

What have been some of your greatest challenges & how have you overcome them?

My biggest challenge has definitely been with work/life balance. For the first two years of my career, I had no balance at all. I devoted almost all of my time to working. I didn't have many friends or have much fun outside of work. Today, I have been able to find a balance and am much happier as a result.

Describe how you have balanced your career and personal life. Were there any corporate or professional programs that helped you advance both personally and professionally? Is there anything you wish you had known "then" or could have done differently?

Work/life balance is one of the most difficult challenges I faced as a new hire, and even today. I think that achieving this balance is something that every person figures out in his or her own time. I often found this subject to be one that I discussed with my mentors early on. While I still do not think I have a perfect work/life balance, I have certainly improved greatly over the past year and a half. Finding your own personal level of balance is extremely vital to your overall career development. Achieving a work/life balance has helped me realize that being successful in your career does not mean sacrificing my personal life.

During my first two years of employment, I didn't have much of a work/life balance at all. I spent at least 10-12 hours a day in the office, took work home every night, and worked every weekend. I burned out very quickly and found myself getting frustrated. My performance at work was outstanding, but I felt like I was missing out on other aspects of my life.

Over the past year and a half, I have found an approach to work/life balance that works for me. I begin each day by writing out a "To Do" list. This helps me maintain focus and maximize my productivity. I also try to block time in my calendar to focus on whatever technical challenges that I am addressing. This is increasingly important as my calendar becomes filled with meetings quickly. I also try to end each day at a specific time. My goal is to be as productive as possible during the workday and limit the amount of work that I take home in the evenings and/or weekends. I like to use my evening and weekend time to

complete my tasks in my personal life. I find that today I am more efficient at work, and it is satisfying to prove to myself that I am still able to be highly successful in my professional career, while engaging in external activities that help with my personal development. This seems to be an effective strategy for me.