

Business Career Advice: Stop Feeling Guilty about Time Off!

Are you sitting at your desk dreamily imagining yourself on a South Seas vacation? Or maybe a rollicking holiday with the family? Or maybe you'd prefer to stay home and watch some DVDs.

Wanting to take some time off shouldn't make you feel guilty. In fact, in her new book, "Time Off for Good Behavior," Mary Lou Quinlan writes that seven out of 10 people fantasize about leaving work for a few months.

What's more, she reports that taking a break can help you feel less burned out. It can help you organize your life goals. Most people don't realize that taking time off--guilt free--isn't as difficult as it might seem.

So don't feel like you're condemned to remaining chained to your desk. Here are six options you can check out:

1. Make a plan. Think about why you want time off. Do you just need a few days to relax? Or are you looking to completely assess your career?
2. Figure out how much time off you'll need to come back fully refreshed.
3. Count your days off. Figure out how many vacation days you have. Add in any remaining sick or personal days.
4. Check out company policy. You may be eligible for a sabbatical with full or partial pay. Or you may have the option of re-entering the company after an unpaid leave.
5. Talk to your employer. If the company doesn't have a policy or spell out the details of flexible time off, now is the time to find out what the company can offer you.
6. Negotiate for what you need.

The point is you shouldn't be afraid to take some needed time off. It may be just what you need to get your life back in focus and prioritize what really important.

Furthermore, if you are a valued employee, your boss expects you to come forward with recommendations that show how the company will benefit from your time off.

Taking the time to spell out your ideas in a way that shows both concern and awareness of your expectations can result in a mutually advantageous arrangement.

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About the Author

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