

Healthy Work-Life Balance Promotes Inclusion

Successfully managing your time between work and personal life – known as work-life balance – can be challenging.

In the "Generational Diversity in the Workplace" article from the last issue, you learned how individuals spanning four generations may approach work, including work-life balance, in different ways. Regardless of a person's age or perspective, maintaining a healthy mix is beneficial for both associates and employers.

"Research shows when individuals feel like they have a healthy work-life balance, they're willing to put more time, energy and focus into their jobs," said Melissa Lamson, a 15-year cultural transformation expert and president of Lamson Consulting, LCC, based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Work-life balance isn't a one-size-fits-all approach that works for everyone. However, individuals can follow similar techniques to help prioritize personal and professional activities to help achieve better balance. Lamson offers these tips:

Communicate – Actress Lucille Ball once said, "If you want something done, ask a busy person to do it. The more things you do; the more you can do." But sometimes, doing so can result in a very long list of deliverables. When this happens, it's important for the associate and his/her manager to openly discuss priorities and come up with a plan to effectively complete the work while enabling the associate to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Plan regular activities – Set aside special time for you and your friends and family to ensure you have something to look forward to. "For families, it could be something as simple as sitting down for 10 minutes each morning before you all start the busy day," Lamson said.

For Diversity and Inclusion Council member Brian Mackowiak, Area Vice President – PL, this special time meant being actively involved in the activities of his children when they were younger. "I urge my team to always keep their families first and work around ways to accomplish both work and family time," he said. "It might mean coming in early the day of a game, practice or school event."

Get moving... but don't forget to rest –

Exercising increases energy and concentration levels. Lamson recommends taking a walk over your lunch break or doing some stretch exercises. On the flip side, Lamson encourages employees to get a good night's rest. "You'll be in a better mood and be more focused and productive at work."



Learn to focus – Try to fully concentrate on one project at a time, rather than shifting small amounts of attention from task to task. "Learning to focus and prioritize tasks will help you establish a good work-life balance," Lamson said.

Based on his experience at Penske, Jim Theiss, General Manager – PL, and Diversity and Inclusion Council member, offers associates these additional tips: "Plan your vacation and personal days early in the year," he said. "Get these dates on the calendar and stay with the plan as much as possible. Ensure family events and/or activities are on your calendar, so that work and work-travel plans can be arranged accordingly."

Associates should use their paid-time-off (PTO) days within the calendar year to enjoy vacations, birthdays or any other holidays and events that are important to them.

Management plays a critical role in associates' ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance, particularly with flexibility. "Studies show that individuals will go the extra mile for their employers if given some flexibility," Lamson said.

Diversity and Inclusion Council member Jennifer Bowman, Senior Project Leader – PTL, maintains flexibility with her associates. "Expectations for my team are set and communicated, along with deadlines," Bowman said. "If an associate needs to come in early or stay late to meet those expectations, I expect them to do so. I utilize Penske policies and manager discretion, but as long as there isn't abuse of that flexibility, it works."

Flexibility also is important for Amy Ilyes, Vice President – Logistics Engineering, PL. "I try to be sensitive to my associates' needs and be flexible," said Ilyes, a Diversity and Inclusion Council member. "We try to maintain a professional environment where there is give-and-take. I think our associates really appreciate that we care about them from a personal perspective, as well."

Associate Finds Link to Diversity Value Model

In a recent Diversity Training session, an associate realized the link between the Diversity Value Model and what she had learned in Penske's DiSC Training.

As discussed in prior "Diverse Insights," the **Diversity Value Model** is a tool that can be used to improve your relationships with co-workers and customers by helping you move through a natural progress to value differences.

Similarly, the DiSC model helps individuals better understand themselves and others through the dimensions of dominance, influencing, steadiness and conscientiousness.

The associate explains how she saw a clear connection between the Diversity Value Model tool and the DiSC model.

"By knowing my behaviors, I began to recognize how and why I **judged** my team members. I realized that we're not all the same, and I **understand** why we need to reach out to individuals in different manners. I **respect** these differences, and absorbing and utilizing them allows me to **appreciate** each individual. We attain **value** when we are open to these differences. Diversity is another dimension to the team dynamic, and we all benefit from acceptance."



Diversity Value Model can be used to improve relationships with your co-workers and customers.

Fresh Perspective



"To me, diversity is the recognition and respect of working with others who are different from ourselves. A business that acquaints itself with the preferences of various demographic groups can better position its product for sale in those market segments. And employees who feel valued perform better, so a workplace without tension created by a clash of cultures is more productive.

I believe businesses that effectively manage diversity will outperform their competition as their workforce resembles the communities in which they operate. Penske is one such business, and I'm glad to be part of its workforce."

*Hile Trotman, Project Manager – PTL,
who completed Diversity Training in March 2011*

Diversity Facts

Approximately **30,000 disability-discrimination charges are expected to be filed** with the U.S. government in 2011, a 42 percent increase since 2009.

Twenty percent of the **highest-paid employees at Fortune 500** companies are women.

Between 2005 and 2016, **college enrollment for U.S. Latinos is expected to increase** by 45 percent, compared with 17 percent for the general population.

Sources: Employee Relations Law Journal, Fortune magazine, U.S. Census Bureau

Diversity Awareness Months

May:

Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month – Celebrates Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States who have enriched America's history and are instrumental in its future success. Asian-Pacific encompasses those who are from Asia and the Pacific islands of Melanesia (New Guinea, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji and the Solomon Islands), Micronesia (Marianas, Guam, Wake Island, Palau, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Nauru and the Federated States of Micronesia) and Polynesia (New Zealand, Hawaiian Islands, Rotuma, Midway Islands, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, French Polynesia and Easter Island).

June:

Gay and Lesbian Pride Month – Recognizes the global influence of gay, lesbian and transgender individuals and encourages others to accept and welcome diversity in their communities regardless of sexual orientation

Black Music Month – Celebrates the extraordinary legacy of African-American singers, composers and musicians, as well as their national and international contributions



Diverse Insights is Penske's quarterly newsletter for associates who have completed Diversity Awareness Training, designed to strengthen diverse and inclusive working relationships.

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