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PROACTIVITY AT WORK

As organizations grow increasingly complex and unpredictable, the topic of proactivity at work has become of great importance for contemporary workplaces. Proactivity drives performance and innovation of teams and organizations and boosts individuals' well-being and careers. When individuals are proactive, they use their initiative at work to bring about a better future. They scan for opportunities, persist until change is achieved, and take charge to prevent problems' future reoccurrence.

In this book, leading scholars on proactivity from across North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia explore how, why, and when individuals are motivated to initiate change within their organizations or themselves and examine the consequences of various forms of proactivity at work. Individual chapters explore specific concepts of proactivity, such as proactive voice, job crafting, and career proactivity, as well as highlight individual processes and organizational dynamics that underlie successful proactivity at work. By providing insights on key advances and future directions for proactivity theory, research, and practice, *Proactivity at Work* synthesizes what we already know and identifies what we still need to learn about *making things happen* at work. This book is relevant to all those involved or interested in Work Psychology and Business, including Human Resource Management scholars.

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PROACTIVITY AT WORK: MAKING THINGS HAPPEN IN ORGANIZATIONS

*Edited by Sharon K. Parker and
Uta K. Bindl*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND DEDICATION

For Mark, and my beautiful daughters, Talia, Melissa, and Suzy – work matters a lot, but you matter most.

(S.K.P)

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I wish to acknowledge the London School of Economics and Political Science, and my colleagues at the Department of Management in particular, for providing me with a truly exciting and supportive work environment that enabled me to complete this book. I would also like to warmly thank Sharon Parker, who initiated me to the topic of *Proactivity at Work* as a doctoral student, and for her wonderful mentorship and collaboration over the years that inspired this book. Finally, I owe a special debt of gratitude to my family for their wonderful support and encouragement of my work. To Rom.

(Uta Bindl)

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SERIES FOREWORD

It is a true pleasure to write a foreword to this new volume in the Routledge Organization and Management Series. It is a particularly important book.

The concept of proactivity – being self-starting, future-oriented, change-oriented, and persistent (see Bindl & Parker's introduction in Chapter 1) – has taken hold of a large part of organizational psychology and organizational behavior. Different aspects of proactivity are described in this volume, for example, in terms of foci of proactivity (chapter 7), proactive goals (Chapter 11), proactive personality (Chapters 8 and 9) and of course, proactive behavior (nearly all chapters refer to proactive behavior, but particularly emphasis on proactive behavior is provided in Chapters 5, 6, 11, and 16).

As discussed in most chapters, proactivity is an important concept for current work places with their inherent requirements for flexibility, strategic orientation, and ability to deal with unforeseen circumstances, given the high degree of uncertainty in modern work. Thus, there are good societal reasons to emphasize proactivity.

There are also good theoretical reasons, of why proactivity research needs to be integrated into theories of work behavior. Among other things, this book proves that once the concept of proactivity is fully integrated into theories of work behavior, the theories change. This has been shown for various areas, such as safety (Chapter 5), career (Chapter 3), proactive aging (Chapter 10), proactive goal setting (Chapter 11), job design (Chapter 14), leadership (Chapter 15), and training (Chapter 16).

Finally, there are also good reasons related to proactivity theories of why such a book on proactivity is important. The enthusiasm for the idea of proactivity has led to a proliferation of constructs in this area, for example, proactive feedback seeking (Chapter 2), job crafting (Chapters 4, and 14), issue selling (Chapter 6), proactive

personality (Chapters 8, and 9), taking charge (Chapter 7), voice (Chapter 17), personal initiative (Chapter 16), task revision (Chapter 14), role innovation, proactive coping (Chapter 7), proactive socialization (Chapter 2), or proactive (Protean) career (Chapter 3), proactive leadership (Chapter 15) and teams (Chapter 19).

Bindl and Parker have done an admirable job in this volume to collect the relevant actors in this area; practically all issues that have been important in the area of proactivity are discussed in this volume. By and large, the effects of proactivity are positive for the individual, his/her career, and the organization. However, there is also a dark side of proactivity, as described in Chapter 18. Different theories of proactivity are described (Chapters 12 and 13), as well as interventions for higher proactivity (Chapter 16).

I definitely hope that discussions of proactivity will be different after the publication of this volume than it was before. No doubt, this volume will contribute to better research in this important area of organizational psychology and organizational behavior.

Michael Frese

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1

PROACTIVITY AT WORK

A Big Picture Perspective on a Construct that Matters

Sharon K. Parker and Uta K. Bindl

Introduction

There are three types of people: Those who make things happen, those who watch what happens, and those who wonder “what happened?”

How many times have we heard managers complain that their staff shows “no initiative” or “don’t step up”? We can all readily identify colleagues or employees who seem content to sit back and watch others lead the charge. Even exceptionally busy managers, themselves, can be quite passive: when we probe beneath the surface of the flurry of activities, their time is often dominated by fire-fighting the pressing demands of the moment. Quite rightly then, media commentators lament the extreme reactivity of our CEOs and politicians, and their seeming inability to think and act for the longer-term. And, being honest with ourselves, we all too often experience domains in our lives where passivity dominates. Why is it that we so frequently seem to put off important tasks, like preparing our tax returns, so that we, just like in this famous quote (derived from an address by Nicholas Murray Butler, 1932), end up wondering “what happened?”

Our focus in this book is on proactivity, or on “making things happen”. Although there are many definitions (as we describe shortly), we define proactivity as “taking control to make things happen rather than watching things happen. It involves aspiring and striving to bring about change in the environment and/or oneself to achieve a different future” (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010, p. 828). This definition identifies three key attributes that collectively define behavior as proactive. First, proactive behavior is *future-focused*. Whilst that is, of course, to some extent true of all goal-directed behavior, proactivity is especially strongly based on anticipating and thinking about the longer-term

future. Simply reacting in a knee-jerk fashion to a problem, regardless of how effective that reaction is, does not constitute proactivity. Second, proactive behavior is *change-oriented*. It does not constitute proactivity to merely anticipate future problems or opportunities; one must also act to address these future challenges through achieving change. This change might be targeted towards improving or altering the environment one is in, such as improving one's work procedures, or it might be targeted towards changing one's self, such as by developing new skills or broadening one's networks. But in each case, proactivity means a change from status quo or the current trend. As Bateman (in Chapter 11) describes it, proactivity involves discontinuity from an existing status quo. Third, proactive behavior is *self-starting*. It is an action that is initiated by an individual him/herself, usually as a result of their interest in, or commitment to, the issue at hand. If a supervisor asks or tells a worker to do something, this action does not constitute proactivity. Nor is it proactive if the worker is simply following the tasks laid out and pre-specified in the job description.

Think about a situation in which a customer service representative initiates the creation of a second queue for particular inquiries in order to speed up service and alleviate the frustration of customers. The employee has taken it on herself (self-starting) to improve the work flow (change-oriented) so as to enhance effectiveness for customers (future-focused). This is an example of proactivity from a customer service representative, which would usually be a position held by an employee at lower levels of an organizational hierarchy. We can also see examples of proactivity at the very highest levels of the hierarchy. De Luga (1998), in a study of US presidents, observed that some presidents were significantly more proactive than others, resulting in greater overall presidential effectiveness. Examples of presidential proactivity include Roosevelt's implementation of the New Deal program and Lyndon Johnson's introduction of Civil Rights legislation. Thus, individuals (and as Harris and Kirkman, in Chapter 19, argue, entire teams) can be proactive in many different ways, and across multiple levels of an organization or even society. And as we elaborate next, such proactivity can make an important difference to the success of contemporary organizations.

A Topic for Our Times: Proactivity Matters

In recent times, academic literature on proactivity in organizations has blossomed. As shown in Figure 1.1, over 360 articles in the psychology and management literature have been published since 1990 that either have "proactive" in their abstract or that address topics that we consider examples of proactivity (e.g., taking charge, proactive feedback seeking, individual innovation, personal initiative). As this figure shows, the number of articles each year is accelerating. In the years 2010 to 2014, more than 180 articles on proactivity were published – compared to just four articles in 1990 to 1994. Similarly, in 2015 alone, almost as many

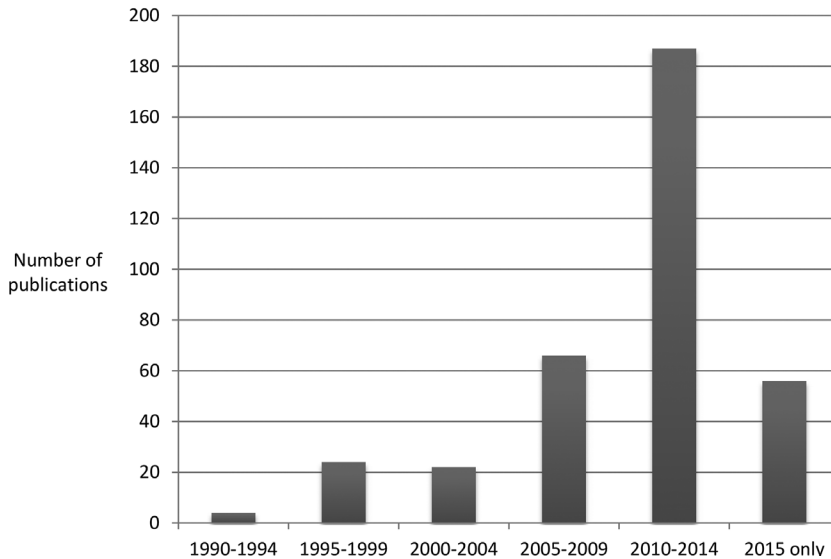


FIGURE 1.1 Number of published journal articles on proactivity since the year 1990.

Note: Based on a web of science search, focusing only on work and organizational journals, and related journals (e.g. Industrial Relations, HRM, etc.) with relevant search terms, followed by some screening (e.g. to exclude articles on voice where the focus was not on individual or team-level voice/speaking up), resulted in 363 articles. Search terms included: “self-initiative”; “job crafting”; “flexible role orientation”; “role breadth self-efficacy”; “idiosyncratic deals”; “task revision”; “role redefinition”; “work proactivity”; “proactive personality”; “personal initiative”; “proactive work behavior”; “proactive work behavior”; “work proactivity”; “proactive behavior”; “proactive behavior”; “proactivity”; “career proactivity”; “proactive career”; “taking charge”; “role innovation”; “individual innovation”; “strategic scanning”; “proactive socialization”; “proactive feedback seeking”; “proactive career”; “proactive person-environment fit”; “change-oriented citizenship”; “challenging citizenship”; “problem prevention”; “proactive coping”; “voice”.

articles ($N = 56$) were published on proactivity in organizations as in the five-year period of 2005 to 2009 together ($N = 66$). Several integrative meta-analyses have also been recently published, which is a good indicator of the maturing of a body of literature.

But is this interest in the topic just a temporary burst: is proactivity a trendy concept that has captured the interest of doctoral scholars, and that will soon give way to the next vogue topic? Or is this scholarly growth in interest reflecting something more substantial happening in the real world? Without a doubt, we assert that it is the latter. The interest in the concept initially emerged due to the overarching frustration of researchers with existing paradigms that assumed less agentic, and more static, approaches to understanding phenomena in organizations. For example, in the field of work performance, scholars increasingly recognized that traditional notions of task performance focus

excessively on employees' efforts to fulfill expectations and to master elements in their existing job descriptions, whilst behaviors such as being innovative or leading improvements in the workplace were neglected. In the field of socialization, it was recognized that newcomers in organizations do not just passively wait to be socialized: instead, they may actively seek information, develop connections, and self-initiatedly learn about their organization. And in the field of careers in the workplace, researchers using a proactivity paradigm proposed that individuals are not just receptacles of career advice and mentoring: they may sculpt and mold their careers to achieve meaningful future career goals, under their own initiative.

The forces that spurred the growth of such proactive concepts look set to continue. Indeed proactivity will likely become more important in the light of projected changes in work and careers. Today's growth in precarious forms of employment, changing employment conditions, and greater mobility across organizations (the "boundaryless" career, Arthur, 1994) all indicate it is more than ever important that individuals proactively take charge of their careers. The notion of a self-driven and highly mobile "protean" career (Hall, 1976) reflects these trends and highlights the importance of proactive career behaviors in today's environment (Sonnetag, in Chapter 3 of this book). Another important trend of our times, globalization in the workplace, implies rising pressure for competitiveness in most industries, which in turn frequently places a premium on innovation. There is a movement (at least in some sectors) away from highly centralized organizational forms, with more flexible entities and more virtual work; all of which increasingly require individuals at work who can "think for themselves" and be proactive. In these cases, an emergent bottom-up change resulting from the self-initiated innovative efforts of employees is needed to ensure the organization remains agile within its environment.

At the same time, digitalization of workplaces increasingly implies that computers will take over employees' routine work – a phenomenon we are already witnessing in examples such as a shoppers checking out supermarket goods, or employees booking their travels, themselves. As a consequence, the remaining jobs in organizations will necessarily become more dynamic, uncertain, and ambiguous, requiring employees to proactively manage their own performance and professional development, seeking out help or feedback when and from whom they need it, or crafting the job to better fit their abilities and values at work. Further, complexity in the form of diverse and multi-disciplinary teams in organizations means it is more important than ever that individuals are willing to engage in proactive voice, to speak up with their concerns and ideas to improve work outcomes, and so on. There are numerous forces arising from technological, social, and demographic changes, which imply that proactivity will be on the organizational radar for the foreseeable future.

The rapid growth in the literature – combined with the likely continued importance of the topic in the future – make this an apt time to take stock of the

field, and to identify key directions of proactivity for the future. To help set the scene for the remaining chapters in this book, we first briefly trace the evolution of the topic. We then describe the approach we have taken to proactivity in this book and provide a brief outline of its structure and content.

Tracing the Evolution of Research on Proactivity in Organizations

How did the research topic of proactivity in organizations emerge? Figure 1.2 shows an overview of highly cited articles on proactive behavior and related concepts since 1990.¹ This overview also includes recent meta-analyses, which are included in the figure to depict the evolving maturity of the field.

Domain-Specific Proactive Behaviors

As Figure 1.2 shows, early developments in proactivity research tended to be domain-specific, stimulated by the recognition that individuals may engage in active and agentic behaviors to a greater degree than traditional concepts in that domain assumed. Within the work performance sphere, early concepts included *work role innovation* (Farr & Ford, 1990), that is, innovations that individuals introduce to accomplish their roles in different ways; *task revision*, that is, correcting poor procedures or job specifications (Staw & Boettger, 1990); and *individual innovative behavior*, that is, producing, adopting, and implementing useful ideas (Scott & Bruce, 1994; see also West & Altink, 1996). All of these concepts, although distinct in important ways, recognized the importance of investigating individuals' proactivity in changing one's work or introducing new ideas within organizations.

In domains beyond work performance, agentic concepts also came to the fore, such as in the notion of *proactive socialization of newcomers* (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000), proactive career behaviors, such as establishing *i-deals* (e.g., Rousseau, 2005; Rousseau, Ho & Greenberg, 2006), proactive forms of *feedback seeking* (e.g., Ashford & Cummings, 1985; see also De Stobbeleir, De Boeck & Dries, Chapter 2 of this book); and proactive forms of organizational change, such as *issue selling* (e.g., Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Ong & Ashford, Chapter 6 of this book), *taking charge* (Morrison & Phelps, 1999) and *proactive voice* (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998; Davidson & Van Dyne, Chapter 17 of this book). Within the work design literature, scholars recognized that good work design can result in more proactive psychological states, such as *role breadth self-efficacy* (Parker, 1998) and *flexible role orientations* (Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997), which in turn have been shown to predict proactive behavior and higher overall job performance. In a similar vein, and related to the earlier concepts of task revision and role innovation, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) noted that individuals may actively shape or redesign their own roles via *job crafting*;

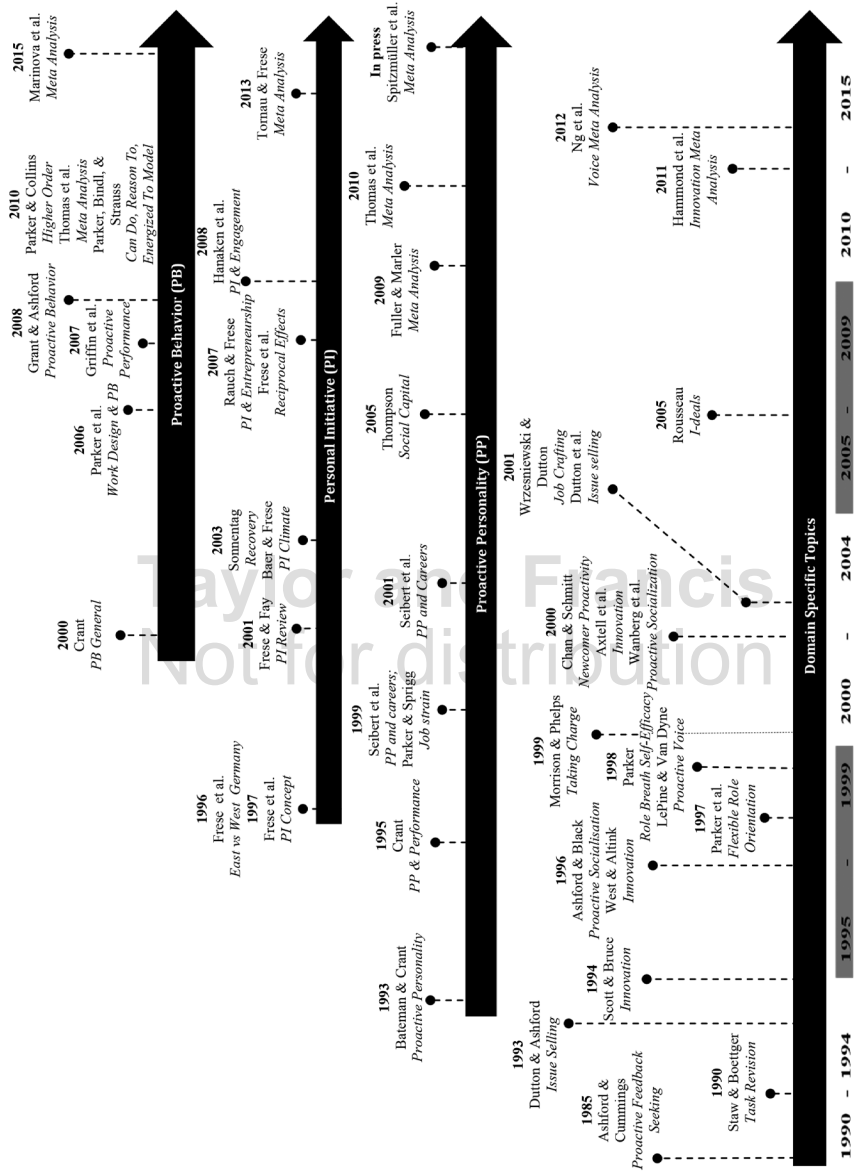


FIGURE 1.2 Evolution of Proactivity Research (1990 to date)

a topic that has received burgeoning attention, more recently (Wang, Demerouti & Bakker, Chapter 4 of this book).

Proactive Personality

At the same time as domain-specific proactive concepts were emerging in separate literatures, an important development was the recognition that there are potential commonalities across these different proactive concepts. An initial approach to integration was to identify “proactive personality” as a determinant of proactive behavior across many different domains. Bateman & Crant (1993, p. 105) defined a proactive person as someone with a “relatively stable behavioral tendency” to initiate change in the environment. This personality-based approach assumes proactive individuals are proactive across multiple contexts and over time, regardless of the contingencies of a situation at work or in one’s career. Much research has shown how proactive personality is associated with positive outcomes across many domains, such as job performance (Crant, 1995; Thompson, 2005) and career success (Seibert et al., 1999; Seibert, Kraimer & Crant, 2001). The popularity of this concept is shown by recent meta-analyses and reviews on the topic (e.g., Fuller & Marler, 2009; see also Crant, Hu & Jiang, Chapter 8 of this book).

Personal Initiative

Around the same time as proactive personality was investigated by researchers in North America, the concept of *personal initiative* was introduced by Frese and colleagues in Germany (Frese, Fay, Hilburger, Leng, & Tag, 1997). Frese et al. (1997, p. 38) defined personal initiative as a constellation of behaviors in individuals with the following attributes: to be consistent with the organization’s mission, to have a long-term focus, to be goal-directed and action-oriented, to persist in the face of barriers and setbacks, and to be self-starting and proactive. A seminal study (Frese, Kring, Soose, Zempel, 1996) showed that West Germans displayed greater personal initiative than East Germans, which Frese et al. (1996) showed was partly a result of higher levels of work control and job complexity in West Germany, at the time. A stream of research has focused on this concept (Frese and Fay, 2001, for a review), showing, for example, that personal initiative enhances entrepreneurship (Rauch & Frese, 2007); is affected by individuals’ recovery from work (Sonnetag, 2003), their engagement at work (Hakanen et al., 2008) and the organizational climate (Baer & Frese, 2003); that personal initiative and work design reciprocally influence each other (Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2007); and that personal initiative can be enhanced through training (Mensmann & Frese, Chapter 16 of this book). Importantly, in a meta-analysis of 163 studies, Tornau and Frese (2013, p. 44) showed a strong positive correspondence

between proactive personality and trait-oriented versions of personal initiative, to the extent that the authors argued these two distinct concepts should be considered to be “functionally equivalent”.

Proactive Behavior

A further key development in the field was the move from a focus on the more trait-like proactive concept of proactive personality to the concept of *proactive behavior*. In other words, scholars recognized that – whilst proactive personality is clearly an identifiable and important personality dimension – it sometimes makes more sense to think about proactivity as a way of behaving, rather than as a trait (Crant, 2000; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006; ; Parker et al., 2010). From this perspective, what integrates the many different concepts across distinct domains (e.g., taking charge, issue selling, voice, or proactive feedback seeking) are common defining behavioral features, as well as shared motivational processes. Parker et al., (2006, p. 636) argued that: “[d]espite different labels and theoretical underpinnings, concepts that relate to individual-level proactive behavior typically focus on self-initiated and future-oriented action that aims to change and improve the situation or oneself”.

From this point of view, proactivity is not restricted to being the execution of a particular group of activities such as those that are “extra-role” but, in contrast, all job activities can be carried out in a more or less proactive way. As noted by Grant and Ashford (2008, p. 9), “the key criterion for identifying proactive behavior is not whether it is in-role or extra-role, but rather whether the employee anticipates, plans for, and attempts to create a future outcome that has an impact on the self or environment”. Grant and Ashford’s observation – that proactive behavior is a way of behaving that can be applied to any form of behavior – has been helpful in negotiating how the construct fits within the broader domain of workplace performance. Organizational citizenship behaviors, for example, can themselves be carried out more or less proactively (Griffin, Neal & Parker, 2007).

In a study that empirically brought together many different concepts under the umbrella of proactive behavior, Parker and Collins (2010) analyzed the relationships between several work behaviors that all fit the above definitions of proactivity. The authors concluded that individual proactive behavior at work might usefully be thought of as comprising three higher-order categories (namely, proactive person-environment fit behavior, proactive work behavior, and proactive strategic behavior). Each category varies in the type of future the individual aims to bring about, i.e., the target of proactive goals (see also Belschak & Den Hartog, Chapter 7 of this book, for a related categorization).

First, *proactive person-environment (PE) fit behavior* encompasses proactive goals to achieve a better fit between one’s own attributes and that of the

internal work environment. For instance, proactive feedback seeking can be a way to achieve *demand-abilities fit*, which occurs when individuals have the knowledge, skills, and other resources demanded by the environment (De Stobbeleir et al., in Chapter 2). Job-role negotiation (Ashford & Black, 1996) and, similarly, job crafting (Wang et al., Chapter 4 of this book) may constitute effective ways to achieve a *supplies-values fit* at work, which occurs when the environment supplies the attributes desired by an individual.

The second higher-order category is *proactive work behavior*, or proactive goals to improve the internal organizational environment (Parker & Collins, 2010). Examples of behaviors that composed this category include: taking charge to improve work methods (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), voice (e.g., Davidson & Van Dyne, Chapter 17 of this book), and proactive problem solving (Parker et al., 2006). Consistent with Parker and Collins' argument that these variables form a higher-order category, Tornau and Frese (2013) provided meta-analytic results, showing strong relationships amongst voice, taking charge, and behavioral measures of personal initiative.

Finally, *proactive strategic behavior* is the third higher-order category, and it focuses on change in order to improve the organization's strategy, that is, its fit with the external environment. Example behaviors include issue selling, in which managers proactively aim to influence the formation of strategy in organizations (Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Ong & Ashford, Chapter 6 of this book), and strategic scanning (Parker & Collins, 2010), in which employees proactively anticipate important issues that might affect the fit between the organization and its environment. In a related paper the same year, Parker et al. (2010) argued that each of these different goals of proactive behavior (person-environment fit, work behavior, and strategic behavior) can be achieved via distinct change strategies. For example, proactive PE fit behavior could occur through the individual changing him or herself (e.g., developing new skills to meet new demands) or through changing others or the situation (e.g., negotiating an i-deal for more flexible work hours) or, indeed, via both processes.

A further contemporary development in the field has been to recognize that proactivity is not necessarily best conceptualized as a one-off action, but rather as a goal-driven process (Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012; Frese & Fay, 2001; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker et al., 2010; Bateman, Chapter 11 of this book). This perspective draws on theories suggesting that individuals' goals are hierarchically organized into two broad systems (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989): Individuals anticipate desired future states or outcomes and develop strategies to reach those goals (goal generation), and then mobilize and monitor their day-to-day behaviors in order to attain their goals (goal striving). Proactive goal generation thus involves "envisioning and planning, under one's own volition, the goal to bring about a new and different future by changing the self and/or the environment" (Parker et al., 2010). *Envisioning*

involves perceiving a current or future problem or opportunity, and imagining a different future that can be achieved by actively addressing this problem or opportunity, whereas *planning* involves the individual deciding on which actions to take in order to achieve their imagined future (Bindl & Parker, 2009). Proactive goal striving includes the behavioral and psychological mechanisms by which individuals purposively seek to accomplish their proactive goals (Parker et al., 2010). In other words, generating a proactive goal without striving is not, per se, proactive, as it does not produce an intended impact on oneself or the environment. Bindl et al., (2012) identified two key elements of proactive goal striving: *enacting*, the overt action individuals engage in to achieve their proactive goal, and *reflecting*, the individual's efforts to understand the success, failure, or consequences of one's proactive behavior. From this perspective, distinct proactive behaviors can be meaningfully described by phases of proactive goal regulation that are shared across these behaviors.

Once we conceptualize proactivity as a generic way of behaving, rather than as a discrete behavior within a particular domain, or as proactive personality, this also paves the way for recognizing more explicitly the motivational processes that underlie proactive behavior at work. In their model of proactive motivation, Parker et al., (2010) proposed how contextual and individual difference variables affect individuals' proactive motivational states ("can do", "reason to", and "energized to" motivation) which, in turn, affect proactive goal generation and striving. *Can do motivation* includes perceptions of self-efficacy beliefs, control appraisals, and the perceived costs of proactive action. *Reason to motivation* relates to why someone is proactive, such as an individual's feeling of intrinsic, integrated, and identified motivation at work; an individual's flexible role orientation; or an individual's future work self. *Energized to motivation* concerns the "hot" affect-related motivational states that influence proactive behavior, such as activated positive feelings of enthusiasm and inspiration at work (see Chapter 13). The authors proposed, and reviewed evidence, showing how more distal antecedents, including individual differences (e.g., personality, values, knowledge and abilities, and demographics) and contextual variations (e.g., leadership, work design, and interpersonal climate/processes) influence these proactive motivational states and, hence, proactive behavior in organizations. A version of this model – amended slightly to depict each of the chapters in this book – is shown in Figure 1.3.

In sum, we have seen the gradual recognition in the proactivity literature that, even though proactive behaviors were traditionally studied separately (and many scholars – reasonably, of course – continue to do so), one may draw important motivational and behavioral synergies across concepts such as individual innovation, issue selling, and proactive socialization, all of which can be referred to as proactive. In building these bridges across what were once separate domains, we are now in a better place to understand important processes, dynamics, and overall implications of proactivity in organizations.

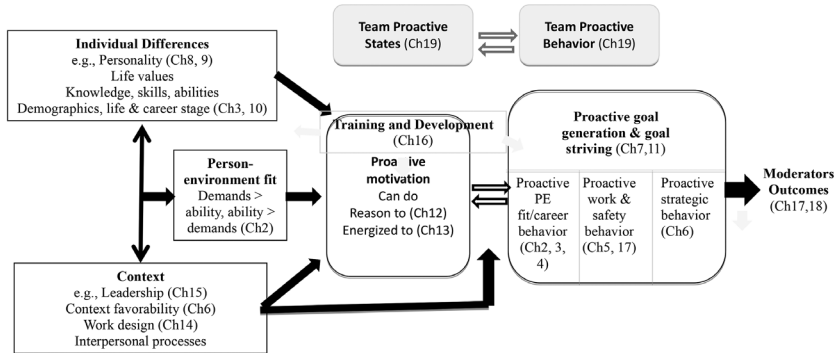


FIGURE 1.3 Motivational model of individual-level proactive work behavior (based on Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). Note that team-level proactive motivation/behavior is depicted, but for simplicity, is not fully integrated into the model.

Book Structure and Content

This book is about proactive *behavior* at work. Thus, even when proactive traits are the focus, as in some of the chapters in this book, it is recognized that these traits influence important work outcomes via changes in proactive behavior. Focusing on proactive behavior allows us to recognize the joint influences of both individual differences (such as personality) and contextual or situational variables in the organization (such as work design and leadership) in understanding when and why employees are proactive at work. We also recognize in this book various psychological processes, such as motivation and identity, through which individuals and situational contexts interact to drive proactivity at work.

Our book is organized into three parts: In Part 1, contributors discuss and review different forms of proactive behavior. In Part 2, each of the chapters emphasizes important individual dynamics of proactivity. Finally, in Part 3, the chapters discuss the work and organizational antecedents and outcomes of proactive behavior.

Part 1: Forms of Proactive Behavior

Part 1 of the book focuses on different forms of proactive behavior. We have sought to organize the chapters according, loosely, to Parker and Collins' (2010) higher order categorizations, as depicted in Figure 1.4.

The initial set of chapters focus on forms of proactivity that most closely fit into the higher-order category of proactive person-environment fit behavior (or what Belschak & Den Hartog, in Chapter 7 of this book, refer to as *pro-self proactive behaviors*). Thus in Chapter 2, De Stobbeleir, DeBoeck and Dries explore novel theoretical perspectives regarding the proactive concept of

12 Parker and Bindl

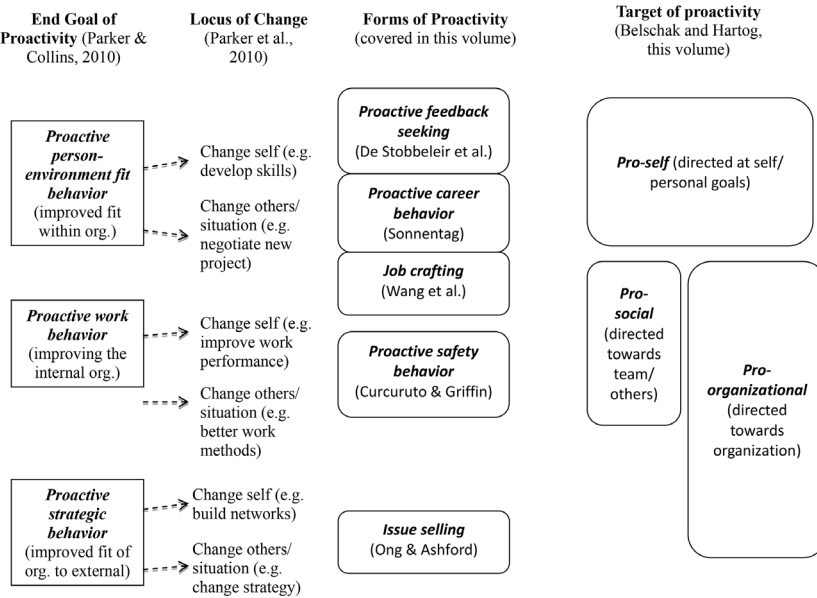


FIGURE 1.4 Different forms of proactivity considered in Part 1 of this book.

feedback seeking behavior. These colleagues define feedback seeking as a form of proactive person-environment fit behavior; particularly in terms of the role that feedback seeking can play in fostering a better demand-abilities fit. For instance, a newcomer might experience more demands than their current ability can meet, prompting them to engage in behaviors like clarifying demands or seeking feedback on one’s abilities. An interesting counter-example is when one’s abilities exceed the demands of the situation, such as occurs when a person is overqualified for the job. De Stobbeleir et al. speculate that such individuals might try to demonstrate their abilities to the feedback source to craft a more challenging role. Thus the motive, and the strategies involved, in feedback seeking may vary according to what type of misfit occurs.

Next, Sonnentag in Chapter 3 focuses on *proactive career behavior*, which – when implemented within an organization – can be a way to achieve better fit of the person to their environment (note that it also encompasses behaviors that can enhance career success by moving into a different organization, so some forms of career proactivity might not be best conceptualized as PE fit behavior). Sonnentag identifies two elements of proactive career behaviors: planning behaviors such as career exploration and goal setting (in essence, *proactive goal generation*) and overt actions such as networking and seeking a mentor (*proactive goal striving*). Importantly, Sonnentag recognizes that versions of these behaviors can be passive, for example, skill development could be mandated via a training

program or it could be pursued proactively, and it is of course the latter focused on in this chapter.

In Chapter 4, Wang, Demerouti, and Bakker discuss the rapidly expanding research on *job crafting*, which can also be seen as a form of proactive PE-fit behavior. Wang et al., define crafting as “a bottom-up job redesign process in which employees themselves make changes pertaining to the characteristics of their jobs” (p. XX, in this book). Job crafting is different from i-deals, for example, in that the latter are authorized by the employers’ agent (usually the supervisor) whereas crafting is not. Job crafting is also aimed towards fulfilling personal needs, whereas task i-deals intend to achieve mutual benefit for employees and job incumbents. In Chapter 4, Wang et al. discuss outcomes and antecedents of job crafting and, in particular, highlight the important role of transformational and empowering leadership in promoting effective job crafting engagements in staff.

A more recent domain-specific form of proactive work behavior is *safety proactivity*, which Curcuruto and Griffin, in Chapter 5, define as anticipatory, self-initiated and change-oriented behavior intended to enhance safety in the workplace. Examples of safety proactivity include redesigning work methods to increase safety and taking pre-emptive steps to enhance safety in light of anticipated future risks. These authors argue that such future-focused proactive behavior is especially important for addressing the more unpredictable risks in complex and highly interdependent workplaces.

Turning to research on proactivity aimed at the broader organization, in Chapter 6, Ong and Ashford provide a review and integration of the *issue selling* literature. The authors define issue selling as employees taking the “initiative to sell issues in anticipation of some future challenges or opportunities facing their organization or society” (p.X). Examples of issue selling include raising issues of gender-equity in the workplace, persuading senior management to address environmental issues across various industries, or highlighting issues of employee-management relations, diversity, or one’s wider community. Importantly, the authors argue that organizational context matters greatly in shaping employees’ willingness (“reason to”) and self-efficacy perceptions (“can-do”) for issue selling. An employee’s identity is strongly implicated in the reason to process. The authors also review evidence for success factors in the issue selling process, spanning both tactics or moves that are aimed at “packaging an issue”, as well as those aimed at “selling the issue” to management. Issue selling can benefit both the issue seller and the organization.

In Chapter 7, the final chapter in Part 1, Belschak and Den Hartog respond to calls to more systematically consider differences amongst *forms of proactive behavior*. The authors explicitly distinguish between different forms of proactive behavior according to their target (see Figure 1.4 above for the link between this categorization structure and that of Parker & Collins, 2010). *Pro-self proactive behaviors* are those directed at one’s self and the achievement of

personal or career goals, such as many forms of career proactivity and proactive person environment-fit behavior, or even some forms of job crafting. *Pro-social behaviors* are directed towards the work group or colleagues, such as proactive knowledge sharing or using one's initiative to help others (what Griffin et al., 2007, refer to as team-member proactivity fits in here). And *pro-organizational proactivity* is proactive behavior that has the organization as its target, such as some forms of voice, taking charge, and, of course, issue selling.

Part 2: Individual Dynamics of Proactivity

Part 2 of the book is concerned with understanding more about the processes and dynamics that underpin individual-level proactivity. Thus, this part of the book is not so much concerned with one specific type or form of proactive behavior, but with understanding the overarching antecedents and mechanisms that generate multiple forms of proactivity; including, individual differences (proactive personality, individual differences), defining elements (proactive goals), common processes (identity, affect), and unanswered questions (aging).

We begin with one of the most important integrative antecedents to proactive behavior that has been introduced into the literature: *proactive personality*, or an individual's relatively stable tendency to bring about environmental change. In Chapter 8, Crant, Hu and Jiang provide a 20-year review of research on this important concept. Proactive personality has been measured in over 100 empirical published articles and is the focus of at least four meta-analyses. The concept can be seen, as summarized by these scholars, "as the 'trait' component of proactivity, and the specific proactive behaviors (are) the 'state' component" (p. XX, in this book). As the authors show, there is overwhelming evidence that proactive personality matters, predicting a whole host of proactive behaviors (e.g., voice, taking charge) and associated outcomes (e.g., job performance, career success, work engagement).

In Chapter 9, we continue with the trait perspective of proactivity. Wu and Li review a broader set of *individual differences* and their role in shaping proactive behavior. Beyond proactive personality, these authors find evidence suggesting the importance of "big five" factors (notably extraversion), cognitive traits (e.g., future orientation), affective traits (e.g., positive affectivity) and instrumental traits (e.g., attachment style). These authors also recognize that these personality traits can develop over time. Thus, consistent with a later chapter recognizing the power of work design in shaping proactivity (Ohly & Schmitt, Chapter 14), these scholars discuss how work design can have a long-term impact on personality, which will in turn affect individual work proactivity.

Zacher and Kooij, in Chapter 10, identify multiple paths by which the age of an individual might shape proactive processes, behaviors and outcomes. *Aging* is a crucial topic in light of the rapidly growing proportion of older workers in many industrialized and developing countries and yet, as these scholars observe, "Employee age is a largely neglected variable in established

theoretical frameworks of proactivity at work” (p. XX). Zacher and Kooij’s review suggests that – contrary to stereotypes – there is no evidence that older employees display lower proactive work behavior, and are possibly even more proactive in their work. Older individuals do, however, tend to engage in lower levels of proactive career behavior. To help understand these findings, and to stimulate more research, the authors draw on theoretical perspectives of lifespan development to propose a theoretical framework of aging and proactivity at work.

Chapters 11 to 13 move away from the focus on more stable trait-like, or demographic, influences on proactivity to consider the goal regulation processes that are inherent to proactivity per se (proactive goals) as well as more proximal influencing processes (identity, affect). First, in Chapter 11, Bateman focuses on the goal process involved in proactivity that has been surprisingly quite neglected in the literature. Bateman defines *proactive goals* in a way that mirrors definitions of proactive behavior in so far as these goals are self-starting, change-oriented, and future-focused, but this scholar adds interesting additional observations, including that “the distinguishing feature of proactive goals compared with other goals is that their intended result is some type of personally-chosen change” (p. XX). That is, proactive behavior is highly idiogenic: it stems from self-chosen aspirations, plans, and personally-important projects. Bateman elaborates several further interesting perspectives, such as the idea of a proactive goal ladder, and provides insights into how proactive goals may be sustained over time.

This idea that proactivity is personally distinctive, and hence very often likely to be self-concordant, is developed further by Strauss and Kelly in their chapter of *identity and proactivity* (Chapter 12). These scholars assert that proactive behavior is very often identity-congruent and serves the purpose of expressing one’s self. The concept of one’s Future Work Self is discussed as a future-oriented and positive identity, or possible self, that creates a discrepancy between the current state and the desired future that, in turn, motivates proactive action. This idea that proactivity is often strongly rooted in one’s identity, such as when an individual sells gender issues or environmental issues to senior managers, represents an important elaboration of the “reason to” motivational process described in Parker et al. (2010).

In the final chapter of this section, Chapter 13, Cangiano, Parker and Bindl consider the role of *affective experience* at work in relation to proactivity. This chapter reviews evidence for the “energized to” pathway of proactivity, including the moods and emotions employees may have in a work setting, that influence the engagement in proactive behavior (Parker et al., 2010). This discussion includes the idea that negative affect can also promote and sustain proactivity in some cases. Importantly, however, the article also discusses the short-term and long-term affective consequences of proactivity, i.e., considers the positive and negative implications of proactive behavior for employee well-being, which is a topic that has had significantly less attention in the literature.

Part 3: Work and Organizational Antecedents and Outcomes of Proactive Behavior

This section of the book goes beyond individual processes in proactivity. Chapters in this part focus on work and organizational antecedents and consequences of proactive behavior, as well as discuss proactivity at the team, rather than the individual, level in organizations. Beginning with antecedents, two of the most frequently identified drivers of proactivity in the literature are work design and leadership. In Chapter 14, Ohly and Schmitt, examine the role of *work design*, including its interaction with personality and other individual differences, in shaping proactive behavior. For example, their review shows compelling evidence for the positive influence of job autonomy, especially for promoting proactive work behavior, but it is also likely important for other forms of proactivity. These authors also consider other work design variables, including some that have had little examination so far, such as accountability and interdependence, and include in their discussion both the processes by which work design shapes proactivity and potential moderators of these relationships.

In Chapter 15, Den Hartog and Belschak examine the role of *leadership*. That leadership affects proactivity is quite obvious, but exactly what leader behaviors are important for what forms of proactivity is much less intuitive. These authors review the effect of leader behaviors on motivation and hence proactivity. It appears that supportive, participative, ethical, and transformational leadership styles are especially important for proactivity, although as these scholars indicate, “there are also theoretical reasons to suggest that employees might specifically choose *not* to speak up to their transformational leaders or to withhold some messages and only provide others to these leaders” (p. XX). These scholars proceed to develop a new theory regarding when and why transformational leadership may be positive or, instead, negative for employee proactivity.

In Chapter 16, Mensmann and Frese investigate the role of *training* in fostering greater employee proactivity, and more specifically, greater personal initiative. The authors describe a training program designed around three defining elements of personal initiative (to be self-starting, future-oriented, and persistent) and five elements of action according to action regulation theory (goal setting, information collection and prognosis, monitoring and feedback). The authors also elaborate on the success of training for personal initiative, as well as offer important recommendations to further strengthen the training and its evaluation.

The next two chapters focus on the outcomes of proactivity, including whether, when, and why negative consequences might arise. In Chapter 17, Davidson and Van Dyne begin by first making clear that, relative to reactive voice, *proactive voice* is self-initiated, rather than being a response, and more focused on changing the environment rather than supporting the status quo. As such, a proactive voice is likely to be responded to differently by supervisors. Drawing on construal-level theory, these authors put forward a series of

intriguing propositions about the construal fit (a match between the employees' proactive voice framing and the supervisor's construal of the issue) will shape whether supervisors judge voice to be useful, legitimate, and compelling.

In Chapter 18, Bolino, Turnley, and Anderson examine “the dark side” of proactivity, or when proactivity might hurt oneself, others, or the organization. Despite the clear evidence for many individual and organizational outcomes of proactive behavior, there can indeed also be downsides to this way of behaving. These authors systematically tackle each of the three higher-order categories of proactive behavior identified by Parker and Collins (2010), discussing theory and empirical evidence suggesting when and why downsides might occur. For example, proactive strategic behavior might result in negative psychological consequences if others make negative attributions about their behaviors, and note the “conflict, misplaced priorities, and reputational damage that can be a by-product of these types of actions” (p. XX).

Finally, although most of the concepts and processes we have discussed in this book have focused on individuals, it is possible for overall teams in organizations to be proactive. In Chapter 19, Harris and Kirkman define *team proactivity* in a way that has parallels with individual proactivity. However, these authors also rightly argue that team proactive states and behaviors “are based on more than just the simple aggregation of team member characteristics; rather, they reflect collective properties” (p. XX). Consequently, the authors have developed a novel IMOI model of Team Proactivity that identifies compositional and contextual inputs that shape team proactive states and behaviors (which reciprocally affect each other) that then influence individual, team, and organizational outcomes, which, in turn, affect the compositional and contextual inputs.

In the very last chapter of this book (Bindl & Parker, Chapter 20 on “New perspectives and directions for understanding proactivity in organizations”, we synthesize key themes in the book. In particular, our goal is to set out an agenda for research in the future. Thus we summarize key research needs and highlight some of those directions we see as especially important for moving the field forward. As we note, to keep moving this exciting topic forward, we need to strike a balance between encouraging diverse and novel perspectives with integrating and bridge-building across topics. Both of these divergent and convergent future directions are important to stimulate theoretical development and at the same time prevent the unmanageable proliferation of overlapping constructs.

We hope you enjoy this book and find it thought provoking and useful. We have certainly enjoyed making this book happen!

Note

- 1 Key articles are those from the above search (Figure 1.2) that were cited at least 100 times, Web of Science, as per 15 December 2015, as well as including meta-analyses in the field.

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PART I

Forms of Proactive Behavior

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FEEDBACK-SEEKING BEHAVIOR

A Person-Environment Fit Perspective

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Work in today's organizations is increasingly characterized by uncertain and changing information about task objectives, ambiguity about work roles, and limited direction from others (Hulin & Glomb, 1999; Uhl-Bien & Graen, 1998). As such, employees need to manage their own performance and professional development proactively within the organization to be successful (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Employees can exhibit a range of proactive behaviors, including selling strategic issues to top management (Dutton, Ashford, Lawrence, Miner-Rubino, 2002), expressing voice (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998), seeking information (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), crafting the task or the job to be more successful (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), taking initiative in pursuing goals (Roberson, 1990; Frese & Fay, 2001), and moving beyond the annual performance review to seek feedback more frequently and/or on issues that go beyond those addressed by traditional organizational feedback systems (Ashford, Blatt, & VandeWalle, 2003). Given the rapid growth of proactive concepts in the literature, Parker and Collins (2010) developed and tested an integrative framework designed to categorize the various specific manifestations of proactivity. Parker and Collins' (2010) framework distinguishes between three general categories of proactivity: (1) proactive work behaviors, i.e., proactive behaviors that focus on the improvement of work processes (e.g., taking charge, job crafting); (2) proactive strategic behaviors, i.e., behaviors aimed at improving the organization's responses and match with its external environment (e.g., strategic issue-selling); and (3) proactive person-environment fit (P-E fit) behaviors, which focus on enhancing one's personal fit with the internal organization (e.g., feedback-seeking behaviors). In this chapter, we focus on the latter category of proactivity, i.e., P-E fit behaviors, and more specifically on feedback-seeking behavior as an important manifestation of these P-E fit behaviors. By not only waiting for

feedback to “happen” to them in a yearly review but by proactively seeking feedback, individuals can achieve greater compatibility between the organization’s/the job’s requirements and their personal expectations and preferences, and continuously monitor how they are doing with respect to the expectations that the organization places on them. Given its practical value, there has been considerable research on feedback-seeking behavior (FSB), which is typically defined as “the conscious devotion of effort toward determining the correctness and adequacy of behavior for attaining valued end states” (Ashford, 1986, p 466). As mentioned by Parker and Collins (2010), who conceptualize FSB as a P-E fit behavior, one of these valued end states may entail being able to better respond to the requirements of the environment. For a newcomer, this may entail learning the ropes of a new job (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996), while for a manager, this may entail trying to understand the expectations of their various stakeholders (e.g., Ashford & Tsui, 1994).

It is surprising, however, that despite the clear conceptual link between the P-E fit literature and feedback-seeking, there are very little feedback-seeking studies that explicitly adopt a P-E fit lens when deriving antecedents and outcomes in relation to FSB. Two notable exceptions are the seminal study by Parker and Collins (2010) and a study by Devloo, Anseel, & De Beuckelaer (2010). The latter study showed that FSB may help managers who have a growth vision in development to solve imbalances between their work demands and their personal abilities. Such initial results suggest that P-E fit theory might be a promising lens for further expanding our understanding of the antecedents and outcomes of feedback-seeking behavior. In this literature review, we therefore explicitly adopt a P-E fit perspective to take stock of the existing literature on FSB and we outline avenues for future research.

Adopting a P-E fit perspective may not only be relevant for identifying new types of variables that may fruitfully be related to feedback-seeking in future research, but it may also lead to a reinterpretation of existing research through a P-E fit lens. For example, in the feedback-seeking literature, there are considerable studies in the context of employee socialization (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996). Employee socialization may, in essence, be a situation of misfit (or perceived misfit) (Cable & Parsons, 2001), where employees may engage in feedback-seeking to achieve a better fit with their environment. In addition to reinterpreting existing research, adopting a P-E fit lens may also shed new light on some of the inconsistent research findings that have been reported in the field. For example, a meta-analysis by Anseel, Beatty, Shen, Lievens, & Sackett (2015) showed that despite the general view that uncertainty leads to enhanced feedback-seeking, uncertainty may both enhance and diminish feedback-seeking. Throughout this chapter, we will offer some alternative interpretations for these inconsistent results based on P-E fit theorizing.

This chapter is structured as follows. We first provide a general overview of the concept of feedback-seeking, zooming in on different patterns of seeking,

and the different motives that impact the feedback-seeking process. We then discuss the basic tenets of P-E fit theory, highlighting different types of situations of misfit between an environment's demands and an individual's abilities. We also discuss how feedback-seeking may reduce misfit in each of these situations of misfit between demands and abilities (i.e., in situations of misfit where demands exceed abilities and in situations of misfit where abilities exceed demands). In the next section we turn to the outcomes of feedback-seeking behavior. In doing so, we highlight the areas in which significant progress has been made, as well as the areas where research seems to have lagged. We conclude this chapter by offering some avenues for further research.

Patterns and Motives for Seeking Feedback

Despite the relatively straightforward definition of feedback-seeking we provided above, feedback-seeking is far from a straightforward phenomenon. Not only does feedback-seeking manifest itself in many different forms and patterns, but there are also complex (and sometimes opposing) motives involved in the feedback-seeking process.

Patterns of Feedback-Seeking

Zooming in on the patterns of feedback-seeking, in order to obtain a sense of how they are doing, employees need to decide on how frequently they will seek feedback, what tactics they will use, from whom they will seek, when to seek, and what type of feedback they will focus on.

With regards to the *tactics*, individuals may either seek feedback by directly asking others for an evaluation of how they are doing (e.g., an employee who directly asks his/her supervisor: "How am I doing?"). But employees can also seek feedback indirectly, by using the monitoring tactic. This tactic involves a screening of the environment for indirect feedback cues, for example, by observing how others react to certain behaviors (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). The tactic that individuals ultimately select has been found to be predominantly driven by the perceived image costs of feedback-seeking. That is, when individuals perceive that they might lose face by inquiring for feedback, they are more likely to seek feedback via monitoring (e.g., Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Ashford & Tsui, 1991).

Another pattern of feedback-seeking refers to the *source* from whom the performer seeks feedback. Sometimes, the task itself can provide the performer the feedback he or she needs (e.g., when a salesman seeks feedback by looking at sales numbers). More often, however, people seek feedback from social sources, such as their supervisors and peers, and sometimes even extra-organizational sources (such as clients) (Ashford et al., 2003). For example, a newcomer may seek feedback from his/her supervisor to understand whether he/she is socializing well in

his/her role. Similarly, a sales manager may seek feedback from clients to understand whether he/she is meeting clients' expectations.

Performers also need to decide on when they will seek feedback, that is, the *timing* of the seeking. Even though there is very little empirical work that has explicitly examined individuals' timing in feedback-seeking, it has been suggested that performers may either seek feedback immediately following a task, or they may decide to postpone feedback-seeking – for example when their performance fell short (Larsson, 1989).

Finally, individuals can also decide to emphasize a particular *topic* when they seek feedback. That is, some individuals may prefer to seek feedback about their strengths and achievements, while others may seek feedback about their weaknesses and areas for development. A study by Gong, Wang, Huang and Cheung (2014) for example showed that individuals with a learning goal orientation (i.e., an orientation towards developing themselves rather than displaying their capabilities) were more likely to seek negative feedback, presumably because they are less concerned about the potential image costs this might have, but more interested in developing themselves. Individuals with a performance-goal orientation (i.e., an orientation towards displaying capabilities) were more likely to seek positive feedback.

Motives for Feedback-Seeking

As mentioned, individuals may also engage in (or refrain from) feedback-seeking for many different reasons. Ashford and colleagues (2003) distinguish three different motives that may impact individuals' choices between the different feedback-seeking patterns: (1) instrumental motives; (2) impression management motives; (3) ego enhancement motives.

The instrumental motive refers to people's desire to obtain evaluative information because it helps them to attain their instrumental goals (Ashford et al., 2003). An example of the instrumental motive is an employee who seeks feedback to ensure that his/her task performance is on track. However, there is also something about feedback-seeking that is not as straightforward as the instrumental motive suggests. Clearly, there are also potential impression-management gains and costs that may impact people's decisions in feedback-seeking. That is, when performers seek feedback, they also need to assess how this seeking will be interpreted by others. Feedback-seeking may not always yield positive outcomes for individuals, in part because of how others evaluate it. For example, De Stobbeleir, Ashford, and DeLuque (2010) showed that individuals who seek feedback are sometimes labeled as impression managers who are more interested in impressing others than in obtaining diagnostic information about their performance. Ultimately, the impression that feedback-seeking leaves may even impact supervisors' performance evaluations and assessments of employees' potential. De Stobbeleir et al. (2010) found that supervisors

who make impression management attributions for feedback-seeking, provide lower performance and potential evaluations of employees. Employees' concerns about how feedback-seeking might look will therefore also shape their feedback-seeking pattern. For example, when an employee feels that his/her supervisor would interpret direct requests for feedback as an interruption or as a lack of independence, the employee may select a less overt tactic for acquiring feedback (e.g., monitoring) or may choose to refrain from feedback-seeking altogether (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992). However, when the performer feels that feedback-seeking will yield impression management benefits (e.g., by seeking feedback on successes), he/she may opt for a more direct tactic to seek feedback, such as direct inquiry (Ashford et al., 2003). Finally, because feedback is evaluative information, people also worry about the answer that they might get when they seek feedback. Feedback may hurt people's self-image, especially when the feedback is negative. As such, the prospect of seeking and obtaining feedback also invokes an ego-based motive, that is, a desire to defend and protect one's ego (Ashford et al., 2003). To date, however, research on the ego-based motive is relatively scarce, so we will mainly address this motive when we discuss the areas for future research.

These three motives for feedback-seeking have influenced the range of personal and contextual variables that have been included in empirical research. It is not our intention to provide a comprehensive review of this literature, as this has already been done elsewhere (e.g., Ashford et al., 2003; VandeWalle, 2003). The question we want to raise here, is how these motives are triggered, and what causes certain motives to become more salient in some feedback-seeking processes compared to others? For example, under what conditions do instrumental motives prevail over impression-management motives? And which types of situations trigger the impression-management motive? Even though the extant literature provides some insight of the types of factors that play a role in these processes, there is a lack of an integrated view on the dynamic interplay between the different motives. We believe that the P-E fit literature offers a promising integrative perspective to study to what extent the different motives are triggered in the feedback-seeking process, and how it might shape the five feedback-seeking patterns we discussed earlier. In the next section we provide an overview of the basic tenets of P-E fit theory, and we discuss how this perspective may increase our understanding of the feedback-seeking process.

A P-E Fit Perspective on Feedback-Seeking Behavior

Over the past decade, the congruence between a person and a work environment, generally referred to as person-environment (P-E) fit, has become a central concept in research on organizational behavior (Edwards, 2008). The basic tenet of P-E fit theory is that individuals thrive the most in their jobs when they experience a situation of fit between themselves and their environment,

while situations of misfit are undesirable because they are associated with negative individual and organizational outcomes (Edwards, 2008). Over time, researchers have conceptualized person–environment fit in many different ways, including person–organization (P–O) fit (Kristof, 1996) and person–job (P–J) fit (Edwards, 1991). Kristof (1996, p. 4) defines P–O fit as “the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both”. With regards to person–job fit, Edwards (1991) states that two types of fit are important to increase employees’ perceptions of P–E fit (Edwards, 1996): 1) Demands–abilities fit (i.e., when individuals have the capabilities to meet their job requirements); and 2) Supplies–values fit (i.e., when the environment supplies what the individual needs/values). In this chapter, we will mainly focus on the demands–abilities fit perspective, as Parker and Collins (2010) suggested that feedback-seeking behavior about one’s own performance is mainly a proactive strategy to acquire demands–abilities fit. Supplies–values fit might be achieved through other proactive behaviors. For example, through information seeking, individuals might assess whether their environment supplies what they need (Kim, Cable, & Kim, 2005).

The view that a situation of person–environment fit is desirable is supported by empirical work that has linked various types of person–environment fit to a wide range of desirable outcomes, including employee satisfaction (Resick, Baltes, & Shantz, 2007), organizational commitment (Cable & Judge, 1996), and overall performance (Hoffman, & Woehr, 2006). In contrast, person–environment misfit is related to increased turnover intentions (Bretz & Judge, 1994) and strain (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). For example, Wheeler, Gallagher, Brouer, and Sablinski (2007) found that a situation of misfit predicted employees’ turnover intentions, especially when employees perceived that they had job mobility.

The question is of course whether all situations of misfit will necessarily result in negative consequences. Zooming in on the demands–ability perspective, for example, proactivity literature suggests that people tend to take charge of their situation and confront situations of misfit by either changing (e.g., improving) their own abilities or by altering the demands that their environments place on them. In other words, proactivity literature suggests that individuals may also respond to situations of misfit by engaging in proactive behaviors in order to acquire a situation of fit (Parker & Collins, 2010; Grant & Ashford, 2008). This view is also consistent with theories on work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Dawis and Lofquist (1984, p. 55) state that work adjustment is a “continuous and dynamic process by which the individual seeks to achieve and maintain a match with the work environment”. Instead of assuming that either fit or misfit exists and the latter results in turnover, this theory emphasizes the malleability of fit: only when *efforts* to establish a correspondence *fail*, the individual will leave the work environment.

As noted by Parker and Collins (2010) feedback-seeking is very likely to be an important behavioral strategy or behavioral effort that individuals engage in to establish a situation of fit between the demands that the environment places on them and their abilities. They suggested that feedback-seeking is a behavior that individuals typically engage in to acquire a better fit between the demands of the job, supervisors, and/or the organization, and their own abilities.

Of course, not all situations of misfit are the same, nor will all types of misfit be associated with the same outcomes. Therefore, it is important to consider the specific direction of misfit (Edwards, 2008). The demands-abilities perspective suggests that two situations of misfit may occur, and it is likely that people will engage in different types of feedback-seeking, or possess different types of motives when seeking for feedback, depending on the direction of D–A misfit they experience.

The first type of misfit is a situation where the demands of the environment (the job, superiors, peers, the organization, clients . . .) exceed the individual's abilities (i.e., a situation of $D > A$ misfit). One example of such a situation of misfit could be a newcomer, who is learning the ropes of a new job. In such a situation, it is very likely that the individual is not yet fully competent in all aspects of the job, thereby creating a situation of $D > A$ misfit. Given that a situation of misfit is considered as an undesirable situation, P-E fit theory suggests that individuals will seek to restore the balance and try to acquire a situation of fit. They can achieve this fit situation either by decreasing the demands or the complexity of the demands that their environment poses on them (e.g., by trying to clarify those demands) or by increasing their abilities (e.g., by seeking feedback on their abilities). Our review of the feedback-seeking literature suggests that most of the existing empirical work has implicitly started from this situation of misfit, and from the view that feedback-seeking basically helps people to improve their abilities to better respond to the requirements of the environment (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996). Research in this dominant view has shown that feedback-seeking enables individuals to adapt and respond to continuously changing goals and role expectations (Morrison & Weldon, 1990; Tsui & Ashford, 1994), obtain more accurate self-views (Ashford & Tsui, 1991), improve their task performance (Chen, Lam, & Zhong, 2007), and learn the ropes of a new job (Ashford & Black, 1996; Morrison, 1992). In sum, feedback-seeking in this view is a strategy used to achieve a better fit with an environment.

However, as mentioned, there is also a different type of misfit – a situation where a person's abilities exceed the demands of his/her environment ($A > D$). This direction of misfit is also undesirable from a P-E fit perspective (Kristof, 1996). For example, when an individual is overqualified for a job, he/she might not be sufficiently challenged, which might result in boredom and demotivation (Kristof, 1996). Based on these suggestions, we expect individuals to change this situation either by decreasing their efforts or by displaying their abilities. In other words, when individuals experience $A > D$ misfit, they might leave their

abilities unused or highlight their abilities to others so that others become aware of the $A > D$ misfit and help the individual to overcome the misfit by, for example, giving the individual additional challenges, or by increasing the complexity of environmental demands. We suggest that when individuals experience $A > D$ misfit, they might use feedback-seeking to either achieve additional challenges, because they might obtain feedback that provides them with an additional challenge (i.e., the demands increase), or to demonstrate their abilities to the feedback source so that they can craft their jobs (e.g., by enlarging their work), or in order to transition to another role (Edwards, 2008). Our review of the literature suggests that there is far less research on the role that feedback-seeking may play in such a situation of misfit.

In our review of the antecedents of feedback-seeking, we start from the assumption that in both situations of misfit (i.e., when $D > A$ and when $A > D$) feedback-seeking may help individuals to achieve a situation of fit, but that these two types of misfit may trigger the motives for feedback-seeking differently, as well as the choices that individuals make with regards to the different patterns of feedback-seeking. So far, research on the antecedents of feedback-seeking behavior has mainly argued that feedback-seeking is a function of the employee's personal characteristics, the characteristics of the context in which he or she works, and the interactions among these characteristics (see Ashford et al., 2003 for a review). As noted by Ashford, De Stobbeleir and Nujella (in press), research has shown that individual characteristics such as an individual's learning-goal orientation (Cho, 2013; Park, Schmidt, Scheu & DeShon; 2007), his/her cognitive style (De Stobbeleir, Ashford, Buyens, 2011), feedback-seeking motives (Hays & Williams, 2011), emotion-related characteristics (e.g., Kim, Cable, Kim, & Wang, 2009; Gervy, Igou, & Trope (2006) and demographic (age, gender, race, nationality, organizational tenure) differences all impact on whether and how individuals will seek feedback. Research with regards to the context important for feedback-seeking reveals that particularly variables related to having a supportive leader (e.g., a transformational or authentic leader), or having a supportive context (e.g., a supportive feedback climate), shape employees' feedback-seeking behaviors (Chun, Choi, & Moon, 2014; Qian, Lin, & Chen, 2012; Nifadkar et al., 2012; Steelman, Levy, & Snell, 2004).

The literature has also introduced antecedents, for which the effects on feedback-seeking are less clear, however. For example, an often-used framework in the feedback-seeking literature is the uncertainty reduction perspective that suggests that uncertainty increases feedback-seeking (e.g., Ashford, 1986). However, recent empirical work by Anseel and Lievens (2007), as well as a meta-analysis by Anseel et al. (2015) has revealed a negative impact of uncertainty on feedback inquiry. However, our P-E fit perspective suggests that depending on the type of misfit that people experience, uncertainty may exert a different impact. Building on P-E fit literature, we suggest that uncertainty may arise in the two scenarios of misfit we have described so far.

When $D > A$ (i.e., when the individual perceives he/she is underqualified), uncertainty may arise because the individual is not certain about whether or not his/her abilities are meeting the demands. When $A > D$ (i.e., when the individual perceives he/she is overqualified), uncertainty may arise because the individual may doubt whether he/she is in the right role. We suggest that the type of misfit that people experience (i.e., $D > A$ or $A > D$) will impact their feedback-seeking. For example, when individuals experience that the demands exceed their abilities, the uncertainty may reduce their tendency to seek feedback because this may have negative consequences for their image. Only in exceptional circumstances (e.g., when they are learning the ropes of a new job), the uncertainty that is associated with a situation where demands are higher than abilities may lead to increased feedback inquiry.

That said, also situations where abilities exceed the demands can cause uncertainty (e.g., people wondering about whether they are still in the right job). In these situations, uncertainty may cause the individual to inquire more frequently for feedback, because this would allow them to display their abilities. To date, however, these assertions remain largely untested. However, several studies provide indirect evidence for our assertion. In what follows, we, therefore, reinterpret the literature on the antecedents of feedback-seeking through the lens of these two situations of misfit (see Figure 2.1 on guiding framework).

Antecedents of Feedback-seeking when Demands Exceed Abilities ($D > A$)

As mentioned, very few studies have explicitly examined situations of misfit, which means that there are little to no studies explicitly incorporating “fit” variables as an antecedent of feedback-seeking. However, when reviewing the FSB literature, it is clear that much of the extant work on feedback seeking is conducted from the perspective that feedback-seeking is a way for individuals to better live up to the expectations of their environment (i.e., to mold their abilities to the demands that are placed on them).

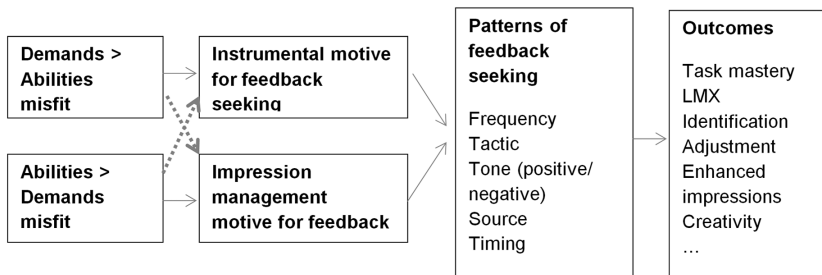


FIGURE 2.1 Our guiding framework

One stream of research that has started from this assumption are studies that relate feedback-seeking to employee socialization. P-E fit literature suggests that newcomers and/or individuals who face a career transition, in essence, experience a situation of misfit where the demands that are placed on them tend to exceed their abilities (or are at least perceived as such by the newcomers as the demands placed on them are quite ambiguous in the early employment stages) (Cable & Parsons, 2001). Individuals can respond to such situations of misfit in two ways. Either they can increase their abilities and clarify the demands to better respond to the demands of their environment, or they can try to change (e.g., reduce) the demands that are placed on them. We argue that feedback-seeking is a strategy that is mainly focused towards increasing one's own abilities, while other types of proactive behaviors that have been described elsewhere in this volume (e.g., job crafting; chapters X and X in this book) may be more oriented towards changing the external demands.

Focusing on feedback-seeking, we argue that in situations of misfit where demands exceed abilities, individuals will have a strong instrumental motive for feedback-seeking. That is, in such situations, individuals may wish to seek feedback to evaluate and gain insight into their abilities, to think about strategies to modify their behaviors, or to gain a deeper insight into the demands that are placed on them. Because feedback-seeking provides them with this information, it is also likely that over time, individuals will achieve a situation of fit because of their seeking (or even a situation where their abilities start to exceed the demands that are placed on them), which may offset the instrumental motive for seeking. This may affect an individual's selection of feedback-seeking patterns.

This view is confirmed by empirical work by Callister, Kramer, and Turban (1999) who found that feedback-seeking from peers following career transitions declined over time, while feedback-seeking from supervisors remained constant. They explained this by suggesting that in the early stages following a transition, inquiry from peers and supervisors mainly has an equal instrumental value in getting acquainted with the requirements of the job, and adapting one's own abilities to those requirements. However, after being on the job for some time, people have learned the ropes of the job (i.e., a fit is achieved between abilities and demands), which means that the instrumental value of seeking feedback from peers declines as demands and abilities become more aligned (or abilities start to exceed demands). Feedback-seeking from supervisors, however, continues to be important, but mainly from an impression management perspective because, also, in situations of fit or in situations of abilities that exceed demands, feedback-seeking may make one's performance more visible to supervisors, who have control over important rewards.

This rationale is also consistent with the pattern of results reported by Brett, Feldman, and Weingart (1990) who found that newcomers looked for feedback from supervisors and peers in the early stages of the transition, and then continued to search for feedback from supervisors once they were properly adjusted.

Ashford and Cummings (1985) also showed that individuals who had a lower tenure in the job and/or organization sought more feedback than those with a longer tenure.

Not only a situation of being new to the job or organization, but also a situation where goals and deadlines need to be met may be a situation of $D > A$ misfit and therefore trigger the instrumental motive to seek feedback. In essence, such situations are those where the demands of the environment have not yet been met, and the performer is working towards meeting these demands. This is supported by a study by Slowiak and Nuetzman (2014) who found in the lab that goals triggered feedback-seeking and that this feedback-seeking increased towards the deadline. Also, Morrison and Weldon (1990), found that individuals who are assigned goals are more likely to seek feedback than individuals who are working without goals. This pattern of results can be explained because a nearing deadline or goal may make individuals more aware of the need for a fit between the demands of the environment and the individual's abilities.

Finally, it has been a longstanding assumption in FSB literature that situations, where there is ambiguity and/or uncertainty may increase feedback-seeking (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Ashford, 1986) because feedback-seeking may help individuals to adjust "fittingly" to such situations (Ashford, 1986). However, as highlighted by Anseel and colleagues (2015), the relationship between uncertainty and feedback-seeking is unclear. As mentioned in our introduction P-E fit theory suggests that it is not as much the level of uncertainty, but rather the mismatch between demands and abilities that may predict feedback-seeking. That is, even in times of uncertainty, it is conceivable that for certain individuals there is still a fit between the demands of the uncertain situation, and the person's abilities, which may make the instrumental need to seek feedback less salient. However, in uncertain situations where the demands of the situation do exceed the abilities of the individual, uncertainty may trigger the instrumental motive to seek feedback. In short, we suggest that uncertainty will only predict feedback-seeking to the extent that the uncertainty leads to a misfit between the person's abilities and the demands of that uncertain situation. We find indirect support for this hypothesis in the fact that most of the studies that report a positive relationship between uncertainty and feedback-seeking, were conducted in situations where the uncertainty was also accompanied by a situation where the demands of the situation were also likely to exceed the abilities of the individual (e.g., among newcomers) (Black & Ashford, 1996; Ashford, 1986).

Taken together, the studies we have discussed so far seem to suggest that under conditions where demands of the environment exceed people's abilities (in situations of $D > A$ misfit), the instrumental value of feedback-seeking increases.

That said, for newcomers, or for individuals working towards a deadline, a situation where demands exceed abilities, seeking feedback to match to the external demands may be a relatively socially accepted situation. However, there are also conditions where this may not be the case. For example, in public

contexts, for leaders, or for individuals who have been performing a job for quite some time, a $D > A$ situation may have a negative impact on their image, and also attempts to redress the balance through feedback-seeking may be viewed negatively. In such situations of misfit, it is likely that not only the instrumental motive will be triggered, but also the impression management motive. That is, despite the instrumental reasons for seeking feedback in a situation of $D > A$, certain boundary conditions may restrain individuals from feedback-seeking because of activation of impression management motives. As shown by Ashford and Northcraft (1992), and later by De Stobbeleir et al. (2010), poor performers, and contexts (such as public contexts) that discourage feedback-seeking, may offset the instrumental motive for feedback-seeking. In the same vein, research has shown that high-performers tend to seek more diagnostic feedback (i.e., feedback that can be used to improve future performance) than non-diagnostic feedback (e.g., very general feedback), while poor performers tend to seek both diagnostic and non-diagnostic feedback (Morrison & Cummings, 1992). Northcraft and Ashford (1990) further found that participants with low performance expectations seek less diagnostic feedback. They attributed this finding to impression management motives. Compared to newcomers, for example, for poor performers, the $D > A$ situation may be less socially accepted, thereby triggering impression-management motives. Research has also shown that the fact that average and poor performers tend to refrain from feedback-seeking is often justified, as they are viewed more negatively than superior performers who seek diagnostic feedback (De Stobbeleir et al., 2010). In sum, when a situation of $D > A$ misfit is socially undesirable (e.g., a situation of underperformance), impression management concerns for seeking feedback are triggered.

That said, impression management concerns may be reduced when individuals develop high-quality relationships with supervisors (e.g., Anseel et al., 2015; Chun, Choi, & Moon, 2014; Chen et al., 2007), when the overall culture is supportive of feedback-seeking (e.g., Morrison, Chen, and Salgado, 2004), when individuals work in an empowering climate (Chen et al., 2007), when the feedback sources are supportive (Williams, Miller, Steelman, and Levy, 1999), or when supervisors are considerate, initiate structure (VandeWalle, Ganesan, Challagalla, & Brown, 2000), are authentic (Qian et al., 2012), and exhibit a transformational leadership style (Anseel et al., 2015). In sum, in a socially undesirable situation of $D > A$ misfit (e.g., a situation of underperformance), impression management concerns for seeking feedback may be offset by a supportive context (e.g., a positive feedback environment, an empowering climate) and a supportive supervisory style (e.g., authentic leadership and considerate/structured supervision).

Finally, research shows that not all individuals will respond to situations of $D > A$ misfit by seeking feedback, which suggests that there may also be individual factors that impact the extent to which individuals will respond to misfit by seeking feedback. For example, a study by Devloo, Anseel, and De Beuckelaer

(in press) showed that individuals with an incremental theory (i.e., a belief that people's abilities can be changed) as opposed to an entity theory (i.e., a belief that people's abilities are fixed) were more likely to seek feedback when demands exceeded abilities. Another individual difference variable that may increase people's desire to achieve a fit between demands and abilities by seeking feedback, is public self-consciousness, a trait that reflects the extent to which individuals are interested in how others view them. Levy, Albright, Cawley, and Williams (1995), for example, showed that individuals with a high public self-consciousness seek more feedback in order to better live up to expectations of others. Also, the fact that feedback-seeking results in feedback-based goal setting (Renn & Fedor, 2001), is an indication of the fact that individuals tend to reduce $D > A$ misfit by setting goals to increase their abilities. Another important individual characteristic that may motivate individuals to reduce $D > A$ misfit through feedback-seeking is a learning goal orientation, an individual orientation that focuses on the acquisition of new knowledge and skills (i.e., increasing one's abilities), with various studies reporting a positive relationship between a learning goal orientation and feedback-seeking (e.g., Anseel et al., 2015; Cho, 2013; VandeWalle, 2003; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle, Cron, & Slocum, 2001; Park et al., 2007; Ren & Fedor, 2001). In sum, the extent to which the instrumental motive and impression management motive in situations of $D > A$ misfit are triggered is likely to depend on individual difference variables (e.g., goal orientation, implicit person theory, and self-consciousness).

Antecedents of Feedback-seeking when Abilities Exceed Demands ($A > D$)

Our review of the literature reveals that a considerable amount of the empirical work on the antecedents of feedback starts from the perspective that people seek feedback to achieve a situation of fit when the demands of their environment exceed their abilities (i.e., $D > A$ misfit). However, misfit can also exist when an individual's abilities exceed the demands of the job ($A > D$ misfit). Individuals may respond to such situations by either signaling their abilities to others (i.e., impression management) or by increasing the demands that they place on themselves (e.g., by engaging in creative or exploratory behaviors). We suggest that feedback-seeking in $A > D$ misfit situations can serve both purposes. That is, feedback-seeking can be used as an impression management tool that helps the individual to signal his/her abilities (in the hope to gain something from that), or feedback-seeking can be used in an instrumental way, to increase the demands.

To date, most of the extant research implicitly seems to suggest that in cases of $A > D$ misfit, the instrumental motive for feedback-seeking will be less salient, making the impression management motive more salient. That is, research seems to implicitly assume that in situations of $A > D$ misfit, feedback-seeking

is more of a strategy used to signal one's own abilities to others and to create a favorable public image (especially among supervisors, who have control over important rewards) (Ashford et al., 2003).

This view is supported by research to the feedback-seeking behaviors of high (versus low or average) performers. As stated in the over-qualification literature, superior performance is often an indication of a situation where a person's abilities exceed the demands of the environment (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009). Manipulating performance expectations in the lab, Northcraft and Ashford (1990) found that students with high performance expectations inquired significantly more for feedback than individuals expecting to perform poorly. Northcraft and Ashford (1990) explained this pattern of results suggesting that feedback-seeking for individuals with low performance expectations was more costly, while feedback-seeking when performance expectations are high, was viewed as a means to display one's own abilities. Also, Morrison and Bies (1991) suggested but did not test that individuals may be likely to seek more feedback when they believe this will create a favorable impression. Their reasoning was further corroborated by Timmers, Braber-van den Broek, & van den Berg (2013) who found a positive relation between success expectancy and feedback-seeking. Research also suggests that compared to low and average performers, high performers are more likely to create a favorable impression when they seek feedback and are even considered more for important rewards because of that seeking (Ashford and Northcraft, 1992). The differential impressions evoked by feedback-seeking make sense from a P-E perspective because, in situations of $A > D$ misfit, feedback-seeking may allow high performers to display their abilities and create a favorable impression. In sum, our review of the existing literature suggests that situations of $A > D$ misfit will trigger the impression management motive for feedback-seeking.

Just as with $D > A$ misfit, however, not all individuals might be equally motivated to use feedback-seeking as a strategy to display their performance. Research shows that especially individuals with a performance-goal orientation (i.e., an orientation towards displaying or proving one's own performance) may be inclined to use feedback-seeking for impression management purposes because these individuals tend to perceive an $A > D$ misfit more frequently. Indeed, given that individuals with a performance-goal orientation seek to prove and display their abilities (Dweck, 1999), it can even be expected that individuals with such a goal orientation will actively seek situations of $A > D$ misfit, as these situations set the ideal stage to demonstrate their abilities. Even though largely untested, this reasoning suggests that individuals with a performance-goal orientation may be more likely to seek feedback to manage others' impressions in a situation of $A > D$ misfit.

Providing indirect support for our suggestions, Janssen and Prins (2007) found that individuals with a performance-goal orientation tended to seek less diagnostic feedback, but more positive feedback, allowing them to display their

abilities. In the same vein, Gong, et al. (2014) found that individuals with a performance-goal orientation were more likely to seek positive feedback about themselves and negative feedback about others, presumably because this also allowed them to display their own performance. Also, Whitaker and Levy (2012) found that a performance-goal orientation was negatively related to seeking useful feedback, while Tuckey, Brewer, and Williamson (2002) showed that above-average performers with a performance-goal orientation (a situation of $A > D$) sought feedback more frequently, presumably because it allowed them to highlight their strengths to others. As such, in situations of $A > D$ misfit, the impression management motive for feedback-seeking may be more salient for individuals who have a preference for displaying their abilities (e.g., individuals with a performance-goal orientation).

However, the research discussed so far suggests that seeking feedback in a situation of $A > D$ misfit will only be meaningful if the situation has some type of reward power or when the context is “evaluative”, i.e., when the seeking may result in some desired benefits for the seeker beyond improving one’s performance (e.g., an important reward, promotion, a favorable performance evaluation) (Ashford & Northcraft, 2004). We suggest that particularly in situations where there is a dependency between the individual and the sources of feedback-seeking, the evaluative nature and reward power of the situation will be strong. For example, policy-capturing studies suggest that individuals tend to seek more feedback from supervisors than from peers, especially when they have positive performance expectations because supervisors have the formal power to make evaluation and reward decisions (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). Such findings do not suggest that other sources (e.g., peers) may not be valuable feedback sources, but they do suggest that sources with reward power may trigger the impression-management motive, especially amongst high performers. In contrast, in situations where there is little reward power, such as in relationships where interactions have little consequences for the feedback seeker in terms of rewards, there may be less of a need to manage impressions, and the instrumental motive to acquire diagnostic feedback may outweigh the need for impression management. An experiment by Trope and Neter (1994) confirms this idea, showing that in lab settings (where the rewards that can be gained by seeking feedback are rather limited), prior success can also increase high performers’ interest in diagnostic feedback.

These findings suggest that even in situations of $A > D$ misfit, feedback-seeking can have instrumental value (e.g., when there is little reward power involved). It may also be that for some individuals, a situation of $A > D$ misfit may stimulate them to increase the demands by seeking more difficult and challenging tasks (i.e., increase the demands) (Roberts, 2006). Also, Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, and Tucker (2007) suggest that sometimes, P-E misfit may even lead to innovation. This could be achieved by, for example, job crafting, or raising strategic issues, two proactive behaviors that are discussed elsewhere in

this volume. However, these individuals may also increase the demands that they place on themselves by seeking feedback. When confronted with $A > D$ misfit, feedback-seeking may be used as an explorative tool to place additional demands on themselves. For example, De Stobbeleir et al. (2011) showed that some individuals tend to seek feedback from a variety of sources, and this allows them to become more creative. De Stobbeleir et al. (2011) explained these results by stating that frequent and broad feedback-seeking gives access to various and potentially clashing perspectives, while simultaneously providing people with the opportunity to check the results of work method experimentations. In this way, employees can challenge themselves through feedback-seeking and increase work demands to alter a misfit situation in which abilities exceed demands. Of course, seeking feedback from a variety of sources, and transforming this feedback into enhanced creativity also requires that these individuals have the mental space and resources to do this. We suggest that this is most likely to happen when individuals experience a situation of $A > D$ misfit. Initial evidence for this view can be found in a study by Devloo et al. (2010) which shows that $A > D$ misfit was positively related to feedback-seeking. Devloo et al. (2010) explained this finding referring to the use of feedback-seeking as a way to maintain and improve abilities to anticipate a future change in demands or as behavior following from the carryover of extra time and resources to improve other abilities. The P-E fit perspective suggests that in $A > D$ misfit situations, a surplus of resources will occur, which can stimulate the use of feedback-seeking as an exploratory tool (cf. De Stobbeleir et al., 2011). In sum, we expect that in situations of $A > D$ misfit, context factors that support exploration (e.g., contexts that support creativity) may trigger the instrumental motive for feedback-seeking.

However, this requires that the person is willing to be exposed to the opinions of others. Therefore, it can be expected that not all individuals will use feedback as their preferred exploratory strategy in a situation of $A > D$ misfit. Krasman (2010) showed that openness to experience is positively related to observing both the supervisor and coworkers for clues about one's performance. Krasman (2010) explained this finding by saying that people high in openness to experience should be comfortable with exposure to all types of feedback-seeking given their broad interests and curiosity. In the situation of $D < A$ misfit, we can expect that people who are open to experience will seek feedback to gain broad and varied input on their performance, and hence are more likely to perform creatively. Similarly, De Stobbeleir et al. (2011) reported broader feedback-seeking when individuals exhibited an innovative cognitive style, i.e., a personality trait oriented towards exploration. Future research needs to assess whether these variables may increase the use of feedback-seeking as an exploratory tool (i.e., seek feedback from a variety of sources) for individuals with an $A > D$ misfit. Given the existing evidence, we suggest that individual factors that support exploration (e.g., an innovative cognitive style) may trigger the instrumental motive for feedback-seeking in situations of $A > D$ misfit.

A P-E Fit Perspective on the Outcomes of Feedback-seeking

So far, we have suggested how feedback-seeking can be used by individuals who perceive some form of D–A misfit, either because the demands of their environment exceed their abilities, or because their abilities exceed the demands of their environment. However, as noted, there is very little research that has explicitly tested whether feedback-seeking will actually result in a situation of fit. One exception is a study by Simmering, Colquitt, Noe, & Porter (2003) that showed that feedback-seeking through 360-degree feedback was linked to increased perceptions of fit. In addition to this one explicit test of whether feedback-seeking can enhance the fit between demands by the environment and individuals' abilities, there are also studies that provide indirect evidence for our suggestions. For example, a longitudinal study among newcomers by Ashford and Black (1996) showed that the newcomers who sought feedback reported higher levels of job satisfaction 6 months later in the job. Ashford and Black (1996) argued that these individuals were likely to be more satisfied because they had attained their goals and had adjusted themselves more appropriately to their environment than the ones who did not seek feedback. These suggestions are supported by a study from Saks, Gruman, and Cooper Thomas (2011) which showed that newcomers who sought feedback, were more likely to master their tasks, which is, in essence, a situation where there is a fit between demands of the task and the abilities of the individual. Several studies, including Huang (2012) and Chen et al. (2007) extended these findings by showing that feedback-seeking increased job performance, regardless of the tenure or whether this individual was a newcomer or not.

As noted, also conditions where individuals work towards the attainment of assigned goals (i.e., assigned demands), feedback-seeking may be instrumental in achieving D–A fit, as the achievement of a goal is likely to be a situation where the individual's abilities match the demands that are associated with the goal. This is supported by a study by Morrison and Weldon (1990) who showed that individuals who were assigned a goal and sought feedback were more likely to also achieve the goal.

In a different setting, Ashford and Tsui (1991) found that managers who actively inquired for negative feedback were more accurate in their understanding of how they were evaluated by others, and were rated as more effective leaders than managers who sought no feedback. Accuracy can, in essence, be viewed as a situation of fit between an individual's perceived abilities and the evaluations and expectations of these abilities by others. Ashford and Tsui (1991) also found that managers who sought more positive feedback did not experience these positive outcomes, presumably because the positive feedback did not help them to better adjust themselves to the expectations (demands) of their environment and was viewed as a strategy for impression management. Even though

these authors did not explicitly examine the impact of “fit”, their findings seem to suggest that negative feedback-seeking can reduce levels of $D > A$ fit, because negative feedback helps individuals to adjust themselves to the expectations of others, by gaining insight in their areas for development (i.e., the abilities they need to further develop).

Moving beyond the demands–abilities fit framework, research also provides indirect evidence for the fact that feedback-seeking may improve other types of “fit”, for example, the fit between individuals and their colleagues. By seeking feedback, individuals can improve the quality of the relationship between themselves and their supervisor (Leader Member Exchange (LMX)), especially when the supervisor attributes the seeking to instrumental motives (Lam, Huang, & Snape, 2007). In the same vein, feedback-seeking has also been found to impact individuals’ identification processes, which is also an important indication of person–environment fit (Edwards, 2008). Young and Steelman (2014) showed that when individuals sought feedback from their supervisor more frequently, they were more likely to identify with that supervisor. Similarly, when individuals sought frequent feedback from co-workers, they tended to identify more with those co-workers.

Taken together, the research towards the outcomes of feedback-seeking provides indirect evidence for how feedback-seeking can help individuals to achieve a situation of fit between the demands of their environment and their abilities. Future research, however, should also incorporate more direct tests of the P-E fit outcomes of feedback-seeking.

Avenues for Further Research

Throughout this chapter, we have hinted at a number of issues in both the feedback-seeking and the P-E fit literature that we feel warrant further investigation. In this section, we summarize the four main avenues for further research we have identified so far.

A first conclusion that can be drawn from our review is that $A > D$ misfit is a very much under-researched area in the feedback-seeking area, while this type of misfit is likely to be very prevalent in reality. For example, research in the over-qualification literature suggests that about 70 percent of employees feel overqualified for the job they are doing (Johnson, Morrow, & Johnson, 2002), which has potentially detrimental effects for individuals and organizations. The basic assumption in the feedback-seeking literature seems to have been that a situation of $A > D$ misfit is less harmful than a situation of $D > A$ misfit, and that $D > A$ misfit triggers more of an instrumental need for feedback-seeking (because it allows the individual to mold his/her abilities to the demands of his/her environment). Research shows that $A > D$ misfit typically coincides with high supervisor-rated performance (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009) and that hiring managers tend to prefer overqualified candidates, especially in times of crisis

(O'Connell, 2010). However, we know from the over-qualification literature (e.g., Khan & Morrow, 1991) that perceived over-qualification may also be associated with highly negative job attitudes and withdrawal behaviors such as low job dissatisfaction, high turnover intentions, alienation, low job involvement, job boredom, and burnout (Luksyte, Spitzmueller, & Maynard, 2011). Furthermore, it can be argued that from a societal perspective $A > D$ misfit on a large scale implies an underutilization of people's abilities. Throughout this chapter, we have suggested that feedback-seeking is not only important in situations of $D > A$ misfit (as most of the research implicitly seems to assume), but also in situations of $A > D$ misfit. It could be, for example, that in situations of $A > D$ misfit, feedback-seeking serves as an important buffer against the negative consequences that stem from $D > A$ misfit situations (e.g., boredom, burnout, alienation). To date, however, more of the extant research has focused on the instrumental value of feedback-seeking in situations of $D > A$ misfit, and has seemed to assume that in situations of $A > D$ misfit (e.g., in cases of superior performance), feedback-seeking mainly has impression management value. A notable exception is a study by De Stobbeleir et al. (2011) that suggested that feedback-seeking is not only a strategy that allows people to better adjust themselves to the demands of their environment, but also as a strategy to move beyond external demands and be creative.

A second issue that warrants further research concerns the extent to which $D-A$ misfit situations trigger ego-based motives. In our review, we have focused on how $D-A$ misfit triggers the instrumental and impression management motives for feedback-seeking. However, far less is known about how both types of misfit might trigger ego-concerns. As said, the prospect of receiving feedback (especially negative feedback) may be a threat to one's ego. Or by seeking positive feedback individuals may try to boost their egos. For example, from an ego-based perspective, one could argue that a situation of $A > D$ misfit represents a 'comfort zone' in terms of employees' self-esteem and self-image, in that it allows them to feel competent at their job with minimal effort. Feedback-seeking (and especially negative feedback-seeking) in this type of situation would threaten the status quo, rendering the feedback seeker vulnerable to either negative feedback that might harm his or her self-esteem, or to constructive feedback that creates an implicit contract between the feedback seeker and the feedback source that behavioral change will follow (with the risk of failing to implement the feedback successfully) (Edwards, 2008; Cooper-Thomas & Wright, 2013). Therefore, it could be that in a situation of $A > D$ misfit, the seeking feedback opens the seeker up to (temporary) crises in his or her self-image whereas not seeking feedback would be the most comfortable choice for protecting his or her self-image. Similarly, situations of $D > A$ misfit may already be damaging for the performer's ego, as they might feel incompetent about their abilities and this could trigger them to seek feedback that would boost their egos. To date, however, we know very little about the role of ego-concerns

in the feedback-seeking process and further research is needed to single out the conditions under which ego-based motives are triggered. Variables, like making reward power less salient and offering a non-public, non-evaluative feedback context may reduce some of the ego concerns associated with feedback-seeking (Northcraft & Ashford, 1990).

In this review, we have also taken the basic tenet of P-E fit literature that fit is desirable as our starting point. However, misfit is often unavoidable (both demands and abilities are dynamic whether an employee wants them to be or not), and sometimes, misfit can even be desirable as it can be a precondition to creativity, innovation, and adaptation (Bauer, et al. 2007). Rather than framing misfit as a deviation that requires corrective action, we posit that fit should be understood as a temporal-dynamic phenomenon where misfit and fit alternate in a perpetual causal chain (referred to as ‘fit cycles’; Edwards, 2008). The question is, then, how feedback-seeking behavior influences an employee’s capacity to navigate these fit cycles and create added value from misfit. To date, however, much of the extant research has used cross-sectional designs or longitudinal designs that are quite restricted in time (e.g., over a time period of 6 months). However, in addition to *episodic* time being a factor of interest in designing studies into misfit and feedback-seeking behavior (for which process research or experience sampling would be the best research methods), also people’s life stages might play a role. For example, it could be that whether or not employees will seek feedback as a response to $A > D$ misfit will depend on their life stage (e.g., young parent) and their career stage (e.g., close to retirement). Therefore, we propose that studying *life-course* time is also a promising avenue for further research into feedback-seeking research. Again, under specific conditions $A > D$ misfit can be experienced by an individual as a temporary “comfort zone”, and feedback as an undesired threat to the status quo. Integrating this type of crucial contextual information in future FSB research is likely to help explain some of the inconsistent findings reported in the literature to date (Anseel et al., 2015).

Finally, future research should look at the role of attribution and locus of control. As we stated earlier, although the P-E fit literature assumes that heightened turnover intention is the most typical reaction to misfit (Schneider, 1987), it is also possible that people react to misfit by increasing their feedback-seeking behavior (Parker & Collins, 2010). We propose, however, that internal attribution both of the cause and the solution to a misfit situation, combined with an internal locus of control, are likely preconditions to feedback-seeking behavior as a response to misfit. Turnover and withdrawal attitudes are more likely to occur as reactions to misfit when the misfit is attributed externally and when perceived control is low (i.e., “I cannot/will not fix this”). In addition, we posit that feedback-seeking as a response to misfit will only translate into a better fit as an outcome when instrumental feedback-seeking motives are active, and not (or to a much lesser extent) when ego-based or impression management

motives are at play. This proposition is in line with the research by Ashford and Tsui (1991) discussed earlier in this chapter, that demonstrated that accuracy (which we argued can be seen as a specific operationalization of fit) is only improved in employees asking for negative (i.e., developmental) feedback, but not in employees asking for positive (i.e., self-enhancing) feedback. In sum, we posit that attribution, perceived control, and feedback-seeking motives are crucial moderators in understanding the effectiveness of feedback-seeking behavior as a response to misfit.

Conclusion

In this literature review, we have invoked a PE-fit perspective to provide a qualitative review of more than three decades of feedback-seeking research. In doing so, we have highlighted the areas in which empirical work seems to have progressed significantly (e.g., feedback-seeking in situations of $D > A$ misfit), but we have also identified a number of areas in which research seems to have lagged behind (e.g., feedback-seeking in situations of $A > D$ misfit). The PE-framework adopted in this review has also facilitated a critical re-examination of some of the conflicting empirical findings and has shaped a pathway for further research.

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3

CAREER PROACTIVITY

Sabine Sonnentag

“When It Comes to Careers, Change Is a Constant” – this title of a 2007 New York Times article captures an important trend in many people’s working lives and careers (Alboher, 2007). The nature of a career has changed and lifetime employment with the same employer cannot be taken for granted any longer. For instance, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), persons born between 1957 and 1964 (the so-called baby-boom generation) held on average 11.7 jobs from age 18 to age 48. In the European Union, the percentage of temporary contracts has increased substantially with more than 30% of the employees in the age group between 15 and 29 years having a temporary contract (Eurostat, 2015). It is obvious that temporary contracts make job changes more likely. This overall trend of frequent job changes, and increases in temporary employment resonates with concepts developed in the academic career literature.

As long as forty years ago, Hall (1976) argued that careers become increasingly protean, that is primarily driven by individuals rather than by organizations. This perspective implies that careers do not simply happen, but that individuals must pursue and shape them actively. This idea is reflected in core conceptualizations of proactivity that focus on proactive behavior as “behavior that directly alters environments” (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105) and as efforts “to bring about change in the environment and/or oneself to achieve a different future” (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2000, p. 828). Similarly, the personal-initiative concept (Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996) relates to the idea that individuals are primarily responsible for their future careers. Specifically, the education-initiative component captures the degree to which employees engage in training during their careers.

Not surprisingly, career proactivity has been an integral part of research on proactivity since the late 1990s (Frese, Fay, Hilburger, Leng, & Tag, 1997; Seibert,

Crant, & Kraimer, 1999; Tharenou & Terry, 1998). In this chapter, I will review research on career proactivity. I will start by defining core concepts (proactivity, career, career success) and presenting an organizing framework for research on career proactivity. In the section that follows, I will focus on reviewing empirical research on the association between proactive personality and career success. Then I will turn to elaborating different types of proactive career behaviors and will discuss their relevance for career success. I will conclude with a section that outlines directions for future research on career proactivity.

Core Concepts: Proactivity, Careers, and Career Success

Proactivity

Research addresses proactivity both from a dispositional and a behavioral perspective. The dispositional perspective focuses on proactive personality as a “relatively stable tendency to effect environmental change” (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 103). The behavioral perspective focuses on the actual behavior that can show some fluctuation and change over time. Bindl and Parker (2010, p. 568) defined proactive behavior as “self-directed and future-focused action in an organization in which the individual aims to bring about change, including change to the situation”. Proactive behaviors can thus aim at changing the work situation as well as the acting person him or herself. Whereas much research on proactive behaviors has looked at proactivity within a designated job, proactive behavior also can help one’s future career, i.e., it can transcend the confines of a specific job role or profession. Proactive career behavior comprises proactive action in order find a new job, to secure a job, and to develop longer-term career opportunities (Grant & Parker, 2009; Parker & Collins, 2010). Parker and Collins (2010) used the term “career initiative” to describe proactive career behaviors that aim at proactively increasing person–environment fit, so that a person’s needs match the supplies a job offers and that a person’s abilities match the demands of the job (Caplan, 1987). Proactive career behaviors comprise both planning behaviors (career exploration, career goal setting, formulating specific career plans) and overt actions (networking, seeking a mentor, activities aiming at skill development). Table 3.1 provides definitions and examples of these behaviors. Importantly, these specific behaviors can vary in the degree to which they are proactive. For instance, skill development might be pursued proactively or occur in the context of a mandatory participation in an organization’s training program.

Careers

In a recent review article, Greenhaus and Kossek (2014, p. 362) defined a career as “the evolution of work experiences over the life course”. This career concept is much broader than many people’s everyday understanding of a career

implying a high status and upward mobility. For career proactivity career concepts emphasizing employees' proactive role in managing their careers (i.e., protean career; Hall, 1976) and stressing inter-organizational mobility (i.e., boundaryless career; Arthur, 1994) are highly relevant.

Hall (1976, 2004) characterized the protean career as being largely driven by the person him or herself (versus driven by the organization), fueled by values such as freedom and growth (versus advancement), and being associated with a high degree of mobility. To thrive within a protean career setting requires a high degree of self-directedness – as opposed to following career paths pre-defined by an organization. When introducing the concept of a boundaryless career, Arthur (1994) described career-related activities and career moves as an interorganizational phenomenon with a high degree of interorganizational mobility. In addition, extra-organizational support from individuals and groups outside one's organization plays an important role (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005). These two career concepts have distinct foci – with the protean concept emphasizing self-directedness as well as the importance of values and the boundaryless concept stressing physical and psychological mobility. However, they can be easily combined and thereby provide eight prototypical categories ranging from a person who is “trapped” or “lost” (Briscoe & Hall, 2006, p. 10) to a “protean career architect” (p. 15): A “trapped” or “lost” person on one end of the continuum is low on self-directedness, low on individually set goals, and on psychological as well as physical mobility (i.e., low on proactivity), resulting in the need to react quickly to emerging career opportunities in order to survive. The “protean career architect” on the other end of the continuum embraces a high degree of mobility, actively directs his or her career, and is guided by personal values of freedom and growth. Between these two extremes, other prototypical categories include the “wanderer” (p. 12) showing high physical, but little psychological mobility, and being low on protean values, or the “solid citizen” (p. 14) who is self-directed and value driven but shows little physical mobility. Hall, Briscoe, and Frautschy DeMuth (2006) developed an instrument that captures the various aspects of protean and boundaryless careers.

It is obvious that individuals need to be proactive in the context of protean and boundaryless careers. Whereas high job performance and compliance with organizational norms might have been sufficient for career advancement in former times, simply responding to career opportunities, in today's dynamic work environment, is likely not enough. People need to take active steps starting from actively exploring career options to negotiating the specific features of one's future job, in order to have careers that satisfy their needs.

Career Success

Arthur et al. (2005, p. 179) defined career success as “the accomplishment of desirable work-related outcomes at any point in a person's work experiences over

time". This broad conceptualization incorporates both objective and subjective perspectives on career success. Objective career success refers to externally accessible indicators such as salary, salary growth, promotion, other advancements, and occupational status or job level (Heslin, 2005). Subjective career success refers to a person's evaluations of his or her accomplishments and is mainly reflected in career satisfaction (Arthur et al., 2005; Heslin, 2005). Objective and subjective indicators of career success only partially overlap. A meta-analysis identified correlations of $r_c = .30$, 95% CI [.28, .32], $k = 23$, $N = 10,903$, between salary and career satisfaction, of $r_c = .22$, 95% CI [.20, .24], $k = 12$, $N = 8,701$, between promotion and career satisfaction. These findings highlight that for many employees achieving a high salary and promotions alone are not sufficient to feel satisfied with their careers. In addition, within boundaryless careers, within-organizational promotions alone are not a good indicator of career success. The protean career concept with its emphasis on the achievement of personal values – as opposed to advancing in the organizational hierarchy (Hall, 1996) – highlights the importance of career satisfaction and perceived career success, such that the indicators for perceived career success might differ from person to person.

A Model of Career Proactivity

In modern protean and boundaryless careers where pre-determined career paths become increasingly rare, people need to develop their own careers in a proactive way. Figure 3.1 presents an overall framework of career proactivity. This model suggests proactive personality as a core driver of career success by eliciting proactive career behaviors (e.g., career exploration or networking; see Table 3.1 for definitions). These proactive career behaviors, in turn, make career success more probable. In addition, proactive personality will enhance proactive work behavior (i.e., proactive behaviors that bring about change in the work situation, Parker & Collins, 2010). By showing proactive work behavior, employees can demonstrate their ability to initiate and pursue change projects as well as their motivation to contribute to the organization. In organizational settings that value employee proactivity, proactive work behavior can also contribute to career success because acts of proactive work behavior will increase an employee's visibility and he or she will be attributed more leadership skills.

