

WHOLE LIFE BALANCE

Everybody knows that we function more efficiently on all levels if there is balance in our life. Here are some tips to help:

- Be clear in your mind about what is really important to you. This will enable you to prioritise when resources are limited.
- Define your boundaries e.g. you will not work after 4pm, or you are not to be disturbed when on the phone in the office. Once everybody knows the boundaries they are more likely to respect them.
- If you choose to work in family, social, or “me” time, be sure to pay back out of work time as soon as possible e.g. if you work on a Saturday morning, take Monday afternoon off. Be flexible, but not just in one direction.
- Look after yourself, you need to manage and maintain your energy levels. Drink plenty of water, eat a balanced diet, take regular exercise and get enough rest.
- Make sure you take proper breaks. Productivity goes down if your mind and body are not sufficiently refreshed, so move away from your work area for a drink or walk around the block etc. Guard “special time” during the week away from work.
- Learn to be assertive. State your own needs and wishes, respect those of others and negotiate win-win outcomes.
- Let go of tasks that do not have to be done by you and don't fuss if they are not done exactly as you would do them. This is a development opportunity for others, freeing you for more important things.
- Value your time. If you can, pay somebody to do the things you don't like or they can do quicker or more cheaply than your hourly rate commands.

- Use your planning system effectively:
 - Enter the important things first. Then you can truthfully say you are already committed if a work request is made for that time.
 - Group similar activities e.g. Thursday for appointments out of the office or paying bills on the third Friday of the month. This leaves more big chunks of space to fit in larger projects that require uninterrupted time.
 - Be realistic about the time needed to complete tasks, and allow for follow up e.g. writing up notes after meetings.
 - Factor in buffer time for unexpected urgent tasks
 - Complete non urgent activities in the small cracks of time that are left e.g. catching up on reading material when early for an appointment.
- If you decide to run a business with your partner, work/life balance becomes even more important. Share domestic, social and wider family responsibilities according to your interests and talents and make sure you allow time away from your 'work colleagues'!