Making Work-Life Balance Work

Everyone wants work-life balance but most struggle with it. Some of this is natural, because work-life balance is a moving target that requires constant tweaking. Here’s one way to figure out what you need to do to create a better sense of balance in your life.

First, define what “work success” means to you. Really pin this one down. Do you want to become vice president in five years, or is becoming the recognized expert in widget design your goal? These definitions of success are different and require different work-life achievement strategies. Once your work-success definition is clarified, you can discuss work-life balance action steps with those you love. This clarity and team effort will reduce your frustration in seeking work-life balance and help you formulate with awareness the life you want to live.

Heading Conflicts off at the Pass

Follow the “Rule of Immediacy” in resolving relationship conflicts. Quickly, after any incident, seek a private meeting with your co-worker or colleague to discuss comments, issues, or behaviors that concern or offend you. Conflicts are normal and unavoidable in any work organization, but they do not have to be as harmful as many people make them. This “keeping the air clear” approach to resolving early-stage conflicts is sound. Most employees want to get along with each other, avoid conflicts, and know their relationships are successful and tranquil. “Why didn’t you come to me sooner” is one of the most frequent retorts heard in workplace conflict resolution.

Resource for Articles: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.

“The best way to finish an unpleasant task is to get started.”

~ Anonymous
In the Workplace...

Soft Skills to Know: Crisis Management

Crisis management skills demonstrate your ability to lead others and remain cool under stress. A crisis includes three parts, the last of which is the target of change:

- the acute level of threat generated by the crisis;
- the suddenness of its occurrence; and
- a brief window of opportunity to intervene.

The key to crisis management is not succumbing to the shock and suddenness of the event. Doing so will impede your problem-solving abilities. If you accept that a crisis could someday happen, you will likely act more decisively. When a crisis happens, gather enough information to intervene. Don’t gather so much information and analyze issues and options so deeply that you cannot act decisively—avoid “paralysis by analysis.” Teach this process to others when a crisis looms, and help coworkers understand the value of calm and deliberate problem solving. In a crisis, be proactive and collaborate, but don’t wait for others to make the first move. Instead, step in to intervene.

How to Build Your Talents

Outstanding employees (star performers) exhibit certain traits. One of them is “talent.” Talent in the workplace does not mean a person is gifted, like a violin prodigy. It means performing certain job functions crucial to the organization’s mission in a predictably superior manner. Talent is so crucial that organizations aggressively strategize to find and recruit it. Managers are often frustrated with their inability to develop talent from the ranks because of resource limitations, but don’t let that hold you back.

Believe that you can be talented like star employees you know. Pay attention to what others point to as your “knack” for doing something well. Consider what you love doing and what seems to come easy to you. Challenge yourself to acquire added skills that grow your talent niche, and stay on the edge of your comfort zone, looking for ways to apply them. Soon you may be seen as a prized part of your organization’s talent pool.

Emotional Intelligence in Customer Service

Emotional intelligence (EI) applies very well to customer service, where it has big payoffs. To use EI in customer service, focus on your customers’ emotions and not your own. You will appear more empathic, identify customer needs more quickly, and calm an angry customer faster. You will experience less stress on the job by being proactive rather than reactive to a customer’s emotionality. Try it. See if you aren’t less worn out at day’s end.

Resource for Articles: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Are you finding yourself struggling with any of the following?

- Family, parenting, and relationship issues
- Work stress and conflict
- Substance abuse or dependency
- Elder care
- Mental health concerns (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Legal and/or financial concerns
- Grief and loss
- Or anything else related to work or home that is causing you undo stress and affecting your ability to be as productive as you once were?

You don’t have to deal with it alone. Support is available through UAlbany’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The mission of UAlbany EAP is to provide services to support a healthy, productive workforce. Available to all employees is the voluntary, confidential Information, Assessment, and Referral Service provided by UAlbany EAP Coordinator, Brenda Seckerson. Take advantage of this confidential assistance available to you as an employee benefit.

“Your life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change.”

~ Jim Rohn, American entrepreneur, author and motivational speaker (1930-2009)

To schedule an appointment for a confidential Information, Assessment & Referral session, contact:

Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
442-5483
bseckerson@albany.edu
EAP Website: http://www.albany.edu/eap

Early intervention is the key! Contact EAP.
Preparing for the “Wake-Up” Call to Go Back to School

Transitioning from the Freedom of Summer to the School Schedule

Parents...How do you prepare your child or teen to go back to school, especially when it comes to adjusting the sleep schedule? Summer months can provide a little loosening of the nightly “off-to-bed” routine. Transitioning between the days of sleeping in and staying up late to the sound of the revelry to “rise and shine” to get up for school can be a challenging one. The best plan is to begin a few weeks before school starts to ease back into the school year bedtime schedules. Doing things to promote good sleep hygiene, for adults as well as children and teens, is vital to health and well-being.

