

Striking the balance between living alone and a full-time career

If you want to maintain consistently satisfactory job performance and aim for promotions, you need to strike a difficult, but not impossible, balance. Here are some simple ways you can do so.

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If you're living alone, whether by choice or circumstance, balancing a full-time job with the myriad of responsibilities of household management, finances, and personal care can be a tough ordeal. If you want to maintain consistently satisfactory job performance and aim for promotions, you need to strike a difficult, but not impossible, balance. Here are some simple ways you can do so.

Maintain a routine

Household chores can pile up fast, especially when you're pulled to a random meeting at the last minute. As such, creating a solid routine for everyday tasks, for both home and office, can help relieve pressure on yourself. Allocate specific time slots for cleaning, paying the bills, and conducting self-care activities like exercising and recreation. For instance, set a day each week, preferably a weekend, for grocery shopping. Set two-three weekdays each week for quick house cleaning and at least one weekend for a more thorough cleaning of your living space.

Prepare meals in advance

Cooking, despite its sheer importance, is one of the most time-consuming tasks on any given day, given how it involves shopping and preparing for ingredients as well. As such, if you buy in bulk on weekends and dedicate two-three days per week to making a lot of food at once, you can avoid the daily stress of cooking after a long workday. However, be sure to refrigerate properly after each meal,

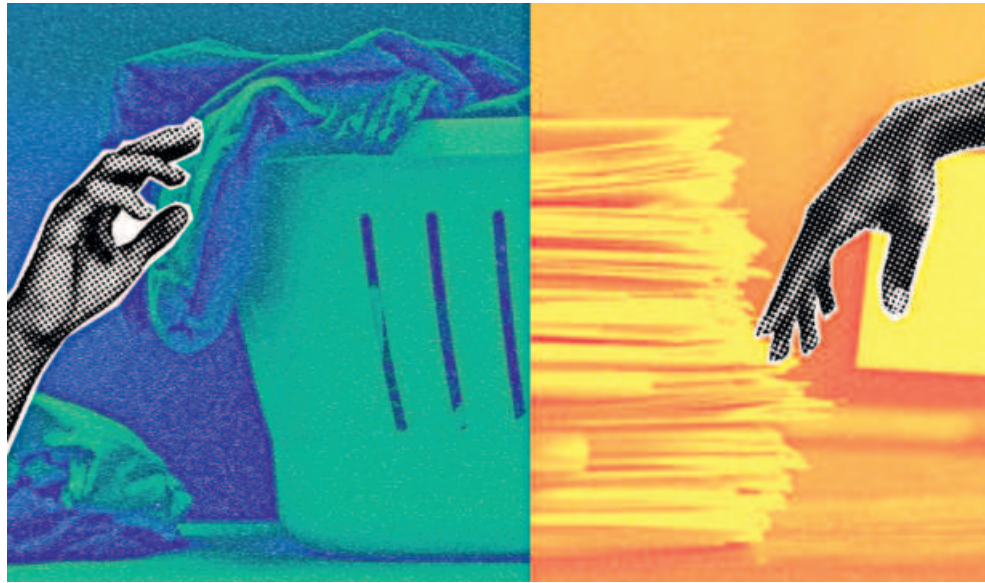


ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

and cook only as much as you need.

Careful financial management

While financial management is a skill everyone should have, it is especially important when living alone. The salary you are getting is being used to pay for your rent, bills, groceries, travel, and any other expenses in between. You can use the 50-30-20 budgeting strategy here; keeping 50% of total income to pay the bills, 30% for things you want to buy, and 20% for savings. However, keep the allocation flexible in case you need to save more or spend less in a given month.

Be patient with yourself

At the end of the day, even your best efforts might not always be enough to achieve a perfect balance. In those moments, take a deep breath, step back, and prioritise self-care. Don't overwhelm yourself with more responsibilities than you can realistically manage. When needed, ask friends and family for advice, or even reach out to experts for more professional help. Recognising the steps needed for self-care is a big sign that you are ready to thrive in both your personal and professional life.

Australians can now ignore work calls outside office hours

REUTERS, Sydney

Australians can now enjoy their personal time without the intrusion of work-related communications, thanks to a new "right to disconnect" law that came into effect on Monday. This legislation protects employees, in most cases, from being penalised for not responding to work emails, calls, or texts outside of their official working hours.

Supporters say the law gives workers the confidence

to stand up against the steady invasion of their personal lives by work emails, texts, and calls, a trend that has accelerated since the Covid-19 pandemic scrambled the division between home and work.

Australians worked on average 281 hours of unpaid overtime in 2023, according to a survey last year by the Australia Institute, which estimated the monetary value of the labour at A\$130 billion (\$88 billion). The changes add Australia to a group of roughly two dozen countries, mostly in Europe and

Latin America, which have similar laws.

