By Candice Lange, President of Lange Associates

Special thanks to Karen Morrison, David Klossner, and the many NCAA members who shared personal stories about balancing their work and personal lives.

NCAA WorkLife Balance resources at: http://www.ncaa.org/wps/ncaa?ContentID=1492
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1</td>
<td>Introduction: The Case for WorkLife Balance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2</td>
<td>What Is WorkLife Balance Today?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 3</td>
<td>Out of Balance: Causes and Conflicts</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4</td>
<td>Work Overload and Its Outcomes</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5</td>
<td>Taking Personal Action to Balance Life and Work</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 6</td>
<td>Suggestions to Create Change</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 7</td>
<td>Building a Supportive Athletics Environment</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX I</td>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX II</td>
<td>Reading List</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX III</td>
<td>Sample Campus Culture Survey...Framing Conversations</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION: THE CASE FOR WORKLIFE BALANCE

My life in athletics never ends. There is never a moment that I can be out of touch with my job. It is truly a 24/7 job but I do love what I do.

There simply isn’t enough time to do what is required. Handling my work commitments with my commitments at home with personal time is impossible, and I always feel I am letting one part go to work on another.

Few work environments are more demanding of time and energy than competitive intercollegiate athletics. With intensely challenging schedules both in and out-of-season, the work culture presents a serious dilemma to those who seek a more effective balance between their work and personal life.

And as the workload has become more intense, personal life has become more complex. Families may be traditional or nontraditional, and may include a spouse or partner, parents, children, grandchildren, extended family members, or close friends – anyone who plays an important role in one’s personal life. Such issues as single parenting, care for elders and the management of dual careers are now commonplace.

In 2006, the NCAA conducted a poll of its membership. Open comments from more than 4,000 respondents provided a unique view of life in today’s athletics environment. Many reported working longer and harder than ever. Staffing shortages have increased the workloads of existing staff. The demands of many athletics jobs, compounded by the use of cell phones and e-mail, result in a nearly continuous work schedule.

Responding to feedback from members, the NCAA has identified the issue of work and personal life balance as a strategic priority. The NCAA is committed to promoting athletics work environments that allow individuals to achieve success in both their work and personal lives. Such supportive cultures also improve the recruitment and retention of athletics staff and promote their health and well-being.
Through the voices of athletics staff members, this handbook will present an overview of the issue of work and life balance in the athletics environment.

Although there is no magic formula to resolve these complex issues, there are some actions you can take to make your life more manageable without sacrificing work results. Most successful initiatives require a foundation of well-designed organizational programs and policies, with continuous effort and flexibility on the part of individuals and their supervisors. But the results are well worth the efforts required. It is possible to help your athletics department achieve a win/win – developing a winning program, while fostering a greater quality of life.

“We need, and will get, organizational changes not unlike those taking place in the corporate world that allow for more flexibility in the way these demands are met, and enable women (as well as all coaches) to take advantage of their skills, opportunities and contributions, while recognizing that they have a life beyond work.”

Myles Brand, NCAA President

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Goals of the WorkLife Balance Initiative:

- Assist athletics administrators, staff, and coaches in balancing their work and personal lives;
- Assist athletics administrators in identifying effective policies;
- Integrate sensitivity and responsiveness toward family and work commitments into daily athletics department practices;
- Increase the visibility of successful Work-Life solutions;
- Implement workplace equity in a diverse workforce;
- Encourage collaboration with other institutional programs by connecting athletics administrators, staff and coaches to programs that already exist on campus and in the community;
- Facilitate the development of new Work-Life solutions;
- Enhance retention of quality staff.

“Providing employees with flexibility and family-friendly programs is more than a ‘nice thing to have’ fringe benefit; it is critical to our success. KPMG is committed to maintaining a strong culture of flexibility - one that supports our people as individuals with real needs and responsibilities at home and at work. It’s not just good for our people; it’s good for our business.”

Timothy P. Flynn, Chairman and CEO, KPMG
CHAPTER 2

WHAT IS WORKLIFE BALANCE TODAY?

The challenge is not to let the job consume you. I’ve been in this a long time and think I’ve handled these issues pretty well along the way.

What does work-life balance mean in today’s athletics environment? It starts with the basics: you, your work, and your personal life.

For just a moment, think of your life as two great dimensions (Figure 1, page 6). Everything connected to your career or life’s work falls on the work side, while everything in your personal life – your family and friends, your personal interests, your work in the community falls into the dimension of your personal life. You stand in the center with your core values.

Of course, you give many parts of yourself to each dimension of your life, and you receive much in return. For this review of your work-life balance, you will focus on two types of “currency” that you distribute to your work and personal life: your time and your energy. But first, consider what kinds of rewards you receive in return for this investment.

Think of balance as the distribution of your time and energy between work and personal life in such a way that, over time, your core values and responsibilities are fulfilled.

Think about the work dimension of your life. Why do you work? For pay, of course, but aren’t there other rewards from your athletics career that may be even more important to you? Most people would list a number of work rewards that arise from their personal values: rewards such as challenge, achievement, growth, meaning and social interaction. The specific list and the importance of each of these rewards vary with each person. If your work rewards are closely in line with your values and expectations from work, it is highly likely that you have a job that fits you, and one that you enjoy.
On the personal side of life, people often report that they seek rewards such as love, perspective, relaxation, meaning, joy, and the fulfillment of their responsibilities to others. Although some values, such as meaning, are often on both lists, people generally expect different rewards from personal life. Most people (but not all) need rewards from both dimensions of life to feel whole and successful.

