

Top 10 Tips to Balance Work/Life in 2009



Featured Author: Todd Wheeler, President and CEO



A new year, a new president, new financial pressures — 2009 is shaping up to be a year of opportunity, uncertainty, optimism and change. However change doesn't only have to be negative. Change can be very positive, and balancing work and personal life is key to positive attitude and your happiness. Keeping an open mind and an optimistic heart will go a long way to support your self-improvement and emotional wellness efforts.

Following are our Top 10 Tips to Balance Work and Life in 2009:

1. **Prioritize** – While this sounds obvious, we see families reprioritize their values at the holidays. Why not continue that pattern? Are your goals to purchase a fancy new car or to spend more time playing catch with your son? Are you focused on a fancy vacation abroad this year or could you spend the time exploring the area where you live, discovering attractions and sites you've only driven past? What means the most to you this year?
2. **Commit to less** – When people and businesses get stressed, we tend to over-commit as a way of showing loyalty and dedication. However, in stressful times, we also need to ensure success, and that often means having laser-like focus on what we can do well, and not committing to projects and teams where we won't contribute high value. It is better to say no than it is to say yes and not do it!
3. **Focus at work and on your job** – Yes, we did say to focus more at work. With competition in the marketplace growing exponentially, with PhD's working at McDonald's, having a job

means doing everything you can to keep it! Recommit to your work, engage with colleagues and staff, and renew your dedication to patient care. Now more than ever, performance expectations are scrutinized and practitioners who apply themselves fully, and with focus, stand out.

4. **Breathe** – ensure you are taking time to catch your breath. On your way to work and on your way home from work, do some deep breathing in the car to help relieve any work-related stress and don't bring your job home with you.

5. **Ask for Help** – Enlist the support and resources of others to help you manage tasks, errands and projects where appropriate. If your hospital or medical center has an on-site concierge program, use them to help you manage your list of “to do” tasks, enabling you to focus on work, and not on oil changes for the car, picking up dry cleaning and planning a birthday party. Instead of taking everything on yourself, whom can you enlist to help? Discuss with your employer the idea of bringing in assistance (such as an on-site concierge service) to help manage stress at work.

6. **Set realistic goals** – What can you actually accomplish right now? For instance, if it would be nice to participate or volunteer on a task force at your hospital, but the time commitment would mean added stress and pressure, now may not be the right time to join the team. Believe me, it is better to say no than it is to say yes and provide less than stellar performance. Now is the time to deliberately avoid adding stress to your life. Focus on doing what you do well, getting done what is within your control, and if you can, put off what you realistically cannot do.

7. **Be specific and break big projects into smaller tasks** – Instead of “buy gifts for my staff,” be specific — consider “Buy scarves for women on my team, and Gift Cards for the guys.” Also don't wander the mall, go with a specific purpose or item in mind.

8. **Keep Track of Spending** – Setting up a system to track spending and manage your finances will give you a sense of control over your income and debt. Times are stressful enough without worrying that you could be breaking your budget. Just because you have checks left doesn't mean that there is still money in the account! Even a shoebox for receipts is better than shoving them into a mass of mail, receipts and papers. Set time aside on a realistic schedule, like once a week to tally the expenses to ensure you're on track with your budget.

9. **Put Off Until Tomorrow What You Can** – Ask yourself, “Do I really need to do this today?” Some things we consider priorities can in fact be delayed until our plates are not as full. No need to apologize-sometimes procrastination is a viable strategy. Commit to what is feasible today, and by tomorrow, your priorities may shift.

10. **Use Technology to Simplify Your Life** – Use your PDA to track receipts, checklists, and key projects. Set up a spreadsheet to track projects and timelines on your home and work computer, so you always know where you stand with important projects. Let your voice mail answer when you need a break. Unless it's critical or a life or death situation, it can likely wait.

Healthcare professionals in particular know there are many things that you can do to ease your stress and improve the lives of others. As we look to 2009, we anticipate change, stress and,

hopefully, opportunity and relief. It is more important this year than ever before that you find ways to be kind to yourself and focus on yourself, your own work/life balance and your emotional wellness. If you are happier and less stressed, the people close to you will be as well!

About Concierge Resource

Concierge Resource life managers help clients balance the load of work and personal responsibilities. Established in 2001 in Denver, Colorado, Concierge Resources develops higher standards for delivery of on-site and remote concierge services, working with clients including Dalbey Educational Institute, Health One and Centura Hospital Systems who are doing everything they can to ensure the lowest possible stress levels for their employees. By providing this service, employees of these organizations are less distracted by the day-to-day activities on their to-do lists and are more focused.

Creating new “Standards of the Industry” methodology and promoting implementation of best practices has elevated Concierge Resource to leadership status across the US. Concierge Resource provides concierge services to employers and hospitals, and offers technology solutions and consulting services to numerous concierge companies. To learn more about Concierge Resource visit www.conciergeresource.com.

Todd Wheeler is the founder and president of Concierge Colorado and Hospital Concierge of America. For over 20 years he has been a successful entrepreneur in many sectors of the service industry. In the 1990's he operated an international management consulting firm specializing in organizational development and growth for mid-size and large organizations. Clients included: Arthur Anderson, Gambro International, Rocky Mountain Bank Note and Grupo Misa (Mexico City). In a former life, Mr. Wheeler was the Chair of the MIT Enterprise Forum in Colorado.

At the present time Hospital Concierge of America and Concierge Colorado provides concierge consulting services and concierge programs to hospitals as retention and recruitment tools. These concierge programs have been noted by both hospital administration and staff as “indispensable”, “extremely professional”, “world-class” and “life savers”. Feedback proves that many nurses site these programs as the reason they work at this hospital. Mr. Wheeler believes that all concierge are not created equal, and strives every day to create and deliver elegant results to people problems. For several years, Concierge Colorado has been exceeding the expectations of over 10,000 individuals and has completed over 35,000 requests for hospital staff, with a 99% same day completion score.

After developing and utilizing web based concierge management technology to run the concierge business for the last 6 years, Concierge Colorado is now offering consulting services, training and the most powerful Customer Relationship Management tools for hospital concierge and small businesses.

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