

# Last Hurrahs – Balance in Life



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# OBJECTIVES

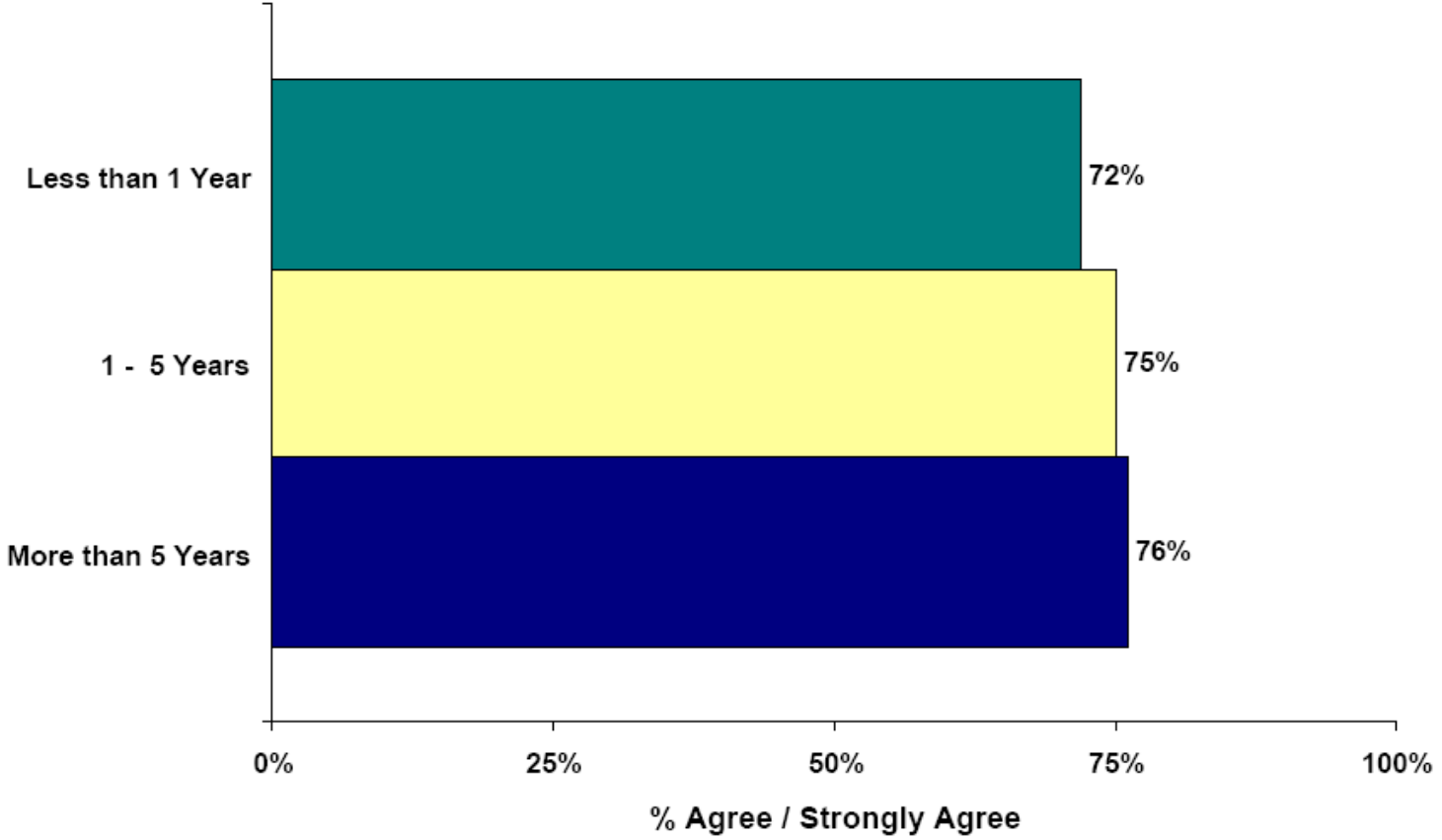


- ◆ Discuss some research related to work/life balance
- ◆ Discuss some of the consequences of imbalance (+ and -)
- ◆ Discuss some tips for maintaining better balance!