Basic Sleep Tips for School-aged Children from the National Sleep Foundation:

- Teach school-aged children about healthy sleep habits.
- Continue to emphasize the need for a regular and consistent sleep schedule and bedtime routine.
- Make your child's bedroom conducive to sleep – dark, cool and quiet.
- Keep TVs and computers out of the bedroom.

Create a Family Schedule

As your family slowly turns to a new, exciting school year, consider this exercise to establish a schedule. Actively have children participate in creating the schedule so they own the need for the transition, understand their responsibilities, and feel empowered by the planning experience.

Using a whiteboard, have a brainstorming session to create a “master schedule” - a list of tasks and activities to be done in the morning, at midday (if necessary), and during the evening, so a “master schedule” can be created. Spend 20-30 minutes collecting ideas—all ideas are welcome. Suggest times for waking up, going to bed, departing for school, arrival at home, chores, extracurricular activities, breakfast, packing lunches, making beds, brushing teeth, feeding and walking pets, laying out clothes, bathroom schedules, etc. After sufficient time, create the schedule and plug all the information into it. Everyone gets a copy. Bonus: Your children will learn about brainstorming and its value years before being taught it in school!
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Contact your Olympic Ambassador: Brenda Seckerson, UAlbany EAP Coordinator bseckerson@albany.edu
Looking for Reading Ideas?
Check the EAP Office Lending Library.

Contributed by Seema Mathura, EAP Office Work Study Student

Change can freak us out! Whether a relationship starts or ends, we’re making a move, starting a new job, or experience the loss of someone we love, change—whether it’s good or bad—causes stress. Check out some of our featured books to help you better adapt and adjust to changes that inevitably will occur in your life.

Are you afraid of making decisions? Whatever your fear, here is your chance to push through it once and for all. In this enduring guide to self-empowerment, Dr. Susan Jeffers inspires you with dynamic techniques and profound concepts that have helped countless people grab hold of their fears and move forward with their lives. Inside of Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway, you’ll discover:

- What we are afraid of and why.
- The secret of making “no lose” decisions.
- The vital 10-step process that helps you outtalk the negative chatterbox in your brain.
- How to create more meaning in your life...and so much more!

“Change is hard,” and it is even harder when change is thrust upon us. In today’s tough times, we may be forced to reinvent our career or downsize our lives. At any point in life, we may lose a love or a dream. In AdaptAbility, author M.J. Ryan provides strategies to retrain your brain and optimize your response to change. Steps include: accepting the new reality, expanding your options, and finally, taking effective action. She offers cutting-edge tools for becoming calmer, less fearful, more flexible, creative, and resourceful in your thinking. Best of all, as your “adapt-ability” increases, so does your confidence that you will be able to face whatever life sends your way and find new ways to flourish.

Psychologists have discovered that our minds are ruled by two different systems—the rational mind and the emotional mind—that compete for control. The rational mind wants a great beach body; the emotional mind wants that Oreo cookie. In Switch, Chip and Dan Heath delve deep inside the human psyche to explain why this is so. They also argue that once we understand how our minds function, there are practical steps we can take to overcome our inbuilt resistance to change. This can be applied to anyone in order to show how everyday people—employees, managers, and parents—have united both minds and, as a result, achieved dramatic results!
As a University employee, what do you know about the history of UAlbany? The EAP Committee members invite you to check out this section of the EAP ENews throughout 2016 to discover historical and fun facts about the University. So, test your knowledge each month to see how much you know about UAlbany, this place where you work!

UAlbany East Campus

So you’ve never set foot on the East Campus? UAlbany’s campus in East Greenbush brings together “office space, state-of-the-art laboratories, up-to-date conference facilities and a highly educated workforce in a venue designed to maximize the Capital Region’s research and development strengths.” Here are some interesting highlights from the East Campus website to help you get a sense of what you are missing by not visiting!

