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Jason Blumer • Jan. 04, 2012

If you haven't noticed, things are changing in the world of professional accounting. In fact, this change seems to be happening all over the world. Due to many things like technology, mobile work areas, work-ready coffee shops, co-working facilities, and a younger work force, we are seeing *The Perfect Blend* of our personal lives and our work take place before our very eyes. This perfect blend seems to be something younger generations (or young-minded individuals) are more tuned in to. The old guard still likes the rigid division between our work and our lives. To be sure, the perfect blend requires an open mind to approach your work and your personal lives in a whole new way. Why this change?

Those interested in *the perfect blend* get to live and work their passions. With *the perfect blend*, passionate individuals get to live their lives (maybe at a camp ground or on the beach) AND work at the same time doing something they love (like blogging, preparing tax returns or coaching with customers). These individuals think this is an amazing change in our world. "I get to prepare tax returns AND go camping at the same time? That is awesome," they'll say. Can everyone live this life? Only if you are open to some serious changes in your work place. Your personal life is ready to receive this change, but the real change has to happen at work. Be ready to give up everything you thought was the way business should be conducted. When you hire individuals ready for *the perfect blend*, be prepared for them to question dress codes, being confined to one location for work, micro-management and even taking on the wrong kind of customers that don't also believe in *the perfect blend*. It sounds like I'm describing a bratty "millennial" employee that doesn't really know much about the real world. But maybe I'm describing someone that has lived their whole life using technology to blend their personal and work life. Maybe they are just wondering

why older-modeled businesses are not changing to reflect the reality of our world's

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through an online website, RingCentral.com (you'll also hear me singing the hold music). Was there hiccups when we did this? Yes, but we work through the issues because we have the underlying belief that we don't need phones anymore. We use Skype more than we use phones (and Skype is free).

2. We implemented a ROWE in our firm. A ROWE, or a Results-Only Work Environment, is an environment where you only care about the results that your team members deliver. Nothing else matters. Dress codes, employment agreements, annual performance reviews, timesheets, and requirements to stay off of Facebook do not exist in our firm. A ROWE means I don't have to micro-manage people who are actually smarter than I am. They do their work because they love to do their work. And when we all buy-in to the vision of how our results can change our customer's lives, we simply get to work. And most of them get to work at home, because they don't want to come to the office anymore. And most of our customers are found all over the country so we don't need to come to the office anyway. This leads to my third experiment...

3. We are going to close our office on January 1, 2013. Since everyone does what they want in our firm, they work at home most of the time now. We believe that we don't need an office anymore. Again, we *believe* that. And when you believe something, you will typically act on what you believe. A lot of planning has gone into this move, and we have a lot of work to do to notify our customer base about this change. But more and more, our customer base is all over the country so they have never been to our office anyway. They don't even need us to tell them that we are closing our office.

4. We will not allow paper to leave or come into our office on January 1, 2013. Because of the way we want to work, and because we will not have an office anymore, paper cannot be a part of our future. It must be eliminated. We believe that. We believe that so much that we are willing to say "you are not the right customer

for us” instead of deliver paper to someone who might want paper. When you make

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about the kind of customers we take into the firm. Only a certain kind of customer will enjoy the way we work. But when you take customers from all over the country, we are finding there are plenty to go around that believe the same things we believe.

What is *the perfect blend* like in your firm? Does it exist? To be sure, for the right team member, the perfect blend will exist... but it may not be at your firm. They may start their own firm one day and create their own *perfect blend* out of their personal life and the work that they love so much. *The Perfect Blend* allows our team members to love what they do, love how they do it and love the customers they serve. What could be better than that?

Technology

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