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Help! Creating Balance, Connections, and Services for Newbie Sci-Tech Librarians

A Round Table Discussion Handout for the ACRL 2011 Conference
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Work-Life Balance, What's That?

Having a healthy work-life balance makes you a better worker and a happier person, but how do we achieve this goal, and what is it anyway?

Why are you working too much?

- I enjoy my work, it's hard to stop working because I'm so excited!
- I feel like I have so much work to do I can never catch up!
- I don't have anything better to do with my time, or want to avoid going home, so I keep working.
- I am ambitious and want to be successful.
- I need to qualify for tenure!
- I need the overtime to pay my student loans!

What is work-life balance?

- Easier said than done.
- Fluid - It can vary daily.
- Taking the time you need and deserve to take care of yourself, working more efficiently, and in the process becoming a better more relaxed worker.

Work-life balance is not:

- Working all the time.
- Rushing all the time because you have too much to do, and then making mistakes or having accidents because you are stressed and in a hurry.
- Working so much you're always exhausted which makes you more prone towards illness.
- Ignoring friends and family in favor of work.

- Equal time for work and play.
- The same every day, or even every week.
- An excuse to be lazy.

How can you create balance?

- Sleep, exercise, and a healthy diet.
- Take a minimum of 20 minutes per day for yourself not connected to your work or family.
- Everyday find at least one thing you enjoy about your job and your life.
- Write down three things per day you are grateful for.
- Call in sick when you should, no one wants to get sick from you and you will resent being there when you are ill.
- Don't submit more than 3 proposals at a time, they do get chosen.
- Hitting a dead wall with a project?

  Take a break, even a short 15-20 minute break to drink a cup of coffee and stare at some plants can help provide perspective.
- Feeling overwhelmed?

  Talk with your supervisor about your workload, ask colleagues for advice on how to be more efficient with your time in their areas of expertise. Still overwhelmed after you've implemented all the advice? Talk with your supervisor about what your priorities should be and what is and is not doable on a regular basis.
- Make a check list of all the things you are working on.

  Divide big tasks into sub-tasks. Check items off and record the date as you accomplish them, add new tasks to the list as you acquire them. This will show that you are steadily accomplishing things through out the day / week / moth.
- Don't overfill your agenda.

  There is only so much time in the day. Schedule extra time between meetings, when possible, take into account meetings that run overtime and extra commute time. Quality is more important than quantity!
- Don't be afraid to say no when you really don't have the time to do something.

  If you're the only person available you can say something like, "I can make time to do this but I will not be able to accomplish all of my other duties, what would you like me to cut back on while I work on this project?"
- Ask for help!

  No one who is successful does it on their own and librarians make careers of helping people. Find people you can relate to, seek out older mentors, and don't forget your co-workers.

- Giving your family or friends the short-shrift?

  Schedule regular times during the week to interact and relax with your friends and family. Once these times are scheduled they should be jealously guarded.

Methods for Creating Connections: What Works? What Doesn't? Why?

- Walking the Halls
- Office Hours
- Attending Lectures
- Attending Faculty Meetings (Invited or Invite Yourself?)
- Stopping By People's Offices
- Joining University/College Level Committees
- Create Flyers Targeted Toward New Graduate Students (or GS Recruits)
- Attending Science Conferences (Go where the scientists are!)
- Finding & Collaborating With Faculty Who Share Similar Research or Service Interests
- Contribute to the Development of a Subject Specific Ontology

Creating Services

Monthly Book Displays

Ex. Emerging Technology
Ex. Space Technology and Exploration (NASA Spin-Offs Tie-In)
Ex. Pair Popular Science Books with Clearly Written Related Science Books
Ex. Controversial Science Subjects
Ex. Environmental / Eco Friendly
Ex. History of Science

Targeted Subject Guides (Bonus Points for Non-US Links)

Ex. Bioinformatics Guide http://unl.libguides.com/bioinformatics

Course Guides

Ex. BIOS 103 Organisms Lab http://unl.libguides.com/bios103lab

Collaborate With Faculty

Ex. Create discipline specific library instruction modules that can be integrated into existing courses.

Ex. Assist with research projects. Remember your faculty are busy too, do a good job and they will mention it to their colleagues.

