

balance

digital work-life

Project Result 2 Guide and DIY Templates

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	5
1.1 WORK-LIFE BALANCE	6
A) LIVING WITH CHANGES: VUCA WORLD	6
B) CHANGES IN WORK LIFE	7
C) CHALLENGES FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE DURING CHANGES	8
D) MENTAL HEALTH AND COPING AT WORK	8
E) EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY AT WORK	9
F) BURNOUT AT WORK	10
1.2 COACHING FOR YOUR MENTAL WELL-BEING	11
A) THEORY	11
B) PRACTICE	12
1.3 REMOTE WORKING STRATEGIES AND ADVANTAGES	15
A) REMOTE WORKING - A NEW FORM OF WORK?	15
B) USING WORKING TIME EFFICIENTLY	16
C) ENHANCING WORKER PERFORMANCE THROUGH TELEWORKING	17
D) ADVANTAGES OF WORKING FROM HOME	17
E) COPING STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE TELEWORKING	18
F) COPING WITH STRESS AT TELEWORKING	19
REFERENCES	20
CHAPTER 2: DIY TEMPLATES AND TIPS	23
2.1. WORK-LIFE BALANCE	24
2.2. COACHING FOR YOUR MENTAL WELL-BEING	30
2.3. REMOTE WORKING STRATEGIES	42

INTRODUCTION

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The Covid-19 Pandemic has brought with it a series of challenges. One of these includes the effect it has taken on women and their work-life balance. Research has found that there has been a drastic increase in rates of women's stress and mental health concerns, however there is little practical support available on how to prevent it.

The **Balance Project** (<https://projectbalance.eu/>) aims to support and equip women and their workplace leaders to better manage work-life balance in a post covid working world.

To achieve its aims, the Balance Project has developed a number of resources, including the Better-Balance Guide.

Better-Balance Guide is a comprehensive tool designed to upskill adult educators, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and tools to train their learners on achieving balance in today's work environment in a digital world.

This guide is packed with practical tips, activities, DIY worksheets, and good practices aimed at helping learners achieve a better balance in their personal and professional lives. It delves into key theories on work-life balance, explores changes and challenges in work-life, and provides insights into mental health and coping strategies, including burnout prevention guides. The guide also delves into the benefits of Personal Learning Networks (PLNs) and how they can be leveraged to achieve personal and professional goals.

The Better-Balance Guide goes beyond theory and explores practical strategies for remote working success, including activities and workshops aimed at helping learners develop effective remote working strategies. Additionally, it introduces learners to coaching and provides guidance on evaluating their stress mindset, an essential skill in achieving a balanced life. Also, it provides tools regarding time management and Burnout prevention.

Finally, the Better-Balance Guide emphasises the importance of mental well-being, providing guidance on identifying how to "switch off" and find the balance to ensure job satisfaction. This guide equips learners with the necessary tools to thrive in a digital world while maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 WORK-LIFE BALANCE

In this chapter basic information regarding the importance and challenges of work-life balance (WLB) in the workers mental health, efficiency and the prevention of work burnout is presented.

In the beginning, the VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) model and the current changes in working life are presented. The importance of individual and organisational resilience is highlighted as a prerequisite of mental health and efficiency. The managers have an important role to support the workers. To strengthen this role BALANCE Project has produced separate material and online training for the managers.

A) LIVING WITH CHANGES: VUCA WORLD

For a long time “continuous change” is said to be something that we must get used to. In organisational development the elements of change are described with the acronym VUCA (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014):

- **Volatility:** Relatively unstable change; information is available and the situation is understandable, but change is frequent and sometimes unpredictable.
- **Uncertainty:** A lack of knowledge as to whether an event will have meaningful ramifications; cause and effect are understood, but it is unknown if an event will create significant change.
- **Complexity:** Many interconnected parts forming an elaborate network of information and procedures; often multiform and convoluted, but not necessarily involving change.
- **Ambiguity:** A lack of knowledge as to ‘the basic rules of the game’; cause and effect are not understood and there is no precedent for making predictions as to what to expect.



Organisations are trying to react and foresee these circumstances in many ways. An answer to volatility is agility. Resources should be directed creating the potential for future flexibility. Uncertainty is met with information. In addition to existing information sources, new data is gathered and it is considered from new perspectives. A way to face complexity is restructuring internal company operations: Organisations are trying to ‘match’ their own operations and processes to mirror environmental complexities. To reduce ambiguity intelligent experimentation is used (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014).

The ways organisations are facing the VUCA world set big requirements for workers. When organisations are, e.g., restructuring operations with a short cycle again and again, workers do not have time to get to know their colleagues, which will make it more difficult to have peer support and utilise the expertise of your co-workers.

B) CHANGES IN WORK LIFE

In the previous chapter, some general changes and circumstances were described. Based on research data, post-pandemic work life involves four key changes (Ranki, 2023):

1. Increased **autonomy** and more individual in-office management.
2. The pandemic boosted **digitalisation**.
3. When prolonged, exclusive remote work can **burn out** even the most skilled experts.
4. Digitalisation boosted **continuous learning** at work.

It has to be noted that different changes may be more prevalent in different industrial sectors. Some changes may be surprising: Although remote work provided many with more autonomy over decision-making, the same phenomenon was seen in office work communities. The trend of independent working has been in progress for a long period of time, but it was boosted by the COVID-19 pandemic (Ranki, 2023).

Enforced closures have likely resulted in many new “teleworkers” amongst low and mid-level clerical and administrative workers who previously had limited access to this working arrangement. Still, results suggest that the large expansion of telework since the COVID-19 outbreak has been strongly skewed toward high-paid white-collar employment (Sostero et al., 2020). It is interesting that a much higher share of women than men (45% compared to 30%) are in teleworkable occupations.

The gender difference in teleworkability relates partly to patterns of sectoral segregation with men in particular overrepresented in sectors with limited teleworkability potential such as agriculture, mining, manufacturing, utilities and construction. Interestingly, even in these male-dominated sectors, the female teleworkable share of employment tends to be high. In construction, only 6% of male employment is teleworkable compared to 69% of female employment with similar differences observed in utilities, mining transportation and storage. Sostero et al. (2020) explain this with the fact that female workers tend to work in different jobs than men in these sectors and that these jobs tend to be teleworkable ones – office-based, secretarial or administrative in nature, with a lower share of physical handling tasks. Overall, it must be remembered that there are still jobs that cannot be done from home and this can be seen as a new digital divide. It is also important to notice that the pandemic will potentially increase other kinds of polarisation in the labour market. Health and well-being issues will become concrete due to the inadequate level of services relative to demand. Digital services do not reach everyone. (FIN, 2020)

C) CHALLENGES FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE DURING CHANGES

Based on the evidence from a variety of scholarly efforts Deci & Ryan (2000) have in Self-determination theory (SDT) defined three basic needs: autonomy, competence, and interpersonal relatedness. Based on their research they noticed that providing autonomy support relative to control, was associated with more positive outcomes, including greater intrinsic motivation, increased satisfaction, and enhanced well-being. When there are big, partly forced changes in working conditions, there are great challenges for all these basic needs, e.g.:

- a) How to manage and control time while working alone (autonomy),
- b) How and what competencies to develop (competence): the competencies must be in line with the requirements of the work. The pandemic has opened up new possibilities to participate in competence development. However, at the same time, online participation is often a new format and it might be difficult to integrate it into the old practices.
- c) How to be in contact with your colleagues and develop positive and constructive relationships within digital environments (interpersonal relatedness).

The utility of this theory also stems from its foundational assumptions. The first assumption of self-determination theory is that the need for personal growth drives human behaviour. SDT posits that individuals are actively directed toward growth. Achieving mastery over challenges and embracing novel experiences are crucial for nurturing a coherent sense of self. The second assumption emphasises the importance of autonomous motivation. While external incentives like money, prizes, and recognition (referred to as extrinsic motivation) often influence people's actions, SDT focuses primarily on internal sources of motivation such as a need to gain knowledge or independence (intrinsic motivation).

D) MENTAL HEALTH AND COPING AT WORK

To support mental health and coping at work both organisation/management and workers themselves must actively strive to address the three fundamental needs of autonomy, competence, and interpersonal relatedness in a balanced manner. To this end, both parties (the organisation and its employees) are expected to fulfil specific responsibilities in relation to these needs:

Organisation responsibilities:

- a) **Autonomy:** Organisations can provide employees with a degree of autonomy in their work by allowing them to have some control over how they perform their tasks and make decisions. This can be achieved by providing flexibility in work schedules, encouraging employee input in decision-making processes, and promoting a culture of trust and empowerment.
- b) **Competence:** Employers can support the development of employees' skills and competence by offering training and professional development opportunities. Regular feedback, coaching, and recognition of employees' accomplishments can also contribute to enhancing their sense of competence.
- c) **Relatedness:** Organisations can foster a sense of belonging and social connection among employees by promoting a positive and inclusive work culture. Team-building activities, social events, and opportunities for collaboration can help strengthen relationships among colleagues.

