

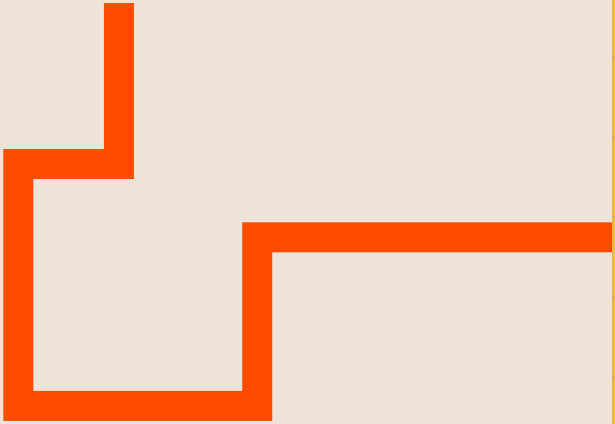


Mastering the Employee Work/Life Equation:

Practical Tips for Success

Presented by Jenny A., SPHR, SHRM-SCP

September 21st, 2023





Welcome to the Webinar!

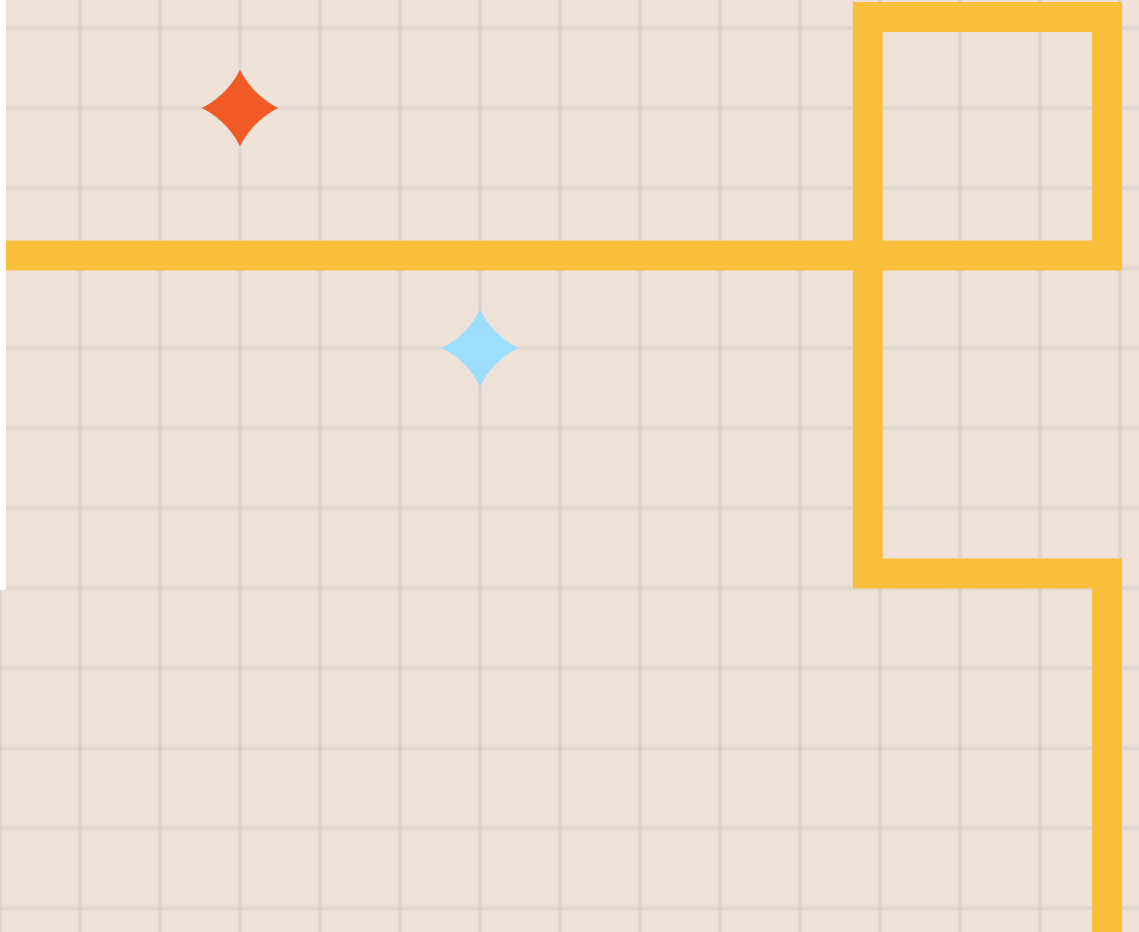
- We'll email the recording and slides within 24 hours
- Please participate in our poll + post-webinar survey
- Please use the Q&A box for questions

