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## Starting a Business Requires Sacrifice

Every business builder I know has made sacrifices in order to start and grow their businesses. It's a key characteristic of successful entrepreneurs.

By definition, a sacrifice is the act of surrendering something highly valued for the sake of something of even greater importance. (Guest contributor Rachel Federman talks about strategies for coping with the inevitable sacrifice of starting a business in her April 4 *Forbes* article [here](#))

In today's business environment, owners are invariably required to make sacrifices with varying consequences. Here are just a few:

### **Personal Sacrifices.**

Entrepreneurs often miss their children's ball games, dance recitals, birthday parties, parent teacher conferences and even wedding anniversaries. As I look back on my own experiences, there were nights when I came home from work long after the children were in bed and I was too tired for even a bowl of soup. As entrepreneurs we should ask ourselves: What am I missing to achieve business success? Where are my priorities? Is work more important to me than my wife or my children?



Every business builder makes great sacrifices to become a successful entrepreneur

To be fair, I tried very hard to juggle my family commitments with the demands of entrepreneurship. Fortunately, there were occasions when I enjoyed a normal day when I played catch with my sons and helped my daughters with their homework. Thankfully, all six children survived my entrepreneurial years and are exceptional adults. Today they are business executives and homemakers with many of the same challenges my wife Jeanne and I faced.

Many entrepreneurs are not so fortunate. As they have built their business kingdoms, they have lost their spouses through divorce and their children hardly know their names. In many cases, the tradeoffs between work and family can be devastating.

I knew I had crossed the line when, after too many trips to San Jose to visit technology clients, the Delta flight attendant called me by name. On another occasion, I awoke one night at 3:00 a.m. in a hotel room having forgotten where I was. Every hotel room looked the same. What was the name of the city? Why was I there?

Had I lost my mind?

**Balance is critical.** There is only so much time in a day. What can a busy entrepreneur do?

1. **First**, find time to be with your family. Make it a non-negotiable priority.
2. **Second**, make some time for yourself. To eliminate burnout, dedicate an hour a day to visit the gym, read, listen to music or take a walk.
3. **Third**, hire an employee and delegate some of your tasks to him or her to reduce your workload.
4. **Fourth**, remind yourself that some days, weeks and months will be long and intense, but there will be other days when you can stay home.

The life of an entrepreneur is filled with many sacrifices. They are real-but with some care and practice they are also manageable.

For more detail and more ideas about how to manage sacrifice as an entrepreneur you can refer to my newest eBook, *The Characteristics of a Successful Entrepreneur*, which is premiering on Amazon this week. While the sacrifice of entrepreneurship is very real, I would maintain that for many individuals, particularly in the current economy, the advantages of entrepreneurship far outweigh the high hard work and high cost. I wish you success.

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<http://www.forbes.com/sites/alanhall/2012/06/12/starting-a-business-requires-sacrifice/>