

A Giant Balancing Act, or a Small but Powerful Decision?

I have been coaching people in club management for about 13 years. I have worked with thousands of people between one on one coaching, group coaching and speaking engagements. I have often been asked to talk to people and specifically support people in creating a more balanced life. My job as a coach is to help people win. I help people reach their goals - but to reach one goal at the expense of all of your other goals is not truly winning.

I have been asked if I believe balance is actually possible in the career of a club manager. My belief is that it is. Now having said that I know that many people reading this are making the assumption that I don't know what I am talking about and that they can prove it.

If that is true for you, then the awareness of that belief may be the key that supports you in getting the balance you are looking for. Are you interested in proving me right or proving me wrong?

If you believe that balance is not possible then you are correct for you. If you believe balance is possible then you have a chance of making it so. If you believe that it is entirely up to outside forces and other people's beliefs and decisions, well then, kiss anything that resembles balance good bye.

What we all may need is a radical change of thinking. There was a time when the thought of even suggesting that people should not smoke inside a building, around other people or near children would be an idea that you wouldn't dream of suggesting. Now it seems to be such common sense that in most places it doesn't happen anymore.

I think big change like that happens when we can actually stand back and look at a situation or a behavior and see how ridiculous it looks.

Why do we work so hard? I love Nigel Marsh's line **"People are walking around in screaming desperation working long hours at jobs they hate, to buy things they don't need to impress people they don't like."**

When I was a club manager I was amazed by the idea that I worked in an environment where people created balance in their lives with mid-week games of golf, lots of leisure time on their weekends and could be upset if I wasn't there at 8:30 pm on Sunday night when they came in. What was more amazing as I look back on it is the importance I put on this in my early days in the business and my eagerness to give them what they needed at the expense of my family.

Not taking care of our health and diminishing our ability to be there in a more powerful way for our family and our clubs makes no sense. Not taking care of the happiness and enjoyment that energizes us, impacting our chance to be more present for our families and our clubs makes no sense. Not making sure that the people we lead are energized for their lives and the club makes no sense. Using ourselves, our people and our resources up to the point of being broken down or used up makes no sense, but yet we have been known to do it.

Here are a few simple thoughts that I would propose.

1. You have a role in designing your life!
2. You are a model for the people who are watching you!
3. Although it starts with us, we have to see the benefit for the club and the industry!
4. We have to decide!

You have a role in designing your life!

Maybe you didn't feel like you had a role when you were five or fifteen, but you do now. Now you do design your life. You may design it based on your needs, your values and your dreams - or perhaps you have consciously or unconsciously designed your life on other people's needs, values and dreams, but you have been part of the design. How is it working for you? If you could design it some other way, even in the same career, how would you make it different? The key here is to realize that if you don't consciously take a role in the design, someone else will design it for you. People who have worked with me on this will know that the design is followed by the establishment of boundaries, knowing how to ask for what you need and the raising of standards, but it starts with a design.

You are a model for the people who are watching you!

I have met many amazing club managers who have come to the conclusion that they would never want to aspire to the example they have set for the people they lead. They have realized that what they thought was a way of being that would inspire young people has actually helped young leaders conclude that they wouldn't want success if that is what it looks like. People are watching. Are you living a life worth emulating?

Although it starts with us, we have to see the benefit for the club and the industry!

I think one of the things that may keep us from succeeding in creating a more balanced life is the fact that we don't want to be selfish. We are programmed to take care of other. If we weren't, why would we get into this business? We are pretty good at putting others' needs ahead of ours, so being balanced may work in opposition to that. We need to change this kind of thinking. We need to show our clubs the success of balanced energized people. We need engage people at all levels of the club in proving this. We need to create an environment that attracts the best and the brightest. We have to help directors and clubs see the value of the human resource the club has. We need to show how it can support and enhance an industry.

We have to decide!

What will you decide? A giant balancing act or a small but powerful decision?