

WORK LIFE BALANCE



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“When the going gets tough, the tough gets going.”

Chetan is a Corporate Executive working in a big company which has operations across India and in some foreign countries also. His day starts at 7.30 am in the morning and ending is unpredictable, may be 9 pm or 11 pm by the time he comes home. He has a qualified and modern wife, Chetana, who also works in a big company. They have two kids, one daughter and one son, both go to school. Many times, his children don't get up early while he leaves for office and sometimes they sleep by the time he comes home late night. Chetan is living a mechanical life, but can't help it. Actually, there are hundreds of youth, employees, house wives, officers and many more who are living like robots, now a days. That is why 'work-life balance' became a very popular and need of the hour skill which is required for every body, in modern life.

Most of the time, Chetan is busy talking to different clients, people, colleagues and his boss during working hours. Many times he is forced to forget his wife, son and daughter, because of his work-pressure. His mobile phone is always engaged or out of range or switched off. Even his friends and family members can't see him at home or any social gatherings like festivals, birth day parties etc., many times. Though he was making good money, network and professional growth, he was losing a lot, otherwise, unknowingly.

One day, his wife calls him over phone from her duty place and asks, “Do you remember what is today?”. Chetan says, “Yeah, Monday, I know!”. “Which Monday, sir?”, asked wife. He says with irritation, “I am not so free at my office so that I can solve your quiz, OK, tell me what it is or keep the phone down.” Immediately his wife cuts the phone, leaving Chetan in dilemma.

By evening, his parents remind that day was actually Chetana's Birth Day. Hurriedly, Chetan goes home with a gift, but by then the damage is already done. His wife is not happy, she can't forget it in her life, but Chetan didn't do that mistake intentionally. His work-pressure made him forgetful.

Chetana feels very bad about her husband and recollects her daily routine. Her day starts at 6 am, when the House Maid rings the bell. Then she starts cooking breakfast and lunch both together, for the children, husband and herself. Within 1 hour 30 minutes, her cooking, packing the lunch boxes and breakfast boxes should be ready. Chetan wants bed-tea by 6.30 am daily and keeps shouting from the bed room, if she forgets to give. He takes some dosa, idly or bread toast whatever is prepared by Chetana, and rushes to office. Some times, he helps children with brushing teeth or giving bath. Both the Children have to get ready by 8.30 am, they have to drink milk and go along with Chetana, because she has to drop them at their school on the way to her office. Her office is some 15 kms away, she also has to eat breakfast and go but since she has to reach her office by 9 am, she can't take breakfast often. Due to heavy traffic, she sometimes goes late to office and gets remarks from her boss. By the time she comes home, children are ready with their complaints and demands for Maggy noodles, ice cream, going out , shopping , homework etc., she has to give more time to kids, though she is tired and irritated at the end of the day, because Chetan cannot come home early. She has to really struggle hard balancing between home, children, husband and office.

Most of their relatives and friends also stopped visiting their home observing their busy lives. Though both Chetana and Chetan are well-educated professionals, earning good money and position in the society, they are socially and culturally becoming poor, in the view of their well-wishers.

This has become very common, in 21st Century lives, for working men and women who are into private jobs, business, public relations, politics, NGOs etc.

One day, Chetan receives a phone call from the Principal of the school informing that there is a Parent-Teacher Meeting which is a must for all the parents to attend without fail and a free advice from the Principal – “ Children's education is more important than any parents' jobs!”. Chetan rings up his wife and says, “ Chetana, please attend the Parent-Teacher Meeting , I am very busy with office work and boss is in the town.” She says, “ At least this meeting you can go and attend, other wise no body at our kids school will ever know that you are the father. What a man you are, you should give some time for me and kids also, otherwise, why did you marry?”.

Helplessly, Chetan goes to his busy boss and requests him for a Half-day leave. His boss jumps out of his chair and shouts, “ What nonsense, our Australian delegates are coming today , you know, all the files must be upto date, keep my presentation ready, arrange bouquets for them and go to Airport to receive them and prepare my speech, no question of leave if your kids, wife and family are more important than your job, then do so.....sit at home and cook, watch TV serials and clean the house , your wife will be happy.....take rest for life time, go!”.

Unable to understand what to do, Chetan reads about Time Management and Stress Management. Then calls wife and pleads, finally, his wife requests her parents and Chetan

requests his parents to take care of the kids and school. But still, they are unable to decide whether Career is important or family is important. Work is important or Life is important? Or is there a way to balance both?

Suggestions

- Working people should understand that both work and life are equally important.
- They have to discuss and delegate work for each other, as far as the kids, school and other works concerned.
- If the ladies are doing house-hold work , gents can do outside works like bringing vegetables, groceries or dropping / bringing the children from home.
- They have to have a time table about DOs and DONTs.
- They have to take weekly or fortnightly off from their work and relax.
- Government, Companies and Institutions should implement Work-Life balance policies for their employees.
- All the family members should meet and have a lunch or dinner at least once in a month or 15 days.
- Every Six months or Year couples and kids should together and separately visit a hill-station or a natural wild life sanctuary.
- Employees should do Yoga, walking and meditation at least alternative days for just 15 minutes.
- At workplace also, employees should have some games, picnics and social gatherings once in 15 days.
- Every body should have healthy life style and food habits.