



B1-B2 • Business English

# Work-Life Balance as a Business Strategy

## 1. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

1. Can balance be a competitive advantage?
2. What policies actually reduce burnout?
3. How do you encourage real vacations?
4. Should leaders model healthy hours?
5. What does 'balance' mean to you personally?

## 2. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

Match the words with their meanings:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| ___ 1. burnout      | a. set a limit on something                 |
| ___ 2. cap          | b. working hours that can be adjusted       |
| ___ 3. flex time    | c. being at work but not productive         |
| ___ 4. coverage     | d. a measure that protects from risk        |
| ___ 5. handover     | e. paid time off                            |
| ___ 6. PTO          | f. exhaustion from chronic workplace stress |
| ___ 7. presenteeism | g. ensuring work continues during absences  |
| ___ 8. safeguard    | h. process of transferring responsibilities |
| ___ 9. cadence      | i. a regular rhythm or schedule             |
| ___ 10. boundary    | j. a limit that protects time or energy     |

## 3. READING

### Balance as an Operating System

Balance isn't a perk; it's an operating system. Companies that cap meetings, protect focus time, and enforce real PTO see lower turnover and better results. Presenteeism looks busy but hides waste and errors.

Policy needs practice: leaders take vacations, teams plan coverage and handovers, and cadences respect energy. Balance is not doing less—it's doing the right amount at the right time so people can keep doing it tomorrow.

Experiments beat slogans: try meeting-free mornings, 'send later' emails after 6 p.m., or rotating on-call coverage. Measure outcomes that matter—quality, retention, error rates—not just hours. Leaders should narrate their choices ('I'm off Friday and coverage is set with Ana') so permission travels. Balance isn't soft; it's how you keep the engine cool enough to run fast.

## 4. COMPREHENSION

1. Why is balance described as an operating system?
2. Which practices lower turnover?
3. Why is presenteeism harmful?
4. What makes policies real in practice?
5. How does the text define balance?

## 5. VOCABULARY REVIEW

Fill in the blanks with words from the vocabulary list:

1. Chronic stress can lead to \_\_\_\_\_.  
2. We should \_\_\_\_ meetings at 45 minutes.  
3. Offer \_\_\_\_ so parents can adjust schedules.  
4. Plan \_\_\_\_ so work continues during vacations.  
5. Do a proper \_\_\_\_ before time off.  
6. Encourage people to actually use \_\_\_\_\_.  
7. \_\_\_\_ looks busy but isn't productive.  
8. Set a \_\_\_\_ to protect deep-work mornings.  
9. A weekly \_\_\_\_ keeps projects on track.  
10. These policies \_\_\_\_ against overload.

## 6. WORD FORMATION

One cell is blank in each row. Complete the missing form.

Verb	Noun	Adjective
___	balance	balanced
protect	___	protective
limit	limit/limitation	___
___	organization	organized

recover	_____	recovering
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## 7. COLLOCATIONS

Match the words that go together:

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. focus    | a. handovers  |
| 2. meeting  | b. time       |
| 3. vacation | c. cap        |
| 4. healthy  | d. boundaries |
| 5. energy   | e. cadence    |

## 8. ERROR CORRECTION

Find and correct the mistakes:

1. There is too many hours and not enough rest.
2. Leaders don't took PTO and the team follow.
3. If we would plan coverage, nobody panic.
4. People are present but isn't productive.
5. She have capped emails but not meetings.

## 9. GRAMMAR REVIEW

Complete the sentences:

1. If the company \_\_\_\_ (enforce) PTO, burnout will drop.
2. Only after the handover \_\_\_\_ (finish) did he relax.
3. Had we \_\_\_\_ (set) boundaries, evenings would be free.
4. If managers \_\_\_\_ (model) balance, the team follows.
5. They kept working because the deadline \_\_\_\_ (loom).

## 10. PASSIVE VOICE TRANSFORMATIONS

Change to passive voice:

1. Managers set boundaries publicly.
2. The HR team will update the PTO policy.
3. We shared coverage plans last week.

## 11. DISCUSSION

1. What boundary would help you most?

2. How should teams plan handovers?
3. What metrics prove balance helps business?
4. How can leaders model balance credibly?

## 12. CRITICAL THINKING

Propose a balance policy for your team. In 150-200 words, define rules, safeguards, and how success will be measured.

### Answer Key

Vocabulary Preview: 1-f, 2-a, 3-b, 4-g, 5-h, 6-e, 7-c, 8-d, 9-i, 10-j

Vocabulary Review: 2. burnout; 3. cap; 4. flex time; 5. coverage; 6. handover; 7. PTO; 8. presenteeism; 9. boundary; 10. cadence; 11. safeguard

Word Formation: balance/balance/balanced; protect/protection/protective; limit/limit/limitation/limited; organize/organization/organized; recover/recovery/recovering

Collocations: 1-b, 2-c, 3-a, 4-d, 5-e

Error Correction: There are too many hours and not enough rest. | Leaders didn't take PTO and the team followed. | If we planned coverage, nobody would panic. | People are present but aren't productive. | She has capped emails but not meetings.

Grammar Review: 2. enforces; 3. finished; 4. set; 5. model; 6. loomed

Passive Voice: 1. Boundaries are set publicly.; 2. The PTO policy will be updated.; 3. Coverage plans were shared last week.