

Top Tips

to Build in Work and Life Balance



- **Plan a 'date night' every week:** when you plan your week, make a point to schedule time with your family and friends. If a date night with your partner, swimming with the children or a football game with friends is on your calendar, you'll have something to look forward to and an extra incentive to manage your time well so you don't have to cancel. Plan an activity with your family, like going to a movie or the park, every Sunday afternoon.
- **Drop activities that sap your time or energy:** take stock of activities that don't enhance your career or personal life, and minimize the time you spend on them. You may even be able to leave work earlier if you make a conscious effort to limit the time you spend on emails or searching for resources. Sometimes, all it takes is to say 'no'.
- **Rethink your errands and chores:** can you afford a cleaner? Organising someone to clean your house, or do the ironing, could radically alter your weekend and gain you valuable family time. Could you order your groceries online and have them delivered? Hire a kid down the street to mow your lawn? Even if you're on a tight budget, you may discover that the time you'll save will make it worth it.

You could trade services with friends - offer to do tasks that you enjoy or that you were planning to do anyway. You could exchange gardening services for babysitting services, or cooking for car-sharing.

- **Get some exercise:** it's hard to make time for exercise when you have a jam-packed schedule, but it may ultimately help you get more done by boosting your energy levels and ability to concentrate. Research shows that exercise can help you to be more alert, and actually increase your productivity.
- **Make time to relax:** don't assume that you need to make big changes to bring more balance to your life. Set realistic goals, like leaving school earlier 1 night per week. Slowly build more activities into your schedule that are important to you. Maybe you can start by spending an hour a week on your hobby, or planning a weekend getaway with your partner once a year. Even during a hectic day, you can take 10 or 15 minutes to do something that will recharge your batteries. Have a bath, read a novel, go for a walk, or listen to music. You have to make a little time for the things that ignite your joy.