Proactive work behaviors that may foster career success have not yet received much research attention yet (cf. for an exception, Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001). Consequentially, in this review, I will focus on discussing the role of proactive personality and proactive career behaviors.

Proactive Personality and Career Success

Empirical studies provided convincing evidence that proactive personality is positively linked to career success. People with a proactive personality (i.e., who

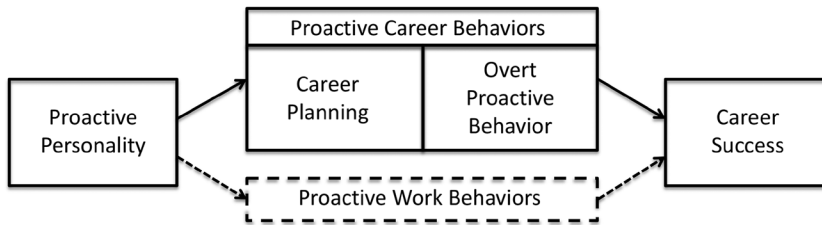


FIGURE 3.1 Organizing framework—linking proactive personality and career success via proactive career behaviors and proactive work behaviors.

have the disposition to engage in proactive behavior; Bateman & Crant, 1993) are relatively unconstrained by situational factors and take an active approach to bring about change. Proactive personality has been found to predict a broad range of organizationally relevant variables, including job performance, satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013; see Chapter X and X in this volume). Importantly, having this proactive disposition helps to attain career success as well.

Seibert, Crant, and Kraimer (1999) referred to an interactionist perspective for explaining why people with a proactive personality should have more success in their careers. Basically, according to the interactionist perspective, it is not only the situation that shapes a person and his or her behavior; also the person exerts considerable influence on his or her behavior by selecting, interpreting, and changing situations (Schneider, 1983). When selecting, interpreting, and changing a situation a person has the opportunity to better understand the environment, to influence decisions, and to engage in behaviors that contribute to better performance and career outcomes. One of Seibert et al.'s core arguments is “that more proactive individuals receive greater objective and subjective career outcomes because they select, create, and influence the situations in which they work” (p. 417). Specifically, people with a proactive personality engage in behaviors that increase the likelihood of career success including information search, career planning, looking for self-improvement, and obtaining mentoring and support. Proactive people take an active approach in shaping their environment, while less proactive people react to it.

Overall, there is rather good empirical evidence for this link between proactive personality and career success. In a first cross-sectional study, Seibert et al. (1999) examined objective career success (i.e., the number of promotions during the career, current annual salary) as well as subjective career success (i.e., career satisfaction) in a sample of US university alumni. These authors found that both self-rated, as well as significant-other rated, proactive personality predicted objective and subjective career success, also when controlling for demographic variables, human-capital, motivational and industrial variables, as well as industry type. Importantly, proactive personality predicted

career satisfaction beyond the predictive power of promotions and salary. The amount of variance explained, however, was low. This is not surprising because career satisfaction depends on a variety of factors and proactive personality is just one of them (Ng & Feldman, 2014).

In a two-year follow-up analysis with a sub-sample of the earlier cross-sectional study, Seibert et al. (2001) found that self-rated proactive personality predicted career satisfaction two years later. With respect to more objective indicators of career success, self-rated proactive personality showed indirect relationships with retrospectively assessed salary progression and promotions during the past two years (via behavioral and cognitive variables, specifically voice, innovation, career initiative, and political knowledge).

During the years after the publication of Seibert et al.'s (1999, 2001) seminal papers, the association between proactive personality and career success received a lot of research attention (e.g., Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003; Erdogan & Bauer, 2005). A meta-analysis by Fuller and Marler (2009) integrating the empirical findings reported weak positive associations between proactive personality and objective success indicators. Specifically, for promotions the corrected correlation was $\rho = .11$, 95% CI [.04, .18], $k = 6$, $N = 1,736$; for salary the corrected correlation was $\rho = .14$, 95% CI [.05, .23], $k = 10$, $N = 3,031$. With respect to subjective success indicators, the effect sizes were larger. For career satisfaction, the corrected correlation was $\rho = .31$, 95% CI [.26, .36], $k = 13$, $N = 2,680$ for perceived career success the corrected correlation was $\rho = .30$, 95% CI [.24, .36], $k = 4$, $N = 963$. Overall, this meta-analysis supports the basic idea that people with a proactive personality achieve better objective career outcomes and are more satisfied with their careers. The stronger associations with subjective career success might imply that proactive people may find or create work situations that they find personally satisfying without necessarily reflecting a higher formal status or a substantial increase in income. Also, more recent studies provide support for a positive association between proactive personality and career success (Converse, Pathak, DePaul-Haddock, Gotlib, & Merbedone, 2012; Maurer & Chapman, 2013). Furthermore, recent research provides additional new insights. For instance, Lau, Wong, and Chow (2013) found that proactive personality attenuated the negative relationship between work-to-family conflict (i.e., the experience that one's job interferes with one's family life) and career satisfaction: for employees with a proactive personality work-to-family conflict was unrelated to career satisfaction, but for employees with low scores on a proactive-personality measure, work-to-family conflict was negatively related to career satisfaction.

A few studies examined mediators and moderators of the relationship between proactive personality and career success. Studies investigating mediating processes found that both behaviors directly oriented at one's career (i.e., proactive career behaviors), as well as other proactive behaviors (e.g., voice), acted as mediators. For instance, Seibert et al. (2001) showed that

career initiative (e.g., updating one's skill in order to succeed more likely in a promotion process) was a mediator in the relationship between proactive personality and career satisfaction; career initiative also was the variable that linked proactive personality to salary progression and promotion, establishing an indirect effect. Barnett and Bradley (2007) examined a broader set of career management behaviors such as career planning, networking, visibility behaviors (i.e., making others aware of one's accomplishments), mobility-oriented behaviors (i.e., making plans for leaving one's organization), and skill development. They found that these career management behaviors mediated the relationship between proactive personality and career satisfaction.

Research further suggests that not only behaviors directly aiming at one's career act as mediators. Seibert et al. (2001) found that proactive personality was linked to career success via innovation behavior and political knowledge. In a multi-wave study with organizational newcomers, Kim, Hon, and Crant (2009) reported that employee creativity mediated the relationship between proactive personality and career satisfaction. Thus, it seems that people with a proactive personality build up specific knowledge and skills that help them to act proactively within their organization and to show creativity and innovation which in turn fuel that career success.

With respect to moderators, Erdogan and Bauer (2005) argued that proactive personality is only related to career satisfaction when person-organization fit and person-job fit is high. Only when a person's value matches organizational values and when a person's knowledge and skills match with the job requirement, proactive personality should matter for career satisfaction. Data gathered in two studies largely supported Erdogan and Bauer's hypothesis. Importantly, not only perceived person-organization fit but also actual person-organization fit moderated the relationship between proactive personality and career satisfaction. Overall, these findings suggest that a proactive personality might not always be helpful for career outcomes. It is important that proactive people perceive fit between their skills and values on the one hand and the job situation on the other hand. It might even be that they create fit in a proactive way, for instance by adjusting their jobs to their needs (Bakker, Tims, & Derks, 2012).

Proactive Career Behaviors and Career Success

As discussed in the previous section, proactive career behaviors explain how proactive personality translates into career outcomes. This section describes proactive career behaviors in greater depth. By building on the broader proactivity literature (Crant, 2000; Grant & Ashford, 2008; cf. Raabe, Frese, and Beehr, 2007), De Vos, De Clippeleer and Dewilde (2009) have suggested a process model of proactive career behaviors comprising cognitive and behavioral components. The cognitive component refers to planning processes, including exploration, goal setting, and developing specific plans (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998).

The behavioral component refers to overt actions individuals undertake to pursue their career goals. In their specific empirical study, De Vos et al. focused on networking as a typical proactive career behavior; but also other behaviors (e.g., proactive skill development) have received substantial attention in empirical research on career proactivity. Table 3.1 provides an overview of prototypical proactive career behaviors.

While many studies have examined the role of specific proactive career behaviors for career success, others have looked at overall measures of proactive career behaviors comprising several specific behaviors (Hirschi, Freund, & Herrmann, 2014). In this section, I will start with discussing findings from studies looking at summative measures of proactive career behaviors, and then I will move to research that looks at their specific cognitive and behavioral components.

TABLE 3.1 Types of Proactive Career Behaviors, Definitions, and Illustrative Examples

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Illustrative Examples</i>
Career Planning		
Career exploration	“Gathering career-related information and testing hypotheses about the self and the environment to reach career goals” (Zikic & Hall, 2009, p. 182).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigating career possibilities, seeking information about the labor market (environment exploration, Stumpf et al., 1983) • Reflecting about one’s past career, focusing one’s thought on the self (self-exploration; Stumpf et al., 1983) • Experimenting with various career activities (intended-systematic exploration, Stumpf et al., 1983)
Career goal-setting	Deciding about a specific career-related outcome (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2010), such as a promotion, salary increase or “a particular balance between different life roles” (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014, p. 368).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifying what one wants to achieve in one’s career • Deciding to strive for a promotion or a higher salary • Deciding to learn new skills • Deciding to change one’s occupation
Developing specific career plans	Developing “behavioral scripts or action sequences . . . individuals believe will help them achieve their career goals” (Seibert et al., 2013, p. 171).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a strategy for reaching one’s career goals • Developing specific action steps

Overt Proactive Behavior

Networking	Engaging in activities that attempt “to develop and maintain relationships with others who have the potential to assist them in their work or career” (Forret & Dougherty, 2004, p. 420).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calling business contacts in order to keep in touch (maintaining contacts; Forret & Dougherty, 2001) • Going out for drinks with co-workers after work (socializing; Forret & Dougherty, 2001) • Giving professional seminars or workshops (engaging in professional activities; Forret & Dougherty, 2001) • Accepting new, highly visible work assignments (increasing internal visibility; Forret & Dougherty, 2001) • Participating in community activities (Forret & Dougherty, 2001)
Seeking a mentor	Building “a developmentally oriented relationship between a younger or less experienced individual (the protégé) and an older or more experienced individual (the mentor”;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking the initiative to seek advice from higher-level managers (Turban & Dougherty, 1994) • Trying to build good personal relationships with higher-level managers (Blickle et al., 2009b)
Activities aiming at skill development	Starting “initiatives and (participating in) interventions that lead to mastery of the various tasks involved in one’s occupation“ (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998, p. 360) or an envisioned future occupation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in college or continuing education courses • Taking on different job assignments • Using pre-recorded audio or video tapes • Reading relevant books • Asking for feedback. • (Maurer et al., 2003)

Summative Measures of Proactive Career Behavior

Research using broad conceptualizations of proactive career behaviors provided some evidence that these behaviors are related to positive indicators of career progress and success. In a pioneering study, Tharenou and Terry (1998) reported that enactive career aspirations (later termed “career initiative” by Parker & Collins, 2010) such as engaging in career path planning and discussing one’s career prospects with an experienced person were positively related to one’s

willingness to relocate and change organizations; however, the positive correlation with career satisfaction was low.

De Vos and her co-workers examined how career self-management behaviors such as creating visibility and networking relate to the motivation to make a career move and to indicators of career success. In one of the studies, De Vos, Dewettinck, and Buyens (2009b) found that career self-management behaviors were positively related to employees' willingness to make a career move, be it a vertical move (i.e., a promotion), a temporary move (i.e., participating in a temporary project group outside one's current job) or a move to job enrichment. However, career self-management behaviors were unrelated to a preference for a lateral move (i.e., moving to a different job without a formal vertical promotion). Findings on the association between career self-management behaviors and career success are mixed. Whereas in one study (De Vos & Soens, 2008) career self-management behaviors were unrelated to perceived employability and career satisfaction, another study (De Vos, Dewettinck, & Buyens, 2009a) showed that career self-management behaviors were related to affective commitment and perceived career success; however, career self-management behaviors were unrelated to the number of promotions received in one's career (retrospective measure). Findings might be inconsistent because the importance of career management behaviors may be contingent on other factors such as the organizational context, the career ambition or career stage. Moreover, career self-management behaviors showed a moderator effect on the relationship between career management provided by line management and perceived career success: a high level of career self-management behaviors compensated for a lack of career management provided by line management, suggesting that career self-management is particularly important when organizational career support is low.

Hirschi and his co-workers introduced a broad career engagement concept comprising behaviors such as developing plans and goals for one's future career as well as voluntarily participating in further education and training. These authors showed that this broad concept of career engagement was positively related to job satisfaction and career satisfaction (Hirschi et al., 2014; Hirschi & Jaensch, 2015).

Taken together, there is some evidence that broad summative measures of proactive career behavior are related to career motivation (e.g., willingness to move) and to career success. However, the effect sizes are relatively small, suggesting that not all aspects of proactive career behaviors are equally important. Therefore, it makes sense to look at specific proactive career behaviors in more detail.

Career Planning

Before engaging in overt proactive career behaviors, it is often necessary to prepare and plan. Such preparatory behaviors comprise career exploration, career goal setting, and formulating specific career plans. These cognitive behaviors

have also been subsumed under the broad umbrella term of career planning (De Vos et al. 2009).

Career Exploration

Career exploration can be defined “as a lifelong process that is triggered particularly during transitions in life . . . It involves gathering career-related information and testing hypotheses about the self and the environment to reach career goals” (Zikic & Hall, 2009, p. 182). Accordingly, much research on career exploration has focused on adolescents and students transitioning from school or university to employment (e.g., Blustein, 1989; Cai et al., 2015). Within the context of protean or boundaryless careers, scholars have focused on “voluntary career exploration” that persons may undertake in order to change their current career (Zikic & Hall, 2009). Stumpf, Colarelli, and Hartman (1983) described different targets of exploration and differentiated between environment exploration (e.g., searching information about specific career options), self-exploration (e.g., reflecting about oneself and one’s past), and intended-systematic exploration (i.e., trying out new work roles). Most empirical studies focused on environment and self-exploration.

Research examining career exploration during the job-search process identified some benefits of this proactive behavior, but also points to some downsides. For instance, in a sample of employed and unemployed job seekers Zikic and Saks (2009) found that environment exploration and self-exploration predicted job-search self-efficacy and job-search intention, but not job-search intensity. Only environment exploration, but not self-exploration predicted job-search clarity; one reason for not finding a significant relationship with self-exploration could be that this specific self-exploration measure focuses more on the past than on the future. Koen, Klehe, van Vianen, Zikic, and Nauta (2010) reported that unemployed job seekers who showed more exploratory behavior received more job offers. Findings on reemployment quality are mixed. In a study by Zikic and Klehe (2006) with unemployed job seekers, environment exploration predicted reemployment quality; self-exploration showed a negative, albeit only marginally significant relationship with reemployment quality. Koen et al. reported a negative relationship between career exploration and reemployment quality. Klehe, Zikic, van Vianen, and de Pater (2011) who studied employees during the process of organizational downsizing found that environmental exploration and self-exploration predicted lower levels of loyalty and higher levels of exit considerations and of actual turnover. Taken together, it seems that career exploration can support people in their job-search efforts, possibly by broadening the scope of potential future jobs. However, the impact of career exploration on reemployment quality seems to be more modest, being potentially contingent on other variables such as the local labor market situation or one’s educational level.

In addition, it is interesting that the career exploration literature is not yet well integrated with the proactivity literature, and career exploration of employed persons with a stable employment contract was rarely studied. An early study by Noe (1996) found that employees' environment exploration was positively related to their willingness to participate in development activities. Self-exploration and intended systematic exploration were unrelated to the motivation to participate in development. Due to the cross-sectional nature of the study, it remains unclear if employment exploration preceded the willingness to participate in development activities; it could also be that employees started to explore their environment after deciding about future development activities. In sum, career exploration can have some benefits for career success. However, the gains seem to be smaller than one would expect, possibly because the widely used measure of career exploration by Stumpf et al. (1983) focused on quantity of career exploration and neglects the quality of the information gained from exploration efforts. Thus, future research might want to pay more attention to the quality of career exploration.

Goal Setting and Formulating Specific Career Plans

Setting career goals means to anticipate and decide about career-related outcomes one wants to achieve (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Kaplan, 1995). These goals can be extrinsic (e.g., financial benefits, power, organizational status) or intrinsic (e.g., learning and skill development, work content; Seibert, Kraimer, Holtom, & Pierotti, 2013). Career planning in a narrow sense refers to the development and clarity of specific action steps one wants to undertake in order to reach one's career goals (cf., Gould, 1979) – this relatively narrow meaning of career planning contrasts with the broader meaning comprising a more diverse set of preparatory behaviors such as career exploration, career goal-setting, and the development of action plans (De Vos, et al., 2009, p. 763). Although goal-setting and plan development are distinct steps in an action process (Frese & Zapf, 1994), research on career behavior often has not clearly differentiated between these concepts. The following paragraphs summarize studies that used the narrow conceptualization of career planning.

Overall, empirical studies suggest that career goals and career planning are related to positive career-related outcomes. For instance, Birdi, Allan, and Warr (1997) investigated career planning in a large sample of manufacturing employees and found that career planning activities pursued during the past 12 months were related to present organizational commitment and work-role flexibility, although not to job satisfaction. The importance of career planning is also reflected in meta-analytic findings reported by Ng et al. (2005). In this meta-analysis, Ng and his co-workers reported a correlation of $r_c = .33$, $k = 7$, $N = 2,367$, with career satisfaction and a correlation of $r_c = .11$, $k = 2$, $N = 522$, with salary.

Also, more recent primary studies are in line with the beneficial role of career planning for career outcomes. Using data from a career intervention study, Raabe, Frese, and Beehr (2007) found that quality of career planning predicted engagement in career self-management behaviors that in turn predicted pay increase and career satisfaction. The quality of career planning refers to the degree to which the career plan includes a short-term and a long-term perspective, knowledge about potential barriers and risks as well as a timeline for implementing the plan and for monitoring progress. In Raabe et al.'s study, quality of career planning was predicted by a commitment to one's career goal and self-knowledge about one's strengths and weaknesses.

Seibert et al. (2013) surveyed university alumni during their early career stage and found that intrinsic career goals and career planning predicted intention to pursue graduate education. Extrinsic career goals were negatively related to the intention to pursue graduate education, particularly when career satisfaction was high. Actual application to a graduate school 16 months later was predicted by a low level of extrinsic career goals and a high level of career planning, in addition to the predictive power of participants' initial intention to engage in graduate education.

Direnzo, Greenhaus, and Weer (2015) reported that career planning was concurrently related to career capital (human capital, social capital, psychological capital), with social and psychological capital predicting perceived employability 2.5 years later.

Maurer, Weiss, and Barbeite (2003) addressed the broader concept of career insight when predicting participation in developmental activities over the course of one year. Career insight captures a person's knowledge about specific career goals and career plans, as well as knowledge about the current work situation and about one's career-related strengths and weaknesses. Career insight predicted motivational and affective states beneficial for self-development (development self-efficacy as well as perceived intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of development) that in turn were related to participation in development activities.

Also, research on future work selves (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2012) is relevant for career goal-setting. Specifically, future work selves "as representations of the self in the future that encapsulate individually significant hopes and aspirations in relation to work" (Strauss et al., 2012, p. 581) point to discrepancies between one's current self and a desired future self; thereby future work selves help to develop career-related goals and to foster goal striving. In several studies, Strauss et al. showed that salience of a person's future work selves predicted a broad set of proactive career behaviors, including career planning. Similarly, Taber and Blankemeyer (2015) reported that future work selves were related to career planning, proactive career networking, and proactive skill development. Interestingly, curiosity and confidence mediated the relationship of future work selves with networking and skill development, respectively. Guan et al. (2014)

found that college students with more salient future work selves had higher job-search self-efficacy and were more likely to secure an employment contract than students with less salient future work selves.

Taken together, empirical evidence suggests that developing a clear sense of one's future work, setting goals, and formulating specific career plans can be helpful for developing one's career. Moreover, the content of the career goals does matter, with more intrinsic goals and self-concordant goals predicting skill development and other proactive career behaviors (Hirschi, Lee, Porfeli, & Vondracek, 2013; Seibert et al., 2013). Possibly, goals that are associated with a strong motivation and that are not linked to immediate extrinsic rewards help to maintain effort and persistence when pursuing long-term career outcomes.

Specific Overt Proactive Career Behaviors

Exploring one's career options, setting goals, and developing plans are important preparatory steps in developing one's career. However, these preparatory steps are not sufficient for achieving desirable career outcomes. It is crucial to actively pursue one's goals and act according to one's plans. Networking, seeking a mentor and engaging in skill development activities belong to the proactive career behaviors that have gained most research attention.

Networking Behavior

Networking is a fundamental proactive career behavior. Most generally, networking behaviors can be defined "as individuals' attempts to develop and maintain relationships with others who have the potential to assist them in their work or career" (Forret & Dougherty, 2004, p. 420). Social relationships are helpful in offering access to new opportunities, information, and other resources (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998) – an advantage that is particularly important within the context of protean and boundaryless careers. According to Forret and Dougherty (2001), networking comprises behaviors such as maintaining contacts, socializing, engaging in professional activities, participating in the community, and increasing internal visibility.

Empirical studies demonstrate that networking behavior is indeed related to both objective and subjective career success such as income, hierarchical position, career satisfaction, and perceived career success (Blickle, Witzki, & Schneider, 2009a, 2009b; De Vos, et al., 2009). Furthermore, Wolff and Moser (2009) provided evidence that networking behavior predicts *growth* in salary over the course of three years. Networking behavior does not only predict actual career success, but is also reflected in managers' perception of their subordinates' career growth potential (Wei, Chiang, & Wu, 2012). One important more immediate benefit of networking behavior seems to be that it can come along with career-related mentoring (Liang & Gong, 2013).

Moreover, networking behavior can be critical when looking for a new job. For instance, Wanberg, Kanfer, and Banas (2000) identified networking behavior as one important job-search method. Based on data from Flemish unemployed job seekers, van Hove, van Hooff, and Lievens (2009) reported that networking behavior predicted the number of job offers received, and finding employment, particularly when network ties had a high status.

Looking at specific networking behaviors, Forret and Dougherty (2004) found that activities that aimed at increasing internal visibility (e.g., accepting highly visible work assignments and going to lunch with one's supervisor) predicted promotions and total compensation, particularly in men. Comparing the role of different networking behaviors in relative weights analysis, Wolff and Moser (2009) showed that maintaining external contacts and building internal contacts were the strongest predictors of concurrent salary, while maintaining internal contacts was the strongest predictor of growth in salary and concurrent career satisfaction. Additional analyses demonstrated that internal networking behaviors predicted promotion within the company, whereas external networking behaviors predicted the change of employer (Wolff & Moser, 2010).

Studies tried to identify moderator variables that impact on the relationship between networking behavior and career success. For instance, gender differences have been observed (Forret & Dougherty, 2004). Engaging in professional activities predicted perceived career success in men, but not in women. Pursuing activities aimed at increasing internal visibility predicted promotions and total compensation in men, but not in women; moreover, these activities predicted perceived career success in women, but not in men. This pattern of finding suggests that factors that facilitate career success might be different for men and women (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). Wei et al. (2012) reported that employees' network resources were related to career growth potential (as perceived by supervisors) when employees had a high level of political skill.

A large body of research examined potential predictors of networking behavior. The meta-analysis of Thomas et al. (2010) has identified proactive personality as a significant predictor of networking behavior, $\rho = 0.27$, CI 95% [.21; .33], $k = 12$, $N = 3,085$. Also, more recent studies reported that proactive personality predicted networking behavior (Liang & Gong, 2013; Vandenberghe & Ok, 2013). Interestingly, additional variables seem to play a role in the relationship between proactive personality and networking behavior. For instance, proactive personality predicts networking behavior at low levels of career commitment, whereas at high levels of career commitment, proactive personality does not matter because networking behavior is high anyway (Vandenberghe & Ok, 2013). In addition, proactive personality is related to networking behavior in people with high core-self evaluations, but not in people with low core-self evaluations (Liang & Gong, 2013). Because networking behaviors include some risks, people with low core self-evaluation might feel more threatened in a networking context. This finding partially reflects an earlier finding of Forret and

Dougherty (2001) that reported positive correlations between self-esteem and several indicators of networking behavior.

With respect to the Big-Five personality factors, there is rather consistent evidence that extraversion and openness to experience predict networking behavior (Forret & Dougherty, 2001; van Hoye et al., 2009; Wolff & Kim, 2012), whereas conscientiousness and emotional stability, seem to be unrelated to networking behavior (van Hoye et al., 2009; Wolff & Kim, 2012). In the study with unemployed job seekers, however, conscientiousness did predict networking intensity (Wanberg et al., 2000), suggesting that highly conscientious people use networking as a goal-directed strategy in their job-search efforts. Agreeableness seems to be positively related to maintaining and using internal contacts, but to be negatively related to building external contacts (Wolff & Kim, 2012).

Taken together, networking is an important proactive career behavior that is related to positive career outcomes. Although proactive people show more networking behavior, it has to be kept in mind that not all behaviors described as networking are particularly proactive. For instance, accepting new and highly visible work assignments – a behavior categorized as networking by Forret and Dougherty (2004) – can just be a conscientious reaction when being offered such an assignment. Thus, future research might pay more attention to which networking is really a proactive behavior, for instance by taking the organizational context into account.

Seeking a Mentor

Mentoring – defined as “developmentally oriented relationship between a younger or less experienced individual (the protégé) and an older or more experienced individual (the mentor”); Eby et al., 2013, p. 441) – has received substantial attention in the careers literature. A large body of research has shown that mentoring is positively related to positive career attitudes, skill development, and objective indicators of career success (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004; Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng, & DuBois, 2008). Not every mentoring relationship, however, is an instantiating of proactive career behavior. Many organizations have formal mentoring programs encouraging employees to participate without having to demonstrate explicit proactive behavior. Actively seeking a mentoring relationship when no formal mentoring program is available or when it does not satisfy one’s specific needs can, however, be seen as a typical proactive behavior.

Accordingly, Singh, Ragins, and Tharenou (2009) reported that employees who had never been mentored before, but who reported a high degree of career initiative (i.e., engaged in career path planning or have updated their skills) at baseline were more likely to have received a mentor one year later than employees with lower levels of career initiative. In a panel study with early career employees, Blickle et al. (2009b) found that self-initiated mentoring was

associated with the hierarchical position and salary two years later (mediated by networking behavior), but not with career satisfaction two years later.

From the perspective of proactive career behaviors, it is important to examine the degree of proactivity in mentoring relationships in more detail. For instance, it would be interesting to know if mentees whose disposition towards proactive behavior is relatively low can benefit from mentors with a highly proactive personality.

Skill Development Activities

Knowledge and skills are important predictors of career success (Ng et al., 2005). Therefore, participation in developmental activities is a promising approach to foster positive career outcomes in a proactive way. Indeed, studies have demonstrated that skill development and learning activities positively relate to subjective and objective indicators of career satisfaction (Pan, Sun, & Chow, 2011) and hierarchical position attained (Hoeksema, van de Vliert, Williams, 1997). Maurer and Chapman (2013), however, have illustrated that a high learning goal orientation is more relevant for positive career outcomes than actual participation in developmental activities. Similarly, Allen, Russell, Poteet, and Dobbins (1999) have emphasized the importance of motivational variables, showing that also employees' motivation to learn negatively relates to their perceived career plateau (i.e., their perception that their job tasks have become routine). Importantly, a perspective on learning might not only enhance career success but might also point to perceived *opportunities* to proceed in one's career (Van Veldhoven & Dorenbosch, 2008).

A broad literature has examined predictors of participation in learning and skill developmental activities (Maurer et al., 2003; Noe & Wilk, 1999). Studies that included constructs such as proactive personality have demonstrated that a person's general level of proactivity predicts participation in activities aiming at learning and updating one's skills (Orvis & Leffler, 2011; Seibert et al., 2001) – also when controlling for other personality factors (Major et al., 2006). Research by Bertolino, Truxillo, and Fraccaroli (2011), however, suggests that the association might not hold for all groups of workers: Although proactive personality was related to training motivation in workers at all ages, only young proactive workers felt that their career development will benefit from training and had explicit plans to participate in training. In older workers, proactive personality was unrelated with perceived career development from training and intention to participate in training.

Moreover, it seems that proactive people use their everyday work experiences as an opportunity to learn. For instance, Chiaburu, Baker, and Pitarieu (2006) reported that proactive personality predicted developmental feedback-seeking, and Hetzner, Heid, and Gruber (2015) found that persons with a high level of personal initiative reflected more on their work experiences.

A study of Hornung, Rousseau, and Glaser (2008) suggests that proactive persons use long-term strategies that enable learning at work. Hornung and his co-workers reported that highly proactive government agency workers (operationalized by personal initiative) were more likely to negotiate future developmental opportunities with their supervisors than less proactive workers. This result suggests that proactive persons do not only take advantage of already existing learning opportunities but shape their environment in a way so that it offers opportunities for learning.

To sum up, proactive actions such as networking behavior and actively engaging in skill development are related to career success. However, the effect sizes are not particularly large, suggesting that these behaviors in themselves do not guarantee career success, but are rather helpful ingredients for a successful career that need to be combined with abilities, skills, motivation, and a wise choice of an organizational context that fits individual preferences.

Discussion and Directions for Future Research

In this section of the chapter, I will discuss the empirical evidence on proactive career behaviors and will suggest avenues for future research. I will start by addressing some content areas that need attention, then I will move to methodological issues.

The Role of Contingencies

Research on career proactivity has focused on the bivariate relationships between proactive personality, proactive career behaviors, and career outcomes. Although a number of studies addressed interaction effects between proactivity on the one hand and individual as well as situational variables, on the other hand, a systematic investigation of moderator effects is still lacking. Particularly promising and important for the study of moderator effects are age and organizational variables that potentially foster career success.

Age

The large majority of research on career proactivity has focused on samples of relatively young persons during early- and mid-career stages. Older persons have been included rarely in studies on career proactivity. This omission is noteworthy because age is a variable that is closely linked to career processes (Maurer, 2001). Moreover, the few studies that looked at age as a moderator with respect to career proactivity demonstrated that the role of age is not negligible. Van Veldhoven and Dorenbosch (2008) reported that age moderated the relationship between organizational HR practices for development and perceived career opportunities. Whereas younger employees' career opportunities benefited from

good HR practices, older employees' career opportunities were particularly unfavorable when HR practices were poor. Relatedly, the above-mentioned study of Bertolino et al. (2011) illustrated that older employees' perceived career opportunities and training intentions did not benefit from proactive personality. Overall, this research suggests that findings on career proactivity identified in early- or mid-career samples might not generalize to late-career employees.

Organizational Context

Organizations differ largely in the degree to which they offer career management practices and support career development of their workforce (Baruch & Peiperl, 2000; Eby, Allen, & Bringley, 2005). For instance, some organizations provide formal mentoring programs and encourage their employees to participate in training and development activities, while others are more reluctant in supporting these activities. These differences between organizations are highly relevant for career proactivity. First, they may have an impact on the degree of proactivity inherent in specific career behaviors. For instance, in an organization that offers a highly structured and supportive career workshop, employees may engage in career planning, not as an indicator of any anticipatory proactive action, but just because they had to attend the career workshop. In another organization, however, that does not offer such a career workshop, career planning will be a sign of a proactive approach towards one's career. Second, the predictive power of specific proactive career behaviors might differ between organizational contexts. In organizations that provide extensive career support, proactive career behaviors are less necessary than in organizations where this support is absent. Thus, to arrive at a good understanding of the driving force between an individual's career behaviors as well as their effects, the specific organizational context needs to be taken into account.

Research Methodology

In terms of research design, research on career proactivity is largely characterized by a cross-sectional perspective, a focus on between-person differences and a predominant use of a variable-centered approach. I suggest that research on career proactivity would benefit from adding a longitudinal perspective and from including within-person and person-centered approaches in its research portfolio.

Longitudinal Study Designs

More longitudinal research on career proactivity is needed to overcome the limitations of the predominantly used cross-sectional study designs. These cross-sectional designs make it impossible to derive any conclusion about causality. For instance, although it seems plausible that proactive networking behavior

contributes to career success, it might also be that high-status employees have more opportunities for networking or that career satisfaction stimulates networking behavior because more satisfied employees find it more rewarding and pleasurable to spend time on career-related activities. To bring more light into causal processes, research on career proactivity should use more longitudinal study designs (see for longitudinal analyses, Seibert et al., 2013; Wolff & Moser, 2009).

Moreover, the career concept is closely linked to a time perspective, namely to the “evolution of work experiences . . . over time” (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014, p. 362). This career concept implies that a cross-sectional design can hardly capture this essential time-bound feature of a career. Even typical panel designs with three measurement points allow only a very rough sketch about how a person’s career develops over time and about the role of proactivity within this development. Therefore, future research on career proactivity needs multiple measurement points that allow capturing the trajectory of a career over time. For instance, one might examine how career trajectories differ between persons with high levels versus low levels of proactivity personality. In addition, it would be interesting to investigate external events on career behaviors and outcomes. One might argue that proactive persons recover more quickly from potential career shocks during economic crises because they are better able to take proactive action (e.g., networking) that helps them find a new job or to move to a better job. Moreover, discontinuous growth models (Bliese, Chan, & Ployhart, 2007) can be used to examine change in proactive career behaviors after career management interventions.

Within-Person Approach

Research on career proactivity adopted a between-person approach, trying to identify differences between persons with respect to proactive personality and proactive career behaviors. Recently, Hirschi and Freund (2014) have argued that proactive career behaviors do not differ only between persons, but fluctuate within persons as well. Using a sample of university students, these authors showed that during weeks when students received more social support and experienced more positive emotions than they did usually they reported a higher level of proactive career behaviors. Also, employees may engage more in career behaviors during one week than during another. It would be interesting to see if the predictors of such career behaviors differ between more and less proactive employees. For instance, employees with a proactive personality might be less reactive to external events, but address career issues following their “internal agenda”, whereas employees low on proactive personality might be more triggered by external events.

Studies on proactive work behavior have used a within-person approach (Sonnentag, 2003; Sonnentag & Starzyk, in press). It would be particularly

interesting to see if and how fluctuations in proactive work behavior correspond to fluctuations in proactive career behaviors. Possibly, for many employees, there is a trade-off between proactive work behaviors and proactive career behaviors: Although proactive people will tend to engage in both types of proactive behavior, within specific weeks (or months) even proactive persons might focus on just one type of proactive behavior and neglect the other one. For instance, when acts of proactive work behaviors turn out to be unsuccessful, proactive employees may put more emphasis on proactive career behaviors in order to enhance alternative career options.

Person-Centered Perspective

Proactive career behavior comprises a broad set of rather diverse behaviors, including career exploration, goal-setting and planning, networking, and skill development. Empirical studies predominantly followed a variable-centered approach in examining the predictive power of single proactive career behaviors, with a few studies also looking at interaction effects. What is missing from this research is an explicit focus on specific configurations or profiles of proactive career behaviors. Research on broader career topics started to use a person-centered approach comparing different latent profiles of motivation or career interest (Graves, Cullen, Lester, Ruderman, & Gentry, 2015; McLarnon, Carswell, & Schneider, 2015). Such a person-centered approach could be also highly fruitful for studying proactive career behaviors and differences in career success between these profiles (Wang & Le, 2013).

Conclusion

Taken together, although there is clear evidence that proactive personality and specific proactive career behaviors matter for career success, many interesting research questions remain unexplored. I expect that by using more advanced research methods we will arrive at a better understanding of how people actively shape their careers.

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4

A REVIEW OF JOB-CRAFTING RESEARCH

The Role of Leader Behaviors in Cultivating Successful Job-crafters

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Today's business world is evolving faster than ever before due to the global economic situation and developments in information/telecommunication technology. The advent of global work, virtual work, and self-managing teams has considerably increased the complexity and flexibility of professional jobs. Jobs have become more dynamic coupled with constantly shifting and changing roles, tasks, and projects (Grant & Parker, 2009). In order to address emergent demands and opportunities at work, managers more and more rely on employees to adapt to and initiate changes in the nature of their jobs (Demerouti, 2014). For example, employees may be encouraged to introduce new methods to carry out tasks more proficiently, or to expand their work by taking on more responsibilities. These proactive behaviors may not only increase individual work well-being and motivation but may also be crucial for organizational effectiveness.

Recognizing the importance of employee proactivity, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001, p. 180) introduced the concept of *job-crafting* to capture “the actions employees take to shape, mold, and redefine their jobs”. Job-crafting is a bottom-up job redesign process in which employees themselves make changes pertaining to the characteristics of their jobs. As organizations change their forms, processes, and functions more quickly than before, employees need to improve their understanding of how their job roles and responsibilities contribute to achieving organizational goals (Ghitulescu, 2013). Employees' ability to craft the content and the meaning of their jobs helps them cope with ongoing changes and thus may be “a strategic advantage in larger-scale organizational change” (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 198).

In this chapter we review the body of research on job-crafting over the past decade, consider the limitations of the extant literature, and identify areas that

require further investigation for future research. Specifically, the present paper firstly discusses the job-crafting phenomenon, as well as types, measurements, antecedents and outcomes of job-crafting (see Figure 4.1). Second, we set out to advance theory on job-crafting. Specifically, we argue that leaders or managers should play a role in the process of job-crafting. Consequently, we outline how leadership (e.g., transformational leadership and empowering leadership) will influence employee job-crafting, and how this influence may be qualified by individual factors and job characteristics. We also discuss how job-crafting may have a reversed effect on leader behaviors. Our overall model of leadership and job-crafting is presented in Figure 4.2. Finally, we identify several ways that this model can be expanded, as well as opportunities for future research on job-crafting. In doing so, we hope this review will bring more attention particularly to the relationship between leader behaviors and employee job-crafting.

What is Job-crafting?

Work plays a significant role in almost everyone's life. Individuals work not only for material benefits (e.g., money), but also for fulfilling psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Individuals can thus derive achievement, meaning, satisfaction, and identity from work. Moreover, individuals are often not passive recipients of their work environment (Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999). When they feel that their psychological needs are not being met in their job, individuals will be motivated to initiate changes in their job tasks and characteristics, which is referred to as job-crafting.

Conceptualizations of Job-crafting

Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001, p. 179) define job-crafting as “the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work”. Changing task boundaries refers to altering the form or number of work activities. That is, employees choose to do fewer, more, or different tasks other than prescribed in their formal job description. Changing relational boundaries means exercising discretion over social interactions at work, which involves changing the quality and/or the amount of interactions with people at work. For instance, employees may avoid colleagues they do not like or increase opportunities to meet new clients. According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), job-crafting also includes changing cognitive task boundaries, which refers to altering how one sees the job. Cognitive crafting involves a cognitive process of task redefinition without actually changing the job. For example, academic researchers may view their job as a combination of teaching students and writing papers, but they also can change their view by seeing their work as making an important contribution to the scientific community and society as a whole.

Job-crafting can be described as proactive behavior to increase person-environment fit (Bindl & Parker, 2010; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). It is different from other types of proactive work behavior, like taking charge and personal initiative, in a way that it is very specific and targeted towards the change of job characteristics (Demerouti & Bakker, 2014). Moreover, the goal of taking charge and personal initiative is mainly to improve the internal organizational environment (Parker & Collins, 2010). In contrast, job-crafting primarily aims to derive individual fit, satisfaction, meaning, and identity from work (Tims & Bakker, 2010; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). As a result, job-crafting does not necessarily lead to organizationally beneficial outcomes. In fact, in some cases, job-crafting may have detrimental effects on employee performance and organizational effectiveness (Demerouti, Bakker, & Halbesleben, in press). The degree to which job-crafting contributes to organizations seems to be dependent on its alignment with organizational objectives (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001, p. 181) argued that “the job is being re-created or crafted all the time”, which implies that job-crafting occurs on a daily basis. In order to capture job-crafting as a daily behavior, some scholars conceptualize job-crafting as employee proactive behavior that is specifically targeted at job characteristics (e.g., Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012; Tims & Bakker, 2010; Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012), mainly drawing on the established framework of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). According to JD-R theory, job characteristics can vary widely across occupations but can always be classified into two categories: job demands and job resources. Job-crafting, from this perspective, is defined as the self-initiated behaviors of employees to make changes in their level of job demands or job resources. Job demands refer to “physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or skills and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs” (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 312). Job resources refer to “physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of the job that are either/or: (a) functional in achieving work goals; (b) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; (c) stimulate personal growth, learning and development” (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 312). Examples of job demands are work pressure, emotional demands, cognitive demands, and physical demands. Examples of job resources are job autonomy, social support, performance feedback, and skill variety. These job demands and resources are generic and can be found across different types of jobs and industries, although they may vary in strength and relevance. Whereas job demands are generally the most important predictors of reduced health (e.g., exhaustion, psychosomatic health complaints), job resources are generally the most important predictors of work motivation (e.g., work enjoyment, engagement) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014).

A comparison of the perspectives of Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) and JD-R theory on job-crafting is presented in Table 4.1, which shows the definition, purpose, and motivation, target, and types of job-crafting from the two perspectives. It should be noted that this review focuses particularly on job-crafting as conceptualized from the JD-R perspective.

Types of Job-Crafting

By increasing or decreasing job demands and job resources, employees can shape the job to better fit their personal abilities, preferences, and needs, helping them to maintain motivation and protect well-being. Therefore, job-crafting is defined as “proactive employee behavior consisting of seeking resources, seeking challenges, and reducing demands” (Petrou et al., 2012, p. 501). Reducing resources is not distinguished, as it is assumed that individuals strive for resources (Hobfoll, 2001). This JD-R approach of job-crafting is consistent with Laurence’s (2010) approach which distinguishes between expansion-oriented and contraction-oriented job-crafting. While expansion-oriented job-crafting

TABLE 4.1 Comparison of Two Perspectives on Job Crafting

<i>Job-crafting perspectives</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Purpose and motivation</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Types</i>
Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001)	“... the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work” (p. 179)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assert control • To create a positive self-image • To connect to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task boundaries • Relational boundaries • Cognitive boundaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task crafting • Relational crafting • Cognitive crafting
Job Demands-Resources Model (Tims et al., 2012)	“... the changes that employees may make to balance their job demands and job resources with their personal abilities and needs” (p.174)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve person-job fit • To enhance work engagement • To avoid health impairment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job demands • Job resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking challenges • Seeking resources • Reducing demands

Note: Task crafting can be seen as changing job demands. Relational crafting can be seen as changing job resources. JD-R perspective focuses on the behavioral component, excluding the cognitive dimension of job crafting.

refers to increasing the number or complexity of tasks and interactions with others, contraction-oriented job-crafting refers to reducing complexity of the tasks or limiting the number of relationships at work. Seeking resources and seeking challenges can be considered as expansion-oriented job-crafting, while reducing demands is a form of contraction-oriented job-crafting. Similarly, Bindl, Unsworth, and Gibson (2014) distinguished between enhancing and limiting forms of job-crafting.

Seeking resources may include behaviors such as asking feedback and advice from colleagues and supervisors, enhancing the amount of communication with people at work to get more information, seeking opportunities to learn new technologies, or increasing skill variety to improve work efficiency. Seeking challenges may include looking for new and appealing tasks at work, or expanding the scope of job responsibilities once one has finished the assigned work. Finally, reducing demands may include behaviors targeted at minimizing the emotionally, cognitively, or physically demanding aspects of the job and reducing workload so that one's work does not erode one's private life (Demerouti & Bakker, 2014). Seeking challenges and reducing demands both refer to changing job demands, but are conceptually distinct (Petrou et al., 2012). Seeking challenges is a way to keep employees busy and enhance motivation. Reducing demands, particularly referring to decreasing hindering job demands, serves to protect employees from stress and burnout.

Team-Level Job-Crafting

Job-crafting not only occurs at the individual level but also at the team level. In a team setting, individuals need to work closely with other team members in order to complete their tasks. This interdependence requires communication, cooperation, and coordinated action among team members. Then it is likely that team members, rather than individual agents, jointly determine how to alter task and relational boundaries in order to meet their common goals. Job-crafting thus can be carried out collaboratively involving joint effort among groups of employees in customizing how their work is organized and enacted (Leana, Appelbaum, & Shevchuk, 2009). In fact, employees can engage in both individual and collaborative job-crafting. The incidence and strength of each kind of job-crafting is dependent on how closely their jobs are connected with others.

The first study examining job-crafting on the team level was conducted by Leana et al. (2009). In this study, it was found that job-crafting can be coordinated between childcare teachers and aides in work teams. Additionally, it was demonstrated that individual and collaborative job-crafting were distinct constructs and had different antecedents. Tims, Bakker, Derks, and Van Rhenen (2013) found that collaborative job-crafting was positively related to team performance through team work engagement. It should be noted that even in work teams with low control, there remain opportunities for collaborative

job-crafting. McClelland, Leach, Clegg, and McGowan (2014) argued that under conditions where need for control is not met, the motivation to job-craft would be enhanced. McClelland et al. (2014) tested a model of collaborative job-crafting using data collected from 242 call center teams (1,935 individuals) that had low levels of work discretion. It was found that collaborative crafting did exist and was related positively to team efficacy, team control, and team interdependence.

Additionally, in collectivist societies (e.g., China), characterized by a primary concern of collective interests (Hofstede, 1984), individual job-crafting might take more effort because individuals should consider the potential influence of their crafting initiatives on others. Collaborative job-crafting thus may be more likely to happen, since it involves joint effort among group members in customizing their work in order to meet their common goals. Note however that the study by Lu, Wang, Lu, Du, and Bakker (2014) showed that individual job-crafting occurs also in collectivistic cultures like China. In sum, next to individual job-crafting also team or collaborative job-crafting occurs even in contexts where discretion is not high and seems to have positive outcomes for the individual and the team.

Related Job Redesign Constructs

Job-crafting represents a bottom-up job redesign approach and is different from task i-deals and role adjustment. Task i-deals refer to the customization of job content based on agreement reflecting the interests and influence of both the employer and the employee (Hornung, Rousseau, Glaser, Angerer, & Weigel, 2010). Task i-deals are distinguished from job-crafting in the sense that they are authorized by the employer or its agents, typically the immediate supervisor (Rousseau, 2005). For example, an employee may negotiate special job duties or assignments with his/her supervisor. Job-crafting, however, is not explicitly authorized by the employer and occurs in the zone of acceptance an individual perceives with respect to his or her supervisor and colleagues. Moreover, the primary goal of job-crafting is to fulfil personal needs of employees through reorganizing and restructuring job demands and resources, and thus employees are the actors of the job. Task i-deals, in contrast, aim to achieve mutual benefit between employers and employees through negotiating employment features, which makes employees both actors and recipients of the job (Hornung et al., 2010).

Role adjustment is generally broader, not only including job-crafting and task i-deals, but also delegation of responsibilities by supervisors and work sharing with colleagues (Clegg & Spencer, 2007). In Clegg and Spencer's (2007) model of role adjustment, high performance from the job-holders leads their supervisors and peers to perceive job-holders as competent and develop trust in them; job-holders also trust their own competence because of good job performance. As a result, the trust from others and self leads to some adjustment in the

role of job-holders that may be initiated by the supervisor (e.g. through delegation), peers (e.g. by sharing out the work differently), or job holders themselves (e.g., through job-crafting).

Job-Crafting Measurement

There are several validated scales measuring job-crafting, developed from slightly different perspectives on job-crafting. Laurence (2010) developed a job-crafting scale measuring dimensions suggested by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), namely physical crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting. There is good evidence for the criterion-related validity of this job-crafting scale (e.g., Lu et al., 2014). Similarly, Slep and Vella-Brodrick's (2013) scale also assessed the extent to which individuals engage in these three forms of job-crafting activities. Most recently, Bindl et al. (2014) developed a job-crafting scale that comprises both enhancing and limiting forms of task, relationship, skill, and cognitive crafting in the workplace. Scholars have also developed job-crafting scales based on the JD-R perspective (Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2012; Petrou et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2012). For instance, by conducting a series of studies Tims et al. (2012) provided a reliable and valid scale consisting of four different dimensions: increasing structural job resources, increasing social job resources, increasing challenging job demands, and decreasing hindering job demands. Petrou et al. (2012) developed a daily job-crafting scale based on the scale by Tims et al. (2012). Their study indicated that all the three forms of job-crafting (seeking resources, seeking challenges, reducing demands) varied substantially both between and within individuals, and the three-factor structure model of job-crafting was confirmed at the day level.

Antecedents of Job-Crafting

In the previous research there have been two broad approaches adopted to address triggers of job-crafting (see Figure 4.1). The first one has focused on personal attributes as determinants of job-crafting. The implicit reasoning in this line of research is that certain individuals are more likely than others to actively redesign their jobs (Bakker et al., 2012; Petrou & Demerouti, 2015). For example, Bipp and Demerouti (in press) found that individual approach temperament was related to more seeking resources and challenges, whereas individual avoidance temperament was related to more reducing demands. Bakker et al. (2012) found that proactive personality was associated with more increasing job resources and job challenges behaviors. Moreover, personal resources (e.g., self-efficacy), which fluctuate within the same person from one day to another (e.g., Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Heuven, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009), may cause daily fluctuations in job-crafting behaviors. For instance, on days when employees feel more efficacious about what can be done at work, employees are

more likely to change the characteristics of the job to attain their goals (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2014).

The second approach has focused on job characteristics as stimulators of job-crafting. Scholars have argued that employee job-crafting is a response to the combination of job demands and job resources at work. For instance, daily working conditions may cause employees to change the job on that specific day. Petrou et al. (2012) found that on days that work pressure and autonomy were both high employees showed highest levels of seeking resources and lowest levels of reducing demands. Petrou et al. (2012) argued that jobs with high job autonomy and high work pressure are seen as active jobs which facilitate learning and development. Consequently, active jobs make employees engage in more resources seeking and less demands reducing. But they may be already too demanding for employees to search for more challenges.

Furthermore, Tims and Bakker (2010) proposed that person-job misfit leads to job-crafting behaviors. Person-job misfit or fit focuses on the match between personal characteristics and those of the jobs or tasks that are performed at work, which can be differentiated into demands-abilities fit and needs-supplies fit (e.g., Edwards, 1991; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). However, we further argue that the motivation to craft may not only be driven by the current misfit between job demands and resources and personal attributes, but also by the possible misfit in future. We suggest that job-crafting is a self-initiated process of changing job characteristics in order to adaptively and proactively achieve greater compatibility between personal attributes and dynamic work environments. Given that today's organizations are faced with increasingly changing dynamic environments, the content of the job is not fixed but may change from time to time. Employees may be motivated to craft their jobs to proactively prepare for a future job change. For instance, they may expand their task and relational environments by increasing the scope of job responsibilities, or enhancing the amount of communication with people at work to get more information. As a result, job-crafting may help employees easily cope with future job change and uncertainty.

Outcomes of Job-Crafting

Job redesign initiated by employees has beneficial effects on both individual and organizational outcomes. Figure 4.1 presents an overview of categories of potential outcomes of job-crafting. First, we can distinguish between immediate and long-term effects. Certain types of outcomes can be achieved immediately after job-crafting, whereas others may be manifested after a longer period of time. Second, a distinction can be made between such outcomes that are more individually or organizationally oriented. This leads to four major categories of potential outcomes of job-crafting: immediate individual outcomes (e.g., work engagement, need satisfaction), immediate organizational outcomes (e.g., job

satisfaction, job performance), long-term individual outcomes (e.g., work meaning and identity, person-job fit), and long-term organizational outcomes (e.g., organizational commitment, job design).

Immediate Individual Outcomes

There is substantial evidence demonstrating that job-crafting relates to employee work engagement. A cross-sectional study by Bakker, Tims, and Derks (2012) found that job-crafting (increasing structural and social job resources and increasing job challenges) was associated with work engagement. A three-wave longitudinal study has shown that job-crafting predicted work engagement over time (Vogt, Hakanen, Brauchli, Jenny, & Bauer, in press). Petrou et al. (2012) addressed this relationship on a daily basis. It was found that day-level seeking challenges (but not resources) was positively associated with day-level work engagement, whereas day-level reducing demands was negatively associated with day-level work engagement. It should be noted that work engagement may also predict job-crafting. In their three-wave longitudinal study, Tims, Bakker, and Derks (in press-a) examined dynamic relationships between job-crafting intentions, work engagement, and actual job-crafting behavior. The time interval was one month between two consecutive time points. Results of structural equation modeling showed that job-crafting intentions and work engagement were significantly related to actual job-crafting behavior, which, in turn, was related to higher levels of work engagement.

Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) suggested that motivation to craft the job is driven by individual, unfulfilled needs, including the needs for control and meaning, a positive self-image, and connection with others. Job-crafting, therefore, allows employees to fulfill basic human needs. In a cross-sectional study with a sample of 253 working adults, it was reported that task, relational, and cognitive forms of job-crafting were related to satisfaction of the intrinsic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2014).

Long-Term Individual Outcomes

Meaning and identity are suggested to be at the center of why employees job-craft and how they benefit from job-crafting over time (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). An extensive review of job-crafting and those two outcomes is provided by Wrzesniewski, LoBuglio, Dutton, and Berg (2013). However, little empirical research has directly examined how employees develop positive meaning and identity at work from the process of job-crafting. A qualitative study by Mattarelli and Tagliaventi (2012) provided insights into dynamics between job-crafting and identity at work. It was found offshore professionals searched for consistency between their professional identity and their work (i.e., work-identity integrity). And when they perceived a lack of consistency,

they were likely to adjust their work to their professional identity, like introducing new products, markets, and services. As a result, job design may be changed and work-identity integrity may be attained.

Using the framework of JD-R model, Tims and Bakker (2010) argued that changes job-crafters make are primarily aimed at improving person-job fit and work motivation. A study conducted in 246 full-time frontline hotel employees in Taiwan revealed that both individual crafting and collaborative crafting related to more person-job fit, which in turn related to more engagement of employees (Chen, Yen, & Tsai, 2014). Moreover, the types of person-job fit achieved most likely depend on how employees craft their job (Yu, 2009). Physical job-crafting, changing the form or number of activities at work, is more likely to affect the perception of demands-abilities fit. Relational job-crafting, changing the psycho-social work environment, which is more relevant to the perception of needs-supplies fit. Lu et al. (2014) provided support for this proposition.

Immediate Organizational Outcomes

Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) assumed that job-crafters, who alter the task and relational boundaries of their jobs, are more satisfied with the work they create. Therefore, job-crafting should increase job satisfaction of employees. Empirical research has provided some evidence for this proposition. For example, it was found in the study of Tims, Bakker, and Derks (2013) that employees who crafted their job resources (i.e., structural and social resources) reported an increase in job resources, and this increase was positively related to increased satisfaction with the job two months later. However, crafting job demands (i.e., challenging and hindering) was not found to lead to an increase in job satisfaction. Similarly, Ghitulescu (2007) reported significant correlations between relational and cognitive job-crafting (but not task job-crafting) and job satisfaction among 661 teachers in 200 schools.

After customizing job features according to their own preference, skill, and ability, employees should generally feel engaged and happy at work and thus job performance is expected to be improved. Several empirical studies have provided evidence for the positive relation between job-crafting and work performance. For example, Bakker et al. (2012) found that job-crafting, predicted by proactive personality, was positively related to colleague-ratings of in-role performance via work engagement. Similarly, Tims et al. (in press-a) found that actual job-crafting increased employee work engagement, which in turn predicted in-role performance but not organizational citizenship behavior. A cross-sectional study found that seeking resources had a positive indirect relationship with contextual performance through work engagement, and with creativity through work engagement and flourishing; reducing demands had negative indirect relationships with both contextual performance and creativity through work engagement (Demerouti, Bakker, & Gevers, in press).

A longitudinal study by Petrou, Demerouti, & Schaufeli (in press) showed that seeking resources predicted task performance one year later. On a day level, Demerouti et al. (in press) found daily seeking resources was positively associated with daily task performance; yet daily reducing demands was detrimental for daily task performance and altruism.

Long-Term Organizational Outcomes

Job-crafting may be associated with stronger organizational commitment. When employees redefine their jobs to incorporate their motives, strengths, and passions, they are expected to be more attached to their jobs. Besides, job-crafters achieve positive meaning and identity in work and thus are more committed to what they do in their work. Leana et al. (2009) examined job-crafting in childcare centers and found teacher collaborative job-crafting positively related to organizational commitment. Do the benefits of job-crafting derive from the changes in job design or simply from being involved in job-crafting (Oldham & Hackman, 2010)? Tims et al. (2013) provided some insights into this question based on longitudinal data. They found that employees who crafted their job resources showed an increase in their structural and social resources. Crafting job demands, however, did not result in a change in job demands.

Based on the above review, it can be concluded that there is increasing evidence showing that job-crafting can foster positive work outcomes. However, more research adopting longitudinal designs is needed to examine the long-term impact of job-crafting on individual and organizational outcomes. Moreover, whether the job-crafting of one person is related to the job characteristics and well-being of a colleague is also worth studying in future research (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, in press-b). In addition, most of the research on the consequences of job-crafting has been conducted in Western societies and more evidence is needed from other cultures where job-crafting may work in a different way.

Potential Negative Outcomes of Job-Crafting

Job-crafting may also cause dysfunctional effects for job-crafters, colleagues, teams, and organizations. Employees' crafting their jobs means they make changes to what they do and how they do it. If this proactivity requires working extra hours or taking on additional responsibilities, such acts could deplete personal resources. And if the change employees make does not work out, employees may experience frustration. Berg, Grant, and Johnson (2010) found that individuals may experience unpleasant states such as stress in pursuing their unanswered callings by crafting job and leisure. An employee may successfully avoid seeing a complaining customer, but someone else will then need to deal with this difficult situation. This means job-crafters who adjust their tasks likely affect their colleagues, depending on the extent to which they are interdependent.

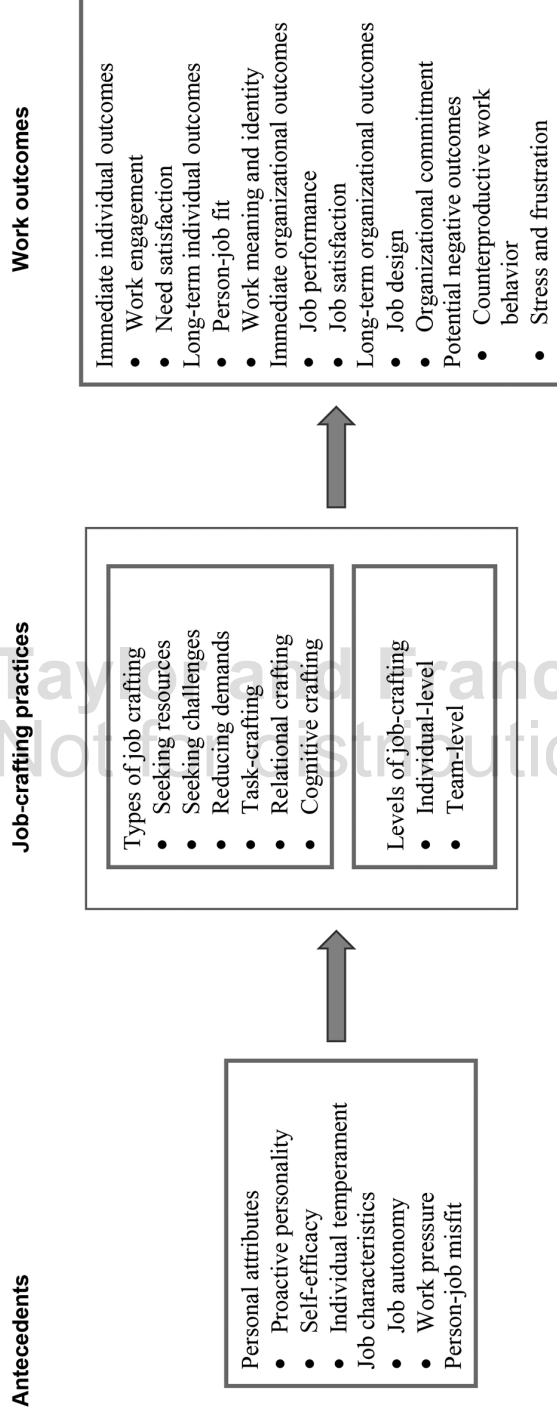


FIGURE 4.1 A review of job crafting research

Moreover, Demerouti et al. (in press) found that daily seeking challenges was positively (rather than negatively) related to daily counter-productive behaviors such as gossiping about others and hiding mistakes. They argued that when individuals search for more challenges they may also tend to legitimize their counter-productive behaviors to achieve a moral equilibrium.

Employees can have different strategies to craft their work, but not all the strategies will bring positive outcomes and achieve what employees want. For example, Petrou et al. (in press) found reducing demands and exhaustion strengthen each other over time. Petrou et al. (in press) argued that employees who are exhausted and drained put less effort into their tasks. As a result, their workload and time pressure is increased, which further intensifies the feelings of exhaustion. It seems that when exhaustion has already happened, reducing demands represents an ineffective strategy. Interestingly, ten Brummelhuis, ter Hoeven, Bakker, and Peper (2011) found that intrinsic motivation enabled employees to break through the loss cycle of burnout. Taken together, seeking challenges and resources, which enhance intrinsic motivation, may be more effective in reducing emotional exhaustion.

As job-crafting is voluntary and not instructed in the job description or by supervisors, it may bring unexpected consequences for job-crafters and others. What leaders or managers can do is to keep job-crafting in a way that is beneficial to both employees and the organization, by promoting more beneficial and avoiding costly or dysfunctional job-crafting. In short, how employees exactly create their dream jobs with the help of their leaders is an interesting area for future research. Therefore, the next goal of this review is to zoom in on the relationship between leader behaviors and employee job-crafting.

Promoting Effective Job-crafting: A Leadership Perspective

Scholars have argued that bottom-up job redesign such as job-crafting should be promoted by leaders or managers and combined with traditional top-down approaches to improve the working conditions of employees. After all, the individual employee knows his/her job best and can recognize which part of the job should be improved (Demerouti & Bakker, 2014). We suggest leaders can stimulate job-crafting by developing personal resources of employees and designing resourceful jobs with urgency to craft. In addition, leader behaviors like promoting employees' organizational identification and building a trusting, open, and supportive work climate may also influence employee job-crafting.

Developing Personal Resources

Self-efficacy is suggested to be the core foundation of human motivation, performance accomplishments, and well-being (Bandura, 1997). People with high

self-efficacy are confident about their abilities and thus more likely to maximize resourceful and challenging aspects of their job to achieve the desired level of job performance. Job-crafting requires competence and persistence. The success of a job-crafter may depend to a large extent on his or her ability to utilize resources at work (Berg, Dutton, & Wrzesniewski, 2008). Leaders can boost followers' efficacy beliefs by, for instance, raising follower self-confidence, developing follower potentials, and providing positive feedback for follower performance. Employees' heightened self-efficacy may be associated with perceived competence, which in turn, leads to self-initiated role adjustment in their jobs (Clegg & Spencer, 2007).

Leaders can indirectly enhance job-crafting by stimulating positive work-related affect of employees (e.g., work engagement). According to Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build (B&B) theory, positive affective states share the ability to broaden momentary thought-action repertoires of individuals, which builds enduring personal resources in people, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to psychological and social resources. Therefore, positive emotions/affect is expected to lead to more proactive behavior (Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012; Den Hartog & Belschak 2007; Fay & Sonnentag 2012; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2009). For instance, Lu et al. (2014) found that work engagement, as a positive and high-arousal affective state, was positively related to both changes in physical and relational job-crafting.

Designing Resourceful Jobs with Urgency to Craft

Essentially, "job-crafting is about resourcefulness" (Berg et al., 2008, p. 5). Leaders need to provide employees with a variety of resources that can be utilized when employees craft their jobs. Leaders have many tangible resources such as empowerment, training opportunities, and decision latitude, and intangible resources such as work-related information, feedback, knowledge, and experience (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, Sleebos, & Maduro, 2014; Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Van den Heuvel, in press; Jiang, Law, & Sun, 2014). The leader should be open and willing to share those resources with employees, which may help employees better enact their jobs.

However, leaders should be aware that a job with resources may not be enough to job-craft, there should be also urgency (i.e., high demands) to do so. Petrou et al. (2012) argue that jobs with high resources combined with high demands are seen as 'active jobs' (Karasek & Theorell, 1990) which facilitate the development of new behavioral patterns. Specifically, high job demands are likely to lead to active problem solving like self-job redesign or self-management because of available job resources. Consequently, employees in active jobs tend to optimize their job characteristics to fit their strength and potentials. Taken together, we suggest that active jobs with high resources and demands can best cultivate employees' job-crafting behaviors.

Promoting Organizational Identification

Leaders can promote ‘good’ job-crafting by raising employees’ identification with the organization. It is expected that employees with high organizational identification may execute their crafting in a way that is beneficial to organizational goals rather than only pursuit self-interests, because employees who identify themselves with the organization view themselves as members of the organization and are willing to submit individual self-interests to the collective interests (Brewer & Chen, 2007). To increase employees’ organizational identification, leaders can explain to employees that what the organization is trying to accomplish and why. If employees buy into goals of the organization and adopt them as their personal goals, they may use this cognitive perception to legitimate their own job-crafting behaviors (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Leaders can also explain to employees how their work is connected to the effectiveness of the work unit as a whole. If employees perceive their jobs important and meaningful, they may be intrinsically motivated to craft their jobs to improve work process and achieve high levels of performance.

Building a Trusting, Open, and Supportive Climate

To establish such a context stimulating personal initiative, mutual trust between employees and leaders may play an important role (Berg et al., 2008). A healthy and trusting work climate accepts mistakes as learning experiences, which is likely to encourage employees to try new things. If employees feel trusted by their leaders, they are likely to have more confidence in their own abilities. Moreover, if employees trust their leaders will support them, they may perceive more control in the process of job-crafting (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006).

Moreover, leaders should display behaviors signaling openness and support, such as listening to employees’ individual needs, considering their new ideas, encouraging personal growth, and taking actions to address the matter raised. Wu and Parker (in press) found that leader secure-base support (i.e., leader availability, encouragement, and noninterference) positively predicted employees’ proactive work behavior through promoting their role breadth self-efficacy and autonomous motivation. Leaders can also encourage employees to risk making mistakes and create an atmosphere that encourages them to share so that others may also learn from the example. As a result, employees will feel safe to be open about the process of job-crafting and leaders can help employees achieve desirable outcomes for both employees and the organization.

However, leaders may not always be aware of job-crafting attempts. Leaders need to act as a role model to show the best practices of crafting behaviors, such that job-crafters would act upon the task and relational boundaries of the job in a “good” way when leaders are not around. For instance, leaders can set challenging goals for their own work, seek and accept feedback, grow and improve continually,

or may engage in more interactions with their employees. By doing so, leaders may actually set good examples of positive job-crafting behaviors for employees.

Transformational Leadership and Job-Crafting

Job-crafting refers to the changes employees make to perform their jobs. As such, leader behaviors signaling appreciation for change should be a critical contextual factor influencing employees' motivation to craft. Since transformational leadership is change-oriented (Bass, 1985; Detert & Burris, 2007), it may be a meaningful antecedent of job-crafting. A recent meta-analysis has found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee proactive behavior (Chiaburu, Smith, Wang, & Zimmerman, 2014). In this section, we discuss how transformational leadership relates to job-crafting of employees.

Characteristics of transformational leaders typically include articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, high-performance expectations, individualized support, and intellectual stimulation (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Specifically, transformational leaders motivate followers to go beyond immediate self-interests by emphasizing long-term goals, developing a vision, and inspiring employees to pursue that vision. Employees are motivated to set long-term goals and adjust their work environment in an effort to achieve these goals. Further, transformational leaders challenge the status quo and expect higher performance, by encouraging employees to find new ways to work. Under transformational leadership, employees are likely to make changes to expand their task and relational environments. Employees also likely lower the levels of hindering demands since those demands may inhibit performance and achievement of valued goals and threaten personal growth and future gains (Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010).

Essentially, job-crafting is a proactive behavior to increase person-environment fit, which should be encouraged by a transformational leader. This idea seems to be supported by the study by Chi and Pan (2012) in which it was found that transformational leadership related to the higher perception of need-supply job fit and demand-ability job fit of employees. In addition, transformational leaders perhaps are job-crafters themselves and they lead by "doing" rather than simply "talking", thus providing a good example for employees. Therefore, we suggest that transformational leadership is positively related to job-crafting of employees.

Empowering Leadership and Job-Crafting

Empowering leadership has been found to increase employee proactive behavior (Martin, Liao, & Campbell, 2013). In the case of job-crafting, it seems that job constraints and lack of power are two major factors that may affect the extent to which low-rank employees craft their jobs (Berg, Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2010).

Empowering leaders explicitly give job autonomy and delegate power to their followers (e.g., Zhang & Bartol, 2010), which may effectively stimulate employee job-crafting.

Empowering leadership involves enhancing the significance of the work, fostering participation in decision making, expressing confidence in high performance, and providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints (e.g., Ahearne, Mathieu, & Rapp, 2005; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Empowered employees feel that their work is personally important (i.e., meaningful), they have freedom to choose how to initiate and perform work tasks (i.e., self-determination), they have the ability to successfully perform work tasks (i.e., self-efficacy), and they are able to make a difference in work outcomes (i.e., impact). Together, these four cognitions reflect an active orientation to a work role in which “an individual wishes and feels able to shape his or her work role and context” (Spreitzer, 1995, p.1444).

For instance, when employees understand how their objectives and goals relate to those of the company, they may perceive their jobs to be of great significance and thus change their way of thinking regarding what their job entails and how to do the work. Empowering leaders delegate authority to employees, therefore empowered employees feel it is legitimate for them to implement actions aimed to shape and redefine their jobs. Empowering leaders, who share power with employees, are open and willing to provide job resources with employees that may help them better enact their jobs. Overall we suggest that empowering leadership is a strong predictor of employee proactive behavior such as job-crafting.

Moderators in the Relationship between Leadership and Job-Crafting

The effect of leadership on job-crafting is not universal and often depends on job characteristics or individual difference of followers (e.g., Howell, Bowen, Dorfman, Kerr, & Podsakoff, 1997; Shamir & Howell, 1999). According to the contingency theory of leadership (e.g., Fiedler, 1978), characteristics of the situation may enhance or weaken the effects of leadership. In the next section, we briefly review the potential moderators in the relationship between leadership and job-crafting.

Individual Factors as Moderators

First, the effectiveness of leadership is likely to be moderated by follower *power distance*. Individual power distance refers to the extent to which one accepts that power is distributed unequally in institutions and organizations (Hofstede, 1984). Power distance of employees has been suggested to influence how they perceive and react to authority. Under transformational and empowering leadership,

employees are expected to shape their work roles themselves. However, high power distance subordinates are more willing to accept the imposed work roles and to wait for instructions from their supervisors with respect to work tasks. For those subordinates, transformational and empowering leadership is less normative and not consistent with how relations and interactions between superiors and subordinates are expected to be (e.g., Kirkman, Chen, Farh, Chen, & Lowe, 2009). Thus we expect that the effects of transformational and empowering leadership on job-crafting would become weaker for subordinates higher in power distance.

Employee personality is also likely to moderate the effect of leadership on job-crafting. *Proactive personality* is defined as “the relatively stable tendency to effect environmental change” (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p.103). People high in proactive personality tend to “identify opportunities and act on them, show initiative, take action, and persevere until meaningful changes occur” (Crant, 2000, p. 439). Bakker et al. (2012) found that proactive employees were most likely to craft their jobs by increasing their structural and social job resources and job challenges, in an effort to create favorable conditions and opportunities for themselves in the workplace. Proactive individuals are likely to lead themselves to personal excellence by using self-management strategies (Breevaart, Bakker & Demerouti, 2014), whereas individuals low in proactive personality are likely to passively wait and react to instructions of leaders. Taken together, we suggest that leadership may be more influential for individuals with low proactive personality.

Leadership is also likely to interact with *individual temperament* in predicting job-crafting. Approach temperament refers to the neurophysiological sensitivity towards positive stimuli (e.g., reward) accompanied by a behavioral predisposition towards such stimuli; avoidance approach temperament refers to the neurophysiological sensitivity towards negative or undesirable stimuli (e.g., punishment) accompanied by a behavioral predisposition away from such stimuli (Elliot & Thrash, 2010). It is expected that high scores on approach temperament combined with approach goals condition lead to higher seeking resources and challenges; high scores on avoidance temperament combined with avoidance goals condition lead to higher reducing demands (Bipp & Demerouti, in press). Leadership may induce different goal focus. For instance, transformational leadership may stimulate the pursuit of approach goals (e.g., encouraging personal growth), and transactional leadership may be more likely to increase the pursuit of avoidance goals (e.g., avoiding mistakes). Therefore, a particular goal focus induced by leadership may jointly predict job-crafting with individual temperament.

Job Characteristics as Moderators

As we mentioned earlier, autonomous jobs are expected to encourage job-crafting because job autonomy implies considerable latitude to determine one’s work activities. We suggest that *job autonomy* may substitute for the effect of

leadership on job-crafting. Take transformational leadership, for example. When job autonomy is high, employees may not need the encouragement of their leaders (even though they may still appreciate their leaders' encouragement), as they already feel self-determined to modify their jobs. On the contrary, low levels of job autonomy suggest that employees have little freedom to choose their work tasks and strategies to fulfill those tasks. Under this condition, employees are in stronger need for empowerment and autonomy and thus are more impacted by leaders' transformational and empowering behaviors.

Employees' responses to leader behaviors may be enhanced by *job uncertainty*. When employees experience job uncertainty, they tend to make a greater use of information from leaders. Specifically, employees experience uncertainty regarding desired behaviors when they do not have clear external social or structural cues to guide their behavior. As a result, employees become more prone to the influence of leadership in terms of how to enact their jobs. By contrast, in jobs where employee behavior is guided by clear cues regarding work tasks and responsibilities and how to fulfill them, leadership may become less influential on employee work behaviors. Accordingly, we argue that when there is a greater level of uncertainty in the job, leadership is likely to have a stronger effect on job-crafting.

Workload depletes employees' energy and leads to stress and burnout, which may impact the extent to which job-crafting takes place. For example, when employees have a high workload, they are more likely to engage in seeking job resources and reducing the hindering aspects of job demands (e.g., minimizing unnecessary demands) as a way to cope with work stress and to sustain well-being. Employees may also increase the challenging aspects of job demands to enhance intrinsic work motivation, which enables them to break through the loss cycle of stress and burnout (ten Brummelhuis et al., 2011). Therefore, although transformational and empowering leader behaviors may generally increase employees' job-crafting, we predict more job-crafting behaviors will be performed when employees are confronted with high (vs low) workload.

Reversed Effect of Job-crafting on Leadership Behaviors

It is suggested that different job-crafting behaviors may result in different qualities of dyadic relationships between supervisors and subordinates (i.e., leader-member exchange, LMX), which may consequently influence behaviors that leaders display towards their subordinates (See Figure 4.2). Because of limited time and resources, leaders differentiate relationship qualities between followers. Leaders form high quality of exchange relationships with followers who are loyal, trustworthy, and skilled, and poor quality of exchange relationships with followers who betray the trust of the leaders, or are unmotivated or incompetent. Seeking resources can both enhance employee work motivation and help employees cope with job demands. Thus, an employee seeking

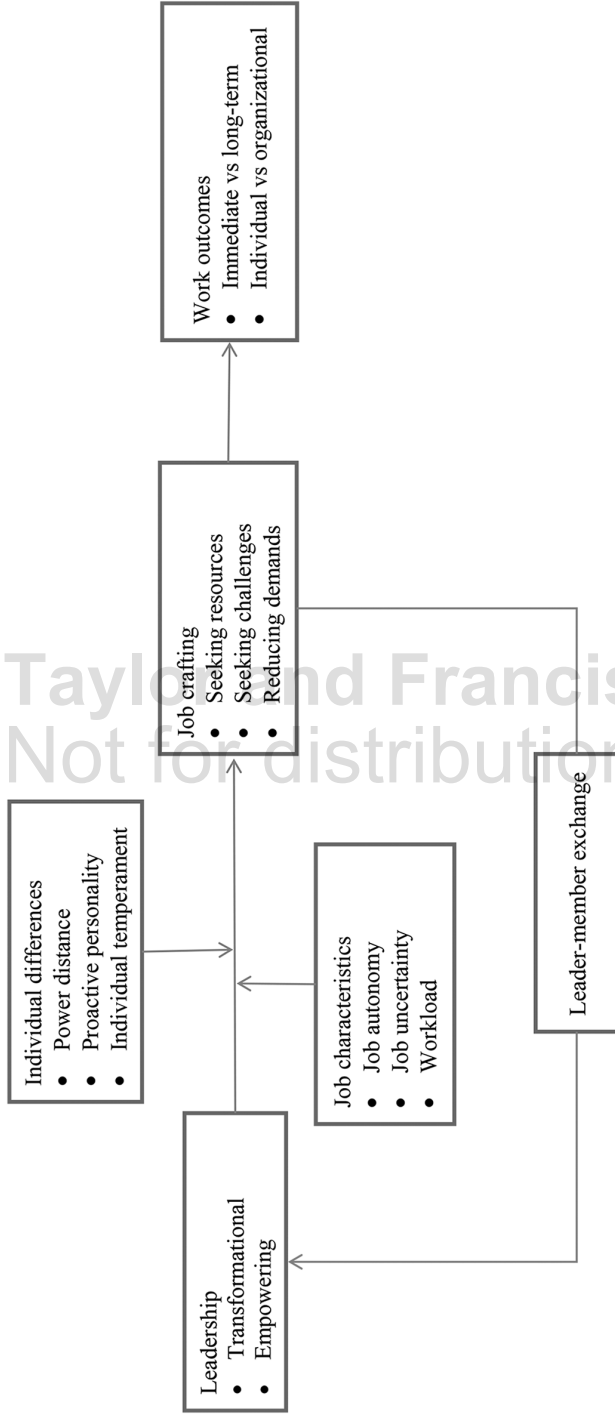


FIGURE 4.2 The overall model of leadership and job crafting

resources could be seen as a sign of high motivation and pursuing better performance at work, which may be appreciated by their leaders. Employees who seek challenges also prove their competence and create a good image of themselves. Leaders may consider employees exhibiting such behaviors to be more responsible, skilled, and capable, and thus are more likely to establish good work relationships with them. Reducing demands, however, could be seen as an indicator of incompetence (Tims et al., 2012) or low motivation (Petrou et al., 2012), which fails to meet leaders' expectations of high performance and therefore may harm LMX quality.

Job-crafting may change leader behaviors because different LMX quality is formed due to different job-crafting strategies. High LMX quality will be associated with, for instance, more transformational leader behaviors (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). High LMX quality is comprised of high levels of social exchange characterized by mutual respect, trust, support, and obligation between leaders and followers. When job-crafters form high LMX quality with their leaders, leaders would display behaviors that are more oriented toward transformational influence, like expecting followers to satisfy longer-term and collective interests of the work unit rather than satisfy immediate self-interests. High LMX quality is also associated with more empowering leader behaviors. Job-crafters with high LMX quality are seen as leaders' in-group members. Leaders assign in-group members more significant tasks and provide them with more resources, such as participation in decision making and autonomy from bureaucratic constraints. Also, leaders trust the competency of in-group members and expect them to have higher performance.

Taken together, we suggest that job-crafting is likely to have a reverse effect on leadership behaviors by influencing LMX quality.

Conclusion

The present chapter provided an overview of the existing literature on job-crafting as well as introduced the neglected role of leadership behaviors in the process of job-crafting. We defined job-crafting as a self-initiated process of changing job characteristics in order to adaptively and proactively achieve greater compatibility between personal attributes and dynamic work environments. We reviewed the conceptualizations, types, forms, measurements, antecedents and outcomes of job-crafting. It seems that job-crafting can bring many positive work outcomes for both employees and organizations. Nevertheless, the potential dark side of job-crafting also needs to be taken into account.

Proactive behavior such as job-crafting usually is not part of a given job description and thus not tied to formal systems of rewards and penalty (Van Dyne, & LePine, 1998; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Consequently, leader behaviors should serve as critical signals of whether or not such proactive behavior is welcomed at work. Yet the insufficient understanding of the role of leader

behaviors in employee job-crafting limits the theoretical development of job-crafting literature. We argued that leaders can stimulate effective job-crafting by developing personal resources of employees, designing resourceful jobs with urgency to craft, building a trusting, open, and supportive work climate, and promoting employees' organizational identification. We then discussed the dynamic relationships between transformational and empowering leadership and employee job-crafting.

Our model of leadership and job-crafting (depicted in Figure 4.2) can also be expanded in several ways. First, whereas we mainly position leadership as a predictor of job-crafting, the effect of job-crafting may also be contingent on leadership. Job-crafting is not welcomed by every leader. For instance, transactional leaders may expect followers to complete the prescribed tasks and not encourage them to take greater responsibility for developing themselves (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1994). They would make the decision as to how to allocate demands and resources, like allocating challenging tasks and projects to followers they think are more competent and committed. Job-crafting like seeking challenges, therefore, might be seen as not to follow transactional leaders' allocations and to challenge their authorities. As a result, employees' job-crafting practices are less likely to bring desired outcomes when they work with a transactional leader than with a transformational leader who facilitates job-crafting by giving autonomy.

Second, the effect of job-crafting on LMX may be determined by how leaders interpret the motivation for job-crafting. Leaders may attribute employees' seeking resources and seeking challenges to impression management motives (Morrison & Bies, 1991). Consequently, leaders tend to provide less support to such employees and such job-crafting attempts may not be associated with high LMX quality. For example, Lam, Huang, and Snape (2007) found that employees' feedback-seeking was positively related to LMX quality only when leaders interpreted the feedback-seeking behavior as being driven more by performance enhancement motives and less by impression management motives. Moreover, if leaders interpret employees may have good motives for reducing their (hindrance) job demands, reducing demands is less likely to negatively impact LMX quality.

Third, future research can also investigate the underlying mechanism linking job-crafting with work outcomes. Past research has mainly focused on the person-environment fit perspective to understand the psychological processes in the job-crafting-work outcomes relationships. Nevertheless, psychological ownership of the job may be an alternative psychological mechanism underlying the effect of job-crafting on work outcomes. Job-crafters may have a feeling of ownership toward their jobs because they feel control over jobs, invest their time and effort into jobs, and have intimate knowledge of jobs (Brown, Pierce, & Crossley, 2013; Pierce, Jussila, & Cummings, 2009). When employees perceive more feelings of ownership of their jobs as a result of job-crafting, they are expected to be engaged at work and achieve many positive work outcomes.

Last but not least, the present study has focused on how leader behaviors influence employee job-crafting. The role of leader traits is not taken into account. Future research can investigate both leader personality traits and leader behaviors in order to have an integrative understanding of how leadership influences job-crafting. For instance, previous research has found that proactive individuals are most likely to craft their jobs in an effort to create favorable working conditions (Bakker et al., 2012). It is reasonable to assume that leaders with proactive personality are job-crafters themselves. Given that employees often see their leaders as role models, employees are more inclined to craft their own jobs when they work with proactive leaders.

In the past decades, due to fierce global competition and rapid changes in technology, organizations have had to adopt various adaptive strategies like outsourcing, mergers and acquisitions, and restructuring to survive and to remain flexible (Sparks, Faragher, & Cooper, 2001). Job-crafting is suggested to be an instrumental way to facilitate employees to adapt to change more successfully while maintaining their well-being and work motivation (Petrou et al., 2012). Thus, creating contexts in which job-crafting is more favored might be key to organization success particularly in times of uncertainty. As argued by Berg et al. (2008), job-crafting of employees should be accepted or even encouraged by leaders or managers as long as it is in line with organizational goals. We hope this review will contribute to understanding how leaders stimulate employee job-crafting in order to improve employee well-being and performance within the workplace.

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5

SAFETY PROACTIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE

The Initiative to Improve Individual, Team, and Organizational Safety

Matteo Curcuruto and Mark A. Griffin

“Decent work is safe work but we are a long way from achieving that goal. Every year some two million men and women lose their lives through accidents and diseases linked to their work. In addition, workers suffer 270 million occupational accidents and 160 million occupational diseases each year – these are conservative estimates”

(International Labour Organization, 2003)

“A great many of these lives could have been saved if workplace risks had been sensibly and properly managed by anticipating the risks and putting adequate measures in place”

(European Agency for Health and Safety at Work, 2012).

In recent years, proactivity has become an increasingly important foundation of safety at work. As technological and organizational environments become more unpredictable and change occurs more rapidly, standardized procedures and compliant behaviors with prescribed safety procedures and regulations put in place by organizations might be insufficient for ensuring safe operations. Therefore, there is now increasing attention from researchers and practitioners who focus on how individuals, teams, and organizations can manage safety more proactively.

Proactivity research applied in the field of occupational safety investigates the active participation of the workforce in the promotion of health and safety (Griffin & Neal, 2000). This concept –which we refer to as *safety proactivity* – is currently broadly recognized by governments and regulatory agencies as a policy priority for workplace health and safety (EU-OSHA, 2012). These policies emphasize that workers need to have a proactive role in safety promotion, and work together with co-workers and managers in order to make meaningful

improvements in the workplace. While employers have the duty to provide workplaces where risks to health and safety are properly controlled, the law also requires employees to help, as managers do not have the solutions to all health and safety problems. Under many legal regulatory systems, employers must consult workers on health and safety issues, as workers and their representatives have detailed knowledge and experience on how the job is done and how it affects them. From this perspective, the final goal of every health and safety policy should be to help promote open dialogue towards advanced levels of safety culture, in which health and safety are integrated into everyone's role (Geller, 2002). If it is true that the employer's main duty is to prevent risk to their workers by putting in place protective measures (i.e., procedures, equipment, instructions), workers are required to play their part in helping the employer look after their own and other people's health and safety. This is achieved by following up on the training they receive, supporting the employer's programs and consultation activities, reporting inadequate, unsafe, and risky situations, raising issues and giving suggestions during meetings, and leading new employees toward safe practice in carrying out their work.

Although they describe different behaviors, the typologies of safety proactivity share three key features with overall employee proactivity (Parker & Collins, 2010) by focusing on behaviors that are self-initiated, anticipatory, and change-oriented. They also have the common aim to enhance safety in the workplace by preventing risks and harm or to further develop organizational routines, procedures or standards. Consistent with the broader proactivity literature, a defining element of safety proactivity is that it is self-initiated behavior in which the employee anticipates, plans, and introduces changes to achieve safety in the future (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Examples include initiating improvements to work methods to increase safety, taking pre-emptive steps to enhance safety as a result of anticipated future risks, and speaking out to alert others to possible hidden risks. These behaviors are spontaneously enacted even in the absence of any external negative stimuli in the workplace (Geller, 2002). Such self-initiation contrasts with the "adhering to rules" emphasis that is embedded in the traditional concepts of safety compliance and reactive risk management (Hollnagel et al., 2012).

Proactive safety behaviors are also change-oriented. That is, they are focused on improving current levels of safety through actions such as changing work methods, influencing the attitudes and behaviors of oneself or others, or changing the technical and physical environment (Geller, 2002; Parker & Collins, 2010). Safety proactivity behaviors are also future-focused and anticipatory, including activities such as taking steps to prevent an accident or anticipating the safety consequences of organizational change, rather than reactive, such as helping a colleague when requested.

The key elements of self-initiation, anticipation, and change-orientation identify and differentiate safety proactivity from proficient and adaptive work performance (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007). Proficiency involves maintaining

safety in stable environments through compliant behaviors such as following procedures and rules. Adaptivity supports safety in changing and unpredictable environments, but compared to proactivity, it is more reactive and involves less initiative and anticipatory thinking.

Reinforcing the importance of safety proactivity, accident investigations by regulatory agencies show that workplaces are safer when workers actively contribute to health and safety. Higher proactivity is associated with lower occupational risk level and accident rates, more effective solutions, a happier and more productive workforce (lower absence rates), and greater awareness and control of workplace risks (EU-OSHA, 2012). Understanding the organizational processes and psychological mechanisms that develop a proactive safety orientation by employees has become an important research topic in recent decades (Griffin et al., 2014; Hollnagel et al., 2012; Zohar, 2008).

The aim of the present chapter is to illustrate the current state of the literature on safety proactivity. Although many approaches to safety proactivity have been developed with reference to high-reliability organizations with advanced organizational processes and design (i.e., nuclear plants, chemical and petrochemical factories, sanitary sectors, air traffic control) (Hollnagel et al., 2012; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007), we believe that the general concepts and empirical evidence are generalizable across diverse industries and organizations.

This chapter consists of three main parts. First, we examine safety research approaches at three different levels of analysis: individuals, teams, and organizations. For each level, we describe the principal conceptual models, the focus of the investigation, and relevant variables. Second, we review the organizational and psychological drivers of safety proactivity, including both distal and proximal antecedents. Finally, we discuss managerial implications, performance advantages and research issues related to the promotion of safety proactivity in organizations and workplaces.

Safety Proactivity: Individuals, Teams, and Organization Level

The active role of workers in occupational health and safety is not new in the industrial safety field (Andriessen, 1975). But, for many years the dominant approach to managing safety involved controlling variability and error in human performance. From this perspective, limited or erratic human performance could degrade an otherwise well-designed and “safe system”. Techniques from many areas such as management theory and the engineering of organization reliability were used to develop demonstrable safe systems (Hollnagel, 2008). The assumption seemed to be that safety, once established, could be maintained by requiring that human performance stayed within prescribed boundaries or norms.

This assumption has increasingly been challenged. Changes arising from the transformations of the economy and technology and workforce characteristics

mean organizations face new interactions between their technical, social and human components. As a result, higher levels of uncertainty, unpredictability, and interdependence limit the traditional view of organizational reliability and raise questions about the determinants of safety capability in organizations (Griffin et al., 2014).

In parallel to this broader perspective at the organizational level, more attention has also been directed to the role that individuals and teams can play to continuously improve safety. Over recent years, the focus of safety research has moved from compliance to more innovative contributions made by individuals (Christian, Bradley, Wallace, & Burke, 2009; Wallace & Chen, 2006). There is a growing interest in understanding how people actively contribute to anticipatory risk prevention, adapt to unexpected scenarios, and recover from critical situations and disasters.

From this perspective, proactivity enacted by individuals and teams is an important foundation for achieving overall reliability and safety. In the next sections, we review these different levels of analysis and describe in more detail the elements that characterize a proactive management of safety at each level.

Safety Proactivity by Individuals: Protection vs Promotion Oriented Safety behaviors

Multiple studies show that the active role of workers in promoting and supporting work safety goes beyond simply complying with rules and procedures (Clarke, 2006; Flin, Mearns, O'Connor, & Bryden, 2000). The behaviors that constitute this more proactive role have been generally described in terms of a commitment-based approach as compared with a rule-control based approach associated with compliance (Barling & Hutchinson, 2000; Simard & Marchand, 1995; Zohar & Luria, 2005).

Researchers and scholars have identified many constructs that are related to proactive safety behaviors such as safety initiative (Simard & Marchand, 1995), safety active caring (Geller, Roberts, & Gilmore, 1996), safety citizenship (Hofmann, Morgerson, & Gerras, 2003; Turner, Chmiel, & Walls, 2005) and safety participation (Griffin & Neal, 2000). A number of different taxonomies incorporating proactive safety behaviors have been proposed. For example, Geller (2002) described three general kinds of active participation behaviors: environment-focused (i.e., housekeeping); person-focused (i.e., active listening and helping, intervening in a crisis) and behavior-focused (i.e., correcting feedback, actively coaching and teaching). Hofmann and collaborators (2003) defined a six-component model of safety OCB (civic virtue, stewardship, initiating-change, whistleblowing, voice, and helping). Griffin and Neal (2000) included contextual safety behaviors like helping coworkers, promoting the safety program within the workplace, demonstrating initiative and putting effort into improving safety in the workplace. Table 5.1 presents the principal

TABLE 5.1 Safety Proactivity in Organizational Behaviour Literature: Constructs, Definitions, Measures

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Authors</i>	<i>Conceptual Definition</i>	<i>Examples of Items</i>
Actively caring for safety	Geller (1991); Geller et al. (1996)	Employees acting to benefit the safety of other employees (e.g. observing and recording the safe and unsafe behaviours of coworkers, and then giving them constructive behavioural feedback).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – If I know a coworker is going to do a hazardous job, I am willing to remind him/her of the hazards – I am willing to warn other coworkers about working unsafely – I am willing to do whatever I can to improve safety, even confronting other coworkers about their acts – When I see a potential safety hazard, I am willing to correct it myself if possible
Safety initiative	Simard and Marchard (1995)	The extent to which workers take informal initiatives to improve the safe execution of their work as well as make suggestions to and exert pressures on the supervisor for improving the safety of the work environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Taking personal initiatives for improving the safe execution of the work – Making suggestions to the supervisor to improve the safety of the work environment – Putting pressure on the supervisor to improve the safety of the workplace
Safety participation	Griffin and Neal (2000); Neal et al. (2000)	Participating in voluntary safety activities or attending safety meetings. These behaviours may not directly contribute to workplace safety, but they do help to develop an environment that supports safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I voluntarily carry out tasks or activities that help to improve workplace safety – I help my coworkers when they are working under risky or hazardous conditions – I promote the safety programs within the organization

(continued)

TABLE 5.1 (continued)

Construct	Authors	Conceptual Definition	Examples of Items
Safety citizenship	Hofmann et al., (2003); Conchie (2013); Curcuruto et al., (2015)	Discretionary behaviours of organizational citizenship that hold a positive value for safety in the workplace, but are not recognized by the formal reward system (e.g. helping and protecting coworkers; reporting violations; voicing safety concerns and suggestions; improving procedures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Helping scale</i>: Helping others with safety related responsibilities – <i>Stewardship scale</i>: Protecting fellow team members from safety hazards – <i>Whistleblowing scale</i>: Reporting team members who violate safety procedures – <i>Voice scale</i>: Raising safety concerns during planning sessions – <i>Initiate a change scale</i>: Trying to change the way the job is done to make it safer – <i>Civic virtue scale</i>: Keeping informed of changes in safety policies and procedures

conceptualizations of the construct of safety proactivity which have been developed over time, with behavioral samples and assessment items.

An Integrative Framework

Recent research has extended the theoretical foundation of safety proactivity by identifying distinct motivational bases of proactivity. For example, Curcuruto, Guglielmi, and Mariani (2013) differentiated between *supporting people and improving procedures* as a primary motivational distinction. Similarly, two studies by Conchie (2013) and Curcuruto, Griffin, and Parker (2015) proposed that different typologies of proactive safety voices may be differentiated in terms of regulatory focus (*promotion vs prevention*) and be related to complementary forms of supervisor leadership styles.

Figure 5.1 presents a summary of these integrative frameworks and differentiates two dimensions. The first dimension contrasts person-oriented versus procedure-oriented behaviors and the second dimension contrasts promotion-oriented versus protection-oriented behaviors.

Regarding the *promotion vs protection* dimension, we refer to Conchie (2013) and Van Dyne, Cummings, and McLean Parks' (1995) definition of proactive

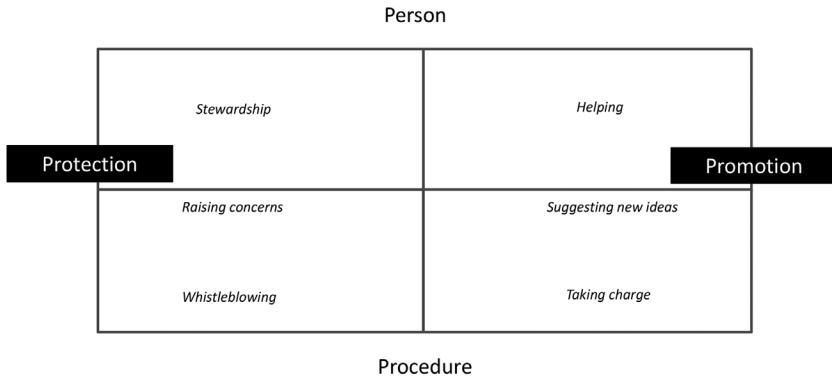


FIGURE 5.1 Safety proactivity by individuals: complementary targets (*person vs procedure*) and focus (*protection vs promotion*)

behaviors as being either promotive by seeking to move the organization in a new direction or protective by seeking to protect the organization against undesirable behavior. While protective behavior aims to defend the efficiency and the correct core functioning of organizations, promotive behaviors are focused more on generating adaptive and constructive changes of standards and procedures through incremental improvements or real transformational changes (Griffin, Cordery, & Soon, 2015). This distinction also highlights complementary motivational bases for proactive behavior, like the one proposed by self-regulatory models in the literature (Higgins, 2012; Johnson, Chang, Meyer, Lanaj, & Way, 2013).

On the one hand, we can consider protection-oriented safety proactivity in terms of behaviors such as *stewardship* (looking after safety of coworkers), *preventive voice* (raising concerns to supervisors and colleagues about potential risks which might generate a negative consequence for the safety of people, technologies and/or structures) and *whistleblowing* and reporting acts (which point out breaches and violations of safety systems and procedures in place). On the other hand, in the typology of promotion oriented safety proactivity we might include all those behaviors which aim to improve the existing organizational safety standards and systems, like helping supervisors and leading coworkers in the development of new safer ways to do the job, or spontaneously voicing personal suggestions to improve the safety of a task, or again, like taking charge of behaviors which aim to initiate constructive changes of practices and procedures with favourable implications for safety.

The second dimension, *person vs procedures*, draws on the literature of socio-technical systems that describes the interplay between human and technical components of organizational safety. From this perspective, safety proactivity may be focused on protecting and/or promoting other people’s safety rather than organizational systems and vice versa (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010). Contemporaneous research underlined complementary motivational dynamics

(Curcuruto et al., 2013; Spitzmuller & Van Dyne, 2013) which may drive individuals to enact their own social agency differently toward defending or improving the organization in itself, here meant as a complex set of procedures and systems, rather than actively caring for the well-being and on behalf of the people inside the organization. We propose the *person-procedures* axis as a second relevant dimension to differentiate different types of safety proactivity. For instance, some proactive safety behaviors might present stronger prosocially oriented drivers and targets (helping behaviors like supporting colleagues to fulfill their responsibility in relation to safety; stewardship acts like looking after the safety of others, protecting them from potential risks), whereas other complementary forms of safety proactivity might present a stronger future-oriented focus on the technical side of the organization itself (to identify potential criticalities; to scope rooms for improvement of the existing organizational safety models and standards at different organizational levels).

Safety Proactivity by Teams: Team Mindfulness and Organizing Routines

Beyond individual behavior, there has been an ongoing interest in collective properties of groups and teams that support proactivity in the management of safety instances in the workplace (Vogus, Rothman, Sutcliffe, & Weick, 2014). This level of analysis focuses mainly on the interplay of organizational structures and cognitive processes shared by teams which eventually create favorable conditions for safe workplaces. In this research stream, scholars have focused their attention on cognitive properties of teamwork such as collective mindfulness.

In their elaboration of the processes of collective mindfulness, Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (1999) identified five processes that contribute to creating and sustaining the enriched awareness of mindfulness: reluctance to simplify interpretations, sensitivity to operations, commitment to resilience, under-specification of structures, and preoccupation with failure. The first three processes were defined as anticipatory proprieties of high-reliability systems (HROs) related to the capability of addressing the complexity of organizational contingencies in spite of their uncertainty and unpredictability. Specifically, *reluctance to simplify interpretations* entails seeking out and maintaining divergent viewpoints. *Sensitivity to operations* means creating and maintaining an integrated big picture of the moment through ongoing attention to real-time information; *commitment to resilience* is the belief in the fallibility of existing knowledge as well as the ability to both bounce back from errors and handle surprises at the moment. On the other hand, the containment processes underline organizational mechanisms which entail the active management of critical events at the moment or after they occur. Specifically, the *under-specification of structures* results from the fluid decision-making that occurs in HRO systems during critical

times. Finally, *preoccupation with failure* leads organizations to treat any failure or near miss as an indicator of the reliability and health of the system and reward the reporting of errors.

Team Mindfulness and Safety Proactivity

As proposed by Vogus and Sutcliffe (2007), it may appear possible to consider the construct of team mindfulness as an expression of proactivity by the teams. Specifically, we may identify three theoretical similarities with general organizational proactive paradigms (Frese & Fay, 2001; Parker & Collins, 2010; Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007). First, mindfulness has been proposed as a concept to bridge HROs and other reliability seeking organizations because reliability in both settings is theorized to emerge proactively from the contingent input side: what they pay attention to, how they process it, and how they struggle to maintain continuing alertness (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007). From this perspective, mindfulness appears to be similar to the self-determination side of organizational proactive behavior (Parker & Collins, 2010). Second, mindfulness is of critical importance to reliability-seeking organizations as it allows them to more readily detect weak signals from interactively complex environments earlier and respond to them more effectively (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007). Mindfulness also loosens tight couplings by creating alternative paths of action. In this sense, mindfulness appears to recall the anticipatory and future-oriented side of proactivity (Parker & Collins, 2010). Finally, mindfulness should also enhance a team's ability to improve the safety of whole socio-technical systems because creating new categories, exploring multiple perspectives and focusing on process, all increase the possibility that a novel approach to a problem will be discovered (Langer, 1989). From this last perspective, the mindfulness concept appears to remind us of the taking charge side of the proactivity paradigm, in terms of self-started and future-oriented behavioral syndromes aimed at the improvement of the human and technical side of organizations (Parker & Collins, 2010; Frese & Fay, 2001).

