

Balancing work and home

A key intention of promoting the techniques explained in this book, is that they will free up your time so that you may achieve a better balance between home and the office. But there is a very real danger that the increased clarity, and the exposure of issues will, if anything, drive people to spend even more time at work.

Man is essentially teleological; that is he or she tends to automatically gravitate towards what he or she thinks about most, and most clearly. The principle is used a lot in 'success' literature, where people are called to visualise a clear and detailed picture of what they want to happen. The concept is that we attune ourselves to be more receptive and responsive to habits and opportunities that are in line with that vision.

In clarifying goals for your organisation; in breaking them down to motivate and align your people; in exposing issues so that they can be addressed effectively; the intention is to make the job of management easier and more effective. As a result you will free people to achieve what they really want, and to reduce the burden of entrenched meetings and last minute panics.

The irony is, that the very things that make the job easier and quicker (so that it occupies less of your time) also make you want to spend more of your time doing it.

That might sound bizarre, and you might be inclined to reject it out of hand. But consider: most of us want to achieve; we want to be needed; we want the praise and admiration of others; we want to win!

To some extent, even a confused picture of business can supply most of these needs. But if, as we intend, the changes you make:



I have never yet heard of anyone on their deathbed, saying that they wished they'd spent more time in the office.

Rob Parsons
Author of 'The sixty minute marriage'



The Achiever is the only person who is truly alive.

George Allen
American Pro Football Coach

Chapter 15

The alarm went off at 6am.

Richard woke, feeling like death warmed up. An inner emptiness, a deep dark void, seemed to confuse and disorient him. But gradually the pieces of the night before fitted back into his reality.

He sat on the edge of the bed with his head in his hands. What a bloody mess. His son in hospital. His wife playing Mae West. His career about to end. And with nothing clear and resolved about any of it. He looked up at the ceiling and railed into the white emptiness: "Bloody hell! This is just so bloody unfair! How is anyone expected to cope with all of this?"

He paused briefly, as if half expecting an answer, and then hung his head. After a moment or two he rose, and simply got on with things. He did not know what else he could do.

The face that stared back at him from the bathroom mirror he barely recognised as his own. Dull eyes and drawn features seemed to complement the ugly redness of his swollen lip. He probed the lip gently, amazed at how sore it still was, and wondered whether claiming he had opened the car door into it would prove a plausible explanation. He tried it out in the hotel car-park to check the authenticity of his excuse.

He arrived back at the Hospital just before seven, and asked after Nicholas. He was directed to a waiting room. Laura was already in there waiting. He went over and sat beside her. Nobody said a word. Perhaps they could maintain some semblance of normality at least.

Nicholas had had an uneventful night. But the doctors felt they needed to keep him in for a few days. He woke up when they walked into his room, but quickly fell back to sleep again. The nurse suggested Richard and Laura leave him and come back around lunchtime. Laura asked if they had a quiet area, or a chapel she could use, and the nurse indicated it was down the hall.

As they walked out together, Richard tentatively broached the subject.

"I'll pop in at lunchtime, and then again at five. Do you want me home this evening?"

- clarify what you really want to achieve and make it more vibrant and accessible
- build a real spirit of teamwork and interdependence
- deliver what others may only have dreamed about,

then business may fulfil your needs more than your home life.

This becomes particularly true for those of you with families, particularly at certain stages of your family's development when:

- you may be beginning to become confused about your role, except possibly as a source of finance
- family members are becoming more independent and are pursuing different, and often unclear, goals
- you are starting to feel that there are no really clear worthwhile goals left to achieve in your personal life.

The danger is that work may become the only place where you can truly be what you want to be. Particularly if in the bid to support your family materially you have been drawn away from being able to invest spiritually in your family and friends.

So what are the alternatives?

Well, you could simply put up with things as they are, and allow more of your energy and dreams to be invested in your work. But the danger is that you lose your depth and personality. The only relationships you would be engaging in are those prescribed by the organisation and its protocols. Added to which, some of you would be denying the responsibilities you took on in marriage and childbirth, and the costs of that are enormous.

Or you could keep your business objectives and their deployment muddy. But



How much of an issue is 'balance' likely to be for you?

Where do you...	Work	Home
Have the clearest goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Achieve the most?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get most recognition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel most in demand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
See most possibilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have greatest fellowship?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find your mind most active?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



He who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby become a monster.

Georg Wilhelm Nietzsche
German Philosopher

“Suit yourself,” was all she said.



