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Thriving at Work: Setting Boundaries, Balancing Life & Building Confidence

Agenda

What are we discussing today?



Boundaries and how
to set them



Work-Life Balance



Confidence and
Pitching

Let's talk truth!

1

Let's introduce
ourselves

2

Who here has said Yes
to something they
regretted this
week/month?

3

What would you have
done if you had said
No? (in a perfect
world!)

Today's tone!

*This is about
Thriving, not just
surviving at work*

Boundaries at work

They define the limits of what's required in your role, ensuring clarity about your duties and responsibilities.

Working relationship
boundaries – these define the limits of what you'll accept in terms of respectful and safe interactions with others.

What They Are

Guidelines for Well-being

Defining Autonomy

Protecting Energy

Examples of boundaries



A brown hand is shown in an open palm position, representing physical boundaries.	A gold hourglass is shown, representing working hours.	Two teal stick figures, a man and a woman, are facing each other with a double-headed arrow between them, representing gossiping.
A dark purple silhouette of a human head is shown with two white gears inside, representing workload boundaries.	A black silhouette of a commercial airplane is shown from a top-down perspective, representing taking time off.	A black silhouette of a human head is shown with a white brain inside, representing emotional and intellectual boundaries.

How do we set boundaries at work?

The 4 C's of boundaries: Clear, Confident, Comfortable and Connecting

- **Step 1: Set a healthy boundary**

Write out the risk to your well-being and the boundary that can help to protect against it. For some examples see Work boundaries.

- **Step 2: Ensure your boundary doesn't infringe on the rights of others**

Ensure that in setting this boundary for yourself, you're not infringing on others' rights. For example, if your boundary is that you feel you should only work 4 hours a day but are paid for 8, this wouldn't be fair to your employer.

- **Step 3: Draw your line**

Specify where the line is in crossing that boundary. Some boundaries need to be flexible while others should have a hard stop. For help with this, see The difference between hard and soft boundaries.

- **Step 4: Predetermine your action(s)**

Identifying in advance the actions you'll take when your boundary is crossed makes it much more likely you'll continue to respect it.

- **Step 5: Communicate your boundary**

Communicate your boundary to those who'll be affected by it. Remember that this is your boundary. It is up to you to respect your own boundary and it shouldn't infringe on others rights.

- **Step 6: Respect your boundary**

There will be times when you choose to ignore your own boundaries, but you should do your best to respect them.

- **Step 7: Review your boundaries**

Our boundaries can change for many different reasons. You should be flexible enough to re-evaluate if the boundary is something you've been able to maintain.

Why do we need boundaries?

Benefits for Your Well-being

Prevents Burnout.

Reduces Stress.

Improves Mental Health.

Benefits for Your Work Performance

Increases Productivity.

Maintains Focus on Goals.

Fosters Professionalism.

Benefits for Your Workplace Environment

Prevents Conflict.

Boosts Job Satisfaction.

Sets a Positive Example.

Challenges when setting boundaries



Internal Challenges

- Desire to please others.
- Personal insecurities.
- Fear of confrontation.
- Lack of awareness.

External Challenges

- Cultural norms and organizational practices.
- Unclear expectations.
- Unrealistic workload.
- Competitive workplace.
- Manager's work style.

Consequences of Poorly Set or Unclear Boundaries

- Burnout.
- Reduced productivity.
- Emotional toll.
- Blurred roles.

*Where do I need
stronger
boundaries?*

Work-Life Balance

Myth or True Story?



*Instead:
define your own
version of success*

Burnout and early warning signs



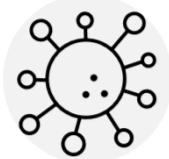
Fatigue and change in
habits/sleep



Irritability and lack of
motivation



Reduced productivity
and procrastination



Weakened immune
system



Withdrawal



Self doubt

Truths and facts about burnout

- Awareness of this challenge gives you power over it.
- Burnout doesn't arrive suddenly with a dramatic entrance.
- It sneaks up on you gradually.

- The **tricky part?** Many burnout symptoms can masquerade as everyday stress at first.
- Unlike typical stress, burnout symptoms persist and worsen over time if not addressed.

- The **3 Rs of Burnout:** Recognition, Response, Resilience

Let's be honest!

15

*Can we achieve a
50-50 Balance?*



The answer is No.

*The trick lies in
the continuum
between 0-100%*

As you might have guessed...



REACHING BALANCE

Balance is achieved
when we answer the
following questions:

Are my goals (personal,
professional, social) clear?

When was the last time
I did something for
myself?

When was the last time I lost my
temper at work?



THE 4 STAGES OF THE WLB PROCESS

- Self-assessment
- Exploration
- Application
- Assessment

THE 10 SIMPLE* STEPS TOWARDS WLB

*I DIDN'T SAY EASY!





