

Time Management

You've heard of "work life balance". Overcoming the battle between the demands of a successful career and a happy home.

Now we have a new challenge. The "eternal triangle". The offset between work, home and studying. Qualifications dangle the sweetener of promotions, salary increases and maybe even foreign secondments, but come with tough study commitments and disrupt the well-established balance between professional and personal lives.

Once studying enters the mix, both work and home life must adjust to accommodate the new demands. So how can we do this, when at least for the short term, study dominates the schedule?



The Juggling Trick

Some people do miraculously manage the three-way pull of work, study and home life. They are rare. For most of us, maintaining all three elements is nearly impossible, and the reality is we often sacrifice parts of our personal or social lives to achieve academic success.

In order to justify this sacrifice, there must be a motivation for taking the exams. Both work and home need to know that they will benefit from that motivating factor of job security, job satisfaction, higher income, increased opportunity or whatever propelled you to take the exams in the first place.

Time Management and Managing Time

Time is often like money – "in short supply and used too quickly". And like money, it needs planning to ensure it's used effectively.

It's been said "Good time management skills are the key to successful studying" and its true. How do we this?

- Draw up a plan charting each available day until the exam
- Tick off existing commitments – involving and rallying home support in this stage
- Add in key study dates – courses to attend, mocks to submit
- Add in study time to work towards the key study dates

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- Put the plan somewhere visible – encouraging you and others to stick to it

Set clear boundaries during study periods to minimize distractions from friends and family. The aim is for them to understand they are partners in this process and your journey.



Duty Calls

There is no doubt it's not just about keeping home life happy. Fitting in work commitments with career-enhancing study is not easy.

It's best to be honest about what support you need for your exams and for your employers to be honest about their expectations of you. You both have the same goal after all – to have the best chance to pass and get the qualifications you need to take your career to the next level.

Conclusion

It is possible to overcome the challenges in the “eternal triangle” of work, home and studying. A healthy dose of realistic study planning, honest communication, and mutual understandings can see you come out as an older, wiser and better qualified person.