

INNER COOL

MANAGING WORK-LIFE STRESS IN SHANGHAI



BY JEFF TAN

Working life in Shanghai is pretty hectic. Twelve-hour work days, weekend work, conference calls at odd hours – it can all get a little too much. And everyone's looking for the magical work-life balance formula, which for most people is like chasing your own shadow.

Ask anyone how to find a healthy work-life balance and the answer is always 'work less' or 'get a life outside the office.' That's nice advice but often impossible to follow, as most of us can't simply leave work early or say no to a late meeting.

The inability to say no in the office and to focus on what really matters is a major cause of work-life imbalance. It's not just the sheer volume of work.

One thing we do have control over is our emotions at work. We have the power to stay cool and calm when all hell's breaking loose around us.

How does remaining peaceful

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and calm on the inside help with work-life balance? Simple answer: it keeps our minds in great shape to handle any challenging situation life throws at us and lets us feel in control. When we're in control, we think with a

clear head, and our logical and emotional minds are aligned. In this calm state, we can say no to work we shouldn't be doing and focus on the priority for the day, week and month, instead of trying to do everything all at once.

When you find peace of mind at work, your brain functions more efficiently and effectively, you become more productive, results are more easily achieved and the struggle to find a work-life balance becomes less of a challenge.

How do people find peace at work? Here's the magic formula: **Step 1:** Be aware that you're the victim of never saying no and always doing multiple things at the same time without getting the best results.

Step 2: When you're aware this is happening, take several deep breaths, smile and mentally soothe yourself by saying, "Relax, I choose peace and calm."

Step 3: Repeat step 2.

Step 4: Repeat step 3.

With practice, you'll find yourself in far better shape than before, as you replace stress with peace. Test drive these tips right now, and let the magic begin!

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