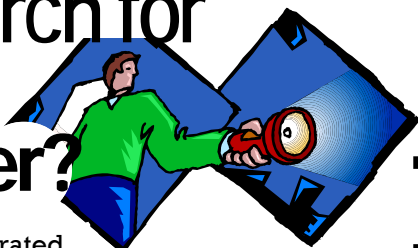


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Is Your Search for Work-Life Balance Over?



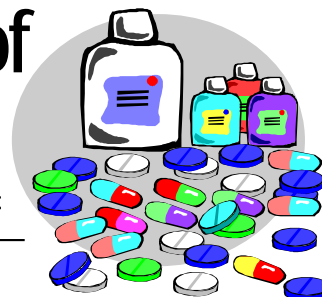
If you are happy but frustrated that you have not achieved work-life balance, perhaps you should put away your scales. You've arrived. The term "work-life balance" is ultimately about happiness and is not about scoring high marks for a tightrope walk between work and family. The good news is that you may have already achieved what you truly want. Presumably, what makes people happy are love and productive work. With our busy lives, driven by technological octane, it is inevitable that these two worlds eventually collide. Understanding what makes you happy is a life skill. Do not allow this criterion to be the way you prove to yourself that you are happy. In a fast-paced world, the quest for work-life balance for most people is a process, not a destination.

Common Sense Soccer Season



Get ready for another great soccer season, but take along a few tips from emergency room doctors who see 100,000 emergency room patients per year with soccer injuries, many of which could have been prevented. Doctors say that players can avoid the 'injured' list if they wear protective equipment at games and practices. Correct fields that are not level, contain holes, or have slippery areas. Consider reducing injuries by matching players by weight, not by age. And, the most important rule: don't play through pain. Pain is a sign of overuse or injury.

Teen Abuse of Coricidin[®]



LSD and PCP are illegal, but Vicks 44 and Coricidin-HPB—which can cause hallucinations, dizziness, loss of motor control, and possibly death when abused—are not. The active ingredient in these two medications is dextromethorphan or DXM, a common cough suppressant frequently abused by drug-using teenagers. The medications attract young drug users because they are not illegal but can be abused to get high. Preventing abuse can be difficult, but a key prevention strategy is making sure you know where your teenager is, and if he or she is visiting a friend's home, knowing that a parent is there.

Log on to the New Food Pyramid



In 2005, the federal government renewed its recommended nutritional guidelines—most commonly called the "food pyramid." It was big news at the time. Now the government has created a new, interactive Web site to go along with the guidelines that provides helpful information about diet, exercise, and weight management, and has various kinds of assessment tools. Visit the new Web site at <http://www.mypyramid.gov>. You can keep track of your progress while you improve your health and store the results for up to one year! There is a section for children, too, so they can learn about proper nutrition and balanced, healthy eating.

Big Shoes to Fill?

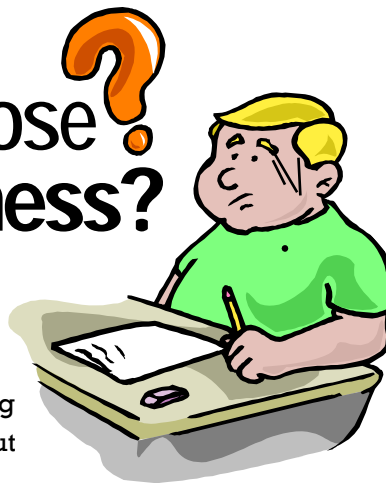
Being hired to replace a high achiever who left for greener pastures is always a challenge because some coworkers inevitably struggle with letting go and accepting a new coworker. You can't take away their feelings of loss, but if you recognize that super-performers are often liked as much for their ability to establish meaningful relationships as they are for their skills, you'll be more easily accepted by your coworkers, while helping them cope at the same time. Don't react with anger or impatience to those who too frequently reference your predecessor. Instead, recognize that these references by your coworkers are steps toward letting go. Be upfront in asking about your predecessor's special abilities and talents, and the qualities that made him or her successful. There is much power in this approach because coworkers will quickly recognize that you want to achieve the same level of success as—but not replace—your predecessor. It will give them hope that they will have someone of whom they can once again feel proud. Your coworkers want you to know how good they had it with your predecessor, and you need to let them share this with you. With this approach, you will discover that there is much to learn that will add meaning to your job, and it won't mean giving up plans for creating a legacy of your own. In fact, it might make your success happen sooner.



Should I Disclose My Mental Illness?

Q My attendance at work has been really awful lately because of my struggle with chronic depression. I am worried about being fired. Should I tell my employer about my depression?

A You should speak to your doctor and the employee assistance program about your circumstances so they can advise you about how to proceed. Sign a release so that these two professionals can talk with each other. Stigmas associated with mental illness are changing, and today most employers earn high marks for compassion. How much and to whom you disclose information about your mental illness is something you should discuss with a trusted, supportive professional.



Difficult People Closer Than You Think?

Books dealing with difficult people number in the hundreds, but they are usually about others—not us. Before someone writes a book about you, consider reducing your “D” factor: 1) Become aware of your emotional responses to events and the undesirable impacts of these responses on others. You can do this by pausing for a moment of reflection between an incident (stimulus) and your response to it. This will allow you time to consider a different, more effective response. Hang in there; you will get it after a few tries. 2) Remember that difficult behavior and civility are both learned. These habits go with us to the workplace, and they can be unlearned or reinforced. 3) Don't forget the following golden rule of coworker relationships, “If you want others to listen to you, listen to them.”



Avoid the Dark Side of Moonlighting

Financial stress means that instead of heading home after

hours, many employees go to a part-time job. If you moonlight, stay on your employer's good side by avoiding these no-no's: 1) Loss of productivity. If you are tired from working too much, tardiness, lack of enthusiasm, and absenteeism are risk issues for you. 2) Increased risk of injury. If you are tired, your risk of injury goes up, and so does the risk of injuring others. 3) Conflict of interest. Sharing customer lists, borrowing tools, taking equipment and supplies—they are all serious moonlighting offenses. 4) And from the “never try this” list: filing a worker's compensation claim against your employer for an injury sustained off the job, during your part-time employment. If you are facing financial stress, remember that the EAP can help.

