



**CURRENT TRENDS IN
HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT**

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Foreword

Dear Readers,

Since the early periods of the industrial revolution, technology has witnessed a dramatic progression from primitive steam engines to robotics and AI shaping up present-day shop floors. Albeit, people remain the most critical resource of any organization. The fact that economic efficiency can be achieved only when organizations optimize their human resource was realized long ago. But, how to optimize it continues to be the greatest *Yaksha Prashna*- intriguing the industries, managers, and academicians for a long.

Innumerable books have been written, experiments have been conducted, and research has been undertaken; man's endless pursuit to know the best way to manage his/her fellow beings continues in the realm of Human Resource Management. The book "Current Trends in Human Resource Management is a sincere effort from the author-editor Dr. Pravin V. Yadav to mobilize contemporary trends in HRM driving the industry.

Each chapter of this book seeks to present a critical review of its subject and to provide both practical and theoretical insights.

I am sure, the book would equip the students, teachers, and practicing managers with useful inputs in bringing the best out of human resources.

Wishing you a great reading....



Dr. A. B. Dadas

Director

Neville Wadia Institute of Management Studies & research,
Pune

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Work-Life Balance

Dr. Pravin Vitthal Yadav

Introduction: -

Work-life balance is the state where a person chooses to equally prioritize the demands of work and career and the demands of their personal life. An individual who lacks this balance has more work and home obligations, works longer hours, and lacks personal time. The need to seek work-life balance is driven by external and internal factors.

Definitions: -

Work-life balance is not a new concept. The change in the pattern of work and the concept of the workplace after the industrial revolution in the second half of the 18th century gave a new dimension to the concept of WLB. As time progressed, nuclear families increased. A later change was the fading away of the "ideal home" in which the earning member's spouse took care of the home. With improved education and employment opportunities today, most homes are ones in which both parents work because of necessity and the desire to augment incomes. The need to create congenial conditions in which employees can balance work with their personal needs and desires became a factor that companies had to take note of both to retain them as well as to improve productivity. It was a compulsion that they could not afford to ignore. Having realized that, companies started introducing schemes to attract and retain employees and

improve their productivity. Work-life balance is the extent to which individuals are equally involved in and equally satisfied with their role and their family role.

In his book *Managing work-life balance*, David Clutterbuck defines work-life balance as:

- being aware of different demands on time and energy;
- having the ability to make choices in the allocation of time and energy;
- knowing what values to apply to choices; and
- making choices.

Work-Life Balance does not mean an equal balance. Trying to schedule an equal number of hours for each of various work and personal activities is usually unrewarding and unrealistic. Life is dynamic and not static. Each person's work-life balance will vary over time, often on a daily basis. The right balance for each one today will probably be different from tomorrow.

The right balances differ when one is single and will be different when one marries or has a partner or if they have children. When one starts a new career versus when one is nearing retirement brings changes in work-life balance there is no perfect, one-size-fits-all, balance that one should be striving for.

Determinants of work-life balance

For most people, work commitments are a fundamental element of life satisfaction and are not performed for the wage alone.

Researchers link this to the daily structure and social identity offered by professional positions and expectations to be met. The determinants of work-life balance include both factors that can be altered by the individual and those that need organizational initiative.

Some are satisfied to spend long hours at work for potential career progression, while others feel satisfied if their family is prioritized. Still, aligning both remains a focus for many. It may be that balance is best defined when it is absent. In any case, when the preferred type of balance is not achieved, it leads to interference or conflict.

Individual factors

Individuals may be affected by their attitude towards work – they may be overachievers, perfectionists, or compulsive workers, all of whom are generally seen as workaholics who spend more time than required, sacrificing other activities. Those overworked also commit to long hours even when not needed to, but are not satisfied by the returns. The worker's health status, personality type and degree of resilience, as well as the stage of career and period of life, and gender are other key parameters in determining a work-life balance.

