



# What gets in the way of your work-life balance?

An insight from 360 Search.

We all want a better work-life balance, but it's hard in today's world of work. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to rebalance your life. Let's find out more.

When you balance your work and life in the right way, everything gets better. Your work improves because you feel fresher, take fewer sick days and feel more valued by your employer. On the other hand, your life improves because you have enough time to do the things you want to do, you don't feel stressed, and you can maintain the relationships that are important to you.

This all sounds great, but in the real world, managing your work-life balance is hard. Unfortunately, there are forces in the world of work that are always out to derail you. In this article, we'll look at three of them – and how you can overcome them and rebalance your life.

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# 01 - Work overload

Often at work, there are times when you just have too much work, more than you can handle. But, most of the time, we accept that some periods are busier than others and knuckle down to get the work done.

Problems arise when there's always an overload of work, not just at certain times. When the demands of your job exceed natural human limits, your work-life balance suffers. As a result, you feel stressed, you don't have enough time for yourself, and the quality of your work suffers too.

## So, what can you do?

Here are some ideas you can try:

- **Prioritise** – Rather than try to do everything, look at your to-do list and work out what needs to be done now and what can wait. Use the Eisenhower Matrix to categorise each task, start with Urgent-Important and work through from there
- **Say no** – If something doesn't sound like a priority or isn't part of your job description, could you say no to it and put it on someone else's to-do list?
- **Talk about it** – If your workload is leaving you on the verge of burnout, try explaining to your manager how it affects you. If they truly value you, they'll do something about it. If they don't, it could be your cue to look elsewhere

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## 02 - No control over your work

Sometimes, your job isn't what you expected, and you feel stifled. For example, perhaps rigid policies in your company leave you with little control over what you get to do. Or, maybe you have a micromanager in charge who gives you no room to manoeuvre. Like overload, this can be fine for short periods, but if it's constant, it can wear you down and affect your work-life balance.

Here's what you can do to overcome this feeling:

- **Express gratitude** – You could try looking on the positive side. After all, many people would be thrilled to have a job like yours
- **Take time to de-stress** – When work finishes, make sure to decompress and try to forget it until the next day. Spend your free time doing things you enjoy with people you love
- **Set goals** – If you don't like your current role, what would it take to get to the next level up? Plan to get the next available promotion or a better job at another company. Then, do what it takes to succeed

## 03 - Conflict with your values

We all have our personal red lines that we will not cross, but sometimes, your work requires you to go up to those lines. Nobody wants to abandon their principles. It causes stress and keeps you awake at night if you ever do.

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If you're being asked to violate the values you hold dear in the workplace, here are some options you should explore:

- **Ask for support** – Talk to your colleagues about your feelings and get their opinions. Commit to watch each other's back and keep each other informed
- **Write everything down** – In situations like this, you need to look after number one. Document everything that happens regarding your values conflict. It could cover you in the future and make you feel less worried about what's going on
- **Create an exit strategy** – If the situation is unsustainable, get out as quickly as possible. Start talking to recruiters about a better role elsewhere

For most of us, we need our jobs and simply walking out is not an option. But, we don't need to accept poor working practices or compromise our values. You will never succeed in a toxic working environment.

If situations like these are affecting your work-life balance, you can make changes to manage your stress in the short term, but in the long term, you have to get out.

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