

A Delicate Balancing Act

Being a full-time wife, mother and career woman is no easy task. But with the right balance, these roles work together to make your life deep and meaningful. The trick? You have to work at it. Balance doesn't just come with the territory. Finding, achieving and maintaining balance takes a sustained effort. So how do you start? Well, here are some of Mary Kay's tips for staying on track. Use them as a guideline — and don't forget to believe in yourself. You can have it all!

The Ol' Gear Switch. Wife. Mother. Daughter. Professional. Supervisor. Friend. You're not just one of them — you're all of them! Women have an amazing ability to balance tasks and identities. So, how do you keep one role from outweighing another? First of all, be clear about who you are and who you want to be. Second, give yourself ample time to switch gears. On your way to work, clear your mind of family issues and focus on what you want to accomplish that day. After work, listen to classical music or take the scenic route home in order to center yourself. Then, when you walk through the door, you can give all your attention to the people who love you. It works!

The 5 O'Clock Club. If you're a working mother, leaving the office doesn't mean your workday ends. In many ways, it's just beginning! There are meals to prepare, homework to check, cleaning up to do — plus, your sweetheart wants your time and attention, too. It's a lot to squeeze into one day. So how can you get more time? Wake up early in the morning! While the rest of the world slumbers, you can devote a couple of hours to catching up on paperwork or spending time on your personal devotions. Do whatever helps you stay relaxed and focused. Wake up early several times a week and you've actually added a full workday onto your schedule. This little trick was one of Mary Kay's favorite success techniques.

Dollar Time on Penny Jobs. Women who do well in their jobs shouldn't have to spend a huge chunk of their time cleaning and ironing clothes. If you can afford to, have a house cleaner come in once a week! Send the clothes to the dry cleaners. Give the small tasks to the kids and your hubby — making it a team effort will help you have more time to spend with your family in the end.

Priorities, Please! God first, family second, career third. All work and no play is bad for working mothers. You need time to spend enjoying your children! They need you and you need them. So don't spend all your time on work, work, work. Even if your job supports your family, make one-on-one time with each of your children. It's worth it!

Family Friendly Workplace. Many workplaces have on-site day care or the option to schedule work around your children's school day. This is one major benefit of being a Mary Kay Independent Beauty Consultant. With flexible scheduling, you can have a successful career and that important time with your children.

Avoid Burnout! Burnout is typical among working mothers. When they're not trying to be Superwoman in the workplace, they're trying to be Superwoman at home. The key to avoiding burnout? Balance. Prioritize and pace yourself. Know when to say "no." Keep your expectations reasonable. Take it one step — and one breath — at a time.

Once a Lady, Always a Lady. In her book, Mary Kay mentions how proud she feels when she sees women working in medicine, law, accounting and many other fields. But she also provides a word of caution: "Don't let your ambition distract you from your womanhood." Sometimes women think they have to become masculine to compete in the workplace. That's a misconception. Don't compromise your femininity. Your grace, your intuition and your insight into people give you a special strength. You don't have to be "one of the boys" to succeed. Be a lady. Men will respect you for being yourself — and it will bring out the best in them.

Mary Kay wisdom taken from *Mary Kay: You Can Have It All* by Mary Kay Ash.