Safety Proactivity by Organizations: Safety Culture, High-Reliability, Resilience Engineering

The purpose of safety management is to make sure that a system functions in a way that is at the same time safe, reliable, and proficient. At the organizational level, much attention has been paid to the role of the safety culture in reducing the number of adverse outcomes and improving support for safety across the organization. Proactivity is a central element of culture maturity models in which more advanced or developed cultures exhibit characteristics such as adapting to change and anticipating future threats (Reason, 2008; 1997). In contrast, less developed cultures are reactive and focused on compliance.

Organizational Features of a Proactive Safety Culture

Safety culture approaches typically focus on the overall value of safety in an organization. This is primarily reflected through evidence of personal commitment to safety by top managers (Parker, Lawrie, & Hudson, 2006), increasing workforce involvement and participation in active caring programs for safety management and other people's safety (Reason, 2008). These are both related to observable links between economic investments for safety and company profitability and reliability (Lawrie, Parker, & Hudson, 2006). These organizational principles find their natural expression in the implementation of organizational capitals supporting the capability by companies to support safety in a dynamic way. For instance, safety commitment by top management is usually expressed as a systematic investment in human resource programs, like structured training aimed to develop high levels of safety leadership and teamwork skills (Griffin et al., 2014), the inclusion of individuals' safety engagement in role performance appraisal and rewarding systems (Saracino, Curcuruto, Antonioni, Mariani, Guglielmi, & Spadoni, 2015), the usage of peer-to-peer observation and feedback techniques (Geller, 2002), the accurate design and implementation of vertical and horizontal communication channels across different organizational levels, functions, and departments (Cox & Cheyne, 2000). In addition to the development of appropriate human resource programs, the implementation of reliable organizational routines and information systems (Griffin et al., 2014) supports the capabilities by organizations toward a gradual achievement of higher levels of excellence of safety systems. For instance, the implementation of systematic risk reporting and investigation programs can support the pre-emptive analysis of criticalities and eventually the generation of original problem-solving solutions and innovation of existing best practices (Curcuruto, Guglielmi, & Mariani, 2014).

High-Reliability and Resilience Engineering

Beyond safety culture approaches, two other conceptual research streams have addressed the proactive features of organizational safety: high-reliability theory and the more recent resilience engineering. *High-reliability theory* provides a comprehensive description of how organizations maintain safety for long periods of time in complex and hazardous environments. This approach identifies key factors such as strategic prioritization of safety, redundancy in safety systems, and a strong culture (Weick et al., 1999). Like team-level proactivity, the high-reliability theory proposes that safety proactivity is an intrinsic feature of collective mindfulness which enables preparedness to manage unexpected events. The *resilience engineering* approach has further extended these conceptual arguments in terms of adapting to complexity through proactive adjustments of organizational systems (Madni & Jackson, 2009). As argued by Hollnagel and colleagues (2012), there are essentially two ways to strategically manage safety.

The first traditional one is to manage by keeping an eye on what happens and to make the necessary adjustments if it turns out that either the direction or the speed of developments are different from what they should be. This is called “reactive” or “feedback” adjustment because it is based on information that is fed back to the process. A second and more innovative approach is to manage by making adjustments based on the prediction that something is going to happen, but before it actually happens. This is called “proactive” or “feedforward” control in safety management. Resilience engineering conceptualizes this capability to make intrinsic adjustments to organizational systems in terms of four main characteristics: monitoring, responding, anticipating, and learning. In this way, the resilience approach has conceptual similarities with the models of proactivity in the general literature of organizational behavior.

Antecedents of Safety Proactivity

After reviewing the principal research approaches and definitions of safety proactivity in the general organizational safety literature, in the second part of our chapter, we will briefly review the principal antecedents of the construct from a more organic perspective.

Generally speaking, a safe and injury-free workplace requires attention to three domains (Geller, 2002): the organizational context (including values, climates, procedures, and routines), the person (including knowledge, role attitudes, beliefs, and affective states), and behavior (including safe practices, safety participation, and at-risk behaviors). These factors are interactive, dynamic, and reciprocal. Influencing one factor eventually impacts on the other two. Griffin and Neal (2000) further differentiated distal antecedents that shape the direction and nature of safety behavior from more proximal determinants such as motivation that underlies specific behaviors.

In the light of this, in this second part of our chapter, we describe the associated psychological mechanisms and how they affect individuals' propensity to express a proactive orientation toward the management of safety related issues in the workplace. In Figure 5.2, we have reported the principal dimensions from organizational behavior literature that we are going to review. In a first section, we review antecedents of safety proactivity at a contextual and individual level. These variables are somewhat stable antecedents of safety proactivity, different antecedents from research in areas such as safety climate, organizational support, and job design. In a second section, we review more proximal determinants of safety proactivity, describing psychological dimensions like proactive motivations and future orientations. In accordance with the general literature of proactivity in organizations, we propose that these cognitive-motivational states act like proximal psychological drivers of safety proactivity, being affected by the influence of distal antecedents associated with the characteristics of people and organizations (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010).

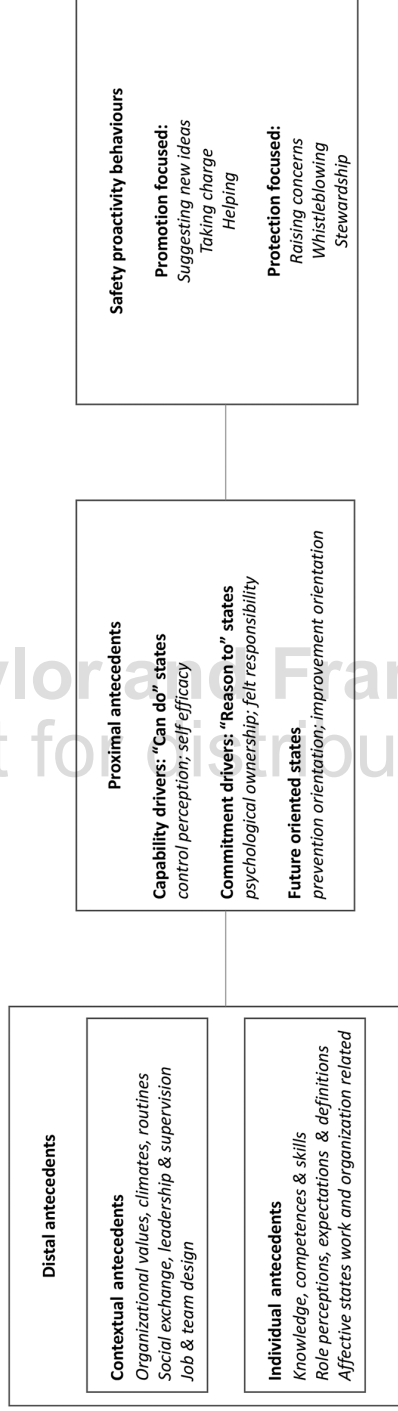


FIGURE 5.2 A model of antecedents of safety proactivity from organizational behaviour literature

Contextual Antecedents: Organizational Values, Social-Exchanges, and Job Design

Study results have shown the links between safety proactivity perspectives to collectivistic organizational dimensions. In general, these contributions can be summarized in relation to three principal explicative approaches of organizational behaviors: organizational climate paradigms (Zohar 2008; 2010; Clarke, 2006; 2010; Griffin & Neal, 2000); organizational support and social-exchange theories; and job design models (Parker, Axtell, & Turner, 2002).

For example, the safety climate approach (Zohar 1980; 2008; 2010; Flin et al., 2000; Griffin & Neal, 2000) has stressed the importance of variables like managerial commitment to safety, supervisor involvement, perceived risk and training and communication. Through all these components, organizations would communicate to their workforces the priority and the value of safety above all the other organizational instances, motivating workers to be actively committed to the promotion of safety. Meta-analyses showed that the impact of safety climate is stronger for discretionary kinds of safety behaviors, like safety participation and citizenship behaviors (Christian et al., 2009).

On the other hand, organizational support to safety (Tucker, Chmiel, Turner, Hershcovis, & Stride, 2008), supervisor related variables like leadership-member exchange (LMX) (Hofmann et al., 2003), general participative leadership styles (Simard & Marchand, 1995), transformational leadership (Barling, Loughlin, & Kelloway, 2002) and coworker support for safety (Tucker et al., 2008), have been conceptualized as motivating mechanisms of worker proactivity in the safety domain according to the principles of social exchange theory. In this perspective, the emergent behavioral expressions of proactivity by individuals in the field of safety would be a way to reciprocate high-quality relations with supervisors and the organization itself.

Finally, a third research stream would link the emergence of safety behavior to the components of job design (Parker, Turner, & Griffin, 2003; Parker et al., 2002), considering aspects like job autonomy, task control, team-work design, participative design of procedures and their moderators' effects on facilitating workforce involvement in promoting safety issues beyond safety compliance (Simard & Marchand, 1995; Turner & Parker, 2004; Yule, Flin, & Murdy, 2007). For instance, employees with higher job control and autonomy may present more opportunities and motivation to get involved in safety tasks that fall outside of their job description. Even if this research line is still relatively unexplored compared to the previous ones, it would be plausible to hypothesize that job and team design characteristics might facilitate the expression of an individual's social agency in promoting organizational safety instances through enacting initiative and prosocial behavior, and through more anticipatory strategies of coping with potential obstacles for health and safety related to the job context (Peiró, 2008; Turner et al., 2005).

Individual Antecedents: Competences, Affective States, and Role Definition

However, relatively little research has been focused on the explanation of the psychosocial mediator mechanisms which lead to safety proactivity behaviors mediating the effects of organizational variables like safety climate dimensions, leadership variables, and teamwork processes. Some of these contributions have highlighted the role of mediating psychological variables between collective and organizational psychosocial dimensions and individual safe behaviors. For example, perceived knowledge, skills and competencies (Griffin et al., 2014; Neal & Griffin, 2006; Yule et al., 2007), and general affective commitment (Clarke, 2010; Curcuruto et al., 2013; Parker et al., 2002) were recognised as important mediators of the effects of organizational dimensions on individual safety performance. In most of these cases, these kinds of psychological constructs were considered proximal antecedents to safety compliance behaviors (Parker et al., 2002) and prosocially oriented proactive safety behavior (Curcuruto et al., 2013). A limit of these studies can be seen in the lack of consideration of how people develop broader role perceptions and orientations toward safety issues that lead to a more active participation in safety promotion beyond rules and procedures compliance.

Significant applications of the role perception and definition paradigm in the safety field were the studies of Hofmann et al. (2003) and Turner et al. (2005), which considered how people define safety citizenship behaviors as a part of their own expected role in the organization, elaborating the construct of safety citizenship definition. This concept is related to the idea that in organizational contexts, people develop specific perceptions about safety-related behavioral role expectations during interactions with other day-by-day organizational actors, and beyond their formal task description. A study by Hofmann and colleagues (2003) illustrated that subordinates' perceived obligations to a leader within an environment valuing safety encouraged this discretionary safety-specific role expansion, which in turn was positively associated with the performance of safety citizenship behaviors. However, a limit of the role definition approach is the absence of considerations of the subjective dimension of individual responsibility aspirations and feelings of capability related to these broader role activities (i.e., Axtell & Parker, 2003) in relation to the specific organizational targets, in this case, safety citizenship and participative safety issues.

Proximal Determinants of Safety Proactivity

This section explores the most proximal antecedents that directly influence and shape volitional behavior. Proximal determinants are particularly important for understanding safety proactivity because they are a self-initiated behavior that depends on individual skill and motivation. We review proximal determinants

in three areas that encompass different aspects of recent proactivity research: capability drivers, commitment drivers, and future-oriented states. In doing this, we will also describe their implications for safety management and their links with other well-established conceptual safety models at the organizational and team levels, previously described in the first half of our chapter. These conceptual links with team and organization safety models are also summarized in Table 5.2. These proximal determinants of safety proactivity can be seen as psychological drivers of the effects of appropriate and functional properties by teams and organizations (Zohar, 2008).

TABLE 5.2 Proximal Determinants of Safety Proactivity: Links with Team and Organization Models

<i>Proximal drivers of safety proactivity by individuals (Zohar, 2008)</i>	<i>Safety proactivity as property of collective mindfulness by teams (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007)</i>	<i>Safety proactivity as expression of safety management and culture (Reason, 1997)</i>
<p><i>Perceived control and influence</i> Perception of subjective impact and relevance of own contributions to safety maintenance processes, improvement initiatives, problem-solving in own organizational units</p> <p><i>Self-efficacy</i> Perceived confidence in own abilities to carry out a broader and more participative role in organizational safety processes beyond prescribed requirements</p> <p><i>Psychological ownership</i> Extent to which workers feel organizational safety processes, issues, and content as something of personal concern and psychologically “owned”</p>	<p><i>Deference to expertise</i> In problem-solving procedures, decision-making authority migrates to the person or people with the most expertise with the problem at hand, regardless of their rank</p> <p><i>Sensitivity to operations</i> Ongoing interaction and information-sharing about the human and organizational factors that determine the safety of a system as a whole</p>	<p><i>Flexible culture</i> Shifting from the conventional hierarchical model to a professional competence structure</p> <p><i>Just culture</i> No-blame culture characterized by atmosphere of trust. Worker participation is reinforced and sometimes rewarded for providing essential safety-related information</p> <p><i>Informed culture</i> A safety information system that collects and examines information from regular proactive checks and determines safety as a whole</p>

(continued)

TABLE 5.2 (continued)

<i>Proximal drivers of safety proactivity by individuals (Zohar, 2008)</i>	<i>Safety proactivity as property of collective mindfulness by teams (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007)</i>	<i>Safety proactivity as expression of safety management and culture (Reason, 1997)</i>
<p><i>Felt responsibility</i> Felt responsibility to contribute to setting and striving for safety goals in order to improve safety work conditions, beyond formal requirements and accountability</p>	<p><i>Reluctance to simplify interpretations</i> Taking deliberate steps to question assumptions and received wisdom to create a more complete picture of ongoing operations</p>	<p><i>Reporting culture</i> Organizational climate in which people in direct contact with hazards are prepared to report their errors and near-misses</p>
<p><i>Improvement orientation</i> Behavioural orientation to exceed safety standards performance, accepting procedural change, availability to learn new procedures, and competences</p>	<p><i>Commitment to resilience</i> Developing capabilities to detect, contain, and bounce back from errors that have already occurred, but before they worsen and cause more serious harm</p>	<p><i>Learning culture</i> To draw appropriate conclusions from the information collected along with the will to implement changes to procedures and equipment as deemed necessary</p>
<p><i>Prevention orientation</i> Anticipatory mindset to predict and prevent threats, risks, and uncertain critical events for safety</p>	<p><i>Preoccupation with failure</i> Operating with a chronic awareness of the possibility of unexpected events that may jeopardize safety by engaging in preventive analysis</p>	

Capability Drivers

In this first subsection, we will illustrate two general capability drivers of self-efficacy and control perception that might determine proactivity behaviors in the safety field through “expectancy” motivation processes (Vroom, 1964), more recently conceptualized as “can do” motivational processes (Parker et al., 2010). Past research shows that both self-efficacy and control beliefs might play a crucial role for the self-initiation of proactivity. The relationship with the contextual organizational environment may not be unidirectional. Over time, empowered individuals can also affect their environments through proactive behaviors (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Thus, the association between the individual perception about an empowering environment and their cognitions

of influence may be mutually reinforcing through a feedback loop between empowered behaviors and work context (Bandura, 2001; 1997).

Self-Efficacy and Safety Participation

Generally, self-efficacy refers to people's judgements about their capability to perform particular tasks and organize and execute courses of action required to attain goal performances. Research has shown that employees who feel capable of performing particular tasks in a specific organizational field will perform them better (Bandura, 2001; 1997), will persist at them in the face of adversity (Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1987), and will cope more effectively with change (Hill, Smith, & Mann, 1987). Self-efficacy is thus an important motivational construct that "influences individual choices, goals, emotional reactions, effort, coping and persistence" (Gist & Mitchell, 1992).

Despite the potential influence on safety proactivity (Geller, 2002; Geller et al., 1996), little attention has been directed toward a specific concept of self-efficacy in the safety context (Katz-Navon, Naveh, & Stern, 2006). We would propose that a more participation-oriented type of safety self-efficacy would concern the extent to which people feel confident that they are able to carry out a broader and more participative organizational role in the maintenance and improvement of contextual safety aspects like work procedures and behaviors or work instruments and the physical contextual environment, beyond formalized tasks-role and prescribed technical requirements. In this perspective, unlike other safety-related concepts like safety knowledge (Neal & Griffin, 2006) and safety consciousness (Barling & Hutchinson, 2000) (which are focused on the individual's awareness of safety issues as well as more behavior-specific knowledge required to ensure safety), the concept of self-efficacy in the research field of safety proactivity must be concerned not with the core safety competences, skills and awareness one has, but with the subjective judgements of what one can do with the skills that one possesses (Bandura, 2001).

At the same time, such a concept must also be seen as different from other role-task oriented types of safety self-efficacy, related to the technical aspects of risk management in the workplace (Katz-Navon et al., 2006). While this refers to one's judgement of one's ability to ensure safety during the achievement of task activities, proactivity oriented types of safety self-efficacy should be seen as more similar to the concept of role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE). This refers to employees' perceived capability of carrying out a broader and more proactive, interpersonal and integrative set of work tasks and goals beyond prescribed requirements. Role breadth self-efficacy has been shown to be associated with outcomes such as proactive work performance (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007) and making improvement suggestions (Axtell & Parker, 2003).

Perceived Control and Influence and Active Care for Safety

Generally, the concept of influence and control in an organizational setting has been studied as the conviction of having a significant influence over the strategic operational outcome of work. For example, control evaluation has been verified as leading to greater personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001), a higher level of mastery and learning, and general better psychological person-environment fit (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). Similarly, the notion of influence is present in research on empowerment (Spreitzer, 1996) and participation and job enrichment (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). In the same way, we propose that the concept of perceived control over safety issues is the degree to which a person is perceived to be able to influence organizational and teamwork processes and initiatives related to safety management issues. This dimension expresses the degree to which people perceive themselves as affecting the safety processes and organizational actions related to safety maintenance and improvements in organizational units and teamwork (Frese & Fay, 2001; Karasek & Theorell, 1990; Parker, William, & Turner, 2006).

Unlike other apparently connected constructs like safety locus of control (Jones & Wuebker, 1993), which were considered as proximal antecedents of safety outcomes like injuries and accidents, empowerment-related concepts like influence perception and control beliefs may be conceptualized as related more to day-by-day organizational processes and from being a more distal variable from the outcome of injuries and accidents. It is also different from the previous dimension of participative self-efficacy, which is theorized to be related to the control of one's own actions in assuming proactive and initiative behaviors to improve safety conditions. Instead, concepts like perceived control on safety organizational issues might be conceptualized as the perceived impact of decisions and strategies related to safety management issues on teamwork and organizational units. It may be considered nearer to the construct of psychological empowerment defined by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) and Spreitzer (1996), as intrinsic motivation manifested in cognitions reflecting an individual's orientation to his or her work role. From this perspective, people with a high degree of perceived safety control consider themselves as capable of positively contributing and influencing organizational actions to successfully manage and resolve issues and problems related to safety. They are also more likely to make suggestions or take initiative to improve or change unfavourable situations.

Commitment Drivers

Beyond the perception of being able to affect the contextual organizational environment, individuals also need to understand the importance of proactive behaviors in a specific organizational domain (Frese & Fay, 2001). Considering the model of proactive motivation in the workplace (Parker et al., 2010), in this

section we will discuss two “reason to” motivation processes supporting people in directing and persisting in proactive management of safety instances in the workplace: psychological ownership and felt responsibility.

As reported by Geller (2002), feelings of ownership and personal responsibilities for safety by workers are a fundamental component of “Total Safety Culture” models, in addition to other constructs such as workforce empowerment in participative safety management systems, which enable the whole organization to maintain and improve a proactive approach to safety management issues. This also appears to be in line with other safety culture models, which described the concept of worker involvement in terms of “reporting culture” and “deference to expertise” in coping with critical situations (Weick et al., 1999; Reason, 1997).

Psychological Ownership and Workforce Involvement in Safety Management

Generally, the construct of psychological ownership has been described as a cognitive-affective construct defined as “the state in which individuals feel as though the target of ownership or a piece of that target is theirs” and reflects “an individual’s awareness, thoughts, and beliefs regarding the target of ownership” (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2001). In line with this, we propose the construct of psychological ownership for safety as the extent to which people feel organizational safety process issues as something that they “own”. It concerns the work safety issues and safety goals that a worker psychologically “owns” or feels responsible for.

Unlike the related construct safety citizenship role definition (Hofmann et al., 2003), which is determined by others’ perceived expectations, psychological ownership for safety is theoretically driven by a process of internalization (Gagné & Deci, 2005) and affects behavioral intention and proactive initiatives via affective and subjective-value motivational states (reason to) (Parker et al., 2010). As reported by Parker and collaborators (2006; 1997), this subjective-affective-motivational path is the cause of a perceived broader role orientation toward specific target of ownership (i.e., flexible role orientation). As argued by Crant (2000), individuals with flexible role orientations define their roles broadly and, as such, feel ownership of activities and problems beyond their immediate set of technical role tasks, seeing them as “my job” rather than as “not my job” (Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997). In the discussed case of participative safety issues, an employee who sees his or her safety role exclusively in terms of the correct use of protection equipment and compliance with norms and procedures has narrow psychological ownership for safety. By contrast, a much broader role orientation, or high safety ownership, would be indicated by that individual also feeling concern for high quality of safety processes in work-teams and organizational units, for coworkers involvement in safety, for continuous improvement of safety management processes and instruments and for participating in safety program

implementation and spread as part of a team and organization (Mearns & Reader, 2008; Silva, Lima, & Baptista, 2004).

As discussed by the general theory of psychological ownership (Pierce et al., 2001), workers who experience high levels of subjective psychological ownership for safety consider safety issues, processes, and problems as something of personal interest and concern, beyond the formal border of responsibilities defined by their job descriptions. Consequently, if they see something that is not done well, they will show initiative in order to rectify it. Similarly, Turner and Parker (2004) considered psychological ownership for safety by individuals and teams as the consequence of autonomous work designs, team decision processes and high-levels of coworker communication processes. Psychological ownership for safety appears to be potentially linked to more widely recognized positive organizational behaviors (Avey, Avolio, Crossley, & Luthans, 2009) and approaches such as psychological capital (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007) and the degree of internalization of safety issues in the subjective value systems of workers, so that individuals feel related issues and organizational processes as something of personal relevance to their role and professional self-concept (Pierce & Loren, 2004; Pierce, Rubbenfeld, & Morgan, 1991; Parker et al., 1997).

Felt Responsibility and Personal Aspirations for Safety Promotion

Constructs like “felt responsibility for change” and “responsibility aspiration” were proposed by Frese and Fay (2001) and Morrison (1994) as an important antecedent of personal initiative and taking charge behaviors because adopting such proactive behaviors provides a sense of personal satisfaction and gratification for fulfilling one’s responsibilities, goals, and aspirations (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). The concept of subjective felt responsibility for work outcomes has been broadly presented in general occupational and organizational psychology research. For example, the concept of experienced responsibility, with respect to core tasks, was included in the job characteristics model by Hackman and Oldham (1976) and discussed in the vitamin model by Warr (1987), as an expression of the use of capabilities and competences by workers in organizational contexts.

In safety culture literature (Gellar, 2002; Cheyne, Tomas, Cox, & Oliver, 1998; Reason, 2008) the concept of responsibility for, and involvement in, safety organizational goals, has already largely been discussed. The development of feeling of personal responsibility over formal role accountability for safety has been indicated as fundamental (Yule et al., 2007; Geller, 2002) in order to achieve a total safety culture, where everyone feels responsible for setting and striving to reach safety goals in work-teams and department units and where everyone feels responsible for the safety of others. This distinction between responsibility and accountability was also reported by Yule and

collaborators (2007). These reflections appear to be in line with the principles of the “reporting culture” in Reason’s safety culture model (2008; 1997), where the workforce becomes fully involved in how safety is managed in their organization (Guldenmund, 2010) regardless of their rank. Similar conceptualizations also appeared in Weick and collaborators’ argument (1999) on the “deference to expertise” principle, as a mindfulness dimension in HROs: “in attempting to resolve a problem or crisis, decision-making authority migrates to the person or people with the most expertise with the problem at hand”. Thus, considering the current safety climate and culture and organizational proactivity literature, we propose psychological dimensions of personal felt responsibility for safety as a measure of the extent to which people feel responsible for contributing to setting and striving to meet organizational safety goals (for instance: achieving improvements in work safety conditions and activities beyond formal accountability) (Geller, 2002).

While similar related constructs like safety ownership might be more focused on the organizational process which supports and innovates safety (team-coordination activities, appropriate training, developing new procedures, participative activities and programs) and their internalization as “owned” objects (Pierce et al., 2001; Geller, 2002), the felt responsibility construct is focused more on one’s own role in striving to achieve safety goals performance by individuals and teams (reducing accidents, avoiding critical hazards).

Future-Oriented States

As recently proposed by Parker and Wu (2014), keeping a stable proactive orientation toward the management of specific organizational functions and instances in work contexts frequently entails keeping a long-term vision about future organizational developments. A future orientation enables people to direct attention to future possibilities and the potential for unexpected events to impinge on current operations (Griffin et al., 2015), adopting more proactive strategies for goal achievement (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2012).

In the light of recent conceptualizations and implications of future orientations in the safety research field (Griffin et al., 2015; Hollnagel et al., 2012), here we will discuss the relevance of two strategic principles for organizational safety which encompass the notion of anticipation of future organizational states: continuous improvement orientation; prevention orientation in risk management. We propose that these two future-oriented principles may play a complementary role to the ones played by the previous categories of motivational drivers. While capability and commitment drivers would be concerned more with the self-initiation and persistence of safety proactivity, we propose that these two future-oriented principles might play a more crucial role in *addressing* safety proactivity by individuals toward congruent and pertinent strategic instances by organizations in safety management.

Preventive Orientation and Risk Anticipation

According to the literature reviews and contributions on general proactivity phenomena (Parker et al., 2010; 2006; Frese & Fay, 2001; Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996), we also consider orientation by individuals to mentally anticipate potential and uncertain safety hazards and critical safety situations in the future, allowing the prevention of threats, problems and risks in an anticipatory way, while maintaining high motivation and capability feeling in the face of potential difficulties and stressful events (Fruhen, Flin, & McLeod, 2014).

The concept of risk prevention and anticipation has been broadly described in safety research. For example, in the traditional model of safety culture by Reason (1997), risk and threats anticipation efforts by teams and individuals were embedded in the concept of “flexible culture” as research and use of information to manage organizational variability and adaptability. The concept of risk and threats anticipation is also presented in the mindfulness concept model by Weick and collaborators in HRO systems (1999) as a “Preoccupation with failure” dimension (chronic awareness of the possibility of unexpected events that may jeopardize safety and operating and engaging in proactive and pre-emptive analyses and discussion). Similarly, the concept of anticipatory prevention orientations is also discussed in the “Resilience Engineering” approach (Hollnagel et al., 2012), which is centred on how safety management implements ways to enhance the ability at all levels of organizations to create processes that are robust yet flexible, to monitor and revise risk models, and to use resources proactively in the face of disruptions or ongoing production pressures.

However, unlike other related future-oriented concepts like situation awareness (Gorman, Cooke, & Winner, 2006), we propose that anticipatory and preventive orientations might be better conceptualized and understood in relation to self-regulatory focus theory as a goal-motivated orientation state (Peirò, 2008; Frese & Fay, 2001; Greenglass & Fiksenbaum, 2009) rather than a set of cognitive and mental strategies to achieve these goals, which we consider as consequences of motivated orientation states (Bindl & Parker, 2010; Parker et al., 2010; 2006).

Continuous Improvement and Organizational Learning

Improvement and learning orientations by individuals toward the improvement of work situations have been theorized as an important antecedent of proactivity and initiative. With regards to safety culture models, the concept of incremental improvements of procedures and objective properties of workplaces has been discussed in relation to the notions of “learning culture” (Reason, 1997), as “drawing appropriate conclusions from the information collected along with the will to implement changes to procedures as deemed necessary” (Guldenmund, 2010), and “commitment to resilience” as “developing capabilities to detect,

contain, and bounce back from errors that have already occurred” (Hollnagel et al., 2012; Weick et al., 1999).

Thus, in line with these literature premises, we may conceptualize the idea of continuous safety improvement by individuals as the behavioral propensity to exceed safety standards performances by individuals and teams (Neal & Griffin, 2006; Hofmann et al., 2003). For example, thinking of and suggesting new ways to do things more safely, learning new and different knowledge, abilities or competences to increase safety in work activities and/or accept change in the way to do things at work in order to improve the safety of activities and work units. From this perspective, workers aimed at improving safety issues in the workplace (i.e., procedures, practices or instruments) are willing to question the ways things are done with their supervisors and coworkers in order to improve safety. They are also willing to think about ways to improve things even if work activities are running smoothly and there is no evidence of an apparent threat.

Such an approach to safety appears to be in line with recent promotion-based approaches to occupational health and safety, beyond traditional preventive-based approaches focused on the elimination of threats, problems, and risks (Hofmann & Tetrick, 2003). Moreover, as discussed in relation to anticipatory future thinking (Aspinwall, 2005) and proactive coping paradigms (Greenglass & Fiksenbaum, 2009; Peirò, 2008), this perspective can be seen as a link between the participative safety research field and the health self-regulatory paradigm (Wallace & Chen, 2006) related to day-by-day safety activities by teams and individuals and goal-promotion self-regulatory mechanisms (Bindl et al., 2010; Gollwitzer & Bayer, 1999; Grant & Ashford, 2008) which go beyond a traditional risks-management regulatory focus (Greenglass, 2002).

Future Agenda and Organizational Implications

The research review in this chapter suggests that safety proactivity is addressed in organizational psychology literature mainly as a behavioral phenomenon at the individual level, a group mental model property at the team level, and a set of managerial principles at the organizational level. How can these different perspectives of organizational safety be integrated into future research? How might all these conceptual models entail practical implications to address real safety issues in a broad range of organizational settings?

Implications for Multilevel Research in Organizations

A key aim of this review was to locate safety proactivity within various safety models of organizational psychology. We found positive and consistent links with culture and climate dimensions by organizations (Reason, 2008), mindfulness models by work teams (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007), and behavioral models by individuals (Curcuruto et al., 2013; Hofmann et al., 2003; Parker & Collins, 2010).

However, there was limited integration across these different research levels and further research should address the way to relate them to each other.

Organizations increasingly need important individual and team resources (e.g., training, learning, leadership processes like active coaching and social caring, team safety audits), to foster “proactive safety orientations” and other positive organization safety perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. Future research should consider how different levels of organizational support for health and safety (Mearns, Hope, Ford, & Tetrick, 2010; Mearns & Reader, 2008) and different levels of safety proactivity drivers (Turner & Parker, 2004; Zohar, 2008) interact to determine several and different proactive performances (Griffin et al., 2007). Research should also consider how different combinations of organizational safety support and motivation shape the nature and effectiveness of proactive safety behavior.

Implications on Safety Outcomes and Performances by Organizations

The research models and designs reviewed in this chapter can be extended to incorporate more multilevel and longitudinal processes. For example, the relative impact of motivational drivers on safety performance should be investigated over time, using multi-trait and multi-method techniques (including supervisor evaluations and data archives). In such a way, longitudinal research designs with repeated measures will enable researchers to verify the additional value of the implementations of proactivity models and programs for organization performance outcomes (i.e., spontaneous suggestions for improvement, implementation of safety innovations, spontaneous risk analysis, and investigations), in addition to lagging indicators of safety performance such as injuries and accident reductions.

A better understanding of safety proactivity is important because of the role it plays in addressing unknown, emerging, or unanticipated risks, and solving potential problems before they can actually produce a loss for the organization, rather than just waiting to fix their negative outcomes and consequences. Safety compliance is more appropriate when the risks are known and can be predicted. However, not all risks can be anticipated, especially in highly complex organizations with high levels of dynamism and interdependence between human and technical components. Along these lines, recent studies have examined the role of proactive behaviors which are prosocially oriented (e.g., helping others) and proactive behaviors oriented on the improvement of work procedures and practices (e.g., seeking change) in predicting different facets of safety performance outcomes (Curcuruto, Conchie, Mariani, & Violante, 2015), including micro-accidents, property damage, near-miss events, and lost-time injuries. The authors showed that prosocial safety behaviors were negatively associated with micro-accidents and property damage, and challenging safety behaviors

were associated with near-miss recording and negatively with lost-time injuries. These results suggest that benefits can be gained from distinguishing between prosocial and proactive safety behaviors when seeking to improve safety performance. Organizations may reduce the rate of minor injuries and property damage by increasing helping among employees. However, this approach will be less effective in reducing more serious accidents or increasing near-miss event reporting. What is more effective in these cases is creating environments in which employees feel able to raise their suggestions and concerns about safety.

Implications for Safety Management and Leadership in Organizations

For proactive safety management to be effective it is necessary to foresee what could happen with acceptable certainty and to have the appropriate means (people and resources) to do something about it (Hollnagel et al., 2012). The most evident challenge for proactive safety management is that the future is uncertain and that an expected situation might, therefore, never happen. In this case, preparations will have been made in vain, hence wasted. Another, and possibly worse, problem is that predictions may be imprecise so that the wrong preparations are made. When a system prepares to respond, the human and material resources that are allocated to the response will not be available for other purposes. Proactive safety management thus means taking a risk, not least an economic one. On the other hand, not being ready may be even more costly in both the short and the long run. In the light of the critical instances and difficulties related to a proactive management of safety in the workplace, scholars have underlined the importance of leaders and supervisors to lead and motivate people toward the difficult task of generating and maintaining a proactive approach toward safety management. Any leadership role is challenging and multifaceted; our review highlights the potential demands and complexities of leading in a high-risk environment. In this setting, leaders must maintain their focus across various levels; interpersonal, team, and organizational. At the same time, leaders must balance the priorities of caution and vigilance with requirements for high performance and innovation (Griffin & Hu, 2013).

First, ambidextrous leadership describes the capacity of leaders to simultaneously manage two or more competing demands (Griffin & Talati, 2014). If the context of work is changing rapidly because of new technology, methods or working, or means of communicating, then safety requirements are usually changing as well. In this context, it is important that individuals be more proactive and future-oriented in their approach to both safety tasks and the social context of safety. Leader actions that energize new ideas and enable flexibility are positive features of leadership in most situations but especially important when considering a change. In this section, we focus on ways that leaders motivate or energize safety and support learning, and adaptability as conditions change.

Second, many studies have found that providing additional safety training fails to significantly improve safety behaviors (Komaki, Heinzmann, & Lawson, 1980; Ray, Bishop, & Wang, 1997). One reason for this failure is that there is insufficient attention to the motivational bases of safe work (Christian et al., 2009). Energizing and adapting requires leaders to engage more with the motivational needs of team members to promote more enduring values of safety. In broader terms, transformational leadership is the leadership approach which is most relevant to energizing and adapting for safety. The positive impact of safety-specific transformational leadership has been demonstrated in a variety of organizational contexts and observed to influence team members' safety attitudes and behavior (Koster, Stam, & Balk, 2011). For instance, Inness, Turner, Barling, and Stride (2010) found that safety-specific transformational leadership was particularly important for safety participation behaviors compared to safety compliance. Conchie (2013) also found that safety-specific leadership was correlated with speaking up about safety issues.

Conclusion

Innovative research streams investigating safety proactivity behavior offers useful and original insights for both organizational proactivity and safety management research. From an academic research perspective, further studies on the links between safety proactivity and organizational outcomes and performances might help to clarify how different types of proactive behaviors with different targets and/or focuses (*protective vs promotive; people oriented vs procedure oriented*) might integrate the function played by more compliance-oriented work conducts. On the other hand, empiric studies on the complementary antecedents of the different types of safety proactivity behaviors that we have tried to propose might help us to better understand which organizational processes (*climates; social exchange; work design*) or individual antecedents (*competence; affective states; motivations*) could be more important in inspiring and supporting over time specific forms of individuals' proactive behaviors rather than others, and what types of behavioral or organizational outcomes we might expect by stimulating a specific cluster of antecedent variables at the individual, rather than at a higher collective, level.

From a managerial perspective, safety proactivity plays an important role in the improvement of safety systems, especially in rapidly changing and uncertain environments or in complex organizational frameworks with highly interdependent components. From the *preventive* side of organizational safety, safety proactivity by individuals and teams serves to support the maintenance of high standards of reliability of the organizational performances and processes thanks to its anticipatory focus. In other words, future-oriented individuals and teams might help safety managers to manage the complexity of the organizational life, enabling them to better predict, monitor, control, and eventually cope with disruptions

and unforeseen events, thanks to an enriched vision of the organizational reality directly provided from the front line. From a more *generative* dynamic of safety in organizations, safety proactivity by individuals and teams can provide original and more adaptive solutions to solve routine or chronic issues for organizational safety and reliability. This is so because of the deeper knowledge of the critical matters that they possess in their daily work activities, which can eventually support original solutions or, even, generate innovative advancements of the whole organizational system.

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6

ISSUE-SELLING

Proactive Efforts toward Organizational Change

Madeline Ong and Susan J. Ashford

Strategies within organizations are often depicted as missions and plans formulated at the very top and disseminated down the organization in a cascade of communication (e.g., Ansoff, 1965; Chandler, 1962). In such depictions, top-level leaders often are imbued with a heroic, larger-than-life quality (Meindl & Ehrlich, 1987) and middle-level managers and lower-level employees are portrayed as passive followers of the strategies dictated from the top. Dutton and Ashford (1993) took issue with this top-down portrayal of strategy formulation and argued that middle managers do not usually sit passively and wait for a strategy from on high. Instead, they argued that middle managers often proactively take actions to gain attention on issues that they think are of strategic importance for the organization (e.g., a new technological trend, a shift in the customer base, a problem among lower-level employees, and so forth). They labeled this type of proactive behavior *issue-selling* and argued that it is important for a firm's strategy and, ultimately, its success. In making this argument, Dutton and Ashford (1993) joined a scholarly conversation advocating a more proactive conceptualization of middle managers in the strategy process (e.g., Bower, 1970; Burgelman, 1983; Westley, 1990; Wooldridge & Floyd, 1990). For example, Floyd and Wooldridge (1996) argued for the strategic value of middle managers and their input particularly in changing organizational contexts. Burgelman (1983) argued that middle managers were important "intrapreneurs" and Westley (1990) described the energizing and motivating quality of middle managers' inclusion in the strategic conversation within a company. These scholars argued that firms that actively cultivate the proactivity of their middle managers and employees will be better able to deal with hectic, fast-changing and complex environments.

Changes in the business landscape are often catalysts for middle managers' issue-selling. For example, at a time when the American workforce

was becoming increasingly diverse, and yet there was continuing evidence that women experienced difficulties with career progression and breaking into the top levels of organizations, Ashford, Rothbard, Piderit, and Dutton (1998) chose to focus on the selling of gender-equity issues in the workplace. Similarly, at a time when corporate environmental scandals were becoming more frequent and environmental issues were becoming increasingly important to business organizations, Andersson and Bateman (2000) chose to focus on the selling of environmental issues across various industries. Other scholars took a more inductive approach in exploring what types of issues were relevant to managers. Sonenshein (2006) was among the first to broadly survey working adults about the types of issues that are personally important to them. He examined issue-selling among a working MBA sample and developed a typology of the kinds of issues that issue-sellers care about. The typology included employee-related issues (e.g., employee-management relations, worker rights), diversity issues (e.g., race and gender discrimination, a diverse work force), community issues (e.g., community service programs, charitable contribution programs), ethical issues (e.g., programs to increase the integrity of the organization), and environmental issues (e.g., sustainable manufacturing, recycling, environmentally friendly products). Mayer, Sonenshein, Ong, and Ashford (2013) conducted three survey studies of working adults across multiple industries and found support for a similar typology. They also found that a small number of employees sold issues that did not fall into any of the above categories, in particular, issues relating to public health, politics, human rights, and tax policies.

This chapter explores the issue-selling literature that has emerged and blossomed since Dutton and Ashford's seminal article in 1993. First, the chapter situates issue-selling in the broader literature on proactivity and describes how issue-selling is similar to and different from other forms of proactive behavior that seek to improve organizational functioning. Next, the chapter reviews the issue-selling literature, specifically examining research on antecedents, processes, and outcomes of issue-selling. Following the literature review, the chapter highlights how the issue-selling literature has contributed to our understanding of proactivity and raises some suggestions for future issue-selling research. Finally, the chapter ends with some practical recommendations for proactive individuals seeking to influence the organizational agenda and for organizations hoping to take advantage of the proactivity of their employees.

Positioning Issue-selling in the Broader Proactivity Literature

Issue-selling is one of many proactive behaviors that employees might engage in at work. Proactive behavior has been defined as “anticipatory action that employees take to impact themselves and/or their environments”

(Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 8). This definition allows for a broad range of proactive behaviors, including feedback-seeking (Ashford, Blatt, & Walle, 2003; Ashford & Cummings, 1983, 1985), voice (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998, 2001), taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), job-crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), and career proactivity (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998; Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001). Issue-selling (Dutton & Ashford, 1993) corresponds to Grant and Ashford's (2008) depiction of proactivity as anticipatory behavior that involves employees' efforts to have an impact on their work environments. Issue-selling is anticipatory in that employees take the initiative to sell issues in anticipation of some future challenges or opportunities facing their organization or society. For example, Howard-Grenville (2007) demonstrated that individuals sell issues in anticipation of external pressures for organizations to introduce environmental considerations into the design of new manufacturing processes.

Organizations can only attend to a finite number of issues at any one time. As such, issue-selling is an attempt to affect the environment in that issue-sellers seek to influence their organization's agenda of issues (i.e., sell) by getting those above them to pay attention to issues that they believe are particularly important. It involves raising issues that the seller believes have direct implications for the issue-seller's department, their organization, or society more broadly. For example, in Sonenshein's (2006) typology, diversity, community, ethical, and environmental issues have organizational implications (e.g., for employee treatment, organizational policies or manufacturing processes), but also to society more broadly (e.g. regarding diversity awareness, community improvement, or environmental protection). While issue-selling generally stems from a seller's desire to influence their environment, at times, employees may raise these issues with implications for changing their own situation in the organization, too. For example, in Ashford et al. (1998), female issue-sellers sold gender-equity issues to bring about organizational change, and in doing so, improve their own career prospects in their organization.

Issue-selling shares similarities and differences with other forms of proactive behavior. These are portrayed in Table 6.1. Compared to most other forms of proactive behavior, issue-selling has a broader focus in that it targets larger organizational goals and strategies, and sometimes addresses societal issues (e.g., gender equity, environment). For most other forms of proactive behavior, the implications are more directly self-focused. For example, feedback-seeking (Ashford et al., 2003; Ashford & Cummings, 1983, 1985), job-crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and career proactivity (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998; Seibert et al., 2001) are all proactive behaviors directed toward advancing one's own job or career, be it through self-regulation processes (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Tsui & Ashford, 1994), or directly altering work structures (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Issue-sellers, in contrast, often have organizational or societal interests in mind when they engage in this proactive activity.

TABLE 6.1 Comparing Issue-Selling with Similar Concepts

<i>Similar Concepts</i>	<i>Similarities to Issue-Selling</i>	<i>Differences from Issue-Selling</i>
Feedback-Seeking, Job-Crafting and Career Proactivity	Involve actions taken by employees in anticipation of future challenges or opportunities	Feedback-seeking, job-crafting and career proactivity involve directly self-focused implications (i.e., employee's job/career), while issue-selling mainly involves organization-focused or societal implications
Voice	Involve employees speaking up to higher authorities	Voice seeks to eliminate personally dissatisfying conditions, while issue-selling seeks to bring about overall organizational improvement Voice involves speaking up to group members or direct supervisors, while issue-selling involves speaking up to top-level management
Taking Charge	Involve employee efforts to bring about organizational change	Taking charge involves internally-oriented strategic issues, while issue-selling involves both internal and externally oriented strategic issues
Internal Social Movements	Ongoing movement by employees to bring about organizational change	Internal social movements are framed as a form of activism, with strong parallels to social or political movements in broader society

Although voice is similar to issue-selling in that both proactive behaviors involve speaking up to higher authorities with the power to bring about change, the objective of voice is often to eliminate personally dissatisfying conditions (Hirschman, 1970; Withey & Cooper, 1989), rather than bringing about overall organizational improvement. While VanDyne and LePine's conceptualization of voice as an "expression of constructive challenge intended to improve rather than merely criticize" (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998, p. 109) bears similarity to issue-selling, voice researchers often examine the individual's willingness to speak up to group members (e.g., LePine & Van Dyne, 1998,

2001; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998) or direct supervisors (e.g., Burris, Detert, & Chiaburu, 2008; Burris, Detert, & Romney, 2013; Detert & Burris, 2007) about changes at the workgroup level, rather than speaking up to top-level managers about changes at the organizational level. Also, while both issue-selling and taking charge involve employee efforts to bring about organizational change, taking charge is related to organizational change regarding “how work is executed within the contexts of their jobs, work units, or organizations” (Morrison & Phelps, 1999, p. 403), while issue-selling includes both externally oriented strategic issues and how work is executed internally. Taking charge is conceptualized as something individuals can do themselves within their work roles whereas issue-selling is an explicit attempt to influence others to attend to, and act on particular issues. Those higher-up others are the ones who make change prompted by the issue-selling efforts of middle- and lower-level employees.

In addition to having broader organizational and sometimes societal implications than most other forms of proactive behavior, issue-selling also differs from other proactive behavior in that it is better conceptualized as a lengthy, ongoing influence process, involving various behaviors such as upward communication, negotiation, social networking, coalition building, and more. In contrast, for example, voice is typically studied as a simple, one-shot communication with one’s boss about a personal concern or idea for local action and feedback-seeking is typically studied as a specific action undertaken to obtain information and evaluations from one’s boss. Issue-selling is a complex process that unfolds over time, sometimes a span of years and involves communications with multiple different stakeholders across the organization to build support for one’s issue. For example, Bansal (2003) investigated a year-long selling of natural environmental issues in two organizations that experienced similar ecological challenges in their similar industries. Howard-Grenville (2007) examined a six-year issue-selling attempt by members of a high-tech manufacturing organization interested in introducing environmental considerations into the design of new manufacturing processes.

Scholars in the social movements tradition, who typically study change-oriented movements in society, either against the state, economic corporations, or educational institutions, have also begun to examine bottom-up organizational change efforts as “internal” social movements that bubble up within the boundaries of an organization (Briscoe & Safford, 2008; Gutierrez, Howard-Grenville, & Scully, 2010). Issue-selling probably bears more resemblance to these movements than it does to voice as conceptualized in the voice literature. Indeed, issue-selling is perhaps not so much a specific behavior, but an ongoing process or movement by individuals in an organization to bring about organizational change, much like how political activists might participate in a movement to bring about societal change.

In the following sections, we review relevant theory and empirical findings from the issue-selling literature, highlighting the antecedents, processes, and outcomes of issue-selling. A summary of our findings can be found in Figure 6.1.

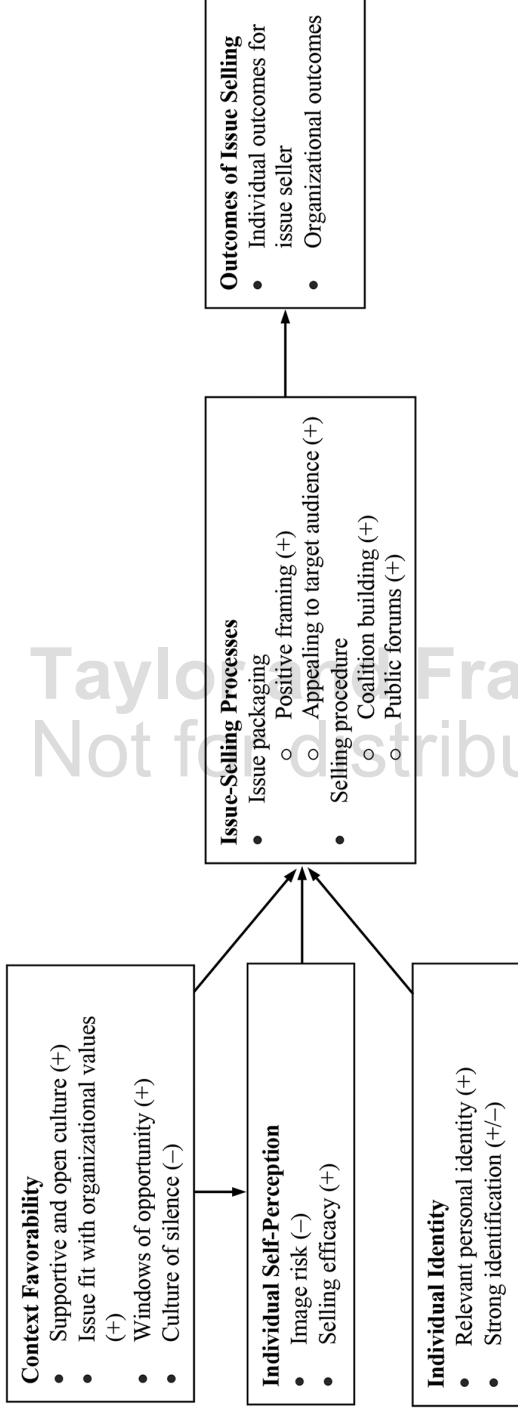


FIGURE 6.1 Antecedents, processes, and outcomes of issue-selling

Note: For context favorability, individual self-perception, and individual identity, + represents a positive relationship, - represents a negative relationship, and +/- represents both a positive and negative relationship between the construct and willingness to sell issues. For issue-selling processes, + represents a positive relationship between the construct and issue-selling success.

Antecedents of Issue-Selling

Context Favorability

Issue-sellers, like all individuals, respond to the contexts in which they find themselves. Potential issue-sellers' perceptions of the favorability of the organizational context have been shown to influence their likelihood of engaging in issue-selling. In particular, as we will outline in the next section, contexts that are favorable for issue-selling are marked by a supportive and open organizational culture and possess organizational values that fit with the issue that the issue-seller is trying to sell. At times, windows of opportunity for issue-selling (e.g., following a leadership transition) may also emerge, rendering contexts temporarily more favorable for this activity. In contrast, employees in organizations that have a culture of silence or culture of exclusivity are likely to perceive the context as generally unfavorable for issue-selling.

Supportive and Open Organizational Culture

Organizations that are able to develop a supportive and open culture, where top management is seen as willing to listen, are more likely to be viewed by middle managers as favorable for issue-selling (Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, Hayes, & Wierba, 1997). In their interview study of managers from a telecommunications company, Dutton et al. (1997) asked managers about the favorability of issue-selling in their company. One theme emerging from this qualitative data was that managers indicated that they considered the general level of supportiveness and openness that characterized the organization's culture when assessing context favorability. Favorable organizational contexts can be described as psychologically safe (Edmondson, 1999), where employees believe that it is safe for them to express themselves and engage in interpersonal risk-taking, such as issue-selling. Often, when potential issue-sellers want to sell an issue, they may choose to self-censor because they fear that they will be harshly evaluated by their supervisors and peers (Detert & Edmondson, 2011). For instance, female business school graduates had fewer fears about how raising an issue might affect others' evaluations of them when the organizational context was perceived as supportive (Ashford et al., 1998). Thus, when there is a high degree of perceived organizational support (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990) when employees believe that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being; employees will feel more empowered to engage in issue-selling. Ashford and colleague's (1998) study also found that employees' fears about risk-taking are lessened when there are stronger norms in the organization favoring issue-selling, and when sellers enjoy strong relationships with critical decision-makers in the organization. In other words, employees are more willing to engage in issue-selling because it is likely to be

seen as legitimate and normal behavior, and the trusting relationships they have with key decision-makers buffers them from potential image risks.

Issue Fit with Organizational Values

Another factor complementing the supportiveness of an organizational culture toward issue-selling is whether the prevailing values in the organization are aligned with the issue being sold. A year-long qualitative study of the selling of natural environmental issues (e.g., recycling, energy and waste management, product stewardship, pollution prevention, and sustainable development) in two British organizations found that the perceived fit between the issue and the organization's values was critical in determining the organization's receptiveness to an issue (Bansal, 2003). Although the organizations Bansal examined both placed a great importance on values such as the profit motive, desirable corporate image, corporate citizenship, employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction, they differed in terms of the importance they placed on other values such as cost reduction, added value, market share and so on. Because of these differences between the organizations, there were some issues that gained management support in one organization but not the other. Therefore, a firm's values can impede, shape, and filter the issue-selling efforts that individuals initiate. Some organizational values may be more relevant to some issues than others. When the issue being sold is aligned with the organization's values (and presented as such), issue-sellers are more likely to find success.

Windows of Opportunity

In organizations where senior managers are not supportive or inclusive, potential issue-sellers should still be on the lookout for windows of opportunity when issue-selling becomes favorable. In Dutton and colleague's (1997) study, managers explained that windows of opportunity for issue-selling arose during times of organizational upheaval. For example, the managers said that when the organization faced competitive and economic pressures, there was more urgency for taking action and this urgency made the context more favorable for issue-selling. The managers also explained that they became more hopeful and optimistic about issue-selling when other changes were also occurring within the organization, changes that would make the organization less bureaucratic and more responsive to ideas from lower levels of the organization (Dutton et al., 1997). On the flip side, windows of opportunity are closed during periods of downsizing and uncertainty. Uncertainty about the future in general and about the future of the organization in particular often dampens managers' willingness to take risks, causing them to hold back issue-selling efforts. It takes great skill to be able to identify the right windows of opportunity. Indeed, successful issue-sellers understand that timing involves many uncontrollable elements, and they are

sensitive to those in deciding when to push an issue forward and when to hold back (Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, & Lawrence, 2001). Ashford and Detert (2015) also find that individuals' sensitivity to the timing of their issue is a trademark of successful issue-sellers.

Culture of silence

While the issue-selling literature emphasizes the importance of a psychologically safe and supportive organizational culture that encourages employees' issue-selling initiatives, Morrison and Milliken's (2000) work on organizational silence suggests that top-level managers may not always appreciate lower-level employees' proactive efforts to raise issues. Senior managers often play a key role in creating and perpetuating a culture of silence, because of implicit beliefs they hold about employees and about the nature of management (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). One common managerial belief is that employees act out of self-interest. When senior managers hold this belief, they do not trust employees to raise ideas that will benefit the organization and act in ways that discourage any upward communication. Another related belief is that management knows best. This belief places management in control of employees, especially since managers perceive employees to be self-interested and unlikely to care about the interests of the organization. A third belief is that dissent and conflict should be avoided and that unity and agreement are signs of organizational health. Given the strong desire for consensus, managers may be eager to discourage conflicting viewpoints. Indeed, Ashford, Sutcliffe, and Christianson (2009) have proposed that senior managers may discourage employees from speaking up because much of what they say is deemed to have little consequence for the organization, and it is too difficult for them to determine which employee ideas do, or do not, deserve their time and attention. Recent research by Fast, Burris, and Bartel (2014) provided evidence that managers felt efficacy about their jobs contributed to their openness versus aversion to employee voice and thus the prevalence of that voice. The relationship between efficacy and openness was mediated by the extent of ego threat felt by the manager. The greater the threat, the less open managers were able to be towards employees' issue-selling attempts. In sum, these findings suggest that managers' beliefs often lead them to preserve a culture of silence in their organizations and this inhibits employees' willingness to sell issues.

Culture of exclusivity

A further aspect of context favorability concerns the culture of the organization. In particular, a qualitative survey study of female managers about their attitudes toward selling gender-equity issues at work (Dutton, Ashford, Lawrence, & Miner-Rubino, 2002) found that women identify a wide range of positive

and negative cues as informative for assessing context favorability. The female managers indicated that the three most diagnostic cues were – in addition to demographic patterns (i.e., number of women in top-level management) and qualities of top management (i.e., top-level management openness to gender-equity issues) – qualities that concerned the overall organizational culture (i.e., exclusivity or “clubbiness” at top levels of the organization). Dutton and colleagues (2002) further explored the relative influence of these three cues in a scenario-based experimental study with female managers as participants. They found that exclusiveness of organizational culture was the strongest factor affecting willingness to sell a gender-equity issue. Exclusivity and “clubbiness” at top levels of the organization (as opposed to inclusivity) negatively affected potential issue-sellers’ willingness to engage in issue-selling. Altogether, these findings suggest that a culture of exclusivity dampens employees’ willingness to sell issues.

Individual Self-Perceptions

As described in the previous section, to assess if the context is favorable for issue-selling, individuals look out for cues from their organization, such as whether leaders will be supportive, or whether it is an opportune time to propose changes for improvement. These contextual cues affect individuals’ perceptions of whether it is wise for them to speak up about issues that they care about. In addition to this external evaluation of the context, literature on issue-selling has identified two important individual self-perceptions driving decisions to engage in issue-selling. These are perceived image risk and issue-selling efficacy and we will discuss these, next.

Image risk

Dutton and Ashford (1993) theorized that the image or reputational risk that potential issue-sellers perceive in raising a particular issue influences their decision to engage in issue-selling. Issue-sellers’ names may become lauded or stigmatized because of their association with a particular issue, depending on whether that issue is perceived as appropriate or inappropriate, or helpful or harmful to the organization and other organizational members. Beyond the nature of the issue itself, the act of issue-selling takes skill. If issue-sellers fail in their attempts to sell an issue, other organizational members may also perceive them as not just disloyal, but also incompetent. People have a desire to manage others’ favorable impressions of them (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Morrison & Bies, 1991). Their concerns about the potential negative impressions from issue-selling influence whether they will step up and raise an issue or remain silent. In a survey study of middle-level managers working for a telecommunications company, Dutton and colleagues (1997) found strong evidence of managers’ image-risk concerns. Managers described violating organizational norms and stepping out

of the bounds of normal procedure as potentially risky to their image. Also, they linked political vulnerability (e.g., having failed attempts at issue-selling) and poor relationships with top management with greater image risk.

Ashford and colleague's (1998) survey study of female managers found that their image risk was a key mediator between several context favorability factors and their willingness to raise issues. When managers were worried about how issue-selling might negatively affect others' impressions of them, they were less willing to engage in issue-selling. In a follow-up study, Ashford (1998) found that female issue-sellers feared that selling gender-related issues would result in them being seen as having a hidden agenda, less focused on career advancement, overly sensitive, and difficult to work with. In addition, the issue-sellers mentioned up to 88 different labels that they felt would be applied to them as a result of selling gender-equity issues, such as "feminist/women's libber," "troublemaker," "complainer," and "whiner." These results suggest that people often feel they face a real risk to their image if they were to engage in issue-selling.

Another study found that image risk is likely the strongest factor preventing people from engaging in issue-selling. Milliken, Morrison, and Hewlin (2003) interviewed full-time employees working in an array of industries and found that most of them had been in situations where they were concerned about an issue but chose not to raise it to their boss. In this study, participants discussed a wide range of issues, including concerns about a colleague's or supervisor's competence or performance, problems with organizational processes or performance, concerns about pay or pay equity, disagreement with company policies or decisions, personal career issues or concerns, ethical or fairness issues, harassment or abuse, and conflict with a coworker. Across all these issues, the most frequently mentioned reason for not raising the issue was the fear of being viewed or labeled negatively. Similar to Ashford's (1998) findings, the most common labels mentioned were "troublemaker," "complainer," and "tattletale." Some respondents also raised concerns that they would not be seen as a "team player."

Like Ashford et al. (1998), Dutton et al. (2002) also hypothesized that image risk would be a key mediator between variables related to context favorability and issue-seller's willingness to sell issues. Specifically, in the context of selling gender-equity issues, image risk could result from labeling, inappropriate attributions, and stereotypes. For example, raising gender-equity issues could prompt others to derogatorily label an issue-seller as a "feminist" or as someone focused on self-interest. Selling gender-equity issues could also make issue-sellers' female identity more salient, and some individuals in their organization might hold negative stereotypes of women and their work performance. Dutton et al.'s (2002) findings suggest that while an unfavorable context (i.e., exclusive culture) did lead to increased perceptions of image risk, image risk did not predict willingness to sell. While issue-sellers did have legitimate image-related concerns, other mediators, such as issue-sellers' perceived probability of success, were stronger determinants of their willingness to sell issues.

Selling Efficacy

The importance of issue-sellers' perceived probability of success in determining their willingness to sell issues was first proposed in Dutton and Ashford (1993). They proposed that potential issue-sellers' level of efficacy regarding issue-selling (or their perceived probability of success) influences their decision to engage in issue-selling. Drawing from expectancy theories of motivation (Vroom, 1964), they argued that the more that potential issue-sellers expect to be successful, the more motivated they will be to exert effort into selling their issue. Since then, multiple studies have found evidence confirming issue-selling efficacy as an important predictor of individuals' willingness to sell issues. In Ashford et al.'s (1998) study of managers raising gender-equity issues, the perceived probability of selling success was a stronger predictor of willingness to sell issues than image risk. Dutton et al. (2002) found the identical pattern in their study. Milliken et al. (2003) also found that feelings of hopelessness and futility was a commonly cited reason for not raising issues in organizations. When discussing such feelings, respondents made statements such as "Why bother," "It would not be worth it," and "What would be the point?" With no expectation of success, this research suggests, potential issue-sellers may have no motivation to engage in issue-selling.

In addition, a combination of these two individual self-perceptions – image risk and selling efficacy – has been shown to matter for predicting employees' engagement in issue-selling. Specifically, building on this earlier work in the issue-selling literature, Morrison, Wheeler-Smith, and Kamdar (2011) proposed that a combination of these two self-perceptions can be used as a group-level measure of voice climate. The first dimension of voice climate is shared beliefs about whether speaking up is safe versus dangerous, or beliefs about whether a particular context is safe for interpersonal risk-taking (Edmondson, 1999). This dimension is related to the work in the issue-selling literature on image risk. The second dimension of voice climate is shared beliefs about whether group members are capable of speaking up effectively. This dimension is related to the work in the issue-selling literature on selling efficacy. In their investigation of voice behavior within 42 groups of engineers from a large chemical company, Morrison et al. (2011) found that group voice climate (consisting of dimensions related to voice risks and efficacy) was a strong predictor of voice, beyond the effects of individual-level identification with the organization, their level of job satisfaction, and procedural justice climate. To the extent that employees are mindful of the two beliefs that underlie it, voice climate may be a useful way to discuss the positivity versus negativity of a context for issue-selling.

Individual Identity

In Chapter 12 of this volume, Strauss and Kelly (2015) argue for the value of an identity-based perspective on proactivity. They propose that proactivity is often

identity-congruent, and serves the purpose of expressing one's self. In the context of issue-selling, researchers have also started to move away from emphasizing a rational expectancy-driven risk assessment that people engage in to decide if it makes sense to sell issues. Instead, as we outline below, Ashford and Barton (2007) proposed that individuals might engage in issue-selling because of their personal identities or their identification with specific groups or organizations.

Personal Identities

Ashford and Barton (2007) argued that individuals who have a strong personal identity as “helpful” or “change agent” might feel more compelled to engage in issue-selling with the end goal of organizational improvement. Also, individuals may possess a strong personal identity in relation to specific issues. For example, an “environmentalist” might feel compelled to sell environmental issues in their organizations, and a “peacemaker” might feel compelled to sell the issue of conflict resolution training. Ashford and Barton (2007) also proposed that individuals who identify more strongly with certain subgroups will be more willing to raise issues that concern that subgroup, especially when the subgroup is threatened in some way. For instance, strong identification with a marginalized subgroup in an organization might motivate an individual to seek equitable treatment for that marginalized subgroup through issue-selling.

Identification

Identification with the organization itself might also foster issue-selling (Ashford & Barton, 2007). Individuals who identify strongly with their organization might engage in more issue-selling since such selling is partly based on a desire to help and improve one's organization (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). Some support for this idea was established in Morrison et al.'s (2011) study of voice climate. The study found that as long as the voice climate was favorable, employees with high levels of organizational identification were more likely to raise issues. They explained that when individuals perceive a strong connection to their organization, they are more likely to try to contribute in positive ways to their organization.

While highly identified employees are motivated to help improve their organization, there are also several factors that might deter them from selling issues (Ashford & Barton, 2007). Issue-selling often involves changing aspects of the existing organization and advocating for initiatives that are incongruent with the organization's identity. Thus, high organizational identification could lead individuals to be less likely to notice issues that are incongruent with the organization's identity, and to see less self-gain and less organizational-gain from raising issues. Perceptions like these result in individuals who identify strongly with their organization being less likely to raise issues in order to avoid upsetting the status quo (Ashford & Barton, 2007). Other scholars (Creed,

DeJordy, & Lok, 2010) suggest that individuals who experience contradictions between their identification with particular issues or sub-groups and their identification with their organization might need to engage in identity work to manage these conflicting identities when acting as agents of change.

Despite the complexities that identification might impose, Ashford and Barton (2007) argue that individuals driven by identification motives will be less influenced by the extrinsic costs and rewards associated with issue-selling. People selling issues based on who they are as people are selling because they believe strongly in the issue, not because they want to obtain a reward or to avoid a punishment. This deep concern for the issue allows them to persist in issue-selling despite setbacks. This logic is consistent with Bansal's (2003) findings that it is issue-sellers' individual concerns that fuel their issue-selling behavior. Therefore, the identity perspective suggests that while the risks and expectancies associated with raising issues clearly play a significant role in people's decisions to engage in issue-selling, people will also advocate for issues based on who they are, what they believe in, or a group or organization they care deeply about.

Discussion

On the whole, it is clear from our review of the issue-selling literature that a supportive organizational culture emerges as the key driver of individuals' willingness to engage in issue-selling. Characteristics of the organizational context directly shape individuals' decisions to sell issues, and they also indirectly shape individuals' decisions to sell issues through influencing their self-perceptions of the risks involved and their likelihood of issue-selling success. While we currently have a strong understanding of how the organizational context influences individuals' issue-selling, less is known about how their individual personalities, values and identities, regardless of their organizational contexts, influence their issue-selling. Since not every single employee working in the same organization feels compelled to engage in issue-selling, there may be strong individual differences that influence individuals' willingness to sell issues. We discuss potential avenues of future research from a personality, and an identity, perspective later in this chapter, in the future directions section.

Issue-Selling Processes

Assuming that potential issue-sellers have decided to engage in issue-selling, their proactivity next faces them with choices from a large repertoire of "moves" or tactics to craft an issue-selling strategy that will best help them to bring about the organizational change that they desire. Dutton and Ashford (1993) proposed that these moves fall into two broad categories. The first category involves issue packaging, for example, how issue-sellers might linguistically frame an issue when talking about it to other people. The second category of moves

involves selling procedures, for example, whether or not issue-sellers choose to involve others in their issue-selling endeavors. In this section, we describe research that has investigated the various issue-selling moves that issue-sellers can utilize, highlighting what moves in particular are most effective in bringing about issue-selling success.

Issue Packaging

Positive Framing

Packaging an issue in a compelling manner can capture the attention of organizational decision-makers and garner their support (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). When it comes to packaging an issue, one main consideration a potential issue-seller will have is whether to go with a positive or negative framing. Should the issue-seller present the issue as an opportunity to improve and enhance the organization, or emphasize the potential threats for the organization if the issue is not addressed? The opportunity-threat dimension is commonly examined in research on issue framing (Dutton & Jackson, 1987). Ashford and Detert (2015) argued that framing issues as opportunities helps generate a sense of optimism in others, making them more likely to support the issue. They proposed that framing issues as threats may make issue-selling targets feel out of control, and this may produce reactance and avoidance (Ashford & Detert, 2015). In their study, they found that framing issues as opportunities was associated more with accounts of successful issue-selling attempts than unsuccessful ones. In fact, their study and others have shown that issues framed as solutions to problems were associated with positive outcomes (Ashford & Detert, 2015; Whiting, Maynes, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2012). However, Andersson and Bateman (2000) found that framing an issue as an opportunity or threat did not significantly predict the outcome of issue-selling. One possible reason for this is that they investigated environmental issues specifically, and environmental issues tend to have long time horizons so that the opportunities or threats they present may not be as immediately perceptible to targets of issue-selling. The authors did, however, find that it is effective to stress the urgency of the issue, describing it as one that requires immediate attention (Andersson & Bateman, 2000).

Appealing to Target Audience

Another important issue-packaging consideration is the extent to which issue-sellers should frame their issues to appeal to their target audience. Indeed, in Chapter 17 in this volume, Davidson and Van Dyne (2015) propose that employees should present issues in ways that fit their supervisor's construal of the issue. Since top-level managers embedded in the business context are the most frequent targets of issue-selling attempts, issue-sellers might choose to

use more business-friendly terminology and presentation methods to sell the issue. Dutton et al.'s (2001) study of hospital managers found that interviewees' most frequently mentioned presentation tactics related to "using the logic of a business plan." Managers explained that it was important to sell the issue with numbers and charts, and emphasizing consequences for the organization's bottom-line. Similarly, research on selling environmental issues suggested that issue-sellers should frame environmental issues in business terms (e.g., "operational efficiency," "risk management," "capital acquisition," "market demand," "strategic direction," and "human resource management;" (Howard-Grenville & Hoffman, 2003), and use simple business terminology rather than technical scientific jargon (Andersson & Bateman, 2000).

Even if issue-sellers do not value the business case for their issue, they should still consider playing up the economic argument to appeal to their target audience. Using evening MBA students' statements collected with an experimental design, Sonenshein (2006) found that issue-sellers often choose to use economic arguments when issue-selling publicly regardless of their private rationales for wanting to advocate a particular issue. Their arguments would explicitly mention economic benefits for the organization, using key linguistic markers such as "sales," "market share," "profits," and "revenue." Sonenshein (2006) also found that issue-sellers would intentionally downplay normative arguments related to moral obligations, values, and fairness, preferring not to mention words like "duty," "social responsibility," "ethical," and "moral." This is likely due to their beliefs that normative arguments lack legitimacy in business organizations, compared to economic arguments. Similarly, Ashford and Detert (2015) found that business framing, but not moral framing, is associated with more positive issue-selling outcomes. It appears that at times, issue-sellers may have to frame the issue in ways that downplay their personal opinions. However, some research (Mayer et al., 2013) has found that using moral arguments can actually be effective when the issue is described as fitting with the mission and vision of the organization. When issue-sellers are able to explicitly tie the issue to the mission and vision of the organization, they are more likely to elicit a prosocial response to the issue from top managers.

On top of using business language to frame issues, Dutton and Ashford (1993) suggested that issue-sellers should use formal, business-like approaches to selling their issue. For instance, similar to how one might present a business proposal to one's supervisors, issue-selling might involve a formal written report, a scheduled formal presentation, or a formal meeting with others. Empirical studies (Ashford & Detert, 2015; Dutton et al., 2001) have since found that using these formal approaches resulted in more successful issue-selling than informal approaches (e.g., unscheduled conversations with others). Furthermore, Ashford and Detert (2015) found that it is more effective to first use informal approaches to selling one's issue, before moving to more formal approaches and venues. For instance, an issue-seller might first bring up a new idea to a higher-level manager

through a casual meeting and then ask to have it formally added to the next team meeting agenda when the manager has signaled some initial interest in the issue.

Issue-sellers are also encouraged to adopt a professional, business-like countenance when selling issues. Piderit and Ashford (2003) found that using a rational and factual approach was more effective for female managers selling gender issues, compared to an emotional approach. Similarly, Andersson and Bateman's (2000) found that a formal, business-like language was more effective than dramatic and emotional language. More recent research (Ashford & Detert, 2015) suggests that it is not so much about suppressing one's emotions than it is about being able to regulate one's emotion and activate the appropriate emotions to further one's cause. The issue-seller not only needs to activate the appropriate emotions in his or her selling attempt but also to understand and manage the issue-selling target's emotions to generate positive rather than negative responses from others when selling issues.

These ideas from issue-selling research about packaging one's issues to fit the business context are further supported by research on internal social movements. Studies here have shown that employees tend to reframe the issues they care about in ways that target specific decision-makers and gear issues toward the prevailing corporate logic of economic rationality (Creed, Scully, & Austin, 2002; Lounsbury, 2001; Meyerson & Scully, 1995). To coordinate their change efforts, they might use familiar business organizing tools (e.g., meetings, agendas, subcommittees, email, and mission statements; Scully & Segal, 2002) and "political toolkits" (e.g., staffing systems, accountability systems, and evaluation system; Kellogg, 2011) to have upward influence about issues that are perhaps not traditionally within the business realm.

Selling Procedure

Coalition Building

Apart from pitching the content of the issue in more engaging ways, potential issue-sellers can also decide how they want to structure the issue-selling process to maximize their chances of success. One major decision is whether to sell the issue alone or to rally like-minded others around the cause and sell as a group. Dutton and Ashford (1993) argued that coalition building is a political necessity to gain attention for one's issue. The greater the size of the coalition, the more likely one will attract top management's attention in the issue. Large-scale coalitions also reduce the image risks for the issue-seller. In their study, Piderit and Ashford (2003) asked women managers about the advice they would give to others on how to sell gender-equity issues. The most frequently mentioned piece of advice was that issue-sellers should involve other people in their selling attempts.

While issue-selling is largely conceived as a bottom-up process, it also occurs laterally in issue-selling to peers (Ashford et al., 2009; Bansal, 2003;

Dutton et al., 2001; Howard-Grenville, 2007). Whether selling upward or laterally, it is the early involvement of others that is crucial for issue-selling success (Dutton et al., 2001). Getting others involved is useful because they help provide emotional support and additional perspective on the issue (Piderit & Ashford, 2003). This might involve forming coalitions with members coming from diverse backgrounds or possessing different expertise (Dutton et al., 2001). It also allows issue-sellers to accumulate resources and enable collective learning among the issue-selling coalition (Howard-Grenville, 2007). Having the support of knowledgeable and committed others increases the likelihood of gaining support from leaders (Andersson & Bateman, 2000), especially if those others are people that top organizational leaders trust (Whiting et al., 2012).

Public Forums

Another major decision in terms of selling procedure is whether to use public or private forums for issue-selling (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). Public forums include weekly staff meetings, quarterly strategy meetings, or annual stockholder meetings while private forums include one-on-one conversations or private group meetings. While it may be more intimidating for issue-sellers to speak about an issue publicly rather than privately, public channels certainly give greater prominence to their issue. Very little research has addressed this issue, though Ashford and Detert (2015) found that successful issue-sellers tended to use more public and formal methods to sell issues than did those describing less successful efforts. They asked working professionals holding a wide variety of professional and managerial jobs in a wide array of companies and industries to describe a time when they sold an issue in their organization. Half of the respondents were asked to describe a successful issue-selling effort, while the other half were asked to describe a failed issue-selling effort. They found that the successful issue-sellers reported higher use of formal tactics such as proposing a formal discussion on the team meeting agenda, and lower use of informal tactics such as “off the record” conversations. In sum, public forums seem to be more effective when it comes to issue-selling, although more research will need to be conducted to investigate why and how public or private forums contribute to issue-selling effectiveness.

Discussion

The bulk of the research on issue-selling processes has focused on issue framing, that is, how issue-sellers should talk about and present their issues when they approach others. However, raising an issue you care about at work is much more than just about knowing the right words to say. Apart from knowing what to say when selling issues, issue-sellers could perhaps benefit from a better understanding of who they should be talking to, where they should hold these discussions when the best times to speak up are, and how they should build and

maintain coalitional support. Unfortunately, compared to the research on issue framing, much less research has been done on the actual organizing or coordination of the issue-selling initiative. More clarity on these aspects of issue-selling will be helpful to potential issue-sellers in their strategizing. We raise some of these as future research directions in the later part of this chapter.

Outcomes of Issue-Selling

Individual Outcomes for Issue-seller

As described in the section on antecedents of issue-selling, research thus far has focused primarily on two outcomes: an issue-seller getting attention (and action) for their issues and how issue-selling might influence others' evaluations of them. The issue-selling literature suggests that their fears about these career outcomes influence their willingness to raise an issue. Some research suggests that employees who engage in voice behavior are hurt in terms of career progression (Seibert et al., 2001), particularly when the voice behavior is challenging in nature (Burriss, 2012). Other research from the voice tradition suggests that employees who speak up do not risk their image. In fact, those who speak up about issues are evaluated positively by others (Grant, Parker, & Collins, 2009; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998; Whiting, Podsakoff, & Pierce, 2008), especially when they are able to engage in emotion regulation (Grant, 2013), speak up early in the decision process (Whiting et al., 2012), and are perceived to hold prosocial and supportive intentions (Burriss, 2012; Grant et al., 2009; Whiting et al., 2012). A very recent case study by Howell, Harrison, Burriss, & Detert (in press) suggests that women who voiced more often were particularly recognized and positively evaluated in their particular organization, in which females were in the majority. This research bodes well for issue-sellers more generally, suggesting that some of their fears about image risks may be unfounded. However, many of these conclusions are based on findings from lab studies of one-off voice episodes. A single episode of speaking up to one's supervisor might result in positive evaluations, especially if the issue is a personal issue that is quickly resolved. But what happens when one speaks up repeatedly about a controversial organizational issue that is not easily resolved since it involves influential changes to high-level organization decisions?

Issue-selling is a heavily context-dependent process that involves multiple episodes with different individuals across the organization, and more research needs to be conducted to understand the dynamics of this process. We recommend that more field studies be conducted to understand how issue-sellers are actually affected by their decision to engage in issue-selling. Howard-Grenville's (2007) ethnographic study is a good example of such research. Her study found that issue-sellers build their issue-selling skills over time as they learn from their

experiences of failure or resistance. Through trying out various moves, they also accumulate assets, such as formal authority, relationships, expertise, and normative knowledge. These valuable assets increase their likelihood of achieving success in issue-selling. Thus, the picture painted here is one of issue-sellers learning and growing through the issue-selling process.

Organizational Outcomes

Ultimately, in order to bring about organizational change, issue-sellers hope to gain top management's attention for their issues (Dutton & Ashford, 1993), which ideally translates into more time, money, and other organizational resources devoted to the issue (Andersson & Bateman, 2000; Dutton & Ashford, 1993). It is still unclear if issue-sellers who succeed in bringing attention to specific issues will actually make a positive contribution to overall organizational functioning. While issue-selling researchers have mainly focused on individual-level outcomes for issue-sellers, there has not been any research directly examining the effects of issue-selling on organizational outcomes. Researchers from the issue-selling tradition tend to make the a priori assumption that issue-selling is good for the organization. There is some theoretical work supporting this assumption. Organizational silence researchers (Morrison & Milliken, 2000) have theorized that when employees speak up about issues, organizations benefit because there is more variance in informational input available to decision-makers and more critical analysis of ideas and alternatives. Input from lower-level employees enhances an organization's ability to make decisions and to detect and correct errors. These, in turn, may contribute to better organizational functioning.

Discussion

We recognize some of the methodological challenges that researchers may face in attempting to study issue-selling outcomes. First, since issue-selling is often a long process taking up to several years from start to end, research projects on issue-selling outcomes require a great deal of time and commitment from researchers. Not all researchers have the resources and means to pursue such intensive, time-consuming projects. Second, issue-selling itself is a huge undertaking for issue-sellers and it is not an activity that every employee engages in. Even when an individual decides to engage in issue-selling, success is not necessarily guaranteed. Thus, researchers may face difficulties in putting together a sample consisting of successful and failed cases of issue-selling that is large enough for rigorous analysis. Finally, while measures of proactive behavior and other specific forms of proactive behavior (e.g., voice) do exist, there is currently no established scale of issue-selling that survey researchers might easily add into a field survey to examine its relationship with organizational outcomes. Thus, survey researchers hoping to measure issue-selling will need to spend

extra time and effort developing and establishing an appropriate scale. Despite these methodological challenges, we still highly encourage researchers who have the resources to pursue projects on this important topic. Empirical research on the outcomes of issue-selling will certainly make a significant contribution to the issue-selling literature.

Insights from Issue-Selling for Proactivity in Organizations

The extant issue-selling literature depicts organizations as a vibrant marketplace, where different employees have interests in different issues, and they compete for the limited attention of top management to bring about changes in the organization that they hope to see. Through the triangulation of results from various surveys, experimental, interview and ethnographic work, we have developed an overarching framework outlining what the issue-selling literature says about employees' motivations for engaging in issue-selling, the moves that they use to pursue their issue-selling goals and the type of outcomes they can expect from their proactive efforts.

Compared to the literature on other forms of proactive behavior, the issue-selling literature especially emphasizes the importance of the social context in influencing individuals' decisions to engage in proactive behavior and how they choose to enact their proactive behavior. Overall, the research suggests that context favorability is the strongest driver of employees' motivation to sell issues. In the framework we developed, contextual favorability directly and indirectly (e.g., through employee perceptions) influences decisions to engage in issue-selling behavior. Potential issue-sellers first scan their organizational environment for cues about whether their leaders will support or discourage issue-selling. They also scan their environment to assess if there are any windows of opportunity that make the organizational context more conducive for selling their issue. These contextual cues about the favorability of issue-selling influence their perceptions of the image risks involved and perceptions of their likelihood of successfully selling the issue.

Furthermore, the manner in which issue-sellers choose to package and sell their issues also depends on the context they find themselves in. Since issue-selling often takes place in corporate settings that prioritize business goals, issue-sellers will often frame their issue to fit the business context, downplaying their private sentiments about the issue. Issue-sellers also turn to clues from their organizational environment to decide on the most appropriate channels (e.g., formal meetings) for issue-selling. The overwhelming influence that the context plays in the issue-selling process is unsurprising given that issue-sellers are, ultimately, proactively trying to change their environments. Since it is the organizational context that they are seeking to change, it makes sense that they would be particularly susceptible to cues from the organization about the appropriateness of

issue-selling, and how they should tailor their issue-selling to best achieve their desired outcomes.

The issue-selling literature also stands out in terms of the importance it gives to timing. The issue of timing arises as potential issue-sellers read their environment to determine if it is an opportune moment to engage in issue-selling. The occurrence of certain time-sensitive changes in the environments (e.g., downsizing, external pressures) might make issue-selling more or less likely to be successful. Issue-sellers who are sensitive toward changes in the organizational context know when to seize the right moment to raise an issue. It might be fruitful to think about the role of timing for other types of proactive behaviors. For instance, might there be certain times that are more conducive for job-crafting? Perhaps, job-crafters will have more luck with their proactive efforts to modify their job responsibilities during times of organizational downsizing or expansion, when employees' roles and responsibilities are in a state of flux. Thus, a keen sense of timing might make for more effective job-crafters. It might also help those interested in "taking charge" at work and/or seeking feedback effectively.

Timing also becomes an important matter of concern as issue-sellers consider the time frame of their selling efforts. Issue-selling involves gaining attention from top management and persuading them to make changes to organizational strategies. Organizational change, especially change that is controversial, requires building broad-based support from multiple organizational stakeholders and it does not occur overnight. It might be fruitful to think about other types of proactive behaviors as a process that occurs over time, rather than as one-off behaviors. For example, career proactivity might be best conceptualized as a process that individuals engage in during their entire adult working life, as they change jobs, change organizations, and/or change occupations. In another example, instead of studying feedback-seeking as a single episode of asking one's supervisor for feedback, scholars might investigate feedback-seeking as an ongoing process of learning and improving, involving multiple episodes with a variety of individuals across the organization.

Finally, the issue-selling literature brings a unique perspective to our understanding of proactivity because it shows that proactive behavior is not necessarily a solitary activity. While issue-selling efforts may be initiated by a single individual, they often evolve to involve other individuals and coalitions across organizations to bring about organizational change. Might other forms of proactive behavior also occur in groups? Individuals hoping to engage in job-crafting might consider coordinating with others in their workgroup to swap roles and responsibilities. Members of the same workgroup might also jointly seek to redesign their group tasks and responsibilities to make their work more engaging and fulfilling. It might also be interesting to think about members of the same workgroup jointly seeking feedback from their supervisor about their individual performance and their performance as a group.

Future Research Directions

Drawing insights from other forms of proactive behavior, we identify several future directions for the issue-selling literature. We believe that the issue-selling literature will be enriched if there is more research on how personality factors influence issue-selling, the role of future and possible selves in issue-selling, the role of emotions and affect in issue-selling, the challenges of coalition building and the potential downsides of issue-selling.

Around the same time that Dutton and Ashford (1993) introduced the concept of issue-selling, Bateman and Crant (1993) introduced the concept of proactive personality (see also Chapter 8 by Crant, Hu, & Jiang 2015, in this book). Proactive personality is an individual difference among people in the degree to which they take actions to influence the environments they find themselves in. People with proactive personalities identify opportunities for change, and take action and persevere until their desired change occurs. Relatedly, scholars have introduced the concept of personal initiative (Frese, Fay, Hilburger, Leng, & Tag, 1997; Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996), which they described as a behavioral pattern where individuals take a self-starting, action-oriented, and goal-directed approach to work. Dispositional traits, like proactive personality and personal initiative, have been associated with individual job performance (Crant, 1995), career success (Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999), leadership effectiveness (Crant & Bateman, 2000), organizational innovation (Parker, 1998), team performance (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999) and entrepreneurship (Crant, 1996). However, we still do not know how dispositional traits like proactive personality might be linked to individuals' willingness to sell issues or their effectiveness in selling issues. Issue-selling researchers have paid so much attention to the organizational context that they have largely ignored the role of personality and disposition. Future research might examine what makes issue-sellers with proactive personalities different from those with less proactive personalities. Do proactive individuals perceive cues about context favorability differently from others? Or do they perceive contextual cues in the same way, but respond to those cues differently, choosing to take action even when the cues suggest that the context is unfavorable? Or do they miss certain contextual cues altogether? Drawing from traditional work on personality, researchers might also consider investigating the links between the Big Five personality dimensions (McCrae & Costa, 1987) and issue-selling. We expect that individuals who are high on openness to experience, low on agreeableness, and low on neuroticism may be more willing to engage in issue-selling. However, those high on extraversion and conscientiousness might find more success with issue-selling since issue-selling involves being able to speak eloquently about one's issue to a wide audience and careful, deliberate planning of issue-selling moves and tactics.

Another future avenue of research is to examine the role of future work selves in motivating individuals' issue-selling. Future work selves refer to individuals'

representations of themselves in the future and these representations reflect their hopes and aspirations in relation to work (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Strauss, Griffin, and Parker (2012) proposed and found that individuals with clearer and more salient future work selves are more likely to engage in proactive career behavior. It is likely that future work selves could also motivate individuals' issue-selling behavior. For example, the more easily that an individual can imagine herself as a leading advocate of gender equity issues in her organization, the more likely she will engage in issue-selling. Similarly, the concept of possible selves (Higgins, 1987; Ibarra, 1999) could be relevant to understanding individuals' willingness to sell issues. Possible selves refer to selves individuals believe they could or should be now (rather than in the future). Individuals' ideas about the kind of person they can be right now will fuel their issue-selling behavior, perhaps with even greater urgency than their ideas about the kind of person they might be in the future.

In trying to explain individuals' motivations for engaging in issue-selling, researchers have largely examined cognitive and identity-based mechanisms. The cognitive lens, in particular, has been the focus of issue-selling research. Under this lens, issue-sellers are portrayed as logical decision-makers who make rational calculations of the risks involved in issue-selling and their expected probabilities of success. While affect-based mechanisms have been explored in the broader proactivity literature (Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2009; Grant et al., 2009; Kim, Cable, Kim, & Wang, 2009), they have been far less explored in the issue-selling literature. We expect that emotions do play a role in motivating individuals to engage in issue-selling. For example, negative affect (e.g., disappointment, frustration) might instigate individuals to seek to change particular aspects of their organization. On the other hand, positive affect (e.g., optimism, hope) might help issue-sellers persist in the face of initial issue-selling failures. Indeed, recent research in voice (Grant, 2013) suggests that it is important to think about the role that emotions play in influencing proactivity. Furthermore, research on emotions show that they impact individuals' risk-taking (e.g., Fessler, Pillsworth, & Flamson, 2004) and efficacy judgments (e.g., Kavanagh & Bower, 1985). Therefore, we expect that individuals' emotions may affect the cognitive mechanisms (i.e., perceptions of image risk and selling efficacy) driving their willingness to sell issues.

While the research does suggest that coalition building is beneficial for issue-selling success, we still do not know much about the best way for issue-sellers to build coalitions. Research on teams suggests that for issue-selling coalitions to be effective, they will need to manage their group dynamics to leverage their diverse skill sets and talents while minimizing group conflict and dysfunctions (LePine, Piccolo, Jackson, Mathieu, & Saul, 2008). Also, coalition building might actually harm the issue-selling process in certain situations. For example, if multiple employees attempt to sell the same issue in the same company but each uses a different tactical approach, their core message might be diluted, rendering their

issue-selling efforts ineffective. Again, teamwork processes are crucial here to enable multiple issue-sellers to work together effectively and to achieve issue-selling success.

Most research on issue-selling has taken the perspective of the issue-seller and assumed that issue-selling will necessarily lead to positive outcomes. Indeed, from the issue-seller's perspective, issue-selling can lead to the fulfillment of their personal goals. However, there is room for research on the potential downsides of issue-selling for organizations. While it might be good for one individual to sell an issue, it can be bad for the organization as a whole to have hundreds of issues coming to the top at once. Managerial time and attention are scarce resources in organizations (Pfeffer, 1992). Hence, excessive issue-selling may impede effective decision-making (Ashford et al., 2009; McClean, Burris, & Detert, 2013; Morrison & Milliken, 2000). There may be a curvilinear relationship between the amount of issue-selling that occurs in an organization and organizational functioning. While some degree of issue-selling may help top-level managers identify and seize potential opportunities for organizational improvement, excessive issue-selling may overwhelm top-level managers and result in organizational dysfunctions.

Practical Takeaways

The research on issue-selling offers some practical insights for middle managers and other lower-level employees who wish to influence organizational decisions. Individuals who want to bring about changes in their organizations should first and foremost devote energy towards reading their organizational context for cues about whether or not the environment is conducive for issue-selling. These contextual cues should give them a sense of the risks involved in issue-selling and their probability of success. Once determined, issue-sellers should manage these risks and probabilities using appropriate issue-selling moves and tactics. The research suggests that successful issue-selling involves framing issues to fit the organizational context in which the issues are being sold. Most importantly, issue-sellers should understand that issue-selling can be a long and effortful process. Since outcomes may not be immediately visible, issue-selling often involves necessary persistence over time. Given these qualities, issue-selling becomes much more manageable if issue-sellers can find friendly allies across the organizations and build coalitions to work collectively toward their issue-selling goals.

Issue-selling is conceptualized as a viable and important response to the organization's increasingly complex, ambiguous, dynamic, and global business environments. In such contexts, making a change in a totally top-down fashion is no longer adequate given these environmental demands. Rather, top management needs input and change initiatives from below to be more adaptable and effective. This logic suggests important practical implications for organizations. For example, top-level managers need to recognize and appreciate

that the proactive efforts of their employees can be beneficial for organization functioning. Top-level managers should ensure that the organizations that they are in charge of have cultures that are supportive towards employees' issue-selling. Supportive cultures can be created through rewarding or acknowledging employees who display proactivity towards improving organizational strategies and minimizing the career penalties for those individuals. Furthermore, top-level managers should themselves be open to hearing opinions and suggestions from below, even for strategic organizational decisions. To increase the probability that employees will speak up with thoughtful and constructive ideas, top-level managers need to set clear expectations that the thoughtfulness and usefulness of employees' voiced ideas matters. In this way, top management will not just get their employees to speak up, but to speak up well, allowing the organization to better reap the benefits of employees' bottom-up change efforts.

Conclusion

The current literature on issue-selling is impressive in its richness and diversity. Issue-selling researchers utilize a wide variety of methods, such as experiments, surveys, interviews, and ethnography, to explore a wide variety of issues that employees care about, such as gender-equity, environment, community, and health. We hope that the framework we developed in this chapter serves as a useful map for researchers and practitioners interested in navigating through the current literature on issue-selling. We also hope that the comments and insights we have shared spur new ideas for future researchers so that they can continue to contribute to the richness and diversity of this literature.

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7

FOCI OF PROACTIVE BEHAVIOR

Frank D. Belschak and Deanne N. Den Hartog

Current dynamic work environments call for proactive employees who are not only reacting to changes in their environment but who plan ahead and take the initiative to avoid potential problems or improve the effectiveness of the organization. In the academic literature, proactive behavior refers to “anticipatory actions that employees take to impact themselves and/or their environments” (Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 4). In line with the call from practitioners for more proactive employees (e.g., Campbell, 2000), academics have investigated the phenomenon of proactive behavior and its consequences over the last two decades. Many different proactive concepts were developed and studied (Bindl & Parker, 2010; Crant, 2000), for example, seeking feedback (Ashford, Blatt, & Vandewalle, 2003), voicing opinions, suggestions, or ideas for change (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998), taking personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2007), proactive problem-solving and idea implementation (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006), issue-selling (Dutton & Ashford, 1993), taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), and network building (Morrison, 2002). As a result, the concept of proactive behavior covers a vast number of quite diverse behaviors ranging from whistleblowing (e.g., Near & Miceli, 1985) to enhancing one’s career prospects by proactively seeking training (e.g., Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001) to proactively helping a colleague in need (e.g., Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010). The field is therefore currently in need of theoretical perspectives that help structure and integrate these different behaviors.

Recognizing that proactivity can take different shapes, part of the extant research on proactivity at work addresses how and why employees direct meaningfully different proactive behaviors toward multiple foci, such as the organization, supervisor, team, or the self (e.g., Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Liu, Zhu, & Yang, 2010). This approach aims to close the current gap in the

literature that little is known about at whom employees choose to direct their proactivity (e.g., making suggestions on how to improve work procedures to one's supervisor or to a colleague), and by what mechanisms employees choose the targets of their proactive behavior. It is important to understand better why and when employees engage in proactivity, especially given that the outcomes of proactivity are not always positive (Belschak, Den Hartog, & Fay, 2010). Here, distinguishing between different foci of proactivity can offer insights into when proactivity is effective as proactive behaviors aiming at different targets may be differentially motivated as well as lead to different consequences. The contribution of this chapter is to review the literature and advance theoretical insights into this important topic.

Explicitly addressing this particular topic, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) distinguish between three different foci of proactivity: pro-organizational (directed at the organization), pro-social (directed at the work group or colleagues), and pro-self proactive behaviors (directed at oneself and the achievement of one's personal or career goals). For instance, the pro-self behavior of proactive career management focuses on the employee him/herself and promoting his/her career at work while pro-organizational voice behavior focuses on speaking up with the aim to improve the organization. As argued above, distinguishing between these targets or foci seems particularly relevant if choices for different foci of one's proactive behavior come with different outcomes. Several studies have linked these different forms of proactive work behavior to a number of organizationally desirable outcomes including individual, team, and organizational performance (e.g., Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013; Bindl & Parker, 2010). However, some work suggests that these forms of proactive behavior can also potentially lead to negative outcomes. For example, conceptual work by Campbell (2000) notes that supervisors do not appreciate all employee proactivity, and similarly, Bolino, Valcea, and Harvey (2010) propose several potential negative (side) effects of employee proactivity (e.g., for supervisors, colleagues, the employee him/herself).

The results of the empirical work on proactivity, to date, suggest that the relationships of employee proactivity with different outcomes can vary across different types of proactive behavior that employees engage in. For example, while employee voice (proactively challenging the organizational status quo in constructive ways) was negatively related to an employee's career success, proactive career management behaviors by the employee came with increased career success (Seibert et al., 2001). The differences in foci might explain why proactive career management was found to be positively linked to outcomes related to the personal career of the employee, while voice was not. Thus, different foci of proactive behaviors may result in differential relationships with outcome variables. Similarly, different types of proactive behavior were also found to be driven by different antecedents (e.g., Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010). Here, we argue that the differences in antecedents and consequences between different

types of proactive behavior may (at least partially) be explained by differences in foci between these proactive behaviors. In line with this, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) showed empirically that proactive behavior directed at different foci shared commonalities, but they also found differences between foci in terms of antecedents as well as consequences. This chapter further elaborates on the concept of different foci of proactivity, their differential relationships with antecedents and outcomes, and the implications for theory as well as practice.

Different Foci of Proactive Behavior

Similar to other behaviors people show at work, proactive behavior is also motivated and goal-directed behavior (e.g., Parker et al., 2010). These goals are likely to affect an employee's choice of which target his/her initiatives should be aimed at as people choose behavior that is instrumental in achieving their goals (van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). As noted, the literature on proactivity at work covers a large number of different proactive behaviors ranging from specific behaviors like taking charge (effecting organizationally functional change in how work is executed, Morrison & Phelps, 1999) or job-crafting (changing one's job to align better with one's preferences; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) to broader, more general groups of behaviors like personal initiative (covering all discretionary, self-starting, anticipatory, persistent, pro-organizational behavior; Frese & Fay, 2001). Proactive behaviors found in the literature can be linked to both the broader other-orientation (e.g., personal initiative, voice, and taking charge) and the self-orientation (e.g., job-crafting, feedback-seeking) (Parker & Collins, 2010).

At a more general level, social psychological literature has introduced the distinction between primarily egoistic goals (self-orientation) versus primarily altruistic goals (other-orientation) (e.g., Batson & Shaw, 1991). This distinction has been applied successfully, for instance, in explaining helping (e.g., Batson, 1991; Eisenberg, 1986) or negotiation behavior (Beersma & De Dreu, 2005). Similarly, scholars in organizational psychology argue for the existence of self-concern and other-orientation as two fundamental motives that influence individuals' decision-making and predict organizational attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004; De Dreu, 2006). This basic distinction between self-orientation and other-orientation, however, has been extended to further specify different types of individuals' other-orientation, that is, showing that individuals can focus their work attitudes and behaviors on different others.

Yet, studies that systematically explore structural differences between proactive behaviors focusing on different targets are still relatively scarce (exceptions include Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Liu et al., 2010; Seibert et al., 2001). Also, prominent conceptualizations and measures of proactive behavior, such as personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001) or voice (Morrison, 2011) tend to focus on pro-organizational behaviors, while excluding behaviors that focus on

benefiting mainly the self (or even harming others or the organization). Scholars have therefore called for a more comprehensive approach in conceptualizing proactive behavior (Grant & Ashford, 2008).

Related to this call, Griffin, Neal, and Parker (2007) argue that employees' (proactive) behaviors may affect different organizational levels, namely the individual level, the team member level, and the organizational level. Based on role theory (cf. Katz & Kahn, 1978), the authors suggest that work behaviors of employees depend on the social embeddedness of their work role. Employees will take action in favor of a larger social entity such as their work group or their organization to the extent that they feel part of that entity. Griffin et al. (2007) make an important theoretical contribution by arguing that proactive behaviors may be aimed at objectives aligned with different organizational levels.

A similar idea has been introduced by scholars studying voice behavior. Some studies have investigated voice behavior toward peers (e.g., Edmondson, 2003), while other researchers have focused on voice behavior toward the supervisor (e.g., Detert & Burris, 2007). In this respect, Liu and colleagues (2010) argue that, employees either voice their ideas towards their peers ("speaking out") or towards their supervisor ("speaking up") depending on whom they perceive as most likely being able to set change in motion to achieve their goals.

From a theoretical perspective, Reichers (1985) noted that a number of different other-oriented foci may be relevant for organizational members including co-workers, superiors, subordinates, customers, and the organization. In line with this argument, Becker (1992) could empirically show that different foci of commitment (supervisor, team) explained additional variance in employees' job satisfaction over and above organizational commitment. Related research shows that employees are committed to the organization as well as to their work team, the latter being a more proximal and often more influential focus (e.g., Van Knippenberg & Van Schie, 2000). Similarly, scholars in organizational justice distinguish between organizational and supervisory justice (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002) and team justice (Cropanzano, Li, & James, 2007). On a behavioral level, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) scholars have also distinguished two different types of other-orientation and related behavioral foci, namely an organizational focus versus a colleague focus (e.g., Williams & Anderson, 1991). Based on these two foci, they introduced the distinction between OCB targeting the organization (OCB-O) versus OCB targeting colleagues (OCB-I). In this sense, the idea of different foci or targets has been a pervasive and basic topic that can be found in relation to many different attitudes and behaviors studied in organizational psychology.

