



WORK LIFE BALANCE

MHR-2-205

Faculty of Business, Computing and
Information Management

Session 2007/8

become what you want to be

Unit Title: Work Life Balance
Level: 2
Course: BA Business Studies/Business Administration
Prerequisites: Organisational Analysis, Level 1
Unit Value: 1.0
Unit Co-ordinator: Mike Rigby
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Total Study Hours: 150 hours
Contact Hours: 40 hours
Private Study: 110 hours
Assessment: Coursework: 40%
Examination: 60%

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The unit examines a key HR issue of contemporary business - the achievement of work/life balance and considers the emergence of the issue as a contemporary problem and the causes of imbalance. It examines the consequences of imbalance and the strategies available for combating it.

2.0 AIMS

This unit builds on the knowledge gained in the Level 1 unit, Organisational Analysis and complements and develops further several themes introduced in the Level 2 Core HR unit. The specific aims are to:

- explain the origin of the concept of work life balance as a contemporary business issue.
- develop an understanding of the causes of work-life imbalance.
- develop and awareness of the consequences of work/life imbalance.

- develop an awareness of vulnerable groups e.g. parents
- develop an understanding of the strategies available to establish an acceptable work/life balance.

3.0 LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- Explain the emergence of work/life balance as a contemporary business issue.
- Identify the factors, which contribute to work/life imbalance.
- Recognise the consequences of work/life imbalance.
- Identify which groups are likely to be most vulnerable to work-life balance problems
- Determine the role of employer policies to improve work/life balance.
- Explore the role of individual strategies in resolving problems of work/life imbalance.
- Identify the role of government intervention in regulating work/life balance.
- Recognise the impact of comparative cultural contexts on the nature of work/life balance.

4.0 KEY AND COGNITIVE SKILLS

SKILL	DEVELOPED	DEMONSTRATED
Learning	In completing self study and preparing group presentations	In group process report and self evaluation of coursework
Interpersonal	In seminar discussions	Group presentations
Communication	In class discussion of presentations and in completion of group and individual assessments	In all grade assessments

Analysing/Problem Solving	In class activities, in completion of assessments	Classroom response and graded assessments
Use of IT	Assessing electronic sources of information in private study time, researching/ completing and presenting assessments	Group presentations, written CW presentations

5.0 INDICATIVE CONTENT

Definition of concept of work life balance, links to concepts such as centrality of work, work ethic, stress, psychological contract.

Emergence of concept as a contemporary business problem in the context of globalisation and restructuring, flexibility, employer control mechanisms, labour market trends, consumerism, communications revolution.

Consequence of work-life imbalance, individual and collective manifestations of imbalance - health, stress, collective and individual conflict, non-work social issues.

Vulnerable groups – managers, parents, women, carers

Employer strategies for managing work-life balance, family friendly policies, flexible working, homeworking.

Government and European Union intervention, regulation in relation to working hours, health and environment, human rights, family friendly policies.

Individual strategies for managing work/life balance, e.g. time management.

Collective approaches to work/life balance, e.g. trade union policies and initiatives.

Work/life balance in different cultures – US, Sweden, Spain

6.0 TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

There will be a two hour lecture and one hour seminar.

Lectures will cover key theoretical concepts and they will be supported by

seminar sessions.

The seminar sessions will be based on group reviews of journal and other documentary material and case studies.

Students are encouraged to make use of IT facilities to support research and reading. Specific web sites will be included in the reading list.

7.0 LECTURE PROGRAMME

WEEK 1 –28/1/08 INTRODUCTION - Definition of work life balance, key concepts, measurement. Why a problem?

LO - Explain emergence of WL balance as an issue.

WEEK 2 – 4/2/08 WHO IS EXPERIENCING WORK LIFE IMBALANCE –

Managers, Women, Parents, Long hours workers, vulnerable sectors , part timers

LO - Explain the emergence of WL balance as a contemporary issue.

WEEK 3- 11/2/08 THREATS TO BALANCE FROM WORK - Changes to organizational structures and cultures, employer control strategies, 24 hour society, communications technology.

