieve its objectives while maximizing the wellbeing of its employees. This can be achieved by offering flexible working hours, time off work, work-from-home, educational/personal development leaves and etc.

As an owner or a decision-maker in your organization, here are **6 tips** to use when designing your work-life balance policies:

1. Find out what employee needs are, and how far they are being met

Do employees encounter any conflicts between commitments related to their work and their personal lives? The best way to manage this issue is to be proactive. For example, you can rely on focus groups and surveys as well as exit interviews to detect potential work-life balance issues.

2. Build a great organizational culture

Encourage employees to take advantage of work-life balance policies, instead of taking this for disloyalty or lack of commitment.

However, because this can sometimes be abused by employees, focus on building a great organizational culture based on trust and value of performance and results over everything else.

3. Improve efficiency

Simple things such as delegation, good time management, and task prioritization can significantly improve individual and organizational efficiency.

4. Set-up work-life policies and benefits

Setting up flexible hours has been the most prevalent work-balance tactic, but work-from-home, career breaks, childcare/elder-care subsidies and special leaves intended for personal crises or emergencies, are becoming more popular with organizations.

5. Communicate and promote the policies

Ensure that the policies are implemented, and employees are aware of them. An employee handbook is a good tool to use in order to make this information easily accessible.

6. Measure the success of your efforts

Keep your policies up-to-date. Monitor employee satisfaction and performance, and most importantly, retention rate.

IPS Recommends...

- Giving your work-life balance policies a memorable title
- Making sure that the work-life balance policies are easily accessible and everyone can benefit from them
- Making sure that managers and supervisors participate in the implementation, allowing employees to take advantage
- Minimizing red tape in order to make signing up for work-life initiatives a simple process
- Building work-life policies based on employee participation and feedback, and if your resources allow, consulting experts



TIME MANAGEMENT

Time management is a vital aspect of personal effectiveness. IPS recommends **5 simple time management tips** that you can include in your New Year's resolution:

1. Find out where your time goes

A good practice to get into is to log your time on a time-sheet. This will give you insight as to whether or not you may need to improve your own productivity, sharpen your schedule planning or delegate some tasks.

2. Identify problem areas

Also, whether under our own control or not, most people's time management suffers from certain problem areas. The majority of us have felt the negative effect of other departments' errors and inefficiencies on our own time, but this problem area is out of our immediate control. The real opportunity for improvement lies in settling our own inefficiencies such as putting off problems, avoiding unwanted tasks or poor planning.

3. Define objectives

Ensure that your job responsibilities are clearly defined and in written format. Not only you, but also your

entire team will be thankful for having clear directions on accountability.

4. Focus on self-improvement

Plan

Plan your next week and review the plan every morning, adjusting your schedule as you go. Based on your experience, decide what would be a reasonable slack time to account for in your schedule in order to avoid running over your time limits.

Prioritize

The tasks you enjoy the most are not always the ones highest on the priority list. Learn to stick to the priority list, but also build contingency plans for which activities you can afford to delay if something unplanned happened.

Delegate

Delegation is one of those things we can label as easier said than done, but if delegated to the right person, under the right circumstances, it is a tactic that can significantly improve your performance at work.

5. Make time to play

Overwork is counterproductive. Plan time for leisure in order to maintain high performance levels at work and live a much happier and healthier life.

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