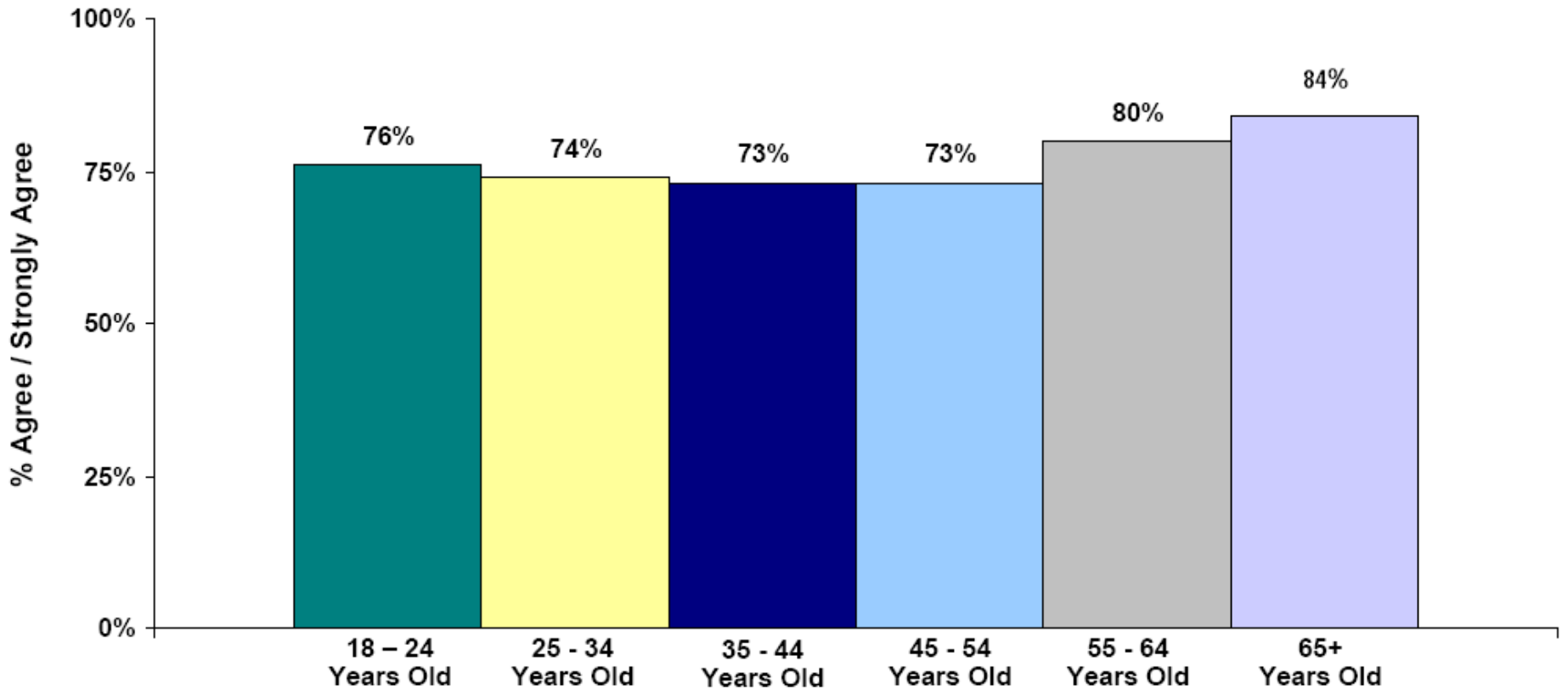
# Opinion Research Survey

- ◆ 807 respondents with 25 or more employees at their company
- ◆ ? how did they handle the relationship between work and personal lives ?
  - Overall, 75% of respondents agree that they are able to strike the right balance between work and their personal lives.

**Employees that have been with a company for over 5 Years are more likely to strike a balance between work and personal lives than less tenured employees.**