- In February of 1996, the University at Albany Foundation purchased the former Sterling Winthrop pharmaceutical complex located at 81 Columbia Turnpike, East Greenbush, NY.
- The East Campus is intended to create an environment in which life science technologies can be developed into commercially viable businesses and to foster the education and clustering of a workforce with the skills necessary to sustain such enterprises.
- The campus is approximately 95 total acres with over 500,000 square feet of existing lab, office, and support facilities.
- It’s home to over 20 separate technology-related organizations.
- The East Campus houses the UAlbany’s School of Public Health, the Cancer Research Center, and the SUNY Student Loan Service Center, which are complemented by the operations of a variety of tenants that collectively represent a range of health related efforts through the spectrum of education, investigation, research, development and production design.
- There is an on-site café and eatery.
- The campus is five minutes from the Amtrak station in Rensselaer, New York.
- It is also located in a New York State Empire Economic Development Zone which may provide tax breaks and other incentives to businesses locating on campus.
- And...you can see a great view of the Albany skyline from the entrance to the campus on Route 20!

For more information and fast facts about the East Campus, please visit: http://www.albany.edu/eastcampus/about.shtml
Health and Wellness Tip - Compliments of Personal Best Publications

MAKING A GREAT PLATE.
Enjoy summer’s fresh, ripe produce.

Peach and Tomato Salad with Mint

INGREDIENTS
- 2 ripe peaches, pitted and cut into wedges
- 2 ripe heirloom tomatoes, cut into wedges
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1/8 tsp each salt and pepper
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh mint leaves

DIRECTIONS
Arrange peaches and tomatoes on large platter. In small bowl, whisk together oil, vinegar, salt and pepper. Pour dressing over peaches and tomatoes. Top with mint.

Makes 4 servings. Each: 100 calories • 3g protein • 7g fat • 10g carb • 2g fiber • 45mg sodium

REACH YOUR BEST:

☀ Myth: You can’t get much water from foods you eat. Fact: Plant foods such as broccoli, celery, grapefruit, lettuce, melons, oranges and tomatoes are 85% to 95% water. Eating plenty of plant foods adds to your daily fluid intake. Another benefit: Foods high in water can make you feel fuller and curb your appetite.

AUGUST 2016
EAP Lunchtime Financial Wellness Program

The Social Side of Retirement: Understanding Social Security

Do you have solid knowledge of the ins and outs of Social Security? Join us as we learn such things as the advantages of delaying social security, the effect of earned income, and taxation on these benefits. Take advantage of this EAP Financial Wellness Program to gain a better general understanding of the Social Security program and how these benefits can be used during retirement. It’s never too early to increase your knowledge about Social Security. Bring your questions!

Presenter: Jeffery Jones Financial Advisor from MassMutual Financial Group

To Register Contact:
Brenda Seckerson
EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu
http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm

12 noon–1:00 pm
Uptown Campus
Tuesday, September 13
Room 375, Campus Center

East Campus
Tuesday, September 20
Room 110A
School of Public Health
Sit and Get Fit—Chair Yoga Class

Join us for this 8 week class* where we will gently breathe and stretch our way to a comfortable body and more relaxed mind. No previous yoga experience needed to gain the benefits of this centuries-old practice. All movements are done seated or standing with the chair for support. Learn techniques that you can use at your desk!

Instructor: Judi England, RN, licensed massage therapist, and professionally certified Kripalu yoga instructor. Judi has offered programs in wellness, yoga, and meditation for over 20 years in the Capital Region. Her blog “Holistic Health” has appeared in the Times Union for ten years.

Class Fee: $ 60.00
- Make check out to Judi England. Payment due at first class.
- Upon registration with EAP, the return of a completed release form confirms your participation.

To Register Contact:
Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu
442-5483
HTTP://WWW.ALBANY.EDU/EAP/EVENT_SIGN-UP.HTM

Wednesdays
12:00 noon–12:45 pm
September 21–November 16, 2016
University Library
Staff Lounge, Room B05

*Minimum of 10 participants needed to conduct the class.
Don’t Fool Around With Fatigue

Fatigue plays a role in many accidents and injuries, so recognizing its symptoms is important to protect yourself if your job includes risk of injury. Fatigue is feeling weary and tired and lacking in energy. Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) is a disorder of relentless fatigue. More often fatigue results from lifestyle issues like excess physical activity, jet lag, lack of physical activity, lack of sleep, medications, alcohol abuse, and unhealthy eating habits. Emotional stress, trauma, depression, and grief can also trigger bouts of fatigue. A list of fatigue symptoms can be found at http://www.cdc.gov [search: fatigue symptoms].

Article Resource: Frontline — Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.

“I like gardening. It’s a place where I find myself when I need to lose myself.”

~Alice Sebold, American author (1963- )