



WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN A PANDEMIC RESPECT TO CORPORATE EMPLOYEES

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Abstract

One of the hardest parts of teaching from home is the increasing blur between work mode and home mode. Many of us are struggling to find anything resembling a balance when teaching from home, but the uncertainty around when schools will reopen makes finding the balance even more important. Setting boundaries is one form of resilience that will help long into the future. Recognize that being a robot does not produce the best version of yourself: Taking breaks and setting boundaries for work hours and non-work hours will breathe more life into your work practice

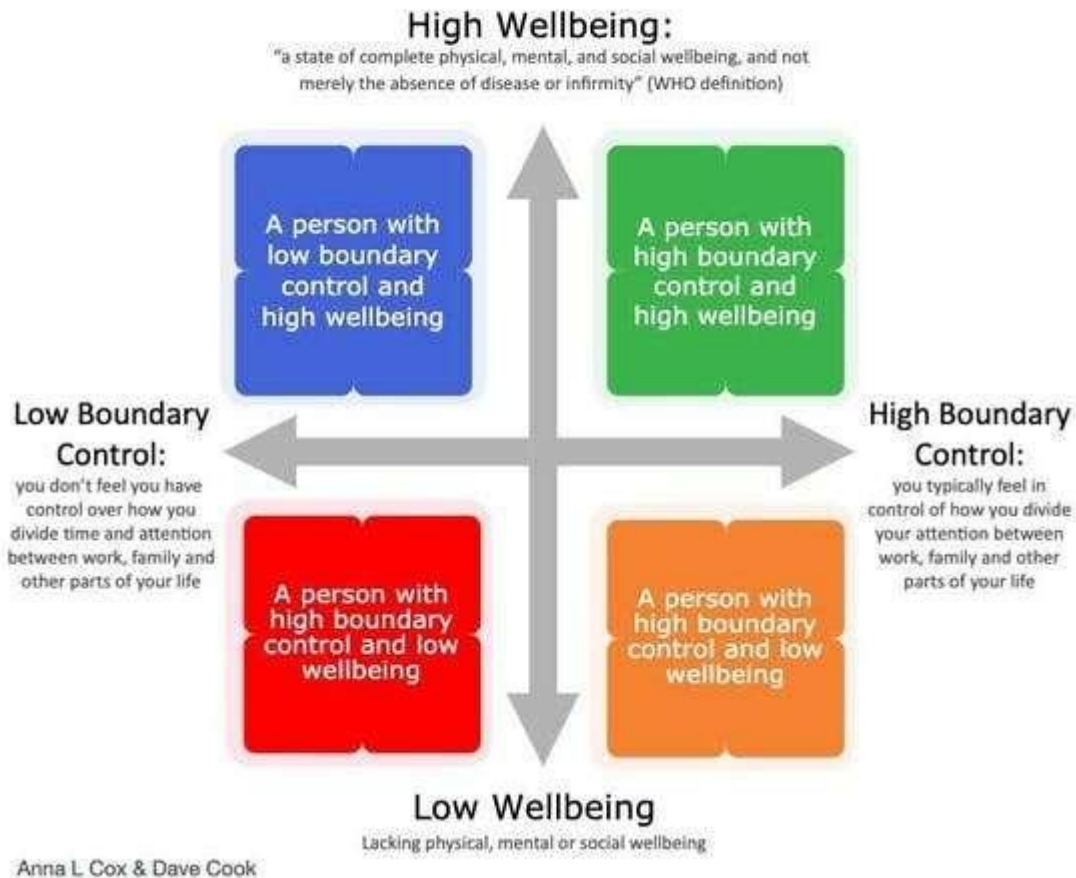
Introduction

Before the pandemic, a common objection to remote working was the suspicion that staff would disengage and productivity levels would drop. But recent evidence suggests the opposite is true—working from home effectively means working more. In the UK, for example, many corporate employees are reportedly putting in an extra two hours a day.

Those juggling work and caring responsibilities are often struggling the most. A recent UK poll showed 71% of working mothers who requested furlough to look after their children were refused. The "sandwich generation", those managing childcare and caring for older relatives, are also having a hard time. Another disturbing trend that makes switching off so difficult is the emergence of so-called "bossware", controversial software that some companies use to monitor employees, under the guise of "productivity enhancement." In November 2020, there was uproar following reports that even Microsoft 365 gave bosses the ability to measure email activity and the use of shared documents.

2020 hasn't exactly been an easy year for balance. Thanks to quarantine, most of us are working from home. That means we're always physically at our place of work. Balance isn't obvious with remote work. By now, many of us understand the importance of a dedicated work space, going for walks to break up the day, and communicating unique family needs to one's boss and team. Those are all important.

The Work-Life Balance Equilibrium



Shockingly, 60% of US companies still haven't shared their remote working policies, and workers at all levels have had enough of inaction. One executive who quit due to spiraling workload confided to us: "Sure, employers are under huge pressure to survive this pandemic. But asking staff to carry the brunt through inhuman productivity rates is unsustainable."

Ways to redefine work-life balance during the pandemic

Many of us will continue to work at home, simultaneously juggling multiple roles, for some time to come during the pandemic. Consider these tips to stay healthy and productive. Pause for a moment and take a deep breath. As you know, we are still in the midst of a global pandemic. While there's good news about vaccines coming, it does little to change our current situation. Many of us will continue to work at home, simultaneously juggling multiple roles, for some time to come.

1. Reflect on why work-life balance matters to you. Why is it important? If you don't maintain a healthy work-life balance, what will the consequences be? What will happen if you continue doing what you are doing now for another six months, or even a year?