Richard never did make the lunchtime slot, but he got back to the hospital for five. He discovered that Laura was back in the chapel. She had spent the whole day either at Nicholas's bedside or in the chapel. Richard spent five minutes with Nicholas watching the boy sleep, then he braced himself for another blow-up as he went to find Laura. He thought she would be furious about him missing the lunchtime session, and felt the privacy of the chapel would be a safe place to face it.

As he walked through the door he was struck by the peacefulness of the place. Laura was kneeling on a mat, her eyes closed, her hands clasped in front of her, facing a candle and a large wooden cross. The flame burnt steadily without flickering. Richard hadn't really believed in religious things since his teenage, but he knew it brought Laura comfort.

Richard moved stealthily into the room, and went and knelt beside her, waiting for her to emerge from her prayers; hoping that, in mirroring her posture with his own, he might ameliorate some of the anger she would focus on him.

He was really surprised when, still in an attitude of prayer, she reached out and took his hand and held it tightly. For a moment he wondered if she really knew that it was him. But then she turned, and smiled sadly at him, blinked and said quietly: “Sorry, Richard.”

The apology took him by surprise; he hadn't been expecting it. Sure he felt Laura was in the wrong over her behaviour last night, but it wasn't like her to apologise in this way, particularly given that he had missed the lunchtime session. For a moment he suspected some elaborate charade, but when he looked in her face he could see that she was sincere. The impact of his wife's honest apology denuded his own guilty thoughts of their validation, and made them stand out in stark contrast. And he found himself unable to meet Laura's open gaze, and had to cast his eyes downward.

Laura continued to look at him, and then said: “Nicholas is still sleeping. Would you please stay here with me for a while?” Richard nodded slowly and Laura continued, her voice barely above a whisper, stretched by some inner tension. “Would you pray with me? Would you ask God to look after our son with me?”

that would be to miss out on so much potential and fulfilment.

Or, you could invest as much time and energy in thinking through your personal life, as you do your business life.

Attempting QFD with the family is not what is being advocated here. Anyone with normal teenagers and a typically idiosyncratic spouse could see that they would not get past step one, and would be more likely to end up wearing the flipchart than writing on it!

But using the tools personally, to rethink your role, would be a good start. And as you become clearer about your impact on the lives of your family and friends, so your personal goals and values will become clearer.

Your personal QFD is unlikely to be as complete or as logical as your business QFD, and you would be brave beyond reason to pin it up on the wall, but that is not the point. It is the questions that arise from doing the QFD that provide the insights and the growth points, not the neatly drawn diagram on the page.

Think about it:

- What relation does your *Sunday afternoon walk* have to the *maturity and values of your eight-year-old son*?
- Or how could *spending time with your friends* help you to *influence the society you live in*?

Your personal QFD will contain scores of similar question for you to explore and find new opportunities and potential within.

QFD could really enrich the thought you put into your life - both your personal life, and your work life - and get a better balance for both.



Working to get a better balance - part 1

What dreams do you share with your family?

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What dreams could you share with your family?

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Still reeling from the apology, and from his own unresolved reaction to it, Richard was having problems assimilating this new request. Laura had never asked him to pray before. She knew he didn't believe in God, and anyway, even if you did believe in God, surely prayer was a private thing. But kneeling there in the chapel, and not daring to look back into Laura's sincere green eyes, he simply nodded dumbly. To him it seemed the easiest course of action.

As Laura turned and bent her head in silent prayer, Richard followed suit, and kneeling there in the stillness, Richard found a strange quietness steal over him. His questions, concerns, challenges, and embarrassment seemed to evaporate from him as he knelt and held his wife's hand.

Afterwards, they walked to Nicholas's bedside, still hand-in-hand. Strangely bound by a common experience of peace, prayer, and a steadily burning candle.

When they left the hospital at eight, Richard suggested Laura leave her car and they pick it up in the morning. They drove home together, feeling closer than they had felt in months.



Nicholas's illness was diagnosed as complicated viral infection that evening. The consultant had seen them as they were about to leave, and explained that Nicholas was out of real danger, but that there was still an element of risk, and that they would need to keep him under observation until they were confident that it was fully under control.

For the rest of the week, hospital visits anchored Richard's day at either end. Most of the time, they would sit by Nicholas's bed, but sometimes Richard would join Laura in the Chapel; simply to be with her, to show her support.