LO - Identify the factors contributing to WL imbalance.

WEEK 4-18/2/08 THREATS TO BALANCE FROM NON-WORK - Changing pattern of women's employment, gender roles, changes in the nature of the family, consumerism.

LO – Identify the factors contributing to WL imbalance

WEEK 5-25/2/08 STRESS - CONSEQUENCES OF IMBALANCE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL - - The individual and stress, What is stress? How serious a problem is it?.

LO - Recognise the consequences of a lack of WL balance and how the individual can manage it..

WEEK 6- 3/3/08 THE BUSINESS CASE FOR ACTION

LO - Recognise the consequences of lack of WL balance for the company.

WEEK 7- 10/3/08 MANAGING WLB I - Government perspectives, public policy, legislative initiatives

LO - Identify role of government intervention.

WEEK 8- 7/4/08 MANAGING WLB II - Corporate response, family friendly policies and beyond

LO - Determine role of employer policies in improving WL balance.

WEEK 9- 14/4/08 TYPES OF FLEXIBLE WORKING - Examining and assessing particular models of flexible working as a response to work-life balance problems..

LO - Determine role of employer policies in improving WL balance.

WEEK 10- 21/4/08 COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES - Is it a US/British problem? Other EU countries- Sweden ,Spain

LO - Recognise impact of comparative cultural contexts on WL balance.

WEEK 11- 28/4/08 ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS – Trade union policies and effectiveness of their interventions on work life balance

LO – Identify and determine the role of trade unions in reconciling work and non work commitments

WEEK 12 – 5/5/08 REVISION LECTURE

8.0 SEMINAR PROGRAMME

The seminar programme will be built around the discussion of materials in class. The materials will be distributed at the beginning of the unit in a booklet "Support Materials for Seminars". Discussion questions will be considered around the materials for each week. The seminars will seek to consolidate the preceding week's lecture. The discussion questions are listed below.

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Week 1 | Introduction to seminar programme. |
| Week 2 | Diagnostic session- What is your work-life balance like? See Appendix III. |
| Week 3 | To what extent are work life balance problems mainly experienced by managerial and professional staff. |
| Week 4 | How has contemporary business and workplace change contributed to the problems of work-life balance? |
| Week 5 | Has the family changed too much or not enough? Discuss in relation to current problems of work life balance |
| Week 6 | To what extent is stress a useful concept in understanding work life balance? |
| Week 7 | How compelling is the business case for companies to develop policies to address worklife balance problems? |
| Week 8 | Evaluate the role of Government Action in improving the balance between work and life. |
| Week 9 | To what extent is increasing flexibility at work necessarily a solution for work life balance problems? |
| Week 10 | Evaluate the potential of home-working for improving work-life balance problems |
| Week 11 | What does the data from the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey and the 24-7 Survey indicate about the progress made by organizations in developing effective work life balance policies? |
| Week 12 | To what extent is the response to work life balance problems likely to vary between different countries? |

9.0 READING/MATERIALS

RECOMMENDED TEXT

Clutterbuck D – Managing Work- life Balance, Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, 2003

Please note that Clutterbuck is by no means an ideal text – none exists, It is OK for weeks 1,5,6,7,8,9 – for other weeks look at material in the seminar pack, on the Blackboard site, material given out in the lecture and items listed under recommended reading.

If you would like to purchase Clutterbuck it can be bought as an online text from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Cost – 25-99 plus vat. Contact Mala Bhaumik at rightsandpermissions@cipd.co.uk

RECOMMENDED READING

Berkeley Journal of Sociology, Vol 45, 2001 - Special edition on Work Life Balance (in seminar pack).

