



B.C. Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association

MEMBER UPDATE

ReFresh

September 15, 2021



Welcome back...

Balance – Defined by YOU!

Welcome back to a new school year, with the smell of new pencils, the laughter of children, and the emails that have started to trickle (or swoosh!) into your inbox!

In the late Spring, when many of you completed the Thriving in Education Survey (more on this soon!), there was this question: ***“Is the balance between my work and personal commitments right for me?”***

Note the way this question is worded. Balance in this context is not the illusion of a scale, with workload on one side and personal life on the other, perfectly balanced on a fulcrum. Not at all. It is a personal definition of work/life quality influenced by many factors: values, passions, obligations, etc. Frankly, work/life quality is best achieved through your own self-awareness and intent!

Let's agree that:

- 1) ***Work-life balance does not mean an equal balance:*** Trying to schedule an equal number of hours for your various work and personal activities is usually unrewarding and unrealistic. Life is – and should be – more fluid than that.
- 2) ***Your best individual work-life balance will vary over time:*** The right balance for you today will probably be different for you tomorrow. The right balance for you when you are single will be different when you marry, or if you have children, or when you start a new career versus when you are nearing retirement.
- 3) ***There is no perfect 'one size fits all' balance you should be striving to achieve:*** The best work-life balance is different for each of us because we all have different priorities and different lives.

Define your year, NOW!

So, before you get too far into this school year, grab one of those nice-smelling sharp pencils and take a 10-minute ReFresh recess to jot down your thoughts in response to the following questions:

1. What does 'right for me' look like with respect to your preferred work/life quality?
2. How does this align with your goals and objectives as a leader? As a spouse? As a parent? As a friend? As a member of your community?
3. Once you have defined what 'right for you' looks like, then how will you establish and monitor your chosen blend between work and life?
4. How will you monitor and adapt as work and personal needs and goals change?

Self-Awareness

Being self-aware starts by answering the questions above and really understanding what  work/life quality means to you. Then, self-awareness is important to monitoring where you are at based on your desired blend of personal and occupational needs. By not being aware, you can quickly slip into old habits!

Intent

We all would like to **achieve** something **today** (based on the goals you have just written down!) as well as **enjoy** something **today**. When this happens, we would say, “*I had a pretty great day!*” And if this happens more days than not, you will have a pretty good year.

Life will deliver the balance or quality we desire when we are achieving and enjoying something every single day in **all** the important areas that make up our lives. Therefore, be **intentional** in having meaningful **daily** achievements in at least three out of four life quadrants (and, never neglect any category over time):

- Self
- Work
- Family
- Friends or Community

Make a plan as to how you will incorporate this philosophy into your daily and weekly schedule. Regularly ask yourself, am I achieving and enjoying something at work? What about achieving and enjoying with my family; my friends? And even more important, am I achieving and enjoying something just for me?

Check out this quick read with great tips to help you develop the right skills to achieve better work/life quality: <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/work-life-balance.html>

Start this September with self-awareness, and intent for how you will navigate the many demands and life opportunities coming your way. With a little dedicated effort and commitment to your own work/life quality, you may find this to be one of your best school years yet!

If you would like to contribute, or have ideas about what you would like to see in the **ReFresh** series, we would love to hear from you: contact rochelle@bcpvpa.bc.ca.

Source:

Work Life Balance | [Work Life Balance Defined](#)