Every day, you invest the currency of your time and energy to each of these dimensions – work and personal life. The key to finding balance is to distribute your time and energy in a way that works for you at this point in your life. That is, are you distributing your time and energy in a manner in which you are receiving the rewards that matter to you in both your work and your personal life? Individuals whose activities, over time, are not fulfilling their most important values (including fulfilling their responsibilities to others) will feel that something is out of place.

In summary, think of balance as the distribution of your time and energy between work and personal life in such a way that, over time, your core values and responsibilities are fulfilled. It is important to remember that balance happens over time, not every day. A system of managing work and personal life may need to be continually adjusted as your circumstances change. And nearly everyone has days and weeks in which life feels completely out of control; it is the fulfillment of your life over the long term that counts.

NCAA WorkLife Task Force
Conclusion No.1

Employees are our biggest investment and most significant asset. Administrators should set the tone, empowering people to achieve their career goals with their families intact. Traditionally, balancing family and work commitments was considered an issue for female employees. The Task Force emphasized that integrating work with a personal life affects both genders. Members expressed concerns that if the issues are not addressed in a timely fashion, many employees will leave the field of intercollegiate athletics and many more may never enter. Incorporating life balance concepts into formalized hiring and retention polices and practices will shape an inclusive environment and provide clear boundaries for life balance.
Note that you are not counting the number of hours that you work. Work-life balance is less about the amount of time spent at work than you may think. Some people may work more than 70 hours every week and feel “in balance” because their specific needs from their work and personal life are met with such a schedule. Others may find that a schedule of 40 hours of work per week is too much.

It is also important to think of balance in terms of your levels of energy. For example, if you are often spending time at home thinking about work, you are actually spending your “energy currency” in the work dimension. And if you feel an energy drain by the time you arrive at home after work, your energy reserves are spent – there is little left of you for your personal life, regardless of the length of time you are at home.

Figure 1: Balance in Today's Work Environment
Exercise: Rewards of Work and Personal Life

1. Most people pursue their careers and personal lives with hope for a number of tangible and intangible rewards. Some of the most frequently mentioned rewards are listed below.

   a. Place a “W” next to eight items that best describe the rewards that you hope or expect to receive from your career in athletics. Choose the eight items that are most important to you.

   b. Place an “L” next to eight items that best describe the rewards that you hope or expect to receive from your personal life. Again, choose the eight items that are most important to you. (If an item is an important reward from both your work and personal life, indicate both “W” and “L” beside that item.)

   - Achievement
   - Affection
   - Challenge
   - Developing others
   - Fulfillment
   - Fun
   - Identity
   - Joy
   - Learning
   - Love
   - Meaning
   - Pay

   - Perspective
   - Power
   - Prestige
   - Relaxation
   - Responsibility
   - Self-actualization
   - Self esteem
   - Service to others
   - Social interaction
   - Spiritual growth
   - Winning
   - Other (specify)

2. How are you doing – today – with respect to the realization of these rewards? Are you distributing your time and energy in a way that works for you?
WORKLOAD

For those in athletics careers, the most frequently mentioned work-life issue is an unrelenting, heavy workload. When asked about the causes of their workload, most people report that they have too much work and not enough staffing. But on closer inspection, there are at least three contributing factors:

- Lack of control
- Multiple tasks competing for attention
- Pressure, either self-imposed or from others

In fact, it is the combination of these three factors that seem to cause the greatest stress in feeling overworked.

LACK OF CONTROL

You always feel as if you have to be accessible to the other athletics staff. Cell phones are great but then your staff tracks you down all hours of the night ... and there is never a clean break from work.

People feel a lack of control when they are unable to set boundaries on time, place or amount of work; when their deadlines or due dates are established by others; or when their work requires constant availability to other people.
MULTIPLE, SIMULTANEOUS TASKS

There are so many duties that have deadlines attached that at times, there are too many things to do at once. Sometimes, I feel I will scream if someone asks me to do one more thing!

Having one large project to complete may be stressful, but when there are several projects that all require attention at the same time, the sense of overwork increases. Examples of multiple task issues are conflicting priorities, insufficient staffing for the work to be done, and a deluge of urgent, but possibly less important, tasks such as answering telephone calls and e-mail messages.

PRESSURE

The growing expectations of the academic advisors ... seem insurmountable much of the time ... Your athletics administrators expect you to do whatever it takes to get it done.

All the competition is putting at least as much time into work as I am. If I spend less time, I’ll be left behind.

Although a little pressure sometimes gets people moving, too much pressure, especially when added to too many tasks and a lack of control, only causes more stress. Pressure in collegiate athletics can be intense. Though pressure arises from many sources, the stress that you place upon yourself may add an additional burden to your workload. Consider the following examples of self-stress:

High self-expectations: Demanding your best performance to such an extent that you undermine your health and well-being. For some, this issue is also related to an unwillingness to rely on others for help.

Guilt: For not spending more time with family members, often followed by more guilt for not spending more time at work.

Uncertainty: Are you truly supported by your boss? Are your children/parents/friends doing well in your absence? Worrying adds to the stress of a heavy workload.
WORK STRESSES IN ADDITION TO WORKLOAD

I do not like my job anymore – [the] new AD has me on a short leash.

In addition to the absorption of time and energy from a heavy workload, staff members can also feel stressed by dealing with problems with the job or the supervisor. For example, people who do not feel valued at work, or who feel that they are not being treated fairly by their supervisor, may be experiencing a significant drain in energy. And a difficult work situation may consume the thoughts of the individual during non-working hours. As a result, someone who is unhappy at work can feel out of balance even with a light amount of work.