Employee's Responsibility:

- a) **Autonomy:** Employees should take initiative and responsibility for their work, seeking opportunities to contribute their ideas and suggestions. Communicating their preferences and needs for autonomy to their supervisors can also be helpful.
- b) **Competence:** Employees should actively seek learning opportunities and be open to feedback for improvement. Taking ownership of their professional development and seeking challenges that allow them to grow and demonstrate their skills can contribute to a sense of competence.
- c) **Relatedness:** Employees can actively engage in building positive relationships with colleagues, being supportive and empathetic. Participating in social activities and creating a sense of community within the workplace can help fulfil the need for relatedness.

Significant attention should be directed towards the support that colleagues can provide and receive. The interaction with colleagues is not only formal, but also informal interaction and informal conversations can have a significant meaning: these conversations deal with intellectual as well as emotional material, with ideas and problems, and with issues that sometimes are in contradiction with the official agenda (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009). Waring & Bishop (2010) have called occasional informal encounters with colleagues "water cooler moments" (in American work culture). Also, they have noticed that these encounters can provide not just emotional support in anxious situations but also be important for the identification of potential and actual sources of risk, such as patient safety.

Even if colleagues are important, the concept of "colleagueship" has been introduced into management and organisation research only lately (Laiho et al., 2019).

E) EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY AT WORK

Overall productivity is largely based on competence as a competent workforce has better capacity to introduce new technologies and working practices. Well-being at work, on the other hand, has a key effect on the learning of the work community, the performance of employees and the accomplishment of goals. The issue is largely about how to do things smarter at workplaces (Ranki, 2023).

Providing Autonomy in Learning and Self-Development allow employees to have some control over their learning and professional development. Organisations need to support the pursuit of knowledge and skills that interest them (with autonomy and not imposed) and align with their career aspirations. When employees have autonomy in their learning journey, they are more likely to be motivated to acquire relevant skills, leading to increased productivity in their roles.

One way to support efficiency and productivity during big changes is to take into account resilience. Resilience empowers both individuals and organisations to cope effectively with unexpected events, bounce back from crises, and even foster future success (Duchek, 2020). This, in turn, can contribute to a subjective sense of well-being and reduced mental health problems. The study of resilience can benefit from an examination through the lens of SDT, by investigating the correlation and impact of motivational factors on bolstering individuals' resilience levels (Perlman et al., 2018). On this basis, individual resilience encompasses both physical and mental capacities, with key elements including rest, recovery, and endurance in the workplace (Valli, 2020).



F) BURNOUT AT WORK

Even if the term “burnout” is rooted deeply in everyday language, the term is “just” about 50 years old. From a psychological point of view, burnout is a form of chronic distress that results from a highly stressful and frustrating work environment (Schaufeli, Leiter and Maslach (2009). As Schaufeli et al. (2009) have pointed out, although burnout seems to be a global phenomenon, the meaning of the concept differs between countries and continents. For instance, in some countries, burnout is used as a medical diagnosis, whereas in other countries it is a non-medical phenomenon. In many European countries, burnout is an official medical diagnosis which gives a “patient” compensation claims and treatment programs. In North America, burnout is a non-medical, socially accepted label that carries a minimum stigma in terms of a psychiatric diagnosis.

It has been stated that the burnout process starts when positive factors energy, involvement and efficacy turns to something else: exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Burnout is a complex phenomenon and a constellation of personal as well as organisational, cultural and social developments. One key element of burnout is personal experience of work life: There is a persistent imbalance of demands over resources. Insufficient opportunities to rest may generate the exhausting impact of demand/resource imbalances. Other resources can be human resources, equipment, or space to meet the demand. Even if there are big changes in the organisational environment, e.g., VUCA changes, public sector organisations may still state ideals that far exceed their current resources. The ongoing imbalance of demands to resources promotes exhaustion and reduces professional efficacy and can create alienation.

In addition to the imbalance between demands and resources at work, the research on burnout (according to Schaufeli et al., 2009) has long pinpointed the conflict between values (i.e., between

personal values and those of the organisation, and between the officially stated organisational values and the values in action) as an essential contributor to burnout. Employees may hold personal values that differ from the values of the organisation.

Burnout is a complex and common phenomenon in modern work life. There is a lot that organisations and management can do to prevent burnout, e.g., by creating a culture and sustainable practices which support well-being at work. In addition to that, individuals can also actively be aware of their own well-being. Tools for that are presented in Chapter 2.

The organisations are now characterised to live in a VUCA world. Many of these elements became real during the pandemic, which changed working life dramatically in many sectors. There were e.g., many new “teleworkers” amongst low and mid-level positions where female workers tend to work. At the same time, there were sectors which were not hit and not changed by the pandemic.

Autonomy, competence, and interpersonal relatedness (Ryan and Deci, 1980) are basic needs that have to be filled somehow in working life. The big changes in the working conditions are also challenging the ways these needs can be fulfilled: E.g., how to be in contact with your peers while working from home. To develop efficiency and at the same time take care of the well-being, both organisations and individuals should carry out their respective responsibilities, as outlined above.

1.2 COACHING FOR YOUR MENTAL WELL-BEING

A) THEORY

Coaching as a concept and practice is complex and often represented by multi-layered approaches that build on different subject-specific disciplines. Cognitive sciences, psychology, neuroscience, business, gender, culture, and other fields merge and interact to create different approaches of coaching. The possibility to mix and use different disciplines to develop a specific approach and practice makes the development of a single definition very challenging. The multidisciplinary nature of coaching has facilitated the creation of a more comprehensive understanding of people’s specific context and the different approaches to develop change (Yves, 2008).

Research has provided evidence that positive psychology education and systemic coaching have the power to evoke a lasting change in people’s thinking, perceptions, and the way they feel and interact with the environment and others (Burke, 2018). This is a key argument to focus this Balance guide on a systemic positive psychological coaching approach, as an expression of applied positive psychology and practical systemic coaching tools for the individual mental well-being (Passmore & Evans-Krimme, 2021). The intention that through this therapeutic or personal-development oriented lens, coaching can help individuals develop a change in attitude, or patterns of persons to enhance their outlook on life. Assisting individuals in identifying the “truth/sense” of their life systems and restoring system coherence. Thereby people understand their place and become free to operate at their best (Lawrence, 2019).

Positive psychology is an approach which rather than focusing on illness and pathologies encourages greater attention to an individual’s strengths, through the use of personal strengths development. Strengths can be described as the natural capacities of persons for behaving, thinking, or feeling in a way that allows the best functioning and performance in the pursuit of valued outcomes (Passmore & Evans-Krimme, 2021). Systemic positive psychological coaching for mental well-being and health deals with how these strengths can help individuals to develop their best possible way of living. This directly addresses the identification of people’s needs and the potential to find and apply their way forward to achieve their goals, impacting positively on their mental health and well-being. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), mental health is “a state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community” (WHO, 2004).

To put it in other words, people live embedded in social complex systems and various people and circumstances in this system interact with each other. Coaching addresses people expressing dissatisfaction and desires for change in their life-systems and supports them to recognise their own patterns of action and goals. The fundamental of the approach is that it assumes that people themselves bear the solution to change in themselves. This process of individual sense as change makers can be fostered by systemic and positive psychological coaching tools. Such tools stimulate people’s development of new and positive perspectives of themselves and their life. This supports individuals in developing a more sensible mindset in alliance with individual values and needs, improving their overall mental well-being.

B) PRACTICE

To find strategies and methods to improve well-being, positive psychology has the conception that well-being is linked to life satisfaction, vitality, and self-esteem (Phaekwamdee et al., 2022). One's own well-being can be improved when individuals make use of positive psychological coaching tools—leading to self-actualization, autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relationships, life purpose, and personal growth. To face mental health issues and to enhance mental well-being, the application of the PERMA Model of Martin Seligman is crucial (ebd.). PERMA is the acronym for P (Positive Emotion), E (Engagement), R (Relationships), M (Meaning), A (Accomplishment). The application of the model supports individuals to cultivate positive emotions in relation to their long-term goals. This improves life satisfaction, increases the possibility of experiencing future positive emotions, and fosters resilience to negative experiences. The PERMA Model will be further explained with the intention of identifying the key aspects of each part of the acronym:

Positive Emotion: Focusing on different types of positive emotions and experiences on a regular basis allows individuals to concentrate on positive experiences that stimulate emotions such as joy, gratitude, serenity, hope, confidence, pride, inspiration, pleasure, awe, and love.

Engagement: These positive emotions are more engaging and represent the psychological attachment or connection to activities that require the most involvement and interest; it is synonymous with the sensation of flow.

Relationships: Developing social relationships in a meaningful way is another part of the concept. Such relationships are often regarded as the most important component

of well-being. We may improve our personal well-being by cultivating healthy relationships with those around us.

Meaning: Well-being is also connected to finding meaning in life, which Seligman defines as a feeling of connection and service to something higher than oneself (Seligman, 2018). When faced with adversity, having a sense of direction in life may be quite beneficial.

Accomplishment: Finally, accomplishment is defined as the consequences of working towards and accomplishing goals, which are pursued for personal gain. This contributes to well-being because a person may look back on his/her life with pride. Achieving internal objectives, including progress and connection, is more important than achieving external objectives, such as money or celebrity, in terms of increasing happiness (Seligman, 2018).