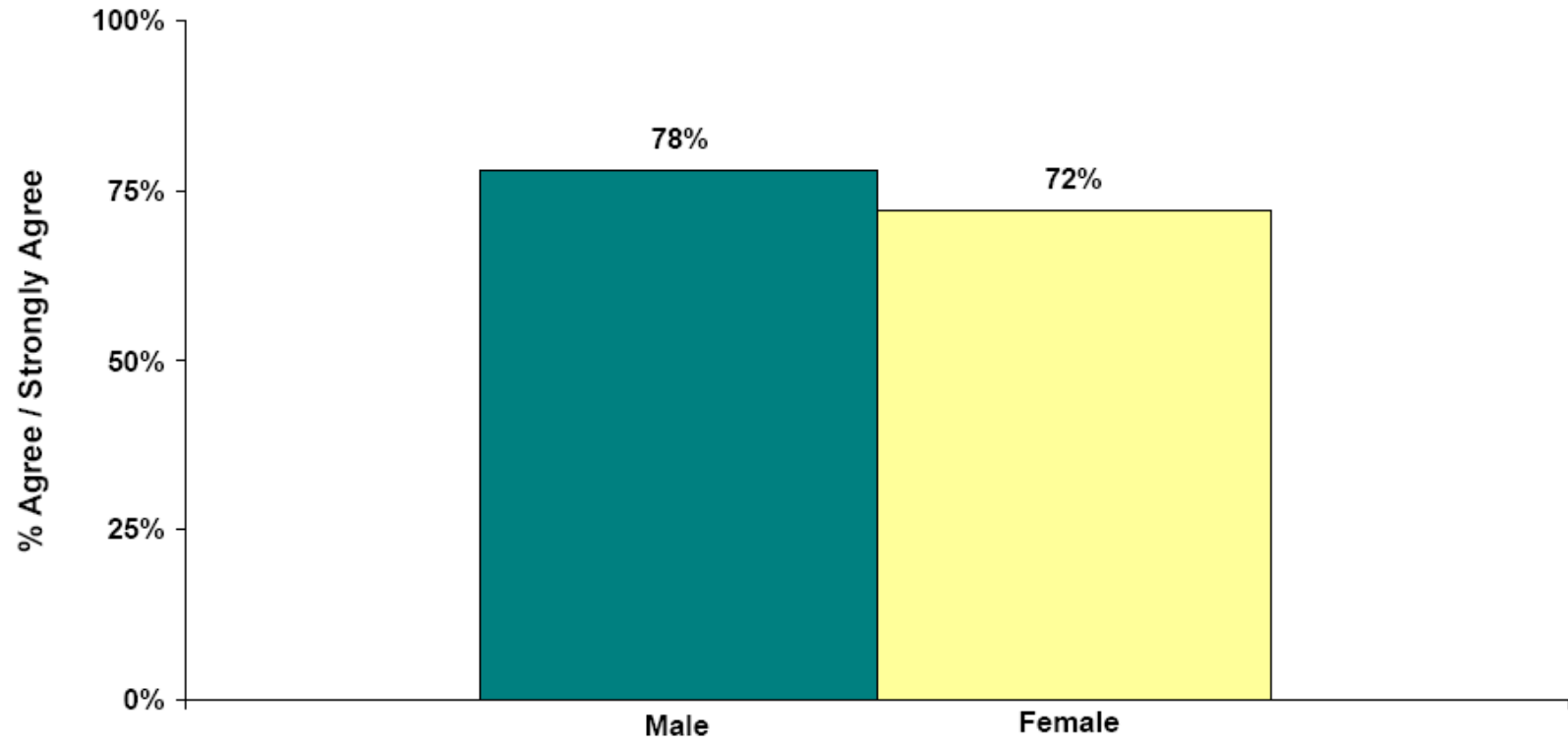


**Employees aged 55 or older have a higher perceived balance of work and personal life than younger employees.**

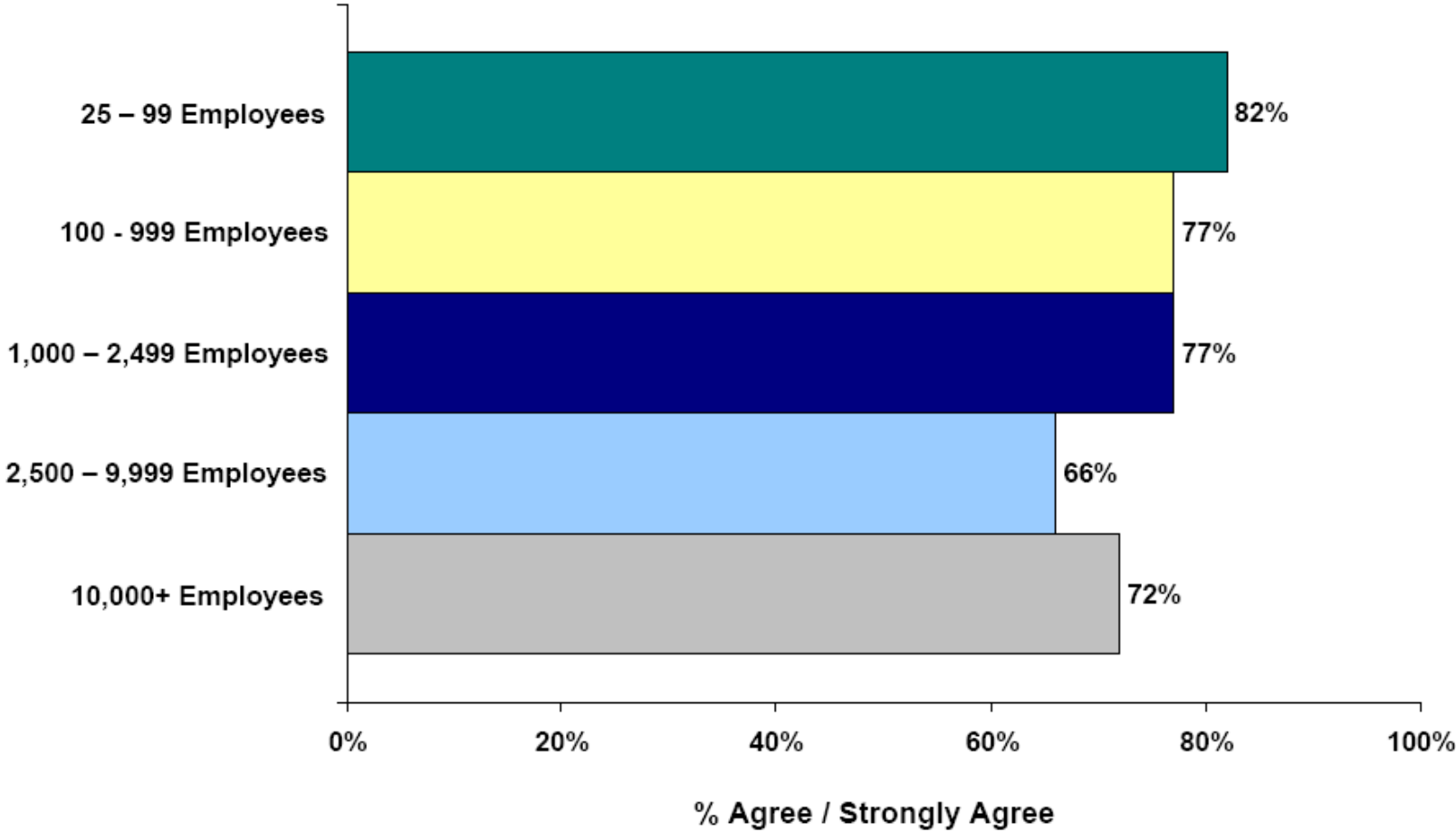




