



SwitchOff

Supporting worker's well
being during remote work

Project No: 2022-1-PL01-KA220-VET-000085734

SwitchOff Training Programme Module 2

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Module 2									
Module 2	The importance of disconnecting from work; benefits associated with the individual and the organisation – Mindshift								
Short description of the module / abstract	This module aims to provide comprehensive insights into the benefits of work disconnection for both individuals and the organisations they are part of, offering valuable knowledge for personal well-being and organisational success.								
Learning Outcomes	<p>L01 - Apply strategies for enhancing work-life balance through psychological detachment from work.</p> <p>L02 - Analyse individual factors like motivation and self-regulation that aid effective work disconnection.</p> <p>L03 - Suggest improvements for a healthy work environment</p>								
Learning Units	<p><i>Unit 1:</i> The importance of disconnecting from work for psychological detachment and work-life balance.</p> <p><i>Unit 2:</i> Analysis of the role of individual factors in facilitating work disconnection.</p> <p><i>Unit 3:</i> Organisational factors influencing disconnection from work</p>								
Learning core material	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 60%;">Chapter</th> <th style="width: 40%;">Learning Material</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 The importance of disconnecting from work for psychological detachment and work-life balance</td> <td>Text, practical activity</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Analysis of the role of individual factors in facilitating work disconnection</td> <td>Text, practical activity</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Organisational factors influencing disconnection from work</td> <td>Text, practical activity</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Chapter	Learning Material	1 The importance of disconnecting from work for psychological detachment and work-life balance	Text, practical activity	2 Analysis of the role of individual factors in facilitating work disconnection	Text, practical activity	3. Organisational factors influencing disconnection from work	Text, practical activity
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Assessment method	Chapter	Assessment method
	1 The importance of disconnecting from work for psychological detachment and work-life balance	True-false statements
	2 Analysis of the role of individual factors in facilitating work disconnection	Multiple choice questions
	3. Organisational factors influencing disconnection from work	Multiple choice questions
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	120'	
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Abstract:

In this module learners will explore strategies for enhancing work-life balance (WLB) through psychological detachment from work, analyse individual factors like motivation and self-regulation that aid effective work disconnection, and suggest improvements to create a healthy work environment. It equips learners with essential skills and insights to disconnect from work effectively, leading to improved well-being for individuals and fostering a productive and sustainable work environment for organisations.

Learning outcomes

- LO1 - Apply strategies for enhancing work-life balance through psychological detachment from work.
- LO2 - Analyse individual factors like motivation and self-regulation that aid effective work disconnection.
- LO3 - Suggest improvements for a healthy work environment.

Keywords

Work-life balance (WLB); psychological detachment; individual factors; organisational culture; well-being.

LEARNING UNIT 1 - THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCONNECTING FROM WORK FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL DETACHMENT AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

In the fast-paced modern world, the boundary between work and personal life has become increasingly blurred. This unit explores the critical role of psychological detachment in achieving a healthier work-life balance (WLB), defined by Kirchmeyer (2000) as the achievement of fulfilling experiences in the different aspects of life.

Understanding psychological detachment

Psychological detachment consists of the ability to mentally disengage from work-related thoughts and worries when outside of the workplace or during non-working hours. A “state of equilibrium” (Basuthakur, 2022) difficult to achieve, but it's about allowing yourself to switch off from work mode and fully immerse into your personal life. Achieving this detachment is essential because it promotes mental and emotional recovery, reducing the risk of burnout and enhancing overall well-being (Ramos, 2018, 27-30).

Strategies for enhancing Work Life Balance (WLB)

1. Establishing boundaries

Set clear boundaries between work and personal life. Clearly define your work hours and communicate them to colleagues and supervisors. Stick to these hours to create a clear division between work and personal life.

2. Unplugging from technology

Designate specific times during the day to check work-related emails and messages. Outside of these times, turn off work-related notifications on your devices to minimise distractions and allow uninterrupted personal time.

3. Mindfulness and relaxation techniques

Mindfulness practices and relaxation techniques can help to relax and detach from work-related issues. Practice mindfulness exercises like deep breathing or meditation for a few minutes each day to help you stay present in the moment and reduce work-related thoughts and stress.

4. Effective time management

Prioritise tasks and allocate dedicated time blocks for specific work activities. By managing your time efficiently, you can complete tasks during work hours and avoid harming your personal activities.

5. Dealing with guilt and overcommitment

Learn how to say “no” when you are already feeling the pressure of overcommitment. Recognise that taking breaks and prioritising self-care is essential for long-term productivity and well-being.

Practical activity: WLB daily schedule

This quick exercise can help you visualise your daily routine and clearly demarcate work and personal time. It encourages you to set boundaries from work-related activities and ensures you allocate time for self-care and relaxation. By doing this regularly, you can work towards achieving a healthier work-life balance and psychological detachment from work.

1. List your working hours: in the first column, write down your typical working hours, including breaks.

2. Identify non-working hours: in the second column, note the hours when you are not officially working, including evenings and weekends.
3. Allocate personal time: in the third column, allocate specific time slots for personal activities, such as exercise, relaxation, family time, or hobbies.
4. Set boundaries: in the fourth column, define boundaries for work-related activities during non-working hours. For example, specify when you will stop checking work emails or taking work calls.
5. Review and adjust: take a moment to review your schedule. Ensure that you have dedicated personal time and that you've clearly defined when work-related activities end. If necessary, adjust it to create a more balanced schedule and stick to it.

