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The Ultimate Balance of Time

How to Find the Work/Life Balance as the School year begins

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Did you know that there are 525,600 minutes in a year? That means that over the past 20 years you've lived more than 10 million minutes. But the question is "Are you making the best use of that time?" According to a recent survey by the Association of Executive Search Consultants, 85% of recruiters have seen candidates reject a job offer because the position didn't include enough work-life balance. About 90% of recruiters say work-life balance considerations are more important now than they were five years ago. How balanced is your life? Here are a few tips to get you on your way to your ultimate balance of time.

Get Control of Your Schedule

Start by dividing your life into three different realms: prime time, prep time, and play time. Prime time days are about production. They are about working in your professional life or for your favorite cause, and they are designated to produce results. Prep time days are about organization, research and strategic planning to lay the groundwork for prime and play time. Play time is (your vacation time and weekends) devoted to doing whatever you love, such as reading, traveling, golfing, getting a massage, spending time with your family or going on vacation. Use a calendar and mark each day as a prime time day, a prep time day or a play time day.

Protect Your Play Time

Play time days are not just important to your health and personal relationships. They are vital to your professional health as well. Play time frees up your creativity, creates balance, improves memory and frees you from the grind and intensity of prime time. Be sure to protect your play days and keep work at work. With

today's advanced technology, such as laptops and the infamous Blackberry, it is easier than ever to work at home—or virtually anywhere with Wi-Fi. Make a conscious decision to separate your professional life and your personal life, and be sure to protect your play time.

Take Advantage of Your Options

Is your current career the best option for you? Are you happy with the hours, benefits, control, flexibility, creativity level, and the like? If not, a career change may be your best option for keeping yourself, and your work/life balance, happy and in good health. If a career change is not an option, find out if your employer offers flex hours, a compressed workweek, telecommuting or even childcare.

Keep Your Health a Priority

Health should be your number one priority. Although work/life balance will improve your well being, you cannot achieve the ultimate balance if you are physically or mentally unhealthy. Set aside time to exercise several days each week. Eat well-balanced, healthy meals, and do not drink in excess. Get enough sleep, drink lots of water, limit caffeine intake and take a daily multivitamin. Schedule regular check-ups from your healthcare team, including your primary physician, dentist, nutritionist, psychiatrist, chiropractor and eye doctor. In addition to having a healthier body and mind, your happiness and productivity levels will greatly increase when you take care of yourself, giving you the necessary tools to obtain your ultimate balance of time.

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