

The Seven Deadly Sins of Work Life Balance

In the thirteenth century, Dante listed the Seven Deadly Sins on the pathway to Paradise: Gluttony, lust, greed, envy, pride, anger and sloth. Now, almost eight hundred years later, people are still committing these seven sins in Work Life Balance. So let me share with you the Seven Deadly Sins of Work Life Balance ... and how to avoid them.

1. Gluttony: Trying to be all things to all people

Don't try to be all things to all people. If you try to please everybody, you will end up satisfying nobody.

The secret to being successful at balancing life is to allow yourself to be human and release guilt from your life. Everyone gets wound up at times, when you notice it happening simply acknowledge where you are and move back to doing something more balanced. Don't give yourself a hard time or anything-just keep moving forward.

Success with a balanced life is just like success anywhere else: You choose your market, find a problem, and provide a superior solution. If you try to be all things to all people, you're not just a glutton – you're a glutton for punishment.

2. Lust: Falling in love with “gimmicks”

Focus your time, money and energy on the things that matter, not just those that catch your eye right now. This doesn't mean an endless quest for Mr. Right, but it does mean that you don't have to settle for Mr. Right Now.

When it comes to balancing your life, this means stop buying a new thing every time you feel stressed or unhappy. Shopping has become the latest way that people try to make themselves happy. You keep buying stuff that brings happiness for a very short period of time and when this wears off you're back at the shops again.

Next time you have this urge, speak to a close friend or colleague and share how you are feeling, if you just stop for a minute and acknowledge where you are at it passes. Go for things that really make you happy like time with good friends compared to short lived shopping trips for more dust collecting stuff.

3. Greed: Looking for too much too fast

When you first get started living a balanced life, there's a temptation to do everything at once. But if you chase two horses, you'll catch neither of them. The best way to get started is to choose one activity that is likely to give you high value, do that well, and then move on to the next.

That's not to say that you should only be doing one thing at a time. But just be sure that everything you do is done well. Go for quality not quantity.

4. Envy: Copying tactics that don't fit your strategy

A Russian soldier stationed in West Berlin after the Second World War wandered into an empty house and saw an electric light bulb for the first time. Fascinated by this magic light-generating globe, he cut it off with his bayonet and put it in his knapsack so he could carry around the light with him wherever he went.

The same is true with living a balanced life. Don't just do what somebody else tells you to do, unless you know why they do it. If they are successful, what they are doing is just one part of their strategy. You can't just pick up that one thing, put it in your knapsack, take it somewhere else and use it to light up your world.

For example, perhaps you know a person you see as living a balanced life you get all excited and choose to do the same things he or she is doing. The only problem is that you have no system to what you do, you shadow them and copy the superficial parts of their life and get exhausted doing it. Why, because they are doing the pieces behind the scenes elements as well, not just the apparent ones.

By all means, look around to see what others are doing, but don't just copy their tactics without understanding how and where they fit your life. Get the whole picture and then implement it as a system.

5. Pride: Holding on to things that aren't working

If what you're doing isn't working, do something else! I know that that sounds obvious, but it never ceases to amaze me how often people keep repeating unsuccessful patterns.

If you're running tired all of the time, or don't even have time to run tired, look at what you are doing. Your lifestyle is obviously not working for you if it is sucking the life out of you constantly. Find a system you can use to get what you want out of life and implement it one step at a time like you would with any new system in the workplace.

It usually doesn't take much effort to solve these problems. But the first step is to recognise them, and commit to doing something about them one step at a time.

6. Anger: Blaming other people for your lack of success

If you're not getting the success you desire, look to yourself first. Even if it is somebody else's "fault", you could be waiting a long time for them to fix things for you. It is far better to take responsibility yourself to find a solution.

For example, if you have lost your spark for life and your health is suffering, you need to look at what you have been doing to get to that state. You are responsible for what you put in your mouth each day, for how you treat yourself and for what you get out of life.

If you are treating your physical and emotional body like a second-class citizen then that is what you will get back in return. You will get a body that won't give you the energy for anything. Accept the responsibility and be healthy now.

7. Sloth: Dragging your feet

Above all, do it now! None of the other advice in this article will do you any good at all unless you take action.

It's too easy to say "I'll go to the gym next week", or "I'll start eating healthy tomorrow", or "I'll fix my office environment after I finish this next project."

It's often easy to take action, but it's almost always easy to not take action. Successful people do the things that unsuccessful people don't do.

Your success is in your hands – it's up to you!