Dex,S and Scheibe,F (2001). - Flexible and Family Friendly Working Arrangements in UK based SMES, British Journal of Industrial Relations, 39.3

Dex S and Smith C(2002) The nature and pattern of family friendly employment policies in Britain, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Felstead A , Jewson N, Phizacklea A,Walters S - Opportunities to work at home in the context of work life balance, HRM Journal, 12,1, 2002, pp54-76

Gambles R, Lewis S, Rapoport R (2006) The Myth of Work-Life Balance, Wiley

McKee L ,Mauthner,MacLean - Family friendly policies and practices in the Oil and Gas Industry: Employer Perspectives, WES 14,3,pp557-571

Perrons D,Fagan C, McDowell L, Ray K, Ward K (2007) Gender Divisions and Working Time in the New Economy, Edward Elgar.

Personnel Review, Vol 32,No 4,2003 – Special edition on teleworking

Rigby M – Work life balance – deconstructing the concept, (available on Blackboard Site)

Taylor R – The Future of Work-Life Balance , ESRC, 2002

JOURNALS

Gender, Work and Organisation.
Incomes Data Services Studies.
IRS Employment Trends
New technology, Work and Employment.
People Management.
Personnel Review
Work, Employment and Society.

WEBSITES

www.workliferesearch.org
www.dti.gov.uk/work-lifebalance
www.tuc.org.uk/changingtimes
www.parentsatwork.org.uk
www.new-ways.co.uk
www.cipd.co.uk

10.0 ASSESSMENT

There will be three elements of assessment as follows:

- a) An unseen examination at the end of the semester (60%).

There will be an unseen exam of two hours at the end of the semester. The exam will be based on the key themes addressed in lectures and seminars. A copy of last years exam paper is included as Appendix II to this unit guide.

- b) A written coursework report (30%).

You will be expected to identify a person you know outside the university who is in full time paid employment and:

- i) analyse their work and non-work roles.
- ii) evaluate the extent to which there exists balance between their work and non-work roles.

- iii) identify the factors which explain the degree of balance or imbalance.

The report will be no more than 2,000 words in length.
It should be submitted by 28th April 2008

The report will be assessed on:

- evidence of answering the whole question.
- logical structure.
- evidence of application of theoretical concepts to data.
- evidence of collection of primary data on subject.
- overall presentation in terms of style, language used, lay-out.

See Appendix 1 for an example piece of coursework and suggestions re questions to ask.

- c) A verbal, individual seminar presentation (10%).

Each student will give a verbal presentation during one of the seminars. During the first part of the seminar, the student presenting will be supported by the other members of their group in preparing their presentations.

The presentation should last about 5 minutes. It will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- structure and clarity of expression.
- evidence of preparation.
- management of time.
- use of research information sources provided.

Please bear in mind the following points:

- discuss any problems you may have in completing the coursework with your unit co-ordinator
- make sure you know when the deadline date for submission is
- get the agreement of your unit co-ordinator to an extension of the deadline date for submission
- hand in the coursework to your School Office (R105)by the submission date
- Copies of all forms are available from your School Office(R105)

Unless you have obtained the agreement of your unit co-ordinator to the late submission of your coursework, coursework submitted:

- up to two weeks after the deadline date will receive a maximum mark of the

- pass mark(40%)
- more than two weeks after the deadline date will not be marked

If you want an extension of the deadline date you must:

- get a copy of the form for late submission from R105
- fill in Part A of the form, giving reasons why you cannot meet the existing deadline date.
- Ask your unit co-ordinator to fill in Part B - the decision whether to agree the request rests with the unit co-ordinator
- Attach the form to the front of your coursework when you submit it

The maximum extension is two weeks

You must:

- complete the coursework submission form and attach it to the front of your coursework
- if necessary, attach the form for an extension of the deadline date, signed by your unit co-ordinator, to the front of your coursework.
- Take the coursework to R105, which will date stamp the submission form

You must not hand coursework to your unit co-ordinator or other lecturer

APPENDIX I - EXAMPLE OF WRITTEN COURSEWORK PLUS QUESTION AREAS SUGGESTIONS PLUS GRADING CRITERIA

To: Mr. M. Rigby

1.0 Introduction: Work-Life Balance Report

1.1 I have been asked to write this report on an individual who is in full time paid employment. I will analysis their work and non-work roles. I will then go on to evaluate the extent to which there exists balance between their work and non-work roles. The report will then conclude by identifying the factors, which explain the degree of balance or imbalance.