PERSONAL LIFE ISSUES: KEY AREAS OF CONFLICT

If work were the only dimension of life that involved multiple tasks, pressure and a lack of control, life would be far less complicated and work-life balance more achievable. But in reality, most people play a number of demanding roles in personal life. The following quotations from athletics staff describe some of the key areas from which a personal life conflict may arise with work:

Child care in our town is outrageous and my salary makes it difficult to cover expenses. I love my job and do not want to leave, but eventually it may come to this.

I do not like my job anymore – [the] new AD has me on a short leash.

The time and energy demands of a full-time job, plus the care of children or adult relatives, is one of the most frequently discussed issues of work-life balance. There is a national shortage of high-quality, affordable child care; for those in athletics, with schedules that require evening or weekend work, there is even more difficulty finding good care. And those with elder relatives have difficult, ever-changing and often long-distance issues.

2008 NCAA Gender Equity in College Coaching and Administration: Perceived Barriers Report

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<th>Coaches (1,475)</th>
<th>Administrators (1,107)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Division I</td>
<td>Division II</td>
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<tr>
<td>I currently have work life balance.</td>
<td>64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am managing my work commitments effectively.</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careers in athletics conflict with my family duties.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Life and work balance is not a concern limited to people with children or adult dependents. Nearly everyone has responsibilities to other people or other issues. Single people often feel that their supervisors and coworkers do not recognize or support their needs. Some report that they are expected to do additional work when their colleagues with families go home.

Personal needs — such as health and fitness — are often neglected when work becomes overwork. Over time, these sacrifices may become barriers to both quality of life and work effectiveness.

By the end of a workweek, I am usually too tired to engage in personal activities and I usually have a lot of household chores to do.

It is very hard to try and get ahead and accomplish all the tasks for the team while being able to pursue even simple relationships outside of work.

What usually is sacrificed is personal time to work out, sleep and take a breath.

It is sometimes the difficulty to perform basic personal life tasks that creates a growing sense of imbalance. In every household, someone needs to do the day-to-day tasks, such as housework and bill-paying. When the routine personal work falls to one person who is also meeting the responsibilities of a demanding job, the resulting overall workload can feel overwhelming.

Many respondents expressed frustration that the personal trade-off for an athletics career is too high. For some, the basic struggle is a conflict in values, as opposed to a specific life situation.

We take these jobs because we love athletics but, it shouldn’t be that we sacrifice our personal lives to do a normal job.

Just as the meaning of work-life balance varies with the individual, the issues that cause people to feel out of balance are varied and complex. Many of the same factors that contribute to work overload — a lack of control, having multiple, simultaneous tasks, and feeling high pressure — also contribute to the sense of overload in the many roles of personal life. The next chapter highlights some of the outcomes of sustained imbalance and overwork.
1. Why do you work so hard? From the list below, check the factors that affect your workload. Next, review your responses and circle the five most significant factors to you.

Factors related to a lack of control:
- Frequent travel
- Tasks require others’ input
- Required attendance at weekend or evening events
- Others set my work schedule
- I need to be available to others on a 24/7 basis
- Frequent interruptions
- Inability to control where my work is done
- Inability to control how my work is done

Factors related to having multiple, simultaneous tasks:
- Too many things to do at the same time
- Too much busy work
- Not enough staffing to cover all the work
- Tight deadlines for my work
- Too many e-mails and voice mails
- Expectations are unclear
- Supervisor doesn’t realize the length of time required to complete tasks
- Frequent changes in priorities

Factors related to high pressure:
- Workaholic culture – everyone works long hours
- Competitive pressures
- Performance judged by hours worked
- Difficult for me to say no
- I have high expectations of myself
- I love my job – it is fun to be at work
- My commitment to the needs of others (colleagues, student-athletes)
- Pressure from coworkers
2. Is it your workload alone that is causing your stress, or are there also some unresolved issues at work or with your supervisor that should be addressed? Describe them.

3. Now consider your personal life. In what specific areas do you feel a lack of control, high pressure, or the experience of too many things competing for your attention?

4. Briefly describe your most significant challenge in balancing your personal life and your work.
What are the consequences of working in a constant state of overload and imbalance? Is work overload a necessary condition of the athletics work environment, and the cost of maintaining a winning program? Or are there unrecognized costs to the program and to the individual?

**THE IMPACT OF OVERWORK**

A 2001 study on work and overwork identified a number of outcomes from work overload. One of the most commonly reported outcomes is the lack of sleep — either from working into the night, or from insomnia caused by stress. Giving up healthy behaviors is also common. The study also found that people who are overworked also report losing focus on their work and making more mistakes.

But what happens when the stressed individual is a supervisor of other people? Leaders under stress often show ineffective behaviors that unfortunately cascade throughout the department. For example, supervisors whose reactions to overwork are irritability or withdrawal from others are not likely to be effective in leading their teams; and those who react to stress by micromanaging the work in their group will contribute even more stress and pressure to the workloads of staff members.

Most people do experience occasional “crunch times” or periods of stress and overwork. And in the short term, these periods often result in accomplishing important goals and meeting critical deadlines. But when overwork and stress become a chronic, day-to-day part of doing work, other issues arise — issues that can impact the long-term health and effectiveness of both the individual and the organization.

Because I am usually very successful with the programs I coordinate ... I am given more projects/responsibilities with the same expectations. Something will have to give eventually.

