

# WORK - LIFE BALANCE

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AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY  
WINNER LARGE ORGANISATION CATEGORY  
EEO TRUST WORK AND LIFE AWARDS 2002

PHIL AND GLENYS KER  
JOINT WINNERS WALK THE TALK CATEGORY  
EEO TRUST WORK AND LIFE AWARDS 2003

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## WHY?

- Strategic Commitment
- Genuine Valuing of Staff
- Empowering Policy
- Contractual Commitments
- Supportive Services
- Practical Application
- Supported by our Staff



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## ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

### ➤ DELIVERING ON THE COMMITMENT

- Action, not words
- Guidelines for managers and staff
- Expect Managers to implement policies/strategies

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## ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

### ➤ MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

- Cost effectiveness of each strategy
- Work environment/employee attitude surveys
- Overall impact on turnover – qualitative feedback
- Overall impact on recruitment – qualitative feedback

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## ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

### ➤ **MANAGING ABUSE OF THE SYSTEM**

(Some staff always go too far)

- Guidelines essential for setting expectations (not all initiatives can apply to all staff)
- Be public about boundaries
- Abuse is a disciplinary matter

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## **AUT COMMITMENT**

### GOAL:

“To maintain a healthy and dynamic work environment for staff that nurtures contribution, innovation and development”

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## **AUT COMMITMENT**

### **STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:**

“To establish a reputation as an employer of choice in order to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre”

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## **AUT COMMITMENT**

To be done by:

“Providing an environment that is highly receptive to staff needs and interests”

**and**

“Providing a flexible and stimulating environment and opportunities for development”

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## WHY EMBRACE IT?

### ➤ IT UNDERPINS EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

- “there’s nothing so unfair as treating unequals equally”

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## WHY EMBRACE IT?

### ➤ IT'S GOOD FOR BUSINESS

- Its positive impact on staff satisfaction translates to higher organisational performance through improved productivity and service value

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## WHY EMBRACE IT?

### ➤ IT'S GOOD FOR BUSINESS

- It builds the employer "brand"
  - ✓ Staff Retention
  - ✓ Staff Recruitment

*"I decided to apply for a position at AUT because I was impressed with the fact that AUT tries to help staff attain a work-life balance"*

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## WHY EMBRACE IT?

### ➤ IT'S RIGHT!!

- People are entitled to decent lives!

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## WHY EMBRACE IT?

### ➤ SOCIETY NEEDS IT

- Immense pressures on families and individuals as a result of 24/7 culture, dual income earners, global business markets, ageing workforce

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## WHAT DO WE DO?

### ➤ FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES & STRATEGIES

- University breaks align with primary school holidays
- School holiday care programme
- Childcare on campus

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## WHAT DO WE DO?

- Kids room in Learning Centre
- Baby Change stations
- Family friendly contracts
  - ★ Permanent part-time work
  - ★ Flexi time
  - ★ Work-from-home

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## WHAT DO WE DO?

- Sick leave to care for family members
- Parental leave
- Family days on campus
- Health care on campus – doctors, nurses, counsellors
- Fitness centre on campus (subsidised)

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## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

- Professional career development support (the Career Centre)
- Development entitlements
- Free tuition for AUT courses
- Vigorous staff development programme

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## OPPORTUNITIES TO DO OWN THING

- Generous leave without pay
- Four for five scheme – long and short versions
- Flexible contracts
- Special leave provisions

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## OPPORTUNITIES TO DO OWN THING

- Work from home and flexi-time
- Funded staff networks
  - Maori, Pasifika, Women, Asian, Disability
  - Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender (LGBT)

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## WHAT DON'T WE DO

- Lower our expectation of staff
- Work-Life Balance strategies are opportunities for personal need to be met, not to work for less for the same pay
- Tolerate abuse of the opportunities

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“There is a lot of talk about workload – but the longer I am at AUT, the more I appreciate that the smarter I work, the more balanced life becomes.”

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## SNAPSHOTS

### ➤ LONG WORK HOURS – AN INTERNATIONAL TREND

Cultures of long work hours to demonstrate commitment, loyalty, worth.

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## SNAPSHOTS

### ➤ USA

Average worker works 1 month a year longer now than in the 1960s

Technology (eg cellphones, laptops), makes it easier for work to intrude into home life and even travel time

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## SNAPSHOTS

### ➤ UK

Employees per day spend

49 minutes on email

25 minutes playing with their children

The Government funds Work/Life initiatives

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## SNAPSHOTS

### ➤ In New Zealand and Australia

Work-Life balance = No 1 issue for managers

### ➤ In New Zealand

15% workforce work >60 hours per week

3.2% workforce work >80 hours per week

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## THE BUSINESS CASE

### ➤ Improved bottom line

- Staff satisfaction → Higher productivity & profitability
- Reduced turnover → Lower recruitment costs
- Reduced absenteeism and lower stress levels → Healthier work environment

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## THE BUSINESS CASE

- Retention of Top Talent
- Easier to attract Top Talent

Work-Life balance is about flexibility in work practices, not less output for the same pay.

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Work-Life balance is about selecting those things that are important to us in our lives and then honouring them

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Work - Life balance is a self-defined, self-determined state of well-being that a person can reach, which allows them to manage effectively multiple responsibilities. They are healthy physically, emotionally and socially, have a sense of control over their lives and feel that the decisions they make are informed choices"

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## SKILLS NEEDED

CONVERSATION

COMMUNICATION

CO-OPERATION

COMMITMENT

COMPROMISE

CREATIVITY

CHAOS

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## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS THAT INDICATE YOU DO NOT HAVE BALANCE**

- Get sick more often
- Not eating well (caffeine, sugar, fat alcohol)
- Life is happening to you, instead of you managing your life
- No choices, no control

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## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS THAT INDICATE YOU DO NOT HAVE BALANCE**

- When you can think of more things that aren't done, than are getting done
- When you see more negative in your life than positive
- Working long hours – not productive
- Unhealthy relationships (negative, blaming)

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## STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING BALANCE

- Build your job's autonomy
- Plan work hours to integrate more effectively with other activities
- Find your own optimum number of work hours – and stick to them
- Eliminate waste at work. Do things once

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## **STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING BALANCE**

- Use downtime effectively
- Delegate effectively
- Learn to say "NO"
- Manage your time effectively

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## WHERE TO FROM HERE

- Recognise where you are
- Do you need support and assistance
- Conversations
- Create a supportive environment for yourself
- Be Proactive
- Be Assertive