A Balancing Act: The Many Requirements at a Modern Landfill

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• What is balance?
• Balancing acts defined
• How to find it!
• Final Takeaways
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What is balance?

- Dictionary.com:

  Balance is having the right amount — not too much or too little — of any quality, which leads to harmony or evenness.
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What is balance?

• Merriam Webster:

1. *an even distribution of weight enabling someone or something to remain upright and steady.* "she lost her balance before falling"

   synonyms: stability, equilibrium, steadiness, footing

2. *a condition in which different elements are equal or in the correct proportions.* "try to keep a balance between work and relaxation"
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What is balance?

• Urban Dictionary:

Balance

It's a new word to describe a really attractive woman, hot chick. On a scale of 10: a balance is a shorty that is an 8/10. Not completely a dime, but still really hot.

Tim: Ayo, bro did u see dat girl.
Alex: Word, dat shorty is my balance for the night.

#shorty #boo #dime #balance #sexy
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What is balance?

• At a modern landfill balance is many things…
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Balancing Acts Defined

• At a modern landfill...

...it’s striving for harmony in the following areas:

- Technical/operational
- Regulatory/compliance
- Economic/financial
- People/culture
- Community relations
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Balancing Acts - Technical/Operational

• Airspace planning – construction sequencing
  • Compaction, settlement, soil usage, ADC, liquids, etc.
  • Waste flow swings
  • What could go wrong???

• Leachate management – hot topic!
  • Cell development and storm water management
  • Liquids addition
  • Cost and effectiveness of options
  • Weather - precipitation
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Balancing Acts - Technical/Operational

- LFG management
  - “Balancing” GCCS (vacuum: too little vs too much)
    - Compliance vs causing LF fire (not as simple as cranking up the vacuum)
    - LFGTE developer (compliance vs LFGTE efficiency)

- Equipment
  - Maintain vs buy new (cost, timing, risk of breakdown)

- Soil usage
  - Daily cover usage (not enough vs too much; compliance)
  - Site balance (structural fill, liner, daily/int cover, final cover)
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Balancing Acts - Technical/Operational

• Safety
  • Load inspections, flaggers, etc. – compliance vs maximizing worker safety

• Scale throughput vs working face traffic
  • Balancing traffic and waste at the face
  • Keep customers safe/happy
  • Maintain harmony!
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Balancing Acts - Regulatory/Compliance

• Multiple programs to address plus changes
• Conflicting permit requirements
• Personnel changes (facility or regulatory)
• No violations policy – high bar – adds internal pressure
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Balancing Acts - Regulatory/Compliance

• CCR
  • Federal vs state requirements (GW, liner/cover systems, etc.)
  • CCR Rule is a vague in many areas
  • Self implementing rule – i.e., no regulator to work with
  • Overhaul the “old way” – tough to break decade long habits
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Balancing Acts - Economic/Financial

• Budgets are always tight!
• Needs vs wants
• Budgeting and communication challenges
  • Engineering vs operations
  • Environmental vs engineering (Utility)
  • Site vs regional vs corporate
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Balancing Acts - People/Culture

- Staffing numbers
  - Private – financially driven, no extras
  - Public – shared staff
- Cultural issues – mergers/acquisitions
- “What do I like least about my job? Managing people!”
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Balancing Acts - Community Relations

• NIMBY effect!
• Local politics
• Social/digital media = escalator
• CCR - prescribed website posting
  • New and challenging concept to industry
  • Too little? Doesn’t provide enough detail
  • Too much? May invite scrutiny >> lawsuits?
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How to Find It! (Balance that is)

• Technical/Operational
  ✓ Have a plan!
  ✓ Identify multiple leachate management options
  ✓ Don’t reinvent the wheel
  ✓ Utilize industry groups (MWCC, SWANA, USWAG, EPRI)
  ✓ Talk to people! (Communicate)
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How to Find It! (Balance that is)

• Regulatory/Compliance
  ✓ Audit program
  ✓ **Communication** plan with regulators
    ✓ Develop relationships!
    ✓ Regular meetings
    ✓ Construction updates
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How to Find It! (Balance that is)

• Economic/Financial
  ✓ Detailed planning leads to accurate budgets
  ✓ Seek broad input
  ✓ Consider market changes/volatility
  ✓ Build in budget contingencies
  ✓ Communicate across organization (pre and post)
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How to Find It! (Balance that is)

• People/Culture
  ✓ Treat others as you would like to be treated
  ✓ Work hard, play hard
  ✓ Merger/acquisition: have an integration plan and execute it
  ✓ Communicate! Talk to people, listen to people, know what’s going on
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How to Find It! (Balance that is)

• Community Relations
  ✓ Build early relationships – you’ll need them
  ✓ Educate the public
  ✓ Know your political reps
  ✓ Host open houses and regular roundtables
  ✓ Be active in the community, be visible
  ✓ Support the broader industry (all for one!)
  ✓ Utilize internal experts or consider a PR firm
  ✓ Budget for it
  ✓ Communicate! Communicate! Communicate!
  ✓ You can never do enough!
Landfill Rebranding Committee

A Joint Committee of SWANA’s Landfill Management Technical Division and Communication, Education & Marketing Technical Division

Contact Anastasia Welch for details
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How to Find It! (Balance that is)

• Final Takeaways
  ✓ There are a lot of technical/operational resources – use them
  ✓ Planning is your friend – plan, communicate, execute
  ✓ Communication may be the key to it all!
    Understanding that communication is critical to overall balance at a landfill!
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Any questions??
Are you done yet?
Wake up!
Who’s your favorite regulator?
That was amazing!!
What do you think Brady?