

Working mom woes? Follow our tips for going back to work after a baby

If you've decided to go back to work and are preparing to become a working mom, you're more than likely navigating a rollercoaster of emotions. Feelings ranging from guilty and anxious to excited and motivated are all normal. How do you manage your working mom work-life balance? If you're wondering how to plan, what to say and what to ask your employer, our tips for going back to work after a baby will help you.

Choosing the right daycare

Do your research and make sure you're happy with the childcare you have in place. When choosing childcare, find out early what the waitlists are like, ask around for recommendations, schedule a tour through the daycare centres you are interested in, look for online reviews on them and, most important of all, trust your gut! If your mind is at rest, you'll be able to more easily concentrate when you're at work.

Consider requesting flexible working

Some parents may ask their employer about job sharing, or reducing work hours or work days. Remember that this will likely mean a reduction in salary. If that's not an option, you may consider a request for flexible working. It may be possible to ask for your hours to be staggered to fit with your childcare needs (an earlier start and an earlier finish, for example) or for teleworking arrangements. Employers won't want to lose good employees, so it's in their interest to consider your request carefully.

Working moms: handle your work colleagues

If your working hours have changed, or you've reduced your working week, make sure to communicate that with your team and colleagues. This will help manage their expectations and to ensure you don't feel pressured into doing overtime or taking on tight deadlines that you won't realistically be able to meet. When prioritizing your workload, remember to take into account your working hours. Don't be afraid to speak up if something feels too tight or suggest more realistic deadlines.

Control working mom anxiety

Don't be hard on yourself. This is going to be a massive change for you, so accept that it'll take some time to adjust to your new routine. It could be good to ease yourself back into working to get into the swing of things. Ask your employer about a phased return. You could do reduced hours or days for the first month, for example, to ensure both you and your baby are coping and happy.

Seek out working mom support

Whether it's a friend that's in the same boat, co-workers or a working mom support group, seek out a network of people you can talk to when it's all getting too much, to answer any of your questions, and who can empathize with your situation. Don't bottle up how you're feeling. Your partner and family will also want to support you however they can, so don't be afraid to shout if you need help.

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