Following the explanation, the objective is to put this concept into practice to generate a reflection of its meaning. We recommend four concrete and simple exercises to apply the PERMA Model and to cultivate mental well-being.

Take 10 minutes in the morning to write a journal and do the following:

- Answer two questions:
 - What am I grateful for and why?
 - What positive experience will I have today, and how can I contribute?
- Define one positive affirmation about yourself in relation to a specific goal you pursue.

Exercise 1: Positive Morning Reflection

Exercise 2: Positive Evening Reflection

Take 10 minutes before going to sleep and answer the following questions:

- What was pleasant today and why?
- How did I contribute to it?
- When did I feel alive?
- Which of my strengths could I express?

Exercise 3: The Flow State

Take some time every day to:

- Note special moments in your life in which your strengths came to the fore.
- Ask yourself, what were these strengths and how did they contribute to the positive experience? What concrete activities do you get completely absorbed in? When do I fully embrace and live my strengths, so that I forget time and space?

Take some time every day to:

- Reflect about meaningful relationships in your daily life.
- To whom do you have a social and emotional connection? Who do you love and is near you? How much time do you spend with these people? Which concrete action can you undertake to bond closer to these persons?

Exercise 4: Relationships in Life

This type of self-reflective (positive) coaching helps us to look at our lives and behaviours from deeper and broader vantage points. By doing so, people gain new solution-oriented perspectives to their life's and should glimpse individual in nature potentials. Nevertheless, to have a lasting, transformative impact, three interrelated foundations need to be constructed:

- building awareness,
- building commitment, and
- building practice.

These have to be constantly worked through a lifetime and not seen as a simple solution. Putting what has been developed in the exercises routinely can become a starting point that allows participants to see the positive changes in small actions. The principles of the well-stable SDT can also strengthen the implementation of the exercises and can further provide validity and credibility to this work.

1.3 REMOTE WORKING STRATEGIES AND ADVANTAGES

A) REMOTE WORKING - A NEW FORM OF WORK?

The concept of teleworking and the way in which it is carried out has become more familiar to society thanks to the development of information and communication technologies, even though working remotely has been practised for centuries. Work at the workplace became unavoidable during the Industrial Revolution, when physical work required workers to be present in the factory, managers to keep records of their working hours, and performance to be reported. The growth in demand and mass production during the Industrial Revolution allowed industrial products to be sold in stationary locations and the travelling work of sales agents was replaced by sales assistants in shops. Telecommuting became relevant again in the 1970s when rising oil prices led employers in the United States to look for new ways

to reduce car use. With the development of information and communication technologies, remote working became possible not only for skilled and manual workers, insurance and commercial agents but also for call and customer service agents, accountants and other workers whose nature of work did not require daily direct contact with customers or colleagues. The technology giant, IBM, started experimenting with teleworking in 1979. Start-up companies that started their businesses in garages gave up renting offices for economic reasons. The COVID-19 pandemic forced all employers to review and assess their workplace policies and opportunities to work without going to the workplace and to develop telecommuting strategies. To date, Google and Facebook have announced the relocation of around half of their employees to home offices.

Enabling remote working has positive results for employers and employees alike. Studies describing the effects of teleworking point to a variety of positive outcomes: More efficient use of working time (Felstead & Henseke, 2017), reduced costs for the employer to maintain the office and for the employee to travel to and from work (Molino, 2020), reduced meetings, meeting time and work stress (Staples, 2001), increased employee engagement (Chen & Fulmer, 2018), motivation and commitment (Wheatley, 2016), and improved performance (Aksoy et al., 2022; Prasad et al., 2020). In addition, the opportunity to telework has contributed to a better work-life balance (Kalajärvi, 2019) (Table 1).

Table 1: Literature review of remote working positive outcomes

Positive Outcomes	References
More efficient use of working time	(Felstead & Henseke, 2017)
Reduced costs for the employer to maintain the office and for the employee to travel to and from work	(Molino, 2020)
Reduced meetings, meeting time and work stress	(Staples, 2001)
Increased employee engagement	(Chen & Fulmer, 2018)
Increased employee motivation and commitment	(Wheatley, 2016)
Improved employee performance	(Aksoy et al., 2022), (Prasad et al., 2020)
Better work-life balance	(Kalajärvi, 2019)

B) USING WORKING TIME EFFICIENTLY

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all workers whose nature of work allowed teleworking and who previously worked in a fixed work location (office) were forced to telework. The job portal and recruitment partner CV-Online (www.cv.ee) conducted a survey on teleworking in March 2021, which showed that 67% of people work wholly or partly from home. Survey respondents said that the most common means of communication for teleworking was email, followed by phone calls, online social networking, video calls and company websites (Kondor, 2021). Although physical contact is sometimes a more efficient way of exchanging information, the COVID-19 pandemic made communication electronic and therefore sometimes more efficient. Time spent on social interaction decreased as physical meetings to exchange information were replaced by telephone calls or online communication. Meetings were held on online platforms and moving from one meeting to another became faster as it was no longer necessary to physically move from one location to another. The time saved allowed more time to focus on tasks, plan future activities or take breaks, such as walks in the fresh air or spending time with family. In addition to being able to participate in more meetings than before, survey respondents also noted that attending more meetings than before is more tiring and that online meetings cause digital fatigue. It is certainly worth noting the time savings in commuting to and from work as an advantage of teleworking. If the commute used to be 1-2 hours a day, the time savings are significant and give the employee the opportunity to take more time off to rest, spend time with family or do housework. In addition to the time savings, teleworking also reduces the stress of travelling on busy roads.

Good planning of working time will ensure efficient use of the time saved by replacing physical movement with virtual movement and the use of technological tools. If working remotely from home feels like a lot more time, there is a risk that working time can get mixed up with personal time. Working remotely from home gives you the opportunity to spend more time on personal matters, household chores and spending time with your family. People with a high level of self-discipline can easily separate personal time from work time and plan their day to optimise time for everything. People with less experience working remotely might find it easier to plan their time by considering when their energy levels are highest and lowest during the day. Depending on this, the time of day could be planned for more routine activities or meetings requiring active communication. A digital calendar, such as Google Calendar or other digital calendars, is the best way to facilitate planning. A digital calendar can help you remember appointments, activities and tasks, and you can also share the calendar or events with your team or family. Do not be afraid to mark your coffee breaks, lunch breaks, and why not time to be with family or do light household chores. Having a clear rhythm and clear tasks will help you to stick to your work schedule and take breaks when you need them. In this way, you can work more efficiently and avoid overwork.

D) ADVANTAGES OF WORKING FROM HOME

Some studies suggest that telecommuting has a negative impact on individual and organisational performance by reducing employee communication, information sharing and team collaboration (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015). Therefore, the psychological support and support of colleagues in the organisation of work in the home office in finding innovative solutions was and continues to be essential. Equally important is the support and advice of managers on the use of digital tools at home and the organisation of working time. Working from home is made easier by clear communication rules with managers and colleagues on who has to work when and what emails they will/should reply to. Companies that have provided their employees with the technical tools to work remotely on-site, training in their use and in the organisation of teleworking, have reported an increase in employees' satisfaction with their employer, their performance and their work-life balance (ibid).

Research also found that the ability to choose where to work increased job motivation, and loyalty to the company, developed the employee's generic skills and allowed for more time with family. In addition, studies showed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, people changed their place of residence, moving from cities to less populated areas. Whereas in the past, the location of the workplace was the deciding factor in the choice of residence, the possibility of teleworking has led to a choice of residence based on personal preferences. Moving to rural areas was seen as a way of benefiting from a quieter and more peaceful environment, which was particularly important for families with children. In addition to a more family-friendly living environment, moving away from the city also benefited society in the form of an economic incentive to move away from cities and larger centres. In addition to public services, consumption of goods and services from local service providers and producers, previously concentrated in more densely populated residential areas, increased. Children's participation in general education and parents' participation in community interaction

C) ENHANCING WORKER PERFORMANCE THROUGH TELEWORKING

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) has created a need to develop the technological and generic skills of employers and employees. In cooperation with the employer, more appropriate forms of digital collaboration and communication were sought, and alongside the use of online communication tools, there was an additional need to improve knowledge of digital hygiene requirements and working with shared documents. In the home office, the ability of the computer to allow the use of a webcam and microphone is important when working remotely. For some staff members, there was a need to learn how to connect them to the computer if necessary and how to set them up in Zoom or another video calling application. When working in a home office, the use of a large screen is certainly desirable, which in turn requires the ability to set up screens. In some cases, you may also need to set up a printer and scanner to work on documents at home. The support and advice of your employer and colleagues in the use of digital tools at home will help to ensure a smooth and effective transition from office to home working.

In the case of working from home, the culture of the organisation supports the achievement of organisational and employee goals, as communication with the organisation is closer and support from managers and colleagues is more accessible. Remote working has required and continues to require a review and adaptation of organisational culture to the specificities of teleworking, supporting the development of employee self-discipline, retention and engagement. Research has highlighted that, in addition to the innovative development of organisations, there has been an increase in employees' awareness of the needs and methods of maintaining work-life balance.

contribute to the development of the area and the resulting sense of unity and community supports mental health. The time saved from taking children to school or nursery and travelling to and from work has allowed more time to be with family and strengthen family ties. In addition, there is a greater awareness of family activities and their digital impact.