Collaborate & Learn From Colleagues At Other Institutions

Ex. ARL/DLF E-Science Institute
http://www.arl.org/rtl/eresearch/escien/escieninstitute/index.shtml

Ex. Information Literacy in the Disciplines (by ACRL's Instruction Section)
http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/Information_literacy_in_the_disciplines

Creating Interactive Research Timeliness

Ex. Beyond Paper of the Week, Beyond Multimedia: Taking Science Coverage in New Directions
http://ksjtracker.mit.edu/2011/02/08/beyond-paper-of-the-week-beyond-multimedia-taking-science-coverage-in-new-directions/

Creating Local Partnerships

Ex. Super Science At Your Library
http://www.americanlibrariesmagazine.org/news/ala/super-science-your-library

Ex. Science Cafes <- Host one! http://www.sciencecafes.org/

Preservation & Data Management

Ex. Help Faculty Deal With New NSF Data Management Requirements by providing example language which can be copied/adapted to the needs of their proposals.
http://www.lib.unc.edu/reference/data_services/researchdatatoolkit/index.html
(University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

Ex. Data Repositories Discipline or Publication Specific http://datadryad.org/

Ex. Create and Maintain Online Oral History Collections (Researchers, Academics, and Citizen Scientists)
Oral History of UK Science

Open Science

Ex. Publicize, Create, Manage Discipline Specific Repositories http://arxiv.org/

Ex. OpenWetWare http://openwetware.org/

Ex. Research into Open Research Data
http://www.slideshare.net/hpiwowar/research-into-open-research-data

Suggested Readings & Multimedia:

Work Life Balance:

Nigel Marsh: How to Make Work-Life Balance Work
Nigel Marsh
TedX, May 2010
URL: http://www.ted.com/talks/nigel_marsh_how_to_make_work_life_balance_work.html

"A Semester Needs a Plan", Kerry Ann Rockquemore
Inside Higher Ed January 18, 2010
URL: http://www.insidehighered.com/advice/winning/winning1

Breathing Space: Examples of Meeting Handouts (On work-life balance issues)
Breathing Space 2011
URL: http://www.breathingspace.com/content/view/712/

The New Faculty Member, Rebecca Brent and Richard M Felder
Chemical Engineering Education, 32 (3), 46-47 (Summer 1998).
URL: http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Columns/Boice.html

Moms: The Politics Of Balancing Work, Life
NPR November 30, 2010
URL: http://www.npr.org/2010/11/30/131696693/Moms-The-Politics-Of-Balancing-Work-Life

Scientifically Proven Ways To Be Happier
BNet February 3, 2011
URL: http://www.bnet.com/blog/business-research/scientifically-proven-ways-to-be-happier/711

"Stop Talking, Start Walking", Kerry Ann Rockquemore
Inside Higher Ed January 18, 2010
URL: http://www.insidehighered.com/advice/winning/winning2

Need even more work-life balance readings?
Check out NSF's ADVANCE: for the advancement of women in science and engineering careers webpage on balance. The page covers, "...the need to balance work and life, initiatives to support balance, and resources to help balance."
URL: http://www.portal.advance.vt.edu/index.php/tags/Balance

Science & Technology Liaison Librarianship & Related Issues:

2011 Horizon Report
Educase February, 2011
URL: http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/HR2011.pdf

2010 Scientific Social Media Website Comparison
URL:
https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?key=0AhhofTutX0ZudFVqRXpNMDFETkEyQ2dVQ2o1UURzbmc&hl=en#gid=0

E-Science & Data Support Services Report: A Study of ARL Member Institutions
ARL August, 2010
URL: http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/escience_report2010.pdf

The Last Mile: Liaison Roles in Curating Science and Engineering Research Data
Research Library Issues: A Bimonthly Report from ARL, CNI, and SPARC, no. 265 15-21
August, 2009
URL: http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/rli-265-gabridge.pdf

A stealthy librarianship manifesto
John Dupuis, Head of Steacie Science & Engineering Library, Confession of a Science Librarian
February 2010
URL: http://scienceblogs.com/confessions/2011/02/a_stealth_librarianship_manife.php

Risk Science Blog
University of Michigan's Risk Science Center, October 2010 - Present
URL: http://umrscblogs.org/

Understanding the culture of the disciplines
Bonnie Swoger, the Undergraduate Science Librarian, November 2010
URL: http://bit.ly/9njEKt

Peer-review and research blogging: A winning-ish combo
The Mother Geek: Just another Science 3.0 Site, February 2011
URL: http://www.science3point0.com/themothergeek/2011/02/02/peer-review-research-blogging-a-winning-ish-combo/

Not Your Parents' Chemistry Class: Integrating Library Skills into the Organic Chemistry Lab
Carol Schultz C&RL News, October 2009
URL: http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/crlnews/2009/oct/chemistry.cfm

Chemistry the difference between Important and Useful
The Curious Wavefunction, February 2011
URL: http://wavefunction.fieldofscience.com/2011/02/chemistry-difference-between-important.html

LabLit: the culture of science in fiction & fact
Edited by Dr. Jennifer Rohn, August 2009 - Present
URL: http://www.lablit.com/

Science 3.0: the community for the advancement of science ...viva la evoltion!
URL: http://www.science3point0.com/

Science & Technology librarian blogs on Scienceblogging.org
John Dupuis, Confession of a Science Librarian October 2010
URL: http://scienceblogs.com/confessions/2010/10/science_technology_librarian_b.php

Scientific Locations
David Bradley & 2 Collaborators, Google Maps, February 2009 - Present
URL: http://bit.ly/science-map

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