

## Work Life Balance

Google: work life balance: over 7 million hits

Amazon: 75 specifically on work/life balance

### At the personal level:

“Manage your work, manage your life.” Describes results of the Harvard Business Review Survey  
<http://hbr.org/2014/03/manage-your-work-manage-your-life>

“Why don’t men talk openly about work-life balance?”

<http://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/personal-finance/2014/11/10/men-talk-openly-work-life-balance/18778533/>

(Not really work life balance, but interesting: Grady, R. K, et al. 2013. Betwixt and Between: The Social Position and Stress Experiences of Graduate Students *Teaching Sociology* 42: 5-16.  
DOI: 10.1177/0092055X13502182 )

### At the institutional level:

Sullivan, T. 2014. Greedy institutions, overwork and work-life balance. *Sociological Inquiry* 84: 1-15. DOI: 10.1111/soin.12029

Two pieces below on the Google company: The first one is a description of how google is amassing a long-term database of work-life balance data and the second one is a description of what it is like to work at Google, but includes only his comments directly related to work-life balance.

1) <https://hbr.org/2014/03/googles-scientific-approach-to-work-life-balance-and-much-more/>

2) <http://www.glassdoor.com/Reviews/Employee-Review-Google-RVW2757802.htm>: “Moving at the speed of light, burn out is inevitable ” Former Employee - Program Manager in Mountain View, CA I worked at Google full-time (more than 8 years), text below

#### Pros

1) Food, food, food. 15+ cafes on main campus (MTV) alone. Mini-kitchens, snacks, drinks, free breakfast/lunch/dinner, all day, err'day.

2) Benefits/perks. Free 24:7 gym access (on MTV campus). Free (self service) laundry (washer/dryer) available. Bowling alley. Volley ball pit. Custom-built and exclusive employee use only outdoor sport park (MTV). Free health/fitness assessments. Dog-friendly. Etc. etc. etc.

5) With so many departments, focus areas, and products, \*in theory\*, you should have plenty of opportunity to grow your career (horizontally or vertically). In practice, not true.

6) You get to work with some of the brightest, most innovative and hard-working/diligent minds in the industry. There's a "con" to that, too (see below).

## Cons

1) Work/life balance. What balance? All those perks and benefits are an illusion. They keep you at work and they help you to be more productive. I've never met anybody at Google who actually time off on weekends or on vacations. You may not hear management say, "You have to work on weekends/vacations" but, they set the culture by doing so - and it inevitably trickles down. I don't know if Google inadvertently hires the work-a-holics or if they create work-a-holics in us. Regardless, I have seen way too many of the following: marriages fall apart, colleagues choosing work and projects over family, colleagues getting physically sick and ill because of stress, colleagues crying while at work because of the stress, colleagues shooting out emails at midnight, 1am, 2am, 3am. It is absolutely ridiculous and something needs to change.