

Welcome to *The Workforce Link Podcast*, where we're offering forward-thinking conversations for the workforce, linking employers and job seekers to a brighter tomorrow. I'm your host Sundi Jo Graham with the Central Workforce Development Region, and I'm glad to be back with you for another episode.

I know a lot of moms out there who truly are superheroes. Somehow they find a way to balance it all - work, soccer, marriage, all the things. Maintaining a career and family is not for the faint of heart, that's for sure.

But sometimes, I think we believe the like that we can't be moms and have a thriving career. Now, I didn't say it's easy, but I am saying that I believe it's possible. So, today I want to share some key habits to help set you up for success as a working mom.

Habits are a byproduct of consistent repetition. That means you must keep implementing the next right step repeatedly before you see results. Sometimes it happens quickly; sometimes, it feels like it takes forever.

So, as we dive in together today, remember that you will eventually get where you want to go if you don't give up.

## **1) TO-DO LISTS**

These are your best friend. Well, they're mine anyway. A task written down is a task half completed. Don't be afraid to write it all down - and I mean all the things. Writing down things you already know you must do might sound redundant, but research has shown that it actually increases efficiency.

If you're a digital gal, there are dozens of tools out there for you. Google calendar is your best friend.

In a previous episode, we actually dive deeper into this, talking about the [6 Must-Have Apps to Help You Be More Productive at Work](#). Google Calendar and Evernote truly can be your best friends.

But I take it one step further and go beyond digital because there's just something about having it written down right in front of you. I've discussed this in previous episodes, but I am a huge fan of the [Full Focus planner](#). I'll share the link in the show notes, but I believe it's episode 25.

Every day, I know the big three things that I must get done for that day. And then there's a place for me to write down my daily tasks. Not only that, but I can write down my goals for the week, the quarter, etc. You can really go as deep as you need to go. I call the Full Focus planner my second brain, and I can't imagine doing my days without it.

And.. there's just something about being able to put a checkmark next to those completed tasks, isn't there?

I'll also share a link in the show notes for you to check out the Full Focus planner.

Hey there. Question for you! Do you want hands-on experience as you decide what career you want to pursue? Through on-the-job training, work experiences, and apprenticeships, Central Missouri Job Center staff are ready to help set you up for success today!

Learn more about our on-the-job training program, an excellent opportunity to get hands-on experience from an employer while earning a paycheck. It's a win-win for everyone. Employers get the workforce they need, and you get the experience you need!

Or there's our Work Experience Program, available to job seekers ages 14-24 with little or no past work experience. This provides the opportunity to meet with prospective employers while also taking advantage of critical workplace training. Gaining work experience gives you the needed work background to secure future jobs.

And don't forget about our Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, which is an alternative "earn while you learn" combination of training and employment. Apprentice workers gradually earn more as they reach higher levels of productivity. In addition to rewarding performance, a Registered Apprenticeship combines employer-driven, job-related instruction with extensive on-the-job learning under the supervision of a trade professional. After completing a Registered Apprenticeship, the apprentice receives a nationally-recognized occupational credential that communicates the standards and high level of training their employer provides.

To learn more about our work-based learning programs, visit [cwdregion.com/learning](http://cwdregion.com/learning) today and find the Central Region Job Center near you!

## **2) DEFINE YOUR PRIORITIES**

Your career is important, no doubt, but you already know your family is a key priority as well. Make sure your boss, manager, and team members know this too. Let them know your boundaries ahead of time - that your family comes before your job.

I've seen people come to work who didn't even tell anyone they had kids, so when they said they couldn't stay late or come in early because of their kids, their boss was surprised to learn that. The manager wasn't upset that she couldn't stay late, but she was upset that she didn't know ahead of time. Don't surprise people. Let them know ahead of time where you stand.

And the same goes for defining your priorities at home. Decide ahead of time how much of your work life you will let spill over into your home life. If you know these boundaries ahead of time, it makes all the difference. It doesn't mean they are set in stone, but it gives you and your family clear guidelines on what they can expect from you.

And know this... there is no shame in making your family a priority. But, if someone tries to make you feel guilty and convince you that you can't climb the corporate ladder unless you choose one or the other, let me save you some trouble and tell you that that's not the person you want to work for.

The working world often tries to tell us we must choose, but I don't believe that's true. There is a way to do both.

### **3) TAKE A BREAK**

I'm not just talking about taking a lunch break here. I'm talking about taking an actual break. Parenting is a full-time job alongside your full-time job. So find a way to take some time for yourself.

Build some "me time" for yourself, and build it into your schedule. Get it on the calendar. Again, I know this isn't easy to make happen, and there might need to be some planning on your part, but I promise you can do it.

Take a day off work. Plan it ahead of time. Even if all you do is sit at home and do nothing, make sure you're doing nothing without the kids around. Sometimes you need a day off work, and sometimes you need a day off from your kids. There is absolutely nothing wrong with either. We all need our batteries recharged.

Maybe you need a really long nap. Read a book. Watch a movie. Take a bath without the kids knocking on the door. Walk in the park. Go to a museum. Get a pedicure or a massage. Go do something for YOU because you deserve it.

### **4) DELEGATE**

No matter how good you are at something, you cannot do everything alone. For those strong-willed women, it's easy to try to do everything on our own. And especially if you're a single mom, you're used to doing it all and carrying the whole burden.

But there are people out there who want to be in your circle, who want to help you. Sometimes you have to look a little harder to find them.

If you want to burn out quickly in your career and your family, don't ask for help.

If you have it in the budget, hire someone to help you. I'm not talking about paying someone else a full-time salary. I'm talking about hiring someone to do those minor tasks you don't want to, like, or have time to do. Consider hiring a virtual assistant to take some of those tasks on for 5-10 hours/week.

Again, I know this isn't a reality for everyone, but it certainly doesn't hurt to make it a future goal for yourself. Dream big; it's good for your health. Hey.. I think that's tweetable right there. Don't forget to make a meme out of it and quote me.

So, maybe you can't afford to hire a virtual assistant, but you have some friends in your circle who can help look after the kids while you run errands, etc. Or maybe your kids are a bit older, and you can start giving them more responsibility to do things.

Remember that you don't have to do it all yourself. Find ways to delegate. Consider making a list of things you enjoy and things you don't enjoy. Things you're good at and things you're not. Then ask yourself how you can outsource some of those things.

Let's do a quick recap of the habits you can start implementing today to balance your family and career as a working mom.

1. Write it down. To-do lists are your friend.
2. Set clear boundaries on your work and home priorities.
3. Give yourself some "me time."
4. Delegate, delegate, delegate.

I know I've already said it, but I'll say it again. I realize you're not going to put these habits all into place overnight, but pick one and start there, then do, rinse, repeat. It might all seem a bit overwhelming at first, but taking one next right step at a time is what leads to success.

And I want to say this... If no one else has said it to you yet, or lately, "You're doing better than you think you are. Keep going."

If you've enjoyed today's episode, would you mind sharing it with someone else you think could benefit? Maybe another working mom who needs some encouragement and motivation to keep going? And if you haven't already, would you mind heading over and leaving a review on iTunes for *The Workforce Link*? Let us know what you enjoy about the show. It means a lot to us and helps us stay visible so that others can easily find us.

Have a great week, my friend, and we'll meet again in the next episode. Until then. Remember this... There's always a brighter tomorrow if you're willing to find it.