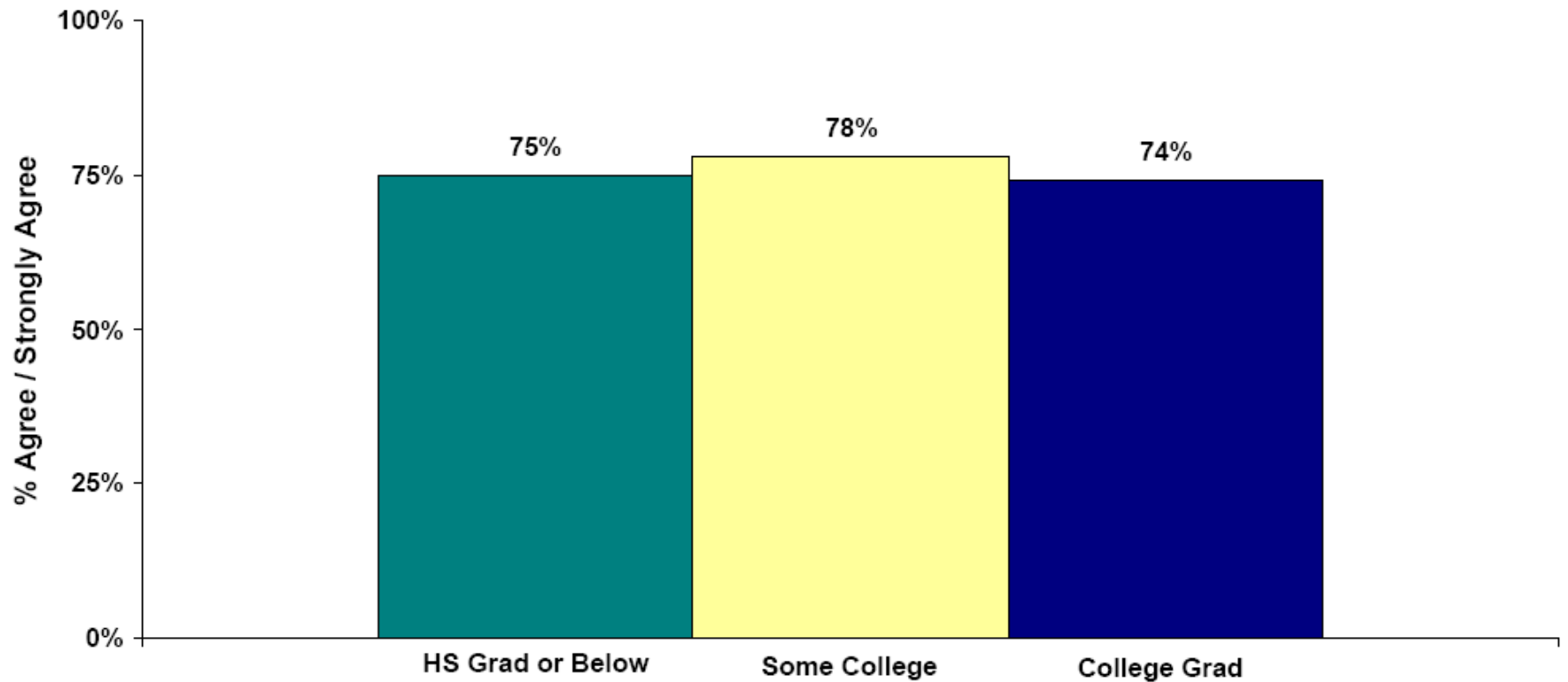
**Male respondents are slightly more likely to strike a balance between work and personal lives than female respondents.**



