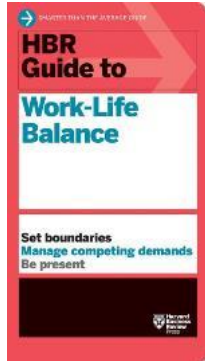

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***HBR Guide to Work-Life Balance***

Author: Harvard Business Review

Publisher: HBR Publishing Corporation

List Price: \$19.95

Format: Softcover, 272 pages

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ISBN: 978-1-63369-712-6

Reviewer: **Charlie Green, PMP**

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Introduction

These days we have many demands competing for our time and attention. Whether it is family, career, education, religion, social, health or other commitments. There are still only 24 hours in a day, and we are constantly trying to squeeze more and more into the available time. As a result, some commitments get dropped or delivered late or with less quality than desired or expected.

Harvard Business Review has compiled information from multiple contributing authors that are experts in the area of work / life balancing. These authors discuss tools, techniques and concepts that will help the reader if used to help manage priorities and expectations and establish boundaries and tradeoffs. They also discuss the importance of taking care of yourself.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book is divided into five sections. Each section contains multiple chapters written by various experts that discuss and provide information and tools to consider when reviewing and addressing work/life balance issues in your life.

- Section One is “Taking Stock”. Here the author discusses identifying and assessing what is important to you.
 - Chapter 1 - “Be a Better Leader, Have a Richer Life”
 - Chapter 2 - “Assessment – Are You Focusing on What’s Important to You?”
- Section Two is “Make Decisions and Manage Your Time”, discusses assessing the demands on your time and setting priorities, trade-offs and when to say no.
 - Chapter 3 - “No, You Can't Have It All”
 - Chapter 4 - “Make Room in Your Life for the Rest of Yourself”

- Chapter 5 - “Before You Agree to New Work, Ask Three Questions”
 - Chapter 6 - “Stop Work Overloading by Setting These Boundaries”
 - Chapter 7 - “Nine Practices to Help You Say No”
 - Chapter 8 - “Why You Need an Untouchable Day Every Week”
 - Chapter 9 - “How to Get the Most Out of a Day”
- Section Three is “Explore Flexible Work Arrangements”. The authors discuss different strategies for when the fixed 9 to 5 schedule in the office may not fit your needs. And how to build and present a case to help you achieve any changes.
 - Chapter 10 - “Winning Support for Flexible Work”
 - Chapter 11 - “Five Strategies of Successful Part-Time Work”
 - Chapter 12 - “Staying Focused When You're Working from Home”
 - Chapter 13 - “What to Do When a Personal Crisis is Hurting Your Professional Life”
 - Section Four is “Manage Your Relationships”. The authors discuss why it is important to have good strong relationships both professionally, socially and family and how to manage them when it comes to balancing them with work and life.
 - Chapter 14 - “Being Too Busy for Friends Won't Help Your Career”
 - Chapter 15 - “Two-Career Couples Need Long-Term Plans”
 - Chapter 16 - “Balance Parenting and Work Stress”
 - Chapter 17 - “How Working Parents Can Manage the Demands of School-Age Kids”
 - Chapter 18 - “Keep Your Home Life Sane When Work Gets Crazy”
 - Section Five is “Taking Care of yourself”. This section talks about some of the ways you can take care of yourself physically and mentally.
 - Chapter 19 - “Six Ways to Weave Self-Care into Your Workday”
 - Chapter 20 - “The Difference Between Workaholics and Working Long Hours”
 - Chapter 21 - “How to Forget About Work When You're Not Working”
 - Chapter 22 - “Regular Exercise is Part of Your Job”
 - Chapter 23 - “Reclaim Your Commute”
 - Chapter 24 - “Get Better Sleep”
 - Chapter 25 - “Don't Take a Bad Day Home with You”

Highlights

I really liked the section on Make Decisions and Manage Your Time. We do things that are time wasters or that don't align with our priorities. The author provided some tools to look at how you spend your time and making decisions as to whether they fit your goals and how to set boundaries as well as determining when we should say no to

some new demands.

I also liked the ideas presented in the “Taking Care of Yourself” section. It gave some thoughts on being diligent and fitting some exercise into our workday. The author communicated that there is evidence that there are benefits to the correlation of getting regular exercise helps us think more clearly.

Highlights: What I liked!

I enjoyed reading this book because the authors discuss the problems with allowing the pressures of the work to control you and in turn potentially cause deeper long-term problems. They provide a lot of techniques, tools and strategies to help you get control and manage your work / life balance. I have seen firsthand that we need to keep watch and maintain control before an imbalance causes other problems that are not easily resolved. The point is to come up with a plan and get started before it is too late.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This book is an easy read and has tips and tools that can be used by anyone. Anyone that finds themselves struggling with the demands of work and life and keeping them from getting out of balance. It would be for anyone that could use some tips on how to get a better handle on their life and work.

Conclusion

We are all very busy these days trying to juggle everything at one time without dropping any of the balls we are juggling to keep in the air. We need to pay attention to the balance and act before something breaks or gets out of whack. If it does, we can lose our health or harm relationships with those that matter the most to us. Once lost, they may never be recovered. This book has something for everyone.

For more about this book, go to: <https://store.hbr.org/product/hbr-guide-to-work-life-balance/10249>

Editor’s note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Dallas Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Dallas Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact editor@pmworldjournal.com.

About the Reviewer



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Charlie Green has worked as a project manager since 1985. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Texas at Dallas. Charlie obtained his Project Management Professional certification in 2010. His experience is managing software implementation projects in the Financial Services industry. He has also managed new product, business process improvement, business intelligence and system development projects in the financial, telecommunications, information technology industries and military. Charlie is retired from the U.S. Air Force Reserve following a 26-year Air Force career. Charlie is a member of the Dallas, Texas PMI Chapter.

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