LEARNING UNIT 2 - ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL FACTORS IN FACILITATING WORK DISCONNECTION

Individual factors play a critical role in enabling effective work disconnection (Zheng et al., 2015). Understanding these factors can significantly contribute to achieving a healthier WLB.

Key individual factors

1. Motivation

Motivation is a powerful driver of behaviour. It influences how dedicated we are to our work tasks and our ability to disengage from them when necessary. Explore the different types of motivation, such as intrinsic and extrinsic, and how each affects your ability to disconnect from work.

2. Self-regulation

Self-regulation involves the ability to control one's impulses and manage emotions. This factor is vital for work disconnection, as it enables individuals to resist the temptation to constantly check work-related emails or engage in work-related tasks during personal time.

Strategies for analysis

1. Self-assessment

Reflect on your motivation levels and self-regulation by asking questions like, "What drives me at work?" and "How well can I resist work-related distractions during personal time?"

2. Identifying triggers

Note when and why you feel compelled to engage in work-related tasks outside of working hours. Identifying patterns will help you address specific triggers.

3. Goal Setting

Define clear, achievable goals for work disconnection, such as "I will not check work emails after 6 pm," and track your progress regularly to stay motivated and maintain self-regulation.

Practical activity: motivation and self-regulation self-assessment

Consider the stated strategies for analysis to encourage your self-awareness for improved work disconnection and follow the steps.

1. **Motivation reflection:** take a moment to think about what truly motivates you at work. Is it the sense of accomplishment, financial rewards, or a passion for what you do? Write down a sentence or two describing your primary work motivators.
2. **Self-regulation evaluation:** reflect on how well you can resist work-related distractions during personal time. Do you find it easy to disconnect, or do you often accede to the urge to check work emails or engage in work tasks? Write down a brief self-assessment of your self-regulation abilities in relation to work disconnection.
3. **Identify triggers:** list one or two specific situations or circumstances that tend to trigger your inclination to work during non-working hours. For example, it could be the fear of missing out on important information or the pressure to meet tight deadlines.
4. **Goal setting:** based on your self-assessment and identified triggers, set a small, achievable goal related to work disconnection. For instance, if you struggle with checking work emails after work, your goal could be to limit email checking to a specific time frame during the evening.
5. **Plan of action:** quickly outline one or two strategies you can implement to help you achieve your goal. These strategies should align with enhancing your motivation and self-regulation for work disconnection.

LEARNING UNIT 3 - ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING DISCONNECTION FROM WORK

Explore the pivotal role that the workplace environment plays in promoting or hindering work disconnection and gain insights into how elements like organisational culture, leadership, and policies can either support or impede employees' ability to disconnect from work effectively (Zheng et al., 2015).

Key organisational factors

1. **Organisational culture**
This factor sets the tone for how work is approached. A culture that values WLB and encourages employees to disconnect after working hours fosters a healthier environment.
2. **Leadership**
Effective leadership plays a critical role in modelling and supporting work disconnection. Leaders who promote boundaries and prioritise employee well-being set a positive example for the entire organisation.
3. **Policies**
Organisational policies and guidelines can either facilitate or hinder work disconnection. Policies related to after-working hours communication, overtime, and vacation time are among those that impact employees' ability to disconnect.

Strategies for improvements

1. **Cultivating a healthy culture**
Encourage the development of a culture that respects personal time and values WLB. This can be achieved through communication, training, and recognition of employees who successfully disconnect.
2. **Leadership training**

Leadership training that emphasises the importance of work disconnection and equips leaders with the skills to support their team members in achieving is essential. Leaders should be encouraged to lead by example.

3. **Reviewing and updating policies**

The organisations must regularly review and update its policies to align them with best practices in work disconnection. Policies must be clear, fair, and supportive of employees' well-being.

Practical activity: brainstorming for a healthier work environment

This quick activity encourages critical thinking about the specific challenges in your work environment and generate practical suggestions for improvement.

1. **Select a focus:** choose one aspect of the work environment to focus on, such as organisational culture, leadership practices, or specific policies.
2. **List current issues:** in a brief list, jot down any issues or challenges related to the chosen aspect. For example, if focusing on leadership, note issues like lack of support for work disconnection.
3. **Brainstorm solutions:** take a few minutes to brainstorm possible solutions or improvements for each issue you've identified. Be creative and open-minded.
4. **Select top three ideas:** from your list of solutions, pick the top three ideas that you believe would have the most significant positive impact on creating a healthier work environment.
5. **Share and discuss:** if you're working with a group, share your top three ideas and discuss their feasibility and potential benefits.

Conclusion

This module has explored into the fundamental aspects of achieving a balanced and fulfilling work-life dynamic. You explored the significance of psychological detachment from work, the role of individual factors like motivation and self-regulation, and the impact of organisational factors such as culture, leadership, and policies.

Through this module, you have gained valuable insights and practical tools. You have learned to apply strategies for enhancing work-life balance, analyse individual factors influencing work disconnection, and suggest improvements for cultivating a healthy work environment. These skills not only benefit individuals by reducing stress and enhancing well-being but also contribute to organisational success through increased productivity and employee satisfaction (Thadoi, Angshuman, 2023).

By understanding and implementing these concepts, individuals and organisations can work together to create a work culture that promotes disconnection from work when appropriate, ultimately leading to happier, more fulfilled individuals and thriving, productive organisations.

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