1.2 Jim Bird (founder of WLB.com) gave a working definition of Work-Life Balance, he defined it as 'meaningful daily achievement and enjoyment in each of your four life quadrants; work, family, friends and self (www.worklifebalance.com). There is no one correct way to achieve balance between all areas of your life, in this report I will analysis the balance / imbalance between the participants work and non-work roles.

1.3 The participant will be referred to as Mr. Brown, for confidentiality reasons. He is presently working as a Supply Teacher at a state primary school in the S.E. London area. He has been a qualified teacher since 1991 and had worked in a local state school as a classroom teacher for just over six years. Eventually, his workload had increased and was spilling over into his non-work life, because he was spending hours in the evening marking, planning and writing reports. Due to the size of his workload and the increase in the volume of work, he decided to quit his permanent job, with all the benefits it brought, and decided to do supply work instead.

2.0 An Analysis of his work roles:

2.1 Since September 2000 Mr. Brown has been employed by an agency, as a supply teacher. The Agency arranges short and long-term temporary jobs in Primary schools in the Borough of Lewisham. His job involves classroom management; organising wall displays; organising classroom assistants; setting home work; carrying out play ground duty; delivering lessons; taking assembly; managing classroom behaviour; assessing and motivating children and managing their emotional, psychological, physical and social health.

2.2 In addition to the above day time role, Mr. Brown also owns and runs his own business providing private tuition teaching Maths and English to primary age children, in the evenings and at weekends. The classes last for 2 hours and there is approximately a further hour spent talking to parents, setting homework, planning material for sessions and marking work. In total he spends 9 hours a week doing private tuition.

2.3 When asked why he works during the day at a State School, Mr. Brown said "I am motivated to work during the day mainly for money. To be able to pay my bills and to support my family and myself until my own business is successful enough to do that". Although he does like being a teacher, having regular steady work from the Agency guarantees a certain amount of money each week.

2.4 When asked why he works in the evening, Mr. Brown said "my true ambition is to become successful enough to become my own boss, so until my private tuition business establishes itself to the extent that I can become financially independent, I am happy to do supply."

2.5 Whilst working at schools Mr. Brown interacts with children, teachers, school office staff, caretakers, dinner ladies, cooks, classroom assistants, school nurse or dentist, cleaners and visitors to the school. When going on school trips and visits he also interacts with the staffs that work at the location of the visit. Meeting different types of people during the day also adds to the variety within his job. He stated, "I enjoy it because I am always learning new things from the children and I also enjoy a challenge, working in an inner city state school is interesting and rewarding and I gain a lot of job satisfaction from working in this type of environment."

2.6 As a teacher there is a culture of working long hours, Mr. Brown calculated that he worked on average between 45 - 50 hours each week. Contact time is usually from 9.00am until 3.30pm, however, during this period there is usually breaks for 'play time' and lunch. But working in an inner city school where behaviour management is crucial to how well the children in your class learn, teachers often have to spend their break time supervising children who have been kept in as a punishment. Then at 3.45pm it was common to have a staff meeting that would last until 5.30pm. After the staff meeting it would be essential to take work home in order to complete it before school the next day. This is a clear example of when there is an imbalance between work and non-work roles. Clutterbuck (2003) argued, conflict occurs when one part of a person's life intrudes dysfunctionally or excessively into another - intrusion is primarily from work into non-work.

2.7 Mr. Brown admitted he often-felt stressed and displayed symptoms of stress. "When somebody is said to be suffering from stress, it implies that pressures in their lives exceed their capacity to cope" (http://mandrin/hr/4_4.htm). Mr. Brown suffered migraines and was irritable, tired and did not maintain healthy eating habits. He would often eat 'on the go', and became quiet overwhelmed with the volume of work and added responsibilities that were placed upon him. He noticed that his health had been affected in an adverse way, although he was constantly tired, he found it hard to sleep at night, so stayed up late to complete marking. He noticed there was a pattern to his migraines, they usually occurred on a Friday (end of the week) or he suffered from them as soon as he had broken up for a school holidays.