However, the different types of proactive behavior mentioned above are mostly other-oriented (focused on specific colleagues, supervisors, teams, or the organization as a whole) and do not include self-focused proactive behaviors (e.g., proactive behaviors aimed to further one's career goals or improve one's own situation). Studies on commitment and identification (e.g., Van Dick,

Wagner, Stellmacher, & Christ, 2004; Ellemers, de Gilder, and van den Heuvel, 1998) and on employee proactivity with respect to career management (e.g., Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999; Seibert et al., 2001) have shown though that an individual's career is an important self-oriented driver for employees' organizational behavior. As Ellemers and colleagues (1998, p. 718) note, "in trying to determine what makes people exert themselves at work, or how they choose to devote their energies, we argue, a distinction should be made between personal career goals [. . .] and common team goals."

Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) have further developed the idea of different foci of proactivity in relation to personal versus common goals and distinguish between the organization (pro-organizational), the team (prosocial), and the individual him/herself (pro-self) as potential targets of employees' proactive behavior. They provide results from two studies that support the argument that these three foci of proactive behavior can be distinguished in a theoretically and empirically meaningful way and hereby offer support for Grant and Ashford's (2008) proposition that the self, other people in the direct environment and the wider organization are three relevant foci for employees' goal-driven proactive behavior.

Pro-organizational proactivity refers to proactive behaviors that focus on the organization as their target. For instance, a sales representative of a company might suggest changes to a sales force automation system that allows for a complete customer profile, thus facilitating companywide future interactions with customers. Whistleblowing, voice, or taking charge generally reflect pro-organizational proactivity. *Prosocial* proactive behaviors are directed at one's direct work group, team, or colleagues. Helping one's colleagues without being asked to do so or taking the initiative to approach a new team member and share one's knowledge with this colleague are examples of prosocial proactivity. These types of proactive behavior are similar to affiliative organizational citizenship behaviors (e.g., LePine & Van Dyne, 1998) to the extent that the affiliative OCB shows the general characteristics of proactive behavior (e.g., being self-initiated). Finally, *pro-self* proactivity covers proactive behavior that aims at furthering an employee's individual goals and interests (e.g., career goals) such as taking the initiative to follow a leadership training as the employee anticipates that this could facilitate his/her promotion to a managerial position. Typically, job-crafting and career initiative are examples of pro-self proactivity.

It should be noted that proactivity directed at a specific target may (deliberately or involuntarily) also affect and even harm other targets thus potentially resulting in (negative) unintended side effects beyond the target. For instance, suggesting improvements in working procedures may increase organizational effectiveness but at the same time also produce (at least temporarily) extra work for colleagues. Or proactive career planning may help employees find a motivating new career challenge but can sometimes also reduce employees' current organizational commitment (e.g., Bambacas & Bordia, 2009) and lead

to turnover (Wolff & Moser, 2010) thus damaging the organization. Bolino, Turnley, and Anderson (in Chapter 18 in this book) elaborate in detail on the potential negative side of employee proactivity.

Somewhat related to the idea of different foci of proactivity, Parker and Collins (2010) explored the similarities and differences between multiple types of proactive behavior and identified three higher-order categories of proactivity at work: proactive work behavior, proactive strategic behavior, and proactive person-environment fit behavior. The authors found factor-analytical support for the proposed three-factor structure of proactive behaviors. The focus of their work, however, is on the *content* of proactive behavior rather than the *target*. As a consequence, proactive behaviors from different content categories (e.g., proactive work behavior and proactive strategic behavior) may focus on the same target (e.g., the organization), and proactive behaviors with different foci (e.g., the organization and the team) might fall in the same content category (e.g., proactive work behavior). In this sense both the distinction between different foci of proactivity and different categories of proactive behavior provide a theoretically and empirically meaningful yet different way to structure the wide field of proactivity at work. Here, we focus on the different foci.

The Nomological Net of Different Foci of Proactivity: A Target Similarity Framework

The distinction between different foci of proactive behavior seems particularly relevant if these foci can be differentially linked to antecedents and consequences of proactivity. In what follows we elaborate on the mechanisms through which foci of proactive behavior can be linked to different outcomes and drivers. We will focus our theoretical elaboration of foci of proactivity on a general *target similarity framework* (i.e., the similarity between targets of proactive behavior and targets of its antecedents/ consequences) and will advance several more specific propositions within this framework. The figure below is based on the model of proactive behavior by Bindl and Parker (2010) and summarizes the main ideas of the target similarity framework in a nomological net of different foci of proactivity. In what follows, we will develop the ideas depicted in the figure in more detail.

The Compatibility Hypothesis

Scholars focusing on extra-role behavior have proposed the idea that discretionary work behavior follows an exchange logic (tit-for-tat: extra-role behavior as compensation for benefits received earlier), and that the foci of the social exchange and the beneficiary of the extra-role behavior need to be compatible (e.g., Lavelle, Rupp, & Brockner, 2007; Olkkonen & Lipponen, 2006). For example, an employee who feels treated in a fair way by his/her work team will likely engage in OCB targeting the team. Researchers thus argue that perceived

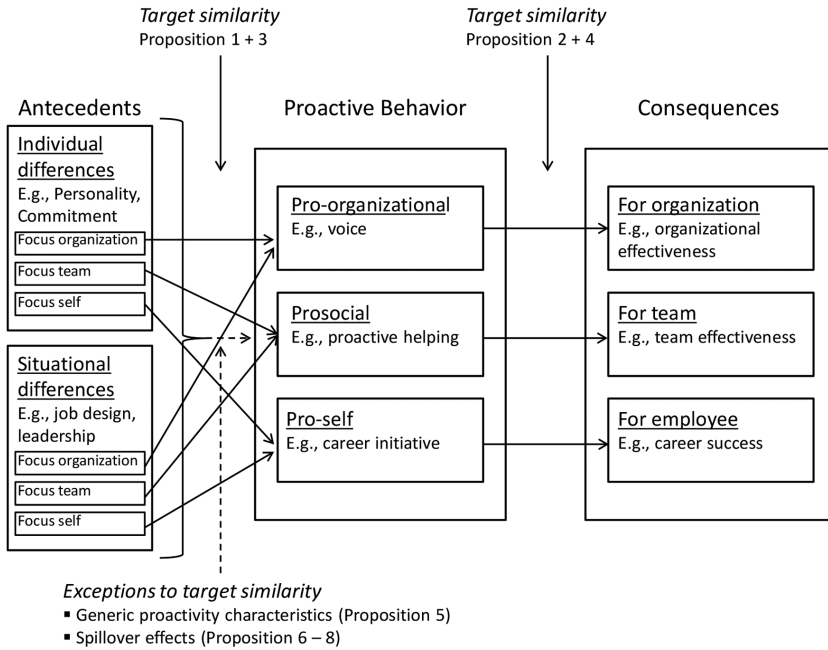


FIGURE 7.1 The nomological net of different foci of proactivity

social exchange with a specific party should affect the behavior directed specifically at that party. Liu et al. (2010) transferred this target similarity idea to voice and found empirical evidence for it.

Here, we argue that this mechanism further extends to the field of proactivity in general and posit that the compatibility between the focus of a proactive behavior and the focus of its antecedent or consequence influences the strength of the relationship between these variables. Antecedents or consequences that mainly focus on a specific target are likely to be linked in particular to proactive behavior aiming at the same target. Individuals define themselves by their unique characteristics (personal self) as well as their relationship and shared identity with others (collective/ social self) (van Knippenberg et al., 2004), and they prefer to exhibit behavior that is congruent with their goal structure and self-concept (e.g., Neale & Griffin, 2006). As a consequence, their identification with and commitment to targets such as the organization, team, or career is likely to enhance proactive behavior on behalf of those targets. For instance, organizational commitment focuses on the organization and should, therefore, be most strongly related to pro-organizational proactive behavior as this behavior is most likely to further the welfare of the organization.

There is empirical evidence in organizational psychology supporting a general compatibility idea for the relationship between constructs. For instance,

researchers have shown that different foci of commitment have differential relationships with turnover intentions and pro-organizational behavior (e.g., Becker, 1992; Ellemers et al., 1998). OCB-I (focusing on one's peers) was found to relate strongest to team commitment, while OCB-O (focusing on the organization as a whole) was most strongly linked to organizational commitment (Riketta & Van Dick, 2005). Similarly, a positive relationship with one's supervisor (LMX) was related to OCB toward the supervisor whereas perceived organizational support was linked to OCB toward the organization (and not toward the supervisor) (Masterson et al., 2000).

In the area of proactivity at work, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) similarly found that different foci of commitment were differentially related to the foci of proactive behavior, and both organizational and career commitment were most strongly related to their corresponding focus of proactivity (pro-organizational and pro-self oriented proactive behavior, respectively). Consistently, Liu et al. (2010) argued and found that voicing towards one's peers (speaking out) was driven by social identification (team identification) whereas voicing toward one's supervisor (speaking up) was driven by personal identification with one's leader (supervisor identification). These findings provide support for the idea of compatibility between the foci of antecedents of proactivity and the foci of the actual proactive behavior.

Proposition 1. An antecedent of proactivity with a specific focus relates (most strongly) to proactive behavior with a corresponding focus.

There are only a few studies that have compared proactive behaviors targeting different foci with each other and thus empirically investigated the compatibility model in terms of exploring the differential relationships of the foci of proactivity with *outcome variables*. One noteworthy exception is the study by Seibert and colleagues (2001) who have tested a model in which they linked personal employee outcomes (career progression: salary progression and promotions) to both proactive behavior targeting the self (career initiative, e.g., updating one's skills in order to be more competitive) and proactive behavior targeting the organization (voice, e.g., speaking up). While voice (pro-organizational focus) was negatively related to career progress (pro-self, personal goals) an employee's career initiative (pro-self proactivity) was positively related to his/her career progress.

Proposition 2. Proactive behavior with a specific focus relates (most strongly) to a consequence with a corresponding focus.

An Extension of the Compatibility Hypothesis

The compatibility hypothesis argues that antecedents and consequences with a specific focus relate to proactive behavior with a corresponding focus. Yet,

sometimes behaviors can be characterized by more than one focus, that is proactive behaviors or their antecedents and consequences can relate to several targets at the same time. First, *proactive behavior* itself may aim at different targets simultaneously. For instance, while most researchers investigate voice behavior in general, one can also differentiate voice that targets peers (e.g., Edmondson, 2003) and voice directed at the supervisor (e.g., Detert & Burris, 2007); yet voice can also be directed at both the supervisor and the team. Consistently, Morrison (2011) notes that voice can be motivated by both the motive to help one's team and the motive to help the organization. This indicates that voice behavior can be directed at different targets (prosocial and pro-organizational focus) at the same time and thus be similarly linked to antecedents and consequences with different foci. In line with this argument, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) found that pro-organizational proactive behavior was significantly correlated with different foci of commitment (organizational, team, and career) as such behavior can benefit the organization, the work team, and the person's career.

Similar to the finding that proactive behaviors may simultaneously aim at different targets, the same *antecedent* may also relate to different targets and thus encourage proactive behaviors with different foci at the same time. For instance, transformational leadership behavior can relate to different foci of proactivity at the same time. Transformational leaders provide employees with attractive collective goals and inspire them to transcend their self-interest for the sake of collective interests (e.g., team, organization). Also, the inspirational motivation component equally clarifies organizational as well as group visions. In line with this, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) found transformational leadership to be equally related to proactive behavior targeting the team and the organization (but not to self-oriented proactive behavior focusing on achieving one's own personal and/or career goals), and Liu and colleagues (2010) found that transformational leadership was related to both voice to the supervisor (speaking up) and voice to colleagues (speaking out).

Proposition 3. An antecedent of proactivity targeting different foci at the same time relates to multiple proactive behaviors with corresponding foci.

On the *outcome side*, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) argued and found that both proactive behaviors with an organizational focus and proactive behaviors with a personal or self-focus were significantly linked to an employee's task performance. As task performance is instrumental in achieving organizational goals as well as personal (career) goals (e.g., high performance leading to better performance reviews thus facilitating promotions) both of these foci of proactivity should be linked to performance. Proactive behavior with a prosocial (team, colleague) focus might lead to increased contextual performance or cooperation rather than increased task performance (and might even distract

from task performance in some cases, Bergeron, 2007) and was indeed not found to be significantly related to employees' task performance by Belschak and Den Hartog (2010).

Proposition 4. Proactive behavior targeting different foci at the same time relates to multiple consequences with corresponding foci.

The findings of the above-mentioned studies are thus in line with the target similarity framework that proactive behavior with a specific focus is (most strongly) related to antecedents or outcomes with a similar or compatible focus.

Exceptions to the Target Similarity Framework

While we have provided theoretical arguments as well as reviewed the first favorable empirical evidence for a general compatibility model of the relationship between proactive behavior with different foci and their consequences and antecedents, and we see this as a promising avenue for further work, there are also a number of noteworthy exceptions to this general mechanism. These exceptions can be summarized as generic proactivity characteristics and spillover effects of foci.

Generic Proactivity Characteristics

Despite their differences in terms of targets, content/ type, or organizational level, all proactive behaviors share some generic 'core' proactivity characteristics. These characteristics include the elements of future-orientation and planfulness, change-orientation, goal orientation, and persistence (see Bindl & Parker, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013; Grant & Ashford, 2008). We argue that antecedents which directly relate to and address these generic proactivity features rather than focusing on a specific target stimulate employee proactivity in general, that is, they relate similarly to a wide range of different types of proactive behaviors aiming at different targets (e.g., voice behavior but also proactive career management). Examples of general antecedents that are linked to generic proactivity characteristics are autonomy as a situational variable or the Big Five personality dimensions (in particular extraversion and conscientiousness) as person variables.

Job autonomy allows employees to affect and change their work thus fostering action and change orientation as generic proactivity features (e.g., Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2007; Parker, et al., 2006). Consistently, a number of empirical studies link job autonomy to different types of proactive behavior including personal initiative, voice, or proactive idea problem-solving and idea implementation, but also more self-development oriented proactive behaviors such as proactive learning efforts (e.g., Frese et al., 2007; Ohly, Sonnentag, & Pluntke, 2006; Parker et al., 2006; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008; Wang & Netemeyer, 2002; see also Tornau & Frese, 2013).

In terms of the Big Five personality dimensions, scholars argue that extraversion and conscientiousness, in particular are positively related to proactivity (e.g., Seibert et al., 1999). Extraverted individuals are described as active, energetic, and forceful (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1992; John & Srivastava, 1999). This action orientation is likely to facilitate (pro)active and persistent work behavior (Tornau & Frese, 2013). Conscientious people are characterized as achievement-oriented, well-structured, and disciplined (John & Srivastava, 1999). Therefore, they are likely to engage in planful, anticipatory, future-oriented activities, in other words, in proactive behavior (e.g., Major, Turner, & Fletcher, 2006). Empirically, both extraversion and conscientiousness were indeed found to relate to different types and foci of proactivity (see e.g., Major et al., 2006, for the link with learning and self-development; see the meta-analyses by Thomas et al., 2010, and Tornau & Frese, 2013, for pro-organizational and prosocial proactive behaviors).

Another person variable that is linked to generic proactivity characteristics is the performance-prove goal orientation. Individuals high on performance-prove orientation strive for high performance and demonstrating their performance to others (VandeWalle, 1997). A performance-prove goal orientation stimulates extra effort and persistence as core proactivity characteristics (e.g., VandeWalle, Cron, and Slocum, 2001) and, consistently, was found to be significantly related to different foci of proactive behavior (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Porath & Bateman, 2006). In sum, empirical evidence shows that constructs that are not covering a specific focus but refer to generic proactivity characteristics are related to multiple foci of proactivity.

Proposition 5. An antecedent of proactivity that addresses the generic proactivity characteristics relates to proactive behaviors of all foci.

Spillover Effects

In addition, despite the empirical support for the compatibility hypothesis, there are also studies that suggest a systematic deviation from this hypothesis beyond generic proactivity characteristics as behavior directed at a specific target may 'spill over' to a different target (e.g., Liu et al., 2010). For instance, Rupp and Cropanzano (2002) noted that an exchange with one's supervisor stimulated not only OCB toward the supervisor but also OCB toward the organization. Here, the supervisor was likely seen as a representative of the whole organization, or the organization was seen as responsible for hiring the supervisor; as a consequence, employee behaviors not only targeted the supervisor as direct social exchange partner but also extended to the organization. Similarly, the literature on perceived organizational support suggests that supervisors are often seen as representatives and agents of the organization, and employees, therefore, seem to interpret perceived supervisor support as an indicator of perceived organizational

support (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 2002). For proactive behavior, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) found that team commitment was equally related to pro-organizational and prosocial proactive behavior suggesting spillover effects from the team to the organizational focus.

The extant literature does not provide a clear answer to the question when such spillover effects do or do not take place. In this respect, Liu et al. (2010) suggest that voice behavior is risky for employees because of its challenging and change-oriented nature (many proactive behaviors are inherently risky as their change orientation can 'rock the boat', Frese & Fay, 2001). The authors further argue that employees therefore carefully choose the target of their voice behavior, and spillover effects are less likely to take place as employees are motivated to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretation of their voice behavior (e.g., facilitate interpretation of speaking up as a reaction to one's identification with the organization rather than an attempt to impress the supervisor). The authors provide first empirical support for their proposition: voice behavior did not show spillover effects while less risky affiliative OCB (compliance with organizational norms, helping colleagues) did show such spillover effects.

Proposition 6. An antecedent of proactivity with a specific focus can relate to proactive behavior with a different focus if the proactive behavior is not risky.

However, more research is needed to further explore the mechanisms and contingencies of spillover effects, and whether these do not apply to proactive behavior in general due to its risky nature. Findings by, for instance, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010), who show similar relationships of team commitment with pro-organizational and prosocial proactive behavior, suggest that spillover effects of proactive behavior perhaps still can take place in spite of proactivity being risky, at least when targets are closely aligned. Also, spillover effects might be encouraged if showing proactivity with the focus of the antecedent is impeded or not readily available. Under these circumstances, the person might look for a different target for his/her proactive behaviors to benefit the original target indirectly (via another target) or might even engage in vicarious proactive behaviors toward a target that is similar to the original one. For instance, if a person feels strongly committed to the organization but only has an idea how to improve the performance of his/her colleagues, the committed person can show colleague or team-oriented prosocial proactivity rather than pro-organizational proactivity. Here, proactivity motivated by feelings related to the organization might spill over and translate into proactivity targeting peers as, by doing so, the organization might indirectly also profit. Clearly, the mechanisms and contingencies of spillover effects are not yet sufficiently understood and explored, and more research is needed to address this gap in the literature.

Proposition 7. An antecedent of proactivity with a specific focus can relate to proactive behavior with a different focus if the focus of the antecedent and the focus of the proactive behavior are closely aligned.

Proposition 8. An antecedent of proactivity with a specific focus can relate to proactive behavior with a different focus if proactive behavior with a corresponding focus is not available.

Directions for Future Research on Foci of Proactivity

Trying to distinguish and better understand the different foci of proactive behavior is a recent, emerging field of research. While there is already some knowledge available in this area there are still only a few studies available investigating different foci of proactivity at the same time. Also, results of extant studies are sometimes somewhat contradictory (e.g., in support of the compatibility model, e.g., Liu et al., 2010; in support of the spillover model, e.g., Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010). So more research is needed to explore, systematically test, and extend the current theoretical models in this area (e.g., which contingency variables determine whether and when proactive behavior follows the compatibility model or the spillover model). In what follows we will highlight some interesting areas for future research in the field of foci of proactive work behavior.

Dynamics in Foci of Proactivity

The extant literature on different foci of proactive behavior assumed a static perspective to date. Longitudinal studies on proactive behavior are scarce in general and rarely investigate changes in proactivity over time (for exceptions see Frese et al., 2007; Sonnentag, 2003). To our knowledge, no study to date has addressed the question how foci of proactivity change over time. As noted above, the focus of proactivity might switch if proactive behavior aiming at a specific target is not possible or readily available, and proactive behavior might spill over from one focus to another under these circumstances. The availability of proactive behavior aiming at a specific target might then act as a contingency variable affecting employees' choice for a certain focus of proactivity.

Relatedly, it might be possible that behaviors with different foci inform each other. For instance, successfully showing pro-organizational proactive behavior might lead to increased investments in proactivity with the same focus in the future, possibly also facilitating spillover effects to this focus. By contrast, negative outcomes of a proactive episode with one specific focus (e.g., the organization) might lead to a switch from this focus to another (e.g., switching from an organizational focus to a pro-self focus as employees are frustrated by their failed efforts for the organization and, as a consequence, withdraw to the

private/ self-oriented behavioral domain). This reasoning is in line with theoretical arguments that an employee's decision to engage in proactive behavior is based on their assessment of the likely success and consequences of that behavior (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), and past experiences are likely to influence this assessment. Future research should explore such dynamics in foci of proactivity.

Contradicting Foci

Another interesting currently unaddressed research question is what happens if individuals hold different foci of proactivity at the same time. Research on profiles of commitment suggests that combinations of different foci can co-exist (a group of employees that are committed to several foci at the same time was consistently identified) and lead to different consequences (e.g., Becker & Billings, 1993; Swales, 2004). Yet, what happens if different foci contradict each other (e.g., organizational focus versus pro-self focus)? Gouldner (1957) suggested that conflict may arise from holding conflicting foci and that professional and organizational commitment are incompatible with each other. Yet, do these findings for different foci of commitment generalize to foci of proactivity? Later studies on commitment found that the relationship between career and organizational attachment is more complex: both foci can co-exist and even lead to both high job satisfaction and high career satisfaction (e.g., Carson, Carson, Roe, Birkenmeir, & Phillips, 1999).

Based on cognitive dissonance theory (e.g., Festinger, 1957), one could argue that conflicts between different foci can be avoided by choosing types of proactivity that are compatible with each other. Pro-self proactivity in terms of personal development, for example, can result in higher performance that equally serves the organization and the employee's career (through receiving a promotion) and is thus compatible with a pro-self as well as a pro-organizational focus. These and related questions on combinations of foci of proactive behavior should be investigated in future research.

Methodological Avenues

An important facilitator of successful research on different foci of proactive behavior is the development of a well-validated measure that addresses multiple foci of proactivity. Extant studies including different foci of proactivity currently vary at the same time the focus and the content of the behavior (e.g., Seibert et al., 2001, compare career initiative to voice) which makes unambiguous interpretation of results difficult. Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) introduced and validated a measure of different foci of proactivity, and their items achieved at least partly a cross-foci symmetry content wise (e.g., proactive knowledge acquisition was part of all foci). Their scale consisted of four items each for measuring pro-organizational, prosocial, and pro-self proactivity. The authors

created in a first step a larger pool of items based on the existing measures by Frese et al. (1997) and Griffin et al. (2007). In addition, the OCB literature (in particular the literature on helping or affiliative OCB; see Podsakoff et al., 2000) was used to generate additional items for prosocial proactive behaviors. These items were first rated by experts regarding the degree to which they indeed reflected the content they should measure. For each of the three foci, the four items with the highest expert ratings were selected. The final measure was validated in two field studies, and its sub-scales were highly correlated with the personal initiative (Frese et al., 1997) as well as the proactive personality scale (Bateman & Crant, 1993). The study by Liu et al. (2010) provides another good example of symmetric measures for different foci. The items for measuring speaking up versus speaking out were mostly identical and only differed in terms of the person at which the voice behavior was targeted (colleagues versus the supervisor). Future research should use a similar approach to develop and validate proactivity measures that cover a range of proactive behaviors that are symmetric in terms of content but differ in terms of the target of the behavior.

Another shortcoming of the extant research on foci of proactivity is that most studies are cross-sectional and correlational in nature. Future research should also focus on conducting experiments. Due to the correlational design of existing studies on foci of proactivity, it is not possible to draw conclusions on the direction of causality. For instance, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) argue theoretically that commitment to a specific focus causes proactive behavior aiming at the same target. However, one could also argue that proactive behavior focusing on a specific target may further the goal achievement of this target and thus increase a person's commitment to this target. Such an interpretation could be theoretically supported by social psychological work on dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) and self-perception theory (Bem, 1972). Similarly, highly effective and well-performing teams could signal their team members that "things are going well," and that they thus have time to engage in discretionary behaviors such as prosocial proactivity. Experimental and longitudinal research should clarify remaining questions about the direction of causality.

Practical Implications

Research on different foci of proactivity offers interesting implications for practitioners. The literature on proactivity often notes that proactive behaviors might not always be appreciated by organizations. Campbell (2000) refers to this as the "initiative paradox" and argues that, on the contrary, organizations often try to suppress employee initiative and voice. Supervisors may appreciate only (or mostly) proactive behavior by employees that is in line with their own values and preferences. In support of the initiative paradox, Seibert et al. (2001) found that employees' voice behavior was negatively related to their career success. The compatibility hypothesis offers organizations some suggestions on

how to manage employee proactivity and avoid undesirable employee initiatives. By directing employees' focus towards a specific target (e.g., the team) supervisors can increase the likelihood that employees will direct their proactive behaviors at that target. For instance, if a supervisor wanted to encourage employees to focus on improving team processes and effectiveness s/he could try to increase their attachment to the team (e.g., through team empowerment by giving more meaningful tasks and autonomy: Kirkman & Rosen, 1999, or through facilitation of intragroup communication: Bishop & Scott, 2000).

Also, organizations might prefer to direct their employees' proactivity at 'other-oriented' targets (e.g., the team, colleagues, and the organization) rather than pro-self proactive behaviors which bear the risk of increasing employees' turnover intentions and behavior (see Brown et al., 2006). Here, research has shown that transformational leader behaviors help to focus employees' proactive behaviors on their team and organization (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Liu et al., 2010) due to the emphasis on collective goals and values. Organizations should, therefore, train their managers in transformational leadership as studies have shown that transformational leadership can be learned and trained successfully (e.g., Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002).

Finally, as proactivity generally has positive performance effects (e.g., Tornau & Frese, 2013), organizations who want to profit from the broad positive consequences of proactive employees should emphasize variables that are linked to generic proactivity characteristics. For instance, organizations can focus on appropriate job design (e.g., giving employees more autonomy and more meaningful jobs is likely to enhance their proactivity). A second strategy would be to test and select applicants based on traits that are closely linked to proactive work behaviors. Here, proactive personality, extraversion, conscientiousness, or performance-prove goal orientation have been found to be useful traits for explaining a wide range of proactive behaviors with different foci (e.g., Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013).

In sum, research on different foci of proactivity is starting to be able to provide evidence-based recommendations for organizations on how to increase employee proactivity in general as well as how to stimulate proactive behavior focusing only on specific targets. Findings of extant studies in this field offer concrete ideas for job design, personnel selection, training, and leadership activities to achieve these ends.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to review the literature on different foci of proactivity and to provide a theoretical framework to help develop a nomological net of foci of proactivity. The concept of foci of proactivity is of theoretical and practical relevance as proactive behaviors targeting different foci are differentially related to the antecedents and consequences of proactivity. We presented the target

similarity framework as an overarching theoretical perspective from which we deduced a number of specific proposals about the relationships between proactivity targeting different foci and the antecedents and consequences of proactivity. We suggest and support with empirical evidence that the relationship between proactivity and its antecedents and consequences follows a general “compatibility of foci” logic for which we propose some exceptions. Clearly, more research should be dedicated to this interesting area of proactivity research.

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PART II

**Individual Dynamics of
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8

PROACTIVE PERSONALITY

A Twenty-Year Review

J. Michael Crant, Jia Hu, and Kaifeng Jiang

The proactive personality construct and scale (PPS) have frequently appeared in organizational research since being introduced to the field in a 1993 *Journal of Organizational Behavior* article titled “The Proactive Component of Organizational Behavior: A Measure and Correlates” (Bateman and Crant, 1993). This article has been cited almost 400 times as indicated by the Web of Science database, and over 1100 times according to Google Scholar. Proactive personality has been measured using the PPS in over 100 empirical articles published in refereed journals, and in more than 60 doctoral dissertations. It has also been a primary focus of three meta-analyses (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010; Spitzmuller, Sin, Howe, & Fatimah, in press) and a central part of another that focused on different conceptualizations of proactivity (Tornau & Frese, 2013). Proactive personality was included as a predictor variable in an additional seven meta-analyses that focused more broadly on proactive behavior and related constructs (Alarcon, Eschleman, & Bowling, 2009; Allen et al., 2012; Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005; Ng & Feldman, 2012, 2014; Rauch & Frese, 2007). Thus, the proactive personality construct has received considerable attention in the field of management since its first appearance in the literature.

The purpose of this chapter is to supplement these quantitative summaries with a qualitative/subjective analysis of the first twenty years of research on this topic. Our objective in writing this chapter is to provide context on the history of the proactive personality construct and scale. It is intended as a primer for those interested in learning what we know – and don’t know—about proactive personality. Toward that end, we will review the empirical literature and identify some key issues and controversies that may be fruitful for future researchers to consider.

The primary content domain for this review is the first twenty years of empirical journal articles that measured proactive personality using the PPS, along with the meta-analyses listed above. We occasionally stray from this and cite more recent articles where appropriate to update certain research streams. To identify relevant empirical articles published between 1993 and 2013, we used various search engines such as PsychINFO and Web of Science focusing on keywords “proactive” and “proactive personality.” We also referred to the reference lists of the prior theoretical and empirical reviews on this topic. The search yielded 96 empirical articles and 11 meta-analyses.

The Introduction of the Construct and Measure

Bateman and Crant's (1993) article provided a theoretical development of the proactive personality construct, introduced a scale to measure it, and provided some preliminary evidence for convergent, discriminant, and criterion validities. Their objective was to introduce a dispositional construct that differentiated the extent to which people tend to take action to influence their environments. Proactive personality was defined as a relatively stable tendency to effect environmental change. It is revealed by one whom “is relatively unconstrained by situational forces, and who effects environmental change.” Specific actions taken by proactive personalities include scanning for opportunities, demonstrating initiative, being active rather than passive, and persevering to bring about change in the face of obstacles. Someone who would be classified as low on the proactive personality construct would be described by the opposite pattern; they tend to be passive and react or adapt to environments rather than actively shape them.

The interactionist perspective (e.g., Bandura, 1977; Schneider, 1983) formed the theoretical underpinning for the proactive personality construct. Simply stated, interactionism notes that person, environment, and behavior continuously influence one another (Bandura, 1986). Thus, people need not passively accept environmental exigencies; they can take action to influence and change the environments that they encounter. A fundamental component of proactive behavior is the idea that people can intentionally change their circumstances, and proactive personality captures the dispositional tendency to do so. Proactive behavior meets one's need to manipulate and control the environment. The Bateman and Crant (1993) article clearly takes a dispositional perspective toward the general topic of proactive behavior, arguing for a relatively stable behavioral tendency. Some are assumed to be more predisposed to behave proactively toward their environments/situations compared to others.

The idea of a study on proactivity was first discussed by Bateman and Crant early in the fall of 1989 while both were at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. During a discussion of potential research projects for that semester, they observed that many writers assumed that being proactive was a good thing, but neither of them could recall a specific article that had systematically studied

proactivity. Subsequent archival research failed to disconfirm this notion. While multiple people had written about proactive behavior as a desirable thing, its importance was largely assumed rather than empirically confirmed. The two decided to collect data to inform the general concept of proactivity at work.

The first article from this research stream was based on three waves of data collected between late 1989 and 1991. The initial idea was to design a study to provide preliminary answers to a few simple questions. Can we measure proactivity and provide data showing that it is an important element of organizational behavior? Can we derive a theoretical basis to support these ideas about proactive behavior at work? Because no measure existed for proactive behavior or personality at the time, the first step was to create items for a new scale. About 50 items were generated in initial brainstorming sessions, tapping four potential facets of proactivity: opportunity scanning, initiative/decisiveness, persistence/drive, and desire to make a difference. It was determined that 27 of these items were sufficient to capture the content domain. Preliminary data collection and analysis did not support a multi-dimensional conceptualization of the construct, and the final 17-item measure included in the initial article was presented as a unidimensional scale.

The 1993 article had several objectives beyond identifying a theoretical context for proactive personality and behavior and introducing a self-report scale to measure the construct. One additional purpose was to identify the relationship between proactive personality and the Big Five factors: with these data, proactive personality was associated with conscientiousness and extraversion, and not with openness, agreeableness, or neuroticism. As will be discussed in a later section on meta-analytic studies, these results were atypical. Further evidence for convergent and discriminant validity was provided via relating proactive personality to three more narrow traits. Proactive personality was correlated with the need for achievement and need for dominance, and not with locus of control or general mental ability as indicated by scores on the Wonderlic Personnel Inventory. A final objective was to provide a preliminary assessment of criterion validity. The proactive personality scale was positively associated with MBA students' change-oriented extracurricular activities, proactive personal achievements, and peer-nominations of transformational leadership potential.

Psychometric Properties of the PPS

The original proactive personality scale consisted of 17 items that loaded on a single factor. The 17-item scale was used with 20 samples in our time frame, with an average Chronbach's alpha of .88. Seibert, Crant, and Kraimer (1999) introduced a shortened 10-item version of the scale comprised of the items with the highest factor loadings in the three samples reported by Bateman and Crant (1993). This has been the most frequently used version of the scale, measured with 48 samples with an average Chronbach's alpha of .86. A six-item version with an average

Chronbach's alpha of .79 was used in nine samples, and a four-item version with an average alpha of .82 was used in six samples. Nine additional studies used other combinations of items (ranging from 5 to 16) from the 17-item scale, and reliability estimates were unreported in the remaining articles.

Most empirical work has used English-language versions of the PPS, although it has also been translated into other languages in these studies including Chinese (e.g., Li, Liang, & Crant, 2010), Dutch (e.g., Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012), Finnish (Claes, Beheydt, & Lemmens, 2005), German (Fay & Frese, 2001), Italian (Bertolino, Truxillo, & Fraccaroli, 2011), Turkish (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005), and Spanish (Crant & Bateman, 2000). Those studies reporting factor analyses converge on the observation that the scale is unidimensional. Only one of the empirical studies reported an internal consistency (Chronbach's alpha) below the commonly accepted threshold level of .70, and that study used a 5-item scale translated to Italian (Bertolino et al., 2011). Researchers in Europe (Claes et al., 2005) examined the unidimensionality of different short versions of the PPS in Belgium, Finland, and Spain. These authors concluded that the 6-item version provided a single-factor solution in all three cultures/languages. They also noted that different cultures and languages result in varying mean differences in proactive personality scores, a finding that may be interesting to explore in future research.

The ensuing twenty years of empirical evidence since the publication of the PPS is largely supportive of the convergent and discriminant validity of the scale. Proactive personality tends to be positively correlated with attitudes, behaviors, and other outcomes associated with proactive behavior, such as innovation (Ards, van der Velde, & Maurer, 2010), job crafting (Tims et al., 2012), career success (Seibert et al., 1999), self-efficacy (Brown, Cober, Kane, Levy, & Shalhoop, 2006), work engagement (Christian et al., 2011), quantity and quality of voice behaviors (Crant, Kim & Wang, 2011; Detert & Burris, 2007; Parker & Collins, 2010), and active socialization and career management tactics (Chiaburu, Baker, & Pitariu, 2006; Gruman & Saks, 2011). Parker, Williams, and Turner (2006) presented data showing that proactive personality was positively correlated with an array of proactive work outcomes; these effects were via an influence on self-efficacy and flexible role orientations. Regarding discriminant validity, examining the correlation matrices reported in the empirical articles studied here reveal numerous insignificant correlation. Meta-analyses show little to no pattern between proactive personality and age or gender. However, among those studies that do report such effects, there are consistent results. Younger rather than older workers tend to portray themselves as more proactive (e.g., Bertolino et al., 2011; Jawahar, Kisamore, Stone, & Rahn, 2012; König, Steinmetz, Frese, Rauch, & Wang, 2010). Similarly, among those studies reporting gender differences, the majority found that the significant effects are in the direction of men tending to portray themselves as more proactive than women (De Pater, Van Vianen, Fischer, & Van Ginkel, 2009; Parker, 1998; Yousaf, Sanders, & Shipton, 2013).

Relationship with Similar Constructs

A few years after the initial publication of the Proactive Personality construct and scale, Michael Frese and colleagues (Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996) introduced a similar concept of personal initiative. Both proactive personality and personal initiative stress an action-based orientation toward work and both involve initiating situations and creating favorable conditions. Personal initiative refers to a behavioral pattern stemming from an active and self-starting approach to work that goes beyond formal job requirements. Personal initiative is a measure of work behaviors rather than a personal disposition (Frese & Fay, 2001), and is best measured using an intensive interview-based methodology. These authors make a compelling case for the advantages of such an approach, although they acknowledge that there are benefits to more economical approaches to the study of initiative/proactivity. Thus, they have a second measure of personal initiative that is a subjective self-report scale. Frese and Fay (2001) reported an uncorrected correlation of .76 (.96 when corrected for unreliability) between these two measures. A recent study (Tims et al., 2012) that included self-report measures of both proactive personality and personal initiative yielded similar results ($r = .67$). A recent meta-analysis (Tornau & Frese, 2013) sought to add clarity on the nomological net of work-related proactivity concepts, focusing on the four most frequently studied proactivity concepts of proactive personality, personal initiative, taking charge, and voice. Relevant to this discussion is their finding that proactive personality and personal initiative/personality (which Tornau and Frese (2013) suggest as a better label for what used to be called subjective personal initiative) should be considered to be functionally equivalent. We agree with this observation: the self-report measure of personal initiative and the proactive personality scale measure essentially the same thing.

Various scholars have cautioned against the proliferation of multiple concepts related to proactive behaviors (e.g., Crant, 2000; Parker & Collins, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013). There are many organizational behaviors that may be considered to be proactive in nature, such as voice, innovation, issue-selling, feedback-seeking, and taking charge. Parker and Collins (2010) conducted a comprehensive study in which a large sample of middle- and senior-level managers completed measures of 18 different concepts related to proactive behavior. One important contribution to the literature on proactive behaviors from this study was the idea that there appear to be three different types of proactive behaviors: Proactive work behaviors (e.g., voice and innovation), proactive strategic behaviors (e.g., strategic scanning, issue-selling), and proactive P-E fit behaviors (e.g., feedback-seeking, career initiative). Proactive personality was conceptualized as an antecedent of proactive work behavior. Their data were consistent with this notion; proactive personality predicted all proactive work behaviors (e.g., taking charge, individual innovation, voice, and feedback-seeking) and issue-selling credibility. Proactive personality did not predict the P-E fit behaviors, strategic

scanning, or issue-selling willingness. Multiple meta-analytic studies – to be discussed in greater detail further in the chapter – yield similar conclusions regarding the relationships between proactive personality and proactive behaviors, and some conflicting findings regarding the other categories. Our interpretation of this pattern of results is that there is considerable evidence to support the idea that proactive personality is a consistent predictor/antecedent of proactive behavior. It does not appear that the correlations are sufficiently strong—most are in the range of .25 to .35—to indicate that there is so much conceptual overlap as to indicate redundancy.

Proactive Behavior and Personality: State vs Trait

Bateman and Crant (1993) assumed that people have different predispositions to behave proactively toward environments and situations. Their work and the resulting scale focused on a personal dispositional tendency to alter environments. Nonetheless, their underlying interest was in the concept of proactive behavior itself as much as in dispositional tendencies. There was some lack of clarity on this issue in the 1993 article. In introducing the scale in the measures section of the article, Bateman and Crant refer to a 17-item measure of proactive *behavior* rather than personality. They go on to discuss the objective of generating a reliable self-report of a general factor of proactive behavior. Yet the theory explicitly classifies the proactive personality as a dispositional component, seemingly taking a trait perspective.

Constructs classified as traits have historically been expected to have relatively stable scores over the lifetime, reflecting a relatively enduring pattern of thoughts, feelings, and action. However, some change is expected over time in traits. Meta-analytic estimates suggest that test-retest correlation coefficients increase over the adult lifespan, ranging from .54 for college-age individuals, .64 at age 30, to .74 between the ages of 50 and 70 (Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000). A separate meta-analysis of longitudinal studies revealed a pattern of substantial changes in scores on the Big Five factors during the lifespan (Roberts, Walton, & Viechtbauer, 2006). Few data have been reported regarding the stability of the proactive personality construct. Bateman and Crant (1993) reported a three-month test-retest reliability coefficient of .72. An unpublished study found a one-year test-retest reliability of .64 (T.S. Bateman, personal communication, January 12, 2015). These preliminary data are in the range that one would expect for a disposition, but further research is needed with longer time intervals between initial and subsequent testing to shed further light on consistency and stability.

Recent research from a behavioral genetics perspective provides some emerging evidence consistent with the trait conceptualization. Using a sample of almost 1000 twins in the United States, Li (2013) showed that 42.5% of the variance in proactive personality is attributable to genetic differences, with the remainder

being explained by environmental factors. The range of genetic effects on other personality traits is typically from 40% to 60% (Bouchard, 2004). Two studies (Li et al., in press) showed that a particular genetic marker, DAT1 10-repeat, was associated with proactive personality in separate samples drawn from China and the United States. These studies present some intriguing findings of state vs trait; advances in behavioral genetics opens up new and exciting possibilities for further research on proactive personality and other traits.

Preliminary evidence toward the malleability of one's proactive orientation can be found in a study by Kirby, Kirby, & Lewis (2002). These authors used a sample of 184 undergraduate students to examine whether an individual's level of proactivity could be increased over time through training in strategic thinking. Using a pretest/posttest field experiment design, the training was intended to enhance the students' ability to recognize critical events, discern implications, and formulate strategies and recommendations for dealing with them. Training was significantly associated with an increase in scores on a short (4-item) version of the proactive personality scale. One could conclude that this provides some evidence – although it is weak evidence in our view – that proactive orientation can be altered via educational processes. In Chapter 9 in this volume, Wu and Li offer a theoretical analysis of the process by which proactive personality may develop over time.

A recent and important study tackled the question of reciprocal determinism between proactive personality and work characteristics (Li, Fay, Frese, Harms, & Gao, 2014). Noting that personality psychologists increasingly believe that personality is moderately malleable in adulthood, Li et al. (2014) used longitudinal data and a latent change score approach to investigate effects of work attributes on changes in proactive personality over time. Two work characteristics – job demands and job control – had positive lagged effects with increased proactive personality scores. Proactive personalities create conditions that increase both job demands and control, which in turn validates experiences and reinforces the trait. A reciprocal relationship was found between proactive personality and job control, providing the first empirical support for the interactionist perspective that formed the theoretical underpinning of the construct. These findings provide strong evidence that proactive personality is indeed a somewhat malleable construct in adults.

Two articles published during the time frame included here have used the PPS as an indicator not of personality but of behavior, thereby taking a “state” perspective. Chiaburu, Marinova, and Lim (2007) found that learning and proving goal orientations mediate the relationship between status striving and proactive behaviors, using the PPS as one of three indicators of proactive behavior. Thus, this is a rare study in that the measure of proactive personality served as a criterion variable rather than as a predictor, mediator, or moderator. Similarly, Porath and Bateman (2006) used five items from the PPS as a measure of proactive behavior, which was associated with learning and performance

goal orientation, feedback-seeking, social control, and the job performance of sales agents.

Proactive personality is only one part of a broader constellation of constructs related to proactivity. Constructs such as personal initiative and taking charge represent one's proclivity to engage in proactive behaviors. Several specific proactive behaviors are described elsewhere in this volume, including voice, issue-selling, feedback-seeking, and job-crafting. These constructs are viewed as malleable, a function of both person – presumably including proactive personality – and situation. When looking at the accumulated evidence from all of these various conceptualizations of proactive behavior, it appears that people exhibit different levels of proactive behavior over time and as work conditions change.

Empirical Research Findings

An array of empirical studies has linked proactive personality to a broad range of employee outcomes, including attitudes, performance, and career-related outcomes. In addition to establishing main effects, scholars have explored potential moderators and mediators of the relationship between proactive personality and attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. Proactive personality has appeared as a measured variable in studies across different fields and cultural settings. As with most constructs, statistical analysis of data have provided mixed results regarding hypothesized relationships. The following section will discuss some representative empirical studies published during the twenty years since the introduction of the construct and scale. We will organize this discussion around outcomes, moderators, and mediators of proactive personality. This section will focus on individual articles; a later section will summarize meta-analytic findings.

Outcomes of Proactive Personality

Main effects were the focus of much early research on proactive personality, and continue to receive significant attention. We will not delve into much background on the individual studies mentioned in this section because we consider the meta-analytic results to be more informative for future researchers than the results of any single study. The outcomes that are most frequently studied in terms of proactive personality can be grouped into three categories: employee attitudes, job behaviors/performance, and career-related outcomes.

Attitudes

Because proactive personality is manifested in part by creating hospitable or favorable working conditions, scholars have theorized a linkage between proactive personality and an array of job attitudes. Field studies have consistently demonstrated the positive relationship between proactive personality

and *attitudinal* outcomes, such as job satisfaction (Li et al., 2010; McNall & Michel, 2011), life satisfaction (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2010), job engagement (Bakker, Tims, & Derks, 2012), motivation to learn (Major, Turner, & Fletcher, 2006), occupational commitment (Yousaf et al., 2013). The findings are in the expected direction whereby more proactive people report higher levels of the various attitudes.

Behaviors/Performance

Empirical research also suggests a link between proactive personality and *behavioral* and *performance* outcomes such as job and task performance (e.g., Baba, Tourigny, Wang, & Liu, 2009; Crant, 1995; Kirby & Kirby, 2006; Fuller, Hester, & Cox, 2010; McNall & Michel, 2011; Thompson, 2005); OCB (Baba et al., 2009; Li et al., 2010; Yang, Gong, & Huo, 2011), voice (Crant et al., 2011), creativity (Gong, Cheung, Wang, & Huang, 2012), proactive behaviors (Parker & Collins, 2010), and work team effectiveness (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). Proactive personality is consistently associated with higher levels of task and job performance. These field studies were conducted among individuals with a variety of occupational backgrounds and from both Western and Eastern settings; these findings are not based solely on Western data. Taking a unique approach to studying proactive personality and job performance, Deluga (1998) employed historiometric procedures to rate proactive personality of 39 American presidents. Results of this study showed that the presidents' proactive characteristics, such as actively looking for opportunities and making changes, were associated with higher ratings of their presidential performance.

Career-related outcomes

One of the more active streams of research using the proactive personality construct has been in the careers domain. Empirical evidence has demonstrated that more proactive employees have higher career satisfaction (Barnett & Bradley, 2007), higher career commitment (Messara & Dagher, 2010), engage in more job search behaviors (Brown et al., 2006), enjoy higher salaries and occupational prestige (Converse, Pathak, DePaul-Haddock, Gotlib, & Merbedone, 2012), greater advancement potential (Hirschfeld, Thomas, & Bernerth, 2011), stronger networking intensity (Lambert, Eby, & Reeves, 2006), perceived internal and external marketability (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003), and overall career success (Seibert et al., 1999; Rode, Arthaud-Day, Mooney, Near, & Baldwin, 2008). In addition, research in mentorship has shown that mentors' proactive personality was related to more career-related mentoring reported by both mentees and mentors (Wanberg, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Marchese, 2006). Proactive socialization and behavior, a hallmark of the proactive personality, appear to have benefits for both subjective and objective career success.

Moderators

Although previous literature has consistently endorsed the positive value of proactive personality on employee attitudinal, behavioral, and career-related outcomes, scholars have begun to believe that proactive personality is likely to link to different outcomes under different conditions. Indeed, a growing body of empirical evidence has provided insights to the question of *when* proactive individuals behave or perform in certain ways. Below we discuss representative examples of empirical findings on the boundary conditions surrounding the relationship between proactive personality and employee outcomes.

Interactions with Other Individual Differences

Several empirical studies focused on whether the effects of proactive personality on employee outcomes differ in terms of their demographic information. Gender, for example, has been explored as a boundary condition of proactive personality effects. Aryee, Srinivas, and Tan (2005) explored the interaction between proactive personality and gender in predicting employee attitudes at work (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) and at the interface between work and family domains (i.e., work-family conflict and work-family facilitation); they found no differences between proactive personality and these attitudinal outcomes between men and women. Gupta and Bhawe (2007) considered the influence of proactive personality on another job-related attitude – entrepreneurial intentions among women. Interestingly, using 80 college female students, they found that compared with those low on proactive personality, women high on proactive personality were more likely to be judged with the “masculine” stereotype about entrepreneurs and thus were more likely to reduce their entrepreneurial intentions. This study, however, did not compare the influence for women with that for men and thus it remains unclear as to whether proactive males will have stronger inspirations to be entrepreneurs than proactive females.

In addition to gender, Bertolino and colleagues (2011) looked at another demographic variable, age, as a potential moderator of the relationship between proactive personality and training-related outcomes, including training motivation, perceived career development from training, and training behavioral intentions. As expected, with a sample of 252 municipal government employees, they found that proactive personality was more positively related to these outcomes among younger employees. Also looking at the differences between younger and older employees, Ng and Feldman (2013) took a more fine-grained perspective and found a three-way interaction among proactive personality, age, and supervisor undermining in predicting innovation. With a time-lagged study with 196 employees, Ng and Feldman found that highly proactive older employees reacted to high supervisor undermining

by demonstrating more innovation, and such an interactive effect was not observed when supervisor undermining was low.

Researchers have explored the interplay between proactive personality and other individual traits and skills in the workplace. A recent example is found in Sun and van Emmerik (in press); they tested the moderating role of political skills in the effects of proactive personality in performance outcomes among 225 employees from 12 companies in China. They found that proactive personality was negatively related to supervisor-rated task performance, helping behaviors, and learning behaviors when employees' political skill was low, and such negative relationships disappear when political skill was high. These interesting findings suggest that being proactive but insensitive to interpersonal relationships and lack of apparent sincerity can actually harm employees' performance outcomes. Stated differently, results show that proactive employees need political skills in order to make their supervisors accept and support their change-oriented behaviors.

Interaction with Attitudes and Perceptions

Researchers have also explored the contingency effects of proactive personality by considering several important attitudinal and perceptual variables. Fuller and colleagues conducted a series of studies using 120 employees from a small utility company in the US to provide insights into the contingency effects of proactive personality. Specifically, Fuller et al., (2010) showed that proactive employees produced high job performance when their jobs provide autonomy but generated low levels of job performance when job autonomy is low. The results imply that proactive employees do not always perform better and low job autonomy keeps proactive employees from utilizing their advantages and performing well. Fuller, Marler, and Hester (2006) found that with access to resources and strategy-related information, only highly proactive employees had felt responsibility for constructive change, which in turn relates to their voice behavior and continuous improvement in performance. Fuller, Marler, and Hester (2012) looked at the proactive personality of supervisors and discovered that highly proactive supervisors tend to value employees' proactive "taking charge" behaviors more than less-proactive supervisors; the same effect was found for in-role performance ratings.

Also, looking at the influence of proactive personality on individual performance, Baba and colleagues (2009) explored the role of emotional exhaustion. Using Chinese airline employees as the study sample, they found that proactive employees performed well only when their emotional exhaustion level was low as opposed to be high. However, they did not discover the same moderating effect for OCB. Jawahar and colleagues (2012) also considered how proactive personality linked to burnout, measured by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. They tested a three-way

interaction among proactive personality, work-family conflict, and family-work conflict in relation to burnout. With 171 clerical employees, they found that proactive individuals reported lower emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment and higher depersonalization when work-family and family-work conflicts are both high. These results suggest that proactive personality helps individuals to buffer negative experiences of emotional exhaustion in the face of conflicts between the work and family domains.

Findings from Harvey, Blouin, and Stout's (2006) study, however, tell a different story. Harvey and colleagues investigated the interactive effects of proactive personality and interpersonal conflict on well-being and performance among 107 college students. The authors discovered that individuals with high proactive personality seem to be more sensitive to the strain associated with school and work and handle conflicts worse than those with low proactive personality. Subsequently, proactive individuals reported lower levels of job satisfaction and performance at school (measured by grades).

The inconsistencies between the findings from Jawahar and colleagues (2012) and Harvey et al. (2006) may be due to the differences in the samples (clerical employees vs college students) or the types of conflicts (conflicts between work and family vs conflicts between school and work) or pre-existing factors in the environment (e.g., company or school culture, leadership, coworkers). Thus, it will be valuable to gain a deeper understanding of the boundary conditions that make proactive individuals respond to conflicts in more or less positive ways.

More proactive individuals are more likely to make a change when situations are undesirable and actively look for new circumstances (Crant, 2000). Based on this line of logic, Allen and colleagues (2005) proposed that turnover intention would relate more strongly to actual turnover for more proactive employees; however, counter to their expectation, they failed to find support for the interaction between proactive personality and turnover intention in a sample of 296 employees of an entertainment and gaming corporation.

Some studies explored proactive personality in the multiple-domain literature and investigated its role in work-family relationships. Because of their tendency to take the initiative to make changes and solve problems, proactive individuals are expected to excel in situations that provide them with opportunities to do so (Crant, 1995). With a sample of full-time faculty members in industrial-organizational psychology departments from universities across the US, Cunningham and De La Rosa (2008) discovered an interesting finding: time-based family-to-work interference enhanced life satisfaction for individuals with higher as opposed to lower levels of proactive personality. This moderating effect was not observed when strain-based or behavior-based family-to-work interference was the independent variable.

Somewhat relatedly, Parker and Sprigg (1999) investigated the role of proactive personality in altering the relationship between job demands and strain. Specifically, they explored the three-way interactions among proactive personality, job control,

and job demands in predicting job strain among 268 production employees. For highly proactive employees with high job control, high demands were associated with low strain. That is, when provided with autonomy and control over their jobs, proactive individuals are better able to deal with job demands and less likely to experience strain at work.

Another research theme that has driven growing attention is the relationship between proactive personality and career-related outcomes and the boundary conditions of such a relationship. Erdogan and Bauer (2005) looked at the interplay between proactive personality and person-organization fit (P-O fit) and person-job fit (P-J fit) in predicting both intrinsic and extrinsic career success. Erdogan and Bauer tested their hypotheses with two studies. In Study 1, they used teachers working in 16 public and private schools in Istanbul, Turkey, and showed that proactive employees felt satisfied with their career only when their perceptions of P-O fit or actual P-O fit or P-J fit was high, and experienced satisfaction with their job only when perceptions of P-O fit was high. In Study 2, they replicated Study 1 with a sample of 203 tenure-track and fixed-term faculty members in a northwestern university in the US. Similar to the findings of Study 1, proactive personality was more positively related to job and career satisfaction for faculty members who were high in P-O fit. Interestingly, in the US sample, proactive personality combined with low P-O fit perceptions actually associated with dissatisfaction with and frustration in jobs. In the American sample, the interaction between proactive personality and P-J fit was not significant with respect to career satisfaction. In addition, Study 2 also tested whether P-O or P-J fit moderate the relationship between proactive personality and objective career success measured by research productivity of faculty members. It showed that proactive personality only related to research productivity when P-J fit was high. Overall, these findings indicate the importance of P-O fit for proactive employees to have subjective or intrinsic career success; P-J fit is more important for achieving objective or extrinsic career success.

Interactions with Contextual Factors at Work

Allen and O'Brien (2006) looked at the moderating role of proactive personality in the relationship between the availability of formal mentoring and organizational attractiveness and suggested that proactive personality would strengthen such a relationship; however, this moderating effect was not supported. Another study conducted by Li, Chiaburu, Kirkman, and Xie (2013) also explored the interactive effect of proactive personality and leadership in predicting employee performance outcomes. With data collected from 196 employees from China, this study indicated that transformational leadership is more helpful in encouraging employees' taking-charge behaviors for those with low proactive personality (Li et al., 2013). This suggests that highly proactive individuals already have the motivation to make changes, and help from the leaders seems less powerful.

Relatedly, Li, Harris, Boswell, and Xie (2011) explored the interaction between proactive personality and influences from both leaders and coworkers in shaping helping behaviors among 151 newcomers in China. The authors found differentiated effects for leaders and coworkers. Specifically, for newcomers with lower proactive personality, supervisors' developmental feedback prompted them to provide more helping behaviors. On the other hand, for newcomers with higher proactive personality, coworkers' developmental feedback was more strongly related to helping behaviors. It seems that proactive personality was seen as a virtue in the eyes of coworkers but not leaders. Context is important here because it is likely that many leaders in China, where power distance is greater, prefer conformity rather than proactivity.

Li and colleagues (2010) proposed that the relationship between proactive personality and performance outcomes is bounded by a group-level contextual influence – procedural justice climate, which refers to the extent to which members of a group consider that their organization implements its work-related procedures in a fair way. Studying 200 Chinese employees nested within 54 work groups, the authors found that higher levels of proactive personality were associated with lower levels of OCBs within groups with low procedural justice climate. Conversely, proactive personality was shown to be insignificantly related to OCB when procedural justice climate was high. This result suggests that when facing an unjust work environment, proactive individuals may demonstrate more frustration, react more negatively, and display fewer OCBs. Further investigation is needed to explore the situational cues that influence proactive individuals' behaviors.

In summary, prior research suggests that proactive personality links to different work behaviors and performance when the age, gender, or other personality traits of employees are considered. Also suggested from the literature is that the influences of proactive personality on employee attitudes, performance, or career outcomes are bounded by employee perceptions of the work contexts, such as job design characteristics, leader-, coworker-, work group-, and organization-related factors. It is important to note that there are some inconsistent findings on the relationship between proactive personality and work outcomes. Future research is encouraged to extend this line of thinking and further explore the boundary conditions for *when* proactive individuals have more positive attitudes and performance.

Meditating Mechanisms

Another key research direction focuses on advancing the knowledge of *how* proactive personality influences employee outcomes. What are the intervening mechanisms that facilitate translating a proactive disposition into attitudes and behaviors? Recent empirical studies have explored the mediating mechanisms that link proactive personality to more distal behavioral and performance outcomes.

An example of this line of thinking can be found in Thompson's (2005) work on the importance of social capital for proactive personalities. Thompson (2005) demonstrated that a positive influence of proactive personality on job performance is realized through developing social networks, which provide employees with opportunities and resources to make changes and take initiatives. Greguras and Diefendorff (2010) developed a self-concordance model that links proactive personality to multiple behavioral and attitudinal outcomes, including life satisfaction, job performance, and OCB. Using a sample of 165 employees from a variety of industries and occupations in Singapore, the study demonstrated that proactive employees tend to set self-concordant goals and choose goals that fit their personal values, which positively influence their subsequent performance and well-being. Li and colleagues (2010) also explored the influence of proactive personality on job satisfaction and OCB but took a relational approach and looked at the mediating role of the relationship between a leader and his or her individual subordinates, leader-member exchange (LMX). They found that having a proactive personality helped individuals to form a high-quality LMX relationship, which encouraged them to contribute more through OCBs and perceive higher levels of satisfaction with their jobs. Similarly, McNall and Michel (2011) found that the relationship between proactive personality and job satisfaction and performance was mediated by work-school enrichment using a sample of 314 employed college students. Furthermore, Yang and colleagues (2011) discovered that proactive personality was indirectly and positively related to helping and negatively related to turnover intentions; first through information exchange and then through trust relationships.

Taking a somewhat different perspective, Zhang, Wang, and Shi (2012) examined the congruence effect of leader and follower proactive personality on follower job satisfaction, affective commitment, and job performance through the mediating role of LMX. Using a cross-level polynomial regression analysis on 165 leader-follower dyads in China, the authors found that when employees were more proactive than their leaders, they experienced lower-quality LMX relationships and produced poorer work outcomes.

Gong and colleagues (2012) unfolded the proactive process for individual creativity and proposed that proactive employees are likely to seek information resources through exchange with others, which in turn builds trusting relationships with supervisors and coworkers, which encourages creativity. This proposed model was largely supported by time-lagged data from a sample of 190 employee-manager dyads in a retail chain in Taiwan. Similarly, Kim, Hon, and Crant (2009) investigated 146 Hong Kong Chinese employees and found that proactive personality was positively related to employee creativity, which in turn positively related to career satisfaction and perceptions of insider status.

Parker and colleagues (2006) used a sample of 282 British wire makers to test the cognitive-motivational process that links proactive personality to proactive work behaviors. As expected, they found that proactive personality was

indirectly related to proactive work behaviors through role breadth self-efficacy and flexible role orientation. Bakker and colleagues (2012) developed a job-crafting model and contended that proactive employees tend to make more changes regarding their job demands and resources, which in turn leads them to be more engaged at work and perform better. Using 190 employees from a wide range of occupational sectors in the Netherlands, they found support for the hypothesized model; proactive personality was positively and indirectly related to in-role performance, first through job-crafting and then through work engagement.

In addition to the above-mentioned studies on general employee behavioral outcomes, several other researchers have sought to understand the influence of proactive personality in early career stages, such as job search processes and the new entry to an organization. For example, Brown et al.'s (2006) study investigated graduating college students from a Midwestern university in the US and found that proactive graduates were more confident, engaged in more job search behaviors, and had more follow-up interviews and job offers. That is, this study showed proactive personality to be indirectly related to job search outcomes first through self-efficacy, and then through job search behavior. A similar study of undergraduate students found that proactive personality mediated the relationship between learning goal orientation and individual efforts (Brown & O'Donnell, 2010).

Relatedly, several other scholars focused on the role of proactive personality in newcomer adjustment to their new organizations. Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) conducted a four-wave longitudinal study of newcomers in seven organizations and found that proactive personality particularly influenced group integration, which in turn positively influenced organizational commitment. This study showed that along with pre-entry knowledge and socialization, proactive personality helped newcomers to adjust to their organizational and task environment. Liang and Gong (2013) examined the mediating mechanisms of the relationship between proactive personality and informal mentoring in 174 early career employees in China. The authors found that proactive personality was indirectly related to career-related mentoring through networking behaviors and was indirectly related to psychosocial mentoring through voice behaviors.

Furthermore, some studies have highlighted the role of proactive personality in predicting individuals' career outcomes. Seibert, Kraimer, and Crant (2001) developed and tested a model exploring the behavioral and cognitive mechanisms that link proactive personality to career success. They designed a time-lagged study with 180 employees and found that proactive personality measured at Time 1 was positively related to innovation, political knowledge, and career initiatives, but not voice, measured at Time 2. Innovation, political knowledge, and career initiative, in turn, were found to be positively related to objective career success, measured by salary growth and a number

of promotions during previous 2 years, and subjective career success, measured by career satisfaction.

A subsequent empirical study also looked at the influence of proactive personality on both subjective (e.g., career satisfaction) and objective (e.g., salary, occupational prestige) career outcomes (Converse et al., 2012). In this study, Converse and colleagues utilized 249 employees from a variety of occupations and found that proactive personality positively related to salary and occupational prestige through educational attainment; however, their data failed to support the hypothesized effect of proactive personality on career satisfaction through the opportunity for achievement. Barnett and Bradley (2007) studied combined samples of public sector employees and graduate business students; they demonstrated that proactive personality was indirectly related to career satisfaction through the mediating role of career management behaviors.

In addition, Hirschfeld and colleagues (2011) looked at proactive personality and another career-related outcome – observed advancement potential. The authors considered two forms of proactive personality, one is *autonomous*, measured with Bateman and Crant's (1993) scale, and the other is *team-oriented* that captures the extent to which individuals voluntarily initiate actions to improve the work environment by interacting with coworkers and teams to facilitate team functioning, and is measured by Hirschfeld, Jordan, Thomas, and Feild's (2008) scale. They tested the theoretical model with 672 participants in a five-week officer development program in the United States Air Force and found that autonomous and team-oriented proactivity were positively related ($\beta = .51, p < .001$) and were both indirectly related to advancement potential through the mediating role of self-perceived influence. Interestingly, they also found that the total relationship of autonomous proactive personality with advancement potential was negative ($-.17, p < .01$), which combines a direct relationship with an indirect relationship via self-perceived influence whereas the total effect of team-oriented proactive personality was positive ($.49, p < .001$). These results indicated the distinction between autonomous and team-oriented forms of proactive personality in a team-based setting and suggested that team-oriented proactivity matched with the team-based context and thus is more beneficial for individuals to advance their career in such context.

Taken together, existing evidence showed that proactive personality indirectly influenced employee outcomes through different mediating mechanisms. Researchers have pointed out that proactive individuals produced better performance and behaviors by engaging in more task-driven behaviors, such as information seeking and searching, and goal-setting, or developing more beneficial relationships and networks with important roles at work, such as their leaders and coworkers. Furthermore, proactive personality has consistently been shown to be associated with career success by first generating attitudinal, cognitive, or behavioral influences. Future research endeavors can be taken to advance our understanding of *how* proactive personality plays a role in different contexts and through different mediators.

Review of Meta-analytic Findings

In this section, we review the relationships between proactive personality and its correlates that have been examined in meta-analyses. By using “proactive personality” and “meta-analysis” as keywords, we searched Google Scholar for published meta-analyses on proactive personality. In total, we identified four meta-analyses that explicitly examined proactive personality as a focal construct (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Thomas et al., 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013; Spitzmuller et al., in press). We also found seven meta-analyses on other topics that used proactive personality as a predictor (Alarcon et al., 2009; Allen et al., 2012; Christian et al., 2011; Ng et al., 2005; Ng & Feldman, 2012, 2014; Rauch & Frese, 2007). Table 8.1 lists the meta-analytic correlations between proactive personality and other variables examined in these meta-analyses. In both the Table and the following discussion, we group the correlates of proactive personality into several categories to better identify the types of variables that have been studied with proactive personality over time. In the discussion below, we group the variables into three broad categories: *dispositional and demographic characteristic; work motivation, attitudes, and states; and career success, proactive behavior, and job performance.*

Dispositional and Demographic Characteristics

All four meta-analyses on proactive personality estimated the relationships between proactive personality and the Big Five factors, which is a general taxonomy of personality (Digman, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 1989). Even though the magnitudes of effect sizes varied somewhat, the four studies consistently found that proactive personality is positively related to openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, and emotional stability, but not significantly associated with agreeableness. Fuller and Marler (2009) also examined the relationships between proactive personality and other dispositional variables and found that proactive people tend to be high in self-esteem, self-monitoring, and locus of control. In addition to dispositional characteristics, prior meta-analyses also investigated the relationships between proactive personality and other individual characteristics. Tornau and Frese (2013) found that demographic characteristics like age, gender, education and tenure were not significantly related to proactive personality. They also found significant positive relationships between proactive personality and general mental ability and work experience, but these findings were not consistent with the meta-analytic results reported by Thomas et al. (2010) and Spitzmuller et al. (in press).

Work Motivation, Attitudes, and States

Researchers have also studied the relationships between proactive personality and work motivation, attitudes, and states. In primary studies, these variables

TABLE 8.1 Summary of Meta-Analytic R results

<i>Variables</i>	<i>FM</i> (2009)	<i>TWV</i> (2010)	<i>TF</i> (2013)	<i>SSHf</i> (in press)	<i>NESF</i> (2005)	<i>RF</i> (2007)	<i>AEB</i> (2009)	<i>CGS</i> (2011)	<i>AJSCDE</i> (2012)	<i>NF</i> (2012)	<i>NF</i> (2014)
Big five personalities											
Openness	.34 (.30 .39)	.38 (.32 .44)	.31 (-)	.35 (.27 .43)							
Conscientiousness	.34 (.28 .40)	.39 (.31 .47)	.40 (-)	.35 (.30 .40)							
Extraversion	.41 (.35 .47)	.42 (.35 .49)	.38 (-)	.37 (.31 .45)							
Agreeableness	.07 (-.01 .15)	.02 (-.16 .20)	-.03 (-)	.01 (-.10 .15)							
Emotional stability	.12 (.05 .20)	.31 (.24 .38)	.25 (-)	.25 (.19 .30)							
Other dispositional variables											
Self-esteem	.37 (.25 .48)										
Self-monitoring	.25 (.11 .38)										
Locus of control	.29 (.13 .45)		.13 (-)								
Demographic characteristics											
General mental ability		.03 (-.11 .17)	.08 (-)	.09 (-.06 .24)							
Age		.04 (.00 .08)	.04 (-)								
Gender		.00 (-)	.00 (-)								
Education		.10 (-)	.10 (-)								
Tenure		.01 (-)	.01 (-)								
Work experience		.05 (-.02 .12)	.15 (-)								

(continued)

Work states

Work engagement

Emotional
exhaustion

Depersonalization

Personal
accomplishment

.44 (.37 .51)

-.23 (-)

-.25 (-)

.38 (-)

Career success

Subjective career
success

.31 (.27 .35)

.41 (.30 .53)

.36 (.30 .41)

.11 (-)

.16 (-)

Career satisfaction

.31 (.26 .36)

.14 (.05 .23)

.11 (.04 .18)

.38 (-)

.11 (-)

.16 (-)

Salary

.14 (.05 .23)

.11 (.04 .18)

Promotions

.11 (.04 .18)

.11 (.04 .18)

.16 (-)

**Proactive
behavior**

Voice

.26 (.21 .32)

.28 (.20 .36)

Taking charge

.28 (.20 .36)

.35 (.28 .42)

Creativity

.27 (.14 .39)

.21 (-)

.43 (.34 .52)

.32 (.17 .47)

Networking

.31 (.22 .39)

.27 (.21 .33)

Career initiative

.35 (.26 .44)

Feedback seeking

.23 (.12 .34)

Socialization

.19 (.10 .27)

Learning

.75 (.67 .84)

Readiness to change

.33 (.14 .51)

(continued)

TABLE 8.1 (continued)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>FM</i> (2009)	<i>TWV</i> (2010)	<i>TF</i> (2013)	<i>SSHf</i> (in press)	<i>NESF</i> (2005)	<i>RF</i> (2007)	<i>AEB</i> (2009)	<i>CGS</i> (2011)	<i>AJSCDE</i> (2012)	<i>NF</i> (2012)	<i>NF</i> (2014)
Job performance											
Overall performance	.38 (.26 .50)	.26 (.21 .31)	.24 (-)	.29 (.20 .38)							
Task performance	.24 (.14 .32)			.19 (.12 .27)							
Contextual performance	.41 (.30 .57)			.16 (.05 .27)							
Entrepreneurial variables											
Entrepreneurial cognitions	.42 (.34 .49)										
Entrepreneurial success						.20 (.12 .28)					
Other variables											
Organizational knowledge	.31 (.24 .39)										
Political knowledge	.27 (.18 .36)										
LMX	.30 (.24 .37)										
Social support			.19 (-)								
Work interfere with family											
Social desirability	.01 (-.04 .06)										

Note: FM (2009) = Fuller & Marler; 2009; TWV (2010) = Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran (2010); TF (2013) = Tornau & Frese (2013); SSHf (in press) = Spitzmuller, Sin, Howe, & Fatimah (in press); NESF (2005) = Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman (2005); RF (2007) = Rauch & Frese (2007); AEB (2009) = Alarcon, Eschleman, & Bowling (2009); CGS (2011) = Christian, Garza, & Slaughter (2011); AJSCDE (2012) = Allen, Johnson, Saboe, Cho, Dumani, & Evans (2012); NF (2012) = Ng & Feldman (2012); NF (2014) = Ng & Feldman (2014).

are often examined as mediators that can help explain why proactive personality may lead to career success, proactive behavior, and job performance. The findings of the four meta-analyses on proactive personality indicate that individuals with proactive personality tend to perceive more psychological empowerment, autonomy, job control, and role clarity at work and feel more confident to complete work tasks (self-efficacy) and pursue job- and career-related goals (flexibility role orientation, role breadth self-efficacy, career self-efficacy, and job search self-efficacy). It has also been demonstrated that proactive individuals are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs and committed to their organizations (high commitment and low turnover intention). Moreover, researchers have meta-analyzed the relationships between proactive personality and two opposing work states – work engagement and burnout. Christian et al. (2011) found that proactive individuals are more involved in their work environment and thus more engaged in their work. In contrast, Alarcon et al. (2009) found that proactive personality was negatively related to three sub-dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.

Career Success, Proactive Behavior, and Job Performance

Career success, proactive behavior, and job performance are three sets of variables that are often examined as distal outcomes of proactive personality. First, proactive personality has been found to positively relate to career success including both subjective career success and career satisfaction (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Spitzmuller et al., in press; Ng et al., 2005; Ng & Feldman, 2014) and objective career success such as salary and promotion (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Ng et al., 2005). Second, researchers have demonstrated positive relationships between proactive personality and a series of proactive behaviors, including voice behavior, taking charge, creativity, networking, career initiative, feedback seeking, socialization, learning, and readiness to change (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Ng & Feldman, 2012; Thomas et al., 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013; Spitzmuller et al., in press). Third, meta-analytic results supported the positive relationships between proactive personality and job performance including both task performance and contextual performance (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Thomas et al., 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013; Spitzmuller et al., in press).

In addition to estimating the bivariate correlations between proactive personality and other variables, meta-analysts also examined whether proactive personality is related to attitudinal and performance outcomes beyond other personality traits and individual characteristics. Using meta-analytic regression analyses, Thomas et al. (2010) and Tornau and Frese (2013) found a significant influence of proactive personality on overall job performance after controlling for the Big Five personality traits; however, the magnitude of the incremental variance explained in the Tornau and Frese (2013) meta-analysis was minuscule. Spitzmuller et al. (in press) found similar results for the impact of proactive

personality on overall job performance by considering the influence of both Big Five personality traits and general mental ability. When Spitzmuller et al. (in press) further categorized performance outcomes into task performance and contextual performance (or organizational citizenship behavior), they only found the unique contribution of proactive personality to task performance but not to contextual performance. Moreover, Spitzmuller et al. (in press) regressed job satisfaction on proactive personality along with Big Five personality traits and did not find a significant effect of proactive personality. These meta-analytic regression results suggest that even though proactive personality is positively related to many positive work attitudes and performance variables, it may only make unique contributions to certain – but not all – outcome variables beyond Big Five personality traits.

Other Variables

In addition to the relationships with the above-mentioned variables, proactive personality is also positively related to entrepreneurial cognitions (Fuller & Marler, 2009) and success (Rauch & Frese, 2007), organizational knowledge, political knowledge, and leader-member exchange (Fuller & Marler, 2009), and social support (Tornau & Frese, 2013). Allen et al. (2012) examined the relationships between proactive personality and work-family conflict and did not find significant results.

In summary, previous meta-analyses have condensed the relationships between proactive personality and a variety of variables ranging from dispositional variables and work motivation and attitudes to career success and performance outcomes. Some studies also examined moderators of some relationships, but most of the moderators were method-related (e.g., rating sources) but not driven by theories. Also, the existing meta-analyses focused on whether proactive personality is related to other variables and whether it makes unique contributions to explaining the variance of other variables beyond Big Five personality traits, but did not pay much attention to the mediating process through which proactive personality is related to different types of variables.

How Others View Proactive Personality: When is it Viewed Negatively?

Chapter 18 of this volume tackles the broad question of when and how proactive behavior can be seen as undesirable rather than desirable. Like many other constructs associated with proactive behavior – indeed, all organizational behavior – there is also a potential downside to proactive personality. Bateman and Crant (1993; 1999) warned that behaving in a proactive fashion is sometimes misguided and entails certain risks, both politically and in terms of others viewing it as potentially inappropriate. As the body of empirical

evidence has emerged over time, we have begun to understand the boundary conditions and the process by which proactive personality might yield unintended consequences, or be interpreted as a negative rather than positive trait.

One such study examined proactive personality in a team-based military setting, an officer development program within the United States Air Force (Hirschfeld et al., 2011). In this setting, the officers' proactive personality was negatively associated with observer ratings of their advancement potential; in contrast, team-oriented proactivity was strongly and positively associated with observed advancement potential. The authors interpret these findings as indicating that in particular careers and situations, contributions to the collective are interpreted more positively than seemingly self-focused acts. Thus, if those in positions of power have a bias against individuals taking action that calls attention to themselves, which may be the case for proactive personalities, they have the capacity to react negatively toward proactivity.

Individual differences in situational judgment effectiveness – the general ability to make sound judgments when faced with different situations – was found to be associated with a potential dark side to proactive personality. An interaction between proactive personality and situational judgment effectiveness predicted five self-reported work outcomes (e.g., perceived supervisor support, social integration) and supervisor ratings of job performance. In each case, proactive personality was negatively associated with the work-related criteria when situational judgment effectiveness was low, and positive when it was high. The ability to read a situation and determine an appropriate course of action, such as whether proactive behavior makes sense, appears to be important in both self-perceptions and others' reactions to the proactivity.

Person-organization fit and person-job fit were found to set boundary conditions in studies of the career outcomes of a sample of Turkish teachers and research productivity of US faculty members (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005). The positive effect of proactive personality in terms of enhanced intrinsic and extrinsic career success was a function of the extent to which there was alignment with organizational goals and values, and with job demands and personal capabilities.

The field of organizational behavior focuses heavily on understanding the concepts and processes that lead supervisors to have positive or negative reactions to employees and their behaviors. The idea of congruence between supervisor and subordinate is a core element of potential supervisor reactions. Supervisors who are themselves higher on the proactive personality construct are more likely to both appreciate and reward subordinate proactive behavior compared to more passive supervisors (Fuller et al., 2012). The congruence between leader and follower proactive personality was related to the quality of the exchange relationship (leader-member exchange), which in turn predicted work outcomes. A study of the perceived similarity of mentor/protégé proactive personality found that similarity/fit yielded better mentoring outcomes (Wanberg et al., 2006). Additionally, the effects of proactive

personality on outcomes such as life satisfaction, in-role performance, and organizational citizenship behavior is a function of self-concordance, or the extent to which goals are consistent with one's values, interests, and needs (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2010).

Perceptions of situational appropriateness and the preferences of others are key elements in the extent to which proactive personality and behavior are interpreted positively or negatively. Some situations, such as the hierarchical structure of the military, might lead proactive personalities to be categorized as self-interested and not a good fit with a particular job. The ability of a person to read a situation and react appropriately as to how proactivity might be interpreted is salient to both self and other beliefs. Fit or congruence is also important in understanding the potential dark side of proactive personality; not everyone values proactivity in others. Those whom themselves tend to be more maintenance-oriented or reactive may not interpret others' proactive personality and behavior as a good thing.

Practical Implications

A number of practical implications stem from this review. Perhaps the most obvious is the consistent evidence that proactive personality is, under the right circumstances, associated with desirable organizational outcomes like job performance, work motivation, and career satisfaction. There is a host of desirable constructs in addition to job performance that meta-analytic results suggest are associated with proactive personalities, such as empowerment, self-efficacy, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work engagement, voice behavior, and taking charge. This has implications for selection, promotion, and development. We acknowledge that not all jobs or situations call for higher levels of proactive behavior. But for those that do, using proactive personality as one part of a comprehensive selection and appraisal system might allow organizations to identify people with a more proactive disposition, and place them in jobs and situations that will yield the most benefit from their personality. We are unaware of any predictive validity studies that have used the proactive personality scale as a selection instrument, but the possibility is intriguing.

A second implication relates to the situations where proactive personality manifests itself in positive rather than negative work behaviors. A key issue that follows from this review is the idea of fit: both person-job and person-organization fit are important. Pairing a proactive employee with a proactive supervisor increases the odds that an employee's proactivity will be appreciated and not viewed as inappropriate. Furthermore, proactive individuals will thrive more fully in organizations with supportive organizational cultures that allow the behaviors to flourish. Thus, some attention must be paid to the situation in which a proactive employee is placed. How proactive behaviors are interpreted by others is in part a function of the specifics of the situation.

Conclusions and Suggestions for Future Research

This subjective review of the proactive personality literature has summarized a large number of studies, allowing some patterns and remaining challenges to be identified. The original article continues to be cited regularly and the PPS is frequently used today in the organizational literature; interest remains high in understanding the proactive component of work behavior, and proactive personality has emerged as the leading “trait” conceptualization of that endeavor.

The evidence suggests that the PPS has strong psychometric properties. It appears that the full 17-item version is not necessary to accurately categorize an individual’s level of proactive personality. The 10-item version of the scale is the most frequently used measure, and the results suggest that little precision is lost in going from 17 to 10 items. The six-item version has also been used with success; there is less empirical data available about this version, but for those researchers pressed for space in a large-scale data collection effort, this version is appealing. The indicators of sound psychometric properties – reliability and validity – are well established in the PPS. All versions are unidimensional and yield consistently high reliability estimates. Convergent, discriminant, and criterion validities have been well established.

An important issue is the proliferation of constructs related to proactive personality and behavior and how proactive personality fits into the nomological net. We refer readers interested in exploring this concept further to two seminal works on the topic by Parker and Collins (2010) and Torneau and Frese (2013). It is clear from these two works that proactive personality adds value to the literature in predicting proactive work behaviors, but it also has some potential issues. Parker and Collins created a taxonomy of proactive behavior that separated proactive work behavior, proactive strategic behavior, and proactive person-environment fit behavior. Proactive personality was most strongly associated with the first of these categories in their data, and Parker and Collins (2010) hypothesize that the bandwidth of proactive personality is too narrow to predict proactive behaviors across all three of these domains. They based this conclusion in part on their finding that proactive personality was not associated with proactive person-environment fit behaviors like career initiative. The zero-order correlations between proactive personality and four person-environment fit behaviors were all significant in the Parker and Collins (2010) study; however, the effects went away when proactive personality was included in a broader model that contained other dispositions, such as future orientation and learning-goal orientation. Multiple meta-analyses have established relationships between proactive personality and career-related outcomes and socialization, which are person-environment fit outcomes. This is an area that perhaps is deserving of further scrutiny. A similar issue is Tornau and Frese’s (2013) contention that proactive personality has very low to no incremental validity for work performance beyond the Big Five personality factors. This is also counter to the findings in other meta-analyses, and might be fruitfully explored more fully.

The state vs trait question is underexplored. There is very little evidence for the test-retest correlations, and what evidence is available is over a fairly short time horizon. Furthermore, some evidence suggests that proactive behavior changes depending on both traits and situations, and that it can be taught and learned. Our assumption is that like most things in life, proactive personality is a function of both nature and nurture. We do believe that most people have a fairly consistent predisposition to behave in a proactive or reactive fashion over time, but it is not unreasonable to assume that a reactive person can be trained to think in a more proactive fashion. Perhaps at this stage of the evolution of the construct, the point is moot because so much research has supported the idea of proactive personality as a predictor of proactive behaviors and important work outcomes. Thus, one can think of proactive personality as the “trait” component of proactivity, and the specific proactive behaviors as the “state” component. The state vs trait idea might be ripe for further exploration, particularly with advances in the field of behavioral genetics.

Finally, the review of individual articles and the many meta-analyses revealed a number of main effects, interactions, and mediating relationships. It is reasonable to conclude that proactive personality “matters” in the sense that it is associated with and predicts variables that are important to organizational scholars. The research has evolved over the twenty-year period from a search for main effects to a search for moderators and mediators. The precision of the prediction of outcomes via proactive personality is enhanced through this process. But it would be a mistake to interpret the evidence as indicating that proactive personality is always a desirable trait; there is a potential downside in terms of a misfit with supervisor preference and political risk associated with moving beyond maintenance behaviors. When two people have different views on the value of proactive behaviors, there is the potential for conflict.

Proactive personality has played an important role in the larger debate over the role of proactive behavior at work. During the twenty-year period that is the focus of this chapter, a resurgence of interest in the concept of proactive behavior has led to a number of theories, perspectives, and constructs along with a wealth of new knowledge about the forms and outcomes of work-related proactivity. The evidence is overwhelming that proactive personality and behavior can lead to or be associated with desirable work-related outcomes. One conclusion that can be drawn from this review is that proactive personality plays a meaningful role in one’s work life and experiences.

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9

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN PROACTIVITY

A Developmental Perspective

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Individuals vary in their tendency to engage in proactive behavior. To explain these individual differences, scholars have focused on the role of personality traits in shaping proactive behavior. In this chapter, we first review studies that examine the effect of personality traits and their joint influence with environmental factors in shaping proactive behavior. We next employ a personality development perspective to suggest that environmental factors can shape individuals' personality over time and thus their proactive behavior, in the long run, extending the research by introducing a different perspective of personality. The implications of the personality development perspective for proactivity research are discussed.

Proactive behavior refers to self-initiated and future-oriented actions that aim to change or improve situations or oneself (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006), which is a desirable work behavior to master complex and uncertain work environments (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007). To date, various research has indicated that proactive behavior can have various positive outcomes at different levels, such as employees' performance and career development (e.g., Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010) and team (e.g., Chen, Farh, Campbell-Bush, Wu, & Wu, 2013) and organizational (e.g., Raub & Liao, 2012) effectiveness. To understand how to enhance proactivity in organizations, research has identified various environmental antecedents of proactive behavior so that organizations can use management practices, such as job design (e.g., Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2007), leadership styles (e.g., Wu & Parker, in press), and the work climate (e.g., Raub & Liao, 2012), to enhance employee proactivity (see Bindl & Parker, 2010, for reviews; Wu & Parker, 2011b).

The focus on the environmental antecedents of proactive behavior, however, ignores that employees can vary in their propensity to be proactive,

and such individual attributes can shape employees' engagement of proactive behavior. This dispositional effect should not be neglected in understanding proactive behavior because, by definition, proactive behavior is self-initiated and is not necessarily tied to formal performance appraisals (Van Dyne & LePineLePine, 1998). This behavior is thus very likely shaped by an individual's propensity, values, and beliefs. Drawing on an individual differences perspective, several studies have examined effect of dispositional factors on proactive behavior, including examinations of the Big Five personality traits (e.g., Crant, Kim, & Wang, 2011; LePine & Van Dyne, 2001), proactive personality traits (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Fuller & Marler, 2009; Tornau & Frese, 2013), and other specific personality traits, such as the need for cognition (Wu, Parker, & de Jong, 2014b) and prosocial orientation (e.g., Grant & Mayer, 2009). Because of these findings, recent research on proactive behavior has considered the role of dispositional factors more explicitly and further discussed the potential interaction effects between individual factors and environmental antecedent factors in shaping proactive behavior (e.g., Chen et al., 2013; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012; Grant & Rothbard, 2013; Raub & Liao, 2012; Wu & Parker, in press).

Despite this progress, the assumptions that dispositional traits are static attributes of individuals that cannot be changed and the notion that dispositional traits and situational characteristics are independent factors/forces that drive individual behavior are dominant in proactivity research. This conventional perspective, although helpful for understanding who tends to engage in proactive behavior and when, ignores the possibility that work environments, personality, and behavior can shape each other in a longitudinal reciprocal process, as described in Bandura's (1986) triadic reciprocal causation model. Additionally, recent research in personality psychology has provided ample evidence that indicates that personality traits change across the life span as the environment changes (Hudson, Roberts, & Lodi-Smith, 2012; Li, Fay, Frese, Harms, & Gao, 2014; Wu, Griffin, & Parker, in press). The more nuanced interplay between the environment and personality is more dynamic than mechanistic, as was conventionally assumed (e.g., Endler & Parker, 1992; Reynolds et al., 2010). The perspective of personality development, therefore, indicates a possibility that an individual can become more proactive at a dispositional, deep level if s/he encounters an environment that facilitates this tendency over a time period. This possibility thus suggests a deeper and enduring approach to promoting employees' proactive behavior because employees should engage in more proactive behavior in different situations and across time frames when their general proactive tendency is intensified.

To facilitate our understanding of individual differences in proactive behavior, this chapter has two goals. First, we provide a state-of-the-art review to understand what dispositional traits have been identified and their interaction

effects with environmental factors in shaping proactive behavior from a conventional, mechanistic interactionism perspective. Second, we extend the idea of personality development into proactivity research by discussing what type of work environment that can change one's traits by facilitating proactive behavior from a dynamic interactionism perspective. In the following sections, we first provide a review of previous research and then move to the discussion on the personality development perspective. We finally provide suggestions for future proactivity research based on our review and discussion.

Review of Existing Approaches to Individual Differences of Proactivity

To present our review, we use two classification frameworks of personality traits. The first one is the content classification of personality traits, which classifies traits based on their contents. The widely used Big Five personality traits belong to this classification framework; it clusters specific facets of traits into five broader traits based on a lexical analysis (see De Raad, 2000). The second framework is a functional classification of personality traits, which classifies traits based on their cognitive, affective, and instrumental nature in shaping behavior (Buss & Finn, 1987). In addition to these three aspects, we include interpersonal traits as an additional classification to cover research on the role of interpersonal orientation in shaping proactive behavior.

Below, we first review studies that involve Big Five traits and then studies that focus on other specific traits using the functional classification of personality traits. As mentioned by Wu, Parker, and Bindl (2013), these two classification frameworks are not mutually exclusive; a trait can be realized and classified in both classification frameworks. The purpose of using these two classification frameworks here is to simplify the presentation of our review. We do not intend to imply that a specific trait can be discussed in only one classification framework but not the other. To provide a general picture of the links between personality traits and proactive behavior, we include research that covers different forms of proactive behavior instead of focusing on a specific type of proactive behavior. Moreover, following Crant (2000), we conceptualize proactive behavior as a positive organizational behavior that aims to bring constructive changes and review only studies that focus on behavior in line with this view. Although individuals can also proactively engage in aggressive or counterproductive behavior (Spector, 2011), such as harming others, to fulfill their own interests, to achieve goals, such as getting a promotion, we do not incorporate studies that focus on counterproductive behavior because first, proactivity research focuses primarily on positive forms of organizational behavior, and second, whether the concept of proactivity helps to understand aggressive behavior, such as the discussion in a framework of hostile-versus-instrumental aggression, is questionable (Bushman & Anderson, 2001).

Review with a Content Classification of Big Five Personality Traits

Extroversion

Extroversion, characterized by a need for stimulation, assertiveness, and activities, can facilitate proactive behavior because people high in this dimension of the trait are more energetic and thrive off of being around other people, which brings chances and sustains effort to initiate changes. Supporting this view, in a meta-analysis report, extroversion was found to have a positive correlation with personal initiative, taking charge, and voice behavior (Tornau & Frese, 2013). In another meta-analysis report that focused on citizenship behavior, extroversion was also positively related to change-oriented citizenship behavior (Chiaburu, Oh, Berry, Li, & Gardner, 2011). Its effect on proactive behavior is solid; the six facets in extroversion (i.e., warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement-seeking, and positive emotions) were all positively related to voice in LePine and Van Dyne's (2001) facet analysis. Because people high in extroversion are good at initiating and maintaining social interactions (Asendorpf & Wilpers, 1998), extroversion is also particularly important for facilitating proactive behavior in a relational context. Indeed, extroversion has been found to positively associate with overt and covert relational information-seeking and covert task and performance information-seeking (Tidwell & Sias, 2005) and feedback-seeking and relationship-building among newcomers (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

Although extroversion can facilitate active engagement within a social-related endeavor, it may not necessarily direct a person's proactive behavior to be more prosocial, e.g., more interpersonally oriented or team oriented. In a framework of personality traits, Ashton and Lee (2001) indicated that extroversion is orthogonal to personality traits, such as agreeableness, that govern the prosocial intentions behind behavior. In other words, this framework suggests that the level of engagement in social actions is orthogonal to the intention behind it and thus that extroversion is orthogonal to prosocial behavior. In support of this view, Carlo, Okun, Knight, and Guzman (2005) reported that agreeableness had a stronger predictive effect ($b = .312, p < .001, n = 796$) than extroversion ($b = .095, p < .01, n = 796$) on prosocial value motives, which in turn positively predicted volunteer behavior. This finding can also be explained by the fact that people high in extroversion focus more on the extent to which they can attract social attention from others (Ashton, Lee, & Paunonen, 2002), which is very different from an orientation concerning others or collective groups. To explain why people high in extroversion do not necessarily engage in interpersonally oriented/team-oriented types of proactivity, Grant, Gino, and Hofmann (2011) offer another theoretical account based on dominance complementarity theory. Basically, they suggest that people high in extroversion often "seek out status

and act assertive, interpersonally dominant, talkative, and outgoing” (p.530) and are more likely to express their agency and exert their control to enact changes they aimed for. In other words, people high in extroversion can utilize their social dominance and skills to approach their proactive goals, which may not necessarily be interpersonally or team oriented. Our reasoning thus indicates an avenue for future research to look at the links between extroversion and proactive behavior by systematically taking different types of proactive behavior into account and unpacking the underlying mechanisms behind those associations.

Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness, the tendency to be organized, persistent, responsible, and dependable, has been theorized to be positively linked to proactive behavior because people high in conscientiousness are dedicated to their work and are thus more likely to put their effort into making improvements at work and to be persistent to achieve their goals when facing obstacles (e.g., Tornau & Frese, 2013). Supporting this, conscientiousness and tendencies related to dependability, conformity, and perseverance have been positively linked to various proactive behaviors (Tornau & Frese, 2013), such as personal initiative (Fay & Frese, 2001), proactive job search (Kanfer, Wanberg, & Kantrowitz, 2001), overt performance and task information-seeking (Tidwell & Sias, 2005), career planning behaviors (Carless & Bernath, 2007) and voice (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001).

Nevertheless, as reported by Parker and Collins (2010), the association of conscientiousness with proactive work behaviors, such as taking charge and voice, becomes weak when the effects of other dispositional variables (i.e., goal orientation and proactive personality) were controlled for. The positive association of conscientiousness with proactive strategic behaviors (e.g., issue-selling credibility) and proactive person-environment fit behaviors (e.g., feedback inquiry and monitoring) were relatively robust. To explain the difference, they argued that because conscientious individuals tend to be rather cautious and appreciative of rules and tend to be dependable and therefore strive to fit in well with the organization, they are not likely to engage in proactive work or strategic behavior that is more change-oriented, but they are likely to engage in proactive person-environment fit behaviors to reflect their dependency in organizations. This finding thus indicates the importance of distinguishing between different forms of proactive behavior.

Conscientiousness, as a broader personality concept, incorporates several specific facets that can also have different effects on proactivity and thus shape an overall association between conscientiousness and a particular proactive behavior. For example, because people high in dutifulness are more other-focused and thus tend to engage in behavior with an intention to benefit the organization, and people high in achievement-striving are more self-focused and thus tend not to do so, Moon, Kamdar, Mayer, and Takeuchi (2008) theorized and found that

the facet of dutifulness (e.g., adhering to rules and obligations) was positively related to taking charge, but the facet of achievement-striving (e.g., being hard-working and having higher aspirations) was negatively related to taking charge. These different associations with taking charge thus result in a null association between conscientiousness and taking charge. This finding reflects the complexity of conscientiousness in its definition and internal structure (Digman, 1990).

Openness to Experience

Openness to experience is the other Big Five personality dimension that should contribute to proactive behavior because a strong tendency to explore the unfamiliar will motivate an individual to think differently and consider using alternative ways to improve a situation (Wu & Parker, in press). As articulated by Frese and Fay (2001), exploration is important at the information-collection and prognosis stages in a proactive action process because an active and self-started search is necessary for identifying barriers, looking for alternative solutions, and exploring opportunities before problems occur. However, Bateman and Crant (1993) argued that an open personality implies a tolerance of others' thoughts, leading to an unwillingness to rise to challenges; thus, they argued that openness to experience would not contribute to proactive behavior. Accordingly, similar to the complexity of conscientiousness, openness to experience as a whole is not an ideal concept to test for the potential effects on proactivity because some specific facets related to proactivity are grouped with other non-relevant facets. This could explain the unreliable relationship between openness to experience and proactivity in the existing studies. For example, several studies have found a non-significant correlation between openness and personal initiative (Fay & Frese, 2001), voice (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001) and different types of information seeking (Tidwell & Sias, 2005), whereas a meta-analysis report indicates a positive correlation between openness and personal initiative, taking charge and voice behavior (Tornau & Frese, 2013) along with feedback-seeking and positive framing, the two types of proactive socialization behavior for newcomers (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). In a recent study, Wu et al. (2014b) reported a positive correlation between openness to experience and individual innovation behavior, but this positive association became insignificant when the effects of other traits, such as a proactive personality and the need for cognition (discussed later), were controlled for. This finding thus indicates that openness to experience is more distal than other traits in influencing individuals' proactive behavior.

Because different facets of openness to experience may have different associations with proactive behavior, the effect of openness on proactivity can be further clarified when the analysis is conducted at the facet level. In the facet analysis, LePine and Van Dyne (2001) found the facet of actions (i.e., willingness to try different activities and preference for novelty over the familiar or routines)

in the open personality type was positively correlated to voice. This finding is consistent with the results reported by Griffin et al. (2007) such that those high in openness to change are more likely to engage in proactive behavior for individual, team, and organizational benefits. LePine and Van Dyne (2001) also found that facets including fantasy (i.e., receptivity to the inner world of imagination), aesthetics (i.e., appreciation of art and beauty), feelings (i.e., openness to inner feelings and emotions), ideas (i.e., intellectual curiosity), and values (i.e., individuals' readiness to re-examine their own values and those of authority figures) were not significantly correlated to voice. These facets would not contribute to proactive behavior because they focus more on internal, private thinking than the facet of actions, which is more concerned with enacting. Nevertheless, there are also findings that suggest that the facet of ideas and values can also play a role in facilitating individuals' proactive behavior because intellectual curiosity and the re-examination of values can actually bring a different view to understand the situation and thus come up with alternative ways for improvement. For example, Kashdan and Steger (2007) found that the trait of curiosity fosters daily growth behavior, involving proactive social behaviors and proactive, goal-directed efforts. Employees who are high in intellectual curiosity were also found to be more likely to engage in environmental scanning, which then leads to more champion behavior in innovation (e.g., having conviction in innovation, building involvement and support, and persisting under adversity) and higher performance (Howell & Shea, 2001). Moreover, relating to the facet of values, Fay and Frese (2000) showed that psychologically conservative individuals, who are high in authoritarianism and the rejection of foreigners, scored lower on personal initiative and change orientation at work. Similarly, Fay and Frese (2001), in longitudinal analyses of the same sample, reported consistently positive correlations between individuals' readiness to change and their current and future level of personal initiative. Overall, the inconsistent findings on the associations of openness to experience and its facets with proactive behavior suggest a need to delve into the puzzle.

Agreeableness

Agreeableness, represented by a tendency to be pleasant and compassionate in social interactions, was not found to have a reliable association with proactive behavior in a meta-analysis study (Tornau & Frese, 2013). On the one hand, people high in this trait are sympathetic and cooperative and tend to avoid interpersonal conflict, which will prevent them from initiating change because such proactive action may result in resistance from others (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010) and interpersonal conflict (Janssen, 2003). In line with this view, agreeableness was not related to personal initiative (Fay & Frese, 2001), and its facet of compliance and tender-mindedness (i.e., attitude of sympathy for others) was even negatively related to voice (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001). On the other hand,

being sympathetic and cooperative may actually cause those high in agreeableness to be more proactive because their consideration of others can evoke a prosocial motivation for leading changes. In a recent study, agreeableness was found to predict prosocial voice positively, and this positive association was stronger when the participative climate in the work group was high (Lee, Diefendorff, Kim, & Bian, 2014). This finding suggests that people high in agreeableness are more likely to speak up for prosocial reasons and when the environment is favorable for such a voice. Moreover, as agreeableness helps build and main social relationships (Asendorpf & Wilpers, 1998), it may actually facilitate individuals' proactive action when a good quality of social relationships is desired. Supporting this possibility, agreeableness was positively correlated with overt relational information-seeking and task information-seeking (Tidwell & Sias, 2005), which requires good social interactions with others at work. Accordingly, the association between agreeableness and proactive behavior is more complex than one would expect. More research is needed to understand when and why agreeableness can promote or inhibit proactive behavior.

Neuroticism

Neuroticism, the tendency to experience negative emotions, is theoretically expected to have a negative association with proactive behavior for several reasons. First, individuals who are prone to experience negative emotions have less self-confidence (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997), which will lead them to question whether they can successfully initiate changes (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). Second, in their behavioral concordance model, Côté and Moskowitz (1998) proposed that:

. . . individuals with high scores on a personality characteristic experience positively valenced affect when engaging in congruent behavior compared with individuals with low scores on that personality characteristic. In contrast, individuals with high scores on a personality characteristic experience more negatively valenced affect when engaging in behavior discordant with the trait than individuals with low scores on that personality characteristic experience when engaging in that behavior. (p. 1033)

In line with this view, Côté and Moskowitz found that people high in neuroticism experienced little pleasant affect when engaging in agreeable or dominant behavior in social interactions (behaviors that are not concordant to neuroticism traits) and engaged in less agreeable or dominant behavior. Following this, people high in neuroticism will engage in less proactive behavior because they would feel uncomfortable doing so.

