

Are you killing your business?

COACH'S CORNER



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Feeling burnt out? As easy as it is to sacrifice a work-life balance for the sake of your business, you're doing more harm than good – to your business as well as yourself. These are the six mistakes you might be making.

IT OFTEN SEEMS like a good idea to sacrifice some of your leisure time to spend more time on your business. The more you put in, the more you get out, right? Wrong. Work-life balance isn't just a neat idea; fundamentally, it's important for the good of your business and your continued wellbeing.

There are exceptions to the rule. Sometimes, your business will need a little extra attention, but to sacrifice your free time altogether will end with you feeling exhausted, unmotivated and incapable of making any real contribution to your business. Let's start with identifying the mistakes you're currently making.

1 PERFECTIONISM IS KILLING YOUR BUSINESS

This isn't just for the over-achievers. It's for any business owner who believes they need to fiddle with every process and micromanage every employee, so that everything is 'just right'. You are not helping matters. Believe in the processes you've implemented and that the people you've hired have the business's well-being in mind – an extension of yourself. Constantly fiddling isn't just an ineffective drain on time, it's demotivating and frustrating to employees. It's particularly harmful when you come in on the weekend, or on your day off. You are going to burn yourself out.

2 REFUSING TO LOG OFF

Reality check! You don't need to be responding to emails at 11pm. If your business is incapable of surviving you going to bed at a reasonable time and checking in the next morning, it has far more serious issues than you realise. You shouldn't just be giving yourself a break, you need to make everyone aware of it. Resisting the urge to check in on your business 24/7 will do wonders for your peace of mind.

3 FAILING TO PUT YOUR HEALTH FIRST

Investing in your health should be a top priority. That goes above and beyond getting enough sleep, eating a balanced diet or taking regular breaks. Exercise is often the first thing abandoned when we're busy, but that is exactly what you should not be doing. Instead, dedicate a few periods each week to something you enjoy, whether it's exercise, meditation, yoga or a walk in your local park.

Exercise doesn't just improve your health, it reduces stress, lifts your mood and mitigates a lot of the burnout you might be feeling. It's a relatively small time investment for a major return on investment; how could a budding entrepreneur say no to that?

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4 NOT DRAWING A LINE IN THE SAND

It's important not to let work seep into your free time. That means not checking your email or asking an employee for a status update when you're with family, or supposed to be relaxing. It also means differentiating different areas of your home for work and play.

5 YOU'RE NOT EXPLORING NEW SOLUTIONS TO OLD PROBLEMS

There are a number of technologies that could drastically change your life. Mobility solutions, for example, will allow you to join a web conference or manage employees from home or your favourite restaurant. And cloud hosting means accessing any (and all) files from anywhere, at any time. That means you're able to attend your son's soccer game or go out for lunch with friends during the day, and attend to work during the evening. Alternatively, search for a partner, like a business coach, with the expertise and competence to guide you to a better work-life balance.

6 GOING TOO BIG FROM THE OUTSET

Work-life balance isn't something that happens overnight; it takes time to implement correctly. Making drastic changes is a formula for failure. When cutting back on your hours, committing to exercise or trying to work from home more, make the necessary changes in small increments. Give yourself time to foresee challenges and tweak your schedule as need be.

It's never too late to make a course correction and readdress your work-life balance (or lack thereof). The only tool necessary for change is acknowledgement that the current situation is detrimental in some shape or form, and the resolve to make the change. This is the change you and your business need to flourish. **EM**