



The Greatest Memo about Work/Life Balance Ever?

Last year a top tech company CEO decided he needed more balance in his life and he wrote a blog post about how he was going to accomplish that.

The Washington Post covered the story with this commentary:

When a male CEO says he's stepping down from his job to spend more time with his family, it's often thought of as code for a tension-filled resignation that allows an executive to save face.

But Max Schireson, CEO of MongoDB, a fast-growing database vendor, really means it.

In an extraordinary [blog entry](#) titled "Why I am leaving the best job I ever had," the Silicon Valley executive wrote Tuesday that the only way he could balance his life was to step away from his work. "I recognize that by writing this I may be disqualifying myself from some future CEO role," writes Schireson, who will remain with the company as vice chairman. "Will that cost me tens of millions of dollars someday? Maybe. Life is about choices. Right now, I choose to spend more time with my family."

Schireson, whose family is based in California, while the majority of the company's work is based in New York, has three children (aged 14, 12 and 9) and is married to a doctor and professor at Stanford who

does research and runs a training program for high-risk obstetricians. In the post, he calls her "a fantastic mom, brilliant, beautiful, and infinitely patient with me. I love her, I am forever in her debt for finding a way to keep the family working despite my crazy travel. I should not continue abusing that patience."



Max Schireson, CEO of MongoDB

He writes of the things he's missed (a family puppy being hit by a car, emergency surgery for his son) and the miles he's flown (he's on track for 300,000 this year). While his travel should scale back significantly, Schireson isn't quitting MongoDB entirely. He'll transition the CEO job in a month to Dev Ittycheria, whom the company named as his successor Tuesday. Schireson will remain vice chairman, and work full-time — "but 'normal full time' and not 'crazy full time,'" he writes.

Here is the full text of his blog entry, which you can also read in original format on his site, <http://maxschireson.com/>:

Earlier this summer, Matt Lauer asked Mary Barra, the CEO of GM, whether she could balance the demands of

being a mom and being a CEO. The Atlantic asked similar questions of PepsiCo's female CEO Indra Nooyi. As a male CEO, I have been asked what kind of car I drive and what type of music I like, but never how I balance the demands of being both a dad and a CEO.

While the press haven't asked me, it is a question that I often ask myself. Here is my situation:

- I have 3 wonderful kids at home, aged 14, 12 and 9, and I love spending time with them: skiing, cooking, playing backgammon, swimming, watching movies or Warriors or Giants games, talking, whatever.
- I am on pace to fly 300,000 miles this year, all the normal CEO travel plus commuting between Palo Alto and New York every 2-3 weeks. During that travel, I have missed a lot of family fun, perhaps more importantly, I was not with my kids when our puppy was hit by a car or when my son had (minor and successful, and of course unexpected) emergency surgery.
- I have an amazing wife who also has an important career; she is a doctor and professor at Stanford where, in addition to her clinical duties, she runs their training program for high risk obstetricians and conducts research on prematurity, surgical techniques, and other topics. She is a fantastic mom, brilliant, beautiful, and infinitely patient with me....

[Click here](#) to read the rest of Schireson's blog post.