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## Father's Day: Family First for These Business Leaders

Seven professional dads share parenting secrets in a 24/7 work world.



BY MAUREEN MACKEY, The Fiscal Times

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Americans will spend an estimated \$12.5 billion on Father's Day gifts for dear old dad – on goofy ties, “man candles” and outsized barbecue grills – but when it comes to the parenting business and its long-term impact, gifts are hardly what matters most.

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Great dads share valuable advice and build bonds with their offspring – whether those bonds are forged over the [World Cup](#), the Stanley Cup, or a [cup of joe](#).

This Father's Day, we asked seven executives how they balance the critical job of parenting with their 24/7 professional lives – and how they keep their children front and center. [Work-life balance as an issue](#) is as relevant to fathers in 2014 as it has long been to mothers:

**Dr. Wayne Scott Andersen, medical director, [Take Shape For Life, Inc.](#):**

“I travel almost every week for work, so to prioritize my time, I apply the Mason jar parable: You have a jar, large rocks, pebbles, and sand. Imagine the sand is what's happening right now. If you fill the jar with sand, there is no room for anything else, specifically the big rocks – the important things – in your life. So I fill my life with the big rocks first – family trips, my daughters' school events. Then I add the pebbles and sand.

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“I had my 14-year-old daughter's graduation on my calendar for months so that no small things could block it. My wife, Lori, and our daughters, Erica, 14, and Savannah, 17, stack our cell phones when we go out to dinner – and the first one to pick up a phone to check messages has to pay for dinner. The girls have had to pay once or twice! We also avoid electronics on vacations so we have time to connect with each other.

“When the girls come home from school and I'm there, I drop everything and devote 100 percent of my attention to them – because I know I'll only have their attention for about five minutes. I make sure they're validated.”

**Raul Corzo, president, [IMUSA USA](#):**

“In the boardroom, I'm dialed in on IMUSA but when I am home, being a father to Sabrina, 14, and Raul, 10, is my main priority. My kids call the shots, from going to the movies, a concert or the mall. I'm a hands-on father.”

**Mike MacDonald, CEO, [Medifast](#):**

“I have three adult children and four grandchildren, with a fifth grandchild on the way. As active and out front as I am in running a public company and needing to demonstrate leadership, I try to spend every minute I can on the weekends with all my children and grandchildren. It's a very balanced life that way – I'm a fortunate man.”

**Ted Karkus, CEO, ProPhase Labs:**

“I’m motivated to provide my wife and kids with as much love and attention as possible. I volunteered to coach my two sons, Jason, 16, and Brett, 11, in AAU travel basketball. Coaching my kids guarantees that I spend quality time with them in a situation where I cannot be distracted by work. As for the rest of the time, I watch less TV and do fewer activities that aren’t productive and instead spend time with my family.”

**Michael Mahoney, SVP, Consumer Marketing, GoHealth:**

“The key is making time at the right time. I have a 3-month-old son, so I’m always deciding when to be in or out of the office and when to be engaged (even remotely) – and how to prioritize my time while at work. I want to get more done in less time so I can be present and engaged in my child’s life. I try to focus on maximizing what matters and minimizing what does not.”

**Craig Shirley, author:**

“I never subscribed to the BS about ‘quality time.’ All time is quality time when it comes to children. I’ve been fortunate to write from home and so never bought into the nonsense about rationing time with our four children – but even when I went to an office, I rejected that false notion.”

**Dr. John P. Salerno, MD, The Salerno Center:**

“I take my son, age 10, and my daughter, age 6, to school every day. Since I tend to work later hours and arrive home late, it’s a great way for me to spend time with the kids. I’ll often ride my bike with them to school. We have great conversations.”