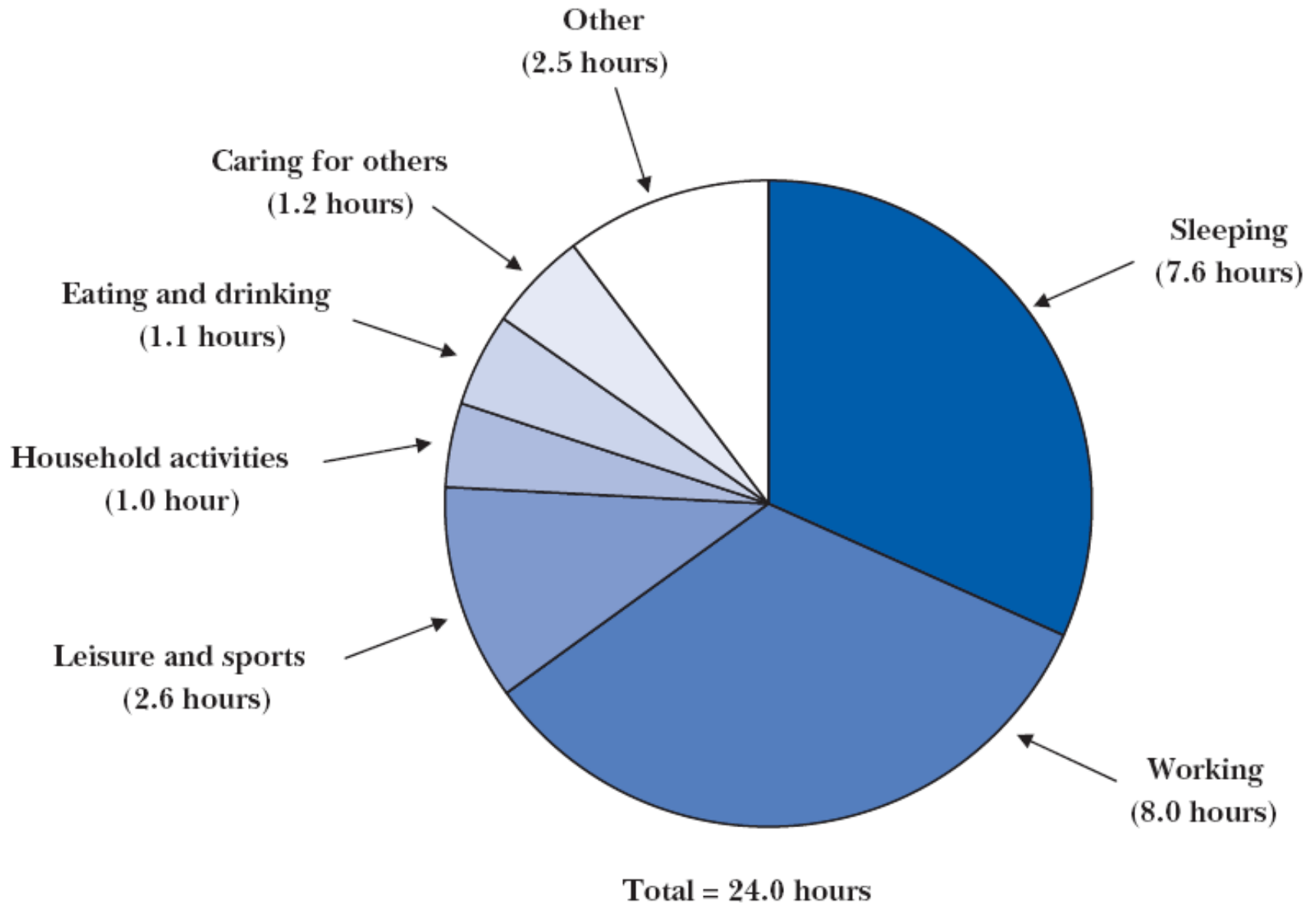
# Employees in smaller companies report a better balance between work and personal lives than in larger companies.



Regardless of education level, there is little variation among the groups with respect to the balance of work and personal life.



## Exhibit 1. Time Use on an Average Work Day for Employed Persons Ages 25 to 54 with Children



*Note:* Data include employed persons on days they worked, ages 25 to 54, and who lived in households with children under 18. Data include non-holiday weekdays and are annual averages for 2005.

# Work/Life Balance



◆ **Term was coined in 1986**

– **Explained the unhealthy life choices that many people were making;**

– **Identified the neglect of other important area of life such as family, friends, and hobbies in favor of work-related chores/goals**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Work-life\\_balance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Work-life_balance)

# Introduction: Definition of *Work-Life Balance*

*Work-life balance is about being able to*

- ◆ Juggle paid work time with personal responsibilities and activities on all fronts:
  - Work and family
  - Work and personal fulfillment/recreation
  - Work and spiritual activities
  - Work and social and community responsibility
  - Health and Wellness

# What Work/Life Balance is Not



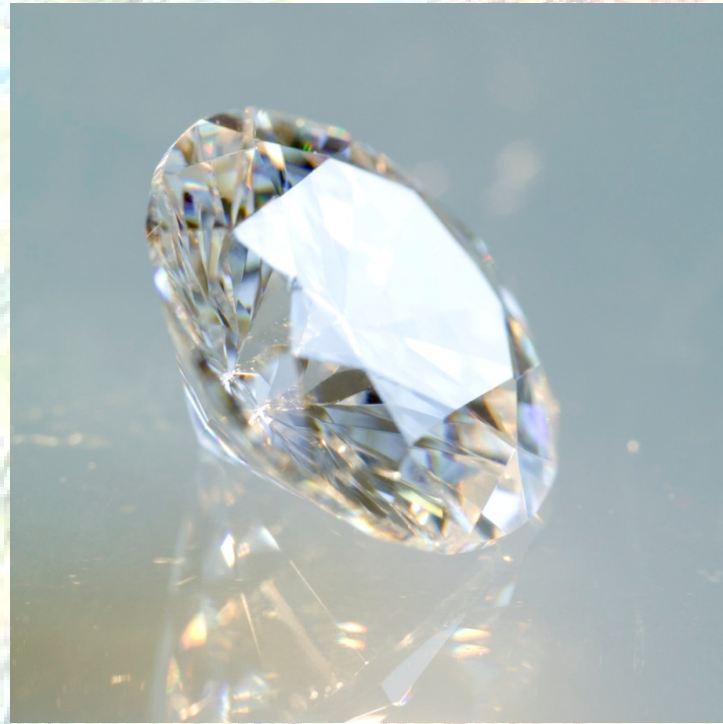
- ◆ Work-Life Balance does not mean an equal balance (not measured by TIME).
- ◆ What works for you today will not work for you tomorrow.
- ◆ There is no perfect, one-size fits all, balance you should be striving for.
- ◆ Easy to Achieve.