*What is
communication
for you?*

What is communication ?

- **Communication** is the process of exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, and emotions through various means, such as spoken or written words, and body language.
- It is a **two-way** process.
- It creates and shares meaning.
- Done with **confidence**, it provides positive and effective context.
- A useful tool? **The Elevator Pitch.**


Confidence and Communication

Confidence and communication=interconnected

Confidence enables clear, effective expression and communication builds confidence.

How to build confidence in communication

- **Prepare and practice:**

Rehearse what you want to say, and prepare your **Elevator Pitch**

- **Listen actively:**

Wait for others to finish their thoughts before speaking, and don't just wait for your turn to talk.

- **Use positive body language:**

Maintain eye contact and use open, approachable body language to project confidence.

- **Be aware of your audience and goals:**

Understand your audience's needs and have a clear objective for the conversation.

- **Focus on your audience:**

Shift your focus from your own anxiety to what your audience needs from the interaction, making communication more effective.

- **Acknowledge your worth :**

Limit or eliminate the imposter syndrome that makes you doubt your career path and skills.

Imposter syndrome



Imposter syndrome

- **Imposter Syndrome** is a term created in 1978 by clinical psychologists Dr. Pauline R. Clance and Suzanne A. Imes, and it refers to:
- ambitious individuals who are characterized by an inability to internalize their achievements and a persistent fear of being exposed as a “fraud.”
- Despite external evidence of their competence, those who experience the syndrome remain convinced that they are impostors and do not deserve success.
- Proof of success is dismissed as luck or as the result of deceiving others into believing they are more intelligent and capable than they believe themselves to be.
- Some studies show that imposter syndrome is particularly **common among high-achieving women.**

Imposter syndrome

The 5 types are:

- The perfectionist
- The specialist
- The genius
- The solo player
- The super-hero

Ways to tackle it:

- Stop comparing yourself to others
- Limit social media use
- Small and steady steps
- Acknowledge my skills
- I admit it exists, but I do NOT surrender



The Elevator Pitch in 5 seconds

1. Short and inclusive description
2. Duration : 30"-2'
3. Answers many questions
4. (Should) create even more question
5. Key-tool

elevator speech equation

I'M A [].
I HELP []
[DO] [],
SO THEY CAN [].

PLAN CAREER

My Elevator Pitch

- Hi, I'm **Maria Zarotiadou**, Managing Director of **Plan of Business** and **Plan Career**. I'm a **Certified Business Coach** and **Strategic Marketing Specialist** with a strong focus on **gender equality** and **women's entrepreneurship**.
- For more than a decade, I've been helping entrepreneurs and professionals redefine their path — turning ideas into actionable strategies for sustainable growth. My experience as a **Gender Equality Advisor** for the Greek government and a **mentor** with organizations such as **Women Do Business** and **King's Trust International** has shown me that meaningful success happens where **strategy meets empowerment**.
- Today, I'll share how you can shape your own elevator pitch — a short, powerful story that expresses *who you are, what you do, and why it matters*.
- **So, if you had just 30 seconds to introduce yourself — what would your story sound like?**

Step 1: Preparation



Who is my audience?



What do I sell/promote?



When and where am I talking?



What do I want to achieve?



What's my back-up plan?

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What to include in the Elevator Pitch

Step 2:



Who am I?



What's my profession?



What is the problem/issue that I solve/address?



How do I deal with that?



The Wow factor



Questions

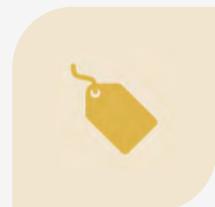
The Wow factor



THE HIGHLIGHT REEL



VISION FOR THE
FUTURE



USP (UNIQUE SELLING
PROPOSITION)



META-
COMMUNICATION

Tips on Don'ts

Vague info

Too much “shop talk” & jargon

Me, me, me

Too much practice/robotic

Body language

Rehearse much?

Too much talk/Out of context

Tips on Do's

1

Clear identity
and goals

2

Positive
speaking

3

Active
listening &
empathy

4

Confidence &
time to shine
YOUR light

5

Prep & 3
alternatives



After the Elevator Pitch?

1. Your phone/email/LinkedIn Profile?
2. Thank you email.
3. Add values and create relations.
4. Regular communication
5. Request the next step
6. New Elevator Pitch
7. QR Code



*Let's do
this!*

1. Write your own Elevator Pitch
2. Send it to me:
info@plancareer.eu and get your feedback

*Confidence grows each time
you honor your boundaries
and speak your truth.*

Maria Zarotiadou

Thank You

info@plancareer.eu

Plancareer.eu

Planofbusiness.eu