Last but not least, participants in the survey have highlighted the advantage of teleworking in terms of reduced pressure on the external image. For example, working parents considered that working from home had the advantage of saving time and resources on the external image. In their opinion, participating in online meetings did not require as much effort in terms of appearance as working in an office.

E) COPING STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE TELEWORKING

Teleworking coping strategies have become essential in today's era of working from home. As more and more workers shift to telecommuting, it is important to establish healthy routines and boundaries to maintain productivity and mental well-being. Some studies suggest that telecommuting has a negative impact on individual and organisational performance by reducing employee communication, information sharing, team collaboration, and engagement (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015). Therefore, support from colleagues in managing work arrangements, finding innovative solutions, and psychological support for working from home are essential. Equally important is the support and advice of managers in the use of digital tools at home and the organisation of working time (İlhan, 2021).

What strategies support teleworking?

- One effective coping strategy is to set up a designated workspace that is separate from your home. This creates a physical separation between work and home life, reducing the risk of burnout. It is also important to set clear boundaries with family members or roommates to minimise distractions during working hours.
 - Another important coping strategy is to take breaks throughout the day, including short walks or stretching exercises, which can improve concentration and creativity. Pomodoro techniques, for example, can be used to plan work time effectively. Pomodoro is a time management method that can be used for any job and when using this technique, a timer reminds you to take a 3–5-minute break every 20 minutes of work.
 - Schedule and participate in video meetings with colleagues or connect with them via messaging platforms. Working remotely reduces social interaction, helps to combat feelings of isolation and promotes collaboration.
 - Have regular meetings with your line manager to review current tasks and plan activities. This will help maintain discipline, progress and the achievement of company goals while on the job.
 - Allow time for breaks in your calendar when planning your day. Include a lunch break in the calendar for each day and avoid noting meetings and tasks without breaks in between.
 - Stick to official working hours and avoid working evenings and nights. This will allow time for family, rest and avoid burnout.
- By implementing these telecommuting coping strategies, you can promote a healthy work-life balance and maximise your productivity while working from home.



F) COPING WITH STRESS AT TELEWORKING

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been changes in both the home and work environment. Rapidly changing environments require rapid adaptation, which can increase stress. People have different coping strategies to deal with external and/or internal stressors, which Susan Folkman and Richard Lazarus define in their article as constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands (Biggs, Brough, & Drummond, 2017).

Coping strategies are grouped into appraisal-focused, problem-focused, and emotion-focused strategies. Appraisal-focused strategies focus on changing mindsets or revising thoughts. The most common coping mechanism is denial, but it also includes changes in organisational culture and in the criteria used to assess performance. A problem-focused strategy changes human behaviour. Acquiring new skills in a changed situation helps the employee to cope with the problem encountered. Learning to use new tools, working methods and management styles. Emotion-focused strategies modify a person's emotions to cope with, tolerate or eliminate stress. Stress is relieved by going for walks during the day, socialising more with family members, exercising and taking longer breaks from computer use.

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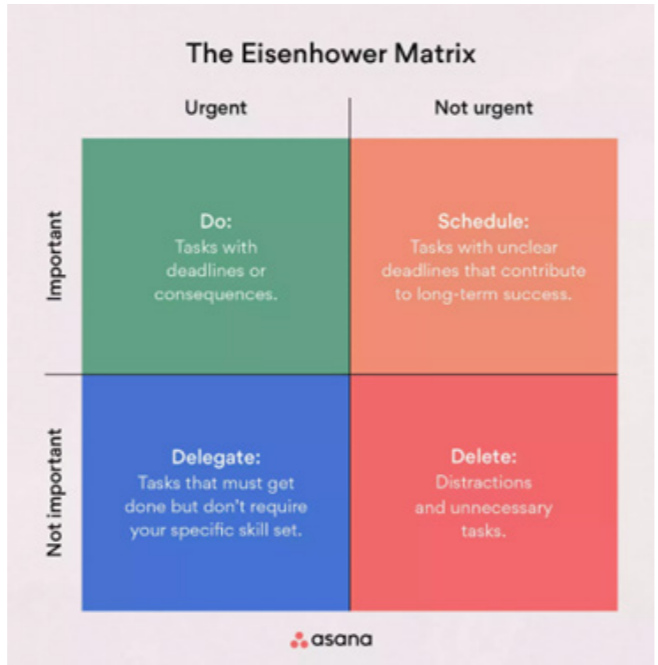
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CHAPTER 2: DIY TEMPLATES AND TIPS

2.1. WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Tool No 1:


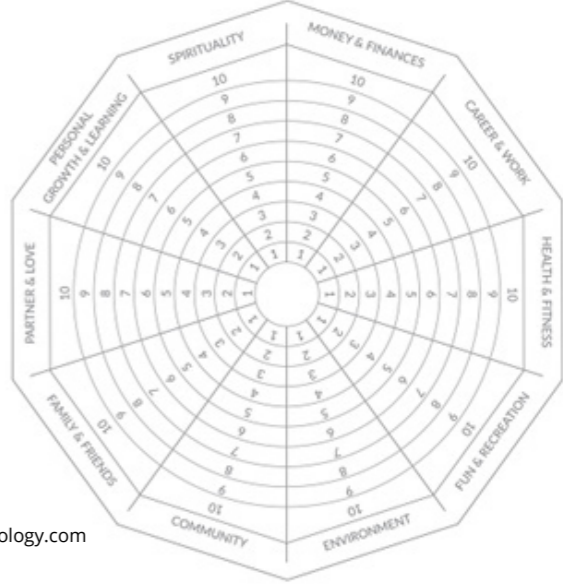
In order to assist in creating a work-life Balance, we have included some practical activities and tools that can support you. Each chapter, corresponds to the theoretical part that was already presented. Through the tools, you can either practice in your organisation or individually and adopt some techniques to reinforce your work-life balance. Each tool and activity provides a description to the approach, additional links or resources and instructions on how to use them. Check them out, see what helps you to start your Balance journey!

Title/Name	The Eisenhower Matrix
Description of the tool/approach	<p>The Eisenhower Matrix/Box is a useful tool for time management, that can help you organise and prioritise tasks and life events in general by urgency and importance. Using this tool, you will divide your tasks into four boxes, based on what you will do first, what you will schedule for later, the tasks you will delegate and the ones you will delete. Hence, it is a to-do list with an emphasis on prioritisation. The Eisenhower Matrix has started by Dwight D. Eisenhower – the 34th President of the United States – and later developed by Stephen Covey.</p> <p>The 4 quadrants of the Eisenhower Matrix: do, schedule/decide, delegate, and eliminate/delete.</p>
Website/Links	https://asana.com/resources/eisenhower-matrix
Screenshot/Logo	<p>Example:</p>  <p>Source: asana.com</p>


Location	USA
Organisation	Asana (website with templates and management tools)
Target group	Everyone
Strengths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity: The matrix provides a clear and easy way to prioritise tasks based on urgency and importance. Focus: By separating tasks into different categories, it helps to focus on the most critical tasks first and avoid distractions. Time management: It helps to allocate time and resources efficiently, thus saving time and increasing productivity.
Weaknesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Limited prioritisation: The matrix categorises all tasks into four quadrants, but some tasks may not fit into any of the categories. It only considers urgency and importance but it does not take into account other factors that may affect task prioritisation, such as personal preferences or other goals. Oversimplification: While the matrix provides a clear framework, it may oversimplify the process of prioritising tasks, which affects decision-making. Interdependencies: The matrix does not consider the interdependencies between tasks and how they may affect each other.
Evaluation (results)	-
Additional info	https://www.ntaskmanager.com/blog/eisenhower-matrix/

Tool No 2:

Title/Name	Wheel of Life
Description of the tool/approach	<p>Wheel of Life is a flexible tool that offers a 360-degree view of your current life situation. It identifies areas of imbalance and helps you to create goals and set priorities based on your life vision.</p> <p>The wheel consists of between eight and ten categories such as finances, career/work, health/fitness, environment(home/work), community, family and friends, personal growth, spirituality, fun and free time.</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a template such as the attached one below. If a template is not available, create a hand-drawn version. 2. For each category ask yourself how satisfied are you on a scale from 1 to 10 with this area of your life. 3. Rate each category until you have a second "inner" wheel. 4. You can also rate your expectations for each category and compare both circles.
	<p>After completing the wheel, you can ask yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you look at the shape of the wheel, how do you feel? • How would you like to change the shape of the inner wheel? • Which category would you most like to improve? • What do you need to improve the score in each area? • Could a single action improve more than one area? • Then, you can focus on specific areas and ask yourself: • Why does this area need attention? • How balanced do you feel in this area of your life? • Why did you give this score? • Is there anything that might add value to this area of your life and change the score? <p>Finally, you can set goals and identify specific activities for each category.</p>
Website/Links	<p>https://positivepsychology.com/wheel-of-life-coaching/#:~:text=The%20original%20idea%20behind%20the,share%20a%20common%20purpose%3A%20transformation.</p>