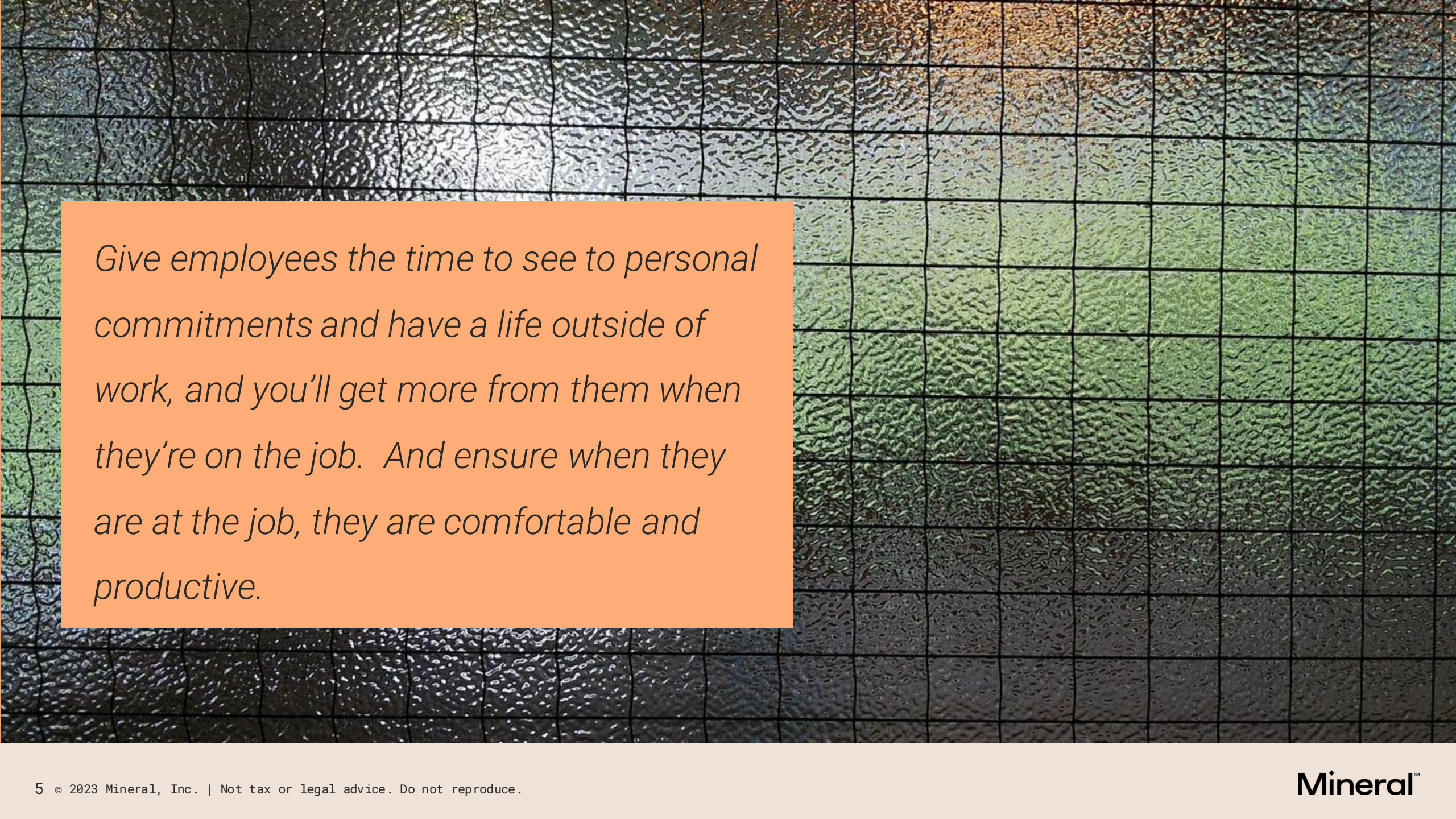
Agenda



- What is Work/Life Balance?
- Jenny's 15 Tips
(How can we foster a healthy work/life balance and why should management care?)

