Balancing the work life scale

By Melissa Greene

Work-life balance refers to the ideal balance between an individual's professional and personal responsibilities, allowing them to prioritise their physical and emotional well-being while achieving career success. This balance entails effectively managing one's time in order to reduce the negative effects of work-related stress on one's health and personal life while maintaining productivity and job performance. The goal is to achieve a state of overall fulfillment and satisfaction in both work and personal life, ensuring a healthy and sustainable lifestyle.

As we navigate our careers and strive for success, it can be challenging to balance the demands of work and personal life. It often feels like we are constantly juggling both, which can leave us feeling overwhelmed and frustrated. Despite our best efforts, finding the perfect balance can seem impossible. However, it's crucial to strive for a healthy work-life balance to avoid burnout and maintain overall well-being.

Undoubtedly, work is essential, as it allows us to pay our bills, access basic needs, and sustain our livelihoods. But as we focus on securing our financial stability, we must not forget the importance of nurturing our lives and taking care of ourselves.

The increasing interconnectivity of our world has made it challenging to maintain a clear boundary between work and personal life. With remote work becoming the new norm for many people, it has become common to check work emails at all hours, take business calls during family dinners, and work on weekends. This constant connection has made achieving a healthy work-life balance even more challenging.

How can employers and employees contribute to a healthy work life

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balance?

Identifying the factors that affect work-life balance is crucial. People with some control over their work schedule and workload tend to have better balance. This includes being able to manage our emotions intelligently. While employers cannot guarantee complete balance, employees must change their attitudes toward work and home life. Creating a culture where employees are valued as "shareholders" rather than just as a transaction and where managers prioritise productivity over hours worked is a step toward finding the right balance.

To establish a healthy work-life balance, both employers and employees must contribute. Employers must create a culture that values work-life balance, regularly review roles and responsibilities, encourage scheduled vacations and breaks, and prioritise productivity over hours worked.

Review roles and responsibilities regularly

To optimise the work environment, examine how tasks are assigned to employees. Ensure each person has a reasonable workload by carefully reviewing their job descriptions. What may seem minor to management can take a full day for an individual to complete. Effective communication is crucial for managers to
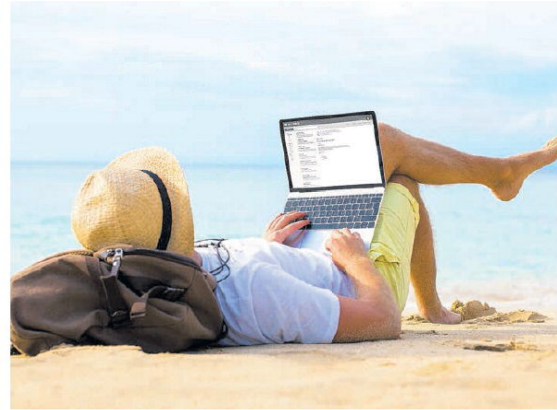
Employers should prioritise productivity over hours worked.
(Internet image)

understand who is stressed and capable of taking on more work. Check in with employees regularly to stay up to date on workload and stress levels. Encourage employees to speak up when they are over or underworked. This will ensure the work allocation process is optimised, and everyone contributes to their full potential.

Be the change you want to see

To create a healthy work-life balance in the workplace, leading by example is crucial. If you expect your employees to switch off their work laptops at a specific time, you must also abide by the same rule. This avoids sending mixed messages and puts less pressure on your staff to prioritise your schedule over theirs. By setting a good example and demonstrating healthy working habits, you can influence your team to do the same. It's also important to respect your employees' time outside of work hours, allowing them to unwind and recharge. This means refraining from contacting them after hours unless it's necessary. Even managers and senior executives should prioritise their work-life balance to foster a healthy workplace culture.

Take scheduled vacations

The Holiday with Pay Act of 2017-3 highlights the importance of providing paid annual leave to employees. Time off is not just a desirable perk, but it is also essential for their overall well-being. When employees take a break from work, they can rest, recharge, and enjoy their lives, which is crucial for their productivity and concentration when they return to work. Employers should also encourage

employees to take regular breaks throughout the day, in addition to vacations. Long periods of staring at a bright screen can be detrimental to our physical and mental health. Creating recreational areas where employees can take a break and socialise, such as installing Wifi and televisions in the lunchroom, can help. Consider organising team lunches or coffee breaks outside the office, if possible.

Listen to your bodies!

In our busy lives, we tend to ignore the warning signs that indicate underlying health issues. It is important to recognise employees who may be experiencing burnout. Stress can negatively affect personal and professional relationships, causing irritability and depression. As our stress levels rise, we may become more focused on completing tasks and forget to evaluate our physical and emotional well-being. It is essential to take a break and check in with ourselves regularly to maintain our productivity and well-being.

In summary, achieving a healthy work-life balance benefits both employers and employees. Employers should foster a culture that values work-life balance, regularly review roles and responsibilities, and encourage scheduled vacations and breaks. Employees should also take responsibility for managing their own work-life balance by adjusting their attitudes and communicating with their managers. Together, these small changes can create a healthier and more productive workplace for all.

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