2.8 The pressures at work and working too many hours had a knock on effect on his health, social and home life. As a direct result of stress, it lead to high levels of absenteeism, which also had a negative effect on his motivation. Mr. Brown felt he did not have the time and also lacked motivation to complete home tasks or other responsibilities outside of paid work.

3.0 An analysis of non-work roles:

3.1 In answer to the question regarding his roles outside of paid work, Mr. Brown replied, "My non-work role includes being a father to two boys (one aged 21 and the other age 8). I am also living with my partner of 12 years and have responsibilities within the home. These responsibilities include picking up my son from school, taking him to karate, football and any other activities he undertakes. My main responsibilities includes me supporting, teaching and encouraging my sons to become motivated, ambitious, brilliant, analytical, kind, moral and loving adults. This is of course ongoing, however, in general I provide a safe comfortable challenging environment for my family."

3.2 He also went on, "My role as a partner is to be supportive, loving and caring and also to ensure I contribute fully to the running of the house. This was one of the reasons why I stopped working in schools on permanent contracts". When asked to elaborate Mr. Brown explained that the pressures at work were becoming unbearable. "There was so much to do but little time to complete the tasks". He also stated that he had to attend far too many meetings almost every school night plus take a lot of work home in order to meet deadlines. This was also having a detrimental effect on his relationship because once he had finished with his own work from school there was no time to complete any tasks around the house on a daily basis. Any chores would have to wait until school holidays or at weekends. Which was not acceptable by his partner and this often led to a number of contentious arguments.

3.3 Due to the hours spent on his work role, Mr. Brown found he did not have sufficient time to be able to participate or to forefill his personal goals or hobbies. Apart from having aspirations to being his own boss, Mr. Brown is also interested in interior designing / decorating, drawing, painting and creating things (DIY). But as with everything, the pressure of work does not allow him time to concentrate on this aspect of his life.

4.0 Evaluation balance between work and non-work roles:

4.1 Mr. Brown explained that since changing employment contracts and now doing supply work, this has had a positive effect on his entire life. He now spends less time at work and takes NO work home. As a Supply Teacher, he no longer carries out the following:-

- Writing end of term reports (assessing children)
- Attends staff meetings, or inset days
- Setting or marking weekly homework
- Writing and evaluating lesson plans

4.2 Because of the reduction in his responsibilities, this has led to a reduction in the number of hours Mr. Brown now works. He is able to concentrate on building his own business. He says, "being able to leave work at 3.30pm rather than attending meetings, doing marking, or planning etc. has allowed him more time to concentrate on myself and my family, which is great".

4.3 Mr. Brown states time management is the key to getting the balance right. He is now able to carry out chores around the house, which has taken the pressure off his partner (who also works full time). If he is doing schoolwork at home it is for his own private tuition business, and there are no longer piles or boxes full of books to be marked lying around the house. When he teaches for his own business his class sizes are between 5 – 10 pupils maximum, as opposed to working in a state school where sizes are now 32 pupils per class, so the reduction in numbers reduces the time spent planning, marking etc.

5.0 Degree of balance or imbalance:

5.1 David Clutterbuck (2003) argued that there is 5 stages of balance / imbalance. He says it is on a spectrum, and there are different levels for example:-

- Subsistence: which is working long hours out of necessity, with no resources left for other things after work.
- Conflict: when the individual recognises conflicting demands and struggles to resolve them.
- Integration: where the person has more or less achieved a satisfactory level of fulfilment in multiple aspects of this or her life.
- Idleness: when the person is unable to work (due to disability or unemployment)
- Hedonism: where there is no need to work, either you were born into wealth or you came into wealth.

