

# WORK/LIFE INTEGRATION CONVERSATION STARTERS



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Traditional approaches to achieving balance tend to be dichotomous. The idea is that people need to establish a balance between two areas - work life and family life, for example, or work hours and leisure time. These two-part approaches heighten awareness, but balance is more than an either-or concept. Balance implies an interconnection among many areas of work and life.

Our model of balance is divided into four areas: **employment, commitment, development,** and **nourishment**. If any of those areas is underdeveloped, you are likely to suffer. When you understand and act on the need for balancing these elements, you're moving toward a holistic workplace - one that recognizes a range of human needs, and the relationship of such needs to achieving organizational goals. Use these conversation starters to help continually evaluate your teams and yourself.

## EMPLOYMENT: SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT

- Is my current work still interesting to me?
- Around what part of my current work do I feel the most excitement?
- Do I feel recognized, nurtured, challenged in my current work?

## DEVELOPMENT: SEEING SATISFACTION IN THE FUTURE

- What's next out there?
- How can I negotiate to do that more within my own current responsibilities?
- What will put me ahead of the game?
- What will ready me further for the future?

## COMMITMENT: FINDING SATISFACTION IN RELATIONSHIPS

- Am I making time for the important relationships in my life?
- Am I expanding my own personal support group?
- When was the last time I spent some noninterrupted time with good friends? With family?

## **NOURISHMENT: SATISFYING OUR PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS**

- Am I rejuvenating myself outside of work?
- Am I giving myself permission to take a time-out?
- Am I taking care of myself the way I admonish others to take care of themselves?

## **BONUS: ENJOYMENT - THE COMMON DENOMINATOR**

- Does the organization uphold a value system that promotes obsessive workaholism?
- Are families considered in decisions on relocation?
- Are benefits made available for childcare?
- Does promotional competition discourage personal and team morale and relationships?
- Is use of vacations and personal counseling encouraged?
- Do meetings start early in the morning or go well into the evening?
- Are employees expected to travel on weekends?