What is Work/Life Balance?





Give employees the time to see to personal commitments and have a life outside of work, and you'll get more from them when they're on the job. And ensure when they are at the job, they are comfortable and productive.

“I don’t like the word ‘balance.’ To me, that somehow conjures up conflict between work and family... as long as we think of these things as conflicting, we will never have happiness. True happiness comes from integration... of work, family, self, community.”

– Padmasree Warrior, former CTO of Cisco & Motorola



Employer Benefits of Improved Work/Life Balance

- Increased productivity
- Reduced absenteeism
- Improved employee health
- Increased engagement
- Improved customer service
- Increased retention rates
- Increased profitability
- Larger applicant pools



"You can't expect your employees to exceed the expectations of your customers if you don't exceed your employees' expectations of management."

- Howard Schultz, Former Chairman and CEO of Starbucks



Poll Question



To your knowledge, how would your employees rate the work/life balance in your organization on a scale of 1-10?

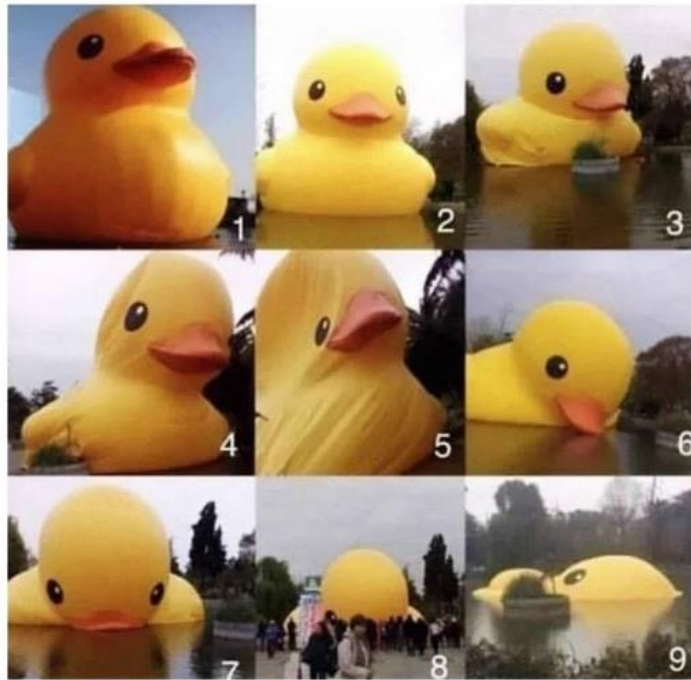
Jenny's 15 Tips

(How to assist employees in achieving a healthy work/life balance)



Tip #1: Assess Your Current Climate

On a 1-9 rubber duck scale, how are things going today?



- Poll employees regarding work/life balance
- [Funny Mood Scales](#)
- Have managers ask about it in regular check-ins
- Watch for signs of stress

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◆ **“The greatest compliment that
was ever paid me was when
someone asked me what I
thought, and attended to my
answer.”**

◆
◆ – Henry David Thoreau, Essayist, Poet, and Philosopher
◆



Tip #2: Offer Flexibility

Consider options like:

- Remote work
- Hybrid work (e.g. pick one day/week to work remotely)
- Seasonal remote work (e.g. work from home in December)
- Predetermined, consistent, flexible schedules
- True flex hours & core hours
- Compressed work weeks



Tip #2: Offer Flexibility

(cont.)



Additional options:

- Job sharing
- Part-time & seasonal employees
- Flexible holiday schedule
- Seasonal half days (e.g. half day once/month in summer months)
- Meeting-free days
- Time off following heavy work stints/projects

Tip #3: Offer Paid Time Off

- Identify a benefit that is sustainable and logical for the business (keep it simple)
- Encourage use and ensure employees *actually* stop working
- Average PTO in an employee's first year is around 18 days (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)



Tip #3: Offer Paid Time Off

(cont.)



