

newsworthy trends

Study Reveals Importance Of Integrating Life And Work

(NAPS)—America has long embraced the notion that the complete separation of work and home lives is key to achieving balance, but research recently released by Pitney Bowes Inc. reveals that work/life integration is the far more common and productive reality for today's time-crunched households.

Nearly half (47 percent) of the employed respondents reported that communication for work has spread beyond regular business hours and nearly a third (32 percent) reported conducting household business communications while at work.

The study revealed that messaging tools, such as cellular phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs) and e-mail, are key to integrating personal, professional and mobile lives because they allow individuals to bridge skills and management techniques learned in the workplace into the home. Messaging strategies are transforming 21st century households into organized corporate structures and are helping workers mirror successful work management techniques at home.

Given the number of circumstances in which work and personal lives inevitably overlap, it is important for on-the-go families to adopt skills to help them consciously balance their personal, professional and mobile lives. Pitney Bowes' study reveals the following strategies as stepping-stones to achieving an integrated work/life balance:

- **Selective Access:** Direct communications to the tool that works best for you. If you prefer being reached via cellular phone, tell friends and co-workers to reach you that way, avoiding receiving the duplicate messages on multiple tools and limiting your obligation to check multiple tools for important messages.



BALANCING SKILLS are important when work and personal lives overlap.

- **Create Message-Free Zones:** Turn off your cellular phone or pager to avoid interruptions during personal time and set aside a specific time or day to conduct household work such as paying bills or scheduling appointments so that you avoid conducting "work" during your personal time.

- **Synchronize Schedules:** Create a centralized calendar that updates everyone's schedules and locations. This can be as simple as maintaining a wall calendar or previewing the next day's activities at dinner.

- **Swap Skills:** Use the same skills you use on the job at home, and teach those skills to your family. If you use a PDA at work to track meetings, use it to also track home responsibilities.

- **Share the Work:** Since no one person can tackle all household obligations alone, assign particular household obligations such as bill paying or grocery shopping to designated family members, allowing you to outsource the "remembering" to other family members.

For more information about the study, visit www.pitneybowes.com.