Empirically, Tidwell and Sias (2005) found a negative relationship between neuroticism and overt information-seeking on performance. A similar finding

was obtained by LePine and Van Dyne (2001), who found that neuroticism, particularly the facet of vulnerability, was negatively related to voice. Grant, Parker, and Collins (2009) also found a negative correlation between negative affectivity (a concept similar to neuroticism) and proactive behavior, particularly voice behavior. However, a null association between neuroticism and proactive behavior was also reported in different studies. For example, Fay and Frese (2001) did not find a significant relation between neuroticism and personal initiative, nor did Griffin et al. (2007) on the relationship between neuroticism and proactive behavior. Strauss, Griffin, and Rafferty (2009) also found non-significant relationships between neuroticism and proactive behavior. In a meta-analysis study (Tornau & Frese, 2013), neuroticism correlated negatively with personal initiative, taking charge, and voice behavior, but the associations were relatively small. One potential reason behind these mixed findings could be that people high in neuroticism may actually take proactive action because negative emotions can serve as psychological signals that motivate individuals to take action to improve situations (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2007). Nevertheless, understanding when such a proactive mechanism would occur is the key to unpacking inconsistent associations between neuroticism and proactive behavior.

Review with a Functional Classification of Personality Traits

The framework of Big Five personality traits, although it covers five broader traits, does not include all personality traits. To date, a vast number of studies have indicated that traits that have not been included in the Big Five personality traits framework can also shape individuals' proactive behavior. To review the effect of these traits on proactive behavior, here, we adopt a functional classification of personality traits to summarize previous findings.

Based on three aspects of behavior (i.e., cognitive, affective, and instrumental; James, 1890), Buss and Finn (1987) classify traits into three categories: cognitive traits, which govern behavior with a large component of thoughts, imagination, and information processing, affective traits, which shape behaviors with a strong emotional component, and instrumental traits, which drive behaviors that have an effect on the environment. As indicated by Wu et al. (2013), this functional classification framework helps understand proactive behavior by unpacking potential psychological mechanisms (i.e., cognitive, affective, or enactive) based on analyses of traits. Specifically, to take proactive action, an individual will need to envision a better future, identify opportunities, and generate ideas to provide an alternative view or methods to challenge the status quo, which requires cognitive effort (Frese & Fay, 2001). Additionally, s/he will need to have enough energy to go through potential obstacles and overcome resistance from others when bringing about changes. As such, emotional responses are part of proactive actions because being proactive will require an individual's emotion regulation to sustain all proactive actions (Bindl, Parker,

Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012). Finally, because proactive behavior aims to shape the environment, a tendency to interact with the environment is therefore an essential part of being proactive (Bateman & Crant, 1993). These features of proactive behavior suggest that proactive behavior can be shaped by cognitive, affective, and instrumental traits.

In addition to these three classifications of traits, we included interpersonal traits as a classification of traits. This type of trait has not been included in Big Five personality traits or functional classification proposed by Buss and Finn (1987), but it has a role in shaping proactive behavior because being proactive involves relational and social considerations. For example, proactive behavior that aims to bring about change has been described as psychologically risky because of the discomfort this behavior can cause in others (Parker et al., 2010) and because of the potential for damage to one's reputation and image if the proactivity is unsuccessful (Ashford, Blatt, & VandeWalle, 2003; Morrison & Bies, 1991). Moreover, an individual may need to develop social networks to obtain the latitude and resources to pursue such initiatives successfully (Thompson, 2005). Therefore, individuals who get along easily with others and are less likely to worry about themselves in social relationships will be more motivated to behave proactively. Interpersonal dispositions have been discussed in the proactivity literature only recently, and we aim to include this type of research in our review.

Cognitive Traits

We identify future orientation, goal orientation, the need for cognition and self-concept as four cognitive traits. **Future orientation** is defined as the degree to which an individual is thoughtful about the future in goal-setting, planning, and evaluation (Nurmi, 1991), which enables him/her to consider possible outcomes and take action in advance (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997; Frese & Fay, 2001; Grant & Ashford, 2008). Empirically, Strauss, Griffin, and Parker (2012) reported that future orientation can positively contribute to proactive career behavior such as planning and networking. Parker and Collins (2010) also showed that the consideration of future consequences positively predicts multiple proactive behaviors, such as innovation, issue-selling, strategic scanning, and career initiative. In a leadership context, Zhang, Wang, and Pearce (2014) found that leaders high in the consideration of future consequences tend to engage in more transformational leadership behavior, which includes articulating a vision and seeking new opportunities for the work unit/organization. They further indicated that such a positive association is stronger in lower rather than higher dynamic work environments because people high in the consideration of future consequences tend to rely on a stable work environment to project the future and thus perform transformational leadership behavior toward their subordinates.

Goal orientation shapes proactive behavior because it influences the individual's attention and direction in goal selection and thus determines whether he/she

will pursue a proactive goal. Studies have reported that individuals who are high in learning goal orientation (a preference to understand or master new things) as opposed to performance goal orientation (a preference to gain favorable, and avoid negative, judgments of their competence; Dweck, 1986) are more likely to engage in proactive behavior, such as feedback-seeking (Parker & Collins, 2010; VandeWalle, 1997; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; VandeWalle, Ganesan, Challagalla, & Brown, 2000) and change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior (i.e., taking charge; Bettencourt, 2004). One explanation for the favorable role of learning goal orientation is that individuals who emphasize learning processes rather than demonstrating capability might find it less risky and more valuable to engage in feedback-seeking and therefore engage more frequently in this type of behavior (VandeWalle, 2003; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997).

However, Tuckey, Brewer, and Williamson (2002) obtained an inconsistent finding regarding the likelihood of feedback-seeking in an employee sample. Their findings suggested that performance goal orientation plays an important role in feedback-seeking. Specifically, they found that learning goal orientation did not predict the two indicators of feedback-seeking, whereas performance-prove goal orientation (the seeking of favorable appraisals) consistently and negatively predicted the two indicators, and performance-avoid goal orientation (the avoidance of negative appraisals) positively predicted the likelihood of feedback-seeking, which is inconsistent with VandeWalle and Cummings' (1997) findings. Tuckey et al.'s (2002) findings revealed that employees who are high in performance-prove goal orientation had stronger motives for not seeking feedback, such as a lower desire for useful information, a higher desire to protect their ego, and a higher tendency to adopt defensive impression management. In addition, they found that the performance-avoid goal orientation interacts with performance level in predicting the likelihood of feedback-seeking, such that the positive relation between performance-avoid goal orientation and feedback-seeking was stronger among employees with better performance, suggesting that people with performance-avoid goal orientation tend to seek feedback only when they perform better to avoid the potential cost of seeking feedback.

Nevertheless, performance goal orientation can also have a beneficial effect on proactive behavior. For example, Bettencourt (2004) found a positive relation between performance goal orientation and taking charge. This finding is consistent with Elliot and Harackiewicz's (1996) argument that learning and performance goal orientations can lead to similar positive outcomes because both orientations are focused on attaining favorable outcomes, although they draw on different purposes, such as task mastery and normative competence, respectively. Their argument is further supported by studies in which performance goal orientation was further divided into performance-prove and performance-avoid goal orientations. As reported by Belschak and Den Hartog (2010), when learning,

performance-prove and performance-avoid goal orientations were examined to predict three types of proactive behavior toward personal, interpersonal, and organizational benefits: Learning goal orientation positively predicted only organizational proactive behavior, performance-prove goal orientation positively predicted all types of proactive behavior, and performance-avoid goal orientation negatively predicted all types of proactive behavior. Thus, the effect of goal orientation on proactive behavior is more complex than might be expected; further studies are called for.

Several studies have examined when goal orientation will be more influential in shaping proactive behavior. Focusing on feedback-seeking, VandeWalle et al. (2000) reported that individuals' learning goal orientation becomes more important in their perception of higher value (e.g., usefulness of feedback) and lower cost (e.g., low risk of asking for feedback) of feedback-seeking when they work with inconsiderate supervisors, an aversive condition for feedback-seeking. A similar finding was obtained in predicting creativity. Huan and Luthans (in press) found that learning goal orientation becomes more important in leading more creative behavior at work via the effect psychological capital in a less learning-oriented team environment because in such a work environment, an external force for learning and creativity is lacking, and thus, individual differences in learning goal orientation becomes critical to shaping employees' creative performance. Liu, Wang, and Wayne (in press) indicated that newcomers high in learning goal orientation are more likely to receive more monitoring support to facilitate their creativity at work if they engage in more impression management tactics. In terms of the contingency of performance goal orientation, Bettencourt (2004) found that people high in performance goal orientation tend to engage in proactive behavior under transformational leadership but tend not to engage in such behavior under contingent reward leadership. This is because those people tend to adjust their behavior according to expected performance under specific leadership content and thus change their focuses in extra-role or in-role tasks.

Being proactive involves not only doing but also thinking, such as imagining how things might be different and generating new ideas or alternative ways to do jobs (Frese & Fay, 2001). **Need for cognition**, a dispositional tendency to engage in and enjoy thinking (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982), should therefore be able to *positively predict* proactive behavior (Wu et al., 2014b). According to Cacioppo, Petty, Feinstein, and Jarvis (1996), individuals who are high in the need for cognition:

“. . . tend to have active, exploring minds, and, through their senses and intellect, they reach and draw out information from their environment; accordingly, they are more likely to expend effort on information acquisition, reasoning, and problem solving to cope with a wide variety of predicaments in their world” (p. 245).

People high in the need for cognition are thus expected to be comfortable initiating change that deviates from the status quo. They are also likely to process more information in any given situation and therefore are better able to predict the future and come up with plans to address the anticipated situation.

Wu et al. (2014b) identified several ways in which the need for cognition can facilitate the thinking involved in proactivity. First, people high in the need for cognition are more likely to engage in and enjoy situations marked by novelty, complexity, and uncertainty (Cacioppo et al., 1996), which is typically when proactivity is called for, as indicated by Griffin et al., (2007). Second, people high in the need for cognition have a higher ability to link new knowledge to previous knowledge in the pursuit of comprehension and can flexibly change learning strategies to acquire new information (Evans, Kirby, & Fabrigar, 2003). As such, they can process information deeply and quickly, which is helpful for proactivity because to set and achieve a proactive goal, an individual must determine what type of information is valuable in that situation and then make appropriate plans to bring about change in the future. Third, individuals high in the need for cognition tend to form a strong attitude toward objects after cognitive elaboration (Haugtvedt & Petty, 1992), which then sustains behavior that is consistent with their attitude (Cacioppo, Petty, Kao, & Rodriguez, 1986). Thus, individuals who are high in the need for cognition tend to be more likely to persist in the pursuit of a proactive goal because they develop ownership of the idea once they have spent time thinking it through. Taking all of the above into account, Wu et al. (2014b) therefore suggest that compared to individuals with a low need for cognition, employees with a higher need for cognition are more likely to engage in proactive work behavior because they enjoy novel situations, are better able to learn from information in a situation, are likely to be strongly committed to goals, and are more able to cope adaptively with obstacles that are commonly encountered with proactive action. In a sample of 179 employees working in a research and consultancy organization in the Netherlands, Wu et al. (2014b) found that the need for cognition positively predicted individuals' innovation behavior. They also found that the need for cognition is more important for shaping individuals' innovation behavior when job autonomy and time pressure are lower but less important when job autonomy and time pressure are higher. This is because higher job autonomy encourages – and time pressure requires – the employee to be more innovative, regardless of the employee's dispositional tendency to prefer thinking. When job autonomy and time pressure are lower, there is no situational force that drives individuals to be innovative, and thus, employees' dispositional tendency in thinking (i.e., need for cognition) becomes important for shaping individual innovation behavior.

Consistent with the importance of perceived capability for engaging in proactive behaviors, dispositional constructs related to individuals' *perception of self*, such as self-esteem, have also been positively linked to proactive behavior

(Kanfer et al., 2001). General self-efficacy, a trait-level concept of self-efficacy that describes perceived self-competence in performing behavior to achieve goals, has also been linked to proactive behavior, including take-charge behavior (Morrison & Phelps, 1999) and proactive customer behavior (Raub & Liao, 2012). Johnson, Kristof-Brown, Van Vianen, De Pater, and Klein (2003) also reported that people with positive core self-evaluations, a fundamental and broader self-evaluations construct, tend to engage in more social network-building activities, a form of proactive behavior in social domains.

In addition to the main effect on proactive behavior, studies also reported that self-perception had interaction effects with situational factors in shaping proactive behavior. Specifically, LePine and Van Dyne (1998) reported that individuals with low self-esteem were more receptive to favorable situational characteristics that promote voice behaviors in a group that is self-managed (e.g., a group with high levels of overall group autonomy) than were individuals with high levels of self-esteem. Similarly, Speier and Frese (1997) showed that the relationship between job control and initiative is stronger for individuals who have a lower general self-efficacy, suggesting that people low in general self-efficacy rely more on the resources of job control to enact proactive behavior than their counterparts do. These findings reveal that favorable situational characteristics can weaken the positive association between positive self-perception and proactive behavior because people who do not possess a positive self-view will be more recipient to favorable situational characteristics and behave more proactively than those possessing positive self-views. This finding is consistent with behavioral plasticity theory (Brockner, 1988), which posits that people low in self-worth are more likely to be influenced and to regulate their behavior according to situations.

In a recent study, Liang and Gong (in press) examined interaction effects among personality traits in predicting proactive behavior in a mentoring relationship and specifically focused on the interaction effects of core self-evaluations and proactive personality (i.e., a dispositional tendency to master external environment; Bateman & Crant, 1993). In line with their reasoning that a positive view can foster a person's attempt to master situations with the confidence of overcoming potential obstacles and risks, they found that people high in core self-evaluations and a higher proactive personality engaged in more networking behavior and voice behavior. Their research helps understand who is more likely to utilize a positive self-view to initiate changes, a new approach to examining the boundary conditions of self-perception in shaping proactive behavior.

Affective Traits

In terms of affective traits, we review research on the effect of *trait positive affectivity* and *trait negative affectivity* on proactive behavior. Drawing on

Fredrickson's (1998) broaden-and-build theory of positive emotion, Parker (2007) proposed that positive affect is likely to influence the selection of proactive goals because it expands thinking and results in more flexible cognitive processes (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001; Isen, 1999), which in turn help individuals to think ahead and rise to the challenge of pursuing proactive goals. Consistent with this idea, Ashforth, Sluss and Saks (2007) reported a positive correlation between positive affectivity and proactive socialization behaviors. Den Hartog and Belschak (2007) found that positive affectivity was positively related to personal initiative. Similarly, LePine and Van Dyne (2001) reported that indicators of positive affectivity in extroversion (positive emotions, excitement seeking) predict voice.

In contrast, from the perspective of a bipolar model of affect (e.g., Green, Goldman, & Salovey, 1993) in which positive and negative affect are regarded as opposite constructs on the same continuum, it would be argued that negative affect was negatively related to proactive behavior. Indeed, Ashforth et al. (2007) reported a negative correlation between negative affectivity and proactive behavior, measured as information-seeking, feedback-seeking, job-change negotiation, socializing, building a relationship with the boss, and networking. However, further findings did not support this perspective. Rather, they may support the two-factor model of affect (Tellegen, Watson, & Clark, 1999), in which positive and negative affect were treated as two different constructs and may thus have different implications for human behavior. For example, Den Hartog and Belschak (2007) found that negative affectivity was positively related to personal initiative in one of their studies. Moreover, as we reviewed earlier, neuroticism, which is close to the concept of negative affectivity, has unreliable associations with proactive behavior. These findings suggest that negative affectivity is not the opposite construct of positive affectivity because it did not have a negative relation to proactive behavior. Nevertheless, more studies, such as research on contingent factors, are needed to address the effect of negative affectivity on proactive behavior.

Instrumental Traits

We identify proactive personality and prosocial motive as instrumental traits that drive an individual to engage in proactive behavior. **Proactive personality** (Bateman & Crant, 1993) refers to the tendency of individuals to influence their environment and to bring about change across multiple contexts and times. This type of disposition has been shown to be distinct from the Big Five personality dimensions and other personality variables (locus of control, the need for achievement, and the need for dominance; (Bateman & Crant, 1993). In a recent study, Crant, Kim, and Wang (2011) reported that only proactive personality had a significant predictive effect on voice behavior when all Big Five personality dimensions were included in the model, revealing its powerful

predictive effect on proactive behavior. The positive relationship between proactive personality and proactive behavior has been reported in meta-analytic studies (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Thomas et al., 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013). Studies have also been conducted to understand when proactive personality will be more predictive of proactive behavior with an interactionist approach (e.g., Liang & Gong, in press; Ng & Feldman, 2013). Please refer to Chapter 8 by Crant, Hu, and Jiang in this book for a thorough review of the research on proactive personality.

Prosocial motive refers to an individual's desire to have a positive effect on other people or social collectives (Grant & Berg, 2011), which can be regarded as an instrumental trait in influencing the environment in a positive way. Because proactive behavior aims to bring about positive and constructive change, people high in prosocial motive are more likely to engage in proactive behavior. Indeed, prosocial motive has been found to be positively related to personal initiative (De Dreu & Nauta, 2009) and general initiative and voice (Grant & Mayer, 2009). Nevertheless, in Grant et al.'s study (2009), high levels of prosocial motive did not have a direct positive association with voice and anticipatory helping behavior. This finding leads to further research on the boundary conditions of prosocial motive. For example, Grant and Rothbard (2013) found that people high in prosocial value tend to engage in proactive behavior only when the ambiguity of the work environment is high, which is consistent with the idea of situational strength that the dispositional effect is stronger in weak situations.

Interpersonal Traits

The role of interpersonal traits on proactive behavior has been rarely considered compared to other traits. Although studies using the Big Five personality framework have included relational dispositions under the trait of agreeableness – a super-ordinate trait that covers several specific traits (e.g., altruism, compliance, trust) that relate to an individual's social relations – this trait is too broad and distal to describe individuals' feelings in social relationships. As reviewed above, past studies usually found a weak or null association between agreeableness and proactive behavior and appeared to suggest that relational dispositions are not important for predicting proactive behavior.

Nevertheless, drawing on attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982), Wu and Parker (2011a, 2012, in press; Wu, Parker, & de Jong, 2014a) propose that an individual characteristic that reflects how an individual relates with others – **attachment style** – is important for shaping proactive behavior. Based on the attachment-exploration association that security in attachment relationships can facilitate exploration behavior (Bowlby, 1969/1982), they proposed and found that a lack of relational security reflected in one's attachment style can impair an individual's desire to approach unfamiliar situations, to try different ways of doing things, and to initiate change. Across different samples, they consistently found

that individuals who are uncomfortable with dependence on, and emotional closeness to others, (i.e., those high in attachment avoidance) were less likely to engage in proactive behavior in general (Wu & Parker, 2012) and exhibited less proactive behavior, such as proactive job search (Wu & Parker, 2011a) and proactive work behavior (Wu & Parker, in press), which is due to their lack of autonomous motivation in pursuing proactive goals (Wu & Parker, in press). Wu and Parker also found that people in an employee sample who were anxious or fearful about abandonment or being unloved (i.e., those high in attachment anxiety) tended not to engage in proactive work behavior (Wu & Parker, in press). Although this negative association was not replicated in other samples, the lack of self-efficacy of people high in attachment anxiety prevents them from taking proactive action (Wu & Parker, 2012, in press). Notably, in a flexible teamwork context, Wu et al. (2014a) found that people high in attachment anxiety tend to seek feedback from peers and rely on feedback-seeking to improve their job performance, whereas those high in attachment avoidance tend not to do so. They suggest that people high in attachment anxiety are concerned about their social relationships at work and how they are perceived in the eyes of others and therefore are more likely to seek and apply feedback from peers to ensure they are on the right track for teamwork.

To understand the boundary conditions of attachment style in shaping proactive behavior, Wu and Parker (in press) focused on the concept of leader secure-base support, which describes leader support in forms of leader availability, encouragement, and noninterference, and found that the negative effect of attachment avoidance/attachment anxiety on autonomous motivation/self-efficacy was mitigated when leader secure-base support increased. This finding suggests that when leaders can be regarded as a secure base at work, employees will be more likely to have a stronger autonomous motivation and sense of self-efficacy and thus more proactive behavior, regardless of employees' attachment styles.

Summary

Based on the above review, we found that extroversion, future orientation, positive self-perception, positive affectivity and proactive personality have been consistently and positively linked to proactive behavior in different forms. Traits such as conscientiousness, openness to experience goal orientation and prosocial motive, in general, have positive associations with proactive behavior, but those associations are contingent on specific facets of traits or situations. Traits such as agreeableness, neuroticism, and negative affectivity generally unrelated to proactive behavior. Finally, regarding the need for cognition and attachment styles, more studies are required to provide more evidence to depict their roles in shaping proactive behavior.

So far, we have considered only how dispositional factors and their interactive effect with situational factors can shape proactive behavior at work and

ignore the possibility that personality traits can change and develop over time as the environment changes (Caspi, Roberts, & Shiner, 2005) such that an individual can be more proactive over time at the dispositional level when tendencies are continually reinforced in the environment (Li et al., 2014). The developmental perspective of personality traits brings an alternative view to understand the association between personality, the environment and proactive behavior in a dynamic process. It also offers an alternative managerial implication in promoting proactivity, such as emphasizing an enduring personality change instead of a transient behavioral change. We now turn to the section regarding how the development perspective of personality traits can influence our approach to understanding proactive behavior.

Understanding Proactivity from a Developmental Perspective of Personality

In this section, we first briefly review studies on personality development and explain why personality changes over time. We next elaborate on and review whether and how proactivity-related personality can be changed over time. We conclude this section with implications on future proactivity research.

Can Personality Change, and Why Does it Change?

Although personality traits are defined as relatively stable patterns of thoughts, behaviors, or feelings (Johnson, 1997), they are not entirely static and are thus relatively free from change. Empirical studies have reported meaningful mean-level and rank-order changes in personality traits across the whole lifespan (Roberts & DeVecchio, 2000; Roberts & Mroczek, 2008; Roberts, Walton, & Viechtbauer, 2006), suggesting that individuals change their personality scores over time and to different degrees (i.e., individual differences in changes). To understand why personality changes occur, personality psychologists propose several potential mechanisms through which personality traits can change (see Specht et al., 2014, for a review). Whereas McCrae and Costa (2008) propose a biological maturation perspective, which emphasizes the genetic factors and brain structure in shaping personality development over time, many scholars (e.g., Caspi et al., 2005; Denissen, Ulferts, Lüdtke, Muck, & Gerstorf, 2014; Scarr & McCartney, 1983) suggest that experiences can play a role. Although different propositions have been made, proponents of environmental influences in general suggest that the role or behavioral demands of the environment is the key to triggering personality trait changes. In other words, when a particular pattern of thoughts, behaviors, or feelings is reinforced in the environment, individuals are likely to adjust their personality towards the same pattern.

This idea has been put forward in social investment theory (Hudson et al., 2012; Lodi-Smith & Roberts, 2007; Roberts, Wood, & Smith, 2005), which suggests

that one's commitment to and investment in a specific social role will lead to personality change toward a direction that is consistent with the role characteristics. For example, individuals with higher involvement and engagement at work tend to increase their conscientiousness over time (Hudson et al., 2012) because this role engagement can reinforce a sense of duty over time, a core element of conscientiousness. In an organizational setting specifically, this notion has been theorized in an occupational socialization model (Frese, 1982), which suggests that specific work designs impose different cognitive, emotional and behavioral requirements, which then require employees to engage in actions that are consistent with these requirements. In turn, actions provide a behavioral basis for self-understanding. That is, by observing one's own behavior, it is likely to develop self-knowledge about values, beliefs, and competencies (Bem, 1967). In part, this process occurs because individuals tend to impose an identity perspective on their actions to understand themselves (Vallacher & Wegner, 1987). For example, Pratt, Rockmann, and Kaufmann (2006) showed that work actions and experiences, particularly those that reflect a mismatch between what an individual does and who he/she is, evoke a bottom-up process of identity change, or the change of self-understanding, which can be a path to personality change.

Although it seems that one's personality is shaped by his/her environment, it should be noted that individuals are not randomly assigned into various environments because people's personality traits actually influence the environment to which they are exposed or selected into or the type of environment they create (Bandura, 2001; Schneider, 1987). In fact, as described in the corresponsive principle in personality development (Caspi et al., 2005), personality and the environment have a longitudinal reciprocal relationship; that is, they can shape each other over time in a way such that life experiences influence the personality traits that lead people to these experiences in the first place. This principle has been empirically supported across a few studies (e.g., Li et al., 2014; Roberts, Caspi, & Moffitt, 2003; Wu & Griffin, 2012).

Influences of Work Environments on Change in Personality

Following the notion that environments can shape individuals' personality over time, studies have been conducted to examine whether work environments can shape individuals' dispositional attributes. Most of these studies have indicated that work design characteristics can shape personality traits. For example, Gecas and Seff (1989) reported a positive predictive effect of job complexity on general self-efficacy and self-worth. Kohn and Schooler (1973) also reported a positive link between job complexity and self-esteem and assumed the former caused the latter. However, these findings were drawn from cross-sectional studies, and the direction of the effects is unclear. It is plausible that self-esteem and general self-efficacy cause individuals to seek out, or be allocated to more complex and autonomous jobs. Focusing on

personality changes, Brousseau (1978) reported that over seven years, task significance predicted an increase in the broad personality trait of action orientation (e.g., being willing to take initiative and risks). Mortimer and Lorence (1979) reported that work autonomy is positively associated with an increase in self-competence. However, in these studies, personality was assessed two times, but job characteristics were assessed only once, close to the second personality assessment. This design is limited because the association between job characteristics and personality change can be interpreted in either causal direction. As noted by Frese and Zapf (1988), this research design is only marginally stronger than a cross-sectional design.

In a two-wave longitudinal study over 10 years, Kohn and Schooler (1982) reported that job complexity had a positive lagged effect on self-directedness or the “beliefs that one has the personal capacity to take responsibility for one’s actions and that society is so constituted as to make self-direction possible” (p. 1276). In a more sophisticated research design, Schooler, Mulatu, and Oates (2004) examined a non-recursive model to examine the link between work design and self-concept drawing on surveys completed over 20 years (1974 and 1994/1995). They reported that work characteristics in self-direction (such as higher job complexity, lower routinization and/or lower closeness of supervision) and individuals’ evaluation of self-directedness (i.e., lower *authoritarian conservatism*, lower fatalism and higher personally responsible morality) assessed at Time 2 had reciprocal relationships when variables assessed at Time 1 were controlled. Although this finding suggests reciprocity between work design and self-concept, their modeling approach was not able to differentiate between contemporaneous and lagged effects between variables, which means that causal direction cannot be tested. Moreover, even a two-wave study is insufficient to describe a longitudinal process (Edwards, 2008; Hertzog & Nesselroade, 2003; Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010; Singer & Willett, 2003).

Overcoming this deficiency, Frese, Garst, and Fay (2007) conducted a four-wave longitudinal study, in which they found that people with a higher control orientation (a trait-like construct indicated by control aspiration, self-efficacy and perceived opportunity for control) in a prior wave tended to have increased job autonomy and complexity in the next wave, which in turn increased individuals’ control orientation in the same wave. Their findings reveal a longitudinal, reciprocal association between work-design factors and self-evaluations in terms of personal control. A recent study conducted by Li et al. (2014) reported a three-wave longitudinal study (three years in total) to examine the reciprocal effects of work characteristics and proactive personality. They found that both job demands and job control in the previous year were associated with an increase in proactive personality in the next year, which further enhanced the two job characteristics later on. Wu et al. (in press) recently reported a three-wave longitudinal study (four years in total) to investigate the role of job autonomy and skill utilization in shaping internal locus of control in a reciprocal dynamic model and

found that job autonomy, but not skill utilization can promote the development of an employee's internal locus of control.

In sum, the results of the studies just reviewed suggest that it is possible to use a job-design approach to alter personality traits, such as self-competence, action orientation, self-directedness, control orientation, and thus proactive behavior in the long run. However, because only a few studies using a rigorous longitudinal design to examine the role of work environments on personality change, and only one study (Frese et al., 2007) incorporates proactive behavior, more studies are needed to thoroughly investigate the dynamics of the work environment, personality, and proactive behavior. We now turn to implications of the personality development perspective for proactivity research.

Implications for Proactivity Research

We now discuss theoretical, practical, and methodological implications of a personality development perspective for proactivity research. First, because personality traits can change over time and can be shaped by work environments, the personality development perspective suggests that associations between personality traits and proactive behavior can vary over time. The changeable association between personality traits and proactive behavior challenges the idea of merely using personality selection to sustain employee proactivity within organizations because the predictive effect of personality on proactive behavior could become unstable over time. Moreover, employees with a higher proactive personality can become less proactive over time if they are in an unfavorable work environment, such as in jobs with lower complexity and autonomy. As such, without providing a favorable work environment to sustain proactivity, selecting employees with a higher proactive personality may not necessarily help organizations boost employee proactivity in the long run. The challenge for personality selection actually highlights the importance of work environments in sustaining proactive behavior in the long term, bringing an implication to intervention studies in proactivity research.

Specifically, the personality development perspective opens up a new avenue for researchers to utilize interventions to enhance proactive behaviors, that is, to modify patterns of behaviors across time and situations. With the increasing emphasis on the transfer of effects of organizational interventions across situations (e.g., Wexley & Latham, 2002), it seems necessary to raise the bar for proactivity interventions to render their effects more enduring. In other words, if organizations aim to pursue long-lasting effects in enhancing employees' proactive behavior, a focus on personality change would be more effective than a focus on temporary behavioral change because the former helps shape individuals' chronic patterns of thoughts, behaviors, or feelings. In line with this notion, recent research in behavioral economics has centered on the lasting effects of interventions, such as research on changing habits (Charness & Gneezy, 2009).

The emerging literature on subjective well-being has also stressed lasting effects of interventions to breed lasting well-being and thus to overcome hedonic adaptation (Charness & Gneezy, 2009). Based on knowledge from personality development research, organizations can surely benefit from proactivity interventions that have long-lasting effects. To date, research on proactivity interventions is limited in this regard. Studies are encouraged to offer intervention programs that help enhance employees' proactive behavior for the long term.

Based on our review, it seems that work-design factors are important situational factors that can be used to effect personality change toward the direction of sustaining proactive behavior in the long term. Although several studies have suggested the role of positive work design features, such as job complexity and job autonomy, in shaping personality to drive proactive behavior, we propose that having those positive work-design features alone may not necessarily lead to personality development for sustaining proactivity. Instead, following the idea of Karasek's job demand-control model (1979), we suggest that having high levels of work challenges along with positive and supportive work design features should be a desirable condition to cultivate personality development for sustaining proactivity. Under this condition, the resources brought by positive and supportive features will be more likely to be mobilized and used to make constructive changes and put things forward due to the challenges of job demands. Over time, employees in this condition may habitualize and internalize their proactive actions, enhancing a chronic proactivity tendency to be proactive. Based on the challenge stressor-hindrance stressor framework (LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005), we expect that along with positive work-design features, challenge stressors will play a more important role than hindrance stressors to bring about changes in proactive propensity over time. Challenge stressors present challenging demands that take individuals out of their comfort zone. Faced with job challenges, individuals need to learn new skills or enhance and develop existing skills (Depue & Collins, 1999; LePine, LePine, & Jackson, 2004) that build the capability to be proactive. Hindrance stressors, on the contrary, may not necessarily lead to skill development. Instead, they have been found to result in stress, lower well-being, and turnover (LePine et al., 2004; LePine et al., 2005), which can deplete resources for being proactive. As such, hindrance stressors may not help drive personality development in proactive propensity. In addition to work-design factors, future studies can also explore the effect of social environmental factors, such as leadership, peer influence, and the organizational climate in shaping personality changes toward sustaining proactivity. In a recent study, Li et al. (2014) examined the role of social support from coworkers and supervisors in predicting change in proactive personality but did not find significant results. Because this is the only study to explore the effect of social environmental factors, more studies are needed to understand whether and how social environments at work can shape personality development.

Finally, the personality development perspective also has a methodological implication for proactivity research. Because the perspective highlights dynamic interactionism, longitudinal studies are necessary to understand dynamic relationships between the environment, personality, and behavior over time. Such longitudinal studies are scarce in proactivity research, serving as an avenue for future research. This longitudinal approach, however, has several challenges. The focal challenge is around issues of time. The time it takes for personality change to occur may vary across traits and contexts, so determining how long is enough to observe personality change is a challenging question. Intuitively, because it takes time to elicit and observe personality change, longitudinal studies over years might be required. Moreover, to depict the process of change, having multiple observations over a period of time is essential (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010). This requirement, in practice, can be very demanding because the attrition rate usually goes up when the length of time increases, and it requires considerable effort to track the same participants over years.

Beyond depicting the change phenomena, we are also interested in how personality change occurs, or the mechanisms behind it. To date, potential mechanisms have been proposed to explain how environmental factors or life experiences can lead to personality change, but they have been rarely examined. Methodological challenges can be reasons for this research gap. For example, behavioral mechanisms, such as behavioral habituation, are not easy to measure because successive data on daily or weekly behavior are required to underpin the operation at a behavioral level. Moreover, it is very likely that the process of personality change can be facilitated or impeded by factors such as whether the direction of change is supported and rewarded by surrounding others or the environment and magnitude of one's motivation for change. To fully depict the operation of the personality change process, it is also important to consider factors that will moderate the operation. Determining when and how to measure those moderators, again, presents methodological challenges, making empirical work more complex and difficult. Overall, to consolidate the personality development perspective, we need to overcome those methodological challenges.

Conclusions and Recommendations

We conclude our chapter by providing several managerial recommendations based on our review. The first and a straightforward recommendation for organizations to promote and sustain employees' proactivity is to recruit people who are more likely to engage in proactive behavior, such as those with higher extroversion, future orientation, positive self-perception, positive affectivity and proactive personality. However, because we highlighted with a developmental perspective that personality traits can change as the environment changes, the second recommendation is thus to provide a supportive environment, such as an enriched job design (please see Chapter 14 by Ohly and Schmitt in this book

for a thorough review) and supportive supervision, that can sustain employees' proactivity. These favorable situational factors can play a role in facilitating proactive behavior for people who are prone to be proactive, motivating those who are not proactive in disposition to behave proactively, or/and have a long-term effect in building people's proactivity at a deep, dispositional level. In other words, while recognizing the importance of identifying proactive employees, we also suggest organizations pay attention to how they can create and provide favorable work environments to utilize in the short term and nurture employees' dispositional tendencies for being proactive in the long term.

In addition to providing a supportive environment for proactivity, organizations can take a more active approach to nurturing employees' proactivity, such as by offering development-type interventions. As discussed in Chapter 16 by Mensmann and Frese in this book, it is possible to train employees to think and behave proactively by offering personal initiative training based on action regulation theory. This proactive training would be effective in enhancing employees' awareness of being proactive, which may evoke their desire for change (Hennecke, Bleidorn, Denissen, & Wood, 2014). If a favorable environment for proactivity is provided, employees' desire for change will be supported and feasible, facilitating personality change toward being more proactive. The emphasis on behavioral change in leading personality change was also elaborated by Magidson, Roberts, Collado-Rodriguez, and Lejuez (2014):

Personality can be changed by targeting behaviors that characterize specific personality traits. These targeted behavior changes, although initially effortful, over time may become more automatic; it is at the point that the behaviors become ingrained that the new behavior patterns ultimately manifest in trait-level changes. (p. 1443)

Based on this principle, they offered a theory-driven intervention framework for personality development by integrating expectancy value theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002) and behavioral activation treatment (e.g., Lejuez, Hopko, & Hopko, 2001) to increase engagement in goal-directed activities that are in accordance with the values of specific traits across numerous domains of individuals' lives. They provided a case study to illustrate how this theory-driven intervention program can be used to enhance an individual's conscientiousness. This intervention framework can also be applied to shape other personality dimensions (e.g., extroversion and future orientation) that can facilitate proactive behavior at work.

To conclude, we suggest that to promote employees' proactivity in organizations, in addition to selecting those who tend to behave proactively based on their personality traits, organizations can be more active in providing environments that can facilitate proactivity and offer a training program to nurture employees' proactivity in the long term.

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10

AGING AND PROACTIVITY

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Workforce aging and the changing nature of job demands constitute two trends that have a fundamental impact on work and organizations in the 21st century. In most industrialized, as well as many developing countries (e.g., China and India), the proportion of older employees is rapidly growing due to consistently low or decreasing birth rates, improved life expectancy, and the aging of the baby boomer generation (Chand & Tung, 2014; Kulik, Ryan, Harper, & George, 2014). Over the past decade, this development has led to increased research efforts to better understand the role of age in the work context and to find ways to motivate and support older employees (Hedge & Borman, 2012; Hertel & Zacher, 2015; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004; Truxillo, Cadiz, & Hammer, 2015). At the same time, most jobs now require that employees not only perform their tasks effectively, but also that they adapt to and show initiative in increasingly complex, interdependent, and uncertain work environments (Frese, 2000; Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007).

While employee age has been systematically investigated in relation to important work outcomes such as task, citizenship, counterproductive, and creative performance (Ng & Feldman, 2008, 2013c), as well as job attitudes, work motivation, occupational well-being, and turnover (Kooij, De Lange, Jansen, Kanfer, & Dikkers, 2011; Ng & Feldman, 2009, 2010, 2013a), organizational researchers have so far largely neglected the association between age and proactivity at work. Thus, there still remains a great deal to learn about age-related differences and changes in proactivity and how proactivity may contribute to successful aging at work (Zacher et al., 2015). The first goal of this chapter is to review, from both a work and organizational psychology and a lifespan developmental perspective, the theoretical and empirical literature on aging and proactivity. Our second goal is to develop a novel theoretical framework

of aging and proactivity at work by integrating extant research on proactivity with lifespan developmental theories and findings. With our literature review, theoretical framework, and research propositions we aim to stimulate further systematic research on aging and proactivity at work and to facilitate theory- and evidence-based practical applications in organizations.

In the following section, we first describe key proactivity concepts and the neglected role of employee age in established theoretical frameworks of proactivity at work. Second, we review empirical studies on age and proactivity at work. Third, we outline major theories and empirical findings in the lifespan developmental literature and their links with proactivity. Fourth, we develop our theoretical framework and associated research propositions. We conclude the chapter with implications for future research and organizational practice.

Key Proactivity Concepts, Theoretical Frameworks, and the Neglected Role of Age

Proactivity concepts can be broadly distinguished into trait and behavioral concepts (Crant, 2000; Tornau & Frese, 2013). On the one hand, employees with a proactive personality are characterized by a relatively stable tendency to initiate change in their work environment, unconstrained by situational forces (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Crant, 1995). On the other hand, proactive behavior has been defined as employees' active, self-directed, and future-focused behavior with the goal of changing and improving their work environment or themselves (Bindl & Parker, 2011; Grant & Ashford, 2008). Proactive behavior is typically conceived as the opposite of reactivity or being passive when changes occur; yet it is not necessarily the opposite of the concept of individual adaptability, which involves actively adjusting to internal and external changes (Griffin et al., 2007; Zhu, Frese, & Li, 2014). Depending on individual and contextual moderating factors, employees' proactive personality is expressed as proactive behavior at work, and thus these concepts tend to be positively related (Fuller & Marler, 2009). Organizational researchers have proposed a number of proactive behavior constructs, such as personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001), taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), expressing voice (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998), job-crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), and negotiating idiosyncratic employment deals (I-deals; Rousseau, Ho, & Greenberg, 2006). Additional proactive behaviors that have been investigated in the organizational literature include proactive newcomer socialization, feedback-seeking, issue-selling, innovative work behavior, as well as proactive career and stress management (see Crant, 2000, for an overview).

Parker and Collins (2010) showed that several of these and related proactive behaviors can be grouped into three higher-order categories: proactive work behavior (e.g., taking charge, voice, innovation), proactive person-environment fit behavior (e.g., feedback-seeking, job change negotiation, career initiative),

and proactive strategic behavior (e.g., strategic scanning, issue-selling). Grant and Ashford (2008) distinguished different types of proactive behavior not only based on their form (e.g., feedback-seeking or social network building), but also based on their intended target (e.g., self, other people, or the organization), frequency (e.g., likelihood and regularity), timing (e.g., particular occasions, phases, or moments), and tactics (e.g., offering emotional support or asking for instrumental information to build social networks).

Established theoretical frameworks of proactivity at work distinguish between rather distal person (e.g., proactive personality) and contextual predictors (e.g., job autonomy) of proactive behavior, as well as more proximal cognitive-motivational and affective processes (e.g., goal setting, self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, control orientations, high-arousal positive affect) that translate the more distal predictors and their interactions into behavior (Bindl & Parker, 2011; Crant, 2000; Frese & Fay, 2001; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010; Tims & Bakker, 2010). Moreover, these frameworks propose that proactive behavior results in important individual and organizational outcomes (e.g., performance, well-being). Grant and Ashford (2008) and Parker and Bindl (2010; Bindl & Parker, 2011) additionally emphasized the importance of other people's attributions and of individual and contextual boundary conditions for the association between proactive behavior and work outcomes.

Employee age is a largely neglected variable in established theoretical frameworks of proactivity at work. With the exception of Fay and Sonnentag (2010) and Bindl and Parker (2011), proactivity theorists did not discuss the potential roles of employee age, aging, or development across the working lifespan. In their agenda for future research on proactivity, Fay and Sonnentag (2010) recommended adopting a lifespan approach because employees' motives for engaging in proactive behavior may change with age: "When trying to generalize findings on proactive behavior across different age groups, we have to be aware that the patterns of predictors and outcome variables may change over the life course" (p. 7).

Bindl and Parker (2011) included "demographics" (i.e., age, gender, and ethnicity) as distal individual difference predictors in their theoretical model of proactive behavior, and they briefly reviewed the findings of a handful of empirical studies on proactivity in which employee age was included merely as a control variable (with the exception of Warr & Fay, 2001, which we will discuss later). They concluded that age is most likely to be negatively related to proactive person-environment fit and career behaviors, but that inconsistent findings on age and other forms of proactive behavior require further research. In this chapter, we attempt to provide the first answer to these calls. In the next section, we systematically review empirical studies that have explicitly examined either the associations between employee age and different proactivity concepts, or the interactive effects of age and proactivity concepts on important work outcomes.

Review of Empirical Studies on Age and Proactivity at Work

We conducted a systematic review of the organizational psychology and organizational behavior literature by searching for empirical studies that explicitly investigated associations between employee age and proactivity constructs, proactivity among young and/or older employees/workers, as well as interactions between age and proactivity constructs in predicting work outcomes. We did not include studies that did not explicitly refer to terms such as “age,” “aging/ageing,” “older employees/workers,” “proactivity,” “proactive personality,” or “proactive behavior.” Our search yielded 12 studies; we first describe the results of two meta-analyses, followed by a review of five primary studies on age and proactive personality and five studies on age and different forms of proactive behavior.

Meta-Analytic Findings on Age and Proactivity

In the first meta-analysis, Thomas, Whitman, and Viswesvaran (2010) reported that age was not significantly correlated with proactive personality ($\rho = .04$) and taking charge ($\rho = .03$), whereas age was weakly positively correlated with personal initiative ($\rho = .08$) and voice ($\rho = .07$). Consistent with Thomas et al.’s (2010) findings, but based on a larger number of primary studies included, Tornau and Frese (2013) found in their meta-analysis that age was also not significantly correlated with proactive personality ($\rho = .04$) and taking charge ($\rho = .02$), whereas age was again weakly positively correlated with personal initiative ($\rho = .13$) and voice ($\rho = .06$). It is important to note that most primary studies included in these and other meta-analyses on age and work-related variables are based on samples of predominantly young and mid-career employees and include only very few older employees (over 50 years, cf. Ng & Feldman, 2008; Ng & Feldman, 2013a). Thus, the relationships between age and proactivity reported in meta-analyses may be attenuated due to sample selectivity and restriction in the age range.

Age and Proactive Personality

The primary studies on age and proactive personality are heterogeneous and examined more complex associations between the concepts than the meta-analyses. Consistent with research on common – yet empirically unfounded – age stereotypes regarding lower motivation and higher resistance to change among older employees (Posthuma & Campion, 2009), Truxillo, McCune, Bertolino, and Fraccaroli (2012) expected and found age differences in others’ perceptions of employees’ proactive personality. Findings from two experiments with samples of 142 and 310 employed students from the United States showed that older employees were perceived as being generally lower in proactive personality than young

employees, independent of rater age. Truxillo et al.'s (2012) findings stand in contrast to the results of the meta-analyses by Thomas et al. (2010) and Tornau and Frese (2013), which found no relationships between employee age and employees' self-reported proactive personality.

Bertolino, Truxillo, and Fraccaroli (2011) investigated employee age as a moderator of relationships between proactive personality and training-related outcomes. Results based on data collected from 252 government employees in Italy showed that the positive associations between proactive personality and training motivation, perceived career development from training, and training behavioral intentions were consistently stronger for young compared to older employees. As in the meta-analyses by Thomas et al. (2010) and Tornau and Frese (2013), young and older employees did not differ in their proactive personality. These findings suggest that employees' proactive personality may translate into different training- and career-related attitudes and behaviors depending on age. For instance, young employees with a proactive personality may be more likely to strive for career advancement, whereas proactive older employees may be more interested in engaging in organizational citizenship or mentoring behaviors (Bertolino et al., 2011).

Findings of the other studies identified in our literature review suggest that proactive personality may constitute an important compensatory resource for older employees. Using a sample of 196 employees who participated in a longitudinal panel study, Ng and Feldman (2012) examined proactive personality and perceived supervisor undermining as moderators of the relationship between age and innovative performance (i.e., creating, implementing, and disseminating new and useful ideas). Again, age was not significantly related to proactive personality in this study. However, Ng and Feldman (2012) found that the age-innovation relationship was positive among employees experiencing low supervisor undermining as well as among employees with both high supervisor undermining and high levels of proactive personality. In contrast, the relationship between age and innovative performance was negative when supervisor undermining was high and proactive personality was low. These findings suggest that having a proactive personality can compensate for negative external influences, such as supervisor undermining, on older employees' innovative performance.

Zacher (2013) examined interactive effects of age, proactive personality, and occupational future time perspective on job search intensity in a sample of 182 job seekers between 43 and 77 years in Australia. Results showed that age was negatively related to job search intensity, but not significantly related to proactive personality. The positive relationship between proactive personality and job search intensity was stronger among relatively older compared to relatively younger job seekers in the sample. This moderating effect of age was mediated by job seekers' perceptions of the length of their remaining time in the occupational context (i.e., one dimension of occupational future time perspective). In a constructive replication study with 188 job seekers between

40 and 64 years in Germany, Zacher and Bock (2014) also did not find a significant relationship between age and proactive personality. However, they showed that job seekers' self-efficacy regarding job search mediated the interactive effect of age and proactive personality on job search intensity.

In summary, the available empirical research in this area suggests that older employees face stereotypes of being generally less proactive than young employees, despite meta-analytic evidence showing that no meaningful relationship between age and proactive personality exists. In addition, a number of primary studies suggested that proactive personality is a predictor of young employees' training- and career-related outcomes, and can act as a compensatory resource with regard to older employees' innovative performance and older job seekers' search intensity.

Age and Proactive Behavior

In the very first article that explicitly focused on associations between age and proactive behavior at work, Warr and Fay (2001) reported a zero relationship between age and personal initiative on the job, as assessed with interview-based measures. However, their results, based on a multi-wave study with employees in Germany, showed that older employees scored lower on personal initiative regarding educational activities than young employees. Moreover, self- but not partner-reported personal initiative was higher among older women compared to younger women, whereas there were no differences between men. Using a sample of 619 employees working in the Netherlands, van Veldhoven and Dorenbosch (2008) investigated relationships between age and two types of proactive behavior: current "on-the-job proactivity" and future career-oriented "developmental proactivity." Similar to Warr and Fay's (2001) finding for women, there was a positive – yet relatively weak – relationship between age and self-reported on-the-job proactivity. In contrast, the relationship between age and developmental proactivity was weakly negative but not significant in this study. Claes and Van Loo (2011) examined associations between proactive behavior, occupational well-being, and expected retirement age in a sample of 89 older employees (50+ years) in Belgium. They found that proactive behavior was positively related to well-being which, in turn, predicted a later expected retirement age. Claes and Van Loo (2011) did not report relationships between age and the other constructs *within* the group of older employees, and thus their study does not allow conclusions about age differences in proactive behavior.

With regard to more domain-specific forms of proactive behavior, a study by Finkelstein, Kulas, and Dages (2003) focused on the relationship between age and proactive newcomer socialization behavior using two samples of 67 university faculty members and 50 retail employees in the United States. They found negative relationships between age and covert information seeking (e.g., asking questions in indirect ways, "testing limits," "surveillance"; Miller & Jablin,

1991) which, in turn, predicted lower role clarity and job satisfaction. These results suggest that older employees were less likely to use proactive newcomer behaviors that have been characterized as disadvantageous in the literature because they are less likely to yield useful information compared to more overt and direct forms of information seeking (Miller & Jablin, 1991). Finally, Zacher and Bal (2012) found a negative relationship between supervisor age and subordinate ratings of supervisors' proactive leadership behavior in a sample of 128 university professors and their research assistants from Germany. This relationship was moderated by subordinates' age stereotypes, such that older professors' behavior was only perceived as less proactive compared to young professors' behavior when subordinates held negative age stereotypes. These findings on age and perceptions of proactive behavior coincide with Truxillo et al.'s (2012) research on negative older age stereotypes regarding proactive personality.

In summary, there is converging evidence from meta-analytic and primary studies that older employees do not generally show lower levels of proactive work and on-the-job behavior than young employees. In fact, there is some suggestion, primarily based on self-report data, that older employees engage, to a somewhat greater extent, in proactive work and on-the-job behavior than young employees. In contrast, evidence suggests that the frequency of educational and career-oriented proactive behaviors decreases with age. Moreover, there is initial evidence that other people's age stereotypes can impact on evaluations of older employees' proactive behavior. In the next section, we review the most important theories and associated empirical findings in the lifespan developmental literature and their links with proactivity.

Major Theories and Findings in the Lifespan Literature and Links with Proactivity

The aging process does not only involve changes in chronological age, or the time that has passed since a person was born (Schwall, 2012). Multiple perspectives have to be taken into account to understand aging. In addition to chronological aging, developmental scholars and gerontologists investigate also biological, social, and psychological aspects of aging (Hooyman & Kiyak, 2011). Biological aging refers to the physiological changes that are part of the aging process. For example, biological theories of aging focus on how biological clocks operate across the lifespan and on age-related functional decline (B. B. Baltes, Rudolph, & Bal, 2012). Social aging refers to age-related changes in individuals' roles in society, organizations, families, and other social networks. Sociological theories of aging focus on macro-level issues such as the influence of cohorts and institutions on the life course as well as on meso- and micro-level issues such as age-related changes in interactions between older individuals and their context, including work and other people (Mayer, 2009). Finally, psychological aging refers to the age-related changes that occur in person factors, such as sensory and

perceptual processes, cognitive and emotional abilities, personality, and motivation. Psychological theories of aging focus on how multiple age-related changes affect individuals' behavior and important outcomes such as well-being and productive functioning. Although all three perspectives are relevant for understanding aging at work (B. B. Baltes et al., 2012; Hertel & Zacher, 2015), our focus in this chapter is on psychological aging theories, in particular, the lifespan developmental perspective, as well as people's psychological responses to age-related physiological and social changes.

Lifespan Developmental Perspective

The lifespan developmental perspective investigates “constancy and change in behavior throughout the life course” (P. B. Baltes, 1987, p. 611). The aim of this theoretical orientation is to acquire knowledge about general principles of lifespan development, about differences and similarities between individuals in development, and about intraindividual plasticity or modifiability of development (P. B. Baltes, Reese, & Lipsitt, 1980). A first key assumption is that the age-related changes can take different forms (*multi-directionality*), including growth (i.e., gain), maintenance, and decline (i.e., loss). For example, research shows that as people age, on average, their physical abilities (e.g., muscle strength) and fluid cognitive abilities (e.g., working memory, speed of information processing) decline (Maertens, Putter, Chen, Diehl, & Huang, 2012; Salthouse, 2012). In contrast, crystallized cognitive abilities (e.g., general knowledge, experiential judgment), certain personality traits (i.e., conscientiousness, emotional stability, and social dominance), and socioemotional abilities (e.g., emotion regulation) tend to improve with age (Grossmann et al., 2010; Kanfer, Beier, & Ackerman, 2013; Lucas & Donnellan, 2011; Roberts, Walton, & Viechtbauer, 2006). Moreover, research on work motives found that growth and extrinsic motives (e.g., challenging work, advancement, compensation) decrease, whereas intrinsic motives (e.g., autonomy, accomplishment, use of skills, helping people, and contributing to society) increase with age (Kooij et al., 2011).

Based on research and graphs by Kanfer et al. (2013; see also Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004), Figure 10.1 summarizes several important normative, age-related changes in person factors, which we will link with employees' priorities regarding different types of proactive behavior in the theory development section. According to lifespan developmental scholars, not only age-related gains but also losses are important for successful development, because losses can result in adaptive capacity and the use of proactive strategies (deficits-breed-growth mechanism; P. B. Baltes, Staudinger, & Lindenberger, 1999; Charles, 2010). As losses increasingly outnumber gains with increasing age, strategies to deal with losses are considered particularly beneficial among older people (P. B. Baltes, 1987; P. B. Baltes & Baltes, 1990).

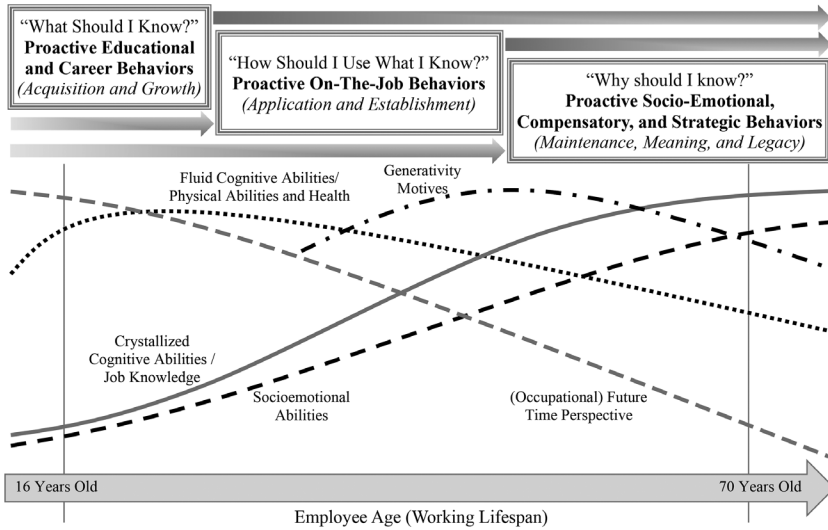


FIGURE 10.1 Normative age-related changes in person characteristics (Based on Kanfer et al., 2013; Schaie & Willis, 2000) and Priority of different types of proactive behaviors across the working lifespan.

A second important assumption of the lifespan developmental perspective is that there is intraindividual variability in lifespan developmental trajectories of psychological outcomes (*plasticity*), which depends on individual and contextual characteristics as well as their interactions (P. B. Baltes, 1987; Lövdén, Backman, Lindenberger, Schaefer, & Schmiedek, 2010). An individual's development is not predetermined and it is a central goal of lifespan research to identify the conditions that can result in positive plasticity. A growing body of research in the lifespan literature suggests that individual agency (i.e., control over the environment and the self), including proactive behavior, is an important contributor to positive plasticity in development. For example, there is solid evidence that older adults who engage in and maintain a physically, intellectually, and socially active lifestyle and who (proactively) train their fluid cognitive abilities can slow down age-related cognitive decline and prevent dementia (P. B. Baltes & Kliegl, 1986; Hertzog, Kramer, Wilson, & Lindenberger, 2009; Lindenberger, 2014). Nevertheless, research also points to biological limits to plasticity which increase with age (P. B. Baltes, 1997).

A final key assumption of the lifespan developmental perspective is that the course of individuals' development is contingent on three types of influences and their interactions (P. B. Baltes, 1987): (1) age-graded normative influences, such as biological maturation and age-graded socialization events (e.g., schooling, traditional retirement age), (2) history-graded influences associated with a certain historical period (e.g., industrialization, war, globalization), and (3) non-normative

influences which do not follow a general and predictable course (e.g., idiosyncratic life events such as accidents or winning the lottery). Thus, the lifespan developmental perspective suggests that potential age-related changes in an individual's proactive behavior are the result of a combination of these three influences.

The lifespan developmental perspective is a meta-theoretical framework composed of a number of important sub-theories, which are useful for explaining the role of proactive behavior in the aging process. Table 10.1 provides a summary of the core ideas of these theories and their links with the notion of proactivity. All of these theories build on the premise that individual agency plays a crucial role in human development, and hence assume that proactivity can help individuals to age successfully (P. B. Baltes & Baltes, 1990; Freund, 2008; Heckhausen, Wrosch, & Schulz, 2010). In the work context, successful aging has been defined as the achievement or maintenance of relatively favorable subjective and objective work outcomes (compared to average or normative levels of outcomes) as

TABLE 10.1 Lifespan Developmental Theories and Links with Proactivity

<i>Lifespan Developmental Theory</i>	<i>Core Ideas</i>	<i>Links with Proactivity</i>
Model of Selection, Optimization, and Compensation	Employees select and prioritize goals based on personal preferences (elective selection) or age-related losses (loss-based selection), optimize goal pursuit (optimization), and compensate for age-related losses (compensation); the orchestrated use of selection, optimization, and compensation strategies leads to successful aging (P. B. Baltes & Baltes, 1990).	Selection, optimization, and compensation strategies are proactive behaviors because they are self-directed and action-oriented, future-oriented, and aimed at changing the priority of personal goals and the way important goals are pursued.
Socioemotional Selectivity Theory	Due to age-related decreases in perceived remaining future time, individuals' goal priorities shift from instrumental to affective goals (Carstensen et al., 1999).	Instrumental and affective goals can motivate proactive behaviors such as engagement in training and crafting of social networks.

(continued)

TABLE 10.1 (continued)

<i>Lifespan Developmental Theory</i>	<i>Core Ideas</i>	<i>Links with Proactivity</i>
Strength and Vulnerability Integration Model	Age-related improvements in the use of emotion regulation strategies that help to avoid emotionally negative experiences, and age-related weaknesses regarding the management of experiences associated with high emotional arousal (Charles, 2010).	Emotion regulation strategies that are used to avoid or limit exposure to emotionally negative experiences (e.g., conflicts at work) are a form of proactive behavior.
Motivational Theory of Lifespan Development	Primary control strategies are behaviors that are used to change the environment to fit individuals' needs, and secondary control strategies are internally-focused behaviors that are used to minimize losses in, sustain, and increase primary control (Heckhausen et al., 2010).	Primary and secondary control strategies are two forms of proactive behavior that individuals can use to change the environment and themselves, respectively.
Model of Preventive and Corrective Proactivity for Successful Aging	Preventive strategies are used to avert age-related losses and stressors and to build personal and social resources; corrective strategies are activated by age-related losses or stressors and can be assisted by people's existing personal and social resources (Kahana & Kahana, 1996).	Preventive and corrective strategies are proactive behaviors employees use to change their environment (e.g., preventing stressors, increasing social resources) or themselves (e.g., increasing personal resources).

employees age (Zacher, 2015). According to this definition, proactivity would be considered a contributor to successful aging at work if older employees with a proactive personality and high levels of proactive behavior achieved or maintained more positive work outcomes compared to young employees and compared to less proactive older employees.

Model of Selection, Optimization, and Compensation

A first important theory of lifespan development is the selection, optimization, and compensation model (B. B. Baltes & Dickson, 2001; P. B. Baltes & Baltes, 1990). Based on an action-theoretical framework (Freund & Baltes, 2000), this model proposes that people engage in three distinct types of proactive behavior that can help them deal with age-related changes by investing their limited resources in an optimal way. The first strategy involves *selecting* and prioritizing goals, either based on personal preferences (elective selection) or due to the unavailability of goal-relevant resources (loss-based selection). The second strategy entails *optimizing* goal-relevant means or resources, for example by investing more effort or through training. The third strategy involves *compensating* for losses in goal-relevant means or resources by using alternative means or resources (e.g., external aids; for further examples, see Freund & Baltes, 2002; Zacher & Frese, 2011). A growing body of research in the work context has shown that the use of proactive selection, optimization, and compensation behaviors has positive effects on job performance and occupational well-being, particularly among older employees and when work demands are high (e.g., Abraham & Hansson, 1995; Schmitt, Zacher, & Frese, 2012; Weigl, Müller, Hornung, Zacher, & Angerer, 2013; Yeung & Fung, 2009; Zacher, Chan, Bakker, & Demerouti, 2015).

Socioemotional Selectivity Theory and Strength and Vulnerability Integration Model

A second important lifespan theory is socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen, 1995). Similar to the selection, optimization, and compensation model, this theory considers individuals to be “inherently agentic and to engage in behaviors guided by the anticipated realization of goals” (Carstensen, Isaacowitz, & Charles, 1999, p. 166). Socioemotional selectivity theory proposes that the perception of remaining time (i.e., future time perspective) leads to a shift in the prioritization of socioemotional goals. Young people, who typically perceive time in their future to be open-ended and full of opportunities, should prioritize instrumental goals to maximize future outcomes, such as goals related to acquiring knowledge and information (e.g., through education or establishing large social networks). Older adults, in contrast, who are more likely to perceive time in their future to be limited and as offering only relatively few remaining possibilities, should prioritize goals that maximize affective outcomes in the present, such as goals related to experiencing positive emotional states and meaningfulness. Research in the work context has shown that employee age is negatively related to (occupational) future time perspective which, in turn, is associated with preferences for development goals (e.g., training, career) among young employees and for generativity goals (e.g., helping, mentoring) among

older employees (Henry, Zacher, & Desmette, 2015; Kooij, Bal, & Kanfer, 2015; Kooij & Van de Voorde, 2011; Weikamp & Göritz, 2015; Zacher et al., 2009; Zacher & Frese, 2009).

Building on socioemotional selectivity theory, Charles (2010) introduced the strength and vulnerability integration model, which explains how emotion regulation processes change with age and the perception of remaining time. Emotion regulation is conceptualized as a form of proactive behavior that involves controlling the type, extent, and timing of experienced emotions, and is influenced by individuals' action orientation, self-direction, and future orientation (Gross, 1998). A core proposition of the strength and vulnerability integration model, supported by empirical studies, is that the frequency and effective use of attentional strategies, appraisals, and emotion regulation behaviors improve with age (Charles & Luong, 2013). On the one hand, these age-related improvements are assumed to be caused by a shortened perception of remaining time, which leads to an increased motivational focus on positive emotional experiences and a tendency to avoid negative experiences. On the other hand, accumulated self-knowledge and experience should also increase the effectiveness of emotion regulation strategies among older adults (Charles, 2010). The model further proposes that older people, due to age-related physiological changes, are less capable of down-regulating negative emotions associated with high levels of arousal and, in the case of prolonged exposure to high-arousal negative experiences, may suffer negative health consequences. So far, propositions of the strength and vulnerability integration model have not been systematically tested in the work context; however, the model has been integrated with the transactional model of stress and coping to explain associations among aging, emotion regulation, and well-being in the work context (Scheibe & Zacher, 2013).

Motivational Theory of Lifespan Development

A fourth important lifespan theory with respect to proactivity is the motivational theory of lifespan development (Heckhausen et al., 2010), which is based on Heckhausen and Schulz's lifespan theory of control (Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995; Schulz & Heckhausen, 1996). The theory posits that people continuously strive to exercise personal agency (primary control capacity). To maintain high levels of primary control, they use two types of proactive behavior. First, they use primary control strategies to shape their environment consistent with their needs. Second, they use secondary control strategies which involve changing goals to adaptively fit environmental demands (Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995). Other researchers have described these behaviors as assimilative strategies (tenacious goal pursuit) and accommodative strategies (flexible goal adjustment), respectively (Brandtstädter & Renner, 1990). Similar to the selection, optimization, and compensation model, the motivational theory of lifespan development suggests that people respond to age-related changes with

both primary and secondary control strategies, including goal selection, pursuit, and disengagement (Heckhausen et al., 2010). For example, striving for a goal may involve investing time and effort (primary control strategy), but also the reinterpretation of experiences to protect the self (secondary control strategy). Although with age the use of primary control strategies decreases and the use of secondary control strategies increases, it is important to note that not only the former but also the latter involves proactive behaviors such as actively restructuring, revalidating, and disengaging from goals, rather than passive reflections on age-related losses and decline (Heckhausen et al., 2010). Research on age and coping with work stress has used the motivational theory of lifespan development (Hertel, Rauschenbach, Thielgen, & Krumm, 2015).

Model of Preventive and Corrective Proactivity for Successful Aging

Kahana and Kahana (1996; Kahana, Kahana, & Lee, 2014) explicitly integrated the notion of proactivity with the lifespan developmental perspective in their model of preventive and corrective proactivity for successful aging (see also Ouwehand, de Ridder, & Bensing, 2007). This model conceives older individuals as active, self-constructing, and self-reflecting agents within their environment, capable of shaping their environment rather than only responding to it (Lawton, 1989). The model proposes that older adults can reduce stressors, develop resources, and buffer the negative effects of stressors on life outcomes by engaging in preventive and corrective proactive behaviors. Preventive behaviors include strategies to anticipate future stressors and delaying or minimizing these stressors, for instance through engagement in health promotion activities, planning for the future, helping others, social participation to increase social resources, and actively preventing person-environment misfit (Kahana & Kahana, 1996; Kahana et al., 2014; Kahana, Kelley-Moore, & Kahana, 2012). Corrective behaviors involve actively dealing with extant stressors and are thus similar to compensation strategies in the selection, optimization, and compensation model. These strategies include mobilizing social support, role substitution (e.g., after retirement or loss of a spouse), environmental modifications to meet personal needs, and proactive illness management, such as self-care or taking an active role in medical decision making (Kahana & Kahana, 1996; Kahana et al., 2014).

Summary and Recent Developments in the Field of Work and Aging

Lifespan developmental theories assume that people exercise agency and strive toward attaining developmental goals (P. B. Baltes, Lindenberger, & Staudinger, 2006; Haase, Heckhausen, & Wrosch, 2013). These goals organize individuals'

proactive attempts to influence themselves and their environment across the lifespan (Wahl, Iwarsson, & Oswald, 2011). In addition, gains and particularly losses that are part of the aging process may trigger proactive behavior, and proactive behavior may help to age successfully (Kahana et al., 2014). For example, people may select fewer goals or tasks to focus on, optimize pursuit of important life goals, compensate for resource losses, shift goal priorities, and regulate their emotions by avoiding or seeking certain experiences. Thus, proactivity appears to play a central role in lifespan development. This is also reflected in the notion of plasticity, which suggests that development is not predetermined but modifiable by proactive strategies. As P. B. Baltes (1997) noted, “we need to keep in mind that the future is not something we simply enter; the future is also something we help create” (p. 378).

Two recent theoretical contributions in the growing interdisciplinary field of work and aging build on the central role of proactivity for successful aging. Kooij, Tims, and Kanfer (2015) proposed that job-crafting – a form of proactive behavior that involves actively changing task and social characteristics of a job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) – may help older employees to fit the characteristics of their job to age-related changes in their abilities and needs. Kooij et al. (2015) further argued that improving or reinstating person-job fit through job-crafting will lead to positive work outcomes particularly among older employees (for research on age and person-environment fit, see also Feldman & Vogel, 2009; Zacher, Feldman, & Schulz, 2014). Based on the lifespan developmental and work and aging literatures, Kooij et al. (2015) coined three types of job-crafting that may be relevant for older employees. First, *accommodative crafting* refers to job-crafting activities that help to compensate for age-related limitations at work (e.g., delegation of certain tasks to others). Second, *developmental crafting* refers to behaviors that aim to optimize personal and professional growth at work, for instance by acquiring new knowledge and skills. Finally, *utilization crafting* comprises the exploitation of existing knowledge and skills in an improved way, for instance by selecting only attainable work goals and by focusing on tasks that require readily available, yet so far unused, resources.

In another line of research, Bal and Jansen (2015) proposed that actively negotiating I-deals – a form of proactive behavior that involves making individualized work arrangements with one’s employer (Rousseau et al., 2006) – can increase older employees’ motivation and performance. These researchers argued that I-deals regarding flexibility and development are particularly important for older employees, because their work-related preferences and needs tend to be more heterogeneous than those of young employees. Initial support for the importance of I-deals among older employees was found in a study by Bal, De Jong, Jansen, and Bakker (2012). Findings showed that negotiating flexibility I-deals positively predicted older employees’ motivation to continue working beyond traditional retirement age. Overall, however, despite these recent

theoretical contributions in the field of work and aging, proactivity scholars have remained relatively silent on the association between employee age and proactivity. In the next section, we develop our theoretical framework and associated propositions based on an integration of research on proactivity in the work context and theories and findings in the lifespan developmental literature.

Theoretical Framework of Aging and Proactivity at Work

Our theoretical framework is shown in Figure 10.2, and the associated research propositions are summarized in Table 10.2. The framework extends established models on proactivity at work by integrating age and age-related characteristics as predictors of cognitive-motivational and affective processes (i.e., “can do, reason to, and energized to” factors; Parker et al., 2010) and as moderators of relationships between proactive behaviors and work outcomes. We argue that the form, frequency, intended target, timing, and tactics of proactive behavior are likely to change with age. Providing initial support of this expectation, research has shown that proactive personality can function as a driver of qualitatively different forms of proactive behavior among young and older employees (Bertolino et al., 2011; Ng & Feldman, 2012; Zacher, 2013). In the following, we first argue that age-related changes in person characteristics influence cognitive-motivational and affective processes and, in turn, proactive behavior. Next, we discuss how age-related changes in contextual characteristics influence these processes and proactive behavior. We conclude by describing how the effects of proactive behavior on work outcomes may be influenced by age-related person and contextual factors.

Age, Person Characteristics, and Proactive Behavior at Work

In our framework we build on research by Ng and Feldman (2013b), who categorized age-related person characteristics that can influence work behavior into five groups: cognitive abilities, personality characteristics, goal orientations, emotional abilities and experiences, and physical abilities and health (Figure 10.2). In addition, we adapt the proactive behavior dimensions suggested by Grant and Ashford (2008): form, intended target, frequency, timing, and tactics. Based on lifespan developmental theories, we argue that these dimensions of proactive behavior change across the working lifespan due to the impact of age-related changes in person characteristics on cognitive-motivational and affective processes. A number of broader types of proactive behavior at work that individuals may prioritize at different ages are summarized at the top of Figure 10.1 (i.e., proactive educational and career behaviors, proactive on-the-job behaviors, proactive socio-emotional, compensatory, and strategic behaviors).

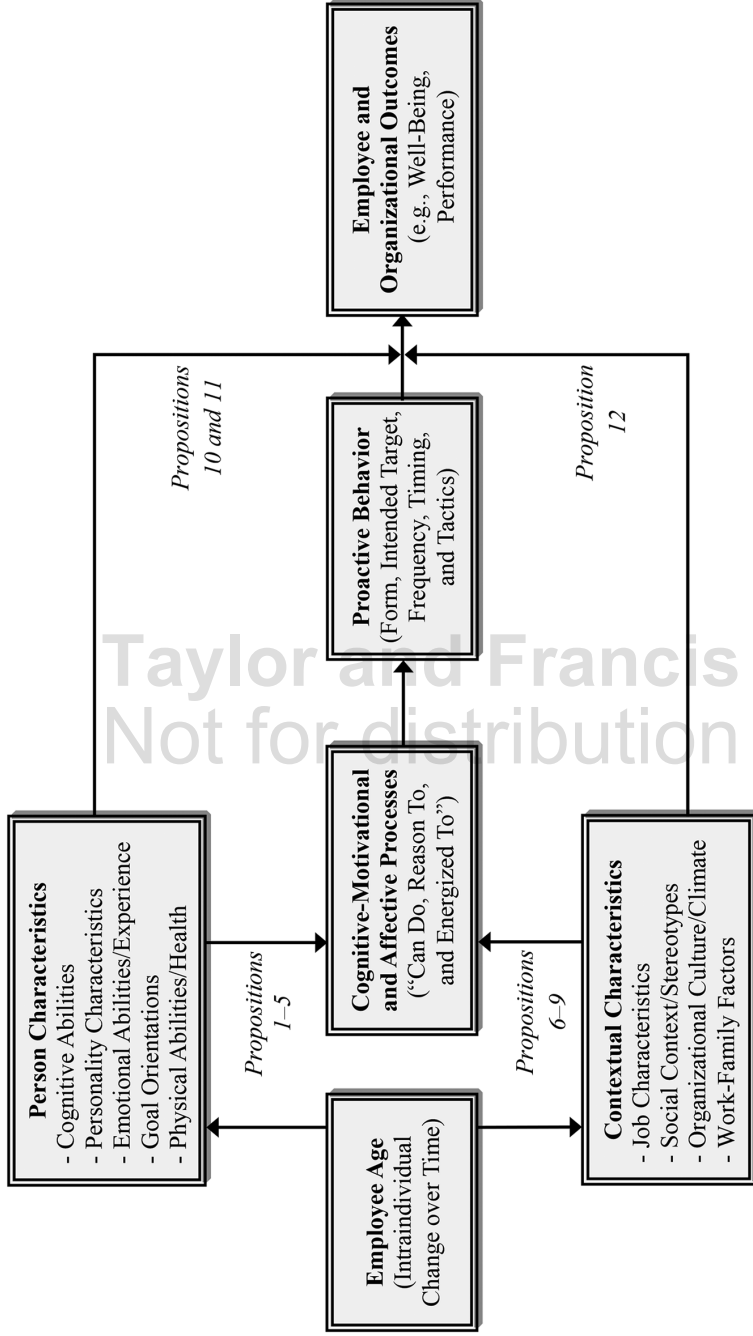


FIGURE 10.2 Theoretical framework of aging and proactivity at work (Based on Bindl & Parker, 2011; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker et al., 2010).

TABLE 10.2 Research Propositions on Aging and Proactivity at Work

<i>Section of Framework</i>	<i>Research Propositions</i>
Age, person characteristics, and proactive behavior	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Age-related changes in fluid and crystallized cognitive abilities, goal orientations, and occupational future time perspective influence the form and intended target of proactive behavior, such that young employees show more self-focused proactive educational and career behaviors compared to older employees.2. Age-related increases in crystallized cognitive abilities, conscientiousness, and changes in goal orientations influence the form and intended target of proactive work behavior, such that employees in mid-career show more organization-focused, proactive on-the-job behaviors (e.g., personal initiative, taking charge) compared to young employees.3. Age-related changes in socioemotional preferences influence the form, intended target, and tactics of proactive behavior, such that older employees are more likely to show other- and organization-focused proactive socioemotional behaviors that elicit positive and low-arousal emotions as well as meaningful experiences (e.g., mentoring co-workers) compared to young employees.4. Age-related declines in fluid cognitive abilities and physical health influence the form and tactics of proactive work behavior, such that older employees use more compensatory proactive behaviors aimed at maintenance as well as prevention and regulation of loss (e.g., accommodation crafting) compared to young employees.5. Age-related increases in emotional stability, social dominance, and emotion regulation abilities, as well as changes in goal orientations influence the form of proactive work behavior, such that older employees show more strategic proactive behavior (e.g., issue-selling, taking on organizational ambassador and gatekeeper roles) compared to young employees.
Age, contextual characteristics, and proactive behavior	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Age-related increases in (perceived) job control influence the frequency of proactive work behavior, such that older employees show more proactive behavior compared to young employees.7. Age-related increases in (perceived) interpersonal trust and decreases in (perceived) relationship conflict influence the frequency of proactive work behavior, such that older employees show more proactive socioemotional behavior compared to young employees.

(continued)

TABLE 10.2 (continued)

Section of Framework	Research Propositions
Age, proactive behavior, and work outcomes	8. Depending on their tendency to perceive situations as threats or challenges, respectively, age-related increases in the experience of negative age stereotypes influence the frequency and form of proactive work behavior, such that older employees show either less proactive behavior at work or more proactive behavior aimed at invalidating negative age stereotypes.
	9. Age-related changes in work-family factors influence the form of proactive behavior, such that: young employees and employees in mid-career are more likely to show behaviors aimed at proactively improving the balance between work, partnership, and/or young children, whereas older employees are more likely to show behaviors aimed at proactively improving the balance between work, eldercare responsibilities, and leisure (or partial retirement).
	10. Age-related increases in crystallized cognitive abilities, conscientiousness, and emotional abilities lead to improvements in older employees' judgments regarding the appropriateness of proactive behaviors. These perceptions of situational fit, in turn, strengthen the positive effects of proactive behavior on work outcomes among older employees.
	11. Due to age-related changes in emotional abilities and preferences, older employees are likely to react more negatively (in terms of physical and psychological well-being) to proactive behaviors that elicit sustained negative and high-arousal emotions compared to young employees.
	12. Age-related increases in negative age stereotypes weaken the positive effects of older (compared to young) employees' proactive behavior on others' evaluations of older employees' work outcomes.

We first propose that age-related changes influence cognitive-motivational processes such that young employees prioritize proactive educational and career behaviors (e.g., seeking opportunities to participate in training, asking for feedback; Hirschi, Lee, Porfeli, & Vondracek, 2013; Warr & Fay, 2001) over other types of proactive behaviors (*Proposition 1*). This is facilitated by their high levels of fluid cognitive abilities and occupational future time perspective, and their relatively low levels of work-relevant experiential knowledge, skills, and abilities. Such a growth phase is consistent with propositions of socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen, 1995), the selection, optimization, and compensation

model (P. B. Baltes & Baltes, 1990; Ebner, Freund, & Baltes, 2006), and the “acquisition” stage in Schaie and Willis’s (2000) lifespan theory of cognitive development, during which people ask “What should I know?” (Figure 10.1). Preliminary empirical support for our proposition was found in the studies by Warr and Fay (2001) and Bertolino et al. (2011) on educational and training-related proactivity.

As employees age and progress in their careers, the question “How should I use what I know?” becomes increasingly important (Figure 10.1; Schaie & Willis, 2000). This application and establishment phase is consistent with the “achieving,” “responsible,” and “executive” life stages in the cognitive model of lifespan development, during which employees select and pursue long-term career goals and take responsibility for others (Schaie & Willis, 2000). We argue that in this phase of the working lifespan, employees prioritize on-the-job proactive behaviors (e.g., personal initiative, voice), partly due to a growing concern for other people and the next generation (i.e., generativity motive; Clark & Arnold, 2008; McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992).

Besides goals and aspirations, perceived capability might also change at the mid-career stage. In this stage, employees’ fluid cognitive abilities and time perspective are still relatively high, and their crystallized cognitive and socioemotional abilities are improving. Moreover, employees tend to become more conscientious and experience increases in self-efficacy due to work-related socialization and affirmation processes (Heckhausen et al., 2010; Roberts et al., 2006; Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling, & Potter, 2002). Taken together, these age-related changes should motivate and enable employees in mid-career to show more proactive on-the-job behaviors (*Proposition 2*). There are currently no empirical studies that examine curvilinear effects of age on proactive on-the-job behaviors. However, meta-analytic studies found that age is weakly positively associated with personal initiative and voice (Thomas et al., 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013).

As employees enter the final phase of their working lives, they can proactively use their increased experiential knowledge, judgment skills, emotional abilities, and social networks to compensate for age-related decreases in fluid cognitive abilities, physical health, and occupational future time perspective. Such compensatory efforts can help them maintain high levels of work motivation, performance, and occupational well-being (Charles, 2010; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). Moreover, socioemotional selectivity theory and the strength and vulnerability integration model suggest that older employees have stronger preferences for emotionally positive and meaningful experiences than younger employees. Consistent with these assumptions, meta-analytic research shows that older employees hold more favorable attitudes toward their work tasks, colleagues and supervisors, and the organization (Ng & Feldman, 2010). Their generativity motives also continue to be relatively high, and may increasingly include the desire to leave a positive lasting legacy (e.g., in the case of business owners; Fox, Tost, & Wade-Benzoni, 2010).

We propose that in the final phase of their working lives, employees prioritize proactive socioemotional, compensatory, and strategic behaviors. Proactive socioemotional behaviors may include increasingly seeking interactions with familiar people at work, avoiding difficult co-workers, helping to create an emotionally positive work atmosphere, or taking on more meaningful tasks and roles, such as mentoring and organizational ambassador roles (Calo, 2005; Henry et al., 2015; Tims & Bakker, 2010). Based on socioemotional selectivity theory and the strength and vulnerability integration model as well as positive associations between age and most work-related attitudes, we expect that older employees are more likely to engage in other- and organization-focused, proactive socioemotional behaviors that elicit low-arousal positive emotions as well as meaningful experiences (*Proposition 3*).

Proactive compensatory behaviors to deal with age-related declines in fluid cognitive abilities and physical health may involve decreasing hindering work demands, using alternative means and resources, or asking others for help (Müller, De Lange, Weigl, Oxfart, & Van der Heijden, 2013; Zacher & Frese, 2011). We argue that older employees are more motivated to use compensatory proactive work behaviors aimed at maintenance as well as prevention and regulation of losses (e.g., accommodation crafting; Kooij et al., 2015) compared to young employees (*Proposition 4*).

Proactive strategic behaviors may include issue-selling as well as acting as organizational ambassadors and effective gatekeepers for innovation and other strategically important topics (Calo, 2005; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Parker et al., 2010). Research has shown that older adults have higher levels of emotional stability, emotion regulation abilities, social dominance, and show more positive attitudes (e.g., commitment) and behaviors (e.g., citizenship) toward their organization (Charles & Luong, 2013; Ng & Feldman, 2008, 2010; Roberts et al., 2006), which should enable and motivate them to show more proactive strategic behaviors (*Proposition 5*). These proactive behaviors address the question “Why should I know?” and correspond to the themes of maintenance and meaning during the reorganizational, re-integrative, and legacy creating stages in the cognitive model of lifespan development (Schaie & Willis, 2000). There are currently no empirical studies that explicitly focused on age differences in proactive socioemotional, compensatory, and strategic behaviors.

Age, Contextual Characteristics, and Proactive Behavior at Work

Age-related changes in contextual factors take place in the areas of job characteristics, team context and age stereotypes, organizational culture and climate, and work-family factors (Figure 10.2; Zacher et al., 2014). Job control (or autonomy) and social support are two job characteristics that have been shown to positively influence proactive behavior at work (Törnau & Frese, 2013). Research on

employee age and job characteristics has shown that age is positively related to perceptions of job control and interpersonal trust, and negatively related to relationship conflict at work (Ng & Feldman, 2010). Moreover, scholars in the field of work and aging have argued that particularly older employees may benefit from these job characteristics with regard to important work outcomes (Ng & Feldman, 2015; Truxillo, Cadiz, Rineer, Zaniboni, & Fraccaroli, 2012). Thus, we expect that age-related increases in job control motivate mid-career and older employees to show more proactive on-the-job behavior, as well as more proactive strategic, compensatory, and socioemotional behaviors, compared to young employees (*Proposition 6*). Moreover, we argue that age-related increases in interpersonal trust and age-related decreases in relationship conflict make it easier for mid-career and older employees to voice their ideas and suggestions, convince others, and ask others for help. Thus, feeling socially supported should motivate older employees to show more proactive on-the-job, as well as more proactive strategic, compensatory, and socioemotional behaviors (*Proposition 7*).

In contrast to these positive influences, research shows that many older employees are still faced with widespread negative age stereotypes regarding their motivation, performance, flexibility, and learning, as well as proactivity (Posthuma & Campion, 2009; Truxillo, McCune, et al., 2012). Older employees also tend to react more negatively than young employees to the feeling of being negatively stereotyped (Finkelstein, King, & Voyles, 2015; Von Hippel, Kalokerinos, & Henry, 2012). Negative age stereotypes may exist at the interpersonal level, in work teams, or on the level of organizational culture and climate (Finkelstein, King, et al., 2015; Kunze, Böhm, & Bruch, 2011; Zacher & Gielnik, 2014). However, research in social psychology suggests that reactions to negative stereotypes depend on whether the situation is perceived as a challenge or as a threat (Vick, Seery, Blascovich, & Weisbuch, 2008). We, therefore, argue that age-related increases in the experience of negative age stereotypes may either discourage older employees from showing proactive behavior, or they may motivate them to show more proactive behaviors aimed at invalidating such stereotypes, depending on their tendency to perceive stereotypes as threats or challenges, respectively (*Proposition 8*). For instance, older employees may show more proactive behaviors with regard to new technology when negative age stereotypes are interpreted as learning and development opportunities. In contrast, older employees may cease engaging in proactive behavior when age stereotypes (e.g., in the form of supervisor undermining) are perceived as a threat to their age-related identity (Ng & Feldman, 2012; Von Hippel et al., 2012).

With regard to work-family factors, we propose that age-related shifts in caregiving demands outside of the work context and changes in work centrality due to impending retirement or post-retirement work options (Allen & Shockley, 2012; Beehr & Bennett, 2015; Huffman, Culbertson, Henning, & Goh, 2013;

Zacher & Bal, 2012) may influence the form of proactive work behavior: whereas young and mid-career employees should be more likely to engage in proactive behaviors at work that aim to improve their balance between work, partnership, and/or caring for young children (e.g., proactively scheduling tasks to prevent work in the evenings or on weekends), older employees should be more likely to show proactive behaviors that improve their balance between work, caring for elderly dependents, and leisure (e.g., proactively organizing a flexible job rotation system in case of absences due to emergencies involving older relatives, proactive planning of partial retirement or bridge employment options; *Proposition 9*).

Age, Proactive Behavior, and Work Outcomes

Proactive behavior is positively related to important employee and organizational outcomes, such as job performance and occupational well-being (Thomas et al., 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013). We argue that these effects are likely to be moderated by age and age-related person and contextual characteristics (Figure 10.2). On the one hand, we expect that age-related increases in experiential knowledge and judgment (or wisdom; P. B. Baltes & Smith, 2008; Grossmann et al., 2010), conscientiousness, and socioemotional abilities improve older employees' judgments regarding the appropriateness or perceived situational fit (Bindl & Parker, 2011) of specific proactive behaviors. Moreover, these age-related gains should enable older employees to better cope with temporary setbacks in the context of their engagement in proactive behavior, which may elicit short-lived and relatively low-arousal negative emotions. These improved judgments and greater resilience, in turn, should strengthen the positive effects of proactive behaviors on work outcomes among older employees (*Proposition 10*).

In contrast, based on socioemotional selectivity theory and the strength and vulnerability integration model (Carstensen, 1995; Charles, 2010), we expect that older employees experience more negative consequences than young employees after engaging in proactive behaviors that elicit sustained negative and high-arousal emotions, such as proactively dealing with new and difficult people and situations over long periods of time (e.g., angry customers, intensive training) (*Proposition 11*). For instance, we expect that older employees ruminate more and experience more detrimental consequences regarding their physical and psychological well-being following their engagement in proactive behavior involving sustained high-arousal negative emotions. Finally, we expect that age-related increases in negative age stereotypes, and particularly age stereotypes regarding proactivity (Truxillo, McCune, et al., 2012), can weaken the positive effects of older employees' proactive behavior on other people's evaluations of older employees' work outcomes (e.g., peer, supervisor, or customer ratings; *Proposition 12*).

Implications for Future Research

Theoretical Implications

Proactivity scholars have suggested that investigating the roles of aging and lifespan development represents a new frontier in proactivity research (Fay & Sonnentag, 2010). With this chapter, we aim to contribute to research in this area by developing a set of testable propositions on the associations between age-related changes in person and contextual characteristics, cognitive-motivational and affective processes, proactive behavior, and work outcomes. In addition to the propositions, our theoretical framework has a number of implications for future research in this emerging area.

First, the form of proactive work behavior is likely to change over the lifespan. We argued that, as employees age, they should increasingly engage in proactive socioemotional, compensatory, and strategic behaviors. However, although organizational proactivity research has examined strategic behaviors, such as issue-selling, socioemotional and compensatory behaviors have not yet been identified as distinct types of proactive behavior in this literature. Future proactivity research could build on lifespan developmental theories to further develop these concepts. For example, according to the model of preventive and corrective proactivity (Kahana & Kahana, 1996), proactive socioemotional behaviors may include helping others and social participation to increase social resources, whereas proactive compensatory behaviors could refer to role substitution and modifications in goals or the environment to meet personal needs and maintain levels of functioning (P. B. Baltes & Baltes, 1990; Kahana et al., 2014). In the work domain, this would mean, for example, that older employees craft their jobs by mentoring coworkers, taking on an assistant, or managing others' impressions (Abraham & Hansson, 1995; Kooij et al., 2015). In addition, future research on proactivity should take into account that tactics of proactive work behaviors may change over the lifespan. For instance, Finkelstein et al. (2003) found that older employees were less likely to engage in indirect compared to more direct forms of proactive information-seeking. Last here, the lifespan developmental literature on wisdom (i.e., experiential knowledge and judgment; P. B. Baltes & Smith, 2008; Grossmann et al., 2010) may be helpful to further develop the notion of perceived situational fit of proactive behavior (Bindl & Parker, 2011) in future research.

Second, based on the rapidly growing literature on work and aging (e.g., Hertel & Zacher, 2015; Ng & Feldman, 2013b), in our theoretical framework and propositions we included a number of age-related variables that might mediate and moderate the associations between age, proactive work behavior, and work outcomes. However, many of these variables have not yet been acknowledged as important antecedents and moderators in existing proactivity research. For example, cognitive, physical, and emotional abilities, generativity

motives, occupational future time perspective, stereotypes held by co-workers and supervisors, as well as organizational age discrimination climates and cultures, are likely to influence the cognitive-motivational and affective processes that influence different types of proactive behavior, but these concepts have not yet been incorporated in research on proactive behavior at work.

Finally, extant proactivity research focuses particularly on job performance and, to a lesser extent, on occupational well-being as central work outcomes. While these are important outcomes in the work context, other outcomes are also becoming increasingly important in countries and organizations with rapidly aging workforces. For instance, researchers have emphasized the importance of proactive behavior for older employees' motivation to continue working after traditional retirement age (Bal et al., 2012; Bal & Jansen, 2015) as well as retirement planning and decision making (Claes & Van Loo, 2011; for an early study, see Shkop, 1982). In summary, we recommend that future proactivity research includes age as a substantial variable, investigates age-related person and contextual characteristics as mediators and moderators, and considers work outcomes relevant to aging and retirement. Moreover, future research should develop the theory on age-related forms and tactics of proactive behavior (e.g., proactive socioemotional and compensatory behaviors).

Methodological Recommendations

Empirical research on work and aging has several challenges (Ng & Feldman, 2008; Zacher, 2015). Table 10.3 summarizes seven methodological recommendations for future research on work, aging, and proactivity. In addition to including age-related mediators and moderators (*Recommendations 1 and 2*), future research on aging and proactivity should employ longitudinal and cohort-sequential research designs which allow conclusions about age-related changes and the possibility to rule out cohort and selection effects (*Recommendation 3*). Several exemplary studies, based on large panel datasets, can be found in the lifespan developmental literature (e.g., Lucas & Donnellan, 2011; Schaie, 2013). Samples included in cross-sectional research on age and proactivity should aim to evenly represent all age groups (*Recommendation 4*). Until now, most primary studies included in meta-analyses on age and work-related variables are based on samples of predominantly young and mid-career employees (Ng & Feldman, 2008, 2013a), which may render these findings not representative for older employees.

Age should always be operationalized as a continuous variable (*Recommendation 5*). We recommend this because lifespan theories conceptualize age as a continuous variable, discussing how and why goals and behaviors change as people age. Furthermore, cut-off ages distinguishing young, mid-career, and older employees are arbitrary and not used universally (Shultz & Adams, 2007). Dichotomizing or otherwise splitting continuous variables also results in a loss of information on individual differences and associated reduction of statistical

TABLE 10.3 Methodological Recommendations for Research on Aging and Proactivity at Work

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
1. Examine age-related mediators	Age is not a causal factor; instead of only investigating simple age effects and age moderation effects, age-related mediators (person and contextual characteristics) should be included.
2. Examine age and age-related characteristics, or proactivity, as moderators	Proactivity concepts may explain more variance in work outcomes among young or older employees. Age and age-related person and contextual characteristics may moderate relationships between proactivity concepts and work outcomes, or proactivity concepts may moderate relationships among age, age-related characteristics, and work outcomes.
3. Employ longitudinal and cohort-sequential research designs	Cross-sectional research designs allow only conclusions about <i>age differences</i> and cannot rule out cohort and selection effects. Longitudinal research designs allow conclusions about <i>age-related changes over time</i> (i.e., <i>aging</i>) and cohort-sequential research designs additionally allow ruling out cohort and selection effects.
4. Sample similar numbers of employees from different age groups	Samples consisting primarily of young and mid-career employees do neither allow generalizing findings to older employees nor comparing employees across the working lifespan. At a minimum, report proportions of employees sampled from different age groups.
5. Operationalize age as a continuous variable	Comparing artificially created age groups (e.g., 35 years and younger, 36–50 years, 51 years and older) reduces statistical power, may bias results, and – in the case of only two age groups (e.g., young and older employees) – does not allow examining curvilinear relationships.
6. Examine curvilinear relationships between age, proactivity concepts, and work outcomes	Young employees may differ in proactivity and work outcomes from both mid-career and older employees; mid-career employees may differ from both young and older employees (i.e., U- or \cap -shapes); or older employees may differ from both young and mid-career employees.
7. Consider other time-related constructs	Other time-related constructs (e.g., job and organizational tenure) may constitute alternative explanations for associations between age, proactivity concepts, and work outcomes.

power (MacCallum, Zhang, Preacher, & Rucker, 2002). It is further important to examine curvilinear relationships between age (operationalized as a continuous variable), proactivity concepts, and work outcomes (*Recommendation 6*) because young, mid-career, and older employees may differ in the form of proactive work behaviors as outlined in our propositions. Finally, researchers should account for other time-related constructs, such as job and organizational tenure, as alternative explanations for associations between age, proactivity, and work outcomes (*Recommendation 7*).

Practical Implications

In the context of workforce aging and changing work demands, organizational practitioners need to find ways to attract, motivate, support, and retain older employees (Finkelstein, Truxillo, Fraccaroli, & Kanfer, 2015; Truxillo et al., 2015). Our review of the empirical literature on aging and proactivity and our theoretical framework suggest a number of practical implications. First, consistent with research on age and other forms of work performance (Ng & Feldman, 2008), results of meta-analytic and primary studies suggest that older employees do not engage in less – and, according to self-reports, possibly even in more – proactive on-the-job behaviors than young employees. However, older employees are often perceived by others as generally less proactive than young employees (Truxillo, McCune, et al., 2012). The empirical evidence challenges these age stereotypes and suggests that managers, employees themselves, and other relevant stakeholders in organizations need to be educated that older employees are not generally less proactive than young employees and may be even more likely to engage in other types of proactive behaviors, such as proactive on-the-job, socioemotional, and strategic behaviors. Reducing age-related (self-)stereotypes can help to further enhance older employees' proactive behaviors and other favorable work outcomes, such as occupational well-being (Von Hippel et al., 2012)

Second, there is evidence that older employees are less likely to engage in educational and career-related proactive behaviors. However, training and career development in most organizations still focus primarily on young employees (e.g., career as upward movement, training in classroom settings). Therefore, designing training and career development activities to better suit older employees' needs and preferences (e.g., lateral job movements, self-paced learning, integration of training content with prior work experience) could be beneficial with regard to older employees' career-related proactive behaviors. Practitioners could also support older employees by providing positive role models and by challenging and reducing age stereotypes regarding proactivity, which may negatively impact on older employees' self-efficacy for learning and development (Maurer, 2001). Research on age management further suggests

that providing employees of all ages with equal access to training and career development opportunities should have positive effects on older employees' motivation and participation (Böhm, Schröder, & Kunze, 2013; Naegele & Walker, 2011).

Finally, our framework and supporting evidence from the lifespan literature suggest that older employees may be more proactive with regard to work behaviors that require experience-based knowledge and judgment, socioemotional skills, and well-established social networks, and that help them compensate for potential age-related declines in fluid cognitive and physical abilities. This research suggests that organizations should encourage older employees to take on new and strategically important work roles such as mentor, organizational ambassador, and facilitator of knowledge transfer and innovation (Calo, 2005; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003). For example, this could be done by rewarding and recognizing these types of proactive behaviors or by providing older employees with supervisor support and more autonomous jobs. Moreover, practitioners could educate older employees about action- and emotion-regulation strategies, such as selection, optimization, and compensation, or the proactive regulation of emotional job demands (Scheibe, Ståmvogel, & Zacher, 2015). These strategies may help older employees invest their resources in an optimal way and thus improve their occupational well-being and performance and maintain a focus on opportunities (Zacher & Frese, 2011).

Conclusion

Our goals in this chapter were to review extant research on aging and proactivity and, based on proactivity and lifespan developmental theories and findings, to develop a theoretical framework to guide future research and practice. With regard to our first goal, we found that theory and empirical evidence suggest that older employees show generally less proactive educational and career-related behavior than young employees, but are as proactive (and possibly more so) with regard to other forms of work behavior, including on-the-job proactive behavior. Our framework proposes that age-related changes in person and contextual characteristics influence cognitive-motivational and affective processes which, in turn, impact on the form, intended target, frequency, timing, and tactics of proactive behavior. Moreover, we argue that age-related changes can strengthen or weaken the effects of proactive behavior on important employee and organizational outcomes. We hope that our literature review, theoretical framework, research propositions, and suggestions for future research will stimulate further systematic scientific inquiry on the association between employee age and proactivity and facilitate theory- and evidence-based practical applications in organizations.

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11

PROACTIVE GOALS AND THEIR PURSUIT

Thomas S. Bateman

The future is not a gift; it is an achievement.

Robert F. Kennedy

The world, they say, holds three kinds of people: those who make things happen, those who watch what happens, and those who wonder what happened. The first group is proactive, the second are passive observers, and the third are oblivious. The proactive individual is a driver, bystanders are passengers, and the oblivious become road kill.

Well, not necessarily; it depends largely on one's mindset and personal choices. Anyone can become more proactive, or less so. People can pick and choose when and where to be proactive, and the form – and hence the likely success or failure – of their proactive behaviors. Proactive behavior can arise unthinkingly, but the focus here will be on people's conscious choices to pursue proactive goals (or not), and on the factors that determine success and failure in proactive goal pursuits.

People do appear to be dispositionally inclined toward more or less proactive behavior (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Crant, Hu, & Jiang, Chapter 8, this volume). People who engage more frequently in proactive behavior are more likely to establish proactive goals and hence personal initiative (Frese & Faye, 2001) than those disposed to lower proactivity. But “low-proactive” individuals can decide to be proactive; personal volition can override traits (Dweck, 2006; Little, 2014; Mischel, 2004; Hoffmann & Wilson, 2010). Moreover, whatever one's personal tendencies, one can learn to be more effective in the challenging pursuit of proactive goals.

Given the known power of goals (Locke & Latham, 2013) and the importance of proactive behavior, it is perhaps surprising that research about proactive

goals (Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010) is scarce, almost nonexistent, in the literature. This chapter is partly a review of relevant literature while also advancing theory via new concepts and definitions, suggested causal mechanisms, inductive generalizations, and informal propositions for which empirical test could inform both goal-setting and proactivity literature. Despite the lack of empiricism, it seems safe to say that proactive goals – that is, effecting personal or organizational change such as developing decision-making skills, initiating a strategic change, and starting a new firm – pose unique challenges compared with commonly-studied goal types, and that this uncharted territory offers extensive opportunity for future research.

As proactive behaviors are different from other behaviors, as described throughout this book, so do proactive goals differ from other goals. The potential array of proactive goal content is vast, well beyond the number of proactive behaviors that have been studied so far. The types of proactive goals that people are most and least likely to tackle, and are most and least likely to successfully attain, are well worth exploring. Self-regulatory failures, strategic missteps, and other mistakes are more likely to occur with some types of proactive goals than others and undoubtedly differ between proactive and other types of goals.

Proactive goals are vitally important, yet far from fully understood. The goal-setting literature, thriving still, can be rejuvenated and elevated even further via the study of proactive vs other goal types – not to mention all of the potential variations within the proactive goal universe. Some fascinating research lies ahead.

Goals and Proactive Goals

Goals are perhaps the key driver of people's behavior in the workplace. Goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1991) is widely considered, based on extensive empiricism and theoretical development (Locke & Latham, 2013), to be one of the most valid and powerful of organizational behavior theories (Miner, 2005). Goals are a cognitive construct, a mental representation of the desired future (Austin & Vancouver, 1996), and not the same as behavior. But goals do reliably predict commensurate behaviors; they direct attention, inspire effort, prompt task strategies, and motivate persistence for a while at least.

Proactive behaviors and their many empirically-substantiated effects presumably stem from proactive goals. While the unconscious does influence behavior (Hoffman & Wilson, 2010), far more often than not proactive behaviors are motivated and directed by conscious, commensurate goals.