I have not taken a vacation since I began working in athletics.
Spillover is the transfer of stress from work to home, or from home to work. People who are feeling overworked are likely to demonstrate stress behaviors at home — with their families — first. These behaviors vary with the individual, and may include increased tension, irritability, or withdrawal from others.

Ellen Galinsky, in her book "Ask the Children," discusses the impact of work-to-home spillover on parents and children. Many children reported a keen sensitivity to the behavior of their parents at the end of the day, and from these cues, they could predict whether their parents had had a pleasant or a stressful time at work.

Eventually, the results of spillover will show up in the workplace. New family stresses arising from bringing work stress home can create a vicious cycle of stress moving from work to home and back again.

Leaders under stress often show ineffective behaviors that unfortunately cascade throughout the department.

Burnout

By the time I get off work, I’m usually too tired to do anything.

The Encarta World English Dictionary defines burnout as “psychological exhaustion and diminished efficiency resulting from overwork or prolonged exposure to stress.” An individual who reaches a state of burnout loses the passion and enthusiasm that formerly made work (and life) enjoyable. In addition, the loss of efficiency resulting from burnout can jeopardize the success of the individual and the work group. Burnout is a lose/lose for the individual and the organization.
In their book “The Truth about Burnout,” Christina Maslach and Michael P. Leiter describe three principal indicators that an individual might be experiencing burnout. The first indicator is complete exhaustion, often beginning early in the day and growing until the individual feels completely spent. The next indicator is cynicism — feeling negative about the workplace, and detaching from others at work. Ultimately, the person feels a growing sense of ineffectiveness, which over time may become self-fulfilling.

Consider the discussion of the rewards that people receive from work (Chapter 2). In a state of burnout, an individual’s time and energy may be consumed by work, while work is no longer providing meaningful rewards. And because so much time and energy has gone exclusively to work, the person is also cut off from the rewards of personal life (Figure 2). Chronic overwork and burnout is destructive to both the individual and the organization.

Figure 2: Impact of Burnout
Exercise: Outcomes of Overwork

Consider the following questions:

1. How often do you give up sleep to get everything done?

2. Do you regularly find time in your day for health and fitness activities?

3. How do you behave when you are under stress? After a difficult day at work, how might you appear to your family and friends?

4. Does your behavior contribute to the effectiveness of your work group, or does it sometimes add additional stress?
Whether you have access to good organizational initiatives for balancing personal life and work, there are strategies that you can employ to make your life easier. If you are like most people, you have multiple areas of work-life conflict and you will use a number of different strategies to deal with them.

At the most basic level, people use one or more of three strategies when balancing life and work: (1) opting out, (2) sequencing and (3) juggling.

**OPTING OUT**

I am considering leaving the field of athletic training for something related but that requires less of a commitment.

Opting out means simply to drop an action or goal. Opting out of a major goal – for example, to end or redefine your career, or to stop pursuing an important personal life goal, such as having a family – is a serious individual decision. Some people make it willingly; for others, such a decision is made only because they see no other options. If you are considering leaving athletics only because you feel that you have no other choices, talk to your supervisor and work through alternative solutions. Remember that giving up your career is a loss to your athletics department and to yourself. With some creative thought and negotiation you and your supervisor may be able to develop a workable solution that allows you to continue your employment. The organization also may be a resource for change that allows you to stay in your career with a higher level of work satisfaction.

**SEQUENCING**

I cannot fathom having kids right now with all the travel I do and weekends I work.

Sequencing is the strategy to pursue an action or goal at a later time. For example, some people decide to wait to have a family until their careers are established. Some may take a leave of absence from work (or defer their career goals), with the plan to return after they have met other personal life goals. Clearly, these strategies require up-front planning and regular monitoring of life goals, as well as the flexibility to adjust when events do not happen as planned. And it is important to work through the plan realistically. What will be different in the future that will make the deferred goal possible to achieve?
The demands are part of the job, and I understood that when accepting the position. I have made a commitment to myself to make time to work out or find some personal time each day. It may sound trivial, but it has been a great help. I am better at my job and better at relating with others when I have found time each day to do something for myself.

Juggling is a set of strategies that enable people to pursue their life and work goals simultaneously, making adjustments as necessary. It is the approach that most people think about when they consider issues of work-life balance.

Juggling strategies directly addresses the factors that cause overwork. They focus on taking control of your work and personal life, reducing multiple, simultaneous tasks, and relieving the pressure from others and from yourself. It is important to note that these approaches are not “one size fits all.” Select the ones that best fit your personal life needs and the needs of your job, and be flexible – none of these approaches will work 100 percent of the time.

NCAA WorkLife Task Force

**Conclusion No. 2**

Balance is defined by the individual rather than the institution. Life balance is enhanced through choice; choice being individually defined and subsequently facilitated by an institution’s campus-wide policy and practice plan. Providing flexibility for individual choice through established policies and practices is an institutional responsibility. Employees should not be forced to take matters into their own hands to establish boundaries. Institutions that build policy connections across campus units, inclusive of athletics, and integrate employee feedback will provide a climate that empowers individuals to make choices.

