



# 5-minute safety talk

## Work-Life Balance

Balancing your work life and personal life can be challenging. Many Americans, and workers worldwide, are experiencing burnout due to overwork and increased stress as the separation between work and home life has diminished.

Here are some steps you can take to reach a work-life balance, increase productivity, increase safety, and avoid burnout.

### Stress management programs

Stress management programs can help you re-align your work life and home life balance and alleviate stress. It also helps you address issues such as how to:

- Leave work at work and create a boundary between work and home. There is no boundary between work and home — unless you create it. Make a conscious decision to separate work time from personal time.
- Get enough sleep. There is nothing as stressful and potentially dangerous as

working when you are sleep-deprived. Not only is your productivity affected, but you can also make costly mistakes.

- Have a support system. Give yourself the gift of a trusted friend or co-worker to talk with during times of stress or hardship. Ensure you have trusted friends and relatives who can assist you when you need to work overtime or travel for your job.
- Seek professional help. Everyone needs help from time to time. If your life feels too chaotic to manage and you are spinning your wheels worrying about it, talk with a professional, such as your doctor, a psychologist, or a counselor.

### Take time for yourself

Set aside one night each week for recreation. Let the answering machine take your phone calls, power down the computer, and turn off the TV. Discover activities you can do with your partner, family, or friends. Set aside time each day for an activity that you enjoy, such

as walking, working out, or listening to music. Unwind after a hectic workday by reading, practicing yoga, or taking a bath or shower. Making time for activities you enjoy will rejuvenate you.

Learn to say NO. Many times, we are so driven to help others we don't realize the harm we are doing to ourselves. Taking time for yourself isn't selfish. You need to take care of yourself first. What good are you to others if your health is failing because of your stress level?

Remember, striking a work-life balance is not a one-time deal. Creating balance — and balance does not mean doing everything — in your life is a continuous process. Demands on your time change as your family, interests, and work life change. Examine your priorities and set boundaries every few months to make sure you are keeping on track. Be firm in what you can and cannot do. Only you can restore harmony to your lifestyle.

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