The early parts of this chapter are highly selective because a large and growing literature supports each subtopic: proactive behavior, goals, goal-setting theory, self-regulation, and an array of other work (some, with regrets, not cited here). The chapter overall is intended to inform future research via a number of objectives: to identify unique characteristics of proactive goals;

expand our understanding of proactive behavior; identify goal dimensions that can distinguish one proactive goal from another; guide readers to some informative studies and reviews; and suggest avenues for future research into this underdeveloped domain.

Proactive Goals

The defining characteristics of proactive goals mirror the common core of major proactivity concepts (Frese & Faye, 2001; Tornau & Frese, 2013): 1) an action orientation (self-starting, not passive); 2) a change orientation (initiating instead of waiting for change); and 3) a focus on the future. The future focus is not unique to goals that are proactive because all goals are representations of an intended future.

Most centrally, the distinguishing feature of proactive goals compared with other goals is that their intended result is some type of personally-chosen change. An additional likely and important characteristic of proactive goals is self-concordance: a high level of fit between person and goal, such as when a work goal connects with higher-order personal identities and values. A goal can have varying degrees of fit with the striver's personality; high self-concordance, more likely with proactive goals because they are self-chosen, will predict higher motivation over longer time periods and contribute to personal development, thriving, and wellbeing (Little, 2014).

In contrast, less-proactive goals are less change-oriented and more externally-imposed. Such goals include to: maintain the status quo, accede to situational demands and constraints, go along to get along, meet required performance targets, hold onto a job, maintain a health regimen, make annual vacation plans, stick to a budget, and submit tax returns on time. These goals may be important, but they are not notably proactive. The generic label used here for contrast with proactive goals will be continuance goals (more on this later).

Conformity to expectations and norms, passivity, and actions controlled by reinforcement consequences are standard, ongoing, everyday behaviors (commensurate with their implied continuance goals). In contrast, proactive goals aim to override confining circumstances or apparent personal limitations. Extraordinary or particularly high levels of proactivity are transcendent in that they have an exceptional impact, exceed rather than merely meet task demands, overcome rather than succumb to real or perceived constraints, and create or seize opportunities rather than miss or fail to capture them (Bateman & Porath, 2003).

Proactive Goal Targets

The content of a proactive goal includes not just change but also its target or focus. An early study of proactivity behavior (Bateman & Crant, 1993) was grounded

in a particular subsystem of social cognitive theory's triadic reciprocal causation (Bandura, 1986) among person (P), environment (E), and behavior (B). This work reversed the traditional and prevalent causal link emphasizing environmental causes of behavior ($E \rightarrow B$) by highlighting how people's agentic behavior can change the environment ($B \rightarrow E$). Completing the picture by adding the other subsystem in triadic causation ($B \rightarrow P$), proactive behavior can also effect changes in the person (e.g., Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010).

Proactive goals that target *personal change* can entail stopping a small bad habit or pursuing an aspirational future self (Markus and Nurius, 1985) that represents a significant change from a perceived current self (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2012). Sample goals that target *environmental change* include to buy a standup desk, change offices, coach (develop) direct reports, change the strategic direction of your firm, start a new company, help your community prepare for climate change, and effect a corporate turnaround. Well-chosen proactive goals can effect desirable changes in both person and environment; job-crafting is a prime example of targeted environmental changes (the task and/or the social environment) that also benefit the individual enacting them (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Environmental and personal goal targets can be further subdivided and specified. Environmental change has been dichotomized as other people and the organization (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Grant & Ashford, 2008). Parker and Collins (2010) distinguish empirically among person-environment fit behavior, proactive work behavior, and proactive strategic behavior of the firm. Proactive foci such as boss and coworkers (Belschak & Den Hartog, Chapter 7 in this volume) are more specific targets, and more specific yet are the many different behaviors found throughout the literature: feedback-seeking, voice, taking charge, and others discussed in this volume. Each targeted behavior is motivated and guided by a commensurate proactive goal.

Expanding Our Perspective on Proactive Goals

Proactive goals entail an intended, personally-chosen change. At least three additional descriptions can help to open the door to greater understanding, while retaining the distinctive nature of proactive as compared with continuance goals: 1) behavioral discontinuity when compared with a current status quo or trendline; 2) gradated (rather than dichotomous) dimensionality; and 3) personal distinctiveness.

Behavioral Discontinuity

Goals that are not proactive in nature entail maintaining a current self or environment or continuing a current behavioral trajectory. They indicate an intended end state or a steady path that reflects or extends a status quo – continuity from

present to future. These often are default goals, in that they are routine and neither change-oriented nor notably agentic (Bandura, 2006).

Agentially, forming any new goal is proactive if it represents a change from a status quo or current trend, rather than renewal of ongoing goals. Discontinuities can take the form of a shift in a trajectory but also can mean a step-function change: a qualitative or dramatic quantitative change in a performance target and the behaviors required to meet it. These are discontinuous changes, and proactive if they also are self-chosen. Less proactive is to specify a new goal – such as tightening a deadline, cutting additional costs, or establishing a subgoal – regarding a behavior in which a person is already engaged or a distal goal already targeted.

Graded Dimensionality

“Less proactive” suggests that proactivity is a continuous variable, not an either/or dichotomy (a goal being either proactive or not). The extent of intended change signals the degree of proactivity. Greater proactivity is indicated by a bigger change in intended impact; moreover, all else equal a quantum leap or qualitative change indicates greater proactivity than a small change in the slope of an activity level.

Likewise, the distinction between personal vs environmental cause of behavior is not a dichotomy but is characterized by gradations. The emphasis on personal agency and its environmental impact in early proactivity research (Bateman & Crant, 1993) was not meant to suggest zero environmental causation. Environmental antecedents influence most behaviors, but proactive goals have personal drivers as well. Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) describes a continuum from zero to full self-determination, and a variety of contingencies and processes relevant to studying this dimension of proactivity in the workplace (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Fundamentally, though, the greater the personal causation, relative to environmental causation, the greater the proactivity.

So, neither intended change vs no change nor personal vs environmental causation, is a simple dichotomy. The same point pertains to the future orientation of proactivity; anticipating a future vs reacting to the past is likewise continuous rather than dichotomous in nature. For example, fixing a problem is a reaction to a current circumstance. But also it is agentic, alters a status quo, disrupts continuity, and (ideally) creates a better future by erasing something of the past and present.

If a problem exists, the behaviors of fixing it are a function of personal initiative to change it, as well as an environmental opportunity to do so. Fixing a problem takes personal initiative by an individual effecting change in ways that others have not. This is in contrast to allowing a problematic status quo or trend to persist, and to conforming passively to the prevailing inaction of other people.

Distinctiveness

For Little (2014), everyday behavior expresses three sources of motivation: our genetic roots drive biogenic behavior, socialization and norms drive sociogenic behaviors, and our self-chosen aspirations, plans, and personal projects express our idiogenic selves. Idiogenic behavior derives from personal choices and personally-important projects that are distinctively one's own.

Proactive goals are agentic and therefore idiogenic. Taking this a step further, idiogenic behavior can be uniquely proactive in a context in which others are not taking action. According to Kelley (1973), consensus information is one dimension that people use in attributing the cause of a behavior: how do other people behave in the same situation, in the presence of the same stimuli? If most people do nothing, an action that attempts to change the situation is distinctively and uniquely proactive.

A goal that is idiogenic might not be particularly proactive, nor is uniqueness a required condition of proactivity. But change-oriented behavior that is unique, and ignores or strays from social norms and constraints and alters the status quo, arguably is more proactive than being one among a group of change agents pursuing consensus goals. The climate change arena provides a good example: Even among people who believe and are concerned, adequate anticipatory actions are the exception rather than the rule. For the small numbers of true climate change activists, their highly proactive goals reflect and even define their idiogenic selves.

The Habitats of Proactive Goals

Conceptualizations of proactive behaviors and the goals that motivate and direct them can inhabit the situational domains of problems and opportunity, personal domains of both thinking and doing, and the special challenges they pose due to the unique demands of goal pursuit.

Situational Domains: Problems Plus Opportunities

What are the situational domains that can prompt proactive goals? As stated earlier, solving problems that others are not, in the service of a better future, is change-focused proactivity, as are creating, pursuing, and seizing opportunities (Bateman & Crant, 1993).

Problems can present multiple options, many of which (ignore, hope it goes away, hope someone else tackles it) are not proactive but some of which are (taking initiative, acting with purpose, orchestrating progress, and fixing it, thereby erasing part of the past to create a better future). Opportunities, if noticed, likewise present multiple options. Scanning for opportunities is proactive, as is turning a problem into an opportunity. Also like problems, known

opportunities can be ignored, attempted but quickly abandoned, or pursued hard to the point of success.

Thus both problems and opportunities can provide organizationally- and personally-relevant context, stimulus, opportunity, and constraint. These domains cover a lot of territory, comprising just about every proactivity-inviting challenge. But problems and opportunities are domains for continuance goals as well. Proactive goals and behaviors in the domains of difficult problems and opportunities remain rare and unique: consider how many problems go unsolved and how many opportunities pass by without anyone noticing, let alone solving or capturing them.

Personal Domains: Thinking Plus Doing

People can pursue proactive goals that target not just their observable behaviors but also their thought processes. Both thinking and doing, and the goals associated with them can be more or less proactive.

Thinking proactively does not mean simply thinking with forethought; again, all goals are mental representations of the desired future. A proactive goal can entail intentionally changing how one thinks. For example, it is well known that much of people's behavior is habitual, routine, instinctive, and mindless – that is, we frequently engage in automatic, unconscious System 1 processing and fail to engage when needed in more deliberative, thoughtful System 2 processing (Kahneman, 2011). To engage more in System 2 thinking is a proactive goal.

To improve one's critical thinking skills is a proactive goal. To engage in meta-cognition, to think about one's thinking is a proactive goal. So is to engage in double-loop learning (Argyris, 2002). It is a proactive goal to not just deliberate, but to deliberate well and with wisdom.

The Nature of Goal Pursuit

The territory for proactive goals also differs from that of continuance goals in the required nature of goal pursuit. Proactive work goals are salient to others, and particularly susceptible to criticism, in part because they are unique and sometimes counter-normative, and because people so often find reasons to resist change. Pursuing a proactive work goal is likely to require personal and organizational resources including information, knowledge, skills, time, effort, funding, and others' attention and contributions. It also can hold ambiguous strategic pathways, require different kinds of cognitive effort and new behaviors, and cause stress due to a greater probability of failure. For these reasons, personal resource depletion can cause fatigue and hurt performance (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000). Attaining such goals requires stronger self-regulation skills and strategies that extend far beyond mere persistence and willpower, sometimes for much longer time periods as discussed in later sections of the chapter.

Scarcity Alert

Proactive goals are rarely mentioned explicitly in the empirical literature (exceptions include Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012, and Montani, Odoardi, & Battistelli, 2014), in contrast to proactive behaviors and to other types of goals. This seems surprising given the importance of both goals and proactivity. On the other hand, their scarcity in the literature may reflect scarcity in real life.

When researchers ask people what goals they are pursuing, strikingly few of the stated goals are proactive in nature. Most of Little, Salmela-Aro, and Phillips' (2007) examples of personal projects are fairly routine and not very proactive: finish my inventory, go fishing, figure out how to pay the rent, keep the boss from finding out what I did Tuesday. The most proactive goals in Little et al.'s (2007) personal project goal matrices are to organize a neighborhood, watch a program, and (arguably) to continue to grow as a person. If the project goals involve change, the changes are minor or vague. Most entail maintaining a certain level of a particular activity or performance, or sustaining a current trajectory.

Among 75 corporate leaders, the large majority of their 2100+ self-identified goals (Bateman, O'Neill, & Kenworthy, 2002) would likely score low on any assessment of their proactivity. The executives indicated a wide variety of goals including to keep major customers, maintain a reputation, cut costs, control overheads, make payables within 30 days, satisfy demand, have products in stock, keep moving up the technological ladder, check monthly productivity, be efficient with production, grow the wholesale business, make quarterly numbers, avoid pirating, survive, grow faster, hold onto good people, recognize hard work, be reliable, keep promises, and keep the company vision in place. Only infrequently was a stated goal clearly proactive: to be a leader in changing how the marketplace works, find international partners, build a new factory, and anticipate legislative changes.

It appears that most goals are not very proactive, and very few are *very* proactive.

Why So Scarce?

If few goals are proactive in nature, why is this so? Trying to create change is difficult, often complicated, and prone to failure. Its demanding nature causes resource or ego depletion (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000), stress, and burnout. Failure experiences drive down expectancies and self-efficacy. Environmental factors often constrain behavioral options both perceived and real. Additional culprits include inertia, habit, perceived risk, lack of resources, and norms and passivity of others. People are inhibited and may need to be disinhibited (Lind & van den Bos, 2013), and often underestimate their abilities including their ability to influence others (Lind & van den Bos, 2013). See Bolino et al. (Chapter 18, this volume) for more on the potential downsides of proactive goals.

Moreover, many are biased in favor of the status quo. Behavioral economists have long noted this tendency, based on cognitive factors such as using the status quo as a reference point and loss aversion that inhibits efforts to depart from it (Samuelson & Zeckhauser, 1988).

According to Social Justification Theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994), the preference for status quo maintenance is not just cognitive but also motivated. Even when existing systems are flawed and somehow disadvantageous, people would rather justify and defend their systems than acknowledge that they are suboptimal or corrupt. Proudfoot and Kay (2014) discuss some implications for organizational behavior, including resistance to change initiated by others as well as a reluctance to initiate change oneself.

People's system justification motive is heightened when they feel dependent upon the system, when it is difficult for them to leave the system when there is an outside threat (such as an effort to impose change), and when they feel low levels of control. Conditions that potentially counter these circumstances – for instance, giving people more autonomy and voice – could reduce this motive to maintain the status quo and engender more proactive goals.

Proudfoot and Kay (2014) also discuss certain organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) such as sportsmanship (willingness to tolerate negative circumstances without complaining) and compliance (adherence to rules and regulations). A motive to preserve the status quo would support these passive OCBs. In contrast, the same motive could discourage other discretionary behaviors (different OCBs) that could benefit the workplace, such as constructive change-oriented behaviors driven by proactive goals.

We commonly accept a dysfunctional status quo. Bazerman's (2008) cognitive explanations for this failure to act include: positive illusions that lead us to conclude that a problem doesn't exist or isn't important; egocentric interpretations such as blaming others for problems and avoiding personal responsibility; discounting the future; lack of personal experience or other vivid information that might prompt action; and a refusal to accept costs even though they would bring about greater benefits.

Proactive Goal Predictors and Choice

Despite their inhibitors, the sometime emergence of proactive goals is somewhat predictable. Antecedents or predictors of proactive goals, like the causes of behavior and goals generally, include both personal and environmental factors. Theoretical models indicate that environmental influences on proactive behaviors, and by extension proactive goals, include task characteristics and leadership (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Griffin, Parker, & Mason, 2010). Regarding personal variables, conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness to experience are positively related to multiple proactive behaviors, while agreeableness is negatively related (Tornau & Frese, 2013). Behavior-specific proactive *goals*,

though, have not been studied as mediators between dispositions and proactive behaviors (and behavioral consequences).

What other personal variables might predict proactive goals and commensurate behaviors? Moral foundations (Graham et al., 2011) can be studied along with predictors of proactivity to predict proactive moral goals, for example, attempts to influence other peoples' ethical behaviors and organizations' ethical cultures. With their implications for confidence and control perceptions, core self-evaluation (Judge, 2009) and commensurate self-efficacy constructs are logical predictors of specific proactive goals. New measures for people in work environments can be developed to tap constructs such as proactive-behavior-specific self-efficacy, perceived proactive capacity, perceived adaptive capacity, and reactive and proactive adaptation (Grothmann & Patt, 2005).

A class of situations well worth investigating is that in which leaders are insufficiently proactive and observers (direct reports and others) realize that someone needs to assume a proactive role and make something happen. An important domain for this someone's-got-to-do-it process is predictable surprises (Bazerman, 2008) – foreseeable events and problems that were preventable if given earlier attention and action. Issue importance is also a likely predictor. Proactive behaviors such as voice pertain to this context, as would problem solving and opportunity pursuit. This has particular relevance in our social-media era as followers and observers not only voice displeasure but mobilize action when they don't like what they (don't) see from leaders.

Felt responsibility could be a pivotal cognitive variable that predicts proactive goals. This is a key mediator between attitudes and behavior that predicts taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), organizational change efforts (Fuller, Marler, & Hester, 2006), and climate engagement (Bateman & O'Connor, 2015). Felt responsibility could be activated by observing passive leaders when action is thought to be needed.

General predictors, though, do not necessarily predict an actual choice of a proactive goal. The fact that people have many goals means that some will compete with one another for priority (Sun & Frese, 2013). With a vast set of potential goal options, and beyond general predictors noted above, what prompts the decision to establish and pursue a proactive goal? Ultimately, the likelihood that a proactive goal will be selected stems from its perceived value. Contributors to perceived value include feasibility, personal importance, affective value, self-efficacy, perceived probability of success, perceived control (influenced by, for example, competence, time, challenge, and autonomy), and beliefs about others' (dis)approval (e.g., Kruglanski et al, 2013; Locke & Latham, 2013; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010).

Pertaining to the interconnectedness among multiple goals, additional value indicators for a proactive goal include its multifinality, equifinality, and self-concordance (Day & Unsworth, 2013; Kruglanski et al., 2013). Multifinality is the number of higher level goals that a lower goal has facilitative connections

with (“bang for the buck”). Equifinality is the number of lower-order goals that a higher-level goal has facilitative connections with – creating multiple pathways to higher goal attainment. Self-concordance was described earlier.

Goal choice, with its commitment to actively pursue the goal, marks the crossing of the Rubicon: the transition from goal-setting to goal-striving (Gollwitzer, 1990; Klein, Austin, & Cooper, 2008). We will discuss goal-striving further after expanding our perspective on proactive goals in the workplace.

Further Stretching the Proactive Goal Territory

Previous sections offered defining characteristics plus more expansive perspectives on proactive goals and behaviors. Exploring further in the context of work, proactive goals can be viewed usefully through the lenses of proactive work projects, stretch goals, and a proactive goal ladder.

Proactive Work Projects

An individual’s entire goal network (including those of top business executives; Bateman et al., 2002) is a complex hierarchy of many goals at many levels, from low-level tactical behaviors to high-level abstract values (Austin & Vancouver, 1996). An important type of mid-level goal – not necessarily but potentially proactive in nature – is the personal project: extended sets of personally-salient action in context (Little, 2014). Parsing this, a personal project is a set of multiple interrelated actions, continuing through time and across circumstances. Action entails interactive commerce with the world outside the individual. The person defines the project (goal) for him/herself: it is idiosyncratic and personally salient. Project-related behaviors are enacted in a social ecology, and can be collective as well as individual pursuits. Projects are important ends for the people pursuing them and means to other ends.

Grant, Little, and Phillips (2007) distinguish personal projects from tasks (assigned pieces of work) and jobs (aggregation of assigned tasks). For purposes here, proactive work projects (PWPs) are those projects that are job-related but personally chosen and that entail personal or situational change – the greater the intended change, the more proactive the personal work project.

Goal-setting theory and research have identified important goal dimensions including specificity, difficulty, and commitment (Locke & Latham, 2013). Little et al. (2007) measure many additional dimensions in their research on personal projects. Applying and extending their work, researchers and participants can assess PWPs and other proactive goals on dimensions including difficulty, importance, temporal range, learning, obstacles, time adequacy, likelihood of success, self-identity, value congruency, challenge, progress, support, absorption, competence, autonomy, and conflict (the extent to which goals support or interfere with one another).

Personal projects are most likely to be chosen when they are central to, or an expression of, the current self, or target the creation/development of a different self (Little, 2014). Field studies of PWWs would yield useful knowledge about goals that are broader and higher-level than the goals investigated in most laboratory and organizational research, and about goals guaranteed to be important to individuals and impactful within and sometimes across organizations.

Stretch Goals

Proactive goals for individuals are similar in important ways to stretch goals for organizations. Sitkin, See, Miller, Lawless, & Carton (2011) describe stretch goals as jolting events that disrupt complacency and promote new ways of thinking and acting, as autogenic (intentional, internally-generated), as intended to spur change, and as requiring experimentation and innovation. They require a shift from System 1 to System 2 information processing (Kahneman, 2011): from automatic processing to heedfulness, mindfulness, vigilance, proactive scanning, and situational awareness and assessment.

Also like stretch goals (Sitkin et al., 2011), proactive goals are characterized by difficulty and novelty. Stretch goals are used to improve performance, but importantly have another potential benefit: to spur exploratory learning. Like proactive goals, the path to attaining a stretch goal is unclear, the actor must devise new strategies of goal pursuit, and pursuit is likely to involve one or more setbacks and plateaus. Because there is no apparent strategic template for stretch goal pursuit and attainment, the actor is forced to search outside current routines. Ideally, the actor learns along the way. Through proactive goals, as with stretch goals, people, groups, and organizations channel toward alternative futures.

A Proactive Goal Ladder

A pathway to a higher-level goal – for example, the goals and behaviors required in pursuing a proactive work project – proceeds up a ladder in which each goal is a step or subgoal toward the next (Koo & Fishbach, 2010). People's attention fluctuates up and down and across the goal hierarchy, ideally progressing upward. Some goals are smaller, some bigger, some more and some less proactive, some with familiar routines and some requiring significant changes in strategies and tactics.

For instance, a manager may spot a business opportunity that fits her company's mission and strategy, and decide to pursue it. To turn the idea into a profitable business is a proactive venture – turning nothing into something, creating a business where one did not previously exist. She will need to scale a ladder of proactive thoughts and behaviors that will depart from the status quo and begin building the new venture. Specifics aside, the manager will draw

on her knowledge, skills, and abilities as she tackles some tasks, but also will face a variety of unfamiliar tasks and challenges that will require changes in her standard operating procedures and additions to her behavioral repertoire. Many things have to happen for success to be realized; many things can get in the way. The odds can be daunting, for reasons both within and outside of the individual's control.

When considering proactive work projects, a person can enhance his effectiveness via a ladder of proactive goals that all involve ratcheting up the effort and attempting to enact change. Ideally, he does this in ways that reduce the risk of error and increase the odds of successfully navigating a rocky and winding road through an uncertain future. Regardless of the details of the proactive work project, a generic ladder of proactive goals and behaviors (see Figure 11.1) entails several and often all of the following steps: 1) from automatic, mindless System 1 information processing to deliberative System 2 processing; 2) from deliberative to *effective* information processing, including rational thinking and practical wisdom; 3) from thought to initial actions; 4) from initial actions to an extended period of self-regulated actions; and 5) from self-regulation to sustained action plus flexibility for other pursuits. Via self-regulation processes, feedback loops, and adjustments will slow or interrupt progress via occasional steps downward and laterally in the goal hierarchy.

Proactive Goal Pursuit: Fundamental Processes

It is one thing to set a proactive goal for oneself. Quite another set of things is needed to pursue the goal effectively and actually attain it. Successful goal pursuit requires self-regulation, enactment over time of phase models of goal-striving, and problem-solving along the way. After this section summarizes these general processes, later sections identify more specific motivational and cognitive processes that can further enhance effectiveness.

Self-Regulation

The editors of this book have described proactivity as a goal-driven process of self-regulation (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). Compared with the pursuit of continuance goals, self-regulation (SR) tends to be both more important and more difficult when pursuing goals that are highly proactive.

In goal-setting theory, goals and feedback are the two basic constructs of SR, and employing goals and feedback together are more effective than either used alone (Locke & Latham, 2013). More broadly, the core processes of self-regulation include establishing goals, using feedback to compare progress against the goals, and adjusting cognitions and behaviors as needed in the event of a discrepancy between the goal and current state (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1998; Karoly, 1993; Lord, Diefendorff, Schmidt, & Hall, 2010). Others have

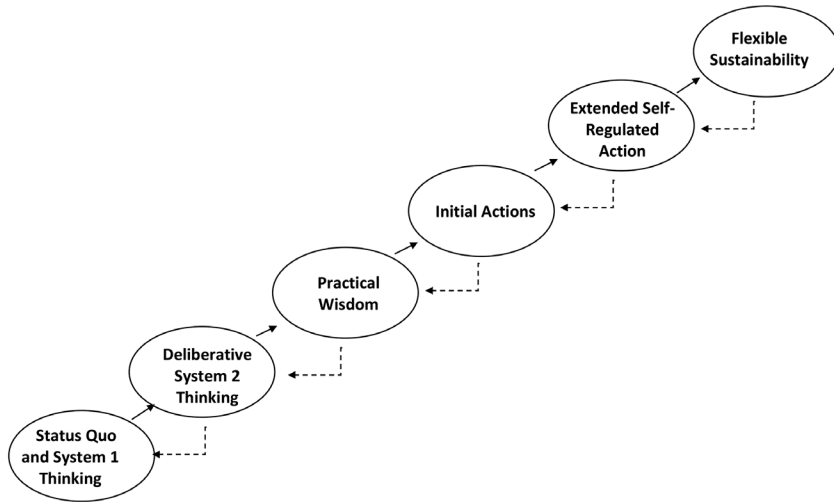


FIGURE 11.1 A proactive goal ladder

summarized self-regulation as including goal establishment, planning, striving, and revision (Austin & Vancouver, 1996; Day & Unsworth, 2013).

A proactive personal project entails multiple goals and multiple feedback loops (Bateman & Barry, 2012). With the longer time periods, that significant proactive work projects typically require, multiple goals and multiple types of feedback will become part of the self-regulatory process. Highly proactive goals, including significant PWP, have more potential consequences, paths, and sub-goals along the chosen path, and a likely need to rethink and “re-goal” along the way.

In the domain of proactivity, effective SR includes establishing goals to execute these processes thoughtfully and thoroughly; envision an intended future and establish appropriate proactive goals; plan a viable (better, the best possible) action strategy; seek and reflect on feedback (Ashford & De Stobbeleir, 2013); and revise the goal or plans as new strategic thinking indicates. These challenging goals are more specific and will be more efficacious than to “manage myself better” or “be more goal-oriented” or “show some self-control” or “don’t give up.”

Phase Models of Proactivity

Regarding self-regulation of proactive behavior, in particular, Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, and Hagger-Johnson (2012) offered a model with four phases: envisioning, planning, enacting, and reflecting. *Envisioning* in this context is imagining a different future, a broad concept that would include establishing a proactive goal. Envisioning activates search and information processing, and

provides access to task-relevant knowledge, toward effective plan development (Wood, Whelan, Sojo, & Wong, 2013).

Planning is preparing to pursue the vision (proactive goal). Defining a roadmap for action toward goal achievement (Gollwitzer, 1990) helps to translate goals into behaviors. Planning includes determining strategies and tactics, contingency plans, and timetable, plus resource acquisition, allocation, and deployment. Planning could benefit from considering the implications of goal hierarchies, goal interdependencies, and multifinality and equifinality as discussed earlier. Useful tactics and skills include metacognition, practical wisdom, mental contrasting (imagining the attainment of the desired future plus reflecting on the current realities that stand in the way), and implementation intentions, or the when, where, and how one wants to act on one's goal intentions (Oettingen, Wittchen, & Gollwitzer, 2013).

Enacting is engaging in a proactive behavior, or in the case of a proactive work project unfolding over time, in a set of multiple goal-pursuit activities. *Reflecting* is founded in feedback, and means thinking about the success, failure, or implications of the pursuit behaviors, and how to sustain the effort or modify goals, plans, and tactics.

Reflecting can result in goal revision or abandonment (often mediated by self-efficacy), and can prompt new and different strategies (Wood et al., 2013). Goal abandonment has received little research attention in the organizational literature (Day & Unsworth, 2013). Overall, self-regulation generally needs much more study “in the wild” (Day & Unsworth, 2013); this pertains even more so to SR in proactive goal pursuit given the importance of so many proactive behaviors that have not yet been studied thoroughly through an SR lens.

These phases are similar to self-regulatory processes for goals generally (Austin & Vancouver, 1996; Day & Unsworth, 2013), but for proactive goals they entail envisioning goals that depart from the status quo; planning that acknowledges the uncertainties and uniqueness of the proactive pursuit and the likely needs to learn and adjust along the way; enacting behaviors at least some of which will be proactive in nature and that will require significant self-regulatory skill; and reflecting in ways more thorough than usual due to the more complex causal maps driving the dynamics and consequences of proactivity.

Proactive Coping

Proactivity often implies a promotion goal (Higgins, 1997) – creating or achieving something positive. But proactive goals can be preventive – to prevent something bad from happening, or at least reduce its anticipated negative impact. Aspinwall & Taylor's (1997) model of proactive coping describes the elements of pursuing proactive goals characterized by this preventive component.

Proactive coping refers to efforts undertaken in advance of a potentially stressful event to prevent it or modify its form before it occurs; it enables people

to prevent, offset, eliminate, reduce, or modify future stress (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997). In contrast, stress coping as considered traditionally (colloquially, theoretically, and empirically) comes after the event. *Anticipatory* coping usually means bracing oneself to withstand the upcoming difficulty, whereas *proactive* coping involves goals targeted at changing the status quo and current trajectories in order to change an expected future into a more preferred realized future.

The focus for Aspinwall and Taylor (1997) is on personal stress and stress coping, but the model has the potential to generalize to other contexts with other types of proactivity. An analogy in management is Bazerman's (2008) work on predictable surprises, defined as negative events and problems that could have been avoided had leaders used available information to anticipate the event and prepared for it. The phases involved in preventing predictable surprises are recognition, prioritization, and mobilization. Predictable surprises can be mitigated or even prevented by applying the strategies and tactics of proactive coping.

Defining self-regulation as the ways in which people control and direct their own actions, Aspinwall & Taylor (1997) depict proactive coping in a phase model including general preparedness via resource accumulation (time, money, planning, organizing, finding a supporting coalition), recognition of a specific threat, appraisal, initial coping efforts, and solicitation and use of feedback.

Useful feedback concerns not only the immediate impact of individual actions but new and changing information regarding the anticipated event itself. Has it advanced, abated, or changed form? Then, what additional coping efforts are needed—more of the same, pause and see what happens, seek additional feedback, change strategies? Even if initial coping efforts are unsuccessful or aggravate the problem, they are likely to yield new information that can be used to develop new strategies.

Goals that would facilitate proactive coping include to prepare for the possibility of future stressors by accumulating resources; to screen the environment and internal cues for danger; to assess accurately the current, potential and changing status; to engage in mental simulation (imagining future events and coping effects); to plan (planning as a preliminary coping effort); to seek multiple types of feedback; and to monitor and manage the effects of negative emotions.

A person can pursue each of these proactive goals, or not, and can pursue each more or less effectively. As examples, an individual with a future temporal orientation (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999) might engage in more planning and mental simulation of future scenarios than people with past and present orientations. Mental simulation of futures can be biased and inaccurate, or turn into mere rumination without strategic thinking. Perceived control, self-efficacy, and optimism could predict whether a person will move from appraisal to initial coping behaviors. Time and fatigue can prompt attempts to reach closure prematurely (say, on planning or late-stage coping strategies).

Like most of the proactivity literature, the authors assume that proactive coping is beneficial, with advantages usually outweighing liabilities. Importantly, though, potential liabilities of proactive coping (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997) are

that the feared event might not occur even without proactive efforts, or it may turn out to be somehow different than expected, or efforts to prevent it may exacerbate the problem. Moreover, the efforts will be a resource drain, and have opportunity costs.

Nonetheless, including (possibly) mitigating negative future outcomes, proactive coping has potential benefits including 1) a greater range of options is likely available in the earlier going, and 2) the ratio of coping resources to the magnitude of a stressor is likely to be most favorable when the anticipated stressor is tackled in its early stages rather than in its full-blown state (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997; Bazerman, 2008).

Problem Solving

How to successfully pursue and attain a proactive goal can be viewed as a problem to be solved. So can every disruption or challenge along the way. Applicable at the beginning and during any phase of proactive goal pursuit, classic phase models of problem solving identify the activities that are logical stepping stones from problem (and opportunity) origination to resolution (e.g., Janis & Mann, 1977; Whyte, 2004). The basic activities include 1) choosing issues (problems and opportunities) for action; 2) defining the scope of the problem (opportunity) and its associated goals; 3) generating and assessing alternatives; 4) choosing actions; 5) planning and preparing for action; 6) implementing; and 7) monitoring results and adapting as needed. Details vary across models, and a linear sequence does not describe actual managerial behavior (Weick, 1983), but “the purpose of such models is . . . to decompose a poorly understood process into components that can be analyzed and improved” (Smith, 1989, p. 967).

A useful goal is to tackle every significant challenge on the path to proactive goal attainment as a problem to be solved by competently executing these problem-solving phases.

Proactive Goal Pursuit: Sustenance over Time

Whether a proactive goal is promotion – or prevention–focused, and even if self-regulation via phase models is attempted conscientiously, it is no small challenge to maintain long-term motivation while attempting to shepherd a proactive work project over the hurdles and through the setbacks. Important processes include backsliding and persistence, accumulating and applying resources, and sustaining for the long haul.

Backsliding and Persistence

As a person moves closer to goal attainment – reduces the discrepancy between the goal and current state – the sense of progress can offer psychological license

to relax and reduce effort (Fishbach, Zhang, & Koo, 2009). Upon taking goal-directed actions, a person can interpret each forward step as making progress or as signaling a commitment to goal achievement. The two frames compete and have opposite motivational effects. When someone interprets movement toward the goal as a personal commitment to goal achievement, goal pursuit continues unimpeded. When forward movement is viewed instead as progress, the perceived current discrepancy with goal attainment is reduced and the person might relax by cutting back on the goal-directed effort.

Thus, a progress frame can beget plateauing and backsliding, whereas a personal-commitment frame can facilitate persistence. Emphasizing what has been completed can create higher satisfaction with current status, whereas emphasizing what remains to be done sustains motivation (Koo & Fishbach, 2008). But like so many things, these relationships are not always so straightforward, and moderating effects require more study (Fishbach, Koo, & Finkelstein, 2014).

Over time, fatigue can hinder goal striving (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000), while facilitators include persistence (Little, 2014), willpower (Mischel, 2004), grit (Duckworth & Gross, 2014), and perceptions of oneself as a doer (Houser-Marko & Sheldon, 2006). These pertain especially to proactive work projects. Persistence can fade out for many reasons, but regardless of the source it is a key behavior for success as it is with “standard” continuance goals, but often more so for proactive work projects because of the additional time required, challenges, and likely setbacks.

Resource Management

Resources are entities that are centrally valued in their own right (e.g., health, close attachments, self-esteem) or provide a means (social capital, funds) to attain a centrally-valued goal (Hobfoll, 2002). In proactive coping, resources play a crucial role (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997). Resource management in proactive goal pursuit is an understudied process, although Strauss, Griffin, Parker, and Mason (2015) identified adaptivity and job satisfaction as personal resources that facilitate proactive behavior over time.

Most research on resources focuses on threat and loss; more is needed on resource gain and how resources interrelate (resource caravans; Hobfoll, 2002). Such research can contribute significantly to understanding and facilitate the pursuit of proactive work projects. The threat of resource loss and the allure of gain can inspire different goals, differentially affect striving strategies and tactics, and contribute in different ways to success or failure. Resource mechanisms worthy of study in the context of PWP include resource accumulation and protection, resource use and deterioration, how successes increase resources, the anticipation of future resource conditions and risk, and choice processes surrounding resource allocation and deployment.

Selection/optimization/compensation (SOC) theory (Baltes, Staudinger, & Lindenberger, 1999) describes strategies for conjointly maximizing resource gains and minimizing resource losses. Selection is the choice of certain goals and directions over others; people tend to fit their (proactive) goal choices to perceived resource availability and capacities. Optimization is the investment of resources in refining the means (strategies and tactics) to achieve goals. Compensation is the investment of resources in means that allow continued functioning despite the loss of some goal-relevant capacities.

These processes are person-specific and contextually bound, and each can be conceived and executed proactively, or not. The theory can inform proposition development and hypothesis-testing about proactive goal pursuit via the management of personal and organizational resources, including roles for 1) personal variables such as age, career stage, cognitive strengths and weaknesses, and other resources; 2) situational contingencies such as organizational slack and environmental munificence; and 3) principles and processes such as equifinality, multicausality, and temporal sequencing (Baltes et al., 1999).

Sustaining for the Long Haul

Self-regulation is the key to maintaining behavior over the long term (Bandura, 1997). In an interview study (Bateman & Barry, 2012), professionals whose work goals required very long-term striving described their goals via the following themes: 1) eventual success that could be many years, decades, or generations down the road; 2) very slow, if any, real progress toward the ultimate goal; and 3) significant uncertainty and chance of failure. Examples included: discovering a cancer cure, helping to reduce the rate of species extinctions, and finding evidence of extraterrestrial intelligence. Study participants' goals were highly proactive in nature: long-term, challenging, unique personal work projects that were expected to change both "the world" and the people pursuing them. What could have been a straightforward study of simple persistence generated a wide-ranging model of long-term goal striving, including motivating factors that extend traditional goal-setting and self-regulation theories.

The interviews were designed to ascertain the sources of long-term and self-regulatory processes that helped to sustain goal pursuit over many years. Hundreds of statements and dozens of themes coalesced into two distal sources of motivation and two proximal sources. The distal sources were possible selves and possible futures. The proximal sources were task interest and near-term gratification.

More specifically, participants described *possible futures* via metaphors, analogies, historical references, envisioned possibilities and impact, and generative images. Contributors to *possible selves* included specific personal identities ("I want to be one of those heroes that try to pull things forward . . . I don't just want to be a soldier"), reputations, personal uniqueness and opportunity,

and personally-felt responsibility for achieving the longer-term outcomes. Any or all of these can be construed as goals: to find inspiring metaphors, analogies, and historical models; to envision the personal and reputational impact (“you’re looked at as a risk taker and a leader and I enjoy that,” “You get credit as a far-sighted individual, as an adventurer”); and to make salient the opportunity and felt responsibility to continue pursuing the work (“if not me, who? If not now, when?”).

Contributors to *task interest* included the uniqueness and singularity of the pursuit, discovery, challenge, risk and uncertainty, surprises, and fun. *Near-term gratifications* included enjoying colleagues, professional and social legitimacy stemming from the work, sparring with critics, indicators of progress, new products spun off from the work en route to the ultimate goal, and acquiring knowledge (“as long as every day I’m learning things, I’m happy”).

Consistent with this broad array of motivators, participants indicated explicitly that both extrinsic and intrinsic factors were important in their long-term goal pursuits: “You would not do [this work] if it was not for that big carrot and there is no doubt about that . . . but that is not what gets you out of bed in the mornings.” “What I dream about are the payoffs: proof in knowing, convincing your colleagues, and knowing for certain that you were right all along.” Extrinsic rewards and intrinsic motivation – which certainly coexist in the workplace – are not necessarily antagonistic; each shows additional predictive validity over the other as they jointly influence performance (Cerasoli, Nicklin, & Ford, 2014).

In addition to these motivational content themes that aid long-term goal pursuit, participants described portfolios of multiple goals and feedback sources and types, plus other self-regulatory themes including Kuhl’s (2000) self-regulatory processes:

- a. Attention control (“when I get down about the day-to-day I think about the longer term and see that it is really going to be useful . . . There it is, a forest. I’m not just digging in the dirt here”).
- b. Motivation control (“It was worth doing the risky inspiring thing as opposed to doing the safe civil service thing”).
- c. Emotion control (“you should always find amusement in what you’re working on and you should always make it as game-like as possible” [in order to keep your sanity]).
- d. Coping with failure (“If we can learn the maximum amount from every failure then I think we will still succeed”; “I tend to look at a negative result as we just need another way to do it”).

These sources of motivation and SR processes in long-term, proactive goal pursuit appear to 1) supplement the goal-setting mechanisms that initially direct and drive behavior (attention, direction, arousal, effort, and short-term persistence),

and 2) serve as mediators between those goal-setting mechanisms and persistence in long-term goal pursuit.

All can be proactively pursued as goal-directed mechanisms of long-term self-regulation. From a proactive self-regulatory perspective, people can consciously construe these as proactive goals: to achieve specified possible futures and possible selves, to find ways to make their ongoing work more interesting, and to generate other gratifications along the way.

Further Enhancing Proactive Goal Pursuit

The previous section concerned sustaining proactive goal pursuit over long periods. *Effective* pursuit requires more. As people pursue their proactive work projects, they can benefit from basic processes of self-regulation and sustained motivation, discussed previously. Their ultimate success or failure will depend also on learning, ambidexterity, affect and emotion, self-sabotage, and self-command.

Learning

Relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities enhance personal effectiveness, and ideally, people will learn continually and episodically throughout their proactive goal pursuits. People can self-regulate their learning in the workplace via challenging goals, metacognitive strategies, motivation, and other deliberative activities (Sitzman & Ely, 2011).

On complex tasks, which proactive work projects exemplify, learning goals lead to better performance than performance goals (Locke & Latham, 2013). Learning goals draw attention away from the end result and toward discovering or mastering the strategies, processes, or procedures needed to perform. They also can boost self-efficacy, and buffer against frustrations including negative feedback.

Locke and Latham (2013) discuss the importance of both learning and performance goals and note that more research is needed on their coexistence and sequencing for optimal performance. For proactive work projects, commitment to learning is likely at least as important as the commitment to performance. There is a need for more field studies in organizational settings using dependent variables with organizational relevance that require learning as well as performance (Locke & Latham, 2013); PWP's meet these criteria.

The combined importance of learning and performance goals brings us to exploration, exploitation, and ambidexterity.

Exploration, Exploitation, and Ambidexterity

An important literature on organizational ambidexterity – both exploring for new knowledge and exploiting current knowledge (March 1991) – can help

to understand individual behavior and performance in proactive work projects. Exploiting past experience and current knowledge is standard activity while exploring unknown territory is relatively rare without external demands to do so. As with organizations, individuals (and teams) do not often explore outside of their current routines and processes and proactively expand their behavioral repertoires.

Exploitation, exploration, and ambidexterity (doing both effectively) have been studied primarily at the organizational level (e.g., March 1991; Lavie, Stettner, & Tushman, 2010), but they pertain to individuals as well. Exploring and experimenting with new ways of operating can contribute to personal learning and successful goal pursuit (Little, 2014). For example, specialists often develop deep expertise in their fields and apply and benefit from (exploit) their unique knowledge. But some, sometimes, also acquire a more general, cross-functional knowledge. Similarly, academia rewards deep expertise but some scholars cross disciplinary boundaries.

While organizations can allocate exploitation and exploration activities across multiple units, an individual has finite resources that cannot be allocated to both at once (Gupta, Smith, & Shalley, 2006). Choices must be made. Often, exploiting current knowledge is the easy, default path, as deep training and specialized knowledge have advantages that have been realized over the years. In contrast, proactively crossing boundaries into new territory tends to be riskier and costlier, and is perceived as such (Bateman & Hess, 2015). Yet those inhibitors notwithstanding, exploring new territories can create unique and path-breaking cross-disciplinary work, and potentially result in the greatest (even, dramatic) change and development.

What's a person to do, continually exploit current knowledge or proactively explore for new boundary-bridging knowledge? Working from the premise that individuals show different yet predictable behavioral patterns, a recent study (Bateman & Hess, 2015) used independent assessments of scientists' research publications along two dimensions: 1) depth (assumedly a continuance work goal that exploits current knowledge), and 2) breadth (a boundary-spanning, exploratory, proactive work goal). A self-report measure of openness to experience related positively to both depth and breadth; conscientiousness predicted breadth negatively; and performance goal orientation predicted depth while learning goal orientation predicted breadth. As expected, exploitation and exploration related to depth and breadth, respectively. As fruitful as the exploration/exploitation dimension has been at the organizational level, further tests at the individual (and group) level could prove highly informative regarding other proactive behaviors.

The authors of that study suggest that once people are aware of their default tendencies they can, if they desire, proactively change them. Better yet would be to change tendencies sometimes, adding to one's behavioral repertoire over time. No doubt some individuals, more than others, are disposed to engage in

proactive boundary-crossing, silo-busting, and other exploratory behaviors. But those who are not naturally inclined can override their inclinations if and when they choose to do so (Little, 2014).

Job performance generally requires exploitation of current knowledge, skills, and abilities. Proactive work projects additionally require exploration and change, in the domain of alternative routines and capabilities. The more proactive the goal, the more important exploration and ambidexterity become. Exploratory behaviors generate greater learning, greater personal development, and a higher likelihood of success via processes described in the next section.

Affect and Emotion

Affect and emotion play many roles in self-regulation generally and proactive goal pursuit in particular. For example, positive (negative) affect leads people to choose performance goals of higher (lower) difficulty (Plemmons & Weiss, 2013), perhaps suggesting that positive affect predicts more proactive goal-setting than does negative affect (Bindl et al., 2010). Similarly, negative affect during goal pursuit can cause a change in goal prioritization; because of the larger difficulties in proactive goal pursuit, goal abandonment or reduction could be more likely than with setbacks in continuance goal pursuit. The proactive coping literature indicates that failure to control emotional arousal can be debilitating, impeding both information processing and instrumental action (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997). Appraising a stress event as threatening can lead to denial or distortion of threatening information, making proactive efforts less likely (climate change is an important example; Weber, 2010). Alternatively, appraising a stressor positively as a challenge rather than negatively as a threat helps people mobilize and meet difficult task demands.

Although not doing justice to the intricacies of the dynamic interrelationships, negative affect can enhance problem detection, while positive affect aids self-control. Positive affect is a source of strength (Isen, 2003), relating to helpful processes including a forward-looking time perspective, cognitive and behavioral flexibility, creativity, openness to information, and high-level thinking about the consequences and implications of actions. Thinking about implications leads to engaging in planned behavior rather than impulsiveness (abandoning or getting distracted from primary goals), and makes people more likely to seek negative feedback useful to their goal pursuit (Gervey, Igou, & Trop, 2005).

Through broaden-and-build processes generated by positive affect (Fredrickson, 2013), people attempt and learn more extensive behavioral repertoires, become more resourceful and connected with others, and learn to function at ever-higher levels. Positive emotions are fleeting but they and their impacts accumulate over time, incrementally building enduring resources. Accrued resources include skills gained via experiential learning, knowledge, resilience, optimism,

achievement motivation, new priorities and new views of self, and motivation for personal growth.

What about affect as a *result* of setting and pursuing proactive goals? No doubt the answers to this question are complex, with multiple and dynamic contingencies and in need of empirical investigation. But here is one relevant finding: When people look back over their lives, regrets of inaction are bigger and more common than regrets of action (Gilovich, Wang, Regan, & Nishina, 2003).

People fail to do things and later wish they had done them. This suggests a failure to behave proactively – e.g., to not seize an opportunity in ways that would prevent or reduce a future regret. With due recognition of the potential downsides of proactivity, and of likely moderated effects, maybe people should set more proactive goals, more often.

Self-Sabotage

People often engage in self-defeating behavior (Baumeister & Scher, 1988). Various mistakes, some mentioned already, can contribute to self-sabotage in proactive goal pursuit. The many potential traps of self-sabotage – while countless and worth studying in organizational contexts – include:

1. Assuming that passivity and not being action-oriented is a fixed trait; a fixed rather than growth mindset (Dweck, 2006; Burnett, O'Boyle, VanEpps, Pollack, & Finkel, 2013) in this regard.
2. Excessive habitual and routine behavior; insufficient System 2 thinking.
3. Failing to scan for opportunities for proactivity, or for foreshadowing of predictable surprises.
4. When faced with a challenge, failing to generate or adequately consider proactive options.
5. Low (or illusory) self-concordance (Hoffmann & Wilson, 2004).
6. Low (or illusory) organizational concordance; misfit between the proactive goal and work environment; neglecting organizationally-important continuance goals.
7. Establishing performance goals but no process (e.g. self-regulatory or learning) goals.
8. Establishing no or inadequately-specific subgoals.
9. Failing to plan adequately, including planning for resource management.
10. Failing to launch, to cross the Rubicon (Gollwitzer, 1990).
11. Failing to monitor results and seek feedback.
12. Failing to adjust strategies and tactics.

Investigators can generate plenty of other simple and curvilinear propositions, and identify additional mediators and moderators of the relationships between proactive goals and ultimate outcomes.

Self-Command

People often self-sabotage but also can exercise self-command (Bateman, 2010). The more proactive a personal work project is, with the implied challenges of long-term proactive goal pursuit, the more requisite become the subgoals of avoiding self-sabotage (a prevention process goal) and exercising self-command (a promotion process goal).

Routine, automatic, System 1-driven default behaviors, including those of self-sabotage, can be overridden by deliberative System 2 thinking and other processes of effective self-regulation. Useful toward establishing such self-command, Weber (2010) among others describes the utility of rule-based decision-making, including self-imposed rules for guiding personal choices.

Again, this chapter offers a variety of suggestions in need of empirical work. In the “exercise self-command” goal hierarchy, prevention goals that could aid self-command are those aimed at avoiding the self-sabotage traps. In addition, approach/promotion goals – offering rule-based guidance – are likely to include:

1. Exhibit situational awareness; exercise situational judgment (Chan, 2006).
2. Engage a growth (as opposed to fixed) mindset (Dweck, 2006; Burnett et al., 2013).
3. Develop as many useful skills as possible, recognize when they are relevant, and use them (Sheldon & Vansteenkiste, 2005).
4. Keep proactive work projects as consistent with one another as possible, so that working on one does not take away from the other or they mutually reinforce. For example, multiple personal projects can serve a mutual superordinate goal.
5. Construe progress as an indication of personal commitment to the proactive goal.
6. When faced with difficult challenges, conscientiously execute phase models of problem-solving.
7. Strategically optimize – acquire, protect, and deploy— personal and organizational resources.
8. Proactively engage a wide range of motivation sources, including both intrinsic and extrinsic.
9. Proactively engage specific possible futures, possible selves, task interest, and other short-term gratifications.
10. Employ Kuhl’s (2000) SR processes: attention control, motivation control, emotion control, and coping with failure.
11. Learn and adapt; explore and exploit; work ambidextrously.

Repeating, investigators can generate plenty of other simple propositions, plus curvilinear relationships (Grant & Schwartz, 2011) and potential mediating and moderating variables that enhance performance when pursuing proactive goals.

Embedding Proactive Goals in Other Literature

Upon seeing proactive behaviors, we can infer the likely operation of commensurate proactive goals. Researchers thereby can study the process dynamics of important hallmarks of proactive goals found in the workplace or other contexts. Emblematic of proactive goals are leadership, entrepreneurship, and the display of “free traits” (Little, 2014). All are viable gateways to the productive study of proactive goals.

Leadership

Leadership scholars have long understood leadership to be not position-based but activity-based. If one defines leadership by role occupancy and title, or a formal leader’s personal goal accomplishment, the predominant behaviors may or may not be proactive in nature. But if leadership is defined by activities such as orchestrating change (e.g., Kotter, 1990; Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009), then it is inherently proactive, driven and directed by proactive goals such as to influence others and create change in strategy, culture, processes, or results.

Leaders also can target themselves with their proactive projects. Self-directed leaders are those who set constructive goals and exhibit self-command in the pursuit of their own personal leadership development (Bateman, 2010). Like other targets of personal change, to develop one’s leadership capacity or effectiveness is a proactive goal. Depending on what is needed or desired, a leader can set proactive goals such as to attend adequately to both people and task performance, to apply an optimal mix of decision styles from autocratic to democratic, to develop a compelling vision, to communicate explicitly about ethics, to start working with signature strengths (one’s own and others’), to think more deliberately and wisely, to engage in long-term thinking, to avoid extreme short-termism, to invoke possible selves for motivation and guidance in personal leadership development, to strategically tackle particular problems and opportunities, and to more effectively lead group, organization, or industry change.

Regarding transfer effects from leader to followers, Crossley, Cooper, & Wernsing (2013) showed that proactive senior managers set more challenging goals for their units and that these translate into higher collective unit performance. The challenge was operationalized by goal difficulty, not proactivity, but the study does suggest possibilities for investigating how leaders influence follower goals that are more and less proactive, the creation and spread of more (less) proactive work cultures, and the impacts thereof.

Entrepreneurship

Baron (2002) writes about the conceptual links between organizational behavior and entrepreneurship and the potential benefits of forging closer ties between

the two kinds of literature. Drawing from Venkataraman's (1997) definition of entrepreneurship as how opportunities to bring future products into existence are discovered, created, and exploited – by whom and with what consequences – entrepreneurship is a proactive work project, and PWPs in the workplace require entrepreneurial processes.

The variables and relationships depicted in Baron's phase model of the entrepreneurial process (prelaunch, launch, and post-launch) can provide guidance in proactive goal establishment (including opportunity recognition) and pursuit. Both promotion and prevention regulatory focus orientations are needed for successful entrepreneurship, and the ebb and flow between the two over time and context (Brockner, Higgins, & Low, 2004) could be used to model similar fluctuations between proactive and continuance goals.

Baum (2013) describes how successful entrepreneurs set goals as they explore for opportunities and set growth and external financing goals. He also notes venture financiers' beliefs that entrepreneurs' personal behaviors such as goal setting are more important to success than the business idea or context. Just as a goal to launch a business is proactive, so are many of the goals en route such as to create a new good or service, find investors, overcome barriers to entry, establish a presence in the market, and learn from experience.

Proactive Goals as Free Traits

Goals, including proactive goals, are mediating mechanisms between general traits like the Big Five and specific behaviors (Buss & Cantor, 1989; Heslin & Caprar, 2013; McAdams & Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 1999). Goals are amenable to change and serve as important mediators between “having” a trait and “doing” a behavior (Cantor, 1990).

Being self-chosen and more specific and malleable than stable traits, people can consciously invoke proactive goals to serve as *characteristic adaptations*: goals and other strategies that can be deployed strategically to navigate life and work (McAdams & Pals, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 1999). To enact behaviors that depart from a person's standard patterns is to exhibit a “free trait” (Little, 2014), for example when an introvert behaves in extraverted fashion and a person who scores low on agreeableness behaves agreeably. People are most likely to exhibit free traits (act “out of character”) when they pursue important personal projects (Little, 2014). Free traits – here, setting proactive goals even if doing so doesn't “come naturally” – make us stretch and grow; they also through learning, ambidexterity, and strategic adjustments increase the likelihood of bringing a proactive work project to fruition. Focused on important aspirations, a person not inclined to behave proactively can shift away from traditional behavior patterns, deviate from personality traits that some consider fixed, see new degrees of freedom rather than immutable constraints, override previously-perceived limitations, and use free traits such as proactive goal setting more frequently and strategically.

Thus, although individuals develop differently in their proclivities toward behaving proactively, establishing a proactive goal frequently is an option. Future research should consider not only that some individuals deploy proactive goals more than others, but also proactive goals' within-person variability. Whether a person is or is not dispositionally inclined toward high levels of proactivity, within-person variation will arise over time in the appearance of proactive goals, driven by traits and situational variables (Heslin & Caprar, 2013) and also by free choice.

Thus people do not need to be tightly constrained by their traits, real or assumed or as measured psychometrically. Choice-driven free traits (Little, 2014) in the form of proactive goal-setting and multi-faceted goal pursuit processes can take command. Deliberative System 2 thinking (Kahneman, 2011), prompting the exercise of an out-of-the-ordinary proactive option, can override unthinking, System-1 default behaviors.

Summary and Conclusion

Proactivity epitomizes free will: generating new possibilities that help to attain beneficial long-term outcomes, aided by conscious reflection and principled commitments (Seligman, Railton, Baumeister, & Sripada, 2013). Our biggest personal challenges, like organizations' biggest opportunities for improvement, require choosing and effectively pursuing proactive goals. Proactivity can help as well with the world's biggest problems – for example, infectious disease outbreaks (e.g., the need to prepare and prevent), climate change (the need for both mitigation and adaptation), and war (deciding whether now, later, or not at all).

Proactive goals differ from other goals in important ways, including their relative scarcity yet significant potential impact. People can set proactive goals with different targets, of differing characteristics, and in different habitats: situational domains of problems and opportunities, personal domains of both thinking and doing, and unique challenges requiring different strategies and tactics of goal pursuit.

Depicting a vital form of stretch goal, a proactive goal ladder offers a window onto the potential variety, requirements, and interdependencies of proactive goals and projects. Effective goal pursuit requires self-regulation of multiple phases over time, periodic problem solving, persistence, resource management, and motivational sustenance for the long haul. Adding further to the odds of success are key processes such as learning, exploration, ambidexterity, and managing affect and emotion. Important activities including leadership and entrepreneurship are inherently proactive and therefore their expanding literature can inform one another. More personally, strategically employing proactive goals as free traits is a prime vehicle for enhancing well-being as well as job and career performance.

The merger of goals and proactivity has just begun; proactive goals do not yet have an extensive literature of their own. Investigators can study proactive goals

not only in their own right (including their multiple characteristics) but also in comparison with standard continuance goals. Proactive goals can be studied in the laboratory, but field studies are requisite and proactive work projects (PWP) can serve particularly well as a unit of analysis (Little, 2015).

PWPs allow the fuller study of process dynamics in ways ever more complex and revelatory. Examples include navigating the uncertainties and risks of PWP pursuit, managing multiple proactive and continuance goals, monitoring emotions and their impacts during positive momentum and setbacks, experimenting with strategies and tactics of goal pursuit, acquiring and managing personal and organizational resources, and assessing the multidimensional, multi-stakeholder consequences of proactive goal strivers' actions. Hypotheses should emphasize multilevel approaches and context (Johns, 2006), and methods can be derived from literature including change management, problem-solving, opportunity finding, exploitation and exploration, design thinking, practical wisdom, champions, project management, bricolage, learning, leadership, and entrepreneurship.

As theoretical richness and empiricism grow for every relevant topic and sub-topic, so too will our ability to devise optimal proactive goals and strategies of pursuit. Such work will help us design and deliver training and development programs aimed at 1) minimizing self-sabotage, and 2) optimizing self-command, personal growth, and organizational and societal impact.

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12

AN IDENTITY-BASED PERSPECTIVE ON PROACTIVITY

Future Work Selves and Beyond

Karoline Strauss and Ciara Kelly

Proactivity refers to future-oriented behavior that aims to bring about change, and that, importantly, is self-initiated (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). A growing body of research provides evidence for the relationship between proactive behavior and a range of positive outcomes, including career success (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001) and job performance (Thompson, 2005), as well as job attitudes (see Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010; and Tornau & Frese, 2013, for meta-analyses).

The self-initiated nature of proactivity emphasizes that this type of behavior is relatively independent of external contingencies (Parker et al., 2010). This conceptualization of proactivity “makes room for individual goals that are not tied to external rewards but are pursued because they are interesting, highly valued, or reflect authentic values and interests” (Strauss & Parker, 2014a, p. 50). It highlights that proactive behavior is inherently linked to how individuals think about themselves, in other words, to their self-concept and identity.

In this chapter, we extend previous theorizing on how proactivity is motivated and explore how identity motivates, shapes, and constrains proactivity, and how proactive behavior in turn influences who individuals believe they are, or may become. We specifically argue that proactive behavior is often identity-congruent, and serves the purpose of expressing one’s self. We further discuss the role of future work selves: hoped for, future-oriented identities in relation to work. Future work selves constitute a motivational resource for proactivity, and drive self-directed behaviors aimed at development and change (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2012).

Self-Concept, Identity, and Future Work Selves

Before exploring the role of the self in relation to proactive behavior, we first define the key terms of self-concept and identity, and introduce the concept

of future work selves. While self-concept and identity are sometimes used interchangeably (Oyserman & Destin, 2010), the self-concept can be seen as a dynamic, changing collection of individual identities (Markus & Wurf, 1987). Identities thus constitute elements of the self (Oyserman & James, 2009).

Not all identities that form part of the self-concept are accessible at any given time. Instead, “the self-concept of the moment is best viewed as a continually active, shifting array of accessible self-knowledge” (Markus & Wurf, 1987, p. 306). Depending on situational cues, different identities become activated and exert their influence on behavior, perception, and judgment (Markus & Wurf, 1987), usually without conscious awareness (Oyserman, 2009). Activated identities “cue readiness to act and to make sense of the world in terms of the norms, values, and behaviors relevant to the identity” (Oyserman & Destin, 2010, p. 1003). Which identities are activated in turn depends on the social context (Oyserman, Fryberg, & Yoder, 2007). This view of the self-concept thus takes social aspects of the self into account, and situates the self in context, rather than treating it as decontextualized (Oyserman & James, 2009). It thus reconciles psychological and sociological perspectives on identity (Markus & Wurf, 1987).

Identities can be categorized in a number of different ways. First, identities can be personal, relational, or collective (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Personal identities emphasize the distinct aspect of the self-concept that differentiates an individual from others (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Relational identities reflect role-related relationships, such as leader-follower (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Collective identities reflect individuals’ membership in groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

At each of these three levels, we can further distinguish between current identities and possible identities (Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999), which reflect who individuals may become (Markus & Nurius, 1986). These possible identities are particularly critical for proactive behavior as they motivate self-directed behavior aimed at bringing about change (Hoyle & Sherrill, 2006). In particular, individuals’ future work selves have been identified as a driver of proactive behavior (Strauss et al., 2012; Strauss & Parker, 2014b).

Future Work Selves

Future work selves are “an individual’s representation of himself or herself in the future that reflects his or her hopes and aspirations in relation to work” (Strauss et al., 2012, p. 580). Future work selves are a specific type of personal possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). In particular, they have three defining characteristics. First, future work selves are future-oriented (Strauss et al., 2012). While possible selves can also represent, for example, ideal current selves (Higgins, 1998), future work selves are selves individuals hope to hold in the future. This is critical because discrepancies between one’s current self and a desired future are evaluated differently than discrepancies between the current self and a desired present (Boldero & Francis, 2000, 2002). Boldero and Francis (2000, 2002)

argued that discrepancies between the present self and an ideal future self, such as the future work self, are evaluated based on the rate of progress, while discrepancies between the current self and a present standard are evaluated based on the magnitude of discrepancy. A discrepancy between one's current self and an ideal present self is experienced as a negative psychological state which in turn motivates the individual to reduce the discrepancy (Boldero & Francis, 2002). In contrast, discrepancies between one's current self and a future self are thus not necessarily associated with negative affect (cf. Carver & Scheier, 1990). This implies that individuals can hold a future work self that is very different from their current self without negative consequences for their self-evaluation.

Second, future work selves are positive reference values, rather than selves to be avoided (Strauss et al., 2012). Strauss et al. (2012) proposed that future work selves are hoped for, rather than feared future work selves, because feared selves would be less effective in regulating behavior as they are less likely to provide a specific direction (Elliot, Sheldon, & Church, 1997).

Finally, future work selves are defined as specific to work (Strauss et al., 2012). Possible selves affect individuals' behavior in the domain of their lives to which they are linked (Black, Stein, & Loveland-Cherry, 2001; Hooker & Kaus, 1994; Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006). Correspondingly, future work selves are likely to be most relevant to behaviors related to one's work and career.

Future work selves can be a motivational resource for proactive behavior (Strauss et al., 2012; Strauss & Parker, 2014b). Before we discuss this relationship in more detail, we first introduce a broader model linking identity and proactivity, based on recent research on identity-based motivation (Oyserman, 2007, 2009; Oyserman et al., 2007).

Identity-Based Motivation and Proactive Behavior

Engaging in proactive behavior is generally seen as a conscious decision based on a careful weighing of costs and benefits (Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Parker et al., 2010). The role of identity has been discussed much less (Ashford & Barton, 2012). However, the calculated decision of whether to engage in proactive behavior may not always be purely utilitarian. Instead it can, as we argue here, be driven by identity-based motivation (Oyserman, 2007, 2009; Oyserman et al., 2007), and reflect "current action in pursuit of identity-based goals" (Oyserman & James, 2011, p. 117). We propose that proactive behavior is particularly likely to be linked to an individual's self-concept, more so than work behaviors that are prescribed or reactive in nature. The self-initiated nature of proactivity is one of its defining features. For example, personal initiative, a proactive form of work performance (Parker et al., 2010), refers to the "pursuit of self-set goals" (Frese & Fay, 2001, p. 139). As Parker et al. (2010) put it, when engaging in proactive behavior "[t]he individual acts on his or her own volition rather than as the result of a specification or direction given by someone else" (p. 831). In deciding whether

or not to engage in proactive behavior, individuals are likely to have a sense of choice. At least in individualistic cultures, choice is experienced as an opportunity to express one's identity (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In contrast, work behaviors which are reactive in nature and prescribed are less likely to provide a sense of volition.

In support of this idea, Ashford and Barton (2012) previously proposed that proactive behavior aimed at raising issues may be consistent with an individual's identity. Drawing on self-verification theory (Swann, 1983), the authors argued that this type of proactive behavior may be driven by individuals' motivation to verify their self-view. For example, for a person who might see themselves as a "fixer", finding a better way for the team to work together or preventing a problem from recurring, is linked to their identity. Suggesting a new way for the team to collaborate would thus confirm their self-view. Anseel and colleagues (Anseel, Beatty, Shen, Lievens, & Sackett, 2015; Anseel, Lievens, & Levy, 2007) proposed a theoretical framework of self-motives underlying proactive feedback-seeking, and similarly argued that self-verification is a possible driver of this specific type of proactive behavior (see also De Stobbeleir, De Boeck, and Dries, Chapter 2 of this volume).

In this sense, identity-based motivation can provide a "reason to" engage in proactive behavior (Parker et al., 2010)¹, depending on the situation. When a relevant identity becomes activated in a social context, this is likely to trigger proactive behavior linked to this identity (Oyserman & Destin, 2010; Oyserman et al., 2007; Oyserman & James, 2009).

Although research that directly investigates the link between proactivity and identity is scarce, Greguras and Diefendorff (2010) provide indirect support for the self-expressive nature of proactive behavior. In a study of 165 full-time employees in Singapore, individuals listed six short-term work related goals they were currently pursuing and indicated to what extent each of these goals was pursued because of external pressures, feelings of guilt, personal importance, or intrinsic enjoyment (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999). Participants high in proactive personality were more likely to pursue goals consistent with their values, interests, and needs. The authors argued that individuals high in proactive personality would "be more likely to resist social pressures and therefore set goals that are consistent with their own values and beliefs" (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2010, p. 542), suggesting that proactive individuals are likely to behave in ways that express their personal identity.

Figure 12.1 summarizes our model and describes the three ways in which we propose identity relates to proactive behavior: First, the discrepancy between current selves and future work selves drives proactive behavior (Strauss et al., 2012). This mechanism facilitates individuals' self-development. Second, engaging in proactive behavior can in turn inform individuals' current and future work selves and trigger identity revision. Finally, we propose that the identity-congruent nature of proactive behavior explains persistence in the face of setbacks.

If proactive behavior is identity congruent, individuals persist in their efforts to bring about change even if they encounter obstacles. Below, we elaborate on each of the pathways in Figure 12.1.

Identity Congruence: Explaining Persistence in Proactive Behavior

Proactive behavior requires persistence in the face of obstacles (Fay & Frese, 2001). As they attempt to bring about change, proactive individuals are likely to face resistance from others and experience setbacks (Parker et al., 2010). Drawing on conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), scholars have proposed that proactive behavior is highly effortful, requiring considerable resources (Bolino et al., 2010). Under certain conditions, proactive behavior can even cause strain, possibly because it involves higher-order cognitive functions such as anticipation, planning, and decision-making, which can be resource depleting (Strauss, Parker, & O'Shea, 2014). This raises the question of how proactive behavior can be sustained, and when and how individuals decide to abandon their efforts to bring about change, considering the significant amount of resources they are investing.

We argue that the motivational properties of identity provide insights into individuals' persistence in their proactive behavior. When proactive behavior is perceived as identity congruent, it will be seen as particularly meaningful and self-expressive (Oyserman, 2009), rather than as merely utilitarian. The self-expressive nature of proactivity explains why individuals invest time and energy in proactive behavior, even if the costs of doing so seem to outweigh the benefits. If a behavior is perceived as congruent with one's identity, difficulties in engaging in the behavior will be interpreted as an indication that the behavior is important, which will further enhance persistence. On the other hand, individuals are reluctant to engage in identity-incongruent behaviors, even when forgoing them has negative consequences. For example, Oyserman et al. (2007)

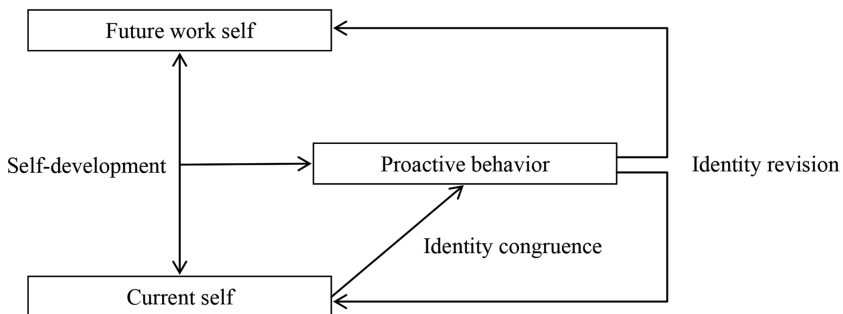


FIGURE 12.1 Identity and proactivity

found that participants who see health promotion as incongruent with their (social) identities are likely to feel conflicted about corresponding behaviors. Difficulty in engaging in identity-incongruent behavior means that the behavior will be interpreted as “pointless” and “not for people like me” (Oyserman & Destin, 2010, p. 1002).

Identity congruence thus explains why individuals persist in their proactive behavior, sometimes even when the costs seem to outweigh the benefits. If they encounter difficulties and setbacks, individuals for whom a proactive behavior is identity congruent will interpret this as an indication that the behavior is important (Oyserman, 2009) and will continue in their efforts. If on the other hand proactive behavior is seen as identity-inconsistent, difficulty will undermine effort (Oyserman, 2009; Oyserman & Destin, 2010).

To date, we know little about how proactive behavior is sustained over time and when proactive goals, i.e., goals that are self-set and aimed at bringing about a different future (Parker et al., 2010), are abandoned. Further research is needed to explore these questions, and the role of identity congruence in motivating persistence in proactive behavior.

Self-Development: Future Work Selves and Proactive Behavior

In addition to expressing current identities, future identities can also provide a powerful driver of proactive behavior (Parker et al., 2010). Previous research has primarily focused on the role of future work selves in motivating proactivity (Guan et al., 2014; Strauss et al., 2012; Strauss & Parker, 2014b; Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015). Like other possible selves, future work selves provide a standard against which the current self is compared, and thus an incentive for future-oriented behavior (Oyserman et al., 2006; Strauss et al., 2012).

Importantly, not all future work selves motivate proactive behavior. Strauss et al. (2012) showed that salience is a key characteristic that determines the influence of future work selves on behavior. Future work selves that are salient are clear and easy to imagine. Consequently, they are frequently activated in a person’s working self-concept (Markus & Wurf, 1987), and have a strong influence on behavior (Leonardi, Syngollitou, & Kiosseoglou, 1998). Across three different studies, Strauss et al., (2012) found that future work self salience was positively related to proactive career behavior. In a cross-sectional study of 397 employees from a range of occupations and 103 Australian doctoral students, the authors found that future work self salience was positively related to proactive career behavior, after controlling for career identity and future orientation. A longitudinal study of 53 doctoral students in the UK demonstrated that future work self salience predicted proactive career behavior 6 months later, after controlling for initial levels of proactive career behavior.

Taber and Blankemeyer (2015) also found that future work self salience predicted proactive career behaviors. In a cross-sectional study of 113 students

at a US university, the authors found that the effects of future work self salience on proactive skill development and networking were (partially) mediated by career adaptability. Career adaptability reflects individuals' resources that enable them "to solve the unfamiliar, complex, and ill-defined problems presented by developmental vocational tasks, occupational transitions, and work traumas" (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012, p. 662), and is composed of four dimensions: concern about the future, a sense of control over one's environment, curiosity to imagine different possible pathways for one's career, and a sense of confidence in one's ability to pursue career aspirations (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Taber and Blankemeyer found that the effects of future work self salience on proactive skill development were fully mediated by confidence, while curiosity partially mediated the relationship between future work self salience and proactive career networking.

In a three-wave lagged study of 270 college students in China by Guan and colleagues (Guan et al., 2014), future work self salience "consistently predicted career adaptability, job search self-efficacy and employment status, which provide[s] strong evidence for the positive role it plays in new entrants' job search success" (p. 144). Future work self salience was significantly related to participants' employment status three months later, and this relationship was partially mediated by career adaptability and job search self-efficacy.

Together, these studies provide preliminary support for the importance of future work self salience for proactive career behaviors and career-related outcomes. In addition to salience, a further important characteristic of future work selves is their elaboration. In a cross-sectional study of 233 doctoral students in the UK, Strauss et al. (2012) showed that the effect of salient future work selves on proactive behavior was further strengthened when future work selves are also elaborate. Drawing on self-complexity theory (Linville, 1982, 1985), the authors proposed that more elaborate future work selves which contain a larger number of different elements are less vulnerable to negative feedback (Niedenthal, Setterlund, & Wherry, 1992). Individuals with elaborate future work selves are thus more open to considering information threatening their future work self, which allows them to plan for contingencies and further strengthens the link between salience and behavior.

Salient future work selves are likely to promote proactive behavior through a number of different mechanisms (Strauss et al., 2012). First, they create a discrepancy between the status quo and the desired future (Carver & Scheier, 1990), which can stimulate the generation of proactive goals (Strauss et al., 2012; Strauss & Parker, 2014b), aimed at initiating change in the self or in one's environment (Parker et al., 2010).

Second, because of their future-focus, future work selves are less limited by individuals' need to be pragmatic (Strauss et al., 2012). Time can act as a resource which enables individuals to set maximal goals (Pennington & Roese, 2003), i.e., goals that represent the most individuals could wish for (Idson, Liberman,

& Higgins, 2000). At a greater temporal distance, individuals' idealistic selves, their selves reflecting values, principles, and a sense of one's "true" self, are more likely to be activated. When focusing on their more immediate rather than their more distal future, individuals' pragmatic selves become activated, resulting in a focus on practical concerns (Kivetz & Tyler, 2007). Salient future work selves thus lay the basis of self-development by encouraging individuals to pursue their best possible future.

Finally, salient future work selves enable individuals to imagine themselves in the future, through the process of episodic prospection. Episodic prospection allows individuals to project themselves into, and thus pre-experience, the future (Atance & O'Neill, 2001). This allows individuals to anticipate, for example, the resources their future work self will require, which in turn motivates proactive behavior aimed at building these resources (Strauss et al., 2012).

These three mechanisms outlined by Strauss et al. (2012) explain how future work selves motivate the setting of proactive goals, but have yet to be tested empirically. Here we propose a further mechanism, integrating recent research on identity-based motivation (Oyserman, 2007, 2009; Oyserman et al., 2007) with insights from developmental psychology (Vygotsky, 1978). We suggest that proactive behavior can also be a way of "trying out" a future work self (cf. Ibarra, 1999). In engaging in proactive behavior individuals often go beyond their current job role and enact behavior consistent not with their current self, but with their future work self. By enacting work behaviors that lie beyond their current role, individuals perform what may still be beyond them, which in turn contributes to their development (Vygotsky, 1978). Bagash, Strauss, and Eubanks (2015) suggested that, depending on their implicit leadership theories (Eden & Leviatan, 1975; Engle & Lord, 1997), individuals may see proactive behavior, such as taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), as reflective of a leader identity. Engaging in proactive behavior may thus be a way of claiming a leader identity (DeRue & Ashford, 2010), which forms part of one's future work self. As we discuss below, the success and failure of proactive behavior linked to one's future work self, in turn, informs individuals' identities.

Identity Revision: Consequences of Failure and Success in Proactive Behavior for the Self

Future work selves are continuously revised and adjusted. As Brandtstädter (1999) put it, "[a]s individuals move through their life cycles, they continuously revise and reinterpret the goals and plans they adopt for themselves in response to previous history, as well as in response to changes in competencies, motives, and external demands" (p. 58). We propose that success and failure in proactive behavior provide important information about progress towards one's future work self, and can trigger a change in an individual's future-oriented self-concept.

Aspects of the self-concept may be modified (A. E. Wilson, Buehler, Lawford, Schmidt, & Yong, 2012) and even dropped, “depending on contextual affordances and constraints” (Oyserman & James, 2011, p. 120). Drawing on previous research on self-complexity (Linville, 1985, 1987; Niedenthal et al., 1992; Stein, 1994), Strauss et al. (2012) argued that more elaborate future work selves, i.e., future work selves which are detailed and complex, and contain “a larger and more diverse range of features” (p. 583), would be less affected by negative feedback. Extending this argument, we propose that individuals can “revise” their future work self by changing their commitment to specific features (Carroll, Shepperd, & Arkin, 2009). The malleability of future work selves is likely to be adaptive and important for individuals’ functioning. Abandoning valued personal goals is stressful (Brandstätter, Herrmann, & Schüler, 2013). However, giving up on unattainable goals is critical for individuals’ well-being (Wrosch, Miller, Scheier, & De Pontet, 2007; Wrosch, Scheier, Carver, & Schulz, 2003; Wrosch, Scheier, Miller, Schulz, & Carver, 2003).

Drawing on Carroll and colleagues’ (2009) process model of self-revision, we suggest that future work selves are revised in response to success and failure in the proactive goals aimed at bringing them about. Failing to achieve proactive goals linked to a future work self is likely to initially raise doubt, and result in rising anxiety, and ultimately in a fall of expectations regarding one’s future work self (Carroll et al., 2009). Future work selves are particularly likely to be revised in response to setbacks in proactive goals if continuing to pursue a proactive goal also makes an undesired self more likely (Carroll et al., 2009). Corresponding feared selves are thus critical in determining whether setbacks in relation to proactive goals trigger a revision of a future work self. We argue that, in addition, self-revision in response to setbacks in the pursuit proactive goals is especially likely if individuals attribute their failure to enduring factors within themselves that are beyond their control (Weiner, 1985).

Carroll et al. (2009) prompted business and psychology students to imagine a future work self as a business psychologist and then exposed students to information threatening this future work self. When participants were told that pursuing their desired future work self was not only unlikely to be successful but would also make a feared future self (working in a low-paid office job) more likely to become reality, this resulted in increased self-doubt and anxiety and decreased commitment to this future self. However, it is important to note that Carroll et al.’s (2009) set of studies used experimentally induced possible selves. To date, we know little about change in salient future work selves in response to setbacks in proactive goals.

While failure in relation to proactive goals can trigger a downward revision of one’s future work self, with identities being adjusted and possibly abandoned, success may have the opposite effect and strengthen individuals’ commitment to their future work self, and encourage an upward revision. Success and failure in proactive behavior are likely to promote reflection, which will in turn

influence future episodes of proactive behavior (Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012). Positive feedback is likely to increase individuals' *can do* motivation (Parker et al., 2010), their efficacy beliefs and outcome expectancies in relation to proactive behavior. These will in turn increase individuals' commitment to their future work self, and make it more likely that they will set further proactive goals aimed at bringing it about.

Carroll (2014) suggested that positive feedback can promote upward self-revision, particularly when it is clearly linked to a desired future self. In an experimental study of 67 undergraduate students, participants were given information about a graduate program in business psychology and provided with positive feedback regarding their grade point average (GPA). Participants who had not only been told that their GPA exceeded the entry requirement of the program but had also been assured that this made it more likely for their desired future self as a business psychologist to become reality increased in confidence and were more likely to commit to applying to the program. This provides initial support for the idea that success can promote upward self-revision, via its effect on expectations to achieve a future self. However, the future selves in this study were experimentally induced, and upward revision was assessed as increases in participants' intention to pursue a new career. Little is known about how success affects long-held salient future work selves.

Beyond the Personal Self

So far we have focused primarily on the individual level of the self-concept, both in terms of current selves and future work selves. However, proactive behavior can also be motivated by identities located at the relational and collective level of the self-concept. We first discuss social identification and its relevance for proactive behavior, before turning to collective and relational future work selves.

Identification and Different Targets of Proactive Behavior

Identification refers to the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their membership in groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). When individuals identify with a group, they are likely to engage in proactive behavior aimed at shaping the future of this group. Parker et al. (2010) suggested that identification with the team or organization is likely to promote proactive work behavior, aimed at changing the internal organizational environment, or proactive strategic behavior, aimed at improving the organization's fit with its external environment (Parker & Collins, 2010). Ashford and Barton (2012) similarly argued that identification with the organization would motivate individuals to raise issues on its behalf. Liu, Zhu, and Yang (2010) drew on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and proposed that an employee identifying with the organization would be motivated to direct voice at colleagues so that they may benefit

from the employee's suggestions, because he or she regards the interests of the organization as his or her own. On the other hand, employees who identify with the leader, rather than the organization, are more likely to direct voice at the leader "so that the leader can directly benefit from them" (p. 193). The authors investigated personal identification with the leader and social identification with the organization as mechanisms in the relationship between transformational leadership and peer-rated voice. In a study of 191 employees from different organizations in China, they found that social identification with the organization partially mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and voice directed at peers, while personal identification with the leader fully mediated the relationship between leadership and voice directed at the leader. This suggests that identification with specific groups or individuals can motivate proactive behavior aimed at their benefit.

Further support for the importance of different levels of the self-concept comes from research investigating different foci of commitment (see also Belschak & Den Hartog, Chapter 7 in this volume). Commitment is defined as "emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization" (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 1). While commitment and identification are conceptually distinct, they are highly correlated (van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006), and identification can be seen as an antecedent of commitment (Meyer, Becker, & Van Dick, 2006). Research on different foci of commitment can thus provide insights into the relationship between identification with different targets and proactive behavior.

In a study of 196 Australian public sector employees, Strauss, Griffin, and Rafferty (2009) found that commitment to the organization was positively related to self-reported proactive behavior targeting the organization, but not to proactive behavior targeting the team. Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) investigated whether the commitment to one's team, organization, and career was significantly related to corresponding proactive behaviors, rated by employees' peers. In a cross-sectional study of 117 employee-coworker dyads from a broad cross-section of organizations in the Netherlands, the authors found limited support for a clear-cut link between foci of commitment and targets of proactive behavior. Team commitment was a consistent predictor of proactive behavior aimed at benefiting the organization, co-workers, and the individual, respectively. Career commitment was significantly related to proactive career behavior, but organizational commitment did not predict peer-ratings of proactivity.

While the studies we have described provide preliminary evidence that identifying with a group may motivate proactive behavior aimed at benefiting this group, the support for links between different levels of identification – career, team, or organization – and corresponding targets of proactivity is mixed. This may be because the target of proactive behavior is not always identical with its beneficiary. For example, individuals may make a suggestion for a solution to an organizational problem because they identify with the organization and thus see

its success as their own success (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). However, they may also make a similar suggestion with the aim of distinguishing themselves from others and, as we argued above, expressing their personal identity. In this way, the behavior itself does not always signal a clear motivation.

Research on organizational citizenship behaviors has long discussed the possibility that the same behavior can be linked to a number of different motives, benefiting the organization, others, or the self (Bolino, 1999; Rioux & Penner, 2001), thus reflecting different levels of identification. Empirical support for a matching of the target of identification and the beneficiary of organizational citizenship behavior is mixed, with some studies showing an exact matching of foci (Olkkonen & Lipponen, 2006), while others suggest the possibility of a spillover from one focus of identification to another (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002), similar to the study of Belschak and Den Hartog (2010). Similar arguments have been applied to proactivity (e.g., Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Liu et al., 2010).

We suggest that future research should go beyond the utilitarian aspects of proactivity. Going beyond a social exchange perspective and emphasizing the unique features of proactive behavior that distinguish it from other positive work behaviors has the potential to further our understanding of the interplay between proactive behavior and different levels of self-construal. For example, identification with a group is likely to make proactive behavior aimed at shaping the future of this group self-expressive, regardless of its instrumental benefits (Oyserman et al., 2007). Similarly, relational identification as a follower may make proactive relationship building identity-congruent. Next, we argue that proactive behavior may not only be expressive of identification with current collective and relational selves but also motivated by collective and relational future selves.

Collective and Relational Future Work Selves

To date, future work selves have been discussed primarily in terms of personal selves (Strauss et al., 2012), emphasizing unique aspects of the self (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). However, like other possible selves (Cinnirella, 1998; Lord et al., 1999), future work selves can also be considered at the collective and relational level of the self (Strauss et al., 2012). While a substantial body of research has investigated the role of personal future selves (Oyserman & James, 2011), collective or relational future selves have received considerably less attention.

Relational future work selves can be seen as “representations of hoped for role relationships” (Strauss et al., 2012, p. 595). Relational future work selves are likely to promote proactive behavior targeting social relationships (Lord et al., 1999; Strauss et al., 2012), such as proactive relationship building (Ashford & Black, 1996; Thompson, 2005). A relational future work self that involves, for example, an individual’s role relationship as a carer may facilitate proactive efforts to improve the relationship with a client. Importantly, we propose that relational future work

selves are specific to dyadic role relationships. The relational future work self in our example focuses on the particular relationship the individual holds with a specific client, rather than reflecting a more personal future work self of being a caring person more generally.

Mirroring the mechanisms outlined by Strauss et al. (2012) for personal future work selves, relational future work selves may provide a basis for mental simulation, and thus facilitate anticipating a dyad partner's future needs. They may create a discrepancy between the current and the desired relationship and motivate efforts to improve the relationship (Carver & Scheier, 1990), and they may facilitate a more open and creative approach to thinking about a role relationship (Ibarra, 1999).

Previous research on individuals' proactive efforts to shape specific relationships has focused primarily on instrumental motives, such as receiving positive performance evaluations. Ashford and Black (1996) argued that proactive efforts to build a positive relationship with one's supervisor "may be undertaken for [. . .] instrumental reasons" (p. 210). In their longitudinal study of 103 MBA graduates in the US, newcomers who proactively built relationships with their supervisors received higher performance ratings, which the authors interpreted as support for their argument.

Research on job crafting has also begun to explore proactive efforts to shape relationships, and has conceptualized relationship building as a means for increasing social resources (Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012; Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012, 2013). However, measures of job crafting targeting social resources do not distinguish between proactive efforts to build relationships with one's coworkers or one's supervisor, and thus tell us little about proactivity specifically targeting dyadic role relationships.

Together these studies highlight that individuals are proactive in shaping social relationships, and suggest that they do so because of the benefits they anticipate. Instrumental motives are certainly likely to play a role in proactive relationship building. However, we suggest that relational future work selves represent a promising area of future research which may provide insights not only into the motivation behind proactive relationship building, but into the self-regulatory processes underlying it.

Collective future work selves are "individuals' representations of their group or organization in the future that reflect their hopes and aspirations" (Strauss et al., 2012, p. 595). While collective future work selves reside by definition within the individual, the processes through which these selves are constructed are inherently social. These social processes constitute a fruitful area of research. For example, leaders are particularly likely to play a key role in shaping collective future work selves. By encouraging social identification with the collective, they may make collective future work selves more salient (Kark & Shamir, 2002; Lord et al., 1999). Collective future work selves are also a potential mechanism through which leader vision may be translated into

proactive behavior (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2009). Griffin et al. (2010) argued that leaders' communication of a vision creates a discrepancy between the status quo and a desired future which highlights the need for change. A longitudinal study of 102 public sector employees in Australia provides some initial support for this argument. The authors found that, controlling for initial levels of proactivity, leader vision was positively related to proactive behavior one year later, at least for employees who felt confident in going beyond their prescribed job role. We suggest that leaders' visions may be translated into collective future work selves which form the basis of proactive goals aimed at shaping the future of the organization.

Avenues for Future Research

Throughout this chapter we have highlighted what we consider to be promising avenues for future research. So far, little research has explicitly investigated the link between identity and proactivity, and there are few studies, to date, on the role of future work selves in facilitating proactive behavior (Guan et al., 2014; Strauss et al., 2012; Strauss & Parker, 2014b; Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015). Our model of the potential links between identity and proactive behavior provides an organizing framework for this underdeveloped area of research. Below, we further discuss specific directions for future research.

Characteristics of Future Work Selves

To date, research on future work selves has focused on their salience, i.e., the extent to which they are clear and easily come to mind, and their elaboration, i.e., the extent to which they contain a complex set of diverse features (Strauss et al., 2012). Salience is generally considered a key characteristic that determines the influence of possible selves on behavior (see Oyserman & James, 2011, for a review). Studies to date have used the measure by Strauss et al. (2012) which instructs participants to mentally travel into the future and rate how clear and accessible the resulting mental image is (Cai et al., 2015; Guan et al., 2014; Strauss et al., 2012; Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015). However, future research is needed to explore further possible characteristics that may determine the consequences of future work selves for proactive behavior, such as, for example, the perceived control in relation to a future work self (Norman & Aron, 2003). Proactive behavior aimed at bringing about a future work self inherently implies working towards an uncertain future, but we know little about the influence of varying degrees of uncertainty. It may be that the relationship between the uncertainty of a future work self and proactive behavior is likely to be U-shaped (Oyserman & James, 2011). If a future work self is very likely to become reality, irrespective of one's own efforts, there is no need to act. If on the other hand a future work self seems unattainable, this will undermine proactive efforts to bring it about.

Similarly, the role of the temporal distance of future work selves deserves further attention. Previous studies on future work selves did not specify a time frame when instructing participants to envision their future work selves (Cai et al., 2015; Guan et al., 2014; Strauss et al., 2012; Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015). Individual differences in time perspective (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999) are likely to influence the temporal distance of individuals' future work selves (Oyserman & James, 2009). Different arguments can be made regarding the effect of temporal distance on the motivation effect of future work selves. On the one hand, individuals are more ambitious in relation to distal rather than proximal goals (Mogilner, Aaker, & Pennington, 2007; Pennington & Roese, 2003). On the other hand, future selves that feel closer in time more strongly influence an individual's current identity. Holding calendar time constant, A. E. Wilson et al. (2012) found that participants predicted that they would hold more "favorable qualities at a future time that seemed close rather than distant" (p. 342), suggesting that more proximal future work selves will be more positive.

How future work selves relate to the present also matters for their link with behavior. As Oyserman and James (2011) argued, "the present is experienced as separate from the future and the future feels distal, vague, and open. When the future begins later, there is not much that can be done now – except wait for the future to arrive. Conversely, the present can be seen as connecting fluidly to the future, and as such, as a time for setting the groundwork for what will become possible in the future. When the future begins now, current action is immediately necessary" (p. 129).

Further research is also needed regarding the content of future work selves, such as the extent to which they reflect intrinsic or extrinsic values, which may determine the well-being outcomes of pursuing a future work self (Vansteenkiste et al., 2007). Instructing research participants to provide future work self narratives in addition to rating the salience of their future work self has the potential to provide richer insights into the nature of future work selves. Moreover, to date, we know little about how stable future work selves are, and how future work self salience develops over time and is shaped by individuals' experiences. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to investigate the potential reciprocal relationship between future work selves and proactive behavior. While there is preliminary evidence from a longitudinal field experiment that encouraging individuals to engage with their future work self results in greater levels of proactive behavior, at least for some individuals (Strauss & Parker, 2014b), further studies employing rigorous experimental designs are needed to more clearly establish the causal relationship between identity-based motivation and proactive behavior.

Consequences of Proactive Self-Development

Proactive behavior is generally portrayed as having primarily positive consequences for individuals, such as by enhancing their job performance (Thompson, 2005) or

career satisfaction (Seibert et al., 2001). Guan et al. (2014) found that students with salient future work selves were more likely to obtain employment. Strauss et al. (2012) suggest that proactive behavior aimed at bringing about a future work self may provide a basis for creating future person–environment fit (Edwards, 1996). While this argument has yet to be tested, there is empirical as well as theoretical support for the idea that proactive self-development based on future work selves is likely to be beneficial. However, there may also be downsides to investing time and energy in bringing about one’s future work self. Research on affective forecasting suggests that individuals tend to overestimate their affective reaction to future events (Dunn & Laham, 2006; T. D. Wilson & Gilbert, 2005). This means that achieving one’s future work selves may not result in genuine happiness. It is, however, important to note that research on affective forecasting focuses primarily on “happiness,” rather than on, for example, the experience of meaning (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

When investigating the benefits of the self-expressive and identity-congruent characteristics of proactive behavior for individuals’ well-being, cultural differences need to be taken into account. Proactivity is likely to be self-expressive primarily in individualistic cultures that value actively seeking success and overtaking others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Markus and Kitayama (1991) argue that controlling and shaping one’s environment, as reflected in proactive behavior, is not universally preferred across cultures. Collectivistic cultures value alignment over more proactive forms of control. Future research should explore the consequences of proactively pursuing one’s future work self, using a broad range of indicators of well-being and accounting for cultural differences.

Intersection of Collective and Personal Identities

Drawing on Strauss et al. (2012), we make a clear distinction between personal, relational, and collective future work selves. This is based on the notion that different levels of the self-concept are unlikely to be activated simultaneously (Kark & Shamir, 2002; Lord et al., 1999). However, to date, we know little about how clearly this distinction holds when individuals imagine their future work self. Further research is needed to explore whether personal future work selves can be clearly distinguished from relational future work selves. Conceptualizing future work selves more broadly, beyond a clear distinction between the three levels of the self-concept, may provide fruitful avenues for future research. For example, just as the present-oriented self-concept can be seen as individuals’ theory about who they are (Oyserman, 2001), future work selves may represent working theories of who individuals hope to become in the future. Future work self could thus be thought of as an individual’s theory of their hoped for future self in relation to work, encompassing a range of different possible future identities (Oyserman & James, 2009), including collective and relational identities.

Further research is also needed to explore the intersection of future work selves and collective identities. While collective future work selves can form the basis of proactive behavior aimed at shaping the future of a team or organization, social identities can also restrict what individuals can imagine for themselves, and thus create barriers to proactive behavior. Social identities may influence the formation of a future work self by signaling that certain roles or achievements are not suitable or attainable by people that share a particular social identity (Oyserman & James, 2011). For example, a woman from a working class background, who is presented with images of only wealthy male politicians in the media, might consider a future work self as a politician as outside of the realm of possible future selves for “people like me”. In support of this idea, research has shown that the perceived likelihood and desirability of attaining certain possible selves can differ by social identity (Lips, 2000, 2007). For instance, women are more likely to feel that their social identity is incompatible with a future work self in a professional area which is strongly stereotyped as male, such as science and engineering, or high power roles (Lips, 2000). Discrepancies between different social identities can operate at a subconscious level, as demonstrated by a study of the implicit attitudes of college students towards math (Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald, 2002). The authors tested students’ implicit associations between math and gender and found that women who implicitly associated math with “male” were less likely to associate math with their own identity. This effect was present even for women who were taking math majors.

Social identities may also influence future work selves when they generate additional future identities which are incompatible with a potential future work self. Individuals may feel that they must choose between incompatible future selves, or negotiate among multiple future selves, depending on their social identities. For example, academically gifted girls have been found to be influenced by considerations of both work and family roles when discussing salient future selves, while academically gifted boys were focused only on work (Curry, Trew, Turner, & Hunter, 1994). Differences such as these, originating in social identities, may affect the degree to which individuals invest resources and proactively work towards a future work self. Future research is needed to explore this possibility.

Finally, in particular, our discussion of collective future work selves has been grounded primarily in social psychological research on the self-concept which views collective future selves as situated within a person’s self-concept, and thus as relatively enduring individual variables. From this perspective, context and situation are seen as playing a secondary role (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004), such as by making different identities salient or shaping their influence on behavior. In contrast, processual approaches to the self-concept would provide a different perspective and may offer insights into how collective future selves are negotiated and defined in social interactions (see e.g., Gecas, 1982).

Practical Implications

An identity-based perspective on proactive behavior has important practical implications for organizations aiming to enhance proactivity in their workforce. Identity-congruent motivation provides a *reason to* motivation for proactivity (Parker et al., 2010) which has received relatively little attention in the literature to date (Ashford & Barton, 2012). In this chapter, we argued that proactive behavior may not always be utilitarian but can be based on identity-congruent motivation. This suggests that identity-congruent proactivity may be relatively unaffected by rewards; instead, attempts to incentivize proactive behavior may undermine the self-expressive nature of proactivity (Strauss & Parker, 2014a).

However, there is evidence that identity-based motivation is open to change (Oyserman & Destin, 2010), which highlights the potential to enhance proactivity through training and development interventions in organizations. To date however most research on interventions based on identity-based motivation and possible selves has focused either on students (Day, Borkowski, Punzo, & Howsepian, 1994; Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002), or on career counselling (Plimmer, 2012), rather than investigating proactive behavior in organizations more generally. For example, in a study of African-American high school students, Oyserman and colleagues (Oyserman et al., 2002) showed that a 9-week small-group intervention resulted in improved behavior and increased school attendance as well as well as in improvements in the balance of students' expected and feared possible selves. The intervention included strategies such as strengthening group membership, creating more concrete links between the present and a desired future, and building the skills that would be required to pursue expected possible selves and avoid feared possible selves.

A rare example of a future work self intervention in an organizational setting is a ten-month longitudinal field experiment carried out by Strauss and Parker (Strauss & Parker, 2014b). The authors found that participants who underwent an intervention based on future work selves showed an increase in proactive behavior aimed at changing the future of the organization. However, these effects were only found for individuals high in future orientation. This is in line with previous research which has shown that individual differences determine how responsive participants are to interventions based on ideal identities (Ouellette, Hessling, Gibbons, Reis-Bergan, & Gerrard, 2005). Together these studies suggest that increasing the salience of future work selves has the potential to enhance proactive behavior, however, individual differences need to be taken into account.

In addition, leaders are likely to play a critical role in identity-congruent motivation for proactivity in a number of ways. First, in particular, transformational leadership may encourage identity-congruent proactive behavior aimed at benefiting the organization by enhancing employees' social identification with the organization (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Second, by encouraging social identification with the team or organization, leaders may make collective future work selves more salient (Kark & Shamir, 2002;

Lord et al., 1999). Finally, leader visions may form the basis of collective future work selves (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2009), and thus stimulate proactive efforts to change the future of the organization. This suggests that organizations can potentially increase identity-congruent proactivity by selecting and developing transformational leaders who stimulate social identification and provide clear visions of the future.

Note

1 Parker et al. (2010) introduced “reason to” motivations as one category of motivational states that drive proactive behavior. The authors highlighted integrated motivation as a “reason to” motivational state which is conceptually similar to identity-based motivation. Integrated regulation reflects individuals’ sense “that the behavior is an integral part of who they are, that it emanates from their sense of self” (Gagné & Deci, 2005, p. 335). There are parallels but also key differences between identity-based motivation and integrated regulation. Identity-based motivation similarly captures the notion that proactive behavior can be self-expressive, but it differs from the concept of integrated regulation in that it takes into account the dynamic interplay between context and identity. Identities become salient depending on the situation and act as a “reason to” engage in proactive behavior only in contexts where they become accessible. In contrast, the concept of integrated regulation is not explicitly context-specific.

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13

THE “HOT” SIDE OF PROACTIVITY

Exploring an Affect-Based Perspective on Proactivity in Organizations

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Today’s globalized economy is characterized by high levels of uncertainty, as well as organizational dynamics (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007; Wall, Jackson, and Mullarkey, 1995). These developments have influenced characteristics of the work environment and thus behaviors required of employees to succeed in their jobs (Ilgen & Pulakos, 1999). In organizations that are low in hierarchical differences and high in environmental uncertainty and ambiguity, employees are more than ever required to not only comply with broader goals that are set by their organization but also to be self-starting in shaping their own careers or in improving organizational performance (Frese, 2008). In this context, research on proactive behavior focuses on explaining how employees actively take charge of situations to bring about change in a future-focused way (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). For instance, employees sometimes modify or adjust their organizational goals, set for themselves more challenging goals (Hacker, 1985), and take action to influence socialization processes to improve their work experiences (Ashford & Black, 1996; Saks & Ashforth, 1996). Similarly, employees can decide to change the characteristics of their job and situation by using their personal initiative (Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2007) or via job-crafting (Berg, Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2010; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), and to persuade managers of important new directions for the organization (Dutton, Ashford, O’Neill, & Lawrence, 2001).

The relevance of proactive action for uncertain and dynamic situations, combined with clear evidence that proactive behavior can promote important outcomes, means it is important for researchers to understand how motivational processes within the individual give rise to and influence proactivity at work. Mitchell and Daniels (2003) distinguished between cold (or cognitive-motivational) processes as well as *hot* (or affect-related) processes that shape individuals’ behaviors. As Parker

and colleagues (2010) pointed out, proactivity research to date has mainly focused on the former, cognitive-motivational factors. However, a large body of research on affect in organizations suggests that emotional-motivational factors should in their own right be powerful influencing factors for employees' ways of behaving at work (e.g., Beal, Weiss, Barros, & MacDermid, 2005; Seo, Bartunek, & Barrett, 2010). In this context, organizational behavior scholarship has seen a surge in attention to affective experience in the workplace, often referred to as the "affective revolution" (Barsade, Brief, & Spataro, 2003). On the one hand, research has shown that the work environment, in particular, work design, leadership, and teams, can have a great impact on moods and emotions experienced by individuals at work (Brief & Weiss, 2002; George & Brief, 1992). In turn, employees' feelings at work – their moods and emotions – impact a wide range of important individual and organizational outcomes, such as work performance, well-being, socialization, and turnover (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Brief & Weiss, 2002).