Screenshot/ Logo	<p>Logo of the website:</p>   <p>Template: Source: positivepsychology.com</p>
Location	Online
Organisation	The original idea behind this tool came from industry pioneer Paul J. Meyer in the 1960s. The Wheel of Life has many different forms and names today.
Target group	Everyone
Strengths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holistic View: The Wheel of Life provides a comprehensive overview of various aspects of a person's life, including relationships, health, career, and personal growth, allowing for a well-rounded evaluation of life satisfaction. 2. Simple: The Wheel of Life is a straightforward tool that is easy to use and understand. It provides a clear visual representation of where someone's life is balanced or imbalanced. 3. The Wheel of Life can encourage individuals to reflect on their priorities and goals, helping them to identify areas where they may want to make changes or improvements.
Weaknesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Wheel of Life is a generic tool that may not be able to fully capture the unique aspects of an individual's life. 2. One-Dimensional: The Wheel of Life only provides a snapshot of life satisfaction; it does not take into account deeper emotional and psychological experiences that may interact with each other. 3. Lack of Action Plan: While the Wheel of Life provides a useful evaluation of life satisfaction, it does not provide specific steps or strategies for making improvements in areas that are lacking.
Additional info	<p>On the website mentioned above, you can also find other goal-setting and time-management tools, such as worksheets, that you can use for your DIY templates.</p> <p>Also, there are versions of Wheel of Life online: https://wheeloflife.noomii.com/</p> <p>More references: https://www.inside-out-coaching.com/how-to-use-the-wheel-of-life-coaching-tool-to-create-a-balanced-life/</p>

Tool No 3 for preventing burnout:

Title/Name	Burnout prevention: a Guide																
Description of the tool/approach	The tool is a burnout prevention guide. It includes a set of strategies and techniques designed to help individuals prevent or reduce the risk of burnout, a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress. It also includes information on identifying burnout, setting boundaries and prioritising self-care. Finally, it includes tips on stress management, time management, and how to maintain a healthy work-life balance.																
Website/Links	https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/burnout-prevention-and-recovery.htm?pdf=11826																
Screenshot/Logo	<p>Logo:</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Stress vs. Burnout</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Stress</th> <th>Burnout</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Characterized by over-engagement.</td> <td>Characterized by disengagement.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Emotions are overreactive.</td> <td>Emotions are blunted.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Produces urgency and hyperactivity.</td> <td>Produces helplessness and hopelessness.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Loss of energy.</td> <td>Loss of motivation, ideals, and hope.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leads to anxiety disorders.</td> <td>Leads to detachment and depression.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Primary damage is physical.</td> <td>Primary damage is emotional.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Example:</p> <p>Source: helpguide.org.com</p>	Stress vs. Burnout		Stress	Burnout	Characterized by over-engagement.	Characterized by disengagement.	Emotions are overreactive.	Emotions are blunted.	Produces urgency and hyperactivity.	Produces helplessness and hopelessness.	Loss of energy.	Loss of motivation, ideals, and hope.	Leads to anxiety disorders.	Leads to detachment and depression.	Primary damage is physical.	Primary damage is emotional.
Stress vs. Burnout																	
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Loss of energy.	Loss of motivation, ideals, and hope.																
Leads to anxiety disorders.	Leads to detachment and depression.																
Primary damage is physical.	Primary damage is emotional.																
Location	Los Angeles, USA																
Organisation	HelpGuide																
Target group	Anyone																
Strengths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practical: A prevention burnout guide can provide practical strategies for reducing stress and improving well-being. Also, it can offer a comprehensive approach to addressing burnout, incorporating aspects such as work-life balance, self-care, and stress management techniques. 2. It can help individuals recognize signs of burnout and take proactive steps to avoid it. 3. Education: It can educate individuals on the causes and consequences of 																

Weaknesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A prevention burnout guide may not be suitable for everyone, as individuals may have different levels of burnout risk or require different approaches to avoiding it. Some individuals may not find the strategies provided in the guide effective for their specific situation. 2. It may not address underlying problems such as poor working conditions or lack of support, which can contribute to burnout.
Additional info	<p>https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/burnout/art-20046642</p> <p>https://www.ttl.fi/en/topical/press-release/new-traffic-light-model-helps-in-identifying-risk-of-occupational-burnout</p> <p>https://burnoutassessmenttool.be/project_eng/</p>



DIY Template:

During this training session, you will have the opportunity to focus on improving your work-life balance. You will be given 60 minutes to choose from one of the tools listed, or from other templates mentioned, and work on it in relation to your own work-life situation. Once you have finished this module, you'll have the chance to discuss your choices and the template you created with the other participants and the facilitator. This will give you a more in-depth understanding of how you can use these tools to achieve a better balance between your work and personal life, manage your time effectively, and prevent burnout.

2.2. COACHING FOR YOUR MENTAL WELL-BEING

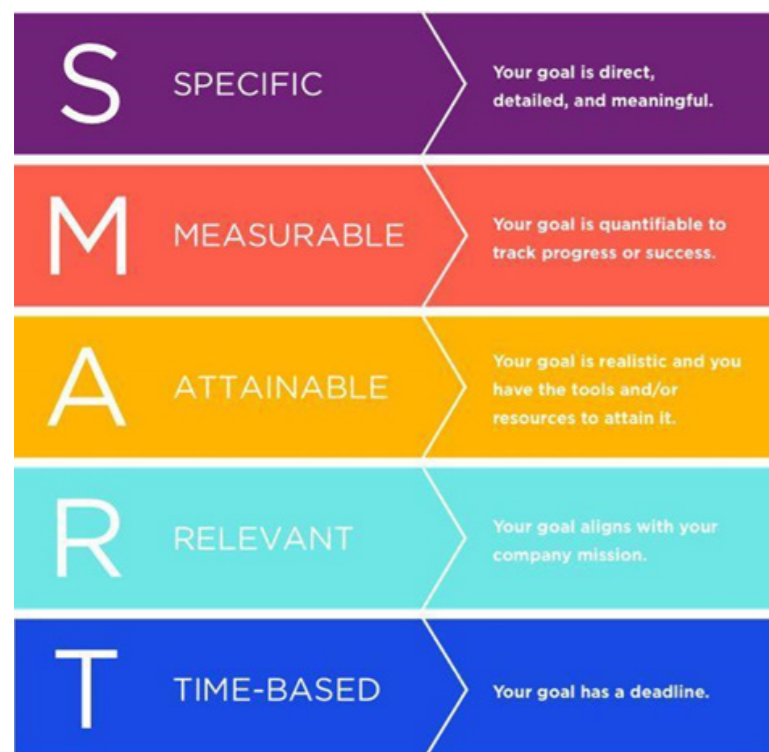
Self-Coaching Models

There are many self-coaching models that can be effective, and the most suitable one for an individual may depend on their personal preferences and specific goals. Here are some of the most commonly used and effective self-coaching models:

GROW model:

This model is widely used and stands for Goal, Reality, Options, and Will. It is very popular to use this model in business. However, it also helps individuals to set and achieve their goals by focusing on their current reality, exploring possible options, and taking action.

[GROW Model | Sir John Whitmore's GROW Coaching Model Framework \(performanceconsultants.com\) What Is the GROW Model? \(With Applications and Example\) | Indeed.com Australia](#)



SMART model

This is another familiar model that is used to create specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals. This model can be useful for individuals who want to set clear and specific goals.

CIGAR model:

In a way, the CIGAR Coaching Model has evolved from the GROW coaching model. The unique value that the CIGAR method of coaching can provide is an in-depth focus on the current reality and the ideal solutions. When there is an emphasis on the actual vs possible, we lean towards a thinking mindset that is useful for everybody to consider. Let's explore this model:

C - Current Reality: As the name suggests, the first focus step in the CIGAR Coaching Model is to explore and clearly establish your current reality. The key question is, 'Where are we right now?'

I - Ideal: After successfully establishing the current reality; the next step is to visualise the ideal. The main question here is, 'Where would you rather be right now?' A tip here is to visualise an ideal scenario as if you have already achieved it. So, instead of saying, 'My ideal scenario is that I want to work full time as a data scientist they must instead say, 'I am a successful data scientist, who is adding immense value to my company with my skills and expertise'.

G - Gaps: We now have a clear vision but before we create a road map towards achieving that goal, we need to identify gaps that will cause delays. The key question here is, 'What are the gaps between your current reality and your ideal scenario? This can be challenging and involves asking questions of yourself or peers for feedback in order to fully explore the existing gaps.

A - Action: This is the logical next step once you have identified the gaps that need to be overcome. The action comes from developing a road map as a guide that will look at ways of removing the gaps.

R - Review: The last step of the CIGAR Coaching model is to review the entire process. They can focus on the actions and efforts made to overcome the gaps to achieve an ideal scenario.