**SOLUTIONS**

1. **Set boundaries.** Determine when you will be available to your job, and for how long. If work needs are truly 24/7, is there the opportunity to share “on call” responsibilities? Boundary-setting is a very individual process. Some people need a clean break from work at certain times, while others feel more in control when they can stay in touch with work on a continual basis. Think about what works best for you and your work station, rather than what has been done in the past.
2. **Build flexibility into your schedule.** Flexible work options are very effective for many people and many types of work. An individual may seek flexibility in when to work, where to work, or, for some, how much to work. Using flexibility often means making small changes — altering a work schedule by even 30 minutes can make a big difference in some situations. For some, knowing that they can have flexibility when they need it (even if they do not use it regularly) is important to their sense of control. For some athletics jobs, having more flexible work arrangements during certain times of the year may be an effective strategy.

3. **Manage your work flow.** This strategy involves examining the way you work and making adjustments that improve your effectiveness. Under what conditions are you most effective? Sometimes making simple changes such as setting guidelines for meetings or limits on interruptions can make a difference in handling your workload.

4. **Set priorities and eliminate low-value work.** People may be quite proficient when managing financial budgets, but they often think of their time as unlimited. As a result, work moves easily into personal time. Guard your personal time. Establish clear priorities for your work, and eliminate those tasks that add little value. If possible, challenge your need to be present at every meeting or event that you currently attend. Priority-setting initiatives are most effective when done as a workgroup activity, with management support, and with ongoing communication.

5. **Set priorities at home.** Many people have too many personal commitments because they have agreed to do too many things. Some experts advocate involving family members to establish personal life priorities, and then taking action as a family unit. There are tools available to help seek feedback from family members concerning personal life needs and expectations. Other tools guide families in shared care of children and adult dependents. (See the reading list in Appendix II.)

6. **Find support.** Sometimes the simplest tasks can cause major life balance issues: “busy work” at work and home, housework, errands, etc. Are there tasks that you can stop doing, or that you can share with other family members? Is there a work project that you can delegate to someone else? For some, finding the right support can make a big difference in the quality of life.

7. **Don't add more pressure to your life.** Transferring (spilling over) work-related pressure to your personal life will only create more stress for yourself and your family. If possible, establish a buffer zone, such as a period of physical activity, to relieve some of your work-related stress every day. Examine your expectations — are you striving for near-perfection in too many areas of your life? If so, be kind to yourself and let something go. And do not ignore feelings of uncertainty and guilt. Gathering the facts about these issues, taking action to correct what is not working, and deciding to let go of needless self-pressure is the key to relieving this form of stress. Seek counseling if these issues become major obstacles in balancing life and work.
8. **Address any underlying work issues.** If one of your sources of work-life imbalance is a drain of energy due to a serious issue with work or with your supervisor, it is important to recognize its impact and to address it directly with your supervisor or with human resources. Even the best work-life balance strategies are unlikely to help you with issues such as interpersonal conflict, compensation, job fit or workplace fairness.

9. **Take care of your physical health.** When you neglect your health, the amount of energy available for your work and personal life is depleted. Make time for exercise and good nutrition. Taking care of yourself is an essential strategy for balancing life and work.

10. **Mentoring.** Communicating openly about work-life issues and solutions is a good strategy for a number of reasons. First of all, you may find that someone who has (or has had) work-life issues similar to yours may be an ideal mentor for you. Together, you can share ideas and support each other. Secondly, you may find it helpful to educate people about the challenges that you and others face. In particular, educating your management — or “reverse mentoring” -- is a great way to help them become more effective leaders concerning these issues, especially if they have not personally faced the same work-life conflicts as their staff members. Finally, talking about work-life balance brings the subject into the open. If too many people keep their challenges to themselves, they cannot be addressed. When subjects of workloads and work-life integration become part of regular work discussions, they are more likely to become accepted considerations in work planning and decision-making.
This section will help you begin conversations in your athletics department about the importance of supporting the life and work balance needs of athletics staff. Like most change initiatives, it takes time and effort to see results. Here are a few tips to assist you:

Seek champions. Some people welcome change, some wait until others have tried it first, and some resist it as long as possible. Who in your department is dealing with work-life balance issues, is concerned about the recruiting and retention of athletics staff, or is open to new ideas? Seek these individuals for ideas and support.

Understand leadership perspectives. Do you know what issues are of most concern to the supervisor? Do these concerns include retention of talent, morale, productivity or diversity? Look for a win/win. Addressing life and work balance issues has a positive impact across the organization.

Prepare for resistance. Resistance is nearly always encountered when advocating for life and work support. It is natural for supervisors to be concerned about the impact of a major change in work practices. The good news is that, with good communication and effective program management, most issues can be worked out successfully. Common concerns include the following arguments:

“The work won’t get done.” Agree on the work results, and then build the change around it. Pilot programs are especially useful because they do not commit the group to a change until everyone involved has had an opportunity to experiment with working differently.

“How will I know if people are working?” This concern is frequently expressed when groups are beginning new flexible work arrangements. In fact, supervisors can rarely be sure that “people are working” in any case. Experience has shown that most people want to do a good job. When the focus is on results, rather than visible evidence of work activity (output instead of input), and when people are able to have some control over their work practices, they usually report increased productivity. It is certainly possible that someone may abuse the privilege of working flexibly, but the results are usually quite apparent. Dealing
with these performance issues as they arise will make flexible work arrangements more effective for everyone.

“If I adjust the schedule for you, I’ll have to adjust it for everyone else.” Such concerns are sometimes voiced when supportive programs are viewed as a give-away to employees. It is important to emphasis that a work-life program or flexible work arrangement is not a perk or a gift – it is a work arrangement that brings a number of benefits to the organization and the individual. In practice, having a serious schedule conflict is rare when flexible work arrangements are planned around the work to be done and are well-communicated. And it is certainly appropriate to decline a request for flexibility if – after considering several options – it is determined that critical work needs cannot be met.