We need a work-life balance to feel good, but also to do good. And when I say, "do good," I am referring to brainpower, decision-making, creativity, empathy, problem-solving, etc. – all



those qualities we need to be a good leader, parent, or contributor. So work-life balance is not “nice to have” – it’s critical.

2. Define your home office. Remove the “temporary” sign and make your workspace work for you. Even if you are sharing it with others, this is where you do your work using your brainpower, decision-making, creativity, empathy, problem-solving, etc. and that means your space should be as free from distractions as possible. Ask yourself: does this space gives me energy? What can I do to make it feel like my special creative space?

There are no corporate or HR rules to define what your special place should look like. I knew I’d succeeded when the rest of my family started to beg to be allowed to come and do their school assignments and work meetings in my office.

Don’t forget factors such as temperature, air quality, and lighting. We all know how draining it can be to sit in a small, uncomfortably warm space all day. Consider getting a flexible desk that allows you to either stand or sit (and perhaps be adjusted to accommodate the height of various family members).

3. Set boundaries. Establish a clear start and end point to your workday. Even having coached many leaders in the past months on how to work remotely, I struggle with this.

Studies suggest that eliminating the daily commute was a win for most of us. But the flip side is that we are spending that time on additional work. All our devices are right there in front of us, tempting us to do just one more email, one more report, one more quick check-in.

Here is another advantage of creating a separate workspace: You can leave it. Maybe you can even close the door. Set your office hours and stick to them. Don’t abandon the habit of weekly planning; expand it. Communicate it to everyone who shares your office space, including spouses, children, roommates (and maybe even pets if they are part of your weekly plan and daily activities!).

4. Keep moving! It’s said that sitting for four hours without proper movement can shorten our lives by 11 minutes. Hold a “walk and talk” meeting with a team member. Keep your yoga pants on so you can quickly move to the mat when the workday is finished. Engage the family in a pre-dinner dance party or a plank challenge. A standing desk can also help you stay more active even while you’re working.

5. Find moments of stillness. Another advantage of remote work: Nobody will notice if you sit down and close your eyes for a moment. Find a quiet corner and take a moment to just sit and think. Seeing things from a new perspective can generate new ideas. Take a quiet walk before an important meeting. Stillness creates space that helps us make better decisions.

6. Connect with others. Spend time with others outside your immediate circle. Remember back when we could grab coffee with a colleague and chat about work, social activities, weekend plans, or just about anything else? Many people feel overwhelmed by meetings these days. That’s in part because of what’s missing: small talk. Connections. Reach out to a

colleague or someone you haven't spoken to recently and catch up over a 20-minute virtual coffee break.

7. Finally, remind yourself that this pandemic will not last forever. And while not everything will go back to the way it was before, many things will. Take another deep breath and consider the perks of the life you are leading now. Define what's positive for you and the people around you. Cherish it.



The coronavirus pandemic of 2020 has disrupted everybody's Work-life balance. The virus is not only taking a toll on health issues, but it is also affecting our work and personal lives. All of a sudden, the concept of work from home has come into the limelight, taking into consideration the concepts of social distancing and the high rate of contamination due to disease. The global pandemic, which is increasing every day, has created fear and apprehension in everyone's mind.

Moreover, the nature of the disease is still unknown, and doctors are recommending to work from the safe constraints of one's home.

Another very disrupting aspect of the pandemic is all kinds of services such as laundry, crèches and salons are closed. Therefore, the workload is increasing at an alarming rate. People have to look after their homes, their children and work, simultaneously. With increased workload comes stress and several mental and physical obstructions.

problems are arising because of a global pandemic?

- The work-life balance has gone Topsy-turvy. Majority of people are working from home. As a result, they are finding it difficult to demarcate the work life from their personal life. This is creating family tensions and also depreciation of work quality and family time.
- Many people have lost their jobs owing to the global pandemic. It is becoming difficult for them to look for new job profiles. As a result, they can neither concentrate on work nor family.
- The pandemic has destroyed our natural life structure. We are confined within our homes with impending fear of the disease, which is increasing at an alarming rate every minute. New concepts of maintaining hygiene and cleanliness are rising every



day, which is leaving us confused. The new normal has become isolation and distancing. Human beings are considered as social animals, and now, with the current scenario, we have to maintain a distance from friends and family. This is creating a mental void in everyone. People are suffering from frustration and dejection. Isolation is creating fear and several mental and physical illnesses.

- Another problem is that we cannot go to theaters, parks, restaurants or take part in any other kind of recreational activities. There is no kind of entertainment other than watching shows and movies at home. This is leaving a mark on our workplace too, as we are not happy. We are scared, stressed and tired. As a result, our Work-life balance is being hampered.
- The coronavirus pandemic is creating several health issues which are drastic. WHO and doctors are prescribing a healthy lifestyle that will strengthen our immunity to fight against the disease. But the economic and financial condition of the world is deteriorating at an alarming rate which is making it difficult for the majority to make both ends meet.

Conclusion

Our survey also indicates that feeling fortunate to still be in work, the collapse of work-life boundaries, and the fear of being under surveillance from employers, have all led to people working harder for longer. A change of approach is essential. Since the arrival of the pandemic, large numbers of people are working longer and harder. And even with increased rates of vaccination, home working in some form is surely here to stay. Ensuring it continues in a balanced way should not be a responsibility that rests entirely on individuals. The right method to achieve Work-life balance is proper calculation and division of work. With the new trend of working from home, people are finding it extremely difficult to maintain a balance between working hours and family time. The office is demanding more time, and the family always cannot understand the concept of staying at home but not being available for them. Therefore, we need to strike a perfect balance between the two.

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