

# Work-Life Balance: Desirable Ideal or Dangerous Distraction?

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Work-life balance is a phrase we often hear. Our lives shall not be ruled by our jobs. Work and life shall co-exist harmoniously in equal measure and one should not interfere with the other. But is that a life we truly desire?

We could look at it differently. We often try to separate life from work and work from life for many reasons: we do not want to end up being workaholics; we want to have time for our families and friends, and we want to make sure that we enjoy both without being stressed. But is balancing it out the best way to get there?

How about having so much “life” in your work that you don’t have to worry about balancing something out?

Work and life have something basic in common: Creation. We all have a certain idea of a life and a job we desire and we all live and work in order to create it. But creation is something that has no schedule. We cannot turn it on in the office and turn it off when we leave. We cannot stop it during birthday parties or put it on hold until next Monday. Creation is that moment where we suddenly have a brilliant idea, the “download” of a missing link, the “ah-ha” moment we were waiting for. The only problem: we cannot control when it happens. Having a work-life balance in place that suggest you to turn off your phone and “disconnect” from work to “relax” even makes it worse: Brilliant ideas mostly arrive when we are relaxed, when we turn off our heads and allow ourselves to step back. And then? We get stressed again, because we should relax instead of working, we start feeling uncomfortable and stressed and

all our balance is gone.

On the other end of a work-life balance we face similar situations: constantly being late for family dinner, disappointing your friends for cancelling drinks and constantly being made wrong for having work as a priority over “private time”.

No matter what balance you have in place, these situations occur no matter what and will never follow your “work-life balance” schedule. Is it time to end this vicious circle?

## **1) More flexibility – less planning**

Creation has no schedule, so stop trying to plan ahead. Allow yourself to be flexible and stop judging yourself for being wrong all the time: stop feeling bad that you do look at your phone during family parties. Allow yourself to be flexible and create space for those moments to occur. It does not take long to take a note or make a short call. But it releases your stress level incredibly, if you know you could if you had to. That does not mean you have to do it. Allow it to occur and you will have way less stress in both areas: life and work.

## **2) Communicate clearly**

Some situations in life are facts: you cannot change them, you cannot move them, you just have to be there: Clearly communicate those meetings or private events you cannot move or change and don't even think of changing them. And never justify your choice. Make a clear and short statement.

## **3) Set your priorities – situation by situation**

Business people tend to make their work way too significant

and are often afraid to be judged if they put a certain priority to their private life. On the other hand, they don't want to be judged as the "bad mum or dad" that only cares about the job. Allow yourself to choose the priorities you desire in your life – situation by situation. Life is way too complicated to make a long-term plan. It is a case by case decision that you have to make as soon as a situation shows up. Not having a plan and knowing you can decide spontaneously is the secret to your personal balance. It allows you to deal with any situation at any time.

And how could all of this look like in your "daily operation"? In those situations that occur unplanned, ask questions. Many tasks only seem to be urgent and require immediate action – but is that really true? How many people make their own "situation" the most significant, only to make sure it will be dealt with. Start with asking yourself: Is this really relevant now? Can this wait or does it have to be dealt with immediately? Do I have to deal with it or can someone else do it? Most of the time you get an immediate response from yourself and know it. There is no need for a real conversation: if it is really relevant and has to be handled – do it. And if not, leave it. And if you are not sure, call the person and ask: Does this need to be dealt with now, or can I do it first thing in the morning?". Important detail: Don't text, make a phone call – talking to people is way more personal and honest.

It is the flexibility you allow yourself that creates a balance with yourself and a clear communication that will eliminate the level of stress. And being balanced out with yourself, does not require a balance between your work and your life – you will handle any situation with ease.

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**About the Author:** Dr David Kubes is an international lawyer specializing in aviation law, finance and project management. In 2006 he opened his own boutique law firm Kubes Passeyrer Attorneys at Law. A savvy entrepreneur, he owns several companies including an import-export company in Cuba, an Art Gallery in Vienna and his own real estate development company in Vienna. Kubes is fluent in German, English, Spanish and French and is an avid world traveller. He is a European-licensed coach and alternative dispute resolution practitioner and heads an international coaching and consulting company. He is a certified facilitator of several Access Consciousness® special programs, including Wealth Creators Anonymous. Follow David.