



The 3 Big Mistakes of Work-Life Balance

I made all 3 of these mistakes during my corporate IT career and they cost me dearly. I share them with you now so that you can avoid making them yourself.

✖ Mistake #1 ✖

Expecting your employer or your business to magically create a good work-life balance for you.

It is tempting to think that initiatives within the office or industry will have a magical impact on your work life balance. They might, but this is by no means guaranteed.

Many businesses are set in their ways and can only see 1 way of being with their employees: the way that requires least management and which delivers the most output from the people themselves.

If you struggle to cope with the pace or the always-on way of working, there is nothing wrong with you. Either it just doesn't suit you personally, or you no longer have the capacity to operate like that. Either way, continuing in the same vein will have serious consequences for you. It certainly did for me.

In my experience, it is best to assume that no one else has your back when it comes to getting a sustainable balance between work and the rest of your life. Only you can do this.

But you **can** do this. And you need to accept these 3 things:

- You must look for ways to make your own work-life balance better
 - You must implement these yourself
- You may well get some resistance from the business or perhaps even your colleagues as you do so

Then you must make the changes you most need to be well.

✖ Mistake #2 ✖

Neglecting the other important aspects in your life and failing to prioritise them until it is too late.

Work will take over the whole of your life if you allow it to. It will squeeze out everything else. You have to notice what else is important in your life besides our work and regularly prioritise those more highly.

Even as you begin to shift your work life balance at work, it is vital to keep – or add in if they are currently missing – other things that help keep you well.

Consider the things you love to spend time on:

Your intimate relationship, your partner, your children, your health, your family and friends

Sports, team games

Hobbies, reading, music, community interests

Fun and playfulness

Add in and protect time each week to spend on these activities. Not only will this help you recover better from the demands of work, but it adds in the vital fun, enjoyable and fulfilling things that go to make up a wholesome life.

Even if you LOVE your work and find it fulfilling in every way, if you have people in your life who want to spend time with you, consider their needs too.

Work will always be there.

Love ones can be taken from us unexpectedly

Prioritise time with them.

✖ Mistake #3 ✖

Not starting out with the end in mind.

When you start a business or take a job, you do so with the information you have at the time but without a clear view of where you will end up. The risk is that you achieve success only to realise that you have arrived in a place that you don't really want to be.

Lots of people end up in this situation because you simply may not know what that is actually going to be like in the months or years to come.

The solution is to check in with yourself periodically to see how you are feeling about the work/business you are in. How much do you enjoy it? How well does it feed you? How well does it enable your life in others areas such as family time, hobbies and interests etc? How well does it fit with what you understand about what your values are?

With that information, you are in a position to notice what the reality is and to act on what you notice to prevent yourself ending up in a life you don't want to be living.

Even the awareness is powerful. Say you absolutely love your work and it aligns with your values beautifully: you might decide that your work life balance is fed by dedicating more time to your work. Awesome!

If your work doesn't feed you or your values, you might instead decide to work ... less diligently so that you can create time and space to gain fulfillment for yourself outside your work.

You need to know how well your work fits your life so you can manage yourself as best as you can.

Actions to Take Right Now

- ✓ Get into the habit of noticing how you are from time to time
- ✓ Consciously make choices that improve your life based on what you notice

Noticing is a process, a practice that you can learn and get better at. Busy super-busy and pushing your body hard can get in the way of noticing how you feel.

👉 **Slow down.** When you move quickly, you end up on automatic pilot and you cannot notice how you feel.

👉 **Make space and time to rest,** with no input – no phone, work, busyness. Just be.

Connect with Me

- ✓ Find me on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/theneillawson/>
- ✓ If you find yourself uncertain how to move forward or just want someone to talk through your situation with, book a no-obligation call with me at <https://neillawsoncoaching.as.me/virtual-coffee>

I have never come across a work-life balance that cannot be improved.

Neil