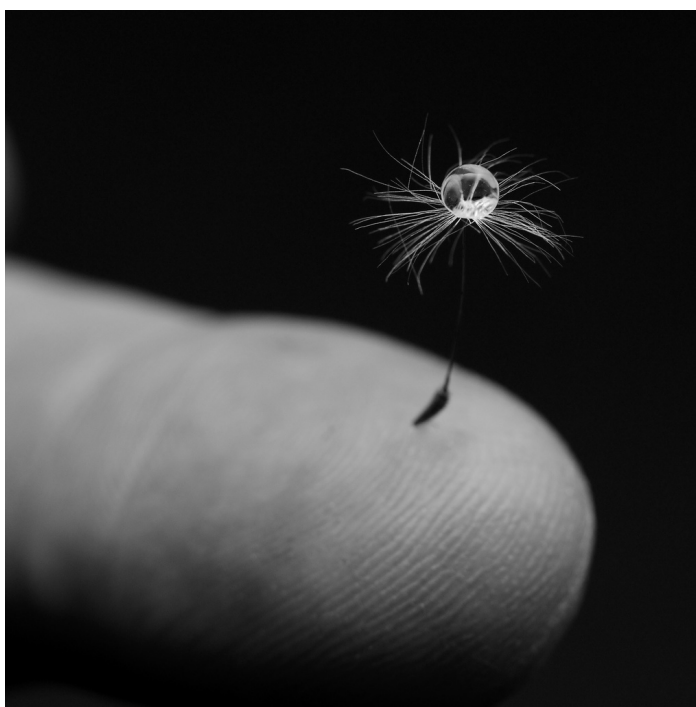


# Creating Work and Family Balance: Workshop Evaluation<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Work-life balance is a pressing issue for many families, and workshops can be a useful tool for raising awareness and building knowledge of individuals facing this challenge.



The evaluation instrument described in this article provides a simple and streamlined way to conduct a useful evaluation and solicit feedback for program refinement. It was designed to accompany a Florida Cooperative Extension Service workshop, *Creating Work and Family Balance*.\*

This publication provides support for professionals who are delivering this workshop or workshops with similar objectives. The purposes of the evaluation are to generate information that can be used for program improvement and for reporting impacts in the annual reporting system of Cooperative Extension.

The evaluation presented here is organized around the primary goal and objectives for the *Creating Work and Family Balance* workshop, which are described below.

## Overview of Workshop

**Workshop Goal** – To support participants in the development of skills that will reduce work-family conflict and create a healthy work-life balance.

**Workshop Objectives** – Participants will be able to do the following:

- Plan their time so they can align their lives with their personal values, goals, and priorities.

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- Utilize effective time-management strategies.
- Communicate effectively with family and co-workers.
- Identify types of family support policies and know where to access relevant information in their work places.
- Recognize personal signs of stress and identify specific stress management techniques.

## Overview of the Evaluation Instrument

The essence of the evaluation is to ask participants the extent to which the workshop objectives were achieved through the educational process so that workshop leaders and program developers can document changes in participants' knowledge and expected behavior as a result of the workshop. The instrument was developed collaboratively by the authors of this publication and has been used with multiple audiences to make sure it is practical and useful. It has two major sections—*Likert Items* and *Open-Ended Questions*.

### Section 1: Likert Items on Workshop Objectives

Workshop participants are asked to express their level of agreement with seven statements that capture the extent to which workshop objectives are being achieved. The items address knowledge gain, skills, confidence, and intent to change behavior and are scaled from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

### Section 2: Open-Ended Questions

The workshop participants are also asked to respond to open-ended questions that can be used to improve program delivery. These questions are very simple: *Please describe any actions you plan to take to create a healthier work/life balance in your life. What did you like best about today's workshop? What changes or improvements would you recommend?*

### Instructions for Leaders/Facilitators

This instrument is intended to be administered at the end of the workshop and takes about five minutes to complete. Leaders can advise participants that the feedback is anonymous—encourage them to take their time and be as honest as possible. The facilitator should emphasize that the information is valuable and will be used to improve the

program. See **Table 1** at the end of this document for the instrument.

