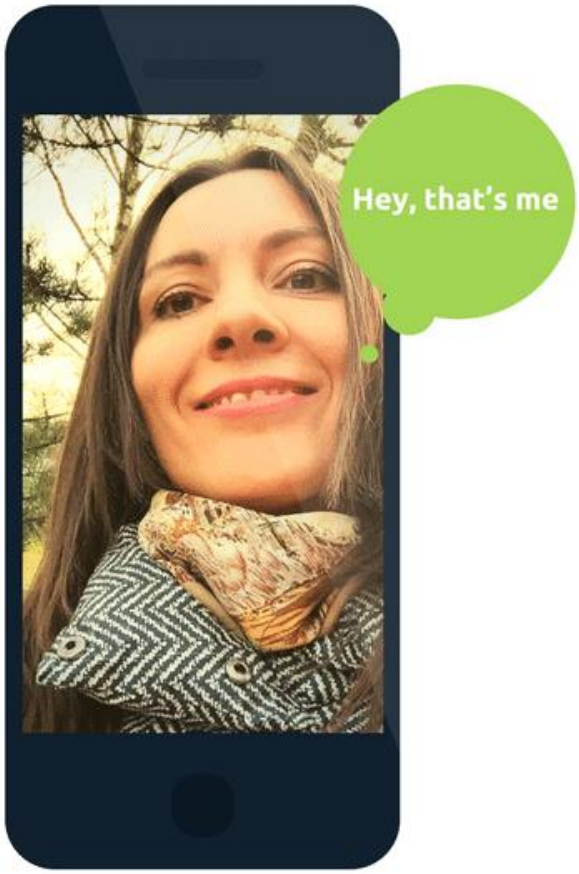
Work-life balance



Special material on the occasion of the International Women's Day, 2018

“Work, Sleep, Family, Fitness, or Friends: Pick 3”

On the occasion of the International Women's Day we have asked Magda Piasecka - a mother and a successful entrepreneur with a background in consulting -- to share her thoughts on the work-life balance from the point of view of a working mum.



Work-life balance is the holy grail for everyone, no matter what gender. The question is how you define ‘life’ and what you expect from life. When I started my career in a consulting firm, and it was the first time I learned about “work-life balance’, my definition of after-work life was simple: to pursue my passions, to hang out with my friends, to travel, to explore nightlife…

When I became a mother my life expectations changed dramatically – basically, the goal was to have more sleep. But seriously, the goal was to spend as much time as possible with my family.

Now, can mothers achieve work-life balance? When they undertake an extra project at work they immediately feel guilty about coming back home late. When they give up an extra project, they know they are losing a bonus, a chance for professional development or acquiring new contacts.

“Work, Sleep, Family, Fitness, or Friends: Pick 3.” Randi Zuckerberg (entrepreneur, former Facebook director of market development, and Mark’s sister) called it the "Entrepreneur's Dilemma". Does it sound familiar? I keep trying to find my own work-family balance: part-time job, stay at home mum. Finally, I’ve started my own business. It’s a great responsibility but at the same time, it offers me the most flexibility. And time flexibility at work is a key to managing family life.

I’m lucky to have all these opportunities. Think about our mothers and their challenges in the 70’s and 80’s in communist Poland. Besides the regular challenges every mother faces, they had to struggle and fight for things that are now so obvious to us and taken for granted. I’m lucky to be a working woman in Poland, 2018.

Magda Piasecka *started her career in 2003 as the first Polish intern hired by the US Embassy in Poland. After 2 years with the Embassy (Public Affairs and Economic Sections), she joined A.T. Kearney, strategic consulting firm. In 2017, Magda has decided to start her own business. She runs Kids in the City (www.kidsinthecity.pl) – a website dedicated to international families living in Poland, bilingual families and Polish internationally-oriented families. The goal of Kids in the City is to support families in their life in Poland and to give them inspiration on how to spend quality time in Warsaw and Poland with children.*

TASK 1: Discuss the following questions:

1. *What is a work-life balance for you?*
2. *Is it hard to achieve it today?*
3. *"Work, Sleep, Family, Fitness, or Friends: Pick 3." Randi Zuckerberg. Which 3 would you choose?*

TASK 2: Watch the video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxRTZQ-Hg0w

and answer the following questions:

1. What is the general situation of women in business according to Randi Zuckerberg? *There's a lot of progress, but also a lot of work to be done; women entrepreneurs get little funding from venture capitalists*

2. When tackling this issue, what aspects need to be taken into consideration? *educational system, the parents' attitude, corporate level, pop culture*

3. What is the common attitude of companies to diversity and why does Randi see it as wrong? *Companies treat diversity as a charitable action, or a 'box that needs to be checked' but in fact it seems that including women in the workforce makes companies more profitable*

4. What does Randi look at when someone comes to her with a business idea and why? *Primarily at the entrepreneur rather than the idea itself, because ideas can change*

5. What are the two key characteristics of an entrepreneur? *Passion and being able to listen to the data*