5.2 When Mr. Brown was working on a permanent contract, he was defiantly at the Subsistence Stage. He often brought work home and was unable to do anything other than schoolwork. But since becoming a Supply Teacher he is now at the Integration Stage. He is able to spend time on his own business (self) and instead of taking his sons to karate and sitting down and marking books. He is now able to join in the karate class, which has had a positive effect on his health and the relationship with his sons and partner. He can now assist with picking up his son from playcenter on a regular basis and helps around the house more regularly.

5.3 Although he still suffers from migraines, they do not occur as often as before. Mr. Brown can go as long as 4 to 6 weeks without having a migraine. When he had a permanent contract they occurred weekly. He stated, "next term I am hoping to work part time during the day at state schools, because this will give me between 2 to 2^{1/2} days a week to spend time on non-work roles.

6.0 Conclusion:

6.1 For teachers specifically, introducing flexible work life balance is difficult. This is because a lot of their work is not flexible i.e. schools are open for a specific time on particular days (3 terms per academic year). However, the tasks that need to be carried out by teachers could be carried out by other persons i.e. admin staff or teaching assistants could have more responsibilities like marking set homework or being in charge of wall displays and photocopying etc. In order for them to be able to carry out their job without the amount of stress they are under will have to come from top management, and is outside his circle of influence. Therefore, the only changes Mr Brown can make are the one he can control. For example better management of his time outside of paid work.

6.2 I am aware of a school that employs two extra Teachers (floaters) who are rotated around the school taking classes and allowing the usual classroom teacher an afternoon or morning each week of 'non contact time'. During this period they could catch up with marking, write reports, finishing planning etc. This would go some way to elevate stress amongst staff, reduce absenteeism and encourage teachers to stay on permanent contracts rather than leaving the profession.

6.3 After completing this interview with Mr. Brown it seems as though the problem lies with the volume of work. In his case the conflict came when his work life split over into his non-work life. He has made steps into the right directions because he is now a Supply Teacher so this move reduces the amount of time spent at work during the day. However, in order for him to meet his goals he needs to take daily or weekly steps in activities that will help him achieve this.

References

Clutterbuck, D. Managing Work-life Balance: A guide for HR in achieving organisational and individual change. (2003) London: CIPD Publishing

www.worklifebalance.com

http://mandrin/hr/4_4.htm



COURSEWORK GRADING CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN REPORT

70+ A report on interview with clear structure – ability to make use of literature and knowledge of legislation in analysis of interview – recommendations for future action

60+ Clear structure in terms of work and non work roles, evaluation of balance and possible action available, but little use of literature, possibly some of legislation, some advice

50+ Clearly a report on interview rather than summary, well structured and with an evaluation of balance but lacking any added value in terms of use of legislative or literature knowledge

40+ Largely summary of interview but structured clearly according to work and non roles and some discussion of balance

Less than 40 – Possibly some evidence of interview having taken place but no stepping outside the interview to analyse and report on findings.

WRITTEN COURSEWORK REPORT

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

1. QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR ROLES

i) WORK

ASK THEM ABOUT THEIR JOB, WHAT IT INVOLVES, HOW LONG THEY HAVE BEEN DOING IT, WHO THEY INTERACT WITH IN IT, HOW MANY HOURS THEY WORK, WHY DO THEY WORK, DO THEY ENJOY IT

HOW STRESSFUL IS WORK, WHAT CAUSES STRESS

ii) OUTSIDE WORK

ASK THEM ABOUT THEIR NON WORK ROLES – WHAT ARE THEY E.G. PARENT, CARER, PARTNER, ROLES OUTSIDE THE FAMILY E.G. CHURCH, SPORT