Organizational factors

Organizational measures influencing work-life balance involve the work demanded in terms of the time spent at work and any intensity or pressure. In addition, the organization determines the work culture. Inflexible hours, demanding managers, incompetent colleagues, and long commutes all contribute to this

problem. Connectivity has worsened this problem. Remote workers are often required to be accessible to their employers, even if these interruptions occur outside of commitment hours or during time spent with family.

Home as a source of imbalance

Work itself is poorly defined, as life outside the workplace also consists of other types of work. This is true of all who operate at home- or family-based businesses but has become a unique pandemic problem. Many at home are expected to be online or available for far longer than before. When it comes to tasks done as non-paid but necessary labour, the demands of home and its culture are seen to be determinants of work-life balance. For instance, role-related expectations are important, along with the presence of dependent children or older adults. Women may be implicitly expected to take care of domestic matters after working hours. Similarly, the care of children and elderly family members may be an unspoken or accepted obligation of one working family member.

The Importance of Work-Life Balance

Although work-life balance looks different to everyone, being on-call every evening and weekend for years is not sustainable. Having enough time for work and your personal life is essential for your well-being and can lead to a more fulfilling life, both at home and in the office. Some of the benefits of work-life balance are:

- **Improved Physical Health:** Spending too many hours working can lead to stress that weakens the immune

system, giving way to frequent bouts of illness. A healthy work-life balance protects your health, which means you'll take fewer sick days and have more energy for your activities.

- **Higher Productivity:** Do you ever feel like you're working more but completing less? When you feel unbalanced, your mind can wander to the things you wish you were doing. When you feel you have time for both work and play, projects go smoothly because you can focus on one thing at a time.
- **Career Advancement:** If you're not getting projects completed on time, have mind-drift during meetings, and wake up dreading going to work, chances are you're not going to be the first person your boss thinks of when it's time for a raise or promotion. Making enough time for sleep and exercise helps you fully participate and be present at work to keep you on track for advancement.
- **More Creativity:** No matter what your line of work is, creativity is essential when you're solving problems. When your life is balanced, ideas flow more easily, and solutions to problems are more apparent.
- **Happiness:** It can be difficult to define what happiness is. But you sure know what it's like to be unhappy! Looking forward to work, taking on new projects with a "can-do" attitude, and simple contentment with the small things are signs of happiness.

What are the most common causes of poor work-life balance?

More than a quarter of full-time employees globally say it's become more difficult to balance work and family in the last five years. The most common causes were:

- **Increased expenses without an increase in salary.** 1/3 of employees cited this as their top challenge to maintaining a work-life balance.
- **Increased responsibilities at work.** About half of millennials and Gen X participants cited additional work responsibilities as a leading cause of poor work-life balance.
- **Increased responsibility at home.** More than 40% of millennials and Gen X participants said more responsibility at home, such as caring for children and aging relatives, made it more challenging to balance work and personal life.
- **Working longer hours.** Almost half (46%) of managers work more than 40 hours each week, and 40% say their hours have increased over the past five years.
- **Having children.** Over a quarter (26%) of millennials said they are working more after having a child. 50% of women and 22% of men took a career break after having a child.

Improving work-life balance at work

First, let's look at some ways you can improve your work-life balance in the workplace.

1. Learn to say "no"

Learning how to say no can be one of the hardest soft skills for any dedicated professional to learn and put into practice. But it's an important part of setting boundaries.

To start, you must first assess the typical demands of your day and learn to articulate and prioritize what you have on your plate.

A great tool to use for this exercise is the Eisenhower Matrix. (Hint: If you're finding everything falling into the "Urgent-Important" quadrant, try this clever hack).

It can be helpful to recognize that saying "no" to things that are less of a priority frees up time and energy to say "yes" and attend to other things that are important to you.

2. Take breaks

Even a 30-second microbreak can:

- Improve concentration
- Reduce stress
- Keep you feeling engaged
- Make your work feel more enjoyable

It's especially important to be mindful of this when you're working from home.