In this chapter, we set out to unravel the "hot" side of proactivity, i.e., we will explore, based on existing theory and evidence, an affect-based perspective on proactivity in organizations. In the first section of our review, we first briefly summarize evidence on the nature of affective experience at work. We then review and discuss evidence on how positive and negative, activated vs low-activated affective experiences at work, respectively, influence proactive behavior at work. In the third part of our chapter, we advance considerations of how the engagement in proactivity itself may importantly influence affective experience at work. We conclude our chapter by indicating practical implications of understanding the role of affect for proactivity for the management of organizations, as well discuss several future avenues for research on affect and proactivity in the workplace.

The Nature of Affective Experience at Work

Affect can be defined as an "umbrella term encompassing a broad range of feelings that individuals experience" (Barsade & Gibson, 2007, p.37). In general, affective experiences can be classified into three hierarchical categories: Emotions, moods, and trait affectivity (Rosenberg, 1998). *Emotions* are momentary experiences usually triggered by a specific stimulus (Lazarus, 1991). They are generally very intense and short-lived, even though sometimes they may transform into moods. From a research perspective, emotions tend to be regarded as discrete (Frijda, 1986). The basic emotions include anger, joy, surprise, love, disgust, fear, and sadness (Ekman, 1999). Examples in the workplace are feelings of excitement workers may experience when deeply involved and absorbed in their work (Fullagar & Kelloway, 2009). Discrete positive emotions, for instance, can influence important organizational outcomes such as increased motivation (Erez & Isen, 2002), task performance (Ashby, Isen, & Turken, 1999), and creativity (Spector & Fox, 2002).

The most common theoretical framework adopted in the study of *moods* is the circumplex model of affect (e.g., Russell, 2003). In this model, feelings are represented across two distinct dimensions: arousal and valence. The arousal (low vs high arousal) axis denotes the degree of energetic activation associated with feelings, whereas the valence axis indicates the degree of pleasure in feelings (positive vs negative valence). These two dimensions create four separate quadrants: activated positive moods (e.g., feeling enthusiastic), low-activated positive moods (e.g., feeling relaxed), activated negative moods (e.g., feeling anxious) and low-activated negative moods (e.g., feeling depressed) (Posner, Russell & Peterson, 2005; Warr, 1990; Warr, Bindl, Parker & Inceoglu, 2014). Unfortunately, most scales used to measure moods do not assess comprehensively the four quadrants of the circumplex, but rather focus on positive vs negative valence. For example, the commonly used Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988) comprises only two mood scales, one for positive (example items: interested, strong, proud) and one for negative affect (ashamed, afraid, scared), without differentiating between activation level (for more comprehensive approaches to measuring affect across all four quadrants, see e.g., Warr, Bindl, Parker, & Inceoglu, 2010). Moods differ from *emotions* especially in terms of *duration* (emotions are typically shorter lasting than moods), *specificity* (emotions are generally elicited by specific events or circumstances) and *intensity* (because emotions are more focused, they are also typically more intense than moods). It is noteworthy that emotions can transform into lingering moods (Frijda, 1993) and moods can, themselves, translate into specific emotions, for instance, in situations where individuals become aware of what causes their moods (Clore, 1992).

Finally, *trait affectivity* refers to an individual's relatively stable tendency to experience certain feelings across time and situations (Watson & Clark, 1984; Williams & Shiaw, 1999). Although trait affectivity is less influenced by the work environment, research suggests it can act as a threshold for state experiences (Rosenberg, 1998). For example, employees high in negative trait affectivity are more likely to report negative state affective experiences at work (Fortunato, Jex, & Heinisch, 1999; Heinisch & Jex, 1997; Schaubroeck, Ganster, & Fox, 1992). In this respect, Parkes (1990) suggested that such relationship can be explained by the fact that individuals more dispositionally prone to negative affect are more sensitive to negative stimuli compared to individuals low in negative trait affectivity.

In sum, overall, empirical evidence suggest powerful effects of affect (both at the state and level) on work-related behaviors and outcomes (e.g., Brief & Weiss, 2002; George, 1991; Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005; Staw & Barsade, 1993). In the next section, we provide a comprehensive review of, and elaborate on why and how affective experiences at work are particularly important in the context of proactive behavior and we discuss how distinct affective experiences can either encourage or derail proactivity in organizations.

The Role of Affective Experience for Proactivity

In this section, we provide a comprehensive review of research evidence to date on the role of affective experience for proactive behavior at work (see Table 13.1). We arrange our review by focusing on the roles of positive affective experiences, comprising positive trait affectivity, moods, and emotions, which has received the most attention in the proactivity literature so far, in particular when investigating a broader range of proactive behaviors at work. We continue to review evidence of the roles of negative affective experiences for proactive behavior, which have mostly been investigated in the literature of proactive voice in organizations (see also Davidson and Van Dyne, in Chapter 17 of this book).

The Role of Positive Affective Experiences

Experiencing positive affect in the workplace is associated with a wide range of desirable outcomes. For instance, individuals in a positive affective state are more likely to perform their job-related duties well (Tsai, Chen, & Liu, 2007), make accurate decisions (Staw & Barsade, 1993), and offer help to colleagues who experience difficulty (George, 1991). Contrary to negative affective experiences, positive affective experiences promote optimism and boost motivation by increasing effort intensity and persistence of one's actions (George & Brief, 1996). Here, we contend that positive affect is especially important when it comes to promoting proactive behavior at work. Namely, we propose that experiencing positive affect at work is even more important in shaping employees' self-set, proactive goals, relative to goals set by the organization (proficient goals) (see Griffin et al., 2007). First, proactive behavior by definition involves "challenging the status quo rather than passively adapting present conditions" (Crant, 2000, p.436). Confidence in oneself is often a necessary prerequisite for proactivity (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010): positive affect can promote confidence to achieve positive outcomes in the face of obstacles and hindrances (Baron, 1990; Kramer, Newton, & Pommerenke, 1993).

Second, proactive behaviors have a self-starting nature. In other words, personal initiative is an essential component of proactivity. When individuals experience negative feelings they are less likely to minimize the risk of loss or negative outcomes, which inevitably results in more conservative/defensive behaviors. In contrast, positive affect tends to promote setting challenging goals for oneself (Ilies & Judge, 2005). As a result, when employees are in a positive affective state they are more prone to explore and attempt achieving anticipated positive outcomes, even though losses can occur in the process (Seo, Barrett, & Bartunek, 2004). This should be extremely important for proactive behaviors, which are not always well-received by peers and supervisors (Bolino, Valcea, & Harvey, 2010; Bolino and colleagues, Chapter 18 in this book). Third, compared to routine tasks, proactive behaviors are more likely to necessitate effortful and

TABLE 13.1 Overview of Research on the Affect-Proactivity Relationship

<i>Study</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Type of Affect Investigated</i>	<i>Location in Affective Circumplex</i>	<i>Type of Proactivity Investigated</i>	<i>Associations Between Affect and Proactivity</i>
Milliken, Morrison, & Hewlin (2003)	Cross-sectional	Emotions	Activated negative	Proactive Voice	-
Den Hartog & Belschak, (2007)	Cross-sectional	Trait Affectivity	Activated positive	Innovative work behaviour	+ (Study 1&2)
Fritz & Sonnentag (2009)	Intensive Longitudinal	Daily Moods & Trait Affectivity	Activated negative	Taking charge	+ (Study 1); ns (Study2)
Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson (2012)	Cross-sectional (Study 1) Longitudinal (Study 2)	Monthly Moods	Activated positive	Task Proactivity (Study 1), Career-related Proactivity (Study 2): four stages of proactive goal regulation - envisioning, planning, enacting, and reflecting	+ (all stages) Ns (all stages) Ns (all stages) + (envisioning)
Fay & Sonnentag (2012)	Intensive Longitudinal	Daily Moods & Trait Affectivity	Activated positive (moods) Activated negative (moods)Positive (trait affectivity) Negative (trait affectivity)		+ ns ns +

(continued)

TABLE 13.1 (continued)

<i>Study</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Type of Affect Investigated</i>	<i>Location in Affective Circumplex</i>	<i>Type of Proactivity Investigated</i>	<i>Associations Between Affect and Proactivity</i>
Hahn, Frese, Binnewies, & Schmitt (2012)	Lagged	Trait Affectivity	Activated positive	Personal Initiative	+
Lam, Spreitzer, & Fritz (2014)	Cross-sectional	Trait Affectivity	Activated positive	Proactive Voice (Supervisor-rated)	Curvilinear (inverted-U)
Madrid, Patterson, Birdi, Leiva, & Kausel (2014)	Intensive Longitudinal	Weekly Moods	Activated positive	Innovative work behaviour	+ (moderated by Openness to experience)
Sonnentag & Starzyk (2015)	Intensive Longitudinal	Daily Moods	Activated positive Activated negative	Proactive Work Behavior: two stages of issue identification and implementation)	+ (implementation) + (issue identification)

Note: Associations between affect and proactivity: '+' positive significant relationship; '-' negative significant relationship; 'ns' non-significant relationship. Apart from Milliken et al.'s (2003), all research reported here used quantitative research data and analysis.

complex self-regulatory processes to be successfully carried out. In this regard, research evidence has shown that positive affect improves self-regulation and can even replenish regulatory resources following depletion (Baumeister, 2002; Tice, Baumeister, Shmueli, Muraven, 2007). Therefore, experiencing positive mood in the workplace should sustain the regulatory resources necessary to pursue proactive goals.

It is important to note that valence is not the only aspect of affect that matters, the activation element also matters. In spite of their positive valence, low-activated feelings (e.g., feeling relaxed) are less likely to promote proactive behaviors. Individuals experiencing a sense of calmness and relaxation are more prone to preserve current circumstances, rather than attempting to change them (Griffin et al., 2007). On the contrary, activated positive affect (e.g., vitality, vigor) are by definition characterized by high levels of energy, and therefore facilitate the engagement in activities that require effort and persistence. In their motivational model of proactivity, Parker, Bindl, and Strauss (2010) identified “energized to” motivation as an essential affect-related motivational state of proactivity. Experiencing activated positive affect can stimulate proactive behaviors inasmuch as these sort of affective experiences help broaden action-thought repertoires (Fredrickson, 2001) and activate approach-action tendencies in individuals at work (Seo, et al. 2004).

Consistent with these considerations, previous studies suggest that positively energized feelings promote proactivity. In a diary study on proactivity and affect, Fritz and Sonnentag (2009) found that over four consecutive work days, activated positive affect was positively associated with taking charge behaviors. Similarly, in a 2-year survey study Hahn, Frese, Binnewies, and Schmitt (2012) showed that experience of vigor is associated with personal initiative amongst business owners. In addition, Madrid, Patterson, Birdi, Leiva, and Kausel (2014) drew on the circumplex model of affect to explore the effects of distinct types of weekly moods on innovative work behavior, which constitutes a form of proactive work behavior (Parker & Collins, 2010), in a sample of 92 workers of diverse occupations. Using a diary study methodology, the researchers found, across 10 waves of weekly data that activated positive mood (measured using Warr’s job-related affect indicator; Warr, 1990) was positively associated with innovative behaviors at work. These effects were moderated by participants’ openness to experience, such that for individuals high in this trait there were stronger associations between activated positive affect and innovative work behavior. Madrid et al.’s (2014) study showed no significant effects of low-activated positive affect on proactivity, thus corroborating previous findings and suggesting that while activated positive mood can drive and sustain proactivity, low-activated moods “most likely lead to proficient performance, rather than change-oriented behaviors” (p.248).

However, in a related area of health research that focused on the role of employees’ relaxation outside of work, and recovery from work, for work-related

proactivity, Binnewies, Sonnentag, and Mojza (2010) showed that feeling recovered from work demands predicted increased task performance and personal initiative. These findings suggest that even though low-activated feelings may be less immediately important for proactivity while at work, related states of relaxation and feelings of recovery may help “recharge” one’s batteries when not at work, thus facilitating proactive behavior the following day at work.

In addition, proactive behavior is not merely about acting proactively; rather, it involves a goal-regulation process made of different phases, each of which is essential to bring about the positive outcomes of proactivity. Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, and Hagger-Johnson (2012) considered four distinct core elements of proactive behavior: envisioning (deliberating a better future), planning (preparing a plan to bring about this future), enacting (implementing proactive behaviors), and reflecting (aiming to understand and considering the implications of past proactive behavior). Results indicated that activated positive moods at work play an important role in facilitating proactivity throughout all four stages of proactivity, hence, ensuring that employees not only think about initiating a better future in their work environment or in themselves but to follow through on the action until completion, including reflecting on lessons learned from the current initiative that may facilitate future engagements in proactivity (Bindl et al., 2012).

Most recently, researchers have started to speculate that the relationship between proactivity and positive affect might not always be of a linear nature. In a recent study of knowledge workers and staff in a US software development firm, Lam, Spreitzer and Fritz (2014) found a curvilinear effect of trait positive affectivity on proactive behavior (in an inverted-U relationship), suggesting that not only low, but also high levels of positive affect at work are associated with lower proactivity. According to Lam et al. (2014), excessively high levels of activated positive affect (i.e., feeling alive and vital at work) can signal the individual that taking initiative is not necessary, thus creating a sense of complacency that disinclines them to engage in proactive behavior. It should be noted that the authors used Ryan and Fredrick’s (1997) subjective vitality scale, which does not account for low-activated positive affect (feelings of contentment). Overall, these results seem to indicate that intermediate levels of activated positive affect might be the most beneficial for proactive behavior. Overall, evidence suggests that, because proactivity requires high levels of confidence, self-initiation, and persistence in overcoming barriers and obstacles, activated positive moods can play an important role in promoting this behavior in organizations.

The Role of Negative Affective Experiences

If evidence regarding the effects of positive affect on proactivity is arguably well-established in the literature, the same conclusions cannot be reached regarding negative affect. In fact, the role of negative emotions and moods in relation to

proactivity is fairly ambivalent. On the one hand, negative moods likely suggest a gap between the current and the desired situation, which should theoretically stimulate the person to engage in change-oriented behavior, and use his or her initiative to achieve one's goals (Carver & Scheier, 1982). For example, employees dissatisfied their job may indeed think about quitting, but might also attempt to craft their job (which is an example of a proactive person-environment fit behavior; Parker & Collins, 2010) to achieve a better fit between their professional identity and their job tasks. On the other hand, being in a negative mood might deter proactive behaviors in a variety of ways: for instance, negative mood has been shown to deplete one's regulatory resources (Hobfoll, 1989), which are important to persist at tasks and overcome difficulties encountered in discretionary behaviors (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000). Additionally, negative mood could also indicate a lack of progress towards one's goals, thus inhibiting effective goal pursuit (Carver & Scheier, 1990; Easterbrook, 1959), which is vital for proactivity.

A few studies have specifically investigated the roles of negative affect on proactive behavior, yielding mixed results. Den Hartog and Belschak (2007) found a positive association between employees' positive trait negative affectivity and personal initiative across two studies (the first one consisting of health care sector employees and the second one with 80 employee-manager dyads). However, the effects were not consistent across samples. According to the researchers, although experiencing negative emotions may stimulate a fight-or-flight, rather than a passive attitude (Frijda, 1987), they may also deplete an individual's resources, thus undermining proactive efforts. Similarly, Fritz and Sonnentag (2009) found no significant effects of negative affect on proactive behavior, suggesting that the relationship between these two variables might be more complex than previously thought.

One way to resolve these conflicting insights was to consider the role of different levels of activation (high vs low-activated; Russell, 2003) when considering the possible effects of negative affective experiences on proactive behavior: different levels of activation are likely to produce divergent outcomes. Research suggests that *activated* affective experiences can narrow the attentional scope (Easterbrook, 1959; Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2010), i.e., influence the way people feel shape whether they attend broadly or narrowly on the environment. The evolutionary explanation for this phenomenon lies in the fact that anxiety helps the human being to focus on negative or threatening stimuli and improves chances of survival (MacLeod & Mathews, 1988). Activated negative feelings are therefore likely to influence one's regulatory processes by mobilizing resources in order to deal with the negative stimulus/situation. From a goal-regulatory perspective, activated negative feelings may indeed prompt proactive behavior but only to the extent that proactive behavior is aimed at resolving the situation causing these emotions. Namely, if an employee is feeling stressed by a huge workload, proactive behavior aimed at reducing workload,

for instance, by taking charge of changing the situation leading to these levels of workload, is more likely to occur than proactivity aimed at an unrelated goal. Other, more general proactive behaviors in the workplace, which may potentially be beneficial for the individual or the organization but not directly related to reducing the source of negative affect, should be less likely the focus of employees with activated negative feeling at work. It is also worth noting the difference between temporary negative affective states (i.e. emotions) and more prolonged negative affective experiences (i.e. moods, trait affectivity). Because the experience of negative mood is not necessarily related to a particular object or even (Parkinson, Totterdell, Briner, & Reynolds, 1996), activated negative mood should not per se motivate proactive behavior, unlike negative momentary emotions. Rather, by signaling poor progression towards a goal, negative moods tend to promote an avoid orientation rather than approach orientation, thus shifting one's regulatory focus (Beal et al., 2005; Carver, 2006; Higgins, 1997; Rodell & Judge, 2009). Furthermore, research on employee voice suggests that intense emotions such as frustration, dissatisfaction and anger can motivate employees to speak up (Chiaburu, Marinova, & Van Dyne, 2008). Other research suggests that highly negative affective experiences, in connection with a specific work issue may prevent employees from engaging in these issues, altogether. In this vein, research on proactive voice (Mowbray, Wilkinson, & Tse, 2015) has established different demotivators of employees raising their concerns and suggestions about improving a given work situation, based on fear of personal and professional consequences. In this respect, fear is a rather intense, activated negative emotion that can strongly derail voice in organizations (Kish-Gephart, Detertm, Trevino, & Edmondson, 2009). According to Kish-Gephart and colleagues (2015) fear "is likely to be accompanied by an automatic tendency to remove oneself from the threat via flight" (p.170). It is also worth noting that although experiencing intense negative emotions such as anger can increase the frequency of voice, the quality and effectiveness of it may greatly decrease due to the less thoughtful and more passionate behavior (Grant, 2008; Kish-Gephart et al., 2009). Qualitative analyses suggest that fear is one of the most commonly mentioned reasons for remaining silent (Milliken, Morrison & Hewlin, 2003). Therefore, it appears that even though negative moods per se might be encouraging proactive behavior, the experience of intense negative activated emotions can also be detrimental to proactivity. Conversely, there is evidence to suggest that low-activated negative moods broaden cognitions (Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2010), which could promote the envisioning of proactive goals. For example, feelings of depression may trigger ruminative thoughts on how to change one's current situation, which could, in turn, facilitate the envisioning of a better future through proactive actions (Verhaeghen, Joormann, & Khan, 2005; Bindl et al., 2012).

In addition, even though employees experiencing negative moods can indeed contemplate proactive goals, their actual implementation may be less likely

to occur. For instance, Bindl et al. (2012) showed that overall low-activated negative moods at work (such as, feeling depressed, sad, and despondent; Warr et al., 2014), predicted higher levels of envisioning, i.e., contemplating a different and improved future, for both task well as well career-related proactivity. However, these negative feelings were not related to the actual engagement in proactive action. Similarly, research suggests that negative affective experiences, over a prolonged timeframe, can create physical and psychological states of tiredness and exhaustion (Gross & John, 2003), and deplete regulatory resources (Hobfoll, 1989). In this regard, research using diary study designs indicate that optimal energy levels are important for facilitating proactivity: on days in which employees are feeling tired and exhausted, they are also less likely to engage in proactive behavior in the workplace, as opposed to days on which they feel recovered (Sonnentag, 2003). Therefore, we propose that persistent negative moods are overall likely to inhibit, rather than facilitate, the actual implementation of proactive behavior.

Nonetheless, although negative affect seems less important than positive affect for the implementation of proactive behavior, it may still help identify potential issues in the workplace on a given work day: negative affect, in fact, may signal the employee that the current situation is problematic and remedial action needs to be taken (Schwarz, 1990). In an attempt to answer this research question, Sonnentag and Starzyk (2015) considered how positive and activated negative moods in the morning influence different aspects of proactive behaviors (issue identification versus the actual implementation of proactive goals) in the afternoon. Analyses of diary survey data from 153 employees showed that while activated negative moods (e.g., feeling distressed, upset, irritable) predicted the identification of issues, activated positive moods (e.g., feeling active, interested, excited) predicted the actual implementation of proactive goals in the afternoon. Interestingly, no effects were found between daily activated positive mood and issue identification, which suggests activated negative moods may be uniquely important in helping employees focus on and identify specific issues in the workplace. Overall, Sonnentag and Starzyk's results corroborate the earlier findings of Bindl and colleagues (2012) by showing that, on a daily level of analysis, both positive and negative moods can be important in contributing to different elements of proactive behavior in employees.

Some research has also started to investigate the interplay between positive and negative affective experience, across different levels of momentary (state) vs more prolonged (trait) affective experiences. In this vein, Fay and Sonnentag (2012) proposed that negative mood entails "an elevated sensitivity to negative issues at work" (p. 76). This implies that individuals high in negative affectivity should be more likely to identify problems in the workplace (which is an important prerequisite for proactivity) and, in general, more alert to opportunities to be proactive. On the contrary, positive, momentary affective states are essential for proactivity. This is because sufficient energy levels are necessary to sustain

proactivity in the face of obstacles and hindrances, and promote optimal goal regulation (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000). In their experience sampling study, Fay and Sonnentag (2012) found support for these predictions by showing that positive affective states and negative trait affectivity were associated with increased time on proactive behavior. At the daily level, high levels of state positive affect predicted subsequent proactive behaviors. As the authors noted, such a relationship remained when considering personal differences: when people experience positive affect higher than their typical levels, they are also more likely to spend time on proactive behavior at work. Interestingly, however, negative trait affectivity also significantly predicted time spent on proactive behavior. According to Fay and Sonnentag, individuals with a dispositional tendency to experience negative affect are more receptive to negative stimuli, which in turn can trigger proactive behavior. These findings suggest that positive and negative affect might function differently at the state and trait level.

Overall, in this section, we have considered the multiple ways in which affective states can generate and sustain proactive behavior. If the importance of positive affective experiences in promoting proactivity is rather established, the same cannot be said for negative affective experiences, whose relationship with proactive behavior in organizations is more complex. In our view, it is important to consider not only the valence but also the different levels of energetic activation associated with affective states. Furthermore, it is essential to differentiate between momentary affective states (i.e., emotions) and more enduring state affective experiences (i.e., moods). Differences in dispositional affect (i.e. trait affectivity) are also likely to play a role. Finally, possible curvilinear effects should not be ruled out. It is plausible that extremely high levels of negative affect (both low and high-activated) may be detrimental for proactivity. In turn, similarly to findings on the roles of positive affective experiences for proactivity, intermediate levels of negative affect might be the most beneficial in terms of promoting proactivity at work.

Understanding Affective Consequences of Proactivity

In the previous section, we discussed how affect can drive and sustain proactive behavior. We now turn our attention towards considering the affective consequences of proactivity – a topic that has generated much less interest in the literature but is, as we will argue, very important to consider. Just as the way employees feel at work can determine their levels of proactive behavior, the act of engaging in proactivity could influence how employees feel at work. Several literatures, in particular on flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, 2000), work stress (Hobfoll, 1989), and needs satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000), provide useful lenses by which we set out to explain how proactivity may shape/generate employees' affective experiences, especially momentary emotions and longer-lasting moods at work.. Only a small number of scholars have considered the

possible affective and well-being consequences of proactive behavior (Bolino et al., 2010; Strauss & Parker, 2014). Yet, from a sustainability perspective, it is essential to understand how proactivity impacts on emotions and moods because, as we discussed in the previous section, affect is a strong driver of proactivity. Namely, if engaging in proactive behavior can elicit positive emotional experiences, then employees should be more likely to engage in further proactivity (Strauss & Parker, 2014). On the contrary, if proactive behaviors generate feelings of anxiety and frustration, for instance by placing additional demands on employees, proactivity may well be thwarted. In sum, the influences of proactivity on affective experiences overall are arguably complex, comprising several underlying processes and contextual variables. In this section, we consider and explore some of these potentially positive and negative affective outcomes of proactivity, as well as their possible underlying mechanisms and contingencies.

Emotional Outcomes of Proactivity

Proactive behaviors are not routine behaviors, regularly displayed during one's workday. Rather, this proactivity can be considered as a deliberate process involving considerable regulatory processes (Bindl et al., 2012). We propose that, due to its self-initiated and self-directed nature, proactivity is not only driven and stimulated by affective states but can also likely elicit intense emotional reactions, in turn.

First, we propose that proactivity could generate positive affect by promoting flow experiences. The flow experience – an enjoyable state of consciousness in which people become fully immersed in challenging activities (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) – is a pleasant psychological state commonly associated with positive energizing emotions, such as happiness and enthusiasm (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). To experience this state, an individual should engage in activities that are challenging enough to the self, without being overwhelming. Being proactive in one's work can create opportunities to engage in challenging and stimulating activities that promote the occurrence of flow experiences. Job-crafting refers to behaviors employees engage in with the aim of aligning their job with their own skills and abilities (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Bakker, Tims, and Derks (2012) showed that individuals who craft their jobs (i.e., increase their job challenges and increase their social/structural resources), are more likely to experience feelings of vigor (an emotion characterized by high levels of energy and enthusiasm). In a similar vein, successfully achieving challenging proactive goals could elicit feelings of pride and contentment (Lewis, Alessandri, & Sullivan, 1992). In this regard, Brown and Marshall (2001) explored how successful experiences impact on self-focused emotions: in an experiment, individuals who solved a series of difficult problems successfully were more prone to experience positive self-relevant emotions such as pride. On the contrary, failures in the experimental task were associated with feelings of shame, guilt,

and embarrassment. In turn, these results seem to suggest that, from a purely emotional perspective, negative outcomes as a result of proactive behavior could elicit strong self-focused failure emotions.

Although empirically there are very few articles on the effects of proactivity on affect, research on similar constructs and their impact on affect seems to concur with these speculations. For instance, creativity – the production of new and useful ideas (Amabile, 1996) – shares with proactivity its emphasis on self-initiation and self-direction (although more focused on generating, rather than implementing, new ideas). From an affective perspective, creativity is often associated with the experience of activated positive affect (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, 2000). According to Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, (2005) not only may affect promote creativity, but creative outcomes may also, in turn, elicit strong positive emotional reactions (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Using a diary study methodology, Amabile and colleagues collected data from 222 workers employed in several companies and time-lagged analyses revealed a positive linear relationship between positive affect and creativity. Subsequently, the authors investigated affect as a direct consequence of creativity: qualitative analyses of creative events descriptions showed that positive affect was by far the most frequent emotional reaction to the creative event. Example emotions that emerged from participants' narratives were feelings of joy, satisfaction, pride, and relief, suggesting that both high and low-activated positive emotions may occur in concomitance of or subsequent to creative events. Although experimental evidence is so far scarce, one study conducted by Feist (1994) showed that college students reported increases in positive mood after engaging in a creative task. These results are therefore consistent with the idea that engaging in proactive behavior might, in turn, elicit positive affective reactions.

However, proactivity may not always promote flow experiences. Under certain circumstances, proactive engagement could become stressful and overwhelming. It has previously been suggested that engaging in proactivity could cause stress and anxiety, particularly when organizations expect individuals to engage in proactive behavior (Bolino et al., 2010), or when employees perceive image risk of their initiatives to be high (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Research on similar constructs seems to corroborate these speculations. For instance, in a cross-sectional study, Janssen (2003) found positive associations between individual innovation and feelings of frustration at work: this finding is not surprising given that engaging in innovative work often requires complex problem-solving, increased workload and resource investment (Janssen, Van de Vliert, & West, 2004). In a related vein, previous evidence indicated positive correlations between organizational citizenship behaviors and role overload, job stress, and work-family conflict (Bolino & Turnley, 2005). To summarize, the increased amount of workload and time pressure potentially associated with proactive behavior could result in negative affective experiences (Mroczek & Almeida, 2004). However, it is important to note these

findings around proactivity and negative affect are mostly correlational in nature, which prevents us from drawing stronger causal links.

To add complexity to these considerations, the effects of proactivity on affective experience might not be a simply linear one. For instance, engaging very frequently in proactive behavior might require a great deal of energy, time, and resources on top of one's duties and responsibilities, potentially creating anxiety and causing unnecessary stress. In this sense, just as intermediate levels of positive affect seem to be the most beneficial for proactive behavior (Lam et al., 2014), it could be speculated that intermediate levels of proactivity may be the most ideal in generating positive affect at work.

Mood-related Outcomes of Proactivity

Drawing upon self-determination theory, scholars have argued that proactivity, given its discretionary element, might generate activated positive affect via the satisfaction of the basic needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. According to Self-Determination Theory, individuals experience intrinsic motivation whenever they are able to meet their need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Self-determination theory postulates that when the three basic psychological needs are satisfied, individuals experience a sense of well-being and of vitality. Vitality, in particular, is generally referred to as a state of alertness and aliveness, characterized by high levels of activated positive affect (e.g., happiness, enthusiasm) (Ryan & Frederick, 1997). In line with Strauss and Parker (2014), we argue that engaging in proactive behavior could generate positive affective experiences via the satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs.

First, being proactive could facilitate the experience of competence by offering opportunities to engage in activities arguably more challenging than one's daily core-tasks (Strauss & Parker, 2014). Previous research seems to concur with these considerations: Fay and Sonnentag (2012) showed that when people have a desire to experience competence at work, they are more likely to engage in proactive behavior, providing indirect support to the idea that proactivity can serve as a means to satisfy one's need for competence. Second, proactivity is by definition self-initiated: rather than being instructed by someone else, employees spontaneously decide when and how to behave proactively. This self-initiated behavior is, therefore, likely to nurture an individual's need for autonomy. Finally, even though less intuitively, proactive behavior could satisfy a person's need for relatedness (Strauss & Parker, 2014). For example, certain subsets of proactivity (e.g., proactively helping others, feedback-seeking) can help shape interpersonal relationships and facilitate social interactions that fulfill the need to feel connected to others (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Spitzmuller & Van Dyne, 2013). Therefore, behaving proactively at work could generate positive affective experiences, via the satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs.

Considering Contingencies in the Proactivity – Affective Outcomes Link

It should be acknowledged that certain situational contingencies might moderate the positive effects of proactivity on vitality (by thwarting needs satisfaction) and, potentially, elicit negative affective experiences. In fact, being proactive can sometimes mean challenging the status quo (Crant, 2000). Inevitably, engaging in such behavior might not always be well-received by peers and supervisors, thus potentially exposing proactive employees to criticism and blaming. According to Vecchio (1995) comments perceived as threatening to a person's social standing or self-concept can generate feelings of depression, anger, or resentment. For instance, an employee's attempt to voice a concern during a team meeting could be interpreted by others as irrelevant or even disruptive to the discussion, resulting in criticism and reprimands. Indeed, positive organizational climate and supervisory support are likely to minimize the occurrence of negative affective experiences as a result of proactive behaviors. Employees who are well-supported by managers and colleagues are less likely to experience unpleasant consequences for their proactive behavior (Blake & Mouton, 1985; Edmondson, 1999; Shalley & Gilson, 2004).

As previously mentioned, in the case of employee voice it is also worth considering that the very emotions that promote speaking up and voicing one's opinions (e.g., anger, frustration) often result in less effective voice, further increasing the chances of a negative reception from others. In this respect, emotional intelligence plays a vital role (Grant, 2008). Employees that possess the ability to manage successfully their emotions are less likely to engage in "passionate" and impulsive proactive behaviors (Kunnamatt, 2004). Skillful emotional regulation should increase the likelihood that others will view the behavior in a favorable manner. Evidence corroborates these speculations by showing that emotional regulation knowledge moderates the impact of employee voice on performance evaluations: employees who regulate their emotions effectively tend to receive greater performance ratings when they engage in proactive voice (Grant, 2008). Arguably, positive evaluations from supervisors and peers may, in turn, generate feelings of pride, satisfaction, and contentment.

Another important factor to consider when examining the affective consequences of proactive behavior is one's disposition to be proactive. Employees who are not dispositionally inclined to be proactive should be more susceptible to experiencing strain, as it involves to effortfully inhibiting habitual behavior (Baumeister, 2002; Bolino et al., 2010). Passive and reactive individuals should require greater effort to be proactive, since taking charge requires them to break a habit. In addition, it is arguably more probable that their motivations to be proactive are extrinsic, given that people low in proactive personality should be less likely to intrinsically enjoy the proactive process and have flow experiences.

Other relevant aspects to take into consideration are employees' motivations to be proactive. Although proactive behavior is by definition self-initiated and self-directed, it is not necessarily intrinsically motivated (i.e., performed for its own sake). Scholars have recognized that organizations sometimes expect employees to behave proactively and use their initiative (Bolino, et al., 2010). This type of environment can create extrinsic reasons to engage in proactive behavior. For example, some individuals might engage in proactive behavior as a means to "stick out from the crowd" and increase their likelihood to be promoted. Similarly, downsizing initiatives may also prompt people to engage in extrinsically motivated proactivity in order to demonstrate that they are outstanding employees worth retaining (Bolino, Klotz, Turnley, & Harvey, 2012; Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004). Arguably, in light of the 2008 financial crisis, these sort of scenarios are becoming increasingly common in organizations (Heyes, 2011). Under these circumstances, predicting the affective consequences of proactivity becomes more complex: on the one hand, engaging in proactive behavior with the sole aim of impressing others could generate more stress and anxiety. On the other, achieving one's extrinsic goals could indeed elicit positive affective experiences.

Finally, although most studies considered the affect-proactivity relationship from a purely individual perspective, other individuals who are involved in the proactive issue may play a crucial role, too. For instance, Grant, Parker, and Collins (2009) explored how supervisors react to employees' proactivity. Drawing upon attribution theory, the authors hypothesized that supervisors are more likely to give credit for proactive behaviors to employees with prosocial values. In line with their predictions, findings showed that proactivity is more likely to contribute to higher performance evaluations from supervisors when employees have low negative affect and express strong prosocial values. We encourage future research on this reversed link of proactivity and affective experience in organizations.

Practical Implications of the Role of Affect for Proactivity

The above considerations on affect offer a number of implications for managers and practitioners. Given the importance of proactive behavior, organizations should indeed aim to develop interventions to encourage proactivity among their workforce (Searle, 2008). One of the main propositions of this chapter is that activated positive affect (e.g., feeling enthusiastic) is perhaps the most desirable affective experience to promote proactivity in the workplace. Organizations who wish to encourage proactivity should, therefore, try to cultivate and maintain high levels of activated positive affect in the workplace. In this respect, managers play a very important role indeed. Previous research suggests that work design and organizational climate can heavily influence employees' feelings. Leadership style can also enormously affect how individuals feel at work (Brief & Weiss, 2002).

Research on the related concept of engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008) has offered a number of viable options for organizations wishing to promote activated positive affect in their environment. For example, in a diary-study with service employees, Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli (2009) found that daily team climate was associated with higher levels of individual employee engagement on the same day. Similarly, organizations should pay attention to the physical aspects of the job: good technological equipment and technical services can promote engagement amongst the workforce (Salanova, Agut, & Peiró, 2005).

Although demanding work conditions can indeed cause stress, they can also minimize feelings of monotony and provide opportunities for personal achievement and growth (Cavanaugh et al., 2000). For instance, high levels of time pressure and workload, so-called “challenge stressors” (LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005), can create a sense of responsibility and challenge for employees, thus increasing their engagement at work. Under these conditions, employees are more likely to feel absorbed, motivated, and enthused in their work (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Individuals who feel engaged in their work will then be more prone to be proactive: in a cross-national study, Salanova & Schaufeli (2008) showed that engagement fully mediated the impact of job resources on proactive behavior, suggesting that job resources per se do not increase proactivity. Rather, employees provided with sufficient resources (e.g., job control and autonomy) are more likely to feel vigorous and dedicated at work, which in turns promotes the pursuit of proactive goals.

In our review, we also considered how proactivity can, in turn, generate affective experiences. From a managerial perspective, we suggest redesigning enriched jobs (e.g., Parker, 2014) to provide employees with sufficient autonomy to behave proactively. A sufficient degree of autonomy in one’s work is, in fact, a rather powerful antecedent as well as an essential prerequisite for proactivity (Parker & Wall, 1998). Having the opportunity to be proactive at work can instill a sense of self-determination which is associated with the experience of activated positive affect (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In a similar vein, to avoid triggering a conservation of resources mechanism, managers should strive to be responsive to their employees’ proactivity, even when it turns out not to be successful (Bolino et al., 2010; Hobfoll, 1989). Reprimands and blaming can generate negative feelings (e.g., depression, anxiety), which may discourage future efforts to pursue proactive goals (Ball & Sims, 1991). When it comes to proactivity, encouragement from the social environment at work may likely boost employees’ self-efficacy beliefs, hence promoting future proactive behaviors at work.

Future Research Directions on Affect and Proactivity

Throughout this chapter, we raised a number of considerations regarding the interplay between affective experiences and proactivity that pave the way for

future research. We have carefully reviewed and integrated previous research on how dispositional affect, moods, and emotions can promote, sustain or derail the pursuit of proactive goals, as well as offered novel considerations into affective outcomes of proactivity at work. In this section, we emphasize four main avenues for future research on affect and proactivity.

Overcoming Methodological Challenges of Investigating Affect and Proactivity

From a methodological perspective, it should be acknowledged that research considering the interplay between affect and proactivity is mostly correlational in nature (e.g., Janssen, 2004). However, we have observed a surge in longitudinal studies (for instance, Bindl et al., 2012; Bledow, Rosing, & Frese, 2013; Madrid et al., 2014; see Table 13.1). Diary studies (Bolger & Laurenceau, 2013), in particular, can turn out to be particularly useful to explore the underlying processes and mechanisms regulating the affect-proactivity relationship, given affective experiences often occur on a momentary basis. Researchers should investigate the type of emotional reactions people experience when engaging in proactivity at work, as well as the crucial factors that mitigate or exacerbate such reactions. Longitudinal studies could allow studying proactivity from an episodic approach and examine possible positive/negative spirals between affect and proactivity (Fredrickson, 1998). For example, it would be interesting to explore if successful proactive behaviors are associated with the experience of pride and contentment, and whether, in turn, these emotions encourage further proactivity. In this regard, designs that allow measuring affective experiences multiple times a day (e.g., before work, at work, and after work) could help understand the causal links between affect and proactive behavior. One important challenge to consider in daily diaries is the temporal dimension of proactivity: owing to its regulatory nature, proactivity can be considered a process involving several stages (Bindl et al., 2012). As a result, capturing emotions and moods in concomitance with proactivity represents a challenging task. As an illustration, implementing a new work procedure is arguably a time-demanding proactive goal that may take days, weeks or even months to be eventually achieved. It is plausible to believe that the striving aspects of such goal would be associated with different emotional reactions and moods compared to the feelings experienced once the final goal is achieved. One way of tackling this issue would be to utilize the day reconstruction method (Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz, & Stone, 2004): this research technique would allow researchers to study the affect-proactivity relationship using an episodic approach and better understand the affective antecedents and outcomes of proactive behavior. In addition, multi-wave longitudinal studies featuring weekly or monthly measurements would be appropriate for the study of dispositional affective tendencies and more stable moods in relation to proactivity. Given that proactivity is a

self-initiated and self-directed behavior, difficult to artificially manipulate in a controlled setting, experimental designs are less viable option to establish causal links with affect. In sum, longitudinal designs represent, in our view, a viable way to explore the short vs long-term interplay between affect and proactivity, which could potentially address several limitations of the existing research on the topic (mainly correlational in nature).

Investigating the Role of Emotions for Proactivity

Relatedly, only scarce research has considered how discrete emotions, which are shorter-lasting and more intense than moods and trait affectivity, shape proactivity. In this vein, most of the research we reviewed on affect and proactivity has focused on investigating either moods, e.g., Madrid, et al., 2014) and or trait affectivity (e.g., Den Hartog & Belschak, 2007). However, emotions are likely to operate differently to moods and trait affectivity: engaging in proactive behavior at work can provoke several different emotional reactions. For instance, attempting to pursue a difficult proactive goal could generate feelings of anxiety or discouragement, especially when proactive behavior is not welcomed by the organization (Frese & Fay, 2001). According to Carver and Scheier (1990), unsatisfactory progress towards a goal can generate negative emotional reactions, which ultimately lead to abandoning the goal. In a related vein, further work is required to understand what emotional reactions are associated with different stages of proactive regulation (Parker et al., 2010). For instance, the goal-generation component of proactivity might be more associated with the experience of activated positive affect, i.e., individuals who envision a different future might feel happy and optimistic more generally, whereas the goal-striving components could provide individuals with a “reality check” of their actions, i.e., unexpected obstacles form the environment, negative reactions from others to one’s initiative, and so forth, likely eliciting negative feelings in the process.

Our differentiation between the influence of positive and negative affect also raises the question of whether there are interactive effects between positive and negative affective experiences in the context of proactivity at work. For instance, future research could explore how positive momentary affective experiences relate to proactivity for people who are high vs low in negative trait affectivity. It might be that people that have a dispositional inclination to experience positive affect are more likely to feel energized and excited when engaging in proactivity in the workplace.

Exploring a Broader Set of Proactive behaviors in Relation to Affect.

Proactivity at work is characterized by a diverse array of behaviors that have been shown to be essential in different areas. Due to this multi-faceted nature,

research on proactive behavior has failed to emerge as an integrated stream (Crant, 2000; Parker & Collins, 2010). Inevitably the construct proliferation and lack of integration also applies to research on affect and proactivity: it is important to note that the overwhelming majority of papers reviewed refer to proactive work behavior (those behaviors aimed at changing the internal organizational environment) such as employee voice, individual innovation, and problem prevention (Parker & Collins, 2010). With the exception of job-crafting (Bakker et al., 2012) – a type of proactive person–environment fit behavior – and career initiative (Bindl et al., 2012) research considering the interplay between affect and other “higher order” types of proactivity (e.g., feedback inquiry, strategic scanning) is essentially non-existent to date. Unfortunately, we believe this limits the generalizability of our considerations in this chapter. For a more comprehensive understanding of the affect-proactivity relationship, future research should aim to consider a broader spectrum of proactive behaviors. Indeed, as we have observed throughout this chapter, different types of proactive behaviors are likely to influence and be influenced by emotions, moods, and trait affectivity in a different manner.

Investigating the Dynamic Relationship between Affect and Proactivity

Relatedly, rather than being considered as cause and effect, proactivity and affect might have a more dynamic interaction that deserves future investigation. In this context, Grant (2008) and Grant and Ashford (2008) argued that “proactive behaviors are not isolated incidents that occur at one point in time. Rather, they are informed, cultivated, and constrained by past experiences, successes, and setbacks” (p. 25). From an interactionist perspective, engaging in proactive behavior may have an effect on our self-perceptions. From a broaden-and-build perspective, experiencing vitality and activated positive emotions (e.g., enthusiasm) encourages people to broaden their awareness and engage in exploratory actions. Over the course of time, this process helps to create skills and resources that enhance a person’s well-being. In turn, increased well-being leads to more positive emotions, thus creating an upward positive spiral (Fredrickson, 2001; Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005).

For example, proactive actions resulting in successful outcomes may generate feelings of enthusiasm and self-confidence. In turn, this could encourage individuals to be proactive again in the future. On the contrary, unsuccessful attempts to be proactive (e.g., engaging in an initiative poorly appreciated by one’s coworkers) may weaken a person’s self-efficacy and generate negative affective experiences (Lindsley, Brass, & Thomas, 1995).

Finally, it would be interesting to explore the longer term consequences of proactivity on affect. Empirical evidence suggests that individuals with a proactive personality are more likely to feel satisfied with their career and their life

in general (Seibert, 1999; Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001). In a three-wave longitudinal study, Greguras and Diefendorff (2010) found that proactive individuals were more likely to attain their self-set goals and experience feelings of self-determination, which in turn predicted greater employee life satisfaction. This is because experiencing positive emotions frequently increases satisfaction with one's life by building resilience (Cohn, Fredrickson, Brown, Mikels, & Conway, 2009). Therefore, the positive outcomes of proactivity on affect could be more far-reaching than previously thought. We contend that future research should aim to investigate these longer-term effects and identify possible mediators and moderators of this relationship.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have considered an affect-based perspective on proactivity in the workplace. We elaborated on the crucial role that affective experiences play in shaping and directing proactive behaviors. Our review suggests that, although activated positive affect seems to be the most consistent driver of proactivity, negative affective experiences can also play an important role in promoting versus derailing forms of proactive behavior at work. Additionally, our review is one of the first to elaborate on the affective consequences of proactivity. We proposed that owing to its self-initiated and self-directed nature, proactive behavior may generate strong feelings in employees, arguably more so than when performing repetitive core tasks. In particular, pursuing and achieving proactive goals may enhance feelings of self-determination, which potentially increases the frequency of positive moods and even changes personal dispositions to experience positive affect, in the long-run. Most importantly, we hope that this chapter paves the way for the future research in the field.

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PART III

**Work and Organizational
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14

WORK DESIGN AND PROACTIVITY

Sandra Ohly and Antje Schmitt

Work design is described as “how jobs, tasks, and roles are structured, enacted, and modified, as well as the impact of these structures, enactments, and modifications on individual, group, and organizational outcomes.” (Grant & Parker, 2009, page 319). While previous research has shown that the way jobs, tasks, and roles are designed affects important outcomes such as performance and well-being, Grant and Parker (2009) argued that because of changes in the nature of work from delivery of goods to the delivery of services and knowledge work, more research is needed on how work design affects proactivity. The aim of this chapter is to review recent research on work design and proactivity, with a focus on the work characteristics that have been linked to proactivity, on the boundary conditions, and on the underlying mechanisms. In the second part of the chapter, we identify the gaps in previous research by discussing work characteristics and mechanisms that have not received sufficient attention. An overview of the concepts and topics in this chapter is depicted in Figure 14.1.

Development of Work Design Theories

The job characteristics model (JCM) (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) provides a basis for theoretical models of work design. According to this model, job autonomy, feedback, task significance, task variety, and task identity lead to critical psychological states (felt responsibility, knowledge of results, and experienced meaningfulness), which in turn should lead to outcomes such as job satisfaction, task performance, and intrinsic motivation. Because of its importance in modern workplaces, proactivity should be examined as an additional outcome in research on work design. Parker, Wall, and Cordery (2001) noted that because of increasing uncertainty of how to achieve organizational goals, proactivity is oftentimes required.

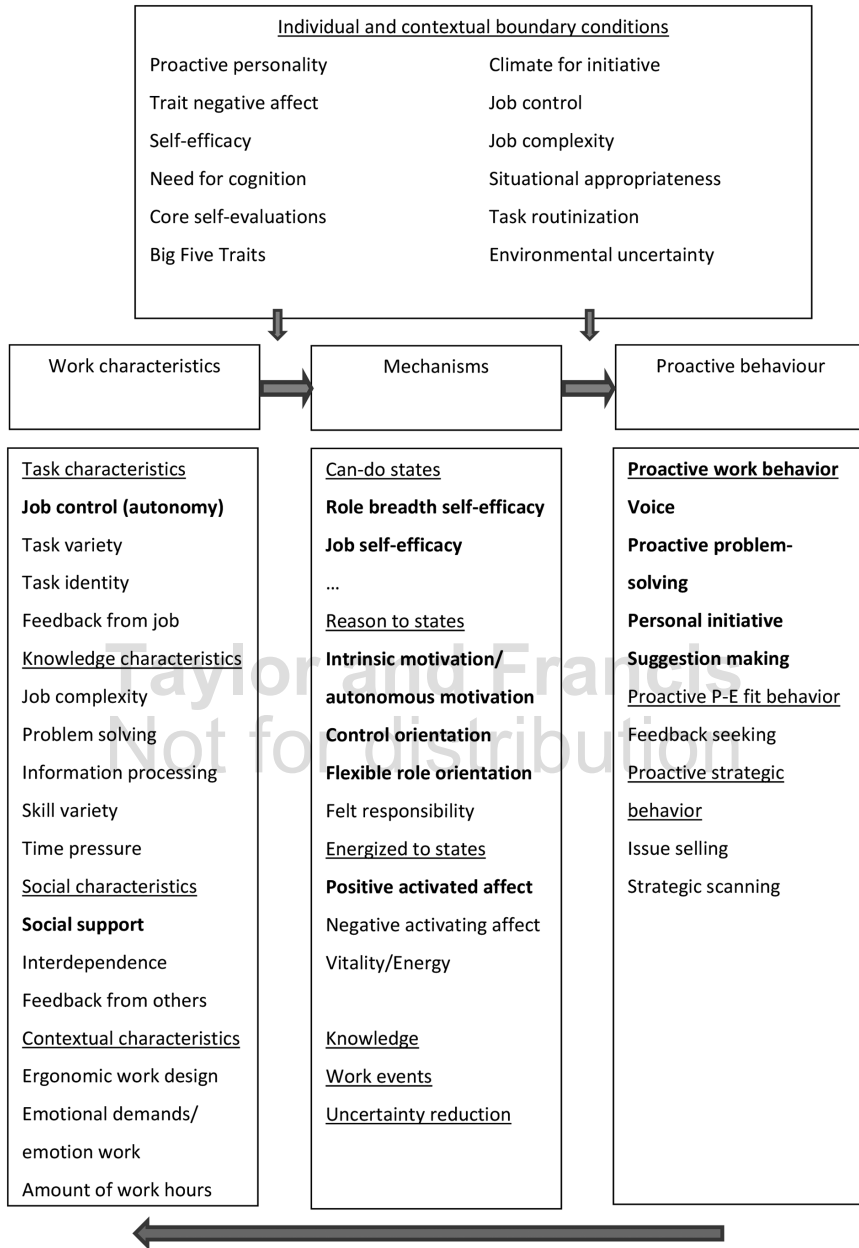


FIGURE 14.1 Summary of research findings.

Note: Concepts in bold generally supported in work design–proactivity research.

The five job characteristics are considered too narrow to describe all jobs (Parker & Wall, 1998; Parker et al., 2001). Accordingly, additional work characteristics have later been added to the five core job characteristics to describe work more fully (see Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007; Parker et al., 2001) and to be able to predict proactive behavior (Parker, Turner, & Williams, 2006; Parker & Wall, 1998; Parker et al., 2001). Additional work characteristics include (among others) knowledge motivation characteristics such as job complexity, social characteristics such as social support and interdependence, contextual characteristics such as the ergonomic design of a system (Humphrey et al., 2007; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006), and emotional demands or characteristics referring to emotion work. Emotion work requires job incumbents to regulate their emotions and to display organizationally desired emotions in work interactions, particularly in service jobs (emotional labor; Parker & Ohly, 2007; Zapf, 2002). In a very broad sense, proactive behavior might be affected by the degree of accountability, ambiguity and autonomy (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Thus, work characteristics that can be linked to accountability, ambiguity and autonomy might also be worth considering.

Parker and colleagues (2010; 2006) also suggested additional mechanisms on how work characteristics influence proactive behavior. The critical psychological states in the JCM are unlikely to provide an adequate prediction of proactive behavior because they focus upon simply motivating an individual to work harder rather than to initiate changes (Parker et al., 2006). Beyond increasing effort, work design is also likely to affect additional motivational processes such as goal setting and goal striving (Parker & Ohly, 2008). Beyond this motivational effect, work design can affect work behavior by allowing quicker response times or increasing employees' knowledge about their job. A further development has been the recognition that contextual characteristics, such as environmental uncertainty, or individual characteristics such as proactive personality, are likely to affect the effectiveness of work design (Parker & Turner, 2002; Parker et al., 2001) and thus need to be considered in research on work design. Below we will review recent empirical research on work characteristics and proactivity, including mechanisms and contingencies (boundary conditions).

Review

Main Effects of Work Characteristics on Proactivity

Of the work characteristics, job control (also called job autonomy), the degree to which an individual is free to control the schedule, timing or methods of work, has received the most attention. Theoretical models predict that high job control/autonomy will lead to employees' engagement in proactive behaviors because they feel responsible for change, feel in control of the situation and feel efficacious (see below for more details; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker et al., 2006).

Rigorous research using longitudinal designs and/or multi-source data (interviewer or supervisor ratings) has linked job control/autonomy to different forms of proactivity (Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2007; Parker et al., 2006), including proactive work behavior and proactive career-related behavior (Parker & Collins, 2010). The relationship between job control/autonomy and proactivity was also supported in a recent meta-analysis (Tornau & Frese, 2013).

For job complexity, such an integration is still lacking, but it has been linked to different forms of proactive behavior, including personal initiative, suggestion-making and innovative behavior (Frese & Fay, 2001; Frese et al., 2007; Ohly, Sonnentag, & Pluntke, 2006). Job complexity – the extent to which a job is multifaceted and difficult to perform – promotes learning and skill development, an active orientation to life, and a higher degree of intellectual flexibility (Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996) and allows employees to experiment with working methods (Frese, Teng, & Wijnen, 1999). Job complexity also creates an ambiguity about the best strategies to accomplish tasks. Grant and Ashford (2008) argued that situational ambiguity is one of the driving forces of proactive behavior. When encountering ambiguity, individuals will be motivated to reduce it by showing a variety of proactive behaviors, including feedback seeking and negotiating job changes. These behaviors will reduce ambiguity by providing information and enabling employees to understand and influence their environment (Grant & Ashford, 2008).

The meta-analysis by Tornau and Frese (2013) provides evidence for a generalized relationship between social support and proactive behavior. This is based on the rationale that social support activates and encourages proactive behavior, although some previous studies failed to find this effect (supportive supervision; Parker et al., 2006) or even found a negative relationship with the number of suggestions as an indicator of proactive behavior (Ohly et al., 2006). Specifically, supervisor support was expected to enhance proactive behavior because it signals that this behavior is valued and that supervisors grant autonomy for employees to act. However, supervisors and colleagues might also feel threatened by proactive behaviors that aim at changing the status quo (Grant, 2013; Janssen, 2001). As a consequence, the nature of the relationship between social support and proactive behavior might depend on boundary conditions, such as the content of the suggestion, situational circumstances (Detert & Edmondson, 2011), or the content of support and the attachment style of the employee (Wu & Parker, 2014) (see boundary conditions below). Furthermore, the way the idea is voiced might also influence a supervisor's reaction and the resultant support for the idea (McClellan, Burris, & Detert, 2012; Wu & Parker, 2014).

Taken together, the relationship between support and proactive behavior is complex and seems to depend on multiple factors. We are not aware of studies linking additional work characteristics such as contextual characteristics, the requirement of emotion work or electronic performance monitoring to proactive behavior.

Mediating Mechanisms in the Relationship between Work Characteristics and Proactivity

As based on the JCM (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), the literature on work design emphasizes that certain job characteristics (e.g., autonomy, task significance, and feedback) do not directly affect outcomes such as work motivation or work effectiveness, but largely operate via critical psychological states. Similarly, current models of proactivity conceptualize work characteristics as distal antecedents that are linked to proactivity through more proximal cognitive, affective, and motivational states (cf. Bindl & Parker, 2010; Fay & Frese, 2001; Frese & Fay, 2001; Parker et al., 2006). Gaining knowledge on the underlying processes that link work characteristics with proactive work behavior is especially useful for better understanding of the phenomenon of proactive behavior and thus necessary for extending theory development. In addition, gaining insight into the distal and proximal antecedents of proactivity is important for drawing practical implications on how to promote proactivity at work.

Proactive Motivational States as Proximal Antecedents of Proactivity

In their model of proactive motivation, Parker and colleagues (2010) conceptualize proactivity as a goal-driven process that consists of two main mechanisms. First, people need to generate proactive goals by anticipating future outcomes (goal generation). Second, they need to strive to achieve these goals through actively mobilizing behavior, effort, and persistence. In line with some previous research (e.g., Frese & Fay, 2001; Parker et al., 2006), the model holds that this goal-driven process is indirectly determined by distal contextual variables such as features of work design and work characteristics that take effect through the impact of more proximal motivational processes: the proactive motivational states of *can do*, *reason to*, and *energized to*. Thus, employees might generate and pursue proactive goals if the characteristics of the job trigger their belief in being successful when engaging in proactive behavior (*can do*), their level of activation and positive affect (*energized to*), and whether or not the individual has good reason or the job environment offers good reason to engage in proactive behavior (*reason to*).

Some recent studies have investigated the link between work characteristics, proactive states, and proactivity (cf. Axtell & Parker, 2003; Frese et al., 2007; Parker et al., 2006; Speier & Frese, 1997). The *can do* motivational states that have so far been investigated are self-efficacy, defined as the belief in one's ability to successfully perform certain tasks, and the domain-specific concept of role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE) (e.g., a person's perceived capability in successfully performing proactive tasks that go beyond required demands and traditional boundaries) (Parker, 1998). Jobs high in control and complexity have shown

to foster employee self-efficacy and RBSE, which in turn influence proactive work behavior (cf. Axtell & Parker, 2003; Parker et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2006; Parker & Wall, 1998). For instance, in their longitudinal study based on a sample of 94 employees and a time period of 18 months, Axtell and Parker (2003) found that RBSE could be enhanced by an organizational intervention that promoted employees' task control. In a similar vein, based on a longitudinal sample, Parker (2006) found a positive lagged effect of perceived job autonomy on RBSE and hence proactive work behavior.

Being proactive by pursuing self-set goals, taking initiative, and making suggestions further implies that a person is driven by an internal strength and takes responsibility for this behavior. The research on indicators of this *reason to* motivation is tied to the literature on self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and the literature on utility judgments as referred to in expectancy theory (Parker et al., 2010; Vroom, 1964). As based on self-determination theory, different types of autonomous motivation drive employees' proactive behaviors. Intrinsic motivation in terms of a person's desire for the experience of flow may trigger the enactment of more challenging tasks and goals. Further, being autonomously motivated in terms of integrating proactivity into one's personal self and strongly identifying with this behavior may be an important antecedent of proactivity at work (Bindl & Parker, 2010; Parker et al., 2010; Strauss & Parker, 2014). In addition, empirical evidence based on longitudinal study designs (Frese et al., 2007; Parker et al., 2006) indicates that enriched jobs in terms of a high job autonomy and complexity affect indicators of *reason to* motivational states, such as control orientation (i.e., the desire to control and to take responsibility for one's environment) (Frese & Fay, 2001; Frese et al., 2007) and people's judgments of impact and meaningfulness of their work (Parker et al., 2010). These motivational states have been shown to predict proactive work behavior (Frese et al., 2007; Fuller, Marler, & Hester, 2006; Parker et al., 2006; Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997).

In terms of feeling *energized to*, to show proactive behavior, extant research indicated that positive activating affect (e.g., feeling enthusiastic, active, proud) in contrast to positive deactivating affect (e.g., feeling content, relaxed) may act as an important predictor of proactive work behavior (Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2009; Warr, Bindl, Parker, & Inceoglu, 2014). As an explanation, a high level of activation broadens people's thinking and acting, facilitates the initiation of intended action, may foster approach-related behavior (Fredrickson, 2004; Seo, Barrett, & Bartunek, 2004; Warr et al., 2014), and provides the energy and attention to invest effort into proactivity (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2009; Sonnentag, 2003). Deactivating affective states do not provide the energetical resources necessary for actively engaging with and investing resources into one's environment.

For negative affect, the relationship with proactive behaviors is more complex (cf. Bindl & Parker, 2010; Grant, 2013). Depending on the situation and on the distinct affective state experienced, negative affect can both suppress and

activate self-starting and change-oriented behavior. According to a cognitive-energetical or resource depletion approach (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007; Hobfoll, 1989; Hockey, 1993), the experience of negative events and emotions is energy-consuming and might deplete employees' motivational resources (Sonnetag & Frese, 2012; Zohar, Tzischinski, & Epstein, 2003). Consequently, when motivational resources are depleted, there are fewer resources available that could be invested into effortful proactive behaviors (Bolino, Valcea, & Harvey, 2010; Hockey, 1993; Parker, Johnson, Collins, & Hong, 2013).

However, as based on a control-theoretical perspective (Carver, 2004; Carver & Scheier, 1982), negative affect may also signal a discrepancy between an actual situation and a desired situation, thereby stimulating individuals to engage in self-initiated and change-oriented behavior in order to reduce this perceived discrepancy (Fay & Sonnetag, 2002). Existing research on the link between negative affect and proactivity has thus provided inconsistent results (Bindl & Parker, 2010).

Interestingly, to date, there are no empirical studies available testing the complete linkage between work characteristics as distant antecedents and proactivity through more proximal affective and energizing states. Indirect evidence for this link stems from research on the affective-motivational state of work engagement (i.e., feeling vigorous and dedicated) (Sonnetag, 2003) which was found to mediate the relationship between the job resources of job control, feedback, and task variety and proactivity in two independent national samples (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008). Saavedra and Kwun (2000) tested the relationships between the five characteristics from the job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) with positive and negative affective states based on a heterogeneous sample of 370 US managers from 26 organizations. The findings revealed that those job characteristics providing a motivating potential are also positively related to employees' emotional work experiences. Job autonomy and task significance turned out to be the most important emotion-influencing characteristics. The higher the level of task significance and autonomy, the more positive activating affect (e.g., enthusiasm) was reported by employees. A strong task identity and feedback were negatively related to negative activated affect (e.g., nervousness). Interestingly, the experience of skill variety was positively related to negative activated affect. The authors hypothesized that skill variety could be related to performance distress especially for those employees low in focusing on professional development and growth, and thus trigger negative activating mood states. Yet, linking the findings on job characteristics and affective states by Saavedra and Kwun (2000) to the enactment of proactive work behavior is still missing.

In summary, theoretical models highlight the role of cognitive, motivational, and affective states as proximal mechanisms linking more distal work characteristics with proactive work behavior (Parker et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2006). However, only a few studies have systematically investigated these mediating mechanisms. There is compelling evidence for *can do* proactive motivational

states (e.g., self-efficacy, RBSE) and some evidence for *reason to* indicators (e.g., aspirations for control and responsibility, autonomous motivation, flexible role orientation) and *energized to* indicators (e.g., positive activating affect) as mediators. However, there is a lack of studies that study the various mechanisms of proactive motivational states simultaneously and that investigate the interplay of different motives that may trigger proactive work behavior. Further, the range of work characteristics examined is limited to the more common and frequently studied features of job control/autonomy and job complexity.

Moderators

In order to better understand the relations between work characteristics and proactive work behavior, there is a need for research to investigate potential boundary conditions (Grant & Parker, 2009). For example, a study on suggestion-making showed that supervisor support was linked to more suggestion-making only when supervisors also had a favorable attitude towards the suggestion system (Deichmann, 2012).

One line of research has focused on the role of dispositional variables interacting with work characteristics in predicting proactive work behavior (Bindl & Parker, 2010; Fuller et al., 2006; Grant & Parker, 2009). This approach has sometimes been based on trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) stating that people tend to act in accordance with their disposition if this dispositional tendency is activated or triggered by the environment. Characteristics of one's job may interact with personality traits by providing cues that activate a person to engage in self-starting and proactive behavior.

One personality trait frequently studied in interacting with work characteristics is employees' proactive personality. This trait refers to the stable and cross-situational tendency to act proactively, impact one's environment, and show future-oriented behaviors (Bateman & Crant, 1993). In a study based on 268 production employees (Parker & Sprigg, 1999), participants high in proactive personality, compared to those low in proactive personality, were better able to cope with high job control and high work demands and showed low strain levels in enriched jobs. Further, a high level of job control was found to predict a proactive behavioral approach for employees high in proactive personality but not for those low in trait proactivity (Parker & Sprigg, 1999).

Following the approach by Martin and Wall (1989) in which cost responsibility was considered as a work characteristic shaping outcomes, Schmitt, Den Hartog, and Belschak (2015) focused on the feature of outcome responsibility (i.e., implying that employees' decisions at work have high material and/or non-material consequences) (see also research on accountability; Grant & Ashford, 2008). In line with a person-job fit approach, the authors hypothesized that whether or not the work characteristic of outcome responsibility is positively or negatively related to employees' emotional exhaustion depends on whether their general proactive behavioral style fits with this job demand. Employees with a

proactive behavioral style go beyond formal job requirements, they are forward thinking, anticipate what may come up to prevent problems in the future, and show effort and persistence in the face of obstacles and barriers (Crant, 2000; Frese & Fay, 2001; Frese, Fay, Hilburger, Leng, & Tag, 1997). The authors argued that due to these cognitive and behavioral abilities and preferences, employees high in proactivity respond positively to high outcome responsibility. In contrast, employees whose general proactive behavioral style makes them less able to manage the demands of high responsibility for outcomes and costs tend to feel psychologically drained when confronted with high responsibility. Proactivity was thus found to be a personal resource and boundary condition that determines whether employees' style of working fits with high demands of taking responsibility for outcomes.

Some extant studies have provided evidence for additional dispositional variables to interact with employees' work characteristics in predicting proactive work behavior. Examples for moderators that have been recently explored are dispositional self-efficacy, trait negative affect, and need for cognition (see Bindl & Parker, 2010). In their study based on a randomly selected German sample, Speier and Frese (1997) revealed that self-efficacy does not only act as a mediator but also moderates the relationship between work characteristics and proactivity. Being faced with high job control was especially predictive for proactivity in those employees low in general self-efficacy, whereas employees high in self-efficacy were less dependent on job control for engaging in proactive work behavior. This finding is based on the idea of compensatory resources and the substitution hypothesis (cf. Bindl & Parker, 2010; Hobfoll & Leiberhan, 1987; Schmitt, Zacher, & De Lange, 2013): Being provided with high control at work might substitute for employees' low levels of self-efficacy in predicting proactive work behavior. Job control seems to be especially important for employees low in self-efficacy in order to determine self-starting, future- and change-oriented behavior.

Further, grounded in a resource-based perspective (Hobfoll, 2001), in a more recent quasi-experimental study with junior doctors in an Australian hospital, Parker and colleagues (2013) investigated the role of structural support as a work characteristic and feature of relational work design for doctors' proactivity as one aspect of job performance. The authors found that promoting structural support offers different benefits for individuals depending on their level of resource loss in terms of their trait negative work affect. In line with a mechanism of resource accumulation, when structural support was provided those individuals experiencing lower levels of negative work affect, who did not experience a loss of resources, reported more proactive work behavior. For doctors high in trait negative affect, structural support was related to lower levels of role overload. Hence, these individuals seemed to use structural support to protect their personal resources against further resource loss (Parker et al., 2013).

In a multisource study based on a sample of 179 employees from the Netherlands, Wu et al. (2014) investigated the role of need for cognition (i.e., a person's

dispositional tendency to engage in thinking), interacting with work characteristics in predicting individual innovation as one specific form of proactive behavior. The authors based their hypotheses on a person–situation interactional approach by arguing that the personality trait of need for cognition becomes more predictive for individuals' efforts to develop and apply new ideas when individuals face lower levels of time pressure and job autonomy. Accordingly, the association between need for cognition and individual innovation was found to be strongest for employees low in job autonomy and time pressure, whereas, it was non-significant when these job features were reported to be high. Another recent study revealed that employees' social astuteness – in terms of recognizing the opportunity when a self-starting and proactive behavior is valued or positively evaluated – moderates the relationship between the organizational climate for initiative on employee personal initiative (Wihler, Blickle, Ellen, Hochwarter, & Ferris, 2014).

In summary, some personality and trait-like variables have been investigated as boundary conditions in the work characteristics – proactive work behavior relationship. The research on the moderating role of personality traits is based upon different theoretical frameworks (e.g., trait activation theory, person–situation interaction approach, resource-based theories), it does not follow a clear structured approach and partly appears to be more empirically driven.

Apart from personality and trait-like variables, the effects of work characteristics may vary depending on the situational and contextual features (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker & Turner, 2002). However, existing research on organizational or environmental boundary conditions is sparse. Environmental uncertainty – providing a source of perceived ambiguity – might not only be linked to proactivity by motivating employees to reduce this uncertainty (Parker & Turner, 2002). Rather, in addition to this main effect, environmental uncertainty possibly influences the degree to which work design features are more or less beneficial for proactivity to be shown. This assumption is based on some empirical evidence suggesting that an increase in job autonomy, for instance, is linked to a gain in work team performance when task uncertainty is high, whereas performance gains were found to be marginal under conditions of low team task uncertainty (Cordery, Morrison, Wright, & Wall, 2010). Similarly, being provided with high autonomy and support might be more important in order to engage in self-starting, future- and change-oriented behavior under conditions of high uncertainty (Parker & Turner, 2002). This assumption should be addressed by further research.

Future Research Directions

Future research is needed to more specifically investigate and extend recent theoretical models on work design and different forms of proactivity. Below, we summarize research that has recently been conducted and we provide some ideas for future research by considering mediational processes and further boundary conditions.

Different Forms of Proactive Behavior

Different forms of proactivity might be differentially affected by work characteristics. The research we reviewed above has mainly looked at proactive work behavior as an outcome (Parker & Collins, 2010). Although the similarities of all forms of proactive behavior have been stressed, little research has examined proactive P-E fit behavior or proactive strategic behavior in relation to work characteristics. Findings by Griffin, Parker, and Neal (2007) suggest that the different forms of proactive behaviors might be differentially affected by role ambiguity. In their study, role clarity (the opposite of role ambiguity) was positively related to proactive work behavior, not negatively as would be expected based on Grant and Ashford's (2008) theorizing.

The study by Frese and colleagues (2007) gives preliminary support to the notion that work characteristics also promote career-related proactivity as a form of proactive P-E fit behavior: Individuals in jobs high on autonomy and complexity will feel in control of the situation and strive to achieve jobs with even higher autonomy and complexity by showing initiative, leading to more job control and job complexity in the long term. Moreover, research suggests that proactive individuals value having challenging tasks and autonomy more than less proactive individuals (Ohly, Friebel, Heinz, Kulisa, & Plücker, 2013). These differences in work values might determine if individuals show career-related proactivity to attain more autonomy and complexity. Future research will need to assess the specific proactive behaviors that individuals show as a result of their work and their values and aspirations to provide a comprehensive picture.

Moreover, proactive strategic behaviors need to be examined in relation to work characteristics. Dutton and Ashford (1993) hypothesize that proactive strategic behavior might be specifically facilitated by providing employees with the freedom and autonomy to create networks in order to keep themselves informed about the organization, the relevant trends, and developments. Social work characteristics such as networking and building interactions outside the organization (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) might be specifically relevant to acquire and extend employees' strategic and relational knowledge necessary to show proactive strategic behavior (e.g., issue selling; identifying and communicating ways in how the organization can adapt to environmental challenges) (Parker & Collins, 2010).

Additional Work Characteristics

While research has accumulated on some work characteristics such as job control/autonomy and how they might affect proactive behavior, less is known about the additional work characteristics proposed by Martin and Wall (1989) such as responsibility for outcomes and costs (see Schmitt et al., 2015) or by

Morgeson and colleagues (2006) such as knowledge characteristics and social characteristics. Grant and Ashford's (2008) theorizing about accountability, uncertainty, and autonomy might help to identify additional work characteristics that might affect proactivity. Accountability refers to "circumstances in which others expect employees to justify and explain their thoughts, emotions and behaviors" (p. 14). Grant and Ashford (2008) argue that accountability increases proactive behavior because it decreases perceived image costs and increases perceived image benefits of proactive behavior. Accountability also leads to the perception that one is responsible for one's action which has been linked to proactive behavior in previous research (felt responsibility; Fuller et al., 2006). In other words, when an employee is held accountable for actions, he or she has more to gain and less to lose by being proactive. Accountability is high in interdependent team work, but research suggests that interdependence needs to be matched by other work characteristics such as autonomy (Parker, Andrej, & Li, 2014). This suggests that work characteristics synergistically create accountability and that proactive behavior is shown when the social work characteristic of interdependence combines with other characteristics to create accountability. Yet, in some situations, high interdependence might limit or suppress proactive behaviors as employees perceive their opportunities to actively control the work situation to be low (Berg, Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2010; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) or because employees are worried that their self-initiated actions will have adverse effects on others. Thus, it remains currently unclear which work characteristics will enhance accountability.

In addition, the uncertainty created through unclear job or role prescriptions might promote proactive behavior because individuals are motivated to reduce uncertainty. Uncertainty is high in knowledge-intensive work characterized by high job complexity, problem-solving demands or information processing. As noted above, additional research is needed to link job complexity and other knowledge characteristics to proactive behavior, and examine the underlying mechanisms.

Integration of Research on Work-Life Balance and Well-Being

The model by Parker, Bindl, and Strauss (2010) might also serve to identify additional work characteristics promoting proactive behavior because they affect the proposed mechanisms of *reason to*, *energized to*, and *can do*. For example, time pressure, long work hours, and complex decision-making may deplete mental resources and create a feeling of fatigue. This, in turn, affects the *energized to* state and thus reduces proactive behavior. This observation calls for more integration of research on work-life balance, well-being, and proactivity (see Sonnentag, 2003 as an example; see Chapter 13 of this book) to determine when employees have the time and energy available to show proactive behavior.

Methodological Issues and Issues of State vs Trait

Interestingly, while certain work characteristics such as time pressure might be depleting and thereby tend to reduce energy-consuming behaviors such as proactivity (Bolino et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2013), the opposite effects have also been shown (Fay & Sonnentag, 2002; Ohly & Fritz, 2010). Thus, it is an open research question which effect will prevail, and if the lack of energy can be compensated when an employee feels responsible or sees a need to act. This question might also depend on the timing and duration of work characteristics such as time pressure. Short-term (varying from day to day or week to week) and long-term time pressure have differential effects (Ohly & Fritz, 2010; Schmitt, Ohly, & Göritz, 2013). The time lags of empirical studies need to be based on sound theorizing about the time frames that a phenomenon needs to unfold. For example, while job crafting (see Chapter 4 of this book) might be accomplished by taking on additional tasks or renegotiating the boundaries of one's own role, it is questionable if daily or weekly changes in tasks map the theoretical construct. By considering the time perspective and level of measurement (daily, monthly, cross-sectional), researchers can test the homology assumption and investigate theoretical models at different levels of analysis (Chen, Bliese, & Mathieu, 2005; Vancouver, 1997). Diary studies on how work characteristics are reflected in the daily or weekly activities of workers might be useful to increase our understanding of the micro-design of jobs, including the daily work tasks (Bakker, 2014; Daniels, Wimalasiri, Beesley, & Cheyne, 2012; Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012), and to investigate how the short-term changes in work characteristics accumulate over time and affect employees' proactivity (Daniels et al., 2012; Fay & Sonnentag, 2010; Tennen, Affleck, Coyne, Larsen, & DeLongis, 2006).

The study by Frese and colleagues (2007) and research on job crafting points to the fact that work design and proactivity might be reciprocally related. However, due to the methodological weaknesses and cross-sectional nature of most studies, this reciprocal nature has not adequately been captured in previous research. Furthermore, previous research might have underestimated the size of the effect of interventions because they take some time to unfold (Parker et al., 2006). Thus, there is a need for more longitudinal research on proactivity and work design that investigates longer periods than days or weeks, specifically with regard to testing the mediating mechanisms and processes underlying these relationships. With longitudinal study designs, the potential long-term effects of work characteristics on personality variables and more stable individual factors like cognitive skills, abilities, and competencies – which in turn predict proactivity – can be investigated (Kohn & Schooler, 1982; Kulik, Oldham, & Hackman, 1987)

Moreover, previous research has been somewhat limited in that it has largely been focused on assuming and testing linear relationships between features of

work design and outcomes such as proactivity (Humphrey et al., 2007). The effects of work characteristics on employee proactivity might increase up to a certain point. At higher levels beyond this point, certain work characteristics (e.g., responsibility, complexity) might not necessarily be advantageous. Future research is thus necessary to consider and investigate potential curvilinear relations (see Janssen, 2001; Xie & Johns, 1995) to advance our knowledge on work design–proactivity relationships.

Future Research on Mediating Mechanisms in the Relationship between Work Characteristics and Proactivity

The model of proactive motivational states provides a useful theoretical framework for testing mediating variables that might link work characteristics as distal antecedents with proactive goal generation and striving (Parker et al., 2010). So far, research on the empirical evaluation of the entire mediating process as suggested by this model has been sparse. We think that there are still some open questions related to this model which need to be addressed in order to advance future research on proactivity. For example, it is unclear whether the three proactive motivational states are multiplicatively or summatively linked, whether and how they might interact and determine each other, and whether the relationships between proactive motivational states and proactive work behavior are linear or non-linear.

Moreover, other motivational states apart from those that have so far been investigated under the umbrella of *energized to, can do, and reason to* should be studied by future research. For instance, Parker et al. (2010) argued that the perceived cost related to proactive behavior is an important indicator of the *can do* motivational state. At the same time, the perceived negative outcomes related to showing proactive behavior indicate a lack of *reason to* motivation to engage in proactivity. Individuals will not see a reason for showing constructive, change-oriented behavior, if they evaluate the personal resources to be invested in this behavior (e.g., attention, time, or cognitive, affective, physical energy) to be too high. The perceived costs or perceived negative outcomes related to proactivity could, in turn, be partly determined by work characteristics. For example, a high level of problem solving, information processing demands, and time pressure at work might result in the feeling of having no further resources available to engage in proactivity. Showing proactivity under these circumstances could be perceived by employees as being too costly because it would result in a loss of resources that rather need to be invested in one's core obligations, demands, and job tasks. Future research needs to investigate these assumptions.

As another example, the *energized to* motivational state has originally been narrowly defined as positive activated affect (Parker et al., 2010). This might be a somewhat limited approach as apart from affect other indicators of a high level of energy and activation might also be relevant. Human energy does not

only consist of an affective dimension but also covers a cognitive dimension (e.g., attention) and a physical dimension (Cole, Bruch, & Vogel, 2012; Kahn, 1990; Shirom, 2003). Indicators of physical energy are, for example, sympathetic or cardiovascular system activation (cf. Cole et al., 2012) (see research on ego depletion; Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). Hence, one can feel physically or cognitively vital, vigorous, and energized without necessarily being in a positive affective state. Future research thus needs to expand this conceptualization of being *energized* to by incorporating the cognitive and physical mechanisms and investigate how these different facets of energy might be differentially predicted by work characteristics.

Apart from the model of proactive motivational states, affective events theory (AET) (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) provides another useful framework for conceptualizing and testing the underlying processes of the relationship between work characteristics and proactivity. AET suggests that work characteristics give rise to specific work events that trigger positive and negative emotions at work and determine work attitudes and behavior. However, there is a lack of empirical research investigating the role of affective events as core mechanisms in the relationship between work characteristics, attitudes, and behavior (Weiss & Beal, 2005). By empirically showing that specific work events may provide the energy, the competence or the reason to engage in proactivity, theoretical approaches of proactive motivational states (Parker et al., 2010) and AET could be integrated. Ohly and Schmitt (2015) developed a taxonomy of positive and negative affective work events based on data from three diary studies. The authors identified four positive and seven negative event clusters which were related to distinct affective states. Events in the category of *goal attainment, problem solving, task-related success* were the most frequently reported positive events, whereas *hindrances in goal attainment, obstacles, in completing work tasks, overload* turned out to be the most frequently reported negative work events. Based on these findings, future research can more systematically investigate the relationships between work characteristics and specific work events as proposed in AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). For instance, positive events such as praise, appreciation and positive feedback are more likely to be reported in an organizational environment with a strong feedback culture that provides high levels of informal supervisor and coworker feedback, that values a collective climate and supports social support such that people take a personal interest in one another (Humphrey et al., 2007). In contrast, conflicts and communication problems might be more likely to occur in work environments where social support and interest in employees' welfare is low and where there is a lack of positive social climate (Humphrey et al., 2007; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Further, examining the relationship between more stable work characteristics triggering affective events and the effects on proactive work behavior would be an interesting line of future research and could advance the literature by specifying more proximal work events that give rise to proactive work behavior.

Specifically, future research on the link between the occurrences of negative events as mechanisms in the work characteristics-proactivity relationship would be of interest. For example, some previous research has shown that negative emotions (which might result from negative events such as conflicts, making errors, being criticized for one's work) may trigger and lay the foundation for proactive work behavior (Grant, 2013). Because people perceive a mismatch between the current status (as is) and the desired state (as should be) in these situations they tend to engage in change- and future-oriented behavior to improve the status quo (Fay & Sonnentag, 2002; Parker et al., 2010). Thus, negative events reported by employees such as hindrances or barriers in goal attainment, conflicts or problems in interactions with clients or patients could facilitate the generation of proactive goals and trigger goal striving. Future research on this issue is also required to investigate the role of self-regulation processes, emotion regulation as well as personality variables as potential moderators, in order to effectively answer the question on the stable individual differences in managing negative work events and the strategies employees might apply in the short-term to handle negative work events and engage in proactivity (Grant, 2013; Parker et al., 2010). Finally, as proposed by Bindl et al. (2012) and in line with previous process models of action and action regulation (Frese & Zapf, 1994), proactivity itself can be conceptualized as a goal process that develops over a period of time. Bindl and colleagues (2012) proposed the four phases of envisioning, planning, enacting, and reflecting. Although the process approach inherent in this model has not been the subject of rigorous testing, the authors provided evidence that these four elements could be empirically distinguished (Bindl et al., 2012). For future research it would be interesting to link work characteristics with the elements or processes of proactivity and to investigate the most relevant work characteristics that might facilitate or hinder the different phases. The motivational characteristic of being faced with high problem-solving demands might be important in the phase of envisioning proactive goals whereas the planning phase could be facilitated by social characteristics such as frequent feedback from others or social support. Further, in line with the finding that negative deactivating affect (e.g., feeling sad or depressed) was positively related to the element of envisioning proactive goals (Bindl et al., 2012), certain negative work events that are triggered by more stable work characteristics (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) might reveal differential relationships with the elements of proactive goal generation. For instance, depressing and sad events happening at work might help to identify future changes but might be unrelated to whether or not this change-oriented behavior is really enacted and realized.

Future Research on Moderators

To advance research on the role of moderators in the work design – proactivity research it is important to understand the boundary conditions of when certain

characteristics of the job promote or impede proactivity. Moderators can thus provide information on the external validity in terms of generalizability of theoretically driven assumptions.

Grant and Ashford (2008) suggested the three characteristics of autonomy, ambiguity, and accountability to be moderated by trait-like variables and individual dispositions. For example, the authors argued that individuals high in openness to experience tend to show higher proactivity in situations of high ambiguity than individuals who are less open. Open employees are more likely to find flexible, creative, and diverse action possibilities in an uncertain environment whereas people low on openness tend to show more rigid and less flexible ways of acting. As another interesting proposition, self-monitoring (i.e., the degree to which individuals observe and evaluate their behavior and are concerned about their public self-presentation) is assumed to moderate the relationship between individuals' situational accountability and proactivity. When individuals are held accountable and have to justify their behavior and cognitions, self-monitors are more likely than people low on self-monitoring to engage in proactive behavior due to their concern about creating a positive image of themselves (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Other dispositional moderators specified were conscientiousness, neuroticism, core self-evaluations, and strategies of maximizing/satisficing. However, the propositions developed by Grant and Ashford (2008) have not been empirically tested so far. Future research is needed in order to disentangle these differential effects of personality traits interacting with work characteristics in predicting proactivity.

In general, when investigating the interaction of personality traits and work characteristics, buffering and compensatory effects might exist (Bindl & Parker, 2010). Buffering effects occur, for example, when individual dispositions moderate the impact of adverse environmental conditions on proactivity and thus help to maintain proactive behavior. Compensatory factors can offset or neutralize the effect of a risk factor such that a favorable job environment, for instance, may substitute for a less favorable disposition in terms of proactivity (Speier & Frese, 1997). Vice versa, individuals high in certain personality traits that trigger proactivity might be better able to compensate for unfavorable situational characteristics of their jobs in terms of engaging in proactive behavior. These considerations underscore the idea that individual dispositions should be taken into consideration when developing and testing models that link work characteristics and proactivity (Li, Fay, Frese, Harms, & Gao, 2014). Moreover, from a practical perspective, gaining knowledge on the role of these trait-like influences would be valuable for Human Resource Management, specifically for personnel selection.

Apart from studying the boundary conditions of personality traits, it would be a useful future approach to investigate interactions between different work characteristics and situational or contextual variables. Features of work design should only be beneficial for promoting employees' proactive behavior given that this

self-starting and change-oriented behavior is accepted, desired, and judged to be appropriate by the organization and by supervisors (see Deichmann, 2012 as an example). The level of acceptance and support of proactivity is largely amplified by the organizational climate, but may partly be a function of situational factors (e.g., depending on the level of environmental uncertainty the organization has to face or on the tasks, projects, and activities employees' have to deal with) (see situational appropriateness, Crant, 2000). Further, a high level of job control, complexity or responsibility might only result in proactive behavior given the support and recognition in terms of training and development provided by the organization to build employees' abilities, skills, and confidence as a core basis for constructive, self-starting behavior to be shown (Parker & Turner, 2002).

Another useful future approach is to investigate interactions between different work characteristics and work tasks in determining proactive work behavior. For instance, as based on empirical findings by Ohly et al. (2006), high job complexity might interact with task routinization in predicting proactivity. The authors found that incorporating routinized work tasks into generally complex jobs increases proactivity and creativity at work. Working on routinized tasks can release cognitive resources and capacity which is especially important in highly complex environments for showing effortful behavior such as proactivity. Routinization has previously been argued to undermine proactive behavior, motivation, and creative thinking. However, when being implemented in highly complex jobs, this characteristic turns out to be beneficial for proactivity. This finding might provide a good starting point to initiate further research on the reinforcing effects of work characteristics and work tasks on proactivity, assuming that some work characteristics may turn out to have favorable effects on proactivity when combined with other resources or tasks. In addition, the model of proactive motivational states (Parker et al., 2010) holds that work characteristics may moderate the effect of *reason to, can do,* and feeling *energized to* on proactive work behavior. For instance, if employees' job autonomy is perceived to be low, there is no possibility for them to engage in proactivity despite having a reason and the energy to do so and feeling competent in showing proactive behavior. Hence, proactive motivation can only come into effect if the environment supports these motivational states. Future research is needed here to provide a clearer picture of the key contextual moderators that prevent or promote employees high in motivational states to engage in proactive behavior.

Practical Implications

The current literature and research on work design and proactivity offer some practical implications for organizations, supervisors, and employees. Based on previous research on work characteristics it is advisable to enhance job autonomy. Employees need to be able to make their own decisions on how to plan,

schedule their tasks and which methods to use in their daily work. This could be accomplished by reducing unnecessary rules and regulations, eliminating bureaucracy, providing alternative and flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting or by establishing self-managing teams (e.g., Parker & Ohly, 2007). Leaders might also focus on enhancing the motivational states of *can do*, *reason to* and *energized to*. For example, they can help their employees to build confidence in their ability to accomplish work tasks, explain why certain tasks or projects need to be accomplished, and generate positive affect by promoting positive events such as goal attainment (Bindl & Parker, 2010; Ohly & Schmitt, 2015). Job enrichment and participation in quality circles have been linked to enhanced role-breadth self-efficacy (Axtell & Parker, 2003; Parker, 1998). Furthermore, self-efficacy can be strengthened by assigning challenging but attainable tasks that provide the opportunity for success.

Apart from job enrichment, organizations and supervisors need to ensure that employees fit with the requirements of their job (Schmitt et al., 2015). This can be realized through integrating work design interventions with more person-centered training and development approaches, oriented to the individual and his or her skills, behavioral tendencies, and capabilities (Grant & Parker, 2009).

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LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE PROACTIVITY

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Leadership and Proactivity

An employee sees an urgent problem that needs to be solved or an opportunity for improvement that could save time, money, or enhance service. Ideally, the employee either takes the initiative to tackle the issue or speaks up and alerts the leader to the problem or opportunity, but that, of course, does not always occur. Employees taking initiative and speaking up rather than withholding ideas, suggestions, and opinions, in other words, employee proactivity, is important for firms as it can enhance organizational effectiveness and improve organizational decision making (e.g., Morrison, 2011). Proactivity at work covers a broad range of more general behaviors that include not only voicing concerns and making suggestions for improvements (e.g., Van Dyne & LePine, 1998), solving problems, and taking the initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001), but also more specific behaviors such as feedback seeking (e.g., Ashford, Blatt, & Walle, 2003), self-improvement oriented or career focused initiative (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010), innovative work behavior (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010), or selling issues to management (e.g., Dutton & Ashford, 1993). Mostly here we focus on the more general proactive work behaviors in relation to leadership.

Whether or not employees choose to speak up or take initiative depends on feeling motivated, in particular the perceived benefits of doing so (“reason to” engage in proactivity), the perceived costs including the feeling that it is safe and they are able to engage in proactivity (“can do” expectations), and the felt energy to do so (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). Leaders affect all of these aspects of employees, motivation. Whether employees perceive their leaders as receptive to ideas, and how they think their leaders will react to proactivity will shape the willingness of employees to take charge or provide their opinions,

concerns, and suggestions. Will I be listened to? Does my boss care? Will I be commended and not punished for my initiative? Those are the types of questions employees can ask themselves before becoming proactive. As such, leaders have been proposed to be central to employees, initiative and their decision of whether to speak up or stay silent at work (e.g., Burris, 2012; Morrison, 2011; Strauss, Griffin, & Rafferty, 2009). Leaders can reward employees for taking initiative at work, support and encourage them, or set an example by showing proactive behaviors themselves. However, they can also stifle proactivity through punishing them, not attending or listening to employees, ideas, or actively discouraging them from making changes.

Proactivity can benefit both organizations and employees themselves. For example, meta-analyses show that more proactive employees performed better and were more satisfied (Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013). Nevertheless, although leaders can stimulate proactivity, leaders do not always applaud employees, voice, ideas, or change initiatives (e.g., Belschak, Den Hartog, & Fay, 2010; Bolino, Valcea, & Harvey, 2010). For example, Seibert, Kraimer, and Crant (2001) found that employees who voiced more received fewer promotions. Campbell (2000) describes this as the “initiative paradox”: While most leaders state they expect proactivity from their employees, they often do not appreciate it when these ideas or initiatives do not align with their personal values, preferences, and interests. Thus, leaders can also stifle proactivity. In this chapter, we address the role of leaders in employee proactivity, and we try to look both at intended and unintended ways in which leaders can promote or stifle such proactivity.

Generally empirical work on how leaders affect proactivity is still relatively limited, and much of the empirical work that has been done to date focuses on the positive relationship of certain leadership styles with different types of proactive work behavior. This research suggests that supportive, participative, ethical, and especially transformational leadership styles might enhance the willingness of their followers to speak up (e.g., Detert & Burris, 2007; Walumbwa, Morrison, & Christensen, 2012), take personal initiative (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012a, b; Kalshoven, Den Hartog & De Hoogh, 2013; Strauss et al., 2009), or show innovative and creative work behavior (Rank, Nelson, Allen, & Xu, 2009; Shin & Zhou, 2003). Below we discuss this work.

In doing so, we particularly and separately focus on transformational leadership which is probably the leadership style that has attracted most attention to date (see van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013), and which has also been the most extensively studied in relation to proactivity (e.g., Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012b; Strauss et al., 2009). Transformational leaders articulate an attractive and challenging vision of the future. They infuse work with meaning, stimulate followers intellectually, stress the importance of the collective, and inspire followers to transcend self-interests. Followers become motivated and committed to contributing to the collective (Bass, 1985; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993).

One important way in which followers can contribute to the collective and to realizing the vision is through showing pro-social discretionary proactive behavior such as voice and initiative (e.g., Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012a, b; Detert & Burris, 2007; Strauss et al., 2009). Theory suggests several different ways in which transformational leaders can enhance follower proactivity and below we outline these in more detail.

However, current theorizing on the role of (transformational) leaders in proactivity is rather general in its focus. We believe the work to date paints an incomplete picture as there are also theoretical reasons to suggest that employees might specifically choose *not* to speak up to their transformational leaders or to withhold some messages and only provide others to these leaders. For example, while the identification processes involved in the transformational leadership process may make people care more about reaching certain goals, and that indeed may make them more motivated to voice suggestions for improvement, the strong collective focus and value-based nature of the shared vision may simultaneously make it less easy for followers to dissent or vocalize problems that they see with the vision for fear of being seen as disloyal. Thus, while some forms of proactivity may be stimulated, there are also potentially countervailing forces sparked by transformational leaders that might suppress other forms. These potential stifling elements of transformational leadership have not yet been sufficiently considered in the literature, and we aim to add to the field by starting to do so here.

Leadership and Encouraging Proactivity

For several reasons, leaders at different levels play an important role in whether employees elect to become proactive or not. First, leaders can affect the motivation of followers. Parker and colleagues (2010) distinguish three different components (proactive motivation states) in individuals, proactive motivation. The “can do” motivation refers to people’s self-efficacy, control appraisals, and perceived costs and risks. Leaders can also influence such efficacy beliefs of their employees; for instance, empowering leader behaviors were found to be positively linked to employees’ (role breadth) self-efficacy (e.g., Parker, 1998). The “reason to” motivation refers to why individuals select and persist with proactive behavior. Leaders can provide such reasons through their appealing visions (more on this later when discussing transformational leadership), and leaders can also affect employees’ expectancies regarding the outcomes of engaging in proactivity at work, for example, through clarifying their expectations. Finally, the “energized to” motivation acknowledges that, for engaging in proactive behavior, some kind of energy or activation is needed. Leaders can stimulate such energy in employees, for instance, some leadership styles can be linked to employee optimism as a positive, activated emotional state (McCull-Kennedy & Anderson, 2002) and leadership also relates to engagement, which is often theorized to include a vigor component (e.g., Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012a).

Because proactivity reflects a deliberate decision process that involves considering the potential costs and benefits (e.g., Detert & Burris, 2007; Morrison & Milliken, 2000), employees consider outcomes and may view the costs of proactivity as too high if they think that their leader may not respond positively to it. In her work on voice, Morrison (2011) highlights two such outcome-related considerations. First employees, sense of whether speaking up (or more generally being proactive) is likely to be effective and lead to the desired outcome (i.e., the perceived instrumentality of the behavior). If employees do not think their actions will have the desired effect, they are less likely to engage in them (“reason to” motivation). Second, their judgment of the risks or costs that might be associated with speaking up or being proactive in any given instance (i.e., the perceived safety of doing so) (“can do” motivation).

Employees carry assumptions with them about whether their leader will react positively to proactivity or not, and these assumptions will affect their behavior. In line with this, in the area of voice, Detert and Edmondson (2011) focus on the socially acquired beliefs of what makes voice risky in social hierarchies (which they label implicit voice theories) and find that employees hold several general beliefs, about how leaders are likely to react to voice, that relate to efficacy and safety. This is also likely to hold for proactivity more generally. Thus, leaders may be successful in enhancing proactive work behavior to the extent that they strengthen the prosocial motivation of employees, enhance perceived instrumentality, and safety of proactivity, and in doing so overcome implicit theories that relate to high costs or low benefits of proactivity.

Over time, when working with their leader, employees will develop a perception of that leader’s openness to proactivity that affects the employees, willingness to speak up, take initiative, or become proactive in problem-solving. This perception likely relates both to traits, characteristics, and behaviors of the leader (e.g., leaders, openness to experience) and to traits and other characteristics of the follower (e.g., leaders, self-efficacy). Leaders are thus more likely to enhance proactivity if they can signal their openness to initiative and their willingness to take employees, suggestions on board so that employees see themselves as likely to be able to have an impact and make a positive difference through being proactive. Explicitly expressing and demonstrating that employees will not be punished for showing initiative is one way for leaders to show openness. Morrison (2011) suggested that openness-fostering leader behaviors also include asking for input, involving employees in decisions, discussing issues, seeking feedback, not responding in hostile ways, and taking action to respond to issues raised (see also Ashford et al., 2003; Morrison & Rothman, 2009).

When leaders show such openness-fostering behaviors this tends to correlate with proactivity. For example, Detert and Burris (2007) demonstrated that perceived manager openness enhances feelings of psychological safety and, in turn, this enhances voice behavior. Similarly, Edmondson (2003) shows that consultation and downplaying of power differentials enhanced feelings

of psychological safety and made it easier for employees to speak up. Also, Tangirala and Ramanujam (2010) found that when leaders show consultation behavior, employees felt more influential, which in turn led to them show more proactive behavior. Similarly, De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) show that participative leader behavior relates positively to employees, innovative work behavior (including both idea generation and implementation), which can also be seen as a form of employee proactivity. This also holds for empowering leadership. Chen and colleagues (2010) show that through enhancing psychological empowerment, empowering leadership positively affects innovative behavior. Similarly, for proactivity in a more general sense, a field experiment by Martin, Liao, and Campbell (2013) shows that empowering leaders enhance employee proactivity.

Encompassing such participative behaviors, ethical leaders also engage in open communication and encourage employee voice (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). They listen to followers' ideas and suggestions and allow followers to take part in decision making (e.g., Kalshoven et al., 2011). Such inclusive behaviors help employees see their work as more meaningful and motivating (e.g., Feldman & Khademian, 2003; Piccolo, Greenbaum, Den Hartog, & Folger, 2010), develop positive feelings of self-efficacy (e.g., Srivastava, Bartol, & Locke, 2006), and, in turn, employees are more likely to become proactive. In addition, ethical leaders are trusted by their employees and treat employees fairly. As a consequence, employees will experience the relationship with their leader as a positive social exchange relationship in which they want to reciprocate (Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, & Salvador, 2009). To reciprocate, employees can shy away from deviance or destructive behaviors and instead take responsibility, cooperate, and show personal initiative (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012a).

Available evidence indeed suggests that ethical leadership is negatively related to deviance and positively to citizenship, including both affiliative (helping) and challenging or proactive (voice/initiative) forms of citizenship (e.g., Avey et al., 2011; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012a; Kalshoven et al., 2011, 2013; Mayer et al., 2009; Walumbwa, Morrison, & Christensen, 2012). For example, Kalshoven et al. (2013) found a positive relationship between ethical leadership and follower initiative, mediated by follower responsibility.

The general quality of the social exchange relationship between leader and follower has also been studied in relation to employees, proactive behavior. For example, higher leader-member exchange (LMX) was found to correlate with employee voice (e.g., Botero & Van Dyne, 2009; Burris, Detert, & Chiaburu, 2008), and change-oriented citizenship (Bettencourt, 2004) as well as individual innovation (Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004; Scott & Bruce, 1994).

Feeling sufficiently energized to show proactivity relates at least in part to affective states and affect researchers note that many work behaviors are mainly driven by the affective system (e.g., Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). This is also likely to hold for proactive work behaviors, and in line with that, leaders may

also affect employee proactivity by stimulating employees, affective responses such as their positive emotions or moods. Leaders have been shown to affect followers' emotions and moods, both through their behavior and through emotion or mood contagion. For example, Sy, Côté, & Saavedra (2005) found that when leaders were in a positive mood compared to a negative mood, group members individually experienced more positive and less negative mood, and as a whole group then also had a more positive and a less negative affective tone.

Both more specifically targeted shorter-term emotions and more generalized and longer-term moods (Rosenberg, 1998) may play a role in stimulating proactivity. As Fredrickson (2001) argues in her broaden-and-build model, positive emotions broaden a person's thought-action repertoire, allowing attention to shift to new matters and encouraging initiation of new behaviors. This is likely to include employees, willingness to show proactivity. In addition, proactivity is goal driven, and positive affect promotes individuals, setting of higher and more challenging goals (Ilies & Judge, 2005) and enhances future-oriented thinking (e.g., Foo, Uy, & Baron, 2009). Affect also often comes with an activation element (e.g., optimism, love, joy) which motivates people to take action to achieve desired outcomes. Indeed research suggests a positive link between positive affect and proactivity (e.g., Den Hartog & Belschak, 2007; Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012). For example, the findings of Bindl and colleagues (2012) point especially to a positive association of highly activated positive mood states (such as feelings of being inspired, energized, and enthused) with proactivity. They ruled out the possibility that personality was the key driver by controlling for trait affectivity and showed that such mood states also still affected proactivity over and above controls of can do and reason to indicators of motivation.

Different forms of leadership have also been linked to engagement, and in turn, engagement is linked to proactivity (e.g., Sonnentag 2003; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012a). Engagement can be defined as a "persistent, positive affective motivational state of fulfilment" (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001, p. 417). Among other things, engagement is characterized by both dedication and vigor and as such relates to both reason to and energized to motivational processes.

