

Work-Life Balance in Blended and Online Teaching

Maintaining balance between personal and work responsibilities can be challenging for teachers, especially when facilitating blended and online learning. Teachers face multiple challenges, ranging from high workloads with unrealistic deadlines, to district or school level policies, to initiatives for managing student behavior and engagement, to isolation from colleagues. It is essential to maintain a healthy work-life balance, as an imbalance can negatively impact both work and personal experiences and responsibilities. Taking time for self-care, building positive relationships, and setting boundaries between work and home can help support a healthy work-life balance.

1. Why is it important to understand the cause and effect of teaching-related stressors?
2. What work-life balance challenges exist related to blended and online teaching?
3. How can I work towards maintaining a healthy work-life balance in blended and online teaching?



to Consider

Work-life balance refers to maintaining a healthy equilibrium between work-related responsibilities and personal responsibilities. Teaching can be intense and leave little to no time for personal pursuits or spending quality time with family and friends. There are many teaching stressors that impact work-life balance including high workloads with unrealistic deadlines, district or school level policies that give teachers little autonomy or freedom, and initiatives implemented to manage behaviors of students. These stressors can negatively impact self-efficacy, commitment to the profession, and physical and mental health.

Transitioning to blended or online teaching can lead to a disrupted work-life balance. Challenges related to blended and online teaching include: not having needed skills with online tools, difficulty meeting individual student needs, working in different physical environments, feeling isolated, and inadequate professional support systems. Teachers should engage in personal and professional self-care practices to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Teachers should build self-care practices into daily blended and online teaching routines. When at work, especially in work-from-home environments, taking short breaks to journal or meditate can be beneficial. Personal journaling helps to keep notes of accomplishments that can be referenced when feeling down, and it helps to track daily needs, prioritize tasks, and provide stress relief. Intentionally building positive relationships with colleagues contributes to overall job satisfaction and career success. A positive working relationship with other teachers can improve satisfaction and reduce work burnout. Additionally, some might find it beneficial to engage in self-selected professional development programs to learn new skills and increase self-efficacy.

Setting boundaries between work and home-related experiences and responsibilities can help support a healthy work-life balance. For blended and online teaching, this might mean designating a part of the home just for work-related tasks to help reduce distractions at home when working. Boundaries could also mean intentionally setting aside specific times outside of work to interact with friends and family, engage in hobbies and exercise, and support positive mental and emotional health.

Many factors, including responsibilities inside and outside of work, make it very challenging for teachers to engage in work-life balance strategies. However, it is essential for teachers to reflect on ways to move towards and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

KEY Elements