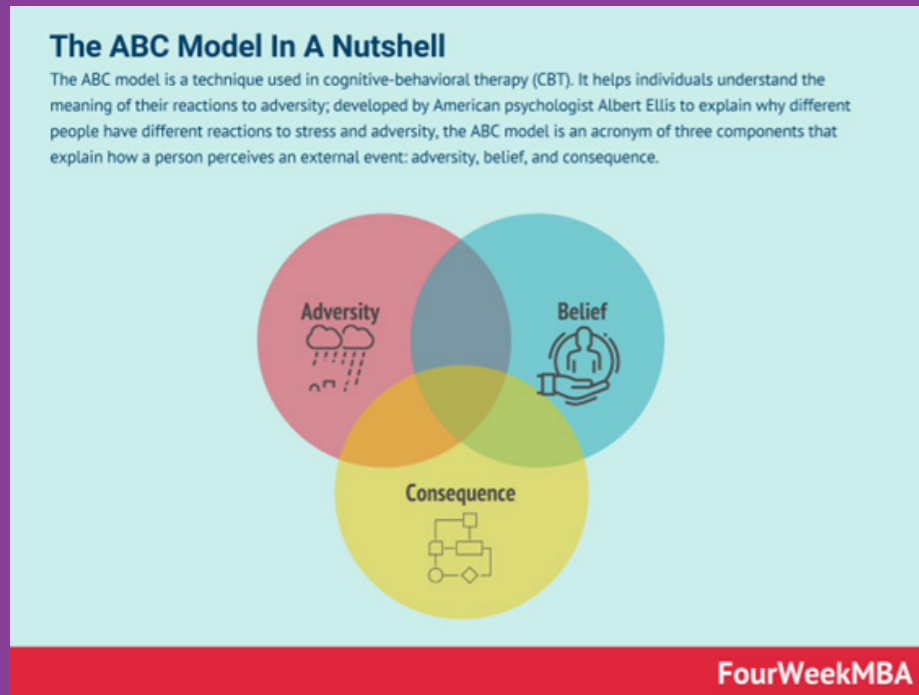
WOOP model:

This stands for Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, Plan. This model focuses on identifying and overcoming obstacles to achieve your goals. It can be particularly helpful when you need to consider potential obstacles that may arise. Similar to other models it then challenges you to develop an action plan that will overcome or lessen the existing obstacles.



ABC model:

This stands for Activating Event, Belief, Consequence. This model is used to challenge negative thoughts and beliefs that may be hindering personal growth.



ABC model - Bing images

PERMA model:

Developed by Dr Martin Seligman this model focused on positive psychology the help define quantify and create well-being. He uses five components that people pursue.

These five elements are:

- Positive emotion: what brings you happiness?
- Engagement: what activities are you completely absorbed in?
- Relationships: what relationships bring you joy and support?
- Meaning: what larger purpose or cause do you feel drawn to?
- Accomplishments: what would you like to achieve in the next week, month or year?

The PERMA Model: Your Scientific Theory of Happiness (positivopsychology.com)

CLEAR model:

This model is used for decision-making and has some shared phases with the CIGAR model. It stands for:

- Circumstances/ Contracting: where are you right now?
- Listen to your intuition: what are your instincts telling you?
- Explore your values: look at your core values?
- Actions: what actions can you take?
- Review your decision: reflecting on actions, values and intuition and how they influenced your decision. The Get Coached tool below is something that can help apply this model.

[The CLEAR Coaching Model: A Simple Summary - The World of Work Project](#)

CLEAR Coaching Model

CLEAR Coaching Model



The **Get Coached model** also follows this idea and can be used to solve problems in your life. It simplifies the problem by filtering out everything else so you can identify the cause immediately. It helps to create the results in your life that you never imagined were possible. The Model is made up of five components: circumstances, thoughts, feelings, actions, and results. Its basic premise is that your thoughts produce your feelings, your feelings fuel your actions, and your actions create your results.

[The Self Coaching Model Guide How To Solve Any Problem Using The Model](#) and an annexe on how to challenge and review your discipline following the [Self Control depletion protocol](#)

Ultimately, the effectiveness of any self-coaching model depends on how well it aligns with your personal values and goals, as well as your ability to apply it consistently over time.

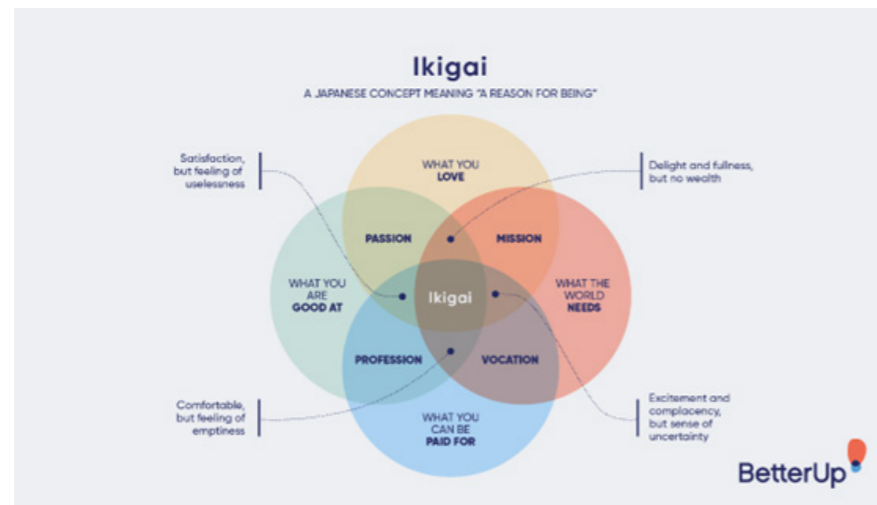
Self-Coaching Tools

These models may be supported by self-discipline tools that can be used to coach yourself toward your goals. Here are a few to support specific needs.

Goal setting:

Setting clear and specific goals is an effective way to stay focused and motivated. It shouldn't be limited only to new year resolutions. Write down your goals and make them measurable and time-bound. This will help you keep track of your progress and stay accountable.

- Vision boards – to visually see your goals [Vision Board](#) or [Free Online Vision Board Maker | Canva](#)
- Visualisation - [Visualization - Imagining – and Achieving – Your Goals \(mindtools.com\)](#)
- Using concepts like Ikigai to uncover your values and align them [What Is Ikigai and How Can It Change My Life? \(betterup.com\)](#)



- To look at your habits and track change over time to achieve your goals you might consider using: [Habit List](#)
- Task management to help you stay organised and on top of your workload: [Todoist | A To-Do List to Organize Your Work & Life](#)
- PERMA worksheets [MODULE 2 WORKSHEETS \(arizona.edu\)](#)

- Applying the Wheel of Life Assessment or Eisenhower Matrix for prioritising your planning and decision making. [You Should Be Using the Eisenhower Matrix To Make Decisions - Manage By Walking Around \(jonathanbecher.com\)](#)



Time management:

Time is a valuable resource, and effective time management is essential for achieving your goals. Use tools like calendars, to-do lists, and time-blocking to prioritise your tasks and schedule your day for maximum productivity. Here are some tools that may help you plan your day and manage your time more effectively.

- [Clockify™ - FREE Time Tracking Software](#)
 - For time tracking and planning, [Toggl: Time Tracking Software, Project Planning & Hiring Tools](#)
 - [Website blockers](#) that allow users to block certain websites, either at all times or during certain time intervals, to decrease distraction and increase productivity.
 - [App timers](#) limit how many minutes or hours a user can spend on certain websites or applications per day.
 - Usage dashboards, like the one integrated into the [Android OS](#), that track how many hours a user spends on different apps or websites.
 - For staying focused on productivity there is: [Forest - Stay focused, be present \(forestapp.cc\)](#)
- Technology has helped us become way more [productive](#).
- [Space](#) tracks how often you unlock your phone and how much time you spend using it, in order to help you reduce your time on it.
 - [Google Shush](#) is a feature that switches a device to “do not disturb” mode whenever it is placed screen down
 - [Rescue Time](#) monitors the sites and apps you frequently visit and for how long

Self-reflection:

Reflect on your progress regularly and identify areas you need to improve. This will help you stay on track and make any necessary adjustments to your approach.

- Regular check-ins with your manager
- Tool to analyse stress levels https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS_08.htm
- Looking at positives and ways to express daily gratitude [How to Practice Gratitude - Mindful](#)

Mindfulness:

Practicing mindfulness can help you stay present and focused on your goals. Use techniques such as meditation, deep breathing, journaling and visualisation to calm your mind and improve your concentration.

- [Calm](#) is an app for sleep and meditation, for people who want to experience better sleep, lower stress, and less anxiety.
- Similar app is Headspace for Guided Meditation and [Mindfulness - The Headspace App](#)
- Tech-free [hobbies to engage with during downtime](#).
- Journaling to free your mind of distractions [Bullet Journal](#)

Accountability:

Find an accountability partner or join a group to help you stay motivated and on track. This can be a great way to get feedback, support, and encouragement from others who are working towards similar goals.

- 360 reviews in the workplace
- Buddy system: proved successful in the workplace or with personal activities e.g., exercise. MyFitnessPal works in a technology format.
- Tracking apps and keeping your focus: [Llama Life - Find Your Focus](#)

Reward system:


Create a reward system to celebrate your progress and accomplishments. This can help you stay motivated and give you a sense of satisfaction and pride in your achievements.

- Pay day perks
- Norwegian app [Hold](#) tries to incentivise its student users by [offering points for reducing their smartphone habit](#), which they can exchange for snacks and cinema tickets.