MIT senior lecturer Robert Pozen recommends taking a break every 75-90 minutes for 15 minutes. This will allow your brain to consolidate and retain learning.

A study by The Energy Project found people naturally go from full focus to physiological fatigue every 90 minutes.

3. Use your lunch break

If you have a lunch break at your place of work, it's your right to use it.

This means you shouldn't be expected to always eat at your desk and work through lunch.

You can take this time to enjoy your meal mindfully. You can also do short meditations or breathing exercises if your stress levels are high or experience chronic stress.

4. Ask for flexibility

Having open, honest conversations about your needs and those of your employer and team can lead to productive solutions.

Those can include flexitime, a compressed workweek schedule, job sharing, and other creative options.

5. Prioritize your health

Recognizing the importance of maintaining your physical health, emotional well-being, and mental fitness is the first step to making it a priority in your life.

Use the concept of habit stacking to build simple, supportive actions into your day. Consider habits like:

- Daily meditation
- Movement/exercise
- Social connection
- A gratitude practice
- Committing to using your paid time off

6. Practice self-compassion

One of the most important ways to achieve a sense of work-life balance is to let go of perfectionism.

The approach of perfectionism may have brought some success during school and early career. But the stress it causes accumulates over time. The strain on our system and emotional resources increases as our responsibilities increase.

It's important to recognize that life isn't always easy. Everyone struggles, and you aren't always going to get it "right." Recognizing this truth allows you to create a shift toward a more compassionate growth-and-learning approach to work and life. This can help to support a sense of balance.

It can also provide an inspiring model for others who also need to hear this message.

Improving work-life balance at home

Now, let's look at some ways you can improve your work-life balance at home.

7. Communicate boundaries so you can truly unplug

Set and communicate your work hours to your colleagues and customers so that you have clear boundaries. This should include when you'll work and when you won't be available to respond.

One simple way to achieve this is to set up an autoresponder to alert those who contact you via email that you are offline. This message can also let them know when you'll respond.

This removes the pressure to keep checking work emails.

Consider setting up a system for key stakeholders to contact you in a true emergency so you can rest, knowing you're not missing something critical.

8. Invest in relationships

Lack of strong relationships increases the risk of premature death from all causes by 50%. That's nearly as harmful as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

On the flip side, solid connections and social support can improve health and increase longevity.

Make sure to spend your time nurturing relationships that matter to you. If you took the previous steps to unplug, then you'll be able to give more attention to the people you spend your time with.

9. Make space in your schedule for family time

Block out some time that's devoted entirely to your family.

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Dr. Pravin Vitthal Yadav
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He is Assistant Professor at Anekant Institute of Management Studies, Baramati. He has 15 years rich experience in teaching & research esp., in the field of Human Resource Management. He has 15 research publications in Scopus Indexed / Care Listed / Peer Reviewed Journals.

AFTERTHOUGHT



Dr. Umesh S Kollimath
(MBA, MA(Eco), Ph.D.)

Dear Reader,

I am sure, you are experiencing a mixed sense of awe, overwhelm and anticipation after having finished reading this book! Yes, the “Current Trends in Human Resource Management” penned and pivoted by an enterprising faculty of HRM, has encapsulated a gamut of insightful articles in this book. The authors of each of the articles have chosen most contemporary issues and woven wonderful articles replete with information as well as insights on their topic. Besides, the book at one end satisfies curiosity of the readers by revealing how cutting-edge technologies will be reshaping the HRM practices, on the other hand some of the articles raise subtle doubts as to whether the organizations and employees are diluting commitments of mutual welfare from the either side!! I hope the thoughts that have begun lingering in our minds after reading the book shall continue till we take some radical different decisions to nurture, retain and promote the Human Resource that is within our sphere of control. With Warmest regards to the Authors, Editor, and all those who have contributed to this book.

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