

Executive Summary :

Work–life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) and "lifestyle" (health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development/meditation). This is related to the idea of lifestyle choice.

The work–leisure dichotomy was invented in the mid-1800s. Paul Krasner remarked that anthropologists use a definition of happiness that is to have as little separation as possible "between your work and your play".

The expression "work–life balance" was first used in the United Kingdom in the late 1970s to describe the balance between an individual's work and personal life. In the United States, this phrase was first used in 1986. By working in an organization, employees identify, to some extent, with the organization, as part of a collective group. Organizational values, norms and interests become incorporated in the self-concept as employees increase their identification with the organization. However, employees also identify with their outside roles, or their "true self". Examples of these might be parental/caretaker roles, identifications with certain groups, religious affiliations, align with certain values and morals, mass media etc.

Most employees identify with not only the organization, but also other facets of their life (family, children, religion, etc.). Sometimes these identities align and sometimes they do not. When identities are in conflict, the sense of a healthy work–life balance may be affected. Organization members must perform identity work so that they align themselves with the area in which they are performing to avoid conflict and any stress as a result.