## Data Analysis and Reporting

### Analysis and Reporting of Likert Items

These data can be entered and analyzed using a simple spreadsheet or database. Data should be entered directly from the completed forms and double-checked for accuracy. Means and frequencies can be computed for each item and either can be reported. Typically, extension faculty develop objectives that state the percentage of people who will achieve that objective, so this is the most natural way to report the findings. See **Table 2** for an example that shows how the evaluation results can be summarized and presented.

### Analysis and Reporting of Open-Ended Items

The answers to the open-ended questions can also be compiled to see if there is systematic feedback that can be used to improve the program. For example, in one instance, respondents commented that they needed more time, which suggests that the educator may want to plan for a second session or may want to expand the time for the current workshop.

Workshop participants may also provide feedback on additional topics they would like to see covered in future sessions. The evaluation form allows educators to systematically collect this information and make use of it for both programming and reporting purposes.

## Conclusions

This evaluation instrument is aligned with workshop objectives, making it easy to summarize the achievement of objectives in annual reporting. Because *Creating Work and Family Balance* is a one-shot workshop, the instrument is short and simple. Through the use of this instrument, however, extension educators can measure meaningful objectives and collect information for program improvement.

## Additional Resources

For more on the broader issue of work/family balance, please see the following resources:

- **BlueSuitMom** – Has practical resources on work/family balance as part of a larger website for working mothers. <http://www.bluesuitmom.com/career/balance/>

- **Families and Work Institute** – Provides a variety of resources and reports on work/family balance and the intersection between work and family life. <http://www.familiesandwork.org/>
- **Sloan Work and Family Research Network** – Provides teaching resources, research, and a database on work and family issues. <http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/>

In addition, a variety of resources on work/family balance can be accessed through a simple Internet search.

## Endnotes

\*The *Creating Work and Family Balance* workshop was developed by Dr. Suzanna Smith. For more information, e-mail [sdsmith@ufl.edu](mailto:sdsmith@ufl.edu).

Table 1. *Creating Work and Family Balance Session Feedback*

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each statement by circling a number for each one.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>As a result of today's lesson . . .</b>		1	2	3	4	5
I have a better understanding of current trends in work and family balance.		1	2	3	4	5
I am more able to plan my time in ways that fit with my values and priorities.		1	2	3	4	5
I have stronger skills to communicate effectively (with my family and co-workers).		1	2	3	4	5
I am confident that I can utilize effective time-management strategies in my life.		1	2	3	4	5
I feel more comfortable balancing work and family issues in my life.		1	2	3	4	5
I plan to create a healthier work-life balance using the skills I have learned today.		1	2	3	4	5
I would recommend this workshop to a friend.		1	2	3	4	5
Please describe any <b>actions</b> you plan to take to create a healthier work/life balance in your life.						
What did you <b>like best</b> about today's workshop?						
What <b>changes or improvements</b> would you recommend?						

Table 2. Example of Table for Reporting Results

As a result of today's lesson...	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	TOTAL 4s + 5s	Mean
I have a better understanding of current trends in work and family balance.	1 2.7%	1 2.7%	4 10.8%	18 48.6%	13 35.1%	31 83.7%	4.1
I am more able to plan my time in ways that fit with my values and priorities.	0	2 5.4%	3 8.1%	23 62.2%	9 24.3%	32 86.5%	4.1
I have stronger skills to communicate effectively (with my family and co-workers).	0	0	8 21.1%	23 60.5%	7 18.4%	30 78.9%	4.0
I am confident that I can utilize effective time management strategies in my life.	0	3 7.9%	6 15.8%	20 52.6%	9 23.7%	29 76.3%	3.9
I feel more comfortable balancing work and family issues in my life.	0	2 5.4%	9 24.3%	21 56.8%	5 13.5%	26 70.3%	3.8
I plan to create a healthier work-life balance using the skills I have learned today.	1 2.7%	2 5.4%	4 10.8%	17 45.9%	13 35.1%	30 81.1%	4.1
I would recommend this workshop to a friend.	0	1 2.70%	4 10.8%	22 59.5%	10 27.0%	32 86.5%	4.1