To cater for emergencies and jobs with irregular hours, the rule still allows employers to contact their workers, who can only refuse to respond where it is reasonable. Determining whether a refusal is reasonable will be up to Australia's industrial umpire, the Fair Work Commission (FWC), which must consider an employee's role, personal circumstances, and how and why the contact was made.

How to conduct a customer behaviour analysis the right way



Understanding customer behaviour is crucial for improving products, marketing strategies, and overall satisfaction. Conducting a customer behaviour analysis involves several key steps.

Define your business goals

Begin by defining your goals and desired outcomes. Determine what you want to understand about your customers and set key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure success, such as improving the customer journey or increasing conversion rates.

Segment your audience

Segmenting your audience involves categorising customers based on shared characteristics like demographics, psychographics, and behaviour patterns. Identifying your most valuable customer segments helps tailor your marketing strategies to meet their specific needs.

Collect quantitative and qualitative data

Gather both quantitative data (e.g., purchase history, website visits) and qualitative data (e.g., customer surveys, interviews). This combination provides

a comprehensive view of customer behaviour, explaining both how often customers buy a product and why they prefer it.

Analyse customer journeys

Map out customer journeys to identify stages from initial awareness to purchase and post-purchase interactions. This analysis highlights key touchpoints and areas for improvement.

Identify behavioural patterns and trends

Examine behavioural patterns and trends over time to spot consistent behaviours among different customer segments. Understanding these patterns helps inform decisions about inventory management, marketing initiatives, and product development.

Apply findings to improve customer experience

Use insights to make data-driven decisions, such as personalising marketing campaigns and optimising product features. Regularly update and refine your analysis to stay attuned to evolving customer needs and preferences.

Microsoft launches unified Teams app for both personal and work use

NEXT STEP DESK

Microsoft has just launched a unified Teams app that supports both personal and work accounts on Windows 11, Windows 10, and Mac. This new version eliminates the need for separate apps, which previously confused users who had to juggle between 'Microsoft Teams (free)' for personal use and 'Microsoft Teams (work or school)' for professional or

educational purposes.

According to a recent blog post by Amit Fulay, Vice President of Product at Microsoft, the new Teams app will allow users to manage all their accounts from a single platform. Whether you're using a personal, work, or education account, they can now be accessed side by side within the same app. Users can switch between accounts by selecting their profile picture in the upper right corner of the app.

With the new unified app, users can now choose their preferred account when joining a Teams meeting or even join as a guest without signing in. This is particularly beneficial for those who frequently switch between personal and work-related calls, says Fulay. Furthermore, users who prefer Teams for personal use can schedule free meetings, invite participants with a join link, and create communities for group interactions.

What you should know about Pavel Durov, Telegram CEO

NEXT STEP DESK

Pavel Durov, the billionaire founder and CEO of the instant messaging app Telegram, was reportedly arrested on the evening of August 24 at Bourget Airport near Paris, according to French media outlets TFI TV and BFM TV, which cited unnamed sources.

TFI and BFM both said the investigation focused on a lack of moderators on Telegram and that police considered that this situation allowed criminal activity to continue undeterred on the messaging app.

Here are some things you should know about Pavel Durov and Telegram:

Russian-born Durov, 39, is the founder and owner of messaging app Telegram, a free-to-use instant messaging platform that competes with other social media platforms such as Messenger, WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, and WeChat. The platform aims to surpass one billion active monthly users within a year.



Telegram is influential in Russia, Ukraine and the republics of the former Soviet Union. It has become a critical source of information on Russia's war in Ukraine, used heavily by both Moscow and Kyiv officials. Some analysts call the app "a virtual battlefield" for the war.

Telegram's increasing popularity, however, has prompted scrutiny from several countries in Europe, including France, on security and data breach concerns. In May, the EU tech regulators said they were in touch with Telegram as it

neared a key usage criterion that could see it subject to more stringent requirements under a landmark EU online content legislation.

Durov, whose fortune was estimated by Forbes at \$15.5 billion, left Russia in 2014 after refusing to comply with government demands to shut down opposition communities on his VKontakte social media platform, which he sold.

Durov became a French citizen in August 2021. He moved himself and Telegram to Dubai in 2017, and according to French media, he has also received United Arab Emirates citizenship. He is also a citizen of St. Kitts and Nevis, a dual-island nation in the Caribbean, according to media reports.

"I would rather be free than to take orders from anyone," Durov told U.S. journalist Tucker Carlson in April about his exit from Russia and search for a home for his company, which included stints in Berlin, London, Singapore and San Francisco.

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