# Imbalance



- ◆ Job Demands
- ◆ Multiple Roles
- ◆ Technology
- ◆ Staffing Patterns
- ◆ Family Requirements
- ◆ Civic Requirements

If pressure makes diamonds out of coal, I'm getting ready to sparkle.



# How Many Hats???

- ◆ Career
- ◆ Wife
- ◆ Mother
- ◆ Volunteer
- ◆ Friend
- ◆ Church
- ◆ Self



# Sandwich Generation

- ◆ **Traditional:**

- sandwiched between aging parents who need care and/or help and their own children.



- ◆ **Club Sandwich:**

- those in their 50s or 60s, sandwiched between aging parents, adult children and grandchildren. OR those in their 30s and 40s, with young children, aging parents and grandparents.



- ◆ **Open Faced:**

- anyone else involved in elder care.



# Recognizing Imbalance

**Are you B.A.T.T.Y?**

**Bitter, Angry, Totally Tired and Yucky?**



# A positive definition of stress

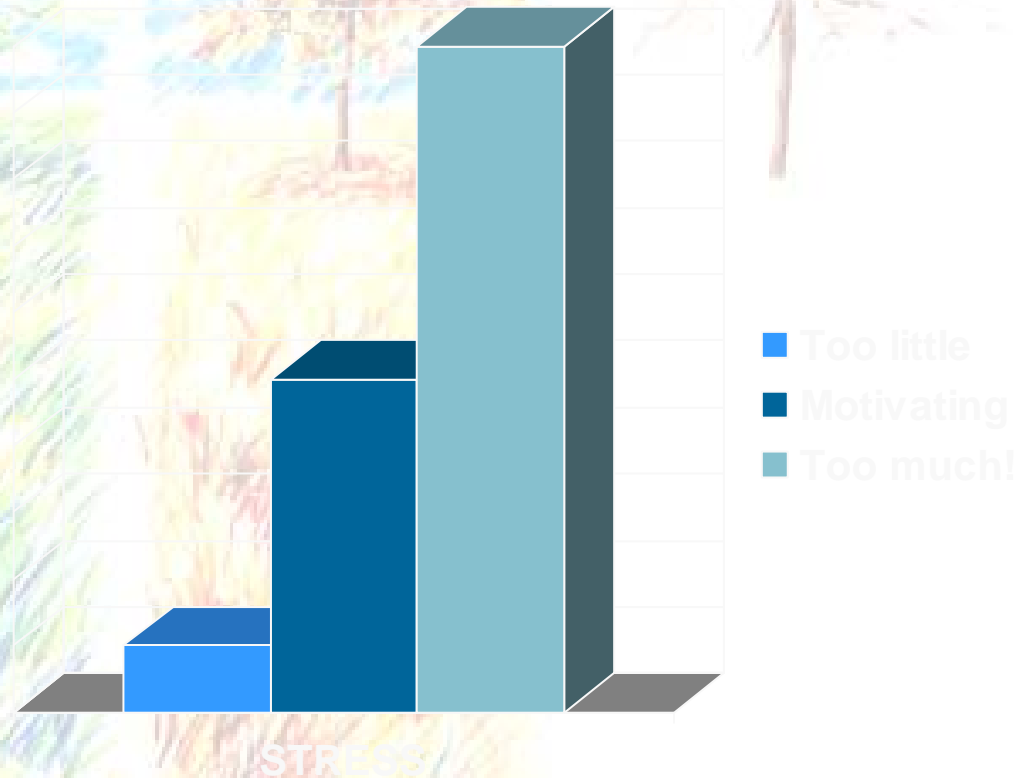
The background of the slide features four vertical panels, each containing a tree. From left to right: 1. A healthy, full green tree. 2. A tree with some yellowing leaves, indicating the start of stress. 3. A tree with many yellow and orange leaves, representing a more advanced stage of stress. 4. A bare, leafless tree, representing the final stage of stress where the organism has lost its ability to cope.

Stress is a positive force that enables you to survive.

Dr. Trevor Powell,  
*Stress Free Living*

# The *level* of stress is important

- ◆ Too little stress – bored and unstimulated
- ◆ Positive, motivating force  
- Crossing a busy road
- ◆ When demands outweigh your ability to cope – Negative effects of stress



# High Stress = Health Risks

- ◆ Emotional health suffers
  - Depression, guilt, anxiety, tension
  - Sleeplessness
- ◆ Physical health risks increase
  - High blood pressure
  - High cholesterol
  - Headaches and other illness
  - Alcohol or drug use
  - Suicide



# Burnout



- ◆ Elevated levels of burnout exist among a substantial percentage of surveyed Emergency Physicians
- ◆ Classified broadly in terms of negative perceptions of self, negative practice habits and attitudes, and unhealthy lifestyle.