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT

2. QUESTIONS ABOUT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK AND NON WORK ROLES

ARE THEY ABLE TO MANAGE THE TWO AREAS OF THEIR LIFE EFFECTIVELY – IF NOT- WHY NOT

WHAT WOULD THEY PARTICULARLY LIKE TO SPEND MORE TIME ON

DO THEY HAVE SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

WHAT FACTORS EXPLAIN THE DEGREE OF BALANCE

WHAT STRATEGIES DO THEY USE TO REACH A BALANCE

ARE THEY PLANNING ANY CHANGES TO HELP IMPROVE BALANCE

WORK LIFE BALANCE QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help the Centre review its policies to enable staff establish a good balance between work and their life outside work. Please circle the number which reflects the correct response as in the following example:
All answers will be treated confidentially

What is your gender? Male {1}
 Female 2

2. What is your age? Under 36 1
 36-50 2

Over 50 3

3. What is your work?

4. What does it involve?

5. Do you have to supervise other people?

6. Do you experience much stress at work? –if yes, what causes the stress?

7. How long does it usually take you to get to work?

Under 30 minutes	1
30minutes – 1 hour	2
More than 1 hour	3

4.i. Do you have any dependent children?

Yes	1
No	2

If no, go to question 5, if yes - - -

4.ii. Do you currently need to use childcare?

Yes	1
No	2

If no go to question 5, if yes - - -

4.iii. What is the most important childcare you use?

Relative	1
Childminder	2
Creche/ nursery	3
My partner	4
Pre school	5
Other	6
(please specify)	

5. Do you have caring responsibilities for an elderly and/or caring relative?

Yes 1
No 2

6. Do you work directly with clients?

Yes 1.
No 2

**SECTION B : YOUR VIEWS ABOUT YOUR CURRENT WORK-LIFE
BALANCE**

7. To what extent are you satisfied with the current balance between your work and home lives?

Very satisfied 1
Satisfied 2
Dissatisfied 3
Very dissatisfied 4

8. Approximately what percentage of your week do you spend on the following activities?

Working for money
Studying
Family/caring issues
Social/recreational/sport
Church
Other –please specify

9. Aproximately what percentage of you week would you like to spend on the following activities:

Working for money
Studying
Family/caring issues
Social/recreational/sport
Church
Other –please specify.

10. Please indicate for each statement the extent to which they occur, using the scale below, circling the appropriate number.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Fairly Frequently	Constantly

- i) Other people in my life complain about how much time I have to spend on my job 1 2 3 4 5
- ii) I feel overwhelmed by things at work and unable to cope with work pressures 1 2 3 4 5
- iii) Things I want to do outside work can't get done because of the demands my job puts on my time 1 2 3 4 5
- iv) Worry or concern over things outside my job affects my work 1 2 3 4 5
- v). There is a conflict between my job and the number of commitments and responsibilities I have outside work 1 2 3 4 5

11. On average how many extra hours (above contract) do you work per week?

None	1
1-5	2
6-10	3
More than 10	4

SECTION C : YOUR VIEWS ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE POLICIES

12. Please indicate using the scale provided below the extent to which you agree with the following statements .

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

- i. Working extra hours is the exception rather than the norm where I work 1 2 3 4 5
- ii. I would feel comfortable asking for some 1 2 3 4 5

flexibility at work

iii. There are work-life balance policies available at 1 2 3 4 5
work but I feel my career would suffer if I took
them up.

13. Keeping in mind the nature of your work, which of the following work-life balance policies would you like to see as options for staff where you work? Please mark only the **two** which would be most beneficial for your own situation

Job-sharing	1
Part-time work	2
Working from home	3
Compressed week e.g 4 day week	4
or 9 day fortnight with longer working days.	
Other(please specify)	5

13. In relation to home-working please indicate using the scale provided below the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree or disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
i. I would like to work exclusively from home	1	2	3	4	5
ii. I would like to work for part of the week	1	2	3	4	5
iii. I would like to have the opportunity to work at home on an ad/hoc basis	1	2	3	4	5
iv. Home-working should be allowed only for people who have a separate working space at home	1	2	3	4	5
v. I would be more productive working from home than in the office	1	2	3	4	5
vi. Working from home would help me to spend more time caring for my dependents	1	2	3	4	5
vii. I believe that working from home	1	2	3	4	5

would damage my service to clients

viii. I would be concerned about the loss of relationships with other staff if I were to work from home

1	2	3	4	5
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ix. I believe that working from home would damage the visibility and standing of my area of work

1	2	3	4	5
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14. If there any worries you have about working from home which have not been covered in the previous question please indicate below.

