

## The Pull of Work and Life

If you were to ask managers and executives where they get the most influential and effective developmental training, the answer you're likely to get is "on the job." It's widely accepted in organizations that experience gained from job assignments and formal training helps managers develop their skills in such areas as implementing agendas, working through relationships, creating change, and increasing personal awareness.

Too often, however, those same managers and executives discount what can be learned from experiences outside of work. The popular media consistently portrays the intersection of work life and family life as fraught with career peril. Phrases like "mommy track" define how some women's careers are handicapped when they take on the role of mother. The label "daddy stress" goes to the conflict men can feel when the expectations to excel at work and the desire to spend more time with family clash.

Although nonwork roles and responsibilities can limit and interfere with performance at work, there is another side to this story that is much richer in possibilities and rewards. Interests, roles, and responsibilities outside of work can also serve as creative and supportive sources for learning how to be a more effective manager.

It's important to see that ordinary nonwork activities such as organizing a fund-raising event, coaching a youth sports team, and even advocating for a community cause are not irrelevant to or disconnected from your work activities. Such activities provide both the practical skills and the psychological support that can enhance your leadership effectiveness on the job. It's not that you

have to be superman or superwoman—having and doing it all—but that you recognize that off-the-job experiences create powerful managerial lessons. Be careful not to misunderstand the relationship between outside activities and work. Contrary to popular belief, and reinforced by CCL research, activities that take place outside of the regular workday contribute to a leader's effectiveness as a manager. In this guidebook you will learn:

- What management skills you can learn from nonwork experiences.
  - How skills developed on the job can enhance your private life.
  - How nonwork activities promote leadership development.
  - How to break down the barriers between your work and your personal life.
  - How to develop an action plan for creating connections between all your roles and responsibilities, on and off the job.