# Burnout Correlates



- ◆ Self- recognition of burnout
- ◆ Lack of job involvement
- ◆ Negative self- assessment of productivity
- ◆ Dissatisfaction with career
- ◆ Sleep disturbances
- ◆ Intent to leave the practice within 10 years
- ◆ Higher levels of alcohol consumption
- ◆ Lower levels of exercise

# Why Is Work/Life Balance Important to an Employer?

- ◆ 8 out of 10 workers ages 20 to 39 identify family time as a top priority.
- ◆ 9 out of 10 working adults report concern about not spending enough time with their families.
- ◆ An estimated 50% of employees would turn down a promotion if the new job would reduce the amount of time for their personal or family life.
- ◆ **Work/Life Balance is Important to Employees!**

# Why Is Work/Life Balance Important to an Employer?

- ◆ Promotes employee satisfaction
- ◆ Leads to retention
- ◆ Enhances performance
- ◆ Reduces stress-related illnesses and therefore, health costs and absenteeism

# Common causes of excessive workplace stress



- ◆ Fear of layoffs
- ◆ Increased demands for overtime due to staff cutbacks
- ◆ Pressure to perform to meet rising expectations but with no increase in job satisfaction
- ◆ Pressure to work at optimum levels – all the time!

# Warning signs of excessive stress at work



- ◆ Feeling anxious, irritable, or depressed
- ◆ Apathy, loss of interest in work.
- ◆ Problems sleeping
- ◆ Fatigue,
- ◆ Trouble concentrating
- ◆ Muscle tension or headaches
- ◆ Stomach problems
- ◆ Social withdrawal
- ◆ Loss of sex drive
- ◆ Using alcohol or drugs to cope

# Workplace Tips



## Improve communication

- Have transparent information sharing to help reduce uncertainty about jobs and futures.
- Provide clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- Make communication friendly and efficient, not mean-spirited or petty.
- Include FOOD when possible!

# Workplace Tips

## Consult your employees

- Give workers opportunities to participate in decisions that affect them
- Consult employees about scheduling and work rules.
- Be sure the workload is suitable to employees' abilities and resources; avoid unrealistic deadlines.
- Show that individual workers are valued.
- Include FOOD when possible!

# Workplace Tips

## Offer rewards and incentives

- Praise good work performance verbally and institutionally.
- Provide opportunities for career development.
- Promote an “entrepreneurial” work climate that gives employees more control over their work.
- Include FOOD when possible!

# Workplace Tips



## Cultivate a friendly social climate

- Provide opportunities for social interaction among employees.
- Establish a zero-tolerance policy for harassment.
- Make management actions consistent with organizational values.
- Include FOOD when possible!

# Time management tips for reducing job stress

- ◆ **Create a balanced schedule.** Analyze your schedule, responsibilities, and daily tasks. All work and no play is a recipe for burnout. Try to find a balance between work and family life, social activities and solitary pursuits, daily responsibilities and downtime.
- ◆ **Don't over-commit yourself.** Avoid scheduling things back-to-back or trying to fit too much into one day. All too often, we underestimate how long things will take. If you've got too much on your plate, distinguish between the "shoulds" and the "musts." Drop tasks that aren't truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.
- ◆ **Try to leave earlier in the morning.** Even 10-15 minutes can make the difference between frantically rushing to your desk and having time to ease into your day. Don't add to your stress levels by running late.
- ◆ **Plan regular breaks.** Make sure to take short breaks throughout the day to sit back and clear your mind. Also try to get away from your desk for lunch. Stepping away from work to briefly relax and recharge will help you be more, not less, productive.

# Find Ways to Dispel Stress at Work

- ◆ **Get time away.** If you feel stress building, take a break. Walk away from the situation. Take a stroll around the block, sit on a park bench, or spend a few minutes meditating. Exercise does wonders for the psyche. But even just finding a quiet place and listening to your iPod can reduce stress.
- ◆ **Talk it out.** Sometimes the best stress-reducer is simply sharing your stress with someone close to you. The act of talking it out – and getting support and empathy from someone else – is often an excellent way of blowing off steam and reducing stress.
- ◆ **Cultivate allies at work.** Just knowing you have one or more co-workers who are willing to assist you in times of stress will reduce your stress level. Just remember to reciprocate and help them when they are in need.
- ◆ **Find humor in the situation.** When you – or the people around you – start taking things too seriously, find a way to break through with laughter. Share a joke or funny story.

# Practical Tips

- ◆ Can the Clutter
- ◆ Out With Excess Paper
- ◆ Say NO
- ◆ Keep it Concise
- ◆ Read Only What Matters
- ◆ Operate Early
- ◆ Lighten Up
- ◆ Hire it Done
- ◆ Earn a B
- ◆ Build in Margins
- ◆ Timing is Everything



# Keeping Balance...ASK:

- ◆ Does it support my value for life-long learning?
- ◆ Does it make a difference?
- ◆ Will it stretch my abilities?
- ◆ Is there someone who is better for the task than me?
- ◆ Does it allow me to be with people whom I care about?
- ◆ Is it irresistible?