“If you want a career in athletics, get used to the way things are. If not, you’re free to work somewhere else.” Work practices that present employees with a take-it-or-leave-it choice will lose those who choose to pursue goals in both work and personal life. And such losses are usually preventable. A good work-life action strategy makes other options possible and expands the available pool of talent for the organization.

**Approach your management with a solution, not a problem.** Supportive programs and flexible work arrangements are more likely to be approved when a work solution is offered. For example, if seeking a flexible schedule, explain how the work might be covered. In corporate settings, too many employees have approached their supervisors with their life balance problem – and have asked their supervisors to help them fix it – without thinking through work issues. A supervisor who sees a request as a new problem to address is more likely to be resistant.

The demands of an athletics career are great, and the rewards are also great. Celebrate your successes, and be patient – breakthrough change takes time. Your efforts are making the workplace more effective, and you are securing a higher quality of life for yourself and your staff!
1. Examine your responses to the exercises in Chapters 2, 3 and 4.
   - What are your most important rewards from work and personal life? Are you experiencing them?
   - From which areas in your work and personal life do you feel the greatest conflict?
   - Is work overload interfering with your effectiveness at work and in your personal life?

2. Consider the juggling strategies outlined in Chapter 5. Which of these might support your needs? Can your work be done differently?
   - Set boundaries.
   - Build flexibility into your schedule. (See page 23 for a list of options.)
   - Manage your work flow.
   - Set priorities and eliminate low-value work.
   - Set priorities at home.
   - Find support.
   - Don’t add more pressure to your life.
   - Address any underlying work issues.
   - Take care of your physical health.

3. What are the top three actions you can take – in your work and your personal life – to increase your sense of control, reduce simultaneous tasks, and ease pressure on yourself and others?

Exercise: Taking Action
Successful life and work strategies require a partnership with the individual, the supervisor and the organization. Organizational programs and policies establish the platform on which individuals can build life and work balance strategies. It is up to the individual to make choices among the available options that optimize both work effectiveness and work-life balance. And the skills and attitudes of the supervisor are critical to the success of the arrangement for both the individual and the organization.

This chapter will address the actions athletics staff can take to develop an effective and supportive work environment. Not all of these will work for every department or every job; choose what fits, and feel free to combine or redesign initiatives to meet your area’s specific needs. Individual strategies for balancing life and work were discussed in Chapter 5.

**FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS**

I think our hours should be decreased in the summer time while most of our students are gone. The whole department works so hard during the school year that I feel you would get more out of the department if you gave them more time in the summer...

Flexible work arrangements are often the core of an organization’s work-life strategy. Most programs are inexpensive to implement and yet address a wide range of work-life issues. Though they appear to focus on time and scheduling, their real power lies in the measure of control that they provide to athletics staff. Many organizations find a win/win for both the organization and the staff member when these initiatives are thoughtfully implemented.

The following initiatives are examples of commonly used flexible work options:

- **Flextime**: Flexibility in the starting and ending times of a workday.

- **Compressed work week**: Flexibility in the starting and ending time of a work week. For example, an employee with a five-day work week may work four very long days, or four longer days and one shorter day.
Off-season or summer hours: The adjustment of work hours to a different schedule during the summer or when work needs are less intense.

Part-time: Reduced hours and workload, with prorated benefits.

Job-sharing: Two employees share the workload and responsibilities of one job.

Telecommuting: The primary location of work for an employee is a site other than the organization’s worksite.

Occasional Work from Home: The employee’s principal worksite continues to be located at the organization, but on occasion – for example, to write a report with minimal interruption – the employee works from home.

Time Off Policies: Paid time off for family illness, leaves of absence for dependent care or community service

The key to success with these programs is to encourage supervisors and staff to work with them as productivity tools. Flexibility is not a “perk” or gift to employees, and it is also not an entitlement to be used without regard for the work to be done. The most successful arrangements are created when the employee and supervisor work together, starting with the work to be done, and building flexibility around it.

Does your institution have policies and programs for flexible work arrangements? Although these programs were probably not designed with athletics positions in mind, they can provide overall guidelines for use. Examples of organizational guidelines for flexible work arrangements are provided in Appendix I.

NCAA WorkLife Task Force
Conclusion No.3

Gender-neutral policies shape an inclusive environment. Supporting gender-neutral policies within athletics departments and across teams for women and men adds value to an inclusive climate. Administrators should value one’s output and accommodate the unique circumstances that men and women bring to the profession, rather than expecting the old, one-size-fits-all model to work for everyone (e.g., face time in the office). Supporting explicit, candid and inclusive discussions about ways to be successful in an athletics environment will facilitate acceptance of a new paradigm.
RETHINKING THE WORK TO BE DONE

The culture says I have to be present in my office to be working.

Other organizational efforts toward work-life balance deal with the work itself. These initiatives, sometimes called work re-design programs, are implemented to understand and reduce the causes of overwork while maintaining or improving productivity. Examples of these interventions may include eliminating low-value work, incorporating specific flexible work arrangements, streamlining work flow, clarifying goals or improving priority-setting.

Organizations often have rules or informal expectations that have evolved over time. Introducing new options for work and personal life can focus attention on old practices and replace them with new ones that are more effective. Consider practices that have developed over time, such as standard work hours throughout the year, or mandatory attendance at events. Which are necessary for the work of the job or department, and which are not?

