



Work life balance -the need of the hour for a healthy life

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Abstract

The world is becoming busier and advanced with latest technology that one should run for his/her daily living and survival. This holds good for both men and women. In a country like India, presently, in nucleus families where both men and women are professionals, there is little or no time left for their personal and family lives as a result of which they are not able to attain work life balance. An imbalance in the work life leads to controversies, contradictions among parents and children and even termination of marital relationship. This conceptual paper discusses the importance of work life balance and suggests a few measures to attain it which is the need of the hour.

Key words: Work life balance, personal life, roles, responsibilities, interpersonal conflicts.

Introduction

Work-life balance refers to the balance that an individual needs between time allocated for profession/career and others like personal, social, leisure and other aspects of life. It doesn't literally mean an equal balance which sounds unrealistic but only means trying to distribute the whole day for all the work related and personal activities of the individual in a fair proportion. It calls for a healthy work as well as personal life.

Competition and targets make employers expect more from their employees, which in turn pressurizes them more to achieve higher targets. As a consequence, this leads to longer working hours leaving a very negligible personal and family time. This creates a feeling of anxiety and stress as the family members demand for one's time and company which is almost not available leading to strained relationship at the personal front.

Importance of Work Life Balance

It is very important to and the need of the hour to strike a balance between work and personal life for the following reasons :

- **To maintain a healthy mind and body** - An unbalanced work life leads to stress which is the major cause of physical and mental illness.
- **To maintain a good family and personal relationship** - A proper work life balance automatically improves better understanding with the family and relations as a result of which conflicts can be avoided.
- **To achieve better results and enhance work quality** - When corporate join hands with their employees in helping them to achieve work life balance, the absenteeism and turnover rate reduces leading to increased productivity and efficiency.

How employers can help employees achieve work life balance?

- **Work from home option** - With the increasing use of technology it is very easy for the employers to permit their employees to work from home. This would be of great help to the employees as they will be able to spend time for the family as well as work simultaneously.
- **Flexible working hours** - The companies should more focus on the targets rather than the working hours. This means that if the employee completes his tasks or targets for the day, he must be allowed to sign off for the day. Thus the typical 40 hours week will be broken and employee will feel relaxed and would be keen in achieving his targets happily.
- **Refresher breaks/family gets together** - Most of the companies arrange for one day or a week's refresher tour to their employees with their families. This allows the employees to relax themselves, spend quality time with their families and spend time for them.
- **Maternity/Paternity/Shared parental leave** - This would encourage all parents to balance their work life regardless of their gender.
- **Health care plan** - This would provide support for the staff when they are unwell as well as makes them proactive to undertake regular health checks. This would result in reduced absenteeism.
- **Additional facilities** - Additional facilities like gym and fitness centers, spas, laundry services, child care centre, feeding rooms etc will also help them achieve a good work life balance.

What employees as individuals must do to achieve work life balance?

- **Prioritising the work** - Not all the work can be completed in one day. This is the major cause for an imbalanced work life as people take work to home even after leaving their work place. Thus it becomes important to divide work on a daily basis and accomplish only what is set for the day.
- **Leave work at work** - Most of the people are very sensitive to their work as they are not able to differentiate work life and personal life and hence work dominates at home as well. This leads to a strained family relationship as people at home expect to spend quality time with their spouse and parents. This must be avoided.
- **Time for fitness** - It is very important to maintain physical fitness as the saying goes a sound mind in a sound body. Therefore one must find time for physical fitness activities like gym, sports, walking and the like.
- **Development of hobbies** - Most of the people are so engrossed in work that they forget to relax and even sleep. It is of utmost importance to develop healthy hobbies which would help calm down the mind.
- **Family outing/get together** - Once a week or a fortnight it is important to have an outing with the family to talk and spend time with each other.
- **Avoid overdoing and over perfection** - It is not possible to achieve 100% perfection in whatever we do. There will be deviations and this must be accepted. Therefore overdoing can be avoided.
- **Keep away from phones** - Our fingers and hands have become so used to smart phones and gadgets that we are habituated to involve more on using them rather than talking to each other. Sharing our thoughts and feelings with our families, especially with our spouse is very important for a healthy married relationship.

Conclusion

Work life balance is the most important aspect in everyone's life as it decides the well being of an individual. We all take work very seriously ignoring ourselves and our families. This is one of the major reasons for work life imbalance. Over a period of time this leads to increased physical and mental illness. This is when people start seeking the help of psychiatrists and psychologists. If each one of us understand the importance of a balanced work life then it would not be a great threat for us to balance easily.