However, it is important to remember, self-discipline is a skill that takes time and practice to develop. Try using different tools and techniques to find what works best for you, and be patient with yourself as you work towards your goals.



Additional Tools

Title/Name	Breakthru
Description of the tool/approach	Breakthru gets teams moving—literally. Two-minute team-wide micro-breaks reset the mind and body. Team leaders who encourage “micro-breaks” build employee engagement. Microbreaks put structure around time, combat sedentary behaviour and build healthy habits. Breakthru’s automated tool manages frequency and generates insights.
Website/Links	Breakthru - Immersive Microbreaks: Movement driven, tunable
Screenshot/Logo	
Location	Available worldwide through Microsoft products like Teams and Slack.
Organisation	It is partnered with Microsoft
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees • Students • Freely available to anyone who uses Microsoft Teams

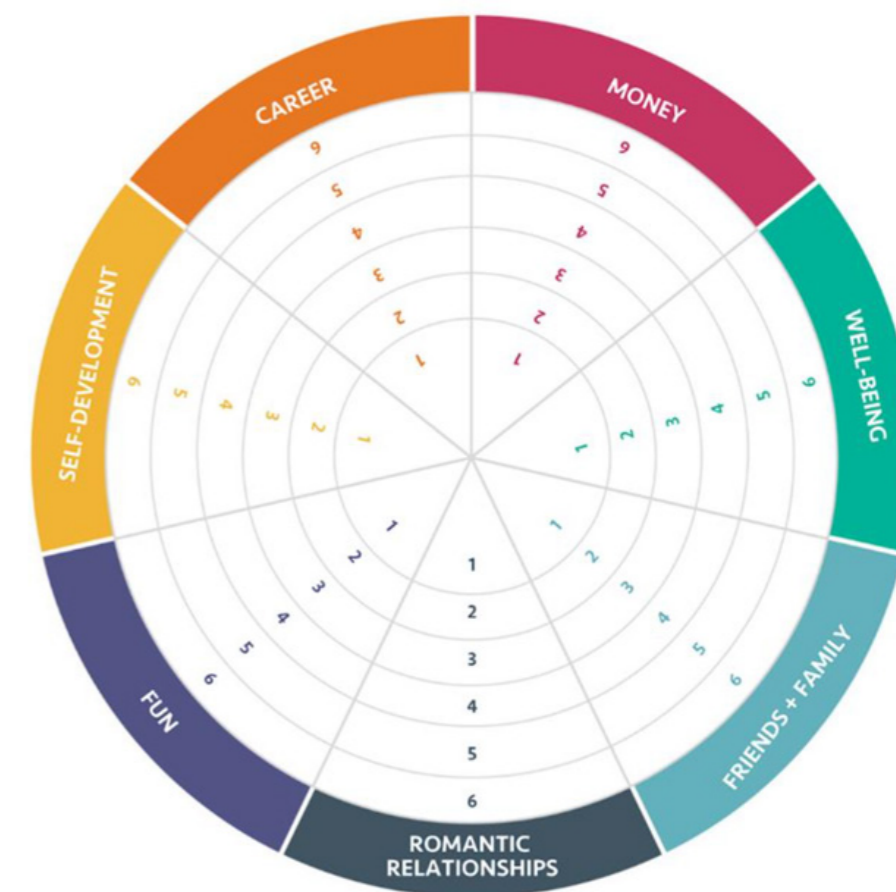
Strengths	<p>It can be used for individual or collaborative break taking especially in remote working environments to encourage micro breaks.</p> <p>It encourages people to be less sedentary and more active during their working day</p> <p>It can be used as an ice breaker for meetings and to build trust.</p> <p>It can be used as a reminder for people to take breaks and contribute to productivity</p> <p>It encourages well-being and focus</p> <p>It is intelligent and can add new features with insights from users.</p> <p>It uses elements from art and nature to enhance feelings of well-being.</p>
Weaknesses	<p>It can be repetitive</p> <p>It can be seen as a disruption to flow state.</p> <p>It can be ignored or switched off easily</p> <p>The content has to receive intelligence from the users.</p> <p>It doesn't suit irregular working patterns.</p>
Evaluation (results)	<p>It is a positive way to counteract sedentary behaviour with micro breaks.</p> <p>It is easy to use and accessible</p> <p>Improves focus and concentration if used regularly.</p>
Additional info	<p>It has based its development on the following research: BREAKTHRU_RESEARCH_120122.pdf</p>

Title/Name	SAP Case Study
Description of the tool/approach	<p>SAP is a multinational software organisation, offering enterprise solutions to manage business operations and customer relations. Operating in over 180 countries, they have over 4,000 customers. Recognising that employee welfare was going to be a key factor to their organisational success, SAP felt that they needed to change the way the organisation and employees viewed mental health, removing stigmas associated with mental well-being, and creating a support system for their employees.</p> <p>SAP felt that they needed to make a commitment to their employees' health and quality of life, and set up ways of planning and measuring this.</p> <p>As SAP workers are primarily software engineers, the organisation identified that using technology all day can have negative side effects. Reflecting on this, SAP decided to create their Mental Health First Aiders Programme. This solution consisted of voluntary employees who were given the necessary training to be able to listen and understand what their colleagues were telling them.</p> <p>If an employee is struggling with their mental health, well-being or stress levels, the idea is that the employee can approach any of the Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA), and get help with their issues.</p>
Website/Links	<p>Mental Health First Aiders with SAP</p> <p>Irish Times Case Study highlighting some of the interventions SAP used</p>
Screenshot/Logo	
Location	180 countries worldwide
Organisation	SAP
Target group	SAP employees – covering 90% of their global workforce.
Strengths	The tool is supported by SAP well-being policy at the core of SAP's business strategy. Dr. Natalie Lotzmann, SAP's Global Head of Health & Well-Being Management states, "We don't pretend that employee well-being is solely about making employees happier and healthier. It helps SAP become a more successful company. We ensure this by linking our workplace culture and investments in employee well-being to SAP's business success and profit."

Weaknesses	The MHFA is relying on employees to exhibit symptoms within their working day so that they can be observed and addressed. This is not always the case as some people may not openly exhibit symptoms. Some employees may be cynical about the role of the MHFA.
Evaluation (results)	<p>The attendees of the MHFA training acquire basic knowledge to identify early symptoms of mental health problems and psychological crises. For example, depression, burn-out, suicidal tendency, anxiety, psychosis or substance abuse. They learn how to address their observation in a respectful way, openly and empathically listen and communicate with the affected person and guide towards professional support.</p> <p>Mental Health First Aiders also follow a set structure when helping employees, called ROGER. This stands for Reacting, Open and unbiased listening and communication, Give general support and information, Encouraging someone to seek professional help, and mobilising Resources.</p>
Additional info	<p>SAP take a whole person approach to employee well-being.</p> <p>SAP's Employee well-being values</p> <p>SAP Employee Wellness Blog</p>

DIY template

The **Wheel of Life Assessment (Tool 2 - Module 2.1)** is a particularly useful coaching tool to visually see where you are at with different life priorities. It can be used initially as a measurement based on a number scale and then for goal-setting to determine where you would like to be and then a discussion point on how to get there. Regular self-reflection can then continue the regular assessment to keep your priorities on track and in balance.




2.3. REMOTE WORKING STRATEGIES

There are many digital tools and strategies that can help you stay productive while working from home. Here are some ideas:


Communication tools: Use messaging apps like Microsoft Teams or Zoom to communicate with your team or clients. These platforms offer video conferencing, screen sharing, and chat options to help you stay connected.

Teams:

Title/Name	Microsoft Teams
Description of the tool/approach	<p>Microsoft Teams was first released back in 2017, and since then has become a staple application in offices all over the world. Microsoft describes the platform as a “chat-based workspace in Office 365.” It’s used by all kinds of businesses as a way to enable increased collaboration among staff and external stakeholders. Read on for an introduction to Microsoft Teams and what it’s used for.</p> <p>Why is Microsoft Teams useful?</p> <p>Many companies find Microsoft Teams to be a useful application because it facilitates easy communication and collaboration. This is especially so for businesses that employ remote workers because Teams can be accessed from any device.</p> <p>Teams is also incredibly useful for audit trails and keeping track of project and ongoing work. The multi-faceted approach and ease of use of Teams means that regardless of company size you can easily communicate with anyone, anywhere.</p> <p>Microsoft Teams for Remote Workers</p> <p>It’s known that employees working from home, or other kinds of remote and hybrid workers, can often feel disconnected from their colleagues.</p>
	<p>Among Microsoft Teams’ functions are instant messaging, video calls, conference calls and screen sharing, all of which can vastly benefit colleagues who are working together on various projects but are not located in the same office.</p> <p>https://www.ramsac.com/it-resources/office-365/an-introduction-to-microsoft-teams/</p>

Website/Links	https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/burnout-prevention-and-recovery.htm?pdf=11826
Screenshot/ Logo	
Location	Redmond, Washington, USA
Organisation	Microsoft
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is it for? Businesses, universities, small teams Who can use it? Anyone
Strengths	<p>Increased Focus on Work.</p> <p>Increased Team Productivity.</p> <p>Easy Implementation.</p>
Weaknesses	<p>Confusing File Structures.</p> <p>Different Online Meeting Experience.</p> <p>Limited Flexibility.</p>
Additional info	https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=UoWHXrmlszg

Zoom:


Title/Name	Zoom
Description of the tool/ approach	Zoom is the leader in modern enterprise video communications, with an easy, reliable cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, collaboration, chat, and webinars across mobile devices, desktops, telephones, and room systems. Zoom holds the feature to allow the host to annotate their shared screen, making engagement more interactive and informative. For those who want to host a webinar online, the Zoom video webinar feature provides access for up to 100 interactive participants, with packages that allow for up to 100,000 view-only attendees. Sharing is simple with a single click, and there's even dual-screen support. Zoom breakout rooms enable groups to move smoothly from a single large gathering into several smaller groups, then return to a single group session.
Website/Links	https://zoom.us/
Screenshot/ Logo	
Location	San Jose, California US
Organisation	Eric Yuan is the founder of Zoom
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is it for? Anyone Who can use it? Anyone
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great tool for video conferencing Includes webinars Ranked number 1 by customer reviews
Weaknesses	May not be suitable for all small businesses

Time management tools: Use tools like Trello or Asana to organise your work and track your progress. These platforms help you manage your tasks and deadlines, assign responsibilities, and share updates with your team.