If Considering Unlimited PTO

- Change the name (*Flexible* or *Personalized PTO*)
- Offer it on a trial basis for the first year
- Track PTO usage & publish average annual usage
- List non-protected usage on performance reviews
- Include a stop-loss provision

Tip #4: Find Time for "Super-Productivity"

- Employees love to be productive and feel like they got a ton done in a day
- The company needs to provide work periods with no interruptions for "super-productivity"
- Give employees an environment and time to be "super-productive" and then adequate time to rest/recharge
- Consider what "super-productivity" looks like in your workplace



"At Netflix, we think you have to build a sense of responsibility where people care about the enterprise. Hard work, like long hours at the office, doesn't matter as much to us. We care about great work."

-Reed Hastings, Co-founder and Executive Chairman of Netflix, Inc.





Tip #5: Consider Custom Breaks

- Change of scenery
- Morning vs. afternoon
- Repetitive focused work – Consider training employees on the [Pomodoro Technique](#) to use in the morning and the 52/17 rule in the afternoon
- Manual work – Consider 15-minute breaks each hour
- Owner/manager support for breaks
- [HBR: How to Take Better Breaks at Work](#)

“I use my lunch break to take a power nap. It’s the best way to re-energize and be productive for the rest of the afternoon.”

– Bill Gates, Co-Founder of Microsoft & Philanthropist





Tip #6: Stop Holding So Many Meetings

- Consider reducing the frequency of periodic meetings
- Shorten meetings
- Make sure a meeting is necessary before scheduling
- Set clear agendas
- Don't over-invite attendees
- [HBR: Dear Manager, You're Holding Too Many Meetings](#)

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◆ **“If you had to identify, in one word,**
◆ **the reason why the human race has**
◆ **not achieved, and never will**
◆ **achieve, its full potential, that word**
◆ **would be "meetings."**
◆

◆ - Dave Barry, Author and Columnist
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Tip #7: Limit Outside Work and "On-Call" Schedules

- Encourage employees to leave work at work on nights and weekends
- Designate someone to cover work for employees on vacation
- If you have employees who feel they are on-call 24/7, consider changing that



**“I’m currently out of the office
and can be reached by waiting
until I get back.”**

– Anonymous





Tip #8: Train Managers

Managers need to know how to:

1. Recognize signs of workplace stress
2. Effectively resolve stressful workplace conflict
3. Ensure employees are getting the flexibility they need
4. Approve/reschedule vacation requests
5. Focus on productivity, not hours

Tip #9: Foster Healthy & Deep Employee/Manager Relationships

- Your managers are the most intimately familiar with what their employees value in terms of balance
- Encourage managers to work with employees individually in regular one-on-ones to talk about balance
- An employee's relationship with their direct manager is generally a huge indicator of their likelihood to remain with the company in the long-term



“Culture is how employees' hearts and stomachs feel about Monday morning on Sunday night.”

- Bill Marklein, Author



Tip #10: Show the Company's Values & Character When Tragedy Strikes

- Show the employee that the organization truly cares about them and their family
- Ask the employee how little/much they want communicated to coworkers
- Show love and support
- Exceed expectations
- Consider revising your Bereavement Policy
- [USA Today Article by Kyle Cupp, Mineral Employee](#)

