

Are You in Balance?

One of the most important ways to reinforce work-life balance at your organization is to set an example. If you have work-life balance, you'll encourage it in your employees. It could be the best thing you do – for your business and yourself!

- **Schedule brief breaks for yourself throughout the day.** Your productivity and effectiveness will increase if you take even a ten-minute break every two hours and overall, you will get more accomplished.
- **At the end of each day, set your priorities for the following day.** Be realistic about what you can achieve in the time you have available.
- **Create a buffer between work and home.** After work, take a brief walk, do a crossword puzzle, or listen to some music before beginning the evening's routine.



Invest in Success

In the busy day of an employer or manager, who has time to think about fostering work-life balance among staff?

In fact, it's an investment of your time and resources that will pay off. The busier you are, the more that you depend on your staff to be efficient, responsive and productive. But if your staff are burnt out, exhausted and overwhelmed, how likely are they to be performing at their best?

Start with small steps:

- Look at eliminating unnecessary meetings or reports;
- Communicate expectations clearly to your staff;
- Allow staff to control their own priorities as much as possible.

Learn More! Contact the Canadian Mental Health Association office nearest you.

- Visit our Web site at www.cmha.ca.
- Call the CMHA branch nearest you or the National office at 613-745-7750.



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For Managers and Employers

Work-Life Balance:

Make it Your Business



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Work-Life Balance The Real Bottom Line

It's clear that making sure your employees have good work-life balance will help you balance your business's bottom line.

According to Stephens and Joubert (2001), the direct and indirect economic burden of mental illnesses in Canada was estimated to be \$14.4 billion in 1998. That should make any employer sit up and take notice.

The benefits of creating work-life balance for you employees include:

- Enhanced productivity;
- Reduced absenteeism;
- Increased competitiveness in hiring and retention of employees;
- Improved credibility and profile for your organization;
- Reduced disability costs;
- Better customer service.



“Disability costs represent 12% of payroll costs, and mental health claims, particularly depression, are the fastest growing category of disability costs in Canada.”

The Conference Board of Canada found that workers who reported a high degree of stress balancing their work and family life missed 7.2 days of work each year, while those who reported very little stress only missed an average of 3.6 days.



How Healthy is My Business?

The economic health of any business relies upon the health of its employees. But how can you tell if your staff has work-life balance?

- Do managers receive training about how to support their staff to achieve work-life balance?
- Are your employees familiar with the policies and programs available to help with work-life balance?
- Does your organization provide flexible hours to help employees balance their responsibilities at work and at home?
- Do your managers encourage staff to stay home with sick children or elderly relatives when necessary?
- Does your organization have a method to track employees' satisfaction with their work-life balance?

If the answer to most or all of these questions is "no", it's time to think about investing in your business's success.

Bringing your Business into Balance

Getting the best performance from your employees means making sure they're getting the most out of their lives, at work, at home and in their communities. You can help by developing policies that support work-life balance. Some of the options include:

- Flexible hours – flexible start and end times;
- Telecommuting – working from home;
- Job sharing – splitting a full-time job with another employee;
- Graduated return – gradually building up to a full-time schedule after a leave;
- Allowing employees to volunteer in their communities during work hours.

Putting practices like these into place could be a good investment for your business!

