
Overview

Effectively balancing your business and personal life can be very difficult. If the balance is not right, you can end up constantly “juggling” feeling guilty and stressed and letting people down. If you get the balance right you can successfully do those things that are really important in both your business and personal life and have time to yourself. This is particularly important for those people who are caring for children or relatives, studying or learning new skills or who simply wish to reduce the amount of time they spend working, or thinking about work.

You might need to do this if you are:

1. setting up a new business or social enterprise
2. running a business or social enterprise

Balancing your business and personal life involves:

1. identifying the priorities in both your business and private life
2. planning how you can best achieve those priorities
3. managing your time, your effectiveness and other people's expectations so that you achieve the things that are most important to you

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 identify your business values and your life values and the reasons you are working
- P2 identify the things that are stopping you achieving the work life balance you would like and plan how to overcome them
- P3 review your business and private activities as a whole and plan how you can best achieve the things that are most important
- P4 set and stick to boundaries that will help you achieve the balance you require between your work and your private life
- P5 decide if there are any tasks that can be done by others and consider innovative ways to pay for them
- P6 manage your time and effectiveness so that you achieve what you want to achieve
- P7 manage your energy levels so that you can concentrate fully on your current task
- P8 manage the expectations of the people in your business and personal life
- P9 put plans in place to deal with unexpected and unavoidable demands on your time
- P10 get the support and advice you need when you need it

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Yourself

- K1 the values that are important to you in both your work and your private life (for example picking the children up from school, being available for customers to call during traditional working hours, attending all of your French classes, visiting an elderly relative whilst they are awake and alert, not working when your partner is home, having a peaceful and relaxing bath)
- K2 the reasons you are working (for example to keep your brain ticking over, because you really enjoy it, because you need the money)
- K3 ways to manage your time and effectiveness (for example writing down ideas when you think of them, allocating time for mundane tasks as well as more enjoyable ones, being assertive when others try and pressurise you to do things, grouping similar, smaller activities such as paying bills or making appointments, allowing enough time to complete tasks, arranging to “pay back” any extra time you give to one part of your life as soon as possible)
- K4 ways to make sure you have the energy to fully focus on what you are doing (for example allocating time to eat and drink healthily, identifying who drains your energy and managing when you see or speak to them, making sure you have time to do something you find relaxing)

Work Life Balance

- K5 ways to handle the long-term barriers that are stopping you achieving your ideal work life balance (for example recognising if they are temporary and will solve themselves in the future, putting plans in place to minimise their impact)
- K6 the advantages of jointly planning your work and private life (for example they are not competing for your time and focus, you can work productively rather than constantly “juggle”, you can avoid feelings of guilt because you know you have allocated time for the important things, it is easier to make informed decisions when something unexpected occurs)
- K7 the times of day that are suitable for the different activities you need to carry out (for example the time of day you have the most concentration for challenging tasks, the activities that must be carried out at a specific time)
- K8 how you can adapt one part of your life to fit around the other depending on your priorities (for example arranging childcare at times when your meetings are most likely to occur, targeting work you can do from the office rather than work that involves travel, saving on marketing time by focusing on associate work)

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Balance your business and personal life

- K9 boundaries that can help you achieve the balance between your work and personal life (for example setting and sticking to working hours, setting time aside for holidays, not checking for messages or responding to clients when you are not working, not having a work mobile always switched on, going for a walk or changing clothes before you start or finish work)
- K10 ways to manage people's expectations (for example discussing and planning priorities and compromises with family members, telling family, friends, neighbours or clients the times you are available to them, explaining what activities you can and cannot carry out and when they will be done)
- K11 what unexpected things might happen and how you might deal with them (for example when your child is ill and cannot go to school, when you have an unexpected piece of work that simply must be done)

Delegation

- K12 the reasons that tasks might be given to others (for example because they can do it quicker than you, you will pay them less than you earn while working, it is an opportunity for them to learn new skills, it frees you up to do things that are more important to you)
- K13 which tasks could be done by others in your work and private life (for example cleaning, ironing, gardening, dropping children at school, bookkeeping, processing orders)
- K14 different ways that you can “pay” for tasks to be done by others (for example paying them, taking turns to do a task for each other, giving treats to family members, trading tasks with each other such as swapping typesetting for childcare)
- K15 ways to encourage people to do tasks for you (for example empowering them to take control of the task, not criticising if they don't do things exactly as you would, not taking advantage of them by asking them to do too much)

Networking

- K16 what support and advice you need for which parts of your life (for example networking with other people in the same position as yourself, chatting to your partner, phoning a relative or friend, attending business networking events, using the internet)

Information and advice

- K17 the benefits of seeking support and advice (for example confirming you are on the right track, avoiding feelings of isolation, helping you get more work, helping you build up a support network, giving you something to compare your progress with)

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Additional Information

Links to other NOS

1. EE1 Achieve your goals for the business
2. BD3 Plan where your business is going.
3. BL4 Run a business from home.
4. YS1 Explore your own motives.
5. YS5 Manage your time.
6. YS6 Delegate work to others.

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