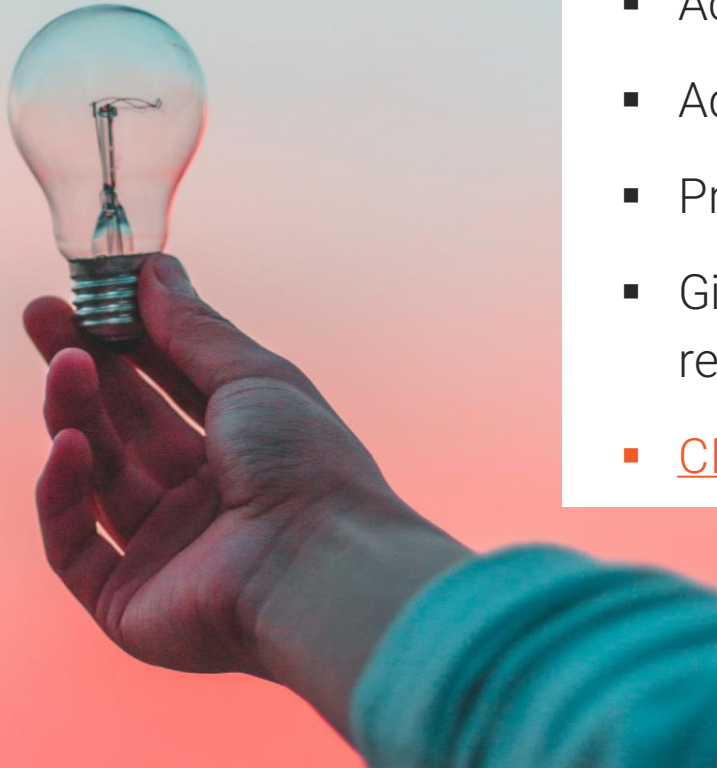


"In the United States, the typical bereavement leave is three to seven days. If I had been given only three days of leave, I would have been expected back to work a few days before we held the funeral. After seven days, I wasn't functional, let alone productive. I don't know how people do it, other than that they have no choice. We have many freedoms in the United States. The freedom to grieve is rarely one of them."

- Kyle Cupp, Senior Editor, Mineral



Tip #11: Reduce Workplace Stress



- Act in good faith
- Address sexism, racism, and other forms of inequity
- Promote support networks
- Give employees permission and time to rest and recharge
- [CDC: Stress...At Work](#)

Tip #12: Encourage Wellness & Safety



- Provide a form for employees to share safety concerns
- Offer a short, monthly training on safety or wellness
- Talk to your workers' compensation company
- Form a safety committee and include employees
- Consider mental health an important component of total health
- [OSHA Employee Stress & Work/Life Balance Survey](#)



Tip #13: Lead by Example

- Have owners and senior leaders talk about their vacations, break periods, personal pursuits, and balance
- Encourage employees to do the same
- Make work/life balance a topic of discussion
- Set boundaries with clients and encourage employees to do so as well





Tip #14: Be Open to Change

- Consider "piloting" work/life balance programs
- View work/life balance as a process, not a one-and-done
- Don't automatically shoot down employee work/life balance suggestions

"The entrepreneur always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity."

— Peter Drucker, Management Consultant, Educator, and Author



Tip #15: Assume Good Intent

Do:

- Encourage managers to avoid assuming the worst about their employees
- Look for the best in employees and remember that they are complex humans
- Look for star employees and inspirational bosses

Don't:

- Assume that when employees ask for flexibility, they are lazy or don't want to work
- Become cynical about the employee/employer relationship
- View employees as threats or liabilities

Final Thoughts

- Work/life balance is essential
- It's a low-cost employee benefit
- Consider trying a couple of ideas
- There is no one-size-fits-all solution
- The goal is a more engaged workforce and more profitable organization



“Your work isn’t its description, title, or what you wake up, what the first 30 minutes in your office is or is not. It’s whether you are physically close to what you can get up and walk to. It’s whether you feel like you’re changing laws or if it fits with your people and events. It’s the person you are at home.”

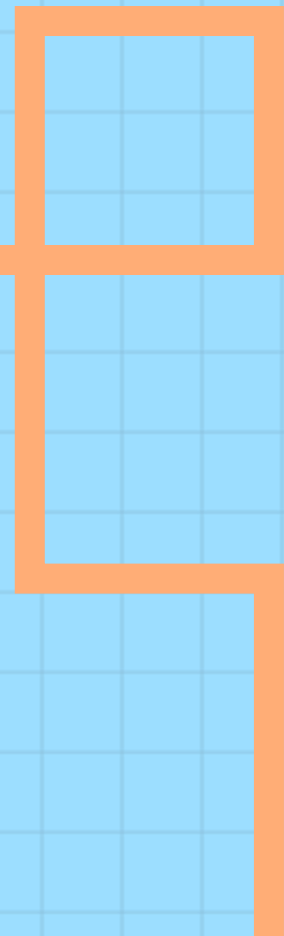
– Evan Thomsen, Business

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Q+A



Thank you!