# Keeping Balance...ASK:

- ◆ Is it fun and will it allow for creativity and a change of pace?
- ◆ Will it create organization and structure in my life?
- ◆ Will it nurture my physical well-being and respect my natural pace?
- ◆ Is it authentic to me and of service to others?
- ◆ Will it strengthen my family relationships?



# Top 10 ways to tell that your life is not in balance

1. You're tired, depressed, anxious, and tense
2. Your work performance isn't as good as it has been
3. You're missing work more often than you should
4. Your personal relationships are suffering
5. You feel like you're running in circles and getting nowhere

# Top 10 ways to tell that your life is not in balance

6. You feel like you have no choices and no control
7. You don't feel in control of your own time
8. You can think of more things that aren't getting done than are
9. You feel like one part of your life is dominating your time and energy

# Top 10 ways to tell that your life is not in balance

**#10. Your life is  
managing you  
rather than you  
are managing  
your life!!**



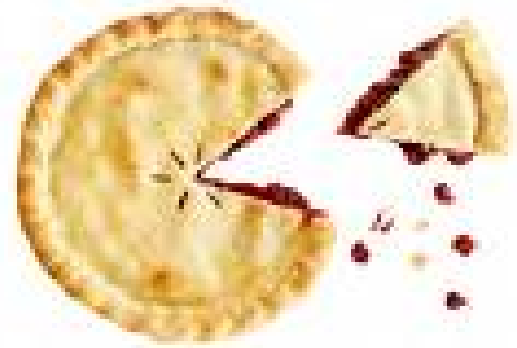
# Key Steps to Balance



1. Clarify Values
2. Realistic Goals & Expectations
3. Figure Out What's Getting in the Way
4. Set Priorities and Manage Time

# Clarify Values

- ◆ Is your pie cut the way you want it to be?
- ◆ Do the slices of the pie have to be equal?
- ◆ Why or Why Not?
- ◆ How do you know what you value?



# Realistic Goals and Expectations



- ◆ What goals do you have related to your values or the different pieces of your pie?
- ◆ What are your expectations?
- ◆ How will you know when you have achieved those goals?

# Figure Out What's Getting in the Way



- ◆ What is causing stress?
- ◆ Then what happens?
- ◆ What can you do?

# Set Priorities and Manage Time

- ◆ What are the priorities that will help you achieve your goals?
- ◆ How should/can you manage your time according to your priorities?



# Finding Balance: Benefits



## To WORK:

- ◆ Measured increases in individual productivity, accountability and commitment
- ◆ Better teamwork and communication
- ◆ Improved morale
- ◆ Less negative organizational stress

# Finding Balance: Benefits



## To Persons:

- ◆ More value and balance in your daily life
- ◆ Better understanding of what your best individual work life integration is
- ◆ Increased productivity
- ◆ Improved relationships both on and off the job
- ◆ Reduced stress

# Finding Balance Strategies



## For WORK and Persons:

- ◆ Implement & Engage in effective stress and time management techniques
- ◆ Learn to say “No” and stick to your answer
- ◆ Be realistic in Setting Goals (24hrs/day)
- ◆ Get rid of clutter and unnecessary things
- ◆ Monitor the Balance – BATTY Self-Check
- ◆ Remember the negative consequences if work/life is not balanced

# The 4 MOST IMPORTANT Things That Keep You Well

## Get moving!!!

- ◆ Aerobic exercise –perspiring – is an effective anti-anxiety treatment lifting mood, increasing energy, sharpening focus and relaxing mind and body.
- ◆ For maximum stress relief, try to get at least 30 minutes of heart pounding activity on most days
- ◆ Activity can be broken up into 2 or 3 short segments.



# The 4 MOST IMPORTANT Things That Keep You Well

## Make GREAT food choices!!

- ◆ Eating small but frequent meals throughout the day maintains an even level of blood sugar in your body.
- ◆ Low blood sugar makes you feel anxious and irritable.
- ◆ On the other hand, eating too much can make you lethargic.



# The 4 MOST IMPORTANT Things That Keep You Well

## Drink alcohol in moderation and avoid nicotine!!

- ◆ Alcohol temporarily reduces anxiety and worry, but too much can cause anxiety as it wears off.
- ◆ Drinking to relieve job stress can also start you on a path to alcohol abuse and dependence.
- ◆ Smoking when you're feeling stressed and overwhelmed may seem calming, but nicotine is a powerful stimulant – leading to higher, not lower, levels of anxiety.



# The 4 MOST IMPORTANT Things That Keep You Well

## Get enough sleep

- ◆ Stress and worry can cause insomnia. But lack of sleep also leaves you vulnerable to stress. When you're sleep deprived, your ability to handle stress is compromised. When you're well-rested, it's much easier to keep your emotional balance, a key factor in coping with job and workplace stress.





- ◆ Being a nurse is more like a calling than a job. It seeps into your blood and becomes who you are, not just something you do. And yet, you can't forget that there's more to life than work. You must learn to focus your attention on other areas of life so that you create a life that's energy-sustaining and personally fulfilling, not just one where you give and give.

Balance is more than  
just a buzzword

Julie Fuimano, RN, BSN, MBA