SUPPORTIVE PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

Due to the administrative burdens of my job, it’s almost impossible to steal time between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to catch up on personal obligations.

A wide variety of options exist for programs to support personal life needs. By offering these programs, organizations can create a win/win: staff members find support for some of the personal life conflicts that lead to stress, while the organization benefits from reducing some of the barriers to productivity caused by work-life conflicts. Many leaders believe that the benefits of these programs – benefits such as reduced turnover, increased morale and productivity – outweigh the costs of providing them.

Key Points

· Bobbi Petersen,
  Northern Iowa Volleyball Coach

3 Steps to success

· Top-Down Support - “My athletic director understands the importance of family”
· Connections - “Support of those around me”
· Personal Tools - “Prioritizing; keeping good balance and time management”
Examples of such programs include the following:

1. Flexible schedules: 7-3; 10-6; 2-10.

2. Telecommute options.

3. Enabling professionals the ability to relieve stress and create balance between work and home. On-site programs, Errand and Concierge services, that employees pay for but which reduce their time stresses. Examples include: dry cleaning, postage and mail service, dog walking service, on-site laundry, workplace massage program, financial planning seminar, nutrition/health seminar, estate planning seminar, or Spousal employment.

4. Support groups for employees (e.g., new parents, parents of teens, elder caregivers).

3. Mentoring: Pair junior staff with a senior staff for reverse mentoring to help the mostly senior management teams understand the issues today’s workforce face.

4. Sponsor Team Nights to allow families to attend events together.

5. Gender neutral policies in regards to paternal/maternal issues.
   - Weekend care for travel to conferences or provide funds for the care.
   - Discounted child care.
   - Nursing mother areas: a designated private room.
   - Create an emergency child sitting service with students (certified) on campus.
   - Spouses and children may be encouraged to attend evening and weekend events for free.
   - Summer camp attendance for children.
   - Parents get unlimited time off to visit their kids’ classrooms.
   - Sponsor Parent’s night out.
   - Elder care program including counseling.
   - Paid week off for new grandparents.
   - Adoption fee reimbursement and paid time off.
   - Paid time off (10 – 30 days) for new mothers and fathers in addition to unpaid job-protected leave and some maternity coverage under disability (pay varies).

6. A paid sabbatical (weeks, months, semesters, summers) every five-ten years of service.
   - A paid six-month sabbatical for those who want “to pursue a personal dream that benefits the community in a meaningful way.”
7. Part-time employees and the same- or opposite-sex partners receive comprehensive health coverage.
8. Peer-elected worklife committee that provides a voice for the staff.
9. Spot bonus for exceptional performance (typically $100).
10. Monthly celebrations (birthdays).

DEPENDENT CARE SUPPORT

We are away just about every weekend ... It is very difficult to find child care and also to just be away from the kids for the extended period of time.

These options are particularly useful in areas where community-based dependent care services are inadequate to meet the needs of the staff. They vary from simple community partnerships to long-range investments. With support, unique programs can be developed to address specific needs.

**Resource and referral services:** Local and nationwide programs are available to help employees find child care or elder care services. Many of these services also offer resources on topics such as parenting, college planning or adoption.

**Supportive travel policies:** Some organizations allow reimbursement for child care expenses due to required travel, or have guidelines for the employee to bring children and/or other family members on required trips.

**Grants to community programs:** Some organizations provide financial support for community-based child care programs that serve employees. Examples include grants to local child care providers and the sponsorship of summer camps or school vacation field trips for children.

**On-site child care centers:** On-site programs may include full-time care for infants through kindergarten; after-school care for older children; or “back-up” care, when normal child care arrangements fall through.
THE ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

Fortunately, I work for a great AD and he is flexible and understanding.

My direct supervisor … was more sympathetic when I had to take my dog to the vet than he is when I need to take my son to the doctor.

It cannot be overstated that the support of the supervisor is critical to the success of a work-life agenda. It is often the attitude of the supervisor that makes an organization-sponsored program accessible (or inaccessible) to the staff member. Many supervisors, initially concerned about the impact of new work arrangements, have been pleasantly surprised to discover that their fears did not materialize when the programs were implemented. However, as in any significant change, there are some proven keys to success. Whether you choose to initiate a comprehensive work-life strategy – or just a few programs – consider the following steps in moving forward:

Tap into the creativity and knowledge of those who know the work. No one knows a job better than the person doing it. Some of the most creative, workable options for accomplishing a task while balancing personal responsibilities have come from staff members themselves, not from their supervisors. Employee involvement is critical to success.

Decide on a strategy and plan of action. Which options best fit the department’s culture and the key messages it chooses to deliver at the present time? What is the benefit vs. cost of offering a specific program?

Be open-minded. Supervisors who trust their staff to do good work have an easier time adjusting to the offering of work-life options than those who believe that their employees require constant supervision. At the same time, most programs will not work for every job or every individual. Success requires the willingness to look at new ways to work, and the discipline to stop or adjust the initiatives that are not working.

Implement the plan. Determine timing of implementation; guidelines for use; which options may require additional training; and which may need a “pilot” program or “laboratory” to test feasibility.

“A company will only do well if it has the best and brightest talent. And work/life programs help us attract and retain great talent because these programs are valued.”

H. Fisk Johnson, Chairman and CEO, S.C. Johnson & Son
Communicate. Before beginning a new initiative, specifically state the desired outcome from the work perspective and from the individual perspective. Once implemented, check in at pre-arranged intervals to be sure the initiative is working as expected. Seek feedback from others who may be impacted by the change. Make adjustments as needed, and be patient – it may take some time to become comfortable with new work practices. Be sure to communicate the successes, and learn from the options that are less effective. Keep trying!