Trello:


Title/Name	Trello
Description of the tool/ approach	Trello is a collaboration tool that gives the user a visual overview of the project, and who/what has been done. A Trello board is a list of lists, filled with cards, used by you and your students. It's a lot more than that, though. Open a card and you can add comments, upload file attachments, create checklists, add labels and due dates, and much more. Using Trello can allow individuals to participate in the actual development of the course content within the syllabus, making it more engaging and understandable from the beginning as it is highly visual more so than simple text. Trello makes it easy to get organised when taking on research or preparation for projects. Work from websites, blogs, News articles can be saved and shared in the cards of the Trello board, making the information more accessible. This can enhance workflow, train of thought, confidence in research and collaboration culture.
Website/Links	https://trello.com/about
Screenshot/ Logo	
Location	NYC, USA
Organisation	Trello spins off from Fog Creek and becomes Trello, Inc. naming Fog Creek co-founder Michael Pryor as its CEO
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is it for? Who can use it?? Anyone who wants to collaborate on Kanban style web-based apps
Strengths	<p>Trello provides users with a lot of creative control over how their images look.</p> <p>The flexibility of use when it comes to design.</p> <p>Option for collaboration with users who do not have paid accounts</p>
Weaknesses	The free version has limited features

Monday:

Title/Name	Monday
Description of the tool/ approach	<p>monday.com is a visual and intuitive tool offering multiple project management features to boost collaboration in. Monday.com allows task allocation and time tracking in the format you prefer: task lists, Gantt charts, or Kanban boards – giving you a global overview of your project's progress. It allows you to comment on tasks and mention your teammates, but also upload and attach any files they may need. Monday.com can be complemented with integration of other project management apps offering new features such as Slack, Google Drive, Gmail, Google Calendar, Jira, GitHub, Trello, Dropbox, Typeform, etc.</p> <p>Monday.com is highly customisable and let you adapt your boards to your preferences and favoured project methodology. You can create as many boards as you wish and choose the level of detail you want to work with.</p>
Website/Links	https://monday.com/
Screenshot/ Logo	
Location	Tel Aviv, Israel
Organisation	Roy Mann · Eran Zinman · Eran Kampf.
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is it for? Teams, small or large! Who can use it?
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monday.com is intuitive and easy to use Visual tool is very useful for project monitoring Templates built into the system Highly customisable
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paid plan to access necessary main features No chat or online meeting possibilities No file storage options


Video conferencing tools: Use video conferencing tools like Zoom or Google Meet to conduct virtual meetings with your team. These platforms provide a great way to hold meetings and brainstorm sessions, even when everyone is remote

Google Meet:

Title/Name	Google Meet (formerly Google Hangouts) Alternative: Zoom (See above)
Description of the tool/ approach	Google Meet is a video-chatting service designed primarily for business and office use, which lets colleagues chat over video and text.
Website/Links	https://meet.google.com/
Screenshot/ Logo	
Location	California USA
Organisation	Google
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is it for? Who can use it? Teams working remotely, large teams within the same office who want to share screens and collaborate. Can also be used for personal communications
Strengths	<p>The app is good for communicating with clients, friends, and a family consisting of a limited number of people.</p> <p>Easy to set up</p> <p>Screen sharing is easy to enable</p>
Weaknesses	Time limits on free version


File-sharing tools: Use cloud-based file-sharing tools like Google Drive or Dropbox to store and share documents with your team. These platforms offer secure access to files from anywhere, and make it easy to collaborate and work on documents together.

Dropbox:

Title/Name	Dropbox
Description of the tool/ approach	Dropbox is one of the simplest cloud storage solutions and is renowned for its ease of use. According to Dropbox, over 6,000 educational institutions worldwide are using the cloud-based software. Dropbox is being used in many schools as a shared storage solution for all sorts of documents, resources, and lesson plans. The huge benefit here is that files are in one location that is accessible to all.
Website/Links	www.dropbox.com
Screenshot/ Logo	
Location	California, US
Organisation	MIT students Drew Houston and Arash Ferdowsi as a startup company
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is it for? Dropbox is a personal cloud storage service Who can use it? Anyone
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dropbox free version works well - With the option to purchase the right amount of storage for your team, and preserve one year of version history on all files It a go to tool for file management and can often sync with other applications Dropbox is accessible from your PC, Mac, tablet or smartphone.


Google Drive:

Title/Name	Google Drive
Description of the tool/ approach	Google Drive is a free cloud-based storage service that enables users to store and access files online. The service syncs stored documents, photos and more across all of the user's devices, including mobile devices, tablets and PCs.


Description of the tool/ approach	<p>Google Drive integrates with the company's other services and systems -- including Google Docs, Gmail, Android, Chrome, YouTube, Google Analytics and Google+. Google Drive competes with Microsoft OneDrive, Apple iCloud, Box, Dropbox and SugarSync.</p> <p>How Google Drive works: To get started with Google Drive, the end user must create or sign in to a Google account. Then, the user types "drive.google.com" into his or her browser. "My Drive" will automatically appear, which can contain uploaded or synced files and folders, as well as Google Sheets, Slides and Docs. Then, the user can either upload files from his or her computer or create files in Google Drive.</p> <p>Alternatively, the end user can download a Google Drive application to one or more devices. A Google Drive folder will appear along with other folders in each device's file system. Files that the user adds to one folder are available through a Google Drive web app or the Google Drive folder on each device.</p> <p>https://www.techtarget.com/searchmobilecomputing/definition/Google-Drive#:~:text=Google%20Drive%20is%20a%20free,mobile%20devices%2C%20tablets%20and%20PCs.</p>
Website/Links	https://www.google.co.uk/intl/en-GB/drive/
Screenshot/ Logo	
Location	California US
Organisation	Google
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is it for? Anyone Who can use it? Anyone
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compatible with various devices Instant access to edit files (great for collaborative work) Quick Files Search
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security Risks Requires Internet connection

Time-tracking tools: Use time-tracking tools like RescueTime, or Pomodoro to monitor how you spend your time. These platforms help you identify where you're spending the most time and can help you prioritize your work more effectively.

Pomodoro:

Title/Name	Pomodoro App / Pomodor web
Description of the tool/ approach	The Pomodoro Technique sounds basic, but it really works. You set a timer for 25 minutes, work until it's up, then take a 5-minute break—and repeat the whole process three more times. After that, you take a 15- to 30-minute break, depending on how you feel. That's one full Pomodoro cycle. The Pomodoro App helps to track your Pomodoros and notifies you when it is time to take a break or get back to work!
Website/Links	https://pomodor.app/timer?utm_source=zapier.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=zapier
Screenshot/ Logo	
Location	US
Organisation	Sasha Drmic
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is it for? Anyone Who can use it?
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to use Can use on mobile or tablet
Weaknesses	Doesn't work for everyone

Rescue Time

Title/Name	RescueTime
Description of the tool/ approach	RescueTime is an app you install on your computer and mobile devices that automatically pays attention to the apps you use, which files you open, and what websites you visit. It logs how much time you spend in each of them.
Description of the tool/ approach	<p>Over the past decade, RescueTime has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helped over 2 million people optimise their days. Logged more than 1.37 billion hours of screen time. Blocked millions of distractions
Website/Links	https://www.rescuetime.com/
Screenshot/ Logo	
Location	West Coast, US
Organisation	Sasha Drmic
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is it for? Anyone Who can use it?
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RescueTime helps spot any inefficiencies throughout the working day and enables users to block out distractions to help better manage their time Weekly email reports summarise activities and provide a productivity score to help individuals plan smarter for the coming week.
Weaknesses	Limited customization

Ergonomic tools: Use ergonomic tools like standing desks or ergonomic chairs to maintain good posture and avoid physical discomfort while working from home.

Overall, finding the right combination of digital tools and strategies can help you stay productive and connected while working from home..

balance

digital work-life

projectbalance.eu



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