Richard loved his son deeply, but the time at the hospital was giving difficulties in pursuing the plans at work. And regularly he would find his mind wandering to the issues back at Cylek. He was finding it difficult to kneel beside Laura in an attitude of prayer, and would tend to stand up after a few minutes and step quietly around the sparsely furnished room, being careful not to disturb the one or two others who were also using the room.

Richard felt guilty that he could not, even at a time like this, keep his mind focused on his family and in particular Nicholas. But he rationalised

The next four chapters continue to develop this theme of your personal relationship with QFD, in four different ways.

- Chapter 16 looks at personal identity, and its impact on the ultimate benefits that you derive from QFD.
- Chapter 17 looks at how Why-How charting can help you to examine your personal identity more clearly, and can help you to build links between who you are at work and who you are at home.
- Chapter 18 looks at how the lessons from your personal life can be reapplied at work.
- And Chapter 19 looks at how you develop your personal QFD, and its implications for managing yourself and your time.

The intention of this book is to equip you to successfully transform the performance of your organisation by implementing QFD, but your personal effectiveness is vitally important to both that success, and to the impact of that success on you as an individual. These chapters will help you to think these things through effectively and to prepare for them.

However, before you move onto those chapters, you might like to take a little time to think through the following questions.

- When someone asks you socially: "What do you do?" does your answer reflect your work or your personal life? Why?
- Do you tend to feel more guilty about allowing your personal life to intrude into your work time, or about allowing your work to intrude into your personal life? Why?
- Where do you fit on a scale from 1 to 10, where: 1 is 'My personal life is purely a means to enable me to relax and refresh myself so that I can pursue my work'; and 10 is 'My work life is



Working to get a better balance - part 2

What for you are the most important things in the world?

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How does what you do at work impact on them?

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How does what you do at home impact on them?

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Does this reflect a balance that feels right to you?

that it was probably because there was so little he could usefully do, while work was crying out with needs he was far better equipped to fulfil.

But while he was at work, he found that his ability to concentrate was suffering. As debates progressed interminably, he was more prone to allow his mind to wander to Nicholas than he was to step in decisively to resolve them. He could sense himself missing vital opportunities to progress things because he was not equipped to deliver the incisive conclusion at the time it was needed.

His mind was in turmoil, and his workload appeared to be building and building as unresolved issues took up more and more of his time.

He spent most of Saturday, physically beside his son's bed, but mentally in the pressures and confusion of his factory. By six o'clock he had realised that he was doing nobody any good, and, with some degree of trepidation, he broached the subject with Laura.

"Laura, I need to go into work tomorrow!" he said gently.

She looked at him, a little quizzically. "But it's Sunday!" she challenged.

"I know... It's just that things have been falling behind. I haven't been able to concentrate on things there, and they are likely to go seriously wrong if I don't do a bit of preparation for Monday."

She looked at him incredulously. "But surely other people can do those things. They aren't dependent on you are they? For heaven's sake your son is seriously ill, surely they can't expect you..." She faltered as Richard's gaze dropped into his lap in resignation, and she realised that, to all intent and purposes, he felt they really were dependent on him. She reached across and put her hand on his shoulder. "It's okay," she said.

He looked up again. "I'll make sure it's not for the whole day."

Laura nodded and said, "One thing though, I'd really appreciate it if you came to Church with me before you go. It's important to me. Could you do that?"

She had been wondering how to broach the subject of Church since the time they had prayed together in the chapel. Richard would expect her to go to Church on Sunday, as she had for the past few months, but she felt he would balk at the idea of coming along himself.

purely a means to enable me to fund the projects and activities in my personal life'?

Are the answers to the above questions the balance you want in your life? And if not, how could developing a clearer focus for your personal life change this?



Few men ever drop dead from over-work, but many quietly curl up and die because of under-satisfaction.

Sydney Harris
American Journalist

And yet, Church for Laura was more than a Sunday Social. She had come to feel a presence around her; a presence which had been supporting her through Richard's neglect and Nicholas's illness. But she was growing increasingly concerned that this experience was yet another source of separation between her and Richard, and as her dependence on it deepened through Nicholas's illness, she wanted more and more for it to be an experience she could share with her husband.

Richard's request to work on Sunday had opened up an opportunity, and now she was taking it.

As for Richard, he was clearly puzzled. Going to Church was the last thing he felt like doing, and he wanted to challenge Laura on her request. But as he struggled to find the words, he realised that accepting would be the easy way out. It would only be for an hour, and so little of the last week had been normal anyway. He nodded his assent, and Laura nodded back, almost as a seal of confirmation over their agreement.