

Sample Work-Life Vision

This document is part of a Neal Whitten eLearning course called “Achieving the Elusive Work-Life Balance” and was developed by Neal Whitten in partnership with Velociteach® (Velociteach.com).

Here is an example of what a work-life vision might look like. Of course, no two people will have the same vision. And there is no right or wrong vision and your vision will likely change over time. It's all about you and how you imagine and hope your life will unfold. You may even find it fun to create a vision and then discover if it bears any resemblance to your life now and where your life appears to be headed.

Please don't read anything into this vision. There are many different scenarios of life visions that I could have created. We all come from widely varied backgrounds in terms of age, relationships, family situation, work interests, spirituality, education, hobbies, passions, etc. It's important that your life vision fully represents your own personal desires. For example, you will notice that the vision I have created below integrates both work and non-work lives, not necessarily favoring one over the other. However, you are free to define your balance however you choose.

The biggest benefit for creating this vision is to give you a baseline from which to measure yourself against. It's that old adage if you don't know where you want to go then any road will work. But in reality, we know that you really don't want to take just any road.

The sample vision is in the first person.

Here's the sample work-life vision.

I have a job that I enjoy and find myself motivated to get out of bed in the morning and get into the office. It's a job that pays at least US \$80,000 a year at today's dollar value. This is enough money to live a comfortable standard of living but still save for old age, emergencies and occasional opportunities. The job requires an average of 45 hours per week whereby many weeks 40 hours are adequate but occasionally a burst of overtime is required. I am able to work from home at least half of each week if I desire to do so.

My spouse works 20-30 hours per week from home but for an outside business. I have two children and there is almost always a parent home during the day and evening. Two nights per week are dedicated to children's activities. One night a week is dedicated to something special for me and my spouse. At least another several hours is typically spent on a special hobby or interest, even if only to spend quiet time to catch my breath and reflect on my life and all that is going on around me.

I take all my vacation and personal days each year. This includes at least one full week of uninterrupted vacation and several long weekends.

The family has meals together most days of the week.

I am selective about the people I spend my time with each week and month. I choose to include people in my life that are positive and enjoyable to be around.

I do not have a problem saying “no” either at work or in my personal life. My private time is special to me and I do not easily give it up.

My job has a number of high-tech elements to it but I am able to disconnect from email, texts and other communications almost all my non-work hours.

I have good work and time management habits. I embrace the concept of “good enough” (versus being a perfectionist) and mostly am able to focus on one thing at a time. I make sure that most days at work have some “me time” built in to catch up on loose ends and allow myself to slow down and think (versus stay in react mode).

I maintain one calendar that integrates my work and non-work lives. I see the harmony between both to be essential and focus predominately on living a full life that includes both elements.

I have learned that putting myself first was not a bad selfish thing but a good thing. The more content and fulfilled I am, the more I can give to others in my life.

Although I would like others to respect and like me, I know that that is not always possible. I live my life treating others with respect and dignity but do not require their approval to function.

I need about 7.5 hours of restful sleep a night to be at the top of my game. Therefore, my schedule supports this need most nights of the week. I start each morning with 10-15 minutes of mediation and occasionally mediate at work or in the evening if I feel the need to do so. I exercise for 45-60 minutes at least 4 days per week. Usually I use my lunch period to work out and grab a bite afterwards and eat at my desk. Overall my diet is nutritious and supports an active day but occasionally I will leave the nutrition wagon behind and enjoy some less nutritious goodies.

Extended family and close friends are important to me. I ensure some contact several times a month, even if sometimes it's only for a short call.

I strive to simplify my life and resist clutter and baggage both at work and at home.

I will seek help if I truly need it and do not let pride keep me from making good judgments.

At the end of a day I will often assess how well my day went. I remind myself of those actions that served me well and where I could use some improvement. I work at learning and growing so that I can see continuous improvement in most areas of my life.

Occasionally, I will consult a mentor, someone who is a subject matter expert in some area where I am looking to improve. I am prepared to call on a qualified professional if I believe that doing so will help me through a tough situation. I have done that twice to date; once when my mother died and another time when I felt I was struggling to decide the direction to move my career.

I live in my present moments—the now—and give my full energy and attention to the task at hand. I do not live in the past or in the future. However, I am open about lessons from the past and I appropriately consider and plan for the future.

I have a hobby that allows me to mentally and emotionally escape and reenergize.

I have convinced my boss to allow me to take a one-month sabbatical from work each winter to work on something with potential for the business. This has given me immense satisfaction, enhanced my reputation and makes me more appreciative for the opportunities that surround me.

Although I am disciplined in starting each day with a to-do list, especially identifying my top three priorities to work each day, I am also known for occasionally walking away from the to-do list to seize upon opportunities which can include having fun either at work or with my family.

I fully believe that I am in charge of my life and, for the most part, create my own destiny and opportunities. I don't blame others for any aspects of my life. I cannot always control what happens but I can control my response to what happens.