



BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. Spotlight

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Keeping Your Work and Life
Balanced

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Keeping Your Work and Life Balanced

It can be a struggle to balance work with other areas of your life, often described as *work-life balance*. Learning new ways to handle things will help you achieve that important balance. Below are ideas to help you bring your work and life into balance.

Manage Your Time. Avoid procrastination. For many people, most of the stress they feel comes from simply being disorganized and procrastinating. Learn to set more realistic goals and deadlines, then stick to them. You'll find that not only are you less stressed, but your work will be better.

Set Realistic Expectations with Yourself. Set realistic expectations with yourself that allows for quality work. If you think it will take 1.5 hours to do something, give yourself two hours. Try the following:

- Step 1—Give yourself increased time frames to get things done.
- Step 2—Increase the amount of gentleness and compassion you have for yourself and your limits.
- Step 3—Slowly increase your expectations of yourself so you have room to grow and succeed.

Talk to Your Employer. If you are feeling overwhelmed. Find out if there is a way of modifying your hours, shifts or job duties to temporarily adjust for your current situation.

Slow Down. Life is simply too short, so don't let things pass by you in a blur. Take steps to stop and enjoy the things and people around you. Don't make plans for every evening or weekend, and find some ways to distance yourself or take breaks from the things that are causing you the most stress.

Share the Load. Even though you may feel you are the only one capable of doing something, it is usually not the case. Get your partner, family or friends to help you with personal and family responsibilities. Taking care of the household, children or parents should not be the responsibility of just one person.

Take Charge. Sometimes it is easier to allow yourself to feel overwhelmed rather than to take charge and develop a prioritized list of things that need to get done. Develop a list, set priorities and then enjoy the satisfaction of crossing things off the list.

In the end, the key word is *balance*. You need to find the right balance that works for you. Celebrate your successes and don't dwell on your failures. Life is a process, and so is striving for balance in your life.

If you need help with balancing, don't hesitate to seek advice. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides free and confidential assessment and counseling services. BHS is available by calling 800-245-1150 or visiting www.behavioralhealthsystems.com.



Navigating Political Discussions at Work

It's election season in the U.S., in an era of increased polarization. What should employers do when their employees engage in political discussions at work or take part in political activism in their personal lives? Experts advised employers not to shut down discussions, but said they should set expectations for what is appropriate.

Joseph L. Beachboard, the chief employment attorney at Beachboard Consulting Group in Los Angeles, and Dennis Davis, the national director of client training at Ogletree Deakins, presented on the issue at the SHRM Annual Conference & Expo in Chicago. The speakers cited research that found 83% of workers overall said they had conversations about politics at work, while about the same number said they would prefer to avoid talking about politics at work.

On the other hand, 87% of surveyed employers said they are concerned about managing divisive political beliefs, 84% said discussions about politics will adversely affect employee engagement, and 79% said political talk adversely affects productivity. But just 8% of companies have workplace policies on political expression at work.

The Legal Implications Employees regularly cite the freedom of speech enshrined in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as a right to say what they please at work, Beachboard said—but that's a misconception. There are certain prohibitions on employers' limitations on speech, he added. They include interfering with someone's ability to vote and trying to coerce employees or provide incentives to vote a certain way.

What can employers do? Davis advised employers to first examine the extent of political discussion or expression in their workplaces and find out how big of an issue it is.

Next, "reaffirm your workplace culture, foster inclusivity and respect for one another," he said. "Remind people that healthy political discussions are OK. HR can guide employees and managers on how these conversations should go."

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The Power of Connection: Building a Supportive Network

In today's fast-paced world, the ability to connect and build a supportive network is essential for personal and professional growth. A strong network can provide guidance, encouragement, and opportunities that are vital to achieving our goals.

Benefits of a Supportive Network

Emotional Support: Having a network of supportive individuals helps us navigate challenges. Emotional connections foster resilience, allowing us to face setbacks with confidence.

Opportunities for Growth: Connections can lead to new experiences, from job opportunities to social gatherings. A robust network enhances our visibility and opens doors to a variety of possibilities.

Skill Development: Engaging with different people allows us to learn new skills and gain valuable insights. Mentorship from friends or family can be just as impactful as professional guidance.

Strategies for Building Your Network

Attend Social Gatherings: Participate in family events, community gatherings, and social functions. These occasions are excellent for strengthening bonds and meeting new people.

Use Social Media Wisely: Platforms like Facebook and Instagram can help you stay connected with friends and family. Share updates, engage with others' content, and participate in group discussions.

Volunteer Together: Get involved in community service projects with friends or family. Volunteering strengthens bonds while connecting you with others who share your values and interests.

Stay in Touch: Make a habit of checking in with loved ones. A simple message or phone call can go a long way in maintaining and nurturing relationships.

RECIPE: Five Ingredient Tortilla Soup • 4 Servings • 15 Minute Prep Time • 15 Minute Cook Time

Ingredients • 4 cups chicken stock • 1 rotisserie chicken, shredded • 1 (19 oz.) can red enchilada sauce • 1 (14 oz.) can fire roasted tomatoes, diced • 1 (14 oz.) can sweet corn, drained (or canned creamed corn)

Instructions • Place all ingredients into a large soup pot and bring to a boil. • Simmer for 15 minutes • Ladle soup into bowls and serve with your favorite fixings: lime juice, sour cream, shredded cheese, avocado, chips etc.

