

# The Six Components of Work-Life Balance

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Everyone talks about work-life balance, but what does it mean? I maintain that if you master these six elements, and you're home free:

**Self-Management:** Sufficiently managing yourself can be challenging, particularly getting proper sleep, exercise, and nutrition. Self-management is the recognition that effectively using the spaces in our lives is vital, and that available resources, time, and life are finite. It means becoming captain of your own ship; no one is coming to steer for us.

**Time Management:** Effective time management involves making optimal use of your day and the supporting resources that can be summoned – you keep pace when your resources match your challenges. Time management is enhanced through appropriate goals and discerning what is both important and urgent, versus important or urgent. It entails knowing what you do best and when, and assembling the appropriate tools to accomplish specific tasks.

**Stress Management:** By nature, societies tend to become more complex over time. In the face of increasing complexity, stress on the individual is inevitable. More people, distractions, and noise require each of us to become adept at maintaining tranquility and working ourselves out of pressure-filled situations. Most forms of multi-tasking ultimately increase our stress, versus focusing on one thing at a time.

**Change Management:** In our fast-paced world, change is one of the only constants. Continually adopting new methods and re-adapting others is vital to a successful career and a happy home life. Effective change management involves making periodic and concerted efforts to ensure that the volume and rate of change at work and at home does not overwhelm or defeat you.

**Technology Management:** Effectively managing technology means ensuring that technology serves you, rather than abuses you. Technology has always been with us, since the first walking stick, flint, spear, and wheel. Now, the rate of change is accelerating, brought on by vendors seeking expanding market share. Often there is no choice but to keep up with the technological Joneses. Nevertheless you must rule technology, not vice versa.

**Leisure Management:** The most overlooked of the work-life balance supporting disciplines, leisure management acknowledges the importance of rest and relaxation- that one can't short-change leisure, and that "time off" is a vital component of the human experience. Curiously, too much of the same leisure activity, however enjoyable, can lead to monotony. Thus, effective leisure management requires varying one's activities.