Organizational or structural factors embody those characteristics that are embedded within the job or workplace; they are inherently related to job performance and the expectations attached to the occupying role. The multilevel theory was developed from data garnered from a study investigating the work-family interface of women National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I coaches, thus several of the foundational items are rooted in the sport culture. Essentially, the organizational level is shaped by work hours, work scheduling, job pressures and stressors, and the culture. Hours worked is consistently a facilitator for conflict, and provides the framework for the organizational element to the theory. Like the coach, the athletic trainer is working in a multifaceted, high-paced employment setting that requires patient care, administrative responsibilities, travel, teaching/supervision of students, and a host of other potential duties related to their employment setting. Working in this type of environment is likely, therefore, to result in conflict.

Although the work-family interface is described as bidirectional, often the discussions focus on the impact work has on family and thus hours worked and job pressures dominate the findings. Long, nontraditional hours (nights, weekends) surely affect an athletic trainer’s ability to make choices regarding work, family, and life balance; however, it is also understood that individuals differ in their experiences of and ability to cope with work-family or work-life balance. Research illustrates that individual differences exist with personality, family values, coping and support systems, and gender in relation to work-life conflict. These individual differences ultimately navigate the occurrence of work-life conflict, and despite organizational constraints or barriers, individuals must make choices regarding the management of their roles, personally and professionally as it fits their lifestyles. In the Dixon and Bruening model, individual factors account for personal preferences, values, and beliefs as a necessary piece to understanding work, family, and life interactions.

Appreciating individualistic values is needed to fully understand when conflict or harmony is experienced, as some individuals may value their work roles more than their family or home role, which can explain time and energy invested in each. Borrowing from the preference theory (as described next), a person is able to choose the roles and time spent in each role as it matches his or her core values and beliefs. Thus, conflict may emanate when the role requires too much time or resources, which limits the person’s chance to engage in the other roles. For example, an athletic trainer who values his or her role at work and gains more satisfaction from that role, is more likely to experience conflict when responsibilities in the personal role (ie, parenting) begin to spill over into the work role.

The final piece to the multi-level perspective includes sociocultural factors, which describe the social impact on work-family conflict. Social and gender norms provide the underpinnings to this piece of the model, describing the way that expectations of masculine and feminine can