The most successful arrangements are created when the employee and supervisor work together, starting with the work to be done, and building flexibility around it.
1. Does your institution have programs and policies for work-life integration? Which programs would best address your needs? Can they be adapted to work in your athletics department?

2. Work with others in your department to evaluate how work gets done. Challenge old assumptions. What changes might you make to foster a more supportive environment?

3. As a supervisor, what results will you need to see to determine that the proposed changes are effective? What will happen if the results are not met? Be specific. Lead a discussion with your group to gather input and buy-in.

4. How will you communicate with one another to check on the status of the changes?
GUIDELINES FOR FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

While some organizations manage flexible work options informally, others provide detailed guidelines. For example, Purdue University has developed a number of resources and tools for employees and supervisors.

Purdue University  http://www.purdue.edu/hr/worklife/
HRS Programs Flexible Work Arrangements
Procedures:
• Procedures for employees applying for a flexible work arrangement
• Procedures for supervisors/managers evaluating employee applications for a flexible work arrangement

Information and Tools:
• Flexible Work Definitions
• Flexible Work Proposal
• Flexible Work Guidelines
• Flexible Work Agreement
• Work Suitability Assessment
• Telework Safety and Workspace Checklist

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE

A number of colleges and universities have established centers of expertise and/or research in the area of work-life integration. Some examples of these centers are listed below:

Boston College
Sloan Work and Family Research Network
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu

Claremont McKenna College
Berger Institute for Work, Family and Children
http://berger.claremontmckenna.edu

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Center for Work, Family and Personal Life
http://hrweb.mit.edu/worklife/

University of California
Faculty Family Friendly Edge
http://ucfamilyedge.berkeley.edu
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

American Council on Education (ACE). Available at: www.acenet.edu


Sloan Work and Family Research Network. Designed to support research and teaching, promote best practices at the workplace, and inform state policy on issues that affect the lives of working families and the places where they work. Available at: http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/

Families and Work Institute (FWI) is a nonprofit center for research that provides data to inform decision-making on the changing workforce, changing family and changing community. Available at: www.familiesandwork.org

Gender Equity in College Coaching and Administration: Perceived Barriers Report. 2008. Available at: www.ncaapublications.com


VIDEOCASTS


National Institutes for Health Work/Life Center. 160 Videocasts on various work and life balance topics available at: http://videocast.nih.gov/PastEvents.asp?c=14&s=1


“Strong Women and Men Live Well” - Women and men who lead physically active lives and eat nutritiously live longer and have decreased risk for heart disease, diabetes, obesity, mental disorders, osteoporosis and many other chronic diseases that we associate with aging… Dr. Miriam Nelson, Tufts University, at the 2008 NCAA Gender Equity and Issues Forum. Available at: http://web1.ncaa.org/web_video/TitleIX/2008_gender_equity_forum/strongMenAndWomenLiveWell.html
**BOOKS**


**ADDITIONAL WEB RESOURCES**


*World at Work.* An association for human resources professionals focused on attracting, motivating and retaining employees. Available at: http://www.worldatwork.org/


*Working Mother.* Available at: www.workingmother.com
APPENDIX II. READING LIST


EMPLOYEE SECTION

It is usually easy for me to manage the demands of both work and home life.  
I am thinking of leaving athletics because the pressures of home life demands.  
My Director of Athletics is supportive when home life issues interfere with work.  
My Director of Athletics treats my work-life needs with sensitivity.  
My Director of Athletics has a good understanding of flexible work practices.  
I believe my administrators treat me with respect.  
Stayed single because I did not have time for a family and a successful athletics career.  
To achieve success within athletics, I had fewer children than I wanted to have.  
Did not ask for a reduced workload when I needed it for family reasons, because it would put an undue burden on others.  
Did not ask for a reduced workload when I needed it for family reasons, because it would lead to a heavier load later.  
Delayed starting my career in athletics in order to start a family.  
Did not ask for a reduced workload when I needed it for family reasons, because it would lead to adverse career repercussions.

WORKPLACE SECTION

There is an unwritten rule that you cannot take care of family needs during working hours.  
Staff who put their family or personal needs ahead of their jobs are not looked on favorably.  
If I have a problem managing my work and family responsibilities, the attitude is:  
“There is your problem.”  
If I could find another job where I would be treated with respect, I would take it.  
If I could find another job where I could have more flexibility, I would take it.

PARENTING SECTION (IF APPLICABLE)

Had one child or adopted one child, but delayed considering another because of athletics.  
Did not ask for parental leave even though it would have helped me to take it.  
Did not ask to stop the tenure clock for a new child even though it would have helped me to take it.  
Missed some of my children’s important events when they were young, because I did not want to appear uncommitted to my job.  
Came back to work sooner than I would have liked after having a new child because I wanted to be taken seriously.  
Tried to time new children to arrive during the summer break or out-of-season.  
Did not bring children to the office during their school breaks because I worried that others would be bothered.
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Candice Lange is president of Lange Advisors, a professional services and consulting firm. Before forming Lange Advisors, Candi was responsible for the development of the work-life and diversity strategies at Eli Lilly and Company. Candi has served in a number of leadership roles in the work-life and diversity fields, and has contributed to a number of books and articles in these areas. She holds a Masters of Business Administration from Indiana University and a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from Purdue University.

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