15.i. Would you be interested in working a compressed week?

Yes	1
No	2

15ii.If yes, what shape would you like the week to take i.e. how would you see the 34 hours distributed, either in a four day week or a 9 day fortnight pattern

16. Please indicate, using the scale provided below, the extent to which you agree with the following statements

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
i. I could maintain the present level of availability to my clients if I worked a compressed week.	1	2	3	4	5
ii. The longer working days associated with a compressed week could lead to fatigue and a deterioration in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
iii. Working a compressed week would only work if there was considerable co-operation between colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
iv. A compressed working week might allow staff to be available for longer hours to clients	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX 2

LAST YEAR'S EXAM PAPER

SESSION 2006/7

BA HONS BUSINESS STUDIES

LEVL TWO

UNIT - WORK LIFE BALANCE

SUMMER EXAMINATION

TIME THREE HOURS

Instructions to candidates

- i) Answer any three questions
- ii) All questions carry equal marks

1. Discuss the role of flexibility both as a cause of and solution for work life balance problems
2. How have demographic trends contributed to the development of the current concern about work life issues?
3. How convincing is the business case for employers taking responsibility for the work life balance of their staff?
4. How has the UK government sought to improve the work life balance of carers? How effective has its approach been?
5. Compare and contrast the experience of work life balance in the US and Sweden.
6. Identify the groups of employees most vulnerable to work life pressures and explain reasons for their vulnerability
7. Discuss the relevance of the concept of corporate culture for seeking to understand and resolve work life issues.
8. To what extent does the concept of stress contribute to our understanding of work life issues.

WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Joan Kofodimos, in her book, *Balancing Act: How Managers Can Integrate Successful Careers and Fulfilling Personal Lives* (1993), defines balance as "a satisfying, healthy, and productive life that includes work, play, and love; that integrates a range of life activities with attention to self and to personal and spiritual development; and that expresses a person's unique wishes, interests, and values" (p. xiii). She describes an unbalanced life as one that is dominated by work, where employees focus on satisfying external demands at the expense of inner development and time for self and family. To put it simply, *balance* can be defined as the ability to manage job and nonjob responsibilities in ways that result in individuals having satisfying and productive work and non-work lives.

In the early 1980s, balance was perceived by many to be a woman's issue. Women were portrayed in the media as having it all: an exciting career, a handsome husband, and two adorable, well-behaved children. The superwoman myth was that she could (and should) balance it all. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the media began describing women at the other extreme: stressed out, bedraggled, and bug-eyed from lack of sleep. The reality is somewhere in between and depends on the individual's job and family circumstances and the extent of support from spouse, family, friends, co-workers, and bosses.

To get a sense of how much balance you have in your life, take a minute to answer the questions in the accompanying box. This exercise has been used in management training programs and in university classes to help individuals think about how balanced or unbalanced their lives are. Students and managers who find that they are out of balance often respond that their imbalance is temporary and that balance will return

BOX 9.1

Is Your Life out of Balance?

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Assign percentages according to the <i>importance</i> of each of the following areas in your life (they should total 100 percent): | Work (or school) _____% |
| Work (or school) _____% | Family (or intimate relationship) _____% |
| Family (or intimate relationship) _____% | Leisure _____% |
| Leisure _____% | Community _____% |
| Community _____% | Religion _____% |
| Religion _____% | |
| 2. Assign percentages according to the amount of <i>time and energy</i> you devote to each of the following areas in your life (they should total 100 percent): | 3. Compare the two columns. Is there a discrepancy between your values and your behavior? If there is a discrepancy, how comfortable are you with the imbalance it implies? Is it a temporary imbalance? What can you do to improve the balance in your life? |

Source: Adapted from Kofodimos (1993)