Findings in the empirical work on the role of stress and negative emotions which can result from less effective leadership styles, such as passive or laissez-faire leadership, are less clear cut so far, though these styles generally do not seem to stimulate proactive behaviors (e.g., Bindl et al., 2012; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2007). Negative emotions may lead to coping efforts that deplete individuals, resources (cf. Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998; Rothbard, 2001). This depletion might decrease proactivity, as people are pre-occupied with coping with their feelings (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2007). Yet, conceptually some negative emotions may stimulate an active ("fight-or-flight") rather than a passive attitude (e.g., Frijda, 1987). Theoretically, negative affect might also enhance proactivity because it can indicate a gap between a present and desired situation (Carver & Scheier, 1982), thereby signaling the need to

adapt and potentially stimulating change-oriented proactive behaviors. More research on this possible role of negative affect is needed.

Another important affective variable in this regard is affective organizational commitment which can be seen as “an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization” (Meyer et al., 2002, p.21). Several different leadership styles form important antecedents of affective commitment, including, for example, transformational (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995) and ethical forms of leadership (Den Hartog & De Hoogh, 2009). Affective commitment has an emotional side and thus in part reflects “energized to” motivation but it can also be linked to control aspirations: the more a person is committed to something, the more s/he takes and accepts responsibility for the achievement of its goals (Den Hartog & Belschak 2007). Having an affective bond with a target such as a team or an organization is likely to heighten employees, willingness to exert themselves on behalf of that target,s (collective) goals. For example, group belongingness makes people more prone to show helping and pro-social organizational behavior (e.g. Den Hartog, De Hoogh, & Keegan, 2007; Hunt & Morgan, 1994). This is also likely to hold for proactivity, and Den Hartog and Belschak (2007) indeed find that affective commitment to different targets relates to employees, personal initiative.

Leadership and Stifling Proactivity

Despite the potentially positive role leaders can have several scholars have suggested that leaders act in ways that stifle proactivity, sometimes without even realizing that they are having this effect. First, in contrast to the aforementioned openness enhancing and supportive leader behaviors, destructive leader behaviors seem to inhibit employee proactivity. For example, abusive forms of leadership were found to relate negatively to voice through increasing psychological detachment and decreasing perceptions of interpersonal fairness (Burris et al., 2008; Rafferty & Restubog, 2011).

However, the negative impact of leaders on proactivity can also be unintended and more subtle. For example, Ashford and colleagues (2003) argue leaders can inadvertently signal a lack of openness to employee voice, for example, because they may not always listen attentively due to time constraints or being distracted. As noted above, leaders may be less open to initiatives that are not in line with their own ideas or values (cf. Campbell, 2000). Leaders may perceive employee proactivity that does not align with their ideas as wasting time or as undermining and react to suppress it (Campbell, 2000; Frese & Fay, 2001). For example, Grant, Parker, and Collins (2009) showed that supervisors only rated the performance of proactive employees higher when these employees also had strong pro-social values.

Also, cues of interpersonal power and dominance may affect perceived openness to others, proactivity. For example, Locke and Anderson (2010) demonstrated

in lab studies that individuals in a follower role tend to speak less when the individuals in a leadership role send subtle cues conveying power (e.g., through vocal volume, gaze, posture). Leaders, however, may not even be aware of sending such cues. More research on this is needed in the area of proactivity and leadership.

Also, leaders are often higher on the need for power and on extraversion (e.g., Judge et al., 2002). Grant and colleagues (2011) note that the idea of dominance complementarity suggests that when one party acts dominantly, they expect the other to be more submissive. Employee proactivity is future directed and change oriented and therefore often involves a challenge to the status quo. As such proactivity is a form of exerting assertiveness or dominance, and an expression of one's agency and forcefulness (Grant et al., 2011; Grant & Parker, 2009) or a form of seeking control (Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2007). Grant and colleagues (2011) showed that given their dominance and control motivation, more extraverted leaders may be less receptive to follower proactivity and may more quickly see proactivity as subversive, challenging their authority and seeking to dominate. Thus, the more extraverted and interpersonally dominant leaders are, the more likely it may be that they become less open to proactivity from employees. Again, the research on this and other stifling effects is still limited.

Transformational Leadership and Its Positive Impact on Proactivity

Above, we have argued that different types of leadership behaviors and leader characteristics (e.g., participative, ethical, supportive, and openness-signaling behaviors, leader mood) can stimulate proactivity whereas other elements of leadership (e.g., dominance, abusive supervision, lack of openness) may stifle employee proactivity. In what follows, we will focus more specifically on the role of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership seems to be of particular interest as a) it is argued to be the most effective leadership style and has attracted the most attention in the literature (see Judge & Piccolo, 2004; van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013), b) it is a more complex leadership style that covers a number of different leader behaviors (e.g., Bass, 1985), and c) it is probably the most extensively studied leadership style to date with respect to proactive behavior (e.g., Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Strauss et al., 2009). Previous research shows that transformational leadership is positively linked to well-being related outcomes for employees such as job satisfaction and positive emotions (Bono, Foldes, Vinson, & Muros, 2007) as well as employees, task performance (e.g., Hoon Song, Kolb, Hee Lee, & Kyoung Kim, 2012; Kovjanic et al., 2013).

As noted, transformational leadership has also been found to relate positively to different forms of proactive work behavior (see e.g., Belschak, Den Hartog, & Kalshoven, 2015; Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012b; Griffin, Parker, & Mason, 2010; Hoon Song et al., 2012; Strauss et al., 2009). For example, in two

multi-source survey studies Den Hartog and Belschak (2012) showed that perceived transformational leadership as rated by employees is correlated positively with two different forms of proactive behavior (voice and initiative), though efficacy and autonomy moderated this relationship. Also, in their longitudinal study, Griffin et al. (2010) found that one of the core elements of transformational leadership behavior (or more specifically communicating an attractive vision) interacted with employees' feelings of efficacy (i.e., their role breath self-efficacy) in stimulating employees to engage in proactivity. Thus, clearly, the available research to date suggests a positive link between transformational leadership and proactivity, albeit potentially with certain boundary conditions that imply that the strength of this positive impact can vary. Conceptually transformational leaders especially seem likely to enhance employees' willingness to be proactive for several reasons.

Reason to Motivation

First, as transformational leaders are change-oriented and proactive themselves (Crant & Bateman, 2000), they are likely to act as role-models for stimulating change-oriented behaviors such as voice (e.g., Shamir & Howell, 1999). Their change-orientedness and proactive behavior are likely to form a signal to employees that they do not mind change and thus are also open to suggestions for change. In their motivational theory of charismatic leadership, Shamir et al. (1993) stress role-modeling as one of the key processes underlying the effects of this type of leadership. Role modeling implies a process by which followers mold their beliefs, feelings, and behavior according to those of the leader. Thus, the more proactive behavior of transformational leaders may be emulated by followers through becoming more proactive themselves.

In addition, transformational leaders can directly stimulate employee proactivity through their intellectual stimulation behavior (e.g., directly asking followers to think about the way things are done, to question the status quo, or to provide ideas and suggestions for change). Intellectual stimulation was originally proposed as one of the four core behaviors of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985), although the emphasis in the later literature on transformational leadership has been more on the core role of vision and charisma in this leadership style (e.g., Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Intellectual stimulation is seen as the degree to which the leader asks followers to challenge assumptions, improve ways of working, and provide ideas and input. Thus, this specific transformational behavior seems directly relevant to stimulating follower proactivity as it clearly signals the leader's openness to changes and new ideas and signals to the employee that s/he will have an impact.

Another very powerful reason that transformational and charismatic leadership are likely to enhance follower's proactivity is because such leadership enhances several related identification processes. More specifically transformational leaders

enhance follower identification (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993) and commitment (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995), value congruence (e.g., Hoffman, Bynum, Piccolo, & Sutton, 2011), and the meaningfulness of work (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). Charismatic leaders articulate a group vision and behave in ways that support the values inherent in this vision. This enhances identification, and followers come to regard organizational goals and values as their own, providing them with powerful reasons to be proactive in trying to improve the organization.

Employees understand how they can contribute to the collective and realization of the vision through their work, which helps them see their own work as more meaningful. This enhanced sense of meaning and purpose makes it more likely for them to care enough to speak up or take initiative, for example, to defend or support the vision, to prevent problems or to provide suggestions for improving processes related to it. In line with this, Liu et al. (2010) found that transformational leadership relates to higher identification with one's supervisor and in turn to more upward voice. In addition, they found that such leadership also relates to higher identification with the organization and in turn, this results in more voicing to co-workers.

Can Do Motivation

The individualized consideration element of transformational leadership (see Bass, 1985), which is similar to the aforementioned leader supportiveness, is likely to enhance proactivity in two ways. First, through enhancing followers' belief that showing proactive behavior is safe, and that they will be heard by their leader who cares about their concerns. In line with this, Detert and Burris (2007) found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and voice, with psychological safety acting as a partial mediator of that relationship.

Secondly, individually considerate leaders mentor and coach followers and communicate to these followers that they have confidence in their ability to contribute (e.g., House & Podsakoff, 1994). Thus, besides their role in ensuring psychological safety, individually considerate transformational leaders may also increase proactivity through enhancing follower feelings of competence and self-efficacy. When followers feel confident in their ability to have an impact, they are more likely to be proactive. Indeed, efficacy beliefs have been shown to relate to different forms of proactivity (e.g., Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012b; Parker et al., 2006; Speier & Frese, 1997).

Energized to Motivation

As noted, like for many work behaviors affect forms a powerful driver of proactivity, and transformational leaders may thus enhance employee proactivity by stimulating employees' positive emotions such as their enthusiasm as well as their hope and optimism, by enhancing their work engagement or through elevating

their affective commitment. Research indeed shows that transformational leaders enhance positive affect (Bono & Ilies, 2006; Bono, Foldes, Vinson, & Muros, 2007; McColl-Kennedy & Anderson, 2002), affective commitment (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995), and work engagement (e.g., Tims, Bakker, & Xanthopoulou, 2011). In turn, as noted positive affect, engagement, and commitment were shown to relate positively to employee proactivity (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2007; 2012a; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2009).

In sum, current theory on transformational leadership and proactivity suggests that there are multiple paths through which transformational leaders generally enhance the likelihood that employees will be proactive. Such leaders are likely to impact proactive behaviors such as voice and initiative through their role modeling and intellectual stimulation as both of these are behaviors that signal their openness to proactivity. Their vision and charisma are likely to draw people to the collective and make them willing to contribute to the collective and take proactive action on its behalf. Their individualized consideration is likely to enhance the perceived safety and efficacy of proactivity and increase the belief that followers will be listened to and can have a positive impact when they voice ideas and concerns and that they will not be punished for being proactive and making changes. In addition, these leaders energize and stimulate followers through enhancing positive affect, meaning making, and identification processes. In sum, transformational leaders can enhance proactivity.

The Full Picture? When Transformational Leadership Stifles Proactivity

Clearly, transformational leaders can stimulate employee proactivity. However, this one-sided positive view may not fully do justice to the potentially more complex relationship between transformational leadership and employee proactivity. We believe that there are also reasons to suggest that highly transformational leaders might also at times stifle proactivity. For example, several pressures relating to transformational leadership could cause followers not to be proactive and speak up even if they do have concerns about the vision.

For example, as noted, Detert and Edmondson (2011) show that employees implicit beliefs about how leaders react to voice include believing that speaking up on issues that one's boss may feel strongly about or be identified with is risky. Transformational leaders deeply care about their vision and the values they stand for and clearly demonstrate this dedication to followers. The fact that beliefs are so strongly held and passionately communicated by such leaders may make followers less likely to engage in proactive behavior that would challenge or go against issues directly related to the values or ideas inherent in this vision. This suggests that while transformational leaders may enhance followers' willingness to challenge some aspects of the status quo, they may simultaneously make it harder for them to challenge others. Thus, the type of message or the content

of the proactive behavior is likely to play a role in whether (transformational) leadership enhances or perhaps also at times stifles employee proactivity. Below we discuss the role of types and content of proactive behaviors in more detail.

Processes by Which Transformational Leadership May Stifle Proactivity

The relationship of transformational leadership with employee proactivity is likely to vary across the different types of proactive behavior that can be distinguished. For example, in the area of voice, Morrison (2011) notes that the research on reluctance to convey bad news suggests that message valence (positive vs. negative) can matter as this is likely to affect the willingness to voice a given message. Leaders may respond very differently to an employee who is expressing a challenging or divergent opinion compared to an employee who is speaking up to support or offering a new idea (e.g., Burris, 2012; Morrison, 2011).

Transformational leaders typically provide strongly positive messages of hope of a better future in their visions, this stress on the positive may make followers less willing to voice messages with a negative valence such as concerns they may have about aspects of the vision, but more willing to speak out in support or with positive suggestions for improvement. Thus, whether employees decide to speak up to a transformational leader may depend on the content of what they have to say. More generally speaking this may mean that employees and especially those individuals who are highly identified with the transformational leader and his/her vision, will be less likely to display proactive behavior that conveys dissatisfaction (e.g., whistleblowing, problem-focused or prohibitive voice) or dissent (e.g., voicing disagreement with the vision, taking initiatives in a different direction) and more likely to display proactive behavior that is supportive, promotive or suggestion oriented (e.g., personal initiative or taking charge only as long as changes are in the expected direction). There are several reasons for this.

Frame Alignment and Identification

First, transformational leaders typically tend to provide strongly positive value-based visions, and this generally may make followers less willing to speak up with ideas or messages with a negative valence such as concerns they may have about the vision.

However, more specifically, as noted, the frame alignment process in transformational leadership also implies that followers usually come to share the values inherent in the vision (Shamir et al., 1993). Frames (or schemata of interpretation, cf. Goffman 1974) help individuals to perceive and label occurrences and experiences they have and guide individuals, action. Frame alignment refers to the linkage of leader and follower interpretive orientations, such that the

leaders, and followers, goals, values, and beliefs become congruent (Shamir et al., 1993). Communicating a vision helps frame alignment by interpreting reality for followers and giving meaning to goals and events (Den Hartog & Verburg, 1997). Through the vision, followers come to share a certain interpretation of the world with their leader, and this frame guides their thoughts and actions. Followers derive a sense of meaning from the vision and tend to come to identify strongly with its goals and values. Thus, they are also likely to have fewer deep concerns to vocalize about the content of the vision that they have come to share over time. Such alignment may thus imply that followers become less critical of the vision or even the status quo their leader built up, and thus they may be less likely to challenge it. In other words, the strong value-driven nature of this type of leadership and the process of frame alignment and meaning making it involves, may imply that followers come to share a frame of reference with their leader and that they share the same interpretation of events. Thus, less deep level-criticism and more support for the vision can be expected as this process evolves.

Thus, the more followers identify and come to share and care deeply about the vision themselves, the more they are likely to invest energy on its behalf by trying to incrementally improve it and defend it and by warding off criticism or change attempts by others. At the same time, they are then also likely to become less critical of its content. In other words, we expect an enhancement of proactive behavior that carries positive valence messages, but a simultaneous decrease in proactivity with a negative valence (support, suggestions: e.g., suggestion-oriented voice, versus problem, dissent: e.g., problem-focused voice; Morrison, 2011). In sum, the more followers share, identify with, and believe in the vision and values inherent in the vision that the transformational leader propagates, the more likely they become to engage in supportive, positively valenced proactive behaviors, and the less likely they are to show critical, negatively valenced proactivity.

Risk of Challenging the Status Quo

In addition, as already noted above, Detert and Edmondson (2011) show that employees already generally tend to believe that speaking up on issues that the leader feels strongly about is risky. This is likely to play a role when transformational leaders are involved as such leaders have strong beliefs and are passionate about what they are doing. The strong drive of transformational leaders and their deep caring for the values and goals of the vision may make followers less likely to confront them and challenge issues related to the values inherent in the vision, to self-initiate to make changes related to the vision, or to comment critically on the way the leader strives to reach goals because of the risk inherent in going against something the leader cares about or is invested in. Thus, the more the leader is seen to personally be passionate about the vision, the riskier

it is likely to seem to followers to voice concerns or problems or to show other challenging proactive behaviors. The riskier they perceive proactivity to be, the more likely employees are to engage only in supportive, positive valence proactive behavior, and the less they likely they become to show critical, negative valence proactivity.

Loyalty

Related to the above, a sense of loyalty to the collective or the work group is likely to play a role. Transformational leaders tend to have a strong collective focus. They stress working together to achieve goals and try to have followers come together to achieve the goals related to the vision. Employees have a need to belong at work (Den Hartog, De Hoogh, & Keegan, 2007), and having a cohesive tight-knit collective that works together in a value driven way can be very motivating to group members. However, the shared nature of the vision and the strong involvement of others in the group may make it less easy for followers to dissent or vocalize problems that they see with the vision in fear of being seen as disloyal by other group members. In that sense, implicit voice theories may also relate to team member perceptions: under certain conditions, individuals may think it is risky to voice because of how they think their peers may react to this. In sum, the more the transformational leader's vision is shared in the group and the more cohesive the group has become in response to such leadership, the more followers perceive challenging proactive behavior as risky as they feel it may potentially be perceived as disloyal to the group. As noted, the more risky proactivity is perceived as, the more likely it gets that only positive valence proactive behaviors are shown.

Admiration

A related reason that transformational leadership might decrease the more challenging forms of proactivity (e.g., whistleblowing or voicing dissent) is that followers typically strongly admire their transformational leaders (Bass, 1996; Conger & Kanungo, 1998); making them more sensitive to the opinion the leader might form of them based on their proactive behavior. Thus, admired transformational leaders may make employees more self-conscious and increase the fear of speaking up and challenging the leader. Employees will want to be seen as competent by the admired leader and would not want to provide "dumb" suggestions. This is likely to make employees more careful to show proactive behavior, even providing suggestions will be done with care as to not harm their image in the eyes of the leader.

Also, followers may be less willing to point out potential problems or concerns or take initiatives that may go against the ideas of the admired leader as they may more easily assume that their admired leader is more likely to be right

than they are themselves. In line with this, research shows that transformational leadership can lead to more dependency in followers (Kark et al., 2003) and relates to a higher felt need for leadership by followers (De Vries, 1999). Thus, when leaders are showing transformational behaviors, followers generally admire them more and tend to seek more of their guidance, and this likely makes them more self-conscious about showing proactivity to protect themselves. In turn, this may make them less likely to engage in challenging or negatively valenced proactive behaviors.

Leader Openness

As noted, employees generally have ideas about their leader's openness to proactivity that affects their willingness to be proactive and speak up. The openness-fostering leader behaviors suggested by Morrison (2011) that include participative and consulting behaviors, discussing problems and ideas, and being open to feedback are in line with the intellectual stimulation component of transformational leadership, and to the extent that leaders are able to effectively engage in intellectual stimulation they are likely to demonstrate their openness to employee proactivity. However, some transformational leaders might come across as less open. First, transformational leaders, strong attachment to certain values may affect the extent to which they are seen as open to behaviors challenging these issues. Also, as noted, cues of interpersonal power and dominance may negatively affect perceived openness to voice (e.g., Locke & Anderson, 2010). Power and dominance issues are likely to play a role for transformational leaders as transformational leadership relates positively to power motivation (De Hoogh et al., 2005), and transformational leaders tend to be relatively high on extraversion (Judge & Bono, 2000). Extraverted individuals tend to be interpersonally dominant and assertive, seek status, and behave in ways that attract social attention (e.g., Ashton, Lee, & Paunonen, 2002; Grant, Gino, & Hofmann, 2011). As discussed, dominant leaders tend to prefer less dominant followers (Grant et al., 2011) and given that transformational leadership and extraversion are correlated, the more extraverted and interpersonally dominant transformational leaders are, the more likely it is that they are less open to proactive behaviors of their employees.

In sum, above, we described the potential stimulating but also the stifling impact that transformational leadership could have on proactivity and proposed that the type of proactive behavior may act as a moderator there, that is, the type of proactive behavior determines to what extent transformational leadership encourages or stifles employees to engage in such behavior. For example, employees only show the types of initiatives that employees feel the leader will appreciate or only adopting changes when they are in a direction that the employee knows the leader will value or that are clearly in line with the content of the vision or mission.

Conclusion

Despite the growing number of studies that show clear positive or negative effects of different leader behaviors on employee proactivity, the research evidence is not fully consistent and some work suggests perhaps more complicated patterns of relationships need to be considered in future work. Some studies have null findings under certain conditions, suggesting that moderators may exist and that other drivers of proactivity may at times have a stronger impact than leadership. For example, Parker and colleagues (2006) found that the positive role of supervisory support in proactivity was no longer significant once autonomy was controlled for. Axtell et al. (2000) reported no relationship between leader support and individual innovation. Also, Wu and Parker (in press) show that supervisory support predicts proactivity for insecurely attached individuals but is less important for securely attached people.

Other studies have already started to identify moderators that play a role in the relationship between leadership and employee proactivity. In addition to the valence and type of proactivity as discussed above, contextual factors and follower characteristics may affect the extent to which leaders affect the proactivity of their followers. For example, while Den Hartog and Belschak (2012b) in line with previous work find positive and significant main effects of transformational leadership, role breadth self-efficacy, and job autonomy on employee proactive behavior, they also find that a 3-way interaction qualifies these main effects: When autonomy is high, transformational leadership relates positively to proactive behavior for individuals high (but not low) on self-efficacy. Vice versa, when job autonomy is low, such leadership relates positively to proactive behavior for individuals low (but not high) on self-efficacy. However, this pattern of results differs from that found by Griffin et al (2010) who found that leader vision was associated with an increase in proactivity when employees were high in role breadth self-efficacy. Further work on efficacy in interaction with the context in relation to proactivity is needed.

Another example of work taking other factors into account is the work by Premeaux and Bedeian (2003) who addressed how the contextual factors of the role of top management team openness and trust in the supervisor, and the individual factors of employee locus of control and self-esteem related to speaking up. They found that all of these positively predicted speaking up for employees who are low on self-monitoring, but null or negatively for people who are high on self-monitoring. Thus the sensitivity to contextual cues and the ability to adapt behavior to these potentially plays an important role in the extent to which proactivity is triggered by certain stimuli.

Besides contextual moderators, individual differences may also play a role for example, as noted in the work by Grant et al. (2011) who suggest that extroversion may make leaders less receptive to proactivity and a better understanding of when and why leaders are receptive to proactivity is needed. In addition, Parker

and Wu (2014) emphasize that research on leadership and proactivity to date focuses mostly on the immediate manager while more powerful individuals in the organization at higher hierarchical levels may also affect employees, proactive behaviors. This too deserves more attention in research. Parker and Wu (2014) also argue that leaders can assist employees in developing the knowledge and thinking styles required for proactivity, which is another area that could be further explored.

Overall, we agree with Parker and Wu (2014) who indicate that the current research shows that leadership matters for individual proactivity – at least part of the time and we would add for some employees – because in general, openness-signaling leader behaviors like participation and support appear to enhance proactivity, whereas negative leader behaviors like abusive supervision suppress proactivity. However, more work is needed to further understand when and why effects occur or not. The mainly cross-sectional research has also mostly examined direct effects so far and has not yet firmly established causality of many of the proposed links.

Summarizing, there are at least five broad and important areas that are less well understood, so far, in relation to how leadership affects different forms of proactivity: First, the mechanisms playing a role in these relationships (for example, are the effects of leadership mainly direct or indirect via enhancing motivational processes). Second, better understanding how the leadership process in relation to proactivity unfolds over time is needed as most work so far is cross-sectional and we do not know enough about causality. Third, increasing understanding of how both elements of the context as well as individual differences between followers affect these relationships is important (for example, are some followers more affected than others or some contexts more conducive than others? What is the interplay between individuals and context?). The role of individual differences between leaders also deserves further attention. Fourth, the extent to which different types of proactivity are stimulated equally or differently by leaders is not yet well understood. Finally, a better understanding of how even positive leader behaviors may have stifling effects on certain forms of proactivity would be important to ensure all relevant ideas and changes come to the fore. These all form interesting areas for future work in the important area of proactivity and leadership.

Practically speaking, Parker and Wu (2014) already noted that leaders can directly affect proactivity by reducing risks involved in being proactive and enhancing employees' belief in their ability to make a difference, but also indirectly through the practices, climate, and work designs they create. In this chapter, we also discussed the many ways in which leader behaviors may benefit employee proactivity – including more empowering, participative, supportive, and inspiring behavior. Organizations can help leaders develop the skills and abilities involved in showing these types of behaviors. For example, in their field experiment, Martin and colleagues (2013) trained leaders to be more empowering,

which in turn positively affected employee proactivity. Thus, leader behaviors that enhance proactivity can be developed. Leaders may also sometimes not be open to proactivity due to their own insecurities or pressures and there too leader development and support for the leader from the side of the organization can play a role.

However, our chapter adds an important caveat for organizations. It is not just leaders who are unwilling or insecure who can potentially stifle proactivity. Even transformational leaders who you might think of as your “best” as they have great visions and are able to inspire others to perform beyond expectations may inadvertently stifle certain forms of proactivity. Making these leaders aware of how their strong passions and persuasive visions might lead to not getting sufficient critical input may form a starting point for organizations to ensure they keep getting the best ideas and input possible from all employees.

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16

PROACTIVE BEHAVIOR TRAINING

Theory, Design, and Future Directions

Mona Mensmann and Michael Frese

The following chapter describes a *contradictio in adiecto*. Its title “Proactive Behavior Training” promises that it is possible to train people to become more proactive. Training is typically done by a trainer – thus, a trainer causes change in other people’s behavior. He or she often instructs training participants to model behavior and trainees are supposed to follow given instructions. What if the goal is to teach people not to follow what others suggest and to start actions themselves instead?

We answer this question by portraying important elements of personal initiative training. Personal initiative is conceptualized as proactive behavior (Bindl & Parker, 2010; Grant & Ashford, 2008). The term “personal initiative” is a good term for proactive behavior because it is clearly a behavioral term. Personal initiative implies that people act in a self-starting way, that they prepare their actions for the long term, and that they overcome barriers on the way towards their goals (Frese & Fay, 2001).

Although recent research has shown the long-term effect of situational variables like job demand and job control on proactive personality (Li, Fay, Frese, Harms, & Gao, 2014), proactive personality is defined as a personality trait that is relatively independent from outside influences (Bateman & Crant, 1993) and therefore difficult to change. Proactive personality is highly related to the Big Five (Tornau & Frese, 2013) and it has a genetic base (Li, Song, Arvey, & Zhang, 2013). In contrast, proactive behavior, and more specifically personal initiative behavior is changeable. For example, it is changeable as a result of modification of work conditions (Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2007). In this chapter, we concentrate on how to train personal initiative with the help of a training approach based on action regulation theory (Frese, 2009; Frese, & Zapf, 1994, Hacker, 1998; Zacher & Frese, in press).

We think of training a behavior and observing the effects of this training as the ultimate proof of a behavioral theory (Frese & Fay, 2001). We also urge other theorists to think in the same way. As long as we have not shown that a change in a relevant variable (such as personal initiative) changes putative dependent variables, we have only scratched the surface to provide causal proof for a relationship. Even longitudinal studies often still allow alternative causal interpretations (often of the “third variable” type). Therefore, it was important for us to utilize a randomized controlled group design to assess the effects of personal initiative training (Glaub, Frese, Fischer, & Hoppe, 2014) which together with other training studies in this area is going to be described in this chapter. We also shed light on the limitations of personal initiative training and give scientific and practical recommendations on how to design and investigate personal initiative training in the future.

The Sequence of Actions

As personal initiative describes proactive behavior, it has to be embedded in an individual's actions. Actions are behaviors oriented towards a goal. In line with action regulation theory (Frese, 2009; Frese, & Zapf, 1994; Hacker, 1998; Zacher & Frese, in press), every action process starts with a goal (see Table 16.1). The next step is the search for important information necessary to reach the goal and the conscious, as well as unconscious elaboration of plans. Plans work as action programs and structure how to reach the selected goal. They function as a bridge between thoughts and action (Gollwitzer, 1999; Miller, Galanter, & Pribram, 1960). When people put plans into practice, they receive feedback concurrently to acting and after an action cycle. People are able to use feedback to adapt their behavior by comparing intended and performed action.

The action sequence should not be conceptualized as fixed phases that have to follow a certain order. Far from it, goal setting, information search, planning, executing, and feedback can and often do occur in a scrambled sequence. We only suggest that all of these aspects of the action sequence are important for action. An action sequence can return to earlier phases of the sequence. For example, after having set a goal and developed a plan, people might already search for feedback on the planning before the execution of actions.

Personal Initiative

To explain personal initiative in human actions we build on the facet model of personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001). According to the facet model, personal initiative consists of three components. Individuals who show personal initiative act in a (1) self-starting, (2) future-oriented and (3) persistent way throughout the action process. Thus, personal initiative constitutes the opposite of passive and reactive behavior (Grant & Ashford, 2008).

Acting in a self-starting way means that individuals start actions themselves without waiting for instructions from outside or simply reacting to personal role requirements resulting from the various work roles (Frese & Fay, 2001). Also, taking up ideas that are “in the air” would not count as a personal initiative (however, improving those ideas, can very well be an example of personal initiative). A secretary, for example, shows self-starting working behavior when her superior asks her to correct the grammar of an e-mail and she does not just improve the grammar but makes a suggestion concerning the contents of the e-mail to improve its quality.

Future-oriented behavior involves the consideration of and preparation for possible future set-backs and opportunities (Frese & Fay, 2001). An example of someone showing future-oriented behavior is an entrepreneur who anticipates future product or service trends in his sector in order to avoid declining sales figures for his company. Originally, we called the component of future-oriented behavior “proactive behavior” (in line with the original Latin concept of “pro” meaning for and before). This has produced some confusion, because Frese and Fay (2001) used the term for a subset of personal initiative, while the rest of the literature (e.g., Bindl & Parker, 2010) used personal initiative as a subset of proactivity. We now also refer to proactivity as the more general term.

Persistence constitutes the third component of personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001). Personal initiative leads to changes and changes most often co-occur with problems and obstacles. Showing persistence means that the individual confronted with a problem does not give up when internal or external barriers appear. Internal barriers are barriers inside the individual, for example, frustration or lack of motivation to continue. External barriers are caused by the environment, for example, shortage of money or the lack of access to important information. Being rejected by a potential employer, for instance, can lead to internal barriers for a jobless person in terms of feelings of uselessness. This may make the unemployed stop his or her job search. In contrast, when confronted with barriers, a persistent person puts extra effort into the continuation of job search. Studies by Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly (2007) about persistence to which they refer as “grit” underline its importance as a crucial factor for success in many different settings.

We see the three components of personal initiative as not isolated from each other. They constitute a positive syndrome of behaviors that are mutually interdependent (Frese & Fay, 2001). Thinking about future problems and opportunities initiates self-starting behavior and the will to overcome barriers. On the other hand, starting an action in a self-starting way gives new perspectives on how an individual can prepare for the future and increases persistence. Finally, persistence leads to new self-starting actions and stimulates the consideration of future problems and opportunities as this helps to overcome further obstacles.

The most proximal antecedents of personal initiative are orientations (Frese & Fay, 2001). Orientations are of medium specificity; that is that they are neither

general personality traits, nor specific attitudes towards a concrete task (Frese & Fay, 2001). Orientations shown to affect personal initiative are control appraisals, self-efficacy beliefs, control and responsibility aspirations, change orientation, handling of errors, and active coping (Frese & Fay, 2001).

Control appraisals, self-efficacy beliefs, control, and responsibility aspirations lead people to believe that they can control a situation and that they have an impact on several outcomes (Folkman, 1984). Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capability to effectively display functional behaviors (Bandura, 1997). Control and responsibility aspirations describe peoples' readiness to accept responsibilities that result from the perceived control they have (Frese & Fay, 2001). We think that taking on responsibility is particularly important in the context of small businesses, as well as in the area of unemployment. All too often, the call for outside help, be it to the state (as in some Western countries), some donor (as in developing countries) or the family (as in collectivist countries), is an attempt to dodge the responsibilities for one's own well-being. The foundation of personal initiative and its action orientation implies that people have to be responsible for their own situation. Thus, waiting for others or for a better environment, or hoping for other people to intervene, is often dysfunctional. Rather one should pursue one's own goals, take whatever help one is getting, but never relinquish the responsibility to others. Taking over responsibility is one key premise of personal initiative. Control cognitions (such as taking responsibility, control expectation for outcomes and for one's actions) have been shown to be causal mediators in the process of work characteristics and how they influence personal initiative (Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2007). However, they also influence the work characteristics directly and indirectly – this means that there are cycles in the sense of positive cycles that lead to higher personal initiative and downwards cycles that lead to a reduction of personal initiative (Frese et al., 2007).

The other three orientations – change orientation, handling of errors and active coping – help to deal with potentially negative consequences of personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001). Personal initiative often leads to changes and change orientation prevents individuals from developing a fear of these changes (Frese, 2001). Similarly, managing errors reduces fear because again, personal initiative is different and self-starting and, therefore, errors can easily occur when showing personal initiative. Finally, personal initiative may lead to more stress, as changes often cause fear. People who use active coping strategies know that they are able to deal with the potential negative outcomes of personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001).

Developing the Training Content Along the Facet Model

The three personal initiative components can be related to each aspect of the action sequence (Frese & Fay, 2001), producing Table 16.1. We used this table to develop the training content, the cases, and the exercises of the training (cf. Glaub et al., 2014).

TABLE 16.1 Personal Initiative Facets in Action Sequence (Frese & Fay, 2001) with Action Principles and Training Examples (based on Glaub et al., 2014)

<i>Goal setting</i>	<i>Personal initiative element</i>	<i>Learning goals</i>	<i>Action principle examples</i>	<i>Example in work context</i>	<i>Example in unemployment context</i>
<i>Self-starting</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set active goals • Redefine goals if necessary • Set different goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be different from those around you! • Add something interesting and new to the things that you do! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a self-developed goal for an innovation within the company • Go beyond what is required by the company; think of new ways to approach your work that makes it more interesting and that helps the company's achievement of its vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a new high and specific active goal to approach employers, e.g., write 30 applications per week or write an application only after having researched the company for 1 hour on the internet
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify future problems and opportunities • Translate them into goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think of what you/ your company needs in 2 years! Develop specific goals for it! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Base the innovation on future trends and potential future problems in the company's sector or in society in general, e.g., based on the demographic changes in society, develop a partial retirement model for your company that allows people to work beyond retirement age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about possible future developments in the intended field of work and make sure that you meet them, e.g., learn how to use the latest technology in your field of work
<i>Future-oriented</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect goals when barriers occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When barriers occur, think of three ways you can deal with them – Don't get stuck on only one idea! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't give up the innovation immediately if others (i.e., your supervisor) consider the idea as inconvertible, try to convince them of your idea, prepare, for example, a convincing presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain job search despite several letters of refusal and subsequent frustration and demotivation, let these barriers be the reason for even more initiative to get a job
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent 			

Information collection and prognosis

Self-starting

- Search actively for information
- Approach employers actively!
- Look for at least two sources of information that are rare and hard to find!
- Use information to prepare for possible threats and opportunities
- Approach the job market actively, do not wait until other people suggest job vacancies, e.g., ask employers about divisions that could need further support or let employees of desired companies tell you what the companies' demands are

Future-oriented

- Use information to prepare for possible threats and opportunities
- Ask yourself: What could be possible threats and opportunities for me/ my company in 3 months/ 2 years?
- Inform yourself about future trends that the innovation could cover and identify possible adaptabilities of the innovation in case of problems, e.g., think about campaigns that increase the model's acceptance among employees
- Inform yourself about which company will hire personnel in the future and which company might have to discharge employees, use this information for strategic job search

Persistent

- Maintain information search even if finding information is difficult
- Identify at least one alternative to every information source that you use!
- Maintain information search on the job market despite difficulties like the lack of information on vacancies matching your job profile, look for different information sources such as friends or employees of desired companies

(continued)

TABLE 16.1 (continued)

<i>Plan and execution</i>	<i>Learning goals</i>	<i>Action principle examples</i>	<i>Example in work context</i>	<i>Example in unemployment context</i>
<i>Personal initiative element</i>				
<i>Self-starting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make plans that demand one's own action • Be flexible in planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the actions that you yourself are going to undertake! • Make a weekly plan on when you are going to undertake which action! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a detailed plan on how to introduce the innovation, think about personal actions, e.g., when and how do you want to present, design, and implement the partial retirement model? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a detailed plan on how to actively approach possible employers, e.g., which employers will you approach on which day and how many applications will you submit in which timeframe?
<i>Future-oriented</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop back-up plans • Develop plans to seize potential opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask yourself: What are potential barriers on my way to the goal? • Make at least one plan B per barrier on how to overcome it or how to turn it into an opportunity! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan B in case the first plan on how to introduce the innovation does not work out, for example, when and how will you implement the campaign increasing employees' acceptance of the model in case they do not support the idea? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan B on how to find a suitable job in case the intended strategy is not successful, e.g., think about possibilities of self-employment or working abroad in case none of the national companies is interested in your application
<i>Persistent</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go back to plan as quickly as possible in case of difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't let negative emotions like frustration stop you from following your plan! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go back to the initial plan on how to introduce the innovation after difficulties have been overcome, e.g., continue following your implementation plan in case the campaign has increased acceptance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go back to the initial plan on how to actively approach possible employers after having switched to job search on the international job market

Monitoring and feedback

Self-starting

- Search for feedback without waiting for others to provide it
- Approach people in your environment and let them give you their positive and negative feedback on your goal-directed behavior!
- Ask yourself: Does my behavior lead to future work success? What exactly should I change?
- Ask colleagues and supervisors for their feedback, implement feedback sessions on a regular basis, also approach people outside of the company in order to get their unaffected feedback

Future-oriented

- Use feedback to detect future problems and opportunities
- Use feedback from colleagues and supervisors to make the innovation sustainable, ask them, for example, what they consider as possible future threats and opportunities for an implemented partial retirement model
- Ask friends and relatives, as well as employees and employers in the desired field of work for their feedback on different aspects of your job search such as the quality of your applications or your persuasiveness in job interviews

Persistent

- Continue with feedback search in case of obstacles
- Look for at least one alternative to every feedback source that you use!
- Keep asking for feedback even if people refuse due to a lack of time or motivation, try to find a more suitable date and time for a talk in this case
- Think about other feedback possibilities such as specialized journals or experts in the field of demographic change
- Keep asking for feedback even if people refuse due to a lack of time or motivation, try to convince them to give you feedback or to give you the contacts of other helpful people that could do so
- Think about other feedback sources such as job interview trainings or company websites informing about company values

Goal Setting

According to goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2002), goals that are difficult and specific generate the highest performance. Non-concrete and abstract goals leave room for interpretation and thus allow being satisfied with a low level of effort (Locke, Chah, Harrison, & Lustgarten, 1989). Personal initiative training should, therefore, teach participants to set themselves (and others) challenging and specific goals.

However, our approach suggests, on top of goal-setting theory, two important aspects: First, we teach training participants to come up with self-developed goals because goals need to be self-starting and goals given by others are not self-starting. Sometimes the larger higher-order goal may be given but self-starting goals are used to embellish and reinterpret them; this is for instance the case for employees who increase quality without being told, for unemployed people who use creative job search strategies or for entrepreneurs who are creative in marketing – the overall goals (company goals, goal to find a job, goal to increase sales) may be very similar; however there is still room for active self-starting goals. During personal initiative training for the unemployed, for example, participants have to learn that they should not perceive the overall goal to get a new job as externally dictated, but that they should turn this goal into several active internal goals. They are for example asked to formulate challenging self-starting goals that are as specific as possible and that allow them to become active right away (i.e. “I want to write 15 job applications to potential employers a day and call the companies if they do not answer within the next two weeks”). Second, as a self-starting goal implies a certain element of newness and creativity, the training teaches the participants to develop goals that are different from those typically pursued by others in a similar situation. These different goals drive creative new ideas to achieve them.

Future-oriented goal setting implies that the person needs to think about future problems and opportunities; these are then translated into goals. Often thinking about goals in a future-oriented way may help to differentiate one’s goals from others in the same situation.

During the training, participants also have to learn how to protect existing goals when the situation threatens its realization or leads to frustration. Thus to some extent, the persistence and overcoming barriers notion of personal initiative implies a certain degree of self-regulation and self-management (Frayne & Latham, 1987). We can only be persistent if we protect goals from distraction or from strong frustration leading to prematurely giving up a goal.

Information Collection and Prognosis

Personal initiative training teaches participants how to search for information actively, instead of waiting until information is provided. This information can

also be used to prepare for possible threats and opportunities and to inform oneself of new fields of action that could be of future relevance. Information search is sometimes difficult and exhausting. Consequently, personal initiative training prepares for these situations and teaches the individual how to maintain the search despite difficulties.

Planning

Planning is the mental simulation of actions (Zacher & Frese, in press). The aim of a plan is to implement the goal. Thus, one of the most important functions of planning is to keep the goal intact even when things do not turn out as the plan has prescribed. Personal initiative training teaches participants planning flexibility. There needs to be some stability in planning, but plans should not be confused with recipes that are used without thought once they have been developed (Gielnik, Frese, & Stark, 2015; Mumford, Mecca, & Watts, 2015). Rather they should be conceived to be flexible, with improvisational interruptions and with flexible approaches. In the context of entrepreneurship, for example, people often do not have the necessary resources and need to invent them on the spot (Baker, Miner, & Eesley, 2003). Thus, planning needs to be open to changing conditions and flexible approaches. This is a major aspect of personal initiative training because personal initiative requires flexible approaches to dealing with barriers.

A self-starting plan does not just have to be active, but people need to keep plan execution in their own hands – delegation of plan execution to others often leads to a kind of ballistic plan (Dörner & Schaub, 1994). Similarly, to throwing a ball into a game and then turning your back to it, a ballistic approach implies that one does not continue the supervision of a plan execution well enough – either one relies too much on one's own routines or on other people. Personal initiative training participants learn how to make active plans relying on their own actions or own supervision of their execution.

In order to develop the participants' competence to plan in the long-term, personal initiative training teaches the development of back-up plans that prepare for potential problems as well as plans to seize upcoming opportunities in order to be prepared when they arise. As difficulties in reaching the set goal will most likely occur, training participants have to learn how to develop a plan B in case of barriers and how to deal with problems flexibly. Personal initiative training prepares participants to return back to plans as quickly as possible if unpredicted events interrupt the execution of existing plans. Another training approach focusing on overcoming barriers in the workplace is the web-based training for the development of psychological capital by Luthans, Avey, and Patera (2008). The training aims at strengthening the participants' resilience by showing short clips of resilient role models, providing guidance on how to apply resilient behavior in the workplace and offering the possibility to transfer the learning to participants' own work situations.

There are two potential problems of planning. One is the prognosis of the time needed to execute a plan – most often the prediction of execution is wrong (Buehler & Griffin, 2015). Outsiders are often much better in predicting the time needed to complete a plan. Thus, people should learn to look at a plan with the coolness of an outsider rather than with the hot ideation of a person who is just doing this task (Buehler & Griffin, 2015). Therefore, it is so important to think of potential problems that could appear and to have a clear understanding of how far one is still removed from accomplishing a task. Moreover, the knowledge of past mistakes that one has made in executing past plans is particularly useful (Buehler & Griffin, 2015). This is in keeping with our emphasis on this training to learn from errors and to record errors.

There is another problem that planning can bring along. Some people use a high degree of intensive planning as a shield to allow them to procrastinate (van Eerde, 2015). Using planning for this purpose may be the result of anxiety. Actions are finite interventions into reality; thus, they cannot be taken back. Personal initiative training teaches people the priority of action – thus, in case of doubt we need to act quickly, with an adjustable and flexible approach (plan), rather than trying to find that one perfect plan that encompasses all eventualities

In the end, everything we think is and should be in the service of the action and not the other way around – that is the most important premise of action regulation theory. However, the doing becomes better when people plan because planning helps to improve actions before they are performed.

Feedback

Feedback needs to be actively sought and developed. Personal initiative training teaches how to actively look for feedback without waiting for other people or situations to provide it. Participants begin to proactively use feedback in order to detect possible future problems and opportunities. They also learn to continue with feedback search, even when obstacles arise. Personal initiative training encourages participants to constantly enhance their search of not just positive, but also, importantly, negative feedback in order to promote personal and professional development. Proactive feedback seeking contributes to increased performance in many ways. It gives an insight into other people's evaluation of own work behavior, into the relative importance of different goals, into the way of operating in certain environments and into possibilities to improve performance (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; London, Larsen, & Thisted, 1999; Morrison, 1993; Porath & Bateman, 2006). Thus, getting feedback increases self-awareness, reduces people's uncertainties concerning their ability to change behavior, and helps to decrease stress levels (DeRue & Wellman, 2009). Negative feedback is of particular importance, as it allows for correcting behavior for the sake of increasing performance (Frese & Keith, 2015). For example, managers who actively search for negative feedback

show better performance (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). One conception of the personal initiative training approach is influenced by the error management training perspective and the emphasis on learning from errors (Keith & Frese, 2008). This is reflected in our focus on the active development of feedback signals, on the detection of errors (negative feedback) and on writing errors down. At the same time, the training teaches participants how not to be intimidated by errors and how to use them as learning instruments for future behavior (dealing with problems actively in the sense of active self-regulation).

Making the Training Work: From Action Principles to Personal Initiative

In our introduction, we stated that teaching personal initiative is a contradiction in and of itself. Nevertheless, there is, fortunately, a way to do it. It is possible to start with the development of an active mindset through action principles which participants then interiorize and refine with the help of action training within and outside of the training situation. Personal initiative training can put into motion a positive cycle (Sonnentag & Frese, 2012).

Our training combines a top-down approach (learning general principles that compose an operative mental model) with a bottom-up approach (learning through action and flexibilization of routines by making and learning from errors). The training material contains action principles from scientific results. We work from the assumptions of evidence-based management (Rousseau, 2012). Evidence-based management means that managers use a combination of good scientific evidence, evidence from their own context of work and own work experience that they have thoughtfully evaluated (Briner, Denyer, & Rousseau, 2009; Glaub et al., 2014). Thus, a science-based approach helps us to develop action principles (Locke, 2004). At the same time, we are praxeology oriented – we believe that all trained behavior must be applicable to the situation of the trainees. Table 16.2 describes the different facets of action training.

Action Principles for Rudimentary Operative Mental Models

The personal initiative activation process starts with the creation of operative mental models of personal initiative. Operative mental models are at the core of actions (Frese & Zapf, 1994; Hacker, 1998). They are models that people use to interact with their tasks and environment (Norman, 1983). The term “operative” underlines the necessity that mental model characteristics must be oriented towards the practice of the participants. An operative mental model of personal initiative in the context of job search, for instance, includes personal initiative behaviors in the job-seeking process like self-starting interactions with potential employers and the proactive search for job opportunities that societal developments could provide in

TABLE 16.2 Summary of the Facets of Personal Initiative Training

<i>Facet</i>	<i>Contents</i>
Action principles for rudimentary operative mental models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of action principles from the best scientific evidence (if possible: meta-analyses) • Provision of good examples from the participants' environment • Creation of a rudimentary understanding of personal initiative • Use of cases to illustrate the importance of action principles • First transfer to own business
Verbalization and interiorization of operative mental models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbalization of personal initiative action principles • Development of personal initiative action schemes
Action training for more sophisticated operative mental models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First actions within the training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transfer of learnings ○ Trainer and participant feedback ○ Error learning through metacognition ○ Coping with frustration
Training transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routinization of personal initiative • Action training in the work environment • Mainly self-correction and self-feedback • Transfer of personal initiative to real-life tasks • Flexibilization of personal initiative

the near future. Stored behaviors change and develop in interaction with the job market. To create operative mental models of personal initiative in the context of work, trainers should explain each facet of personal initiative and teach participants how to execute goal setting, information search, planning, and feedback seeking in a self-starting, future-oriented, and persistent way.

While the operative mental model is developed top down, the bottom-up approach includes learning through action (Frese & Zapf, 1994). This aspect will be discussed below.

Action principles (Glaub et al., 2014; Locke, 2004; Rousseau & McCarthy, 2007) serve as good rules. They link personal initiative theory to participants' actions. In many training situations, knowledge conveyed is not applicable – often because the knowledge may be too complex, too abstract, or the connection between thought and action may be too weak. Consequently, people cannot transform knowledge into operative mental models which then, in turn, lead to personal initiative. Action principles allow transferring the abstract action background into “rules of thumb” that are teachable, usable,

and adaptable to the action context (Glaub et al., 2014). Action principles should be derived from the current best evidence in the respective context (Briner et al., 2009; Rousseau & McCarthy, 2007). In addition, they should be easily understandable. Examples of action principles from personal initiative training for entrepreneurs are “Look actively for information. Don’t wait until people tell you” for the self-starting component in the information collection and prognosis phase, “Set some long-term goals with a timeframe of half a year to one year” for the proactivity component in the goal-setting phase or “Anticipate possible problems and develop back-up plans” for the persistence component in the plan and execution phase.

The functionality of action principles of personal initiative has to become evident, that is training participants should understand that following action principles leads to increased success in their respective work situation. Cases from the participants’ own work environment that describe why personal initiative action principles are useful in relevant action areas and why action principles help to acquire personal initiative can help here. They usually depict either positive or negative role models of personal initiative in various work settings. Research suggests that using models in training contributes to better training outcomes in terms of self-efficacy and performance (Gist, 1989). We also know that giving concrete examples to illustrate abstract knowledge increases learning success (Anderson, Reder, & Simon, 1996). In the context of entrepreneurship, for instance, cases can portray entrepreneurs following the action principle “Look actively for information. Don’t wait until people tell you”, as well as the positive consequences resulting from this behavior such as the gain of new clients due to the competitive advantage resulting from the gathered information. Case-based reasoning is then important for the development of planning (Mumford, Giorgini, & Steele, 2015; Osburn, Hatcher, & Zongrone, 2015).

Verbalization and Interiorization of Operative Mental Models

Thus, participants of personal initiative training develop first rudimentary operative mental models. As participants are supposed to show self-starting, proactive, and persistent behavior on their own, independently from outside activation, other steps have to follow. They should allow for participants’ autonomous correction and completion of operative mental models and stand-alone development of personal initiative routines.

Interiorization (Galperin, 1966) means that participants of personal initiative training develop their own internal action schemes which guide their actions. Verbalization, defined as the inner or outer verbal fixation of former non-verbal work tasks (Tomaszewski, 1981), constitutes the link between external personal initiative stimulation through training and internal action schemes promoting

personal initiative (Hacker, 1998, Luria, 1970). Through verbalization, individuals process external information, in this case mainly personal initiative action principles and their use and importance in the context of work, and translate them into internal action goals. These goals are then the basis of interiorization processes. This may lead to actions by the participants that have not been supported by the trainer. For example, we often observed training participants who developed networks among themselves.

Action Training for More Sophisticated Operative Mental Models

Learning by action is necessary for the development of operative mental models and respective action schemes (Frese, 2009; Frese & Zapf, 1994). There are three arguments why learning through action is required (Frese, Beimel, & Schoenborn, 2003). First, human beings are by their very nature active as they are dependent on actions to survive. Second, learning through action creates a deeper relationship between thoughts and actions and therefore actions are necessary to get from declarative knowledge (“knowing that”) to more action-oriented procedural knowledge (“knowing how”). Third, actions help to discover the situational conditions under which action knowledge is applicable or non-applicable, making acquired knowledge and skills more flexible.

Case studies already provide support for creating operative mental models of personal initiative. They set the stage for a first engagement with personal initiative. However, in order to enable transfer, participants should actively apply their learnings from case studies and the resulting personal initiative action schemes to their own work situation. In the context of job search, for example, it is not enough to only analyze cases of self-starting and reactive job seekers. Participants have to subsequently think of their own reactive routines and turn them into self-starting job searching behavior. The repeated engagement with, and active application of, different personal initiative facets during training leads to the first routinization of personal initiative actions. As a result, new active behaviors replace old reactive routines.

As people derive their motivation to change from the comparison of how they are and how they want to be (Carver & Scheier, 1998), feedback on participant behavior plays a crucial role in the action training phases of personal initiative training. Feedback mechanisms are the most important source of behavior correction (Frese & Zapf, 1994; Miller et al., 1960). Positive and negative feedback have different functions which are both vital for the behavioral change through personal initiative training. The main function of positive feedback is to encourage individuals to proceed with their behavior and to develop self-confidence. Negative feedback, in contrast, points to behavior patterns that are incompatible with the aims of their actions and leads to self-reflection and metacognition, meaning the individual’s ability of developing plans and evaluating

their goal approach (Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, & Campione, 1983; Ford, Smith, Weissbein, Gully, & Salas, 1998; Gully & Chen, 2010).

Errors are a particularly valuable form of negative feedback in action training. They constitute a very direct and informative knowledge base making the participants aware of dysfunctional behavior (Frese, 2009; Keith & Frese, 2008) and contributing to the correction and completion of operative mental models. Another advantage of errors is their capacity to prevent premature routinization of personal initiative. An important precondition for a positive impact of errors on behavior is that training conditions encourage participants to make errors and that trainers communicate the value of errors for improvement (Frese et al., 2003; Heimbeck, Frese, Sonnentag, & Keith, 2003). In the context of personal initiative training for call center agents, for example, role plays can offer a platform for making errors. A role play can, for instance, help a participant having a wrong mental model of persistent customer acquisition who thinks that being persistent means to continue persuading a customer to buy a product with the same arguments again and again. During the role play, he experiences that this behavior could be detrimental because clients become annoyed. Before his mental model of persistence in customer acquisition ends in routinization, he can now complete it with different strategies for how to deal with customer refusal.

Feedback mechanisms should be adapted in the course of action training. During the first exercises, extensive and detailed feedback on every exercise and presentation helps to refine operative mental models of personal initiative. In later phases of the training, when mental models are already more sophisticated, feedback can get more general (cf. Frese et al., 2003). While in the beginning, feedback should mainly come from trainers, they should more and more fade into the background and leave the task to provide feedback to the participants themselves. By this means, participants become able to self-regulate existing behaviors and action schemes and get in control of their personal initiative.

Training Transfer

Acquired skills and knowledge do not exert long-time influence on behavior if they are not connected to the participants' respective job situation (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). During the training, participants learn how to transfer action principles of personal initiative to their own job environment with the help of exercises in which they analyze and change their current work situation. Although this practice already provides the first link between training content and the work situation, participants must repeatedly apply their personal initiative to concrete work situations in their daily professional life in order to fully routinize personal initiative. This setting provides natural feedback from available feedback sources. Furthermore, real-life action training allows for the training of flexible usage of action principles. Therefore, at the end of personal

initiative training, every training participant should develop their own personal project (Little, 1983) based on a job-related goal, and operationalize it in weekly plans of how to achieve the project goal. To assure constant feedback during the realization of their personal projects, participants should discuss their progress with a peer taken from the other training participants.

Personal projects provide the opportunity of making further errors, this time in the real-life context. They further correct wrong operative mental models of the intended behavior (Frese & Zapf, 1994). An entrepreneur who develops a personal project with the goal to increase sales by distributing business cards, for example, benefits from this project in two ways. First, the project gives him the chance to put his knowledge of the necessity to be different from his competitors into practice. He can now actively pursue what he has theoretically grasped. Second, while pursuing his plan, he might find that the distribution of business cards does not really serve as a unique selling proposition raising sales levels in his sector and he can, therefore, correct his mental model of successful differentiation from others.

Personal Initiative Trainings in Different Contexts of Work

In the following, we present the effects of personal initiative on work performance in various settings. We then illustrate different training studies aiming at the increase of work performance through personal initiative. Some of the training studies explicitly concentrate on training of personal initiative; others address the orientations which lead to personal initiative or related constructs.

Table 16.3 depicts the design and main results of training interventions in the context of entrepreneurship, employment, and unemployment. Some of these training interventions have the status of pilot training. However, whenever a pilot training intervention appears to achieve its purpose, it makes sense to develop a more sophisticated experimental design and to give this training intervention a trial.

Training for Entrepreneurs

In the domain of entrepreneurship, personal initiative is crucial for business success for three reasons. First, according to Shepherd (2014), proactivity facilitates facing opportunities and difficulties in the entrepreneur's environment. Second, due to the growing speed in which businesses have to operate, the striving for being the first instead of a follower of competitors constitutes a major competitive advantage (Shepherd, 2014). Third, as entrepreneurs are oftentimes solely responsible for their business (Frese, 2009) because there are no organizational institutions and processes that structure their actions, they need to show proactive behavior. Research substantiates this thought. Personal initiative enhances

TABLE 16.3 Overview of Different Personal Initiative Training interventions and Related Training Approaches

<i>Trainings for entrepreneurs</i>						
<i>Author(s)</i>	<i>N training</i>	<i>N control</i>	<i>Aimed change in</i>	<i>Theoretical background</i>	<i>Training design</i>	<i>Training outcomes</i>
Frese, Hass, & Friedrich (2015)	36	97	Personal Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Initiative Theory • Action Regulation Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-test/post-test Control group • No randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased personal initiative • Increased number of employees
Glaub et al. (2014)	56	53	Personal Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Initiative Theory • Action Regulation Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-test/post-test Control group • Randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased personal initiative • Increased sales levels • Increased number of employees • Lower failure rate
Solomon, Frese, Friedrich, & Glaub (2013)	27	30	Personal Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Initiative Theory • Action Regulation Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-test/post-test Control group • No randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased personal initiative • Increased innovation • Increased proactive goal-setting and planning • Increased sales levels • No effect on time management

(continued)

TABLE 16.3 (continued)

<i>Author(s)</i>	<i>N training</i>	<i>N control</i>	<i>Aimed change in</i>	<i>Theoretical background</i>	<i>Training design</i>	<i>Training outcomes</i>
Coch (2002)	8	7	Stress Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Regulation Theory Social Learning Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-test/post-test Control group No randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased self-efficacy Decreased emotional and cognitive strain Decreased job-induced tensions Decreased helplessness Increased work change No effect on locus of control No effect on being strong-willed No effect on change activity No effect on time pressure No effect on psychomatic affections and depression No effect on job satisfaction
Frayne & Latham (1987)	20	20	Self-Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Learning Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-test/post-test Control group Randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased perceived self-efficacy Increased job attendance

Raabe et al. (2007)	205	0	Self-Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Initiative Theory Action Regulation Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-test/post-test No control group No randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased self-knowledge Better plan quality Higher goal commitment More active career self-management
Schildbach (2002), Pulwitt (2002), & Garman (2002) (unpublished)	12	10	Personal Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Initiative Theory, emphasis on orientations Action Regulation Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-test/post-test Control group No randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased career satisfaction Increased personal initiative Increased self-efficacy Increased process-oriented error competence Increased motivational control
Strauss & Parker (2014)	≈20/20	≈72	Proactivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cybernetic Control Perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-test/post-test Control group Randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased emotional and cognitive strain Decreased passivity Increased individual task proactivity in problem-focused intervention for individuals experiencing high role overload Increased organization member proactivity and involvement in shaping the future of the organization in vision-focused intervention for future-oriented individuals

(continued)

TABLE 16.3 (continued)

<i>Author(s)</i>	<i>N training</i>	<i>N control</i>	<i>Aimed change in</i>	<i>Theoretical background</i>	<i>Training design</i>	<i>Training outcomes</i>
Eden and Aviram (1993)	39	27	Self-Efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Efficacy Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-test/post-test • Control group • Randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased general self-efficacy • Increased job-search activity for people low in initial general self-efficacy • Higher reemployment rate for people low in initial general self-efficacy
Fresse et al. (2002)	8	0	Personal Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Initiative Theory, emphasis on orientations • Action Regulation Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-test/post-test • No control group • No randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased personal initiative • Increased competence expectation • Decreased emotional and cognitive strain • Less psychosomatic symptoms and depressiveness
Noordzij, van Hooff, van Mierlo, van Dam, & Born (2013)	161	84	Self-Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal Orientation Theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-test/post-test • Control group • No randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased self-confidence • Increased job-search learning goal orientation • Decreased job-search performance avoidance • Better dealing with negative experiences

Yanar, Budworth, and Latham (2009)	27	28	Self-Efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Cognitive Theory • Pre-test/post-test • Control group • Randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of different job-seeking strategies • More planning of job-search activities • Increased reemployment rate • No increase in self-efficacy • Increased self-efficacy • Increased job search behavior • Higher rate of secured employment compared to control group
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Training for other target groups

Searle (2008)	44 in 2 groups	51	Personal Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Initiative Theory • Action Regulation Theory • Pre-test/post-test • Control group • R.randomization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No increase in self-reported personal initiative • Only short-term increase in independent ratings of personal initiative • Less strain compared to control group, but no difference between PI treatment and a stressor reduction program
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business success for small and medium size business owners (Frese, 2000; Glaub et al., 2014; Krauss, Frese, Friedrich, & Unger, 2005). There is also evidence for the impact of personal initiative on sales (Crant, 1995) and entrepreneurial performance (Glaub et al., 2014; Solomon, Frese, Friedrich, & Glaub, 2013).

One example of personal initiative training in the entrepreneurial context is the randomized controlled field intervention by Glaub et al. (2014) which used the above-mentioned action training approach (see Table 16.3). It encouraged participants' personal initiative in every part of the entrepreneurial action sequence. The training promoted the interiorization of entrepreneurial personal initiative action principles (Glaub et al., 2014). Participants worked on entrepreneurial cases with high or low personal initiative, applied their new knowledge to their own context and developed personal projects which they implemented with the help of another participant as implementation partner giving feedback. The training was successful in increasing personal initiative of training participants and led to higher business success in terms of sales, number of employees, and low failure rates.

Other personal initiative training approaches similar to the one described above are the training by Frese, Hass, and Friedrich (2015) for small-scale business owners in Germany as well as the training by Solomon et al. (2013) for owner-managers of small businesses in South Africa (see Table 16.3). The two training interventions, both of them quasi-experiments with a pre-test post-test design and a control group enhanced participants' personal initiative. For German entrepreneurs, this increase then positively affected the number of employees (Frese et al., 2015). In the South African context, personal initiative subsequent to the training caused a rise in business sales, as well as better business performance in terms of proactive goal-setting, planning, and innovation (Solomon et al., 2013). An effect on time management was not detectable.

Training for Employees

In the context of white collar occupation, personal initiative leads to active self-management of one's own career, high commitment to the organization and the introduction of innovations. Research provides evidence for the positive impact of proactivity in general and personal initiative on employee performance. On the individual level, proactivity has a positive influence on career management, which is in turn linked to the employee's career satisfaction (Raabe, Frese, & Beehr, 2007). Employees behaving in a proactive way receive higher salaries, get promoted more frequently and have a higher probability of earning rewards (Grant, Nurmohamed, Ashford, & Dekas, 2011; Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999; Van Scotter, Motowidlo, & Cross, 2000). On the organizational level, due to the constantly changing work environment, organizations are more than ever dependent on their employees' personal initiative (Axtell & Parker, 2003). There are positive effects of employees' proactivity

on affective commitment towards their organization (Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010). Also, personal initiative is crucial for initiating and going ahead with innovations (Tornau & Frese, 2013).

One intervention example is the career management training to stimulate employees' active career building by Raabe et al. (2007). It was guided by action regulation theory and successfully focused on the increase of self-knowledge, goal commitment, and the quality of career planning as antecedents of active self-management behaviors (see Table 16.3). The one group pre-test/post-test design intervention addressed rank and file employees of a large international company based in Germany and aimed at fostering active behavior in all phases of the action sequence for managing one's own career. Throughout the training, trainers communicated that employees should actively care for their own career management without waiting for supervisors and colleagues from the human resource department to plan their careers for them. Participants had to develop career goals and plans for their next five years of employment. In addition, they were supposed to look for information that could help them to achieve their goals and mentally simulate actions that would lead them to goal attainment, including dealing with potential problems during the pursuit of their plans. 360-degree feedback on participants' strengths and weaknesses, as well as feedback on their actions and result presentations, provided the possibility to correct career-building behavior. The successful increase in active career building initiated a more active career self-management which then, in turn, led to more career satisfaction.

There are two other personal initiative trainings for employees which are based on action regulation theory (see Table 16.3). One is the personal initiative pilot training for employees of an international company in the financial sector by Schildbach (2002), Pulwitt (2002) and Garman (2002). The other training is a stress management pilot training for civil servant employees by Coch (2002). Both are non-randomized pre-test/post-test control group interventions. The training in the financial sector fostered personal initiative, as well as orientations leading to personal initiative (self-efficacy, error competence, perceived control) which subsequently decreased employees' negative feelings and passivity. The stress management intervention showed mixed findings with regard to personal initiative orientations and stress management. Some postulated changes could not be found (cf. Table 16.3). Nevertheless, the training produced positive outcomes. Participants showed an increase in self-efficacy and work change, as well as a decrease in emotional and cognitive strain, job induced tensions, and the feeling of helplessness.

Another randomized controlled training intervention built on social learning theory (Frayne and Latham, 1987). It was aimed at increasing job attendance of state government employees. The training successfully increased self-efficacy, as well as job attendance after the training.

Strauss and Parker (2014) developed two randomized controlled interventions to train proactive behavior in police officers. One was a problem-focused

intervention comparing the current situation and a desired situation in the present. The other one was a vision-focused intervention comparing the current situation and a desired situation in the future. The trainings were grounded on cybernetic control perspectives. Both interventions were successful in increasing proactive behavior. Nevertheless, they did not work equally well for all police officers. The problem-focused intervention increased proactive behavior for people with high role overload, while the vision-focused intervention worked best for those high in future orientation.

Training for Job Seekers

Proactive behavior is also beneficial for (re)integration into the job market. In the context of job search, action-state orientation (composed of disengagement, persistence, and initiative and therefore related to the personal initiative concept) leads to more job search effort (Wanberg, Zhu, & Van Hooft, 2010). Job search effort, in turn, is related to faster reemployment (Kanfer, Wanberg, & Kantrowitz, 2001; Wanberg et al., 2010).

Two examples of increasing active job search behavior are the pre-test/post-test control group interventions by Eden and Aviram (1993) and Yanar, Budworth, and Latham (2009, see Table 16.3). Both of them successfully promoted self-efficacy to stimulate job-searching behavior. The self-efficacy training for job seekers with postsecondary training by Eden and Aviram (1993) used video cases and subsequent role plays to rehearse the intended job-search behaviors. Participants got feedback from other participants and trainers underlined that successful behavior in the workshop constitutes a prerequisite for future successful behavior in a job search. As a result, especially participants with low levels of self-efficacy before the training showed a higher job-search activity and a higher reemployment rate.

Yanar, Budworth, and Latham (2009) used the method of verbal self-guidance to boost women's self-efficacy regarding successful job search. The training was based on cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977) which argues that people are able to proactively shape their environments (Bandura, 2001). Participants were asked to turn negative self-statements that produce inner barriers for job search into positive statements guiding job-searching actions. The trainer modeled these actions. In addition, role plays were used to practice acting. Trainers encouraged the participants to continue using the positive statements they have developed in the training in their subsequent job search. After the training, trainees were more engaged in their job search than control group members. They were also more likely to find secured employment.

Table 16.3 depicts other training approaches for training personal initiative or personal initiative orientations in the context of unemployment. Action regulation theory is the basis for the pre-test/post-test intervention for German job seekers by Frese et al. (2002). The training worked with case studies and role plays

to routinize personal initiative, as well as with exercises for the development of more self-confidence. A rise in personal initiative, competence expectation, and self-confidence and a decrease in negative feelings and psychosomatic symptoms were the results of the training. Noordzij, van Hooft, van Mierlo, van Dam and Born (2013) used goal orientation theory as a basis for their self-regulation training with a quasi-experimental pre-test/post-test control group design. Training participants were unemployed job seekers who were registered in different branches of a reemployment-counseling agency in the Netherlands. The training taught them how to develop goals and adopt a learning goal orientation. As a result, participants increased learning goal orientation and showed less job-search performance avoidance. Participants became better in dealing with negative experiences, increased their awareness of different and more challenging job seeking strategies and intensified planning of job-search activities. Self-efficacy, in contrast, was not increased. The training promoted trainees' reemployment rate.

Evaluation of Personal Initiative Training

A successful training project should not only strive to maximize stakeholders' benefits, but also prove its usefulness (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). This implies two rules. First, the training design should allow for a meaningful evaluation. A randomized controlled field experiment (Reay, Berta, & Kohn, 2009; Shadish & Cook, 2009), which allows for direct comparison of training outcomes with a similar control group, is best here.

Second, if someone wants to evaluate personal initiative, he or she should concentrate on evaluating behavior. This sentence seems to be trivial and redundant, but it is important. Researchers should measure training effectiveness by evaluating performance before and after the training and the change in personal initiative behavior. Therefore, the distinction between proactive personality and proactive behavior (Frese & Fay, 2001; Parker & Collins, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013) is also relevant when it comes to evaluating personal initiative training. The increase in personal initiative should be measured with behavioral measures detecting changes in work-related behavior.

Searle (2008) measured training success regarding a change in personal initiative using a personal initiative self-report scale developed by Frese, Fay, Hilburger, Leng and Tag (1997). This scale asks about general beliefs regarding a participant's own personal initiative. A sample item is "Whenever something goes wrong, I search for a solution immediately". This scale is a useful instrument for measuring general personal initiative in the sense of proactive personality. However, it is not useful to measure change in behavior. Thus, we agree with Searle that this measure of proactive personality is not easily changeable through training.

Frese et al. (1997) and Frese and Fay (2001) recommend using more behavior-oriented measures. Meta-analysis results reveal that interview-based personal

initiative is more strongly related to objective success than self-evaluations or evaluations of others' personal initiative (Tornau & Frese, 2013). Asking for concrete behavior in an interview setting is a useful method of analyzing the self-starting, proactive, and persistent aspect of behavior. One possibility is the use of an interview asking for different facets of work-related behavior (Fay & Frese, 2001; Frese et al., 1997; Glaub et al., 2014). In the context of entrepreneurship, Glaub et al. (2014) conducted interviews asking the entrepreneurs who participated in personal initiative training for their entrepreneurial behavior in the past months. More specifically, they examined how the entrepreneurs approached their self-set goals, how they dealt with problems that occurred in their businesses, if and how they tested product or service quality, and if and how they introduced changes concerning several business aspects in their businesses. The interviewer notes were coded by two independent coders. Interviewers also provided barriers to participants and asked them for possible ways to overcome them (cf. Fay & Frese, 2001).

If possible, other measuring methods should accompany interview measures aiming at detecting personal initiative. Triangulation (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 1966), meaning the use of different methods to measure the same construct, ensures high validity in the measuring process. In addition to that, using further methods for personal initiative assessment can help collecting additional data not affected by social desirability. In the case of personal initiative, other evaluation methods could be the observation of individuals' behavior or the evaluation of personal initiative by significant others like their spouses (Frese, Krings, Soose, & Zempel, 1996; Frese et al., 1997).

Limitations of Personal Initiative Training

There are two sides to every coin. Personal initiative training is a useful method for increasing personal initiative in various work contexts. Personal initiative itself is, in turn, related to better performance in the trained performance domain. Nevertheless, we want to point to potential downsides of personal initiative training that may appear and that we have observed during trainings and by talking to training participants. Studies have already shown that proactivity does not always contribute to higher performance or perceived performance in the workplace (Grant et al., 2011; Wihler, Blickle, Parker Ellen III, Hochwarter, & Ferris, 2014). However, research on the disadvantages of training personal initiative does not exist. The following are first ideas that need to be empirically examined.

Personal initiative training gives people the chance to take initiative and change their life to be more successful. On the other hand, this kind of training is likely to increase aspirations. We experienced one example in the training for small and medium entrepreneurs in Lomé, Togo. During one of the training sessions, a participant said that she would like to complain. She was one of the

most avid participants in the training. The very reason that the woman was so passionate about the training also caused problems. She explained that whenever she devoted herself to life outside work, she started to feel that she was wasting her time. She felt that even breastfeeding her baby took too much of her time. Although she was saying this with a grin in her face, the woman addressed an important challenge that everyone offering personal initiative training faces. Bolino, Valcea, and Harvey (2010) warned that the focus on and expectation of proactive behavior from employees in organizational settings may cause strain. Personal initiative training, in contrast to trainings that focus on teaching concrete skills like managerial skills, provides its participants with a potentially unlimited set of tasks. As it teaches a constant self-development towards an active approach to the environment, training participants may be dissatisfied because there is a constant increase in their aspiration levels. Increasing aspiration levels, in turn, leads to more and more tasks to do.

Another possible downside is the overconfidence that some participants develop as a result of the training. Overconfidence is a cognitive bias which leads to the overestimation of one's own abilities (Koellinger, Minniti, & Schade, 2007). In the domain of entrepreneurship, for example, overconfidence leads to underestimating risks and to unrealistic goals, making non-optimal decisions, and going for promising opportunities on the basis of ambiguous information (Frese & Gielnik, 2014; Hmieleski & Baron, 2008; Simon & Houghton, 2002). In our personal initiative training for small-scale entrepreneurs, we encountered cases of entrepreneurs who developed unrealistic goals and plans as a result of their newly activated personal initiative. An example of this is that many entrepreneurs set the goal to move to a completely different locality to jump-start their businesses. For some of them, this goal is surely well-chosen and leads to the gain of new customers or the payment of lower rents. However, for some, this may also be the result of unrealistic expectations; they may believe that they can double their sales by simply changing the location. In these cases, the training may have led to an underestimation of obstacles. Trainers of personal initiative training should always emphasize a degree of realism. A balance between teaching to dare to change one's environment and the communication of a sense of reality is indispensable. Fortunately, the emphasis on searching for negative feedback and on managing errors instead of denying them may help here. Making small experiments and failures without too many risks involved is one possible method to avoid overconfidence.

In general, personal initiative training has been shown to be successful. However, a third challenge may be a high variance in participants' personal initiative that may appear as a result of personal initiative training. The majority probably gains a lot from the training. Nevertheless, some people may not change their behavior to a large extent. Although the training provides action principles giving action-oriented guidelines on how to increase personal initiative, certain participants may not be able to translate their personal initiative

knowledge into fruitful personal initiative despite our efforts. The variance in training effects might be the result of individual differences. Strauss and Parker (2014) showed that future-oriented participants were more able to benefit from a training focused on the increase in proactive behaviors by letting participants compare their current state with desired future states. However, we should also consider possible changes in training conditions that allow every training participant to benefit from personal initiative training. Further research is needed to shed light on the reasons for variance in training effects and to investigate which training supplements or additional measures could help to facilitate the translation of training content into personal initiative.

Recommendations for Research and Practice

We think that the personal initiative training for small-scale entrepreneurs (Glaub et al., 2014) is promising as a strategy to enhance performance for different target groups in the work context. However, it is possible to improve training effectiveness.

One way to increase training effectiveness may be a better match of training participants to training design. We postulate that different training participants will react differently to different training contents. Gully and Chen (2010) propose a theoretical framework of attribute-treatment interactions. They state that cognitive, behavioral, and affective training outcomes are dependent on an interaction between trainees' capabilities, demographics, personality traits, interests, values, and the training with its specific training design, features, and situational characteristics. Up to now, there is a lack of research examining the training-trainee relationship and its influence on the training effectiveness in the area of proactivity training (Strauss & Parker, 2014).

To close this gap, researchers and practitioners should address the following aspects of proactivity training. First, we need to examine participant preconditions that facilitate or prevent training success. Possibly, personal initiative training can lead to extraordinary training benefits for those participants who already have set goals, but have given them up without trying. Some training participants reported that they were feeling as if the training woke them up and made them realize that they had to work hard to attain the goals that they had already had before. These participants often belong to those who benefited the most from personal initiative training. This phenomenon can be well described by differentiating between goal intentions and implementation intentions. Goal intentions specify an outcome the individual desires and create a certain but still small commitment towards this outcome (Gollwitzer, 1999). A goal intention does not guarantee goal achievement because situational factors may distract a person from goal pursuit (Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006). Implementation intentions appear as a result of developing a plan which bridges goal intentions and actual behavior leading to goal attainment. The plan specifies when, where, and how the individual

responds to upcoming opportunities to reach a goal (Gollwitzer, 1999). Action training for personal initiative helps to develop plans. Participants who were already motivated by some goals now also find the means to attain them.

Second, research should identify trainer characteristics influencing participants' training success in proactivity training. We assume that trainers constitute a vital factor of training success in personal initiative training. Trainers can, for example, play a decisive role in increasing self-efficacy beliefs and control and responsibility aspirations regarding personal initiative work behavior. In the domain of white-collar occupation, Wu and Parker (in press) showed that leaders' support of employees in form of availability, encouragement of growth, and noninterference leads to enhanced proactive employee behavior through the increase of self-efficacy and autonomous motivation. We hypothesize that the same relationship should be true in the trainer-trainee relationship. We saw this type of phenomenon in one of our trainings. During the last session of the training one of the most encouraging trainers asked his participants to give feedback on the training and to express what they had learned. An illiterate business woman selling dried fish in a market in Togo stood up and announced that the training had changed her life as she was now thinking of herself to be strong enough to improve her business practices despite her age and lack of education. In addition, although already at an advanced age, she decided to learn how to read and write in order to be more in control of her business. The other market women in her course started to applaud and affirmed that they were feeling the same way.

Third, future research should search for potential complements of personal initiative training. One possibility would be a combination of personal initiative training with classes teaching knowledge and skills that are relevant for the respective job situation. In this manner, practitioners could minimize the risk of participants engaging in useless or even harmful actions that might arise from their awakened personal initiative. In the context of entrepreneurship training, for example, we suggest the combination of personal initiative training with classes equipping participants with knowledge on business-related topics like bookkeeping and market segmentation. We are convinced that learning from errors is a helpful method to correct former ineffective behavior. Nonetheless, we think that teaching skills can be a useful supplement to personal initiative training as it leads to a more effective correction of behavior after error making.

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17

VOICE FRAMING AND SENSEMAKING

A Construal-Level Perspective on Proactive Voice Effectiveness

Tina Davidson and Linn Van Dyne

Voice behavior refers to an employee's communication of constructively intended ideas for workplace improvement (Van Dyne, Cummings, McLean Parks, 1995). Employees may offer change-oriented suggestions in myriad ways. For example, they may include modifications in the production line to prevent accidents, innovative ways to improve product design or changes in administrative procedures. Prior work suggests that employee voice behavior is important for personal and organizational effectiveness. Employees who speak up with change-oriented ideas are generally evaluated more positively by their managers (e.g., Van Dyne & LePine, 1998; Whiting, Maynes, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2012), and experimental evidence shows that job candidates who engage in more voice are rated as more competent, receive higher overall evaluations, and higher salary recommendations than those with low voice (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Mishra, 2011). At the organizational level, employee suggestions, concerns, and ideas may enhance important organizational processes, including error detection and decision making (Morrison & Milliken, 2000), learning (Edmondson, 1999, 2003), and innovation (Nemeth & Staw, 1989).

At the same time, however, some empirical evidence suggests that voice behavior can have negative implications. For example, engaging in voice behavior can, in some cases, impair long-term salary increases and promotion opportunities (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001), cause supervisors to denigrate the competence of the voicer (Fast, Burris, & Bartel, 2014), and trigger involuntary turnover (Burris, Detert, & Romney, 2013). In addition, empirical evidence suggests that, in some instances, group voice may impair unit performance (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2011).

Given these equivocal consequences of voice behavior, research has started to investigate when and why voice behavior inhibits or enhances personal and

organizational effectiveness. For example, research has demonstrated that the type of voice makes a difference. Burriss (2012) demonstrated that challenging voice (compared to supportive voice) and Chiaburu, Peng, and Van Dyne (2015) demonstrated that complaining voice (compared to constructive voice) predicted more negative supervisor reactions. In addition, if employees display strong prosocial motives or low negative affect when they speak up, supervisors are more likely to evaluate them positively (Grant, Parker, & Collins, 2009). Furthermore, some characteristics of the supervisor, such as low managerial self-efficacy (Fast et al., 2014) and high dogmatism (Chiaburu et al., 2015), reduce supervisor's receptiveness and positive reactions toward employee voice.

This brief summary of positive and negative outcomes of voice, and some of the boundary conditions that qualify these outcomes raises the question of when and why supervisors will view voice behavior as more or less effective (useful, legitimate, and compelling). Answering this question is important, both theoretically and practically. While prior empirical work has made significant contributions to our understanding of voice outcome contingencies (e.g., Whiting et al., 2012), the field needs systematic theorizing about the effectiveness of voice behavior (Morrison, 2011, 2014) – on when and why supervisors will judge employee's change-oriented voice behavior to be more or less effective. Practically, employees, supervisors, and organizations need guidance on how to realize the potential benefits of voice behavior, while avoiding the downfalls of voice, in order to promote organizational effectiveness (Detert, Burriss, Harrison, & Martin, 2013) and to encourage subsequent high-quality voice in organizations (e.g., Janssen & Gao, in press).

In this chapter, we present a two-fold answer as to when and why voice behavior will be viewed as more effective by supervisors. For the purpose of our current theorizing, we define voice effectiveness as the extent to which the proposed suggestion or idea is deemed effective (useful, legitimate, and compelling) by the employee's supervisor. This is because prior empirical work demonstrates that supervisors play a key role in linking employee's change-oriented ideas to unit effectiveness by initiating corrective or growth-oriented actions (Detert et al., 2013). In other words, supervisors are key to implementation of employee suggestions for change.

In our theorizing, we first address the outcome contingencies of voice by differentiating between proactive and reactive voice. We review the literature and describe prior work that has implicitly recognized and investigated both proactive and reactive forms of voice behavior. We define proactive voice as self-initiated, future-oriented communication of constructively intended ideas aimed at benefiting the organization. In contrast, reactive voice occurs in response to a supervisor's request for ideas.

Drawing on Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010) and prior theoretical (Bolino, Valcea, & Harvey, 2010; Spitzmuller & Van Dyne, 2013) and empirical work (Burriss, 2012), we propose that proactive voice will lead to

more variability in supervisor judgments of effectiveness and is generally more likely to be perceived as misguided and seen as doing more harm than good (compared to reactive voice). This is because voice that is initiated by employees is less likely to match the supervisor's construal of the issue than voice that occurs in response to requests for suggestions. Next, we develop a Construal-Level Theory model that predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness, with the objective of shedding light on when and why proactive voice will be more versus less effective. Finally, we conclude by discussing ways future research can test and extend our theorizing on proactive voice.

Defining Proactive Voice

Prior work has – both explicitly and implicitly – suggested that voice behavior can be more or less proactive. For example, Bolino and colleagues (2010, p. 327) argued that employee voice “may occur in a proactive sense, as when employees point out ways to improve the organization; alternatively, it may be prompted by a supervisor question that the employee seeks to answer.” Similarly, Burris (2012) distinguished between more proactive challenging voice, which involves agentic and anticipatory upward communication of change-oriented ideas to alter, modify, or destabilize the status quo, and more reactive supportive voice, which involves upward communication supportive of the status quo and defending the way things are. Thus, just as “any behavior can be carried out reactively or proactively” (Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 9), so too can voice behavior range on a continuum from more reactive to more proactive.

Scholars have implicitly investigated voice along this reactive–proactive continuum in prior empirical work. For example, some researchers have examined employee voice as a response to supervisor consultation (Fast et al., 2014; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012), positive exchange relationships (Burris, Detert, & Chiaburu, 2008), and participative decision-making systems (Liang, Huang, & Chen, 2013). In these contexts, employees offer change-oriented ideas in response to situational cues, and hence their voice is more reactive. In other words, voice behavior, in these cases, does not depend entirely on employee's own intentionality and foresight. On the other hand, voice has been studied as a consequence of employee's dispositional or motivational states, such as duty focus (Tangirala, Kamdar, Venkataramani, & Parke, 2013), self-esteem (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998), felt obligation for constructive change (Liang, Farh, & Farh, 2012), and organizational concern (Y.-J. Kim, Van Dyne, Kamdar, & Johnson, 2013), thereby implying that voice can be self-initiated and anticipatory, originating from employees themselves.

Although this distinction between proactive and reactive behaviors is important, as has been shown in the helping and OCB domains (e.g., Bolino et al., 2010; Grant et al., 2009; Spitzmuller & Van Dyne, 2013), the field lacks explicit definitions and theorizing on proactive versus reactive voice. In this chapter,

we propose that the voice domain could benefit from more systematic and nuanced conceptualizations of more reactive and proactive voice because this distinction can have implications for how managers evaluate employee suggestions. The first step is to explicitly recognize and consider the deeper meaning of relatively more reactive versus proactive voice. In line with the general proactivity literature (Grant & Ashford, 2008), we propose that proactive voice is agentic and anticipatory because employees express future-focused change-oriented ideas to create envisioned future outcomes. In contrast, reactive voice occurs in response to cues from others (e.g., manager consultation, Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012) or events (e.g., defending against challenges to the status quo, Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014). Thus agency, self-initiative, and anticipation are limited for reactive voice.

A second key characteristic of proactive voice is its focus on effecting change in the environment. Employees who proactively engage in voice behavior aim to have a discernible impact on their work situation. Conversely, because reactive voice aims to provide suggestions *in response* to specific requests, events, or contexts, it is less likely to focus on far-reaching changes to the way things are done. Building on these arguments, we define proactive voice as self-initiated, future-oriented communication of constructively intended change-oriented ideas aimed at benefiting the organization.

Importantly, we do not propose an absolute distinction between reactive and proactive voice. This is because change-oriented ideas are typically triggered by some kind of reaction to the current status quo. The main distinction between more proactive and more reactive voice is whether 1) the voice expression is relatively more initiated by the employee (e.g., suggestion to improve the work flow in the future) or elicited by a concrete request or cue in the context (e.g., consultation with supervisor regarding the current work flow); and whether 2) the idea focuses more on changing the work context or whether it is more interdependent with and reinforces the current work context.

Prior work provides several reasons why the reactive–proactive continuum is relevant for understanding outcome contingencies of voice. First, Spitzmuller and Van Dyne (2013) theorized that reactive versus proactive forms of helping yield different positive consequences. Reactive forms of helping tend to facilitate heedful relationships with others but proactive forms of helping tend to yield personal benefits (i.e. personal well-being and need satisfaction). Similarly, given differences in the antecedents and consequences of reactive and proactive behavior (Grant & Ashford, 2008), we expect that differentiation of voice along the reactive–proactive continuum may shed light on predictors of voice effectiveness. Second, Bolino et al. (2010) argued that proactivity is not always valued in organizations. When behavior is a response to direct or indirect solicitation, it is more likely to be considered legitimate, warranted, and useful. In contrast, when behavior is initiated by employees (without any cue in the work

context), it is more likely to be considered misguided, out of place, or unhelpful (Bolino et al., 2010; Chan, 2006).

Unfortunately, prior limited attention to the reactive–proactive continuum of voice behavior means that we lack systematic theorizing regarding when and why proactive voice is evaluated as effective by the supervisor. This is an important problem because proactive voice paradoxically has potential benefits to organizations in terms of innovation, learning, and error detection, but it also has potential costs to employees if it is viewed negatively by supervisors.

In the next section, we draw on Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010) to advance one important reason for why the effectiveness of proactive voice is likely to be more variable than that of reactive voice. In addition, we offer a series of propositions that elucidate ways employees can proactively frame their ideas to enhance supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness.

Construal-Level Theory and Voice Effectiveness

In this section, we first elaborate on Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010) and use it to explain when and why proactive voice is more likely to be misconstrued, and hence why it shows more variability in supervisor judgments of effectiveness (than reactive voice). Then we delineate features of the supervisor–employee relationship which impede proactive voice effectiveness. We also offer propositions about how employee framing of voice can facilitate supervisor sensemaking of voice, which then predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. Importantly, for the purpose of this theorizing, we define proactive voice effectiveness as the extent to which the proposed suggestion or idea is deemed effective (useful, legitimate, and compelling) by the employee’s supervisor because supervisors play a key role in championing employee’s change-oriented suggestions (Detert et al., 2013). Figure 17.1 depicts our overall conceptual model.

People often act based on future-oriented strategic goals (Crossley, Cooper, & Wernsing, 2013), the ideal future self (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2012), advice from others (Danziger, Montal, & Barkan, 2012) and ideas about possible improved work processes (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010) posits that people form mental construals of distal objects, and then act, decide, choose, and make evaluations based on their mental representations of psychologically distal objects. We posit that construal of distal objects and events is especially important for proactive voice which is future-focused and change-oriented (Grant & Ashford, 2008).

According to Construal-Level Theory, psychological distance is the subjective experience that something is close to or far away from the self – here and now (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Construal-Level Theory posits that psychologically distal objects and events are construed at more abstract, higher levels. High-level construals are big-picture and focus on overall coherence and

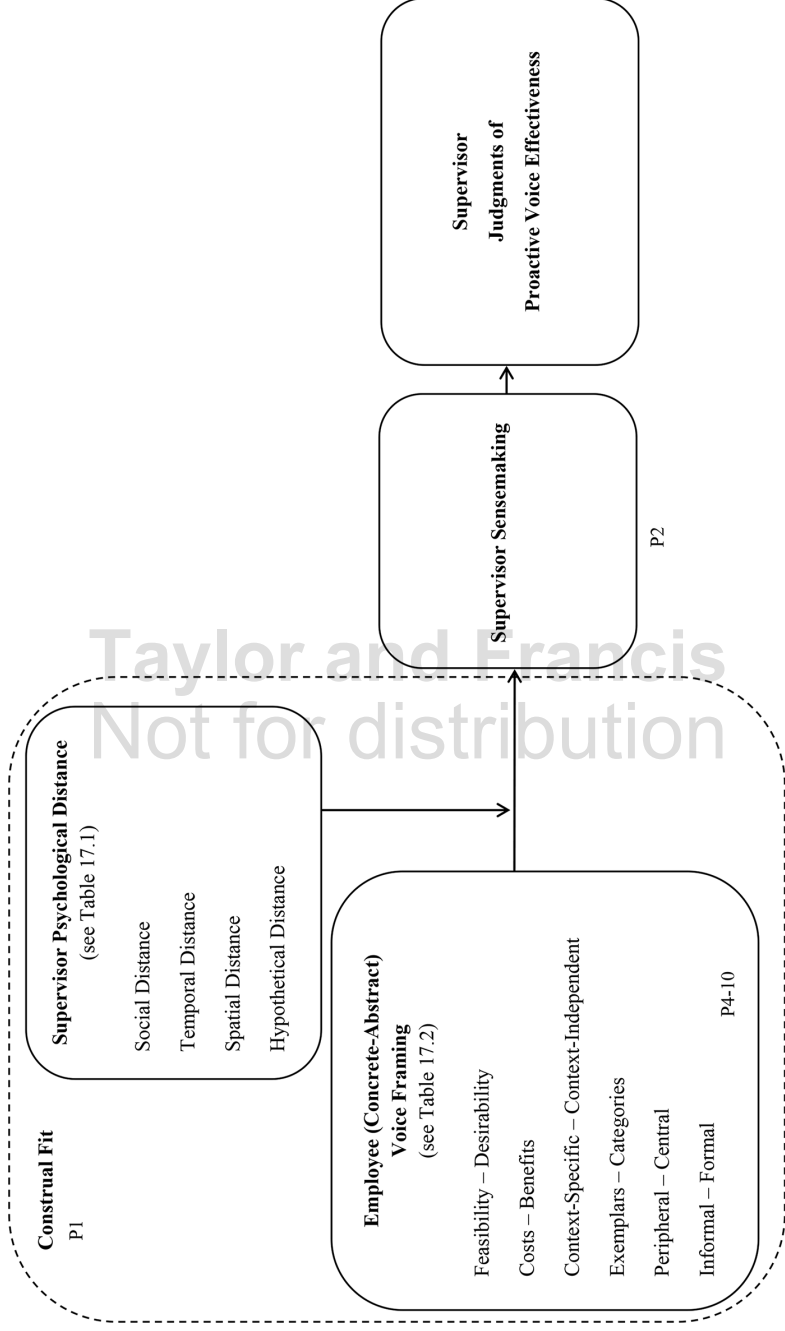


FIGURE 17.1 Conceptual Model of Construal Fit and Proactive Voice Effectiveness

superordinate representations. Conversely, psychologically proximal objects and events are construed at less abstract levels. Low-level construals emphasize concrete details, specifics, and subordinate representations.

Importantly, Construal-Level Theory argues that psychological distance not only influences construal level, but it also has powerful effects on receptivity to social influence and ideas proposed by others. When people perceive outcomes or events as psychologically distal, they respond more positively to abstract ideas and suggestions. This is because the high-level aspects of these outcomes or events are salient to them. In contrast, when people perceive outcomes or events as psychologically proximal, they respond more positively to concrete ideas and suggestions. This is because the low-level aspects are more pertinent to them (Trope & Liberman, 2010). In general, “construal fit,” defined as the congruence between message construal and recipient psychological distance, is key for persuasion, communication fluency, positive evaluation, and susceptibility to influence (Berson, Halevy, Shamir, & Erez, 2015; Fujita, Eyal, Chaiken, Trope, & Liberman, 2008). For example, in a series of studies Fujita and colleagues (2008) demonstrated that the strength of persuasive appeals depended on temporal distance. Specific and concrete arguments were more persuasive to those focusing on proximal objects or events, whereas general and abstract arguments were more persuasive to those focusing on distant events or objects (see also Henderson, 2011; Liviatan, Trope, & Liberman, 2008; Joshi & Wakslak, 2014).

Given that Construal-Level Theory explains the effectiveness of persuasion and framing, we propose that Construal-Level Theory can also shed light on judgments of voice effectiveness. We first explain how voice represents a possibility for action which may be differentially construed by employees and their supervisors. Second, and also consistent with Construal-Level Theory, we posit that voice is more effective when the employee’s framing of the suggestion matches the supervisor’s psychological distance from the issue. Restated, we propose that voice effectiveness depends on construal fit.

When employees engage in voice, they speak up with constructive ideas, opinions, and suggestions for ways to bring about improvement in their work environment (Van Dyne et al., 1995). Accordingly, voice proposes an alternative course of action that is different from the status quo (the here and now). Voice is a construal of a potential change at work. Prior voice research acknowledges different ways of representing suggestions for change. For example, employees can focus on concerns versus possibilities (Liang et al., 2012), on directness versus politeness (Lee, 1993), on supportive versus challenging suggestions (Burris, 2012), or on conventional versus novel ideas (Janssen, de Vries, & Cozijnsen, 1998). Thus, employees have choices about how to frame their suggestions for change.

Building on Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010), we posit that voice is more effective in the eyes of the supervisor when the employee’s framing and construal of the proposed change fit with the supervisor’s

psychological distance from the issue. In other words, construal fit promotes voice effectiveness. This is because construal fit facilitates fluent information processing (Bar-Anan, Liberman, & Trope, 2006; Berson & Halevy, 2014), perceived credibility (Hansen & Wänke, 2010), and persuasiveness of information (Kim, Rao, & Lee, 2009), and thus influences the amount of attention the supervisor gives to the idea and the extent to which the supervisor considers the value of the suggestion. Ultimately, construal fit should also have implications for voice implementation and whether the employee suggestion leads to changes in work processes (Detert et al., 2013). Thus, construal fit between employee voice framing and supervisor psychological distance from the issue should increase the likelihood that supervisors judge the voice behavior to be effective. Hence, we propose:

Proposition 1: *Construal fit between employee voice framing and supervisor psychological distance facilitates supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness, such that low-level concrete voice framing is most effective when supervisor psychological distance is low and high-level abstract voice framing is most effective when supervisor psychological distance is high.*

Furthermore, consistent with Construal-Level Theory, we posit that when the employee's framing of voice is congruent with the supervisor's psychological distance to the proposed change, the employee's message is more likely to make sense to the supervisor. This is because it fits their frame of reference, is easy to process (Bar-Anan et al., 2006), and sounds credible (Hansen & Wänke, 2010), as well as compelling (Kim et al., 2009). Supervisor sensemaking of voice may also be useful in furthering our understanding of prior empirical findings. For example, voice about core features of a product (abstract and general voice framing) provided a few days before the product launch (psychologically proximal) may be evaluated negatively because it is difficult to make sense of and see the value of a high-level abstract suggestion when a concrete deadline is proximal (Whiting et al., 2012). Thus, we posit that supervisor sensemaking mediates the relationship between construal fit and supervisor judgments of voice effectiveness (useful, legitimate, and compelling).

Proposition 2: *Supervisor sensemaking mediates the effect of construal fit on supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness.*

Effectiveness of Reactive and Proactive Forms of Voice

Building on our discussion of the reactive–proactive continuum of voice, we propose that more proactive voice, compared to more reactive voice, is more likely to result in construal misfit, and hence lead to more variability in supervisor judgments of effectiveness. Reactive voice occurs in response to a request

or a specific situation, and this gives employees cues about how their supervisor construes the issue. For example, when supervisors consult with employees about an issue, they inevitably give cues regarding whether they perceive the issue from a distance or more proximally. Employees, in turn, respond with ideas, suggestions, and concerns that fit with their supervisor's views on the issue. This is because the give and take of conversations causes employees to elaborate on information that is salient to supervisors, rather than on unrelated information (Schwarz, 1999).

In contrast, proactive voice, due to its self-initiated and change-oriented nature, is less likely to result in construal fit and voice effectiveness for at least two reasons. First, employees and supervisors have different roles and perspectives about issues at work (Lammers, Galinsky, Gordijn, & Otten, 2012; Magee & Smith, 2013; Werbel & Henriques, 2009). Thus, an employee's self-initiated ideas may not fit with the supervisor's psychological distance to the issue. Second, proactive voice suggests more dramatic change-oriented ideas than reactive voice. Thus, employees may speak up about novel issues or issues which have not been previously discussed. Based on these contrasts, construal fit between the employee's voice message and the supervisor's psychological distance to the issue is more likely for reactive voice (in response to cues in the situation or supervisor requests for input). Consequently, we propose that supervisors will judge reactive voice as more effective than proactive voice.

Proposition 3: *Construal fit and supervisor judgments of voice effectiveness are higher when employees engage in reactive voice, compared to proactive voice.*

Supervisor and Employee Psychological Distance

We have argued that construal fit is essential for proactive voice effectiveness. We next describe supervisor psychological distance as a critical boundary condition that influences the relationship between employee proactive voice framing and supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. We start by delineating different dimensions of psychological distance and reasons why supervisors and employees may differ in their psychological distance from issues. We then describe more versus less abstract ways for employees to frame voice suggestions and implications for judgments of voice effectiveness, depending on the supervisor's psychological distance from the issue.

Supervisors and employees typically construe events and objects differently due to differences in their hierarchical positions (Smith & Trope, 2006), accessibility to information (Ashford, Sutcliffe, & Christianson, 2009), and their perspectives on time and space (Berson et al., 2015; Connaughton & Daly, 2005; Shamir, 2013). For example, supervisors tend to have a more abstract and holistic understanding of organizational activities, compared to employees and are more likely to deal with issues across time zones and geographical

distances. In contrast, employees tend to be closer to their work and focus on more concrete issues. Consequently, supervisors and employees often differ in their interpretations of the when, where, who, and whether of changes at work. For example, they may have different ideas about what is temporally near (distant), here (there), pertaining to us (them), or likely (unlikely). These differences cause them to construe change-oriented ideas differently, triggering construal misfit and negative implications for supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. Next, we delineate ways supervisors and employees may differ in psychological distance based on social, temporal, spatial, and hypothetical criteria. Table 17.1 provides a schematic representation of these four dimensions of psychological distance.

First, supervisors and employees often hold different perceptions of *social distance* (i.e., whether others are socially close or distant). For example, the social distance theory of power argues that asymmetric dependence, such as in supervisor–employee relationships, produces asymmetric social distance (Magee & Smith, 2013). Those with high power systematically feel more distant and removed from others than those with low power. Consequently, they tend to engage in more abstract processing (Smith & Trope, 2006). Applied to employee voice, supervisors typically construe issues as more abstract, whereas employees typically construe issues as more concrete. For example, when considering a product launch, supervisors tend to construe this issue at an abstract level, emphasizing the core strategic importance of the event. In contrast, employees tend to construe the event at a concrete level, emphasizing the steps they will take to implement the launch.

Second, supervisors and employees often differ in their perceptions of *temporal distance* (i.e., whether events or changes take place in the near or far future). Prior work suggests that temporal depth, defined as the temporal distance into the past and future that individuals typically consider (Bluedorn, 2002), may be critical to perceptions of temporal distance (Bluedorn & Jaussi, 2008). Hunt and Ropo (1995) posited that individual's future temporal depth at work depends on the complexity and scope of their jobs. Hence, supervisors and employees should construe events at different temporal distances by virtue of their distinct locations in the organizational chart and the complexity and scope of their work. More specifically, employees habitually think about work issues in the near future and construe issues concretely, but supervisors have larger scope in their jobs and construe the same issues abstractly.

A third psychological distance dimension which supervisors and employees often construe differently is the *spatial distance* (i.e., whether events or changes occur close by or in a distant location). Globalization requires supervisors to provide leadership across geographical distances, such as when they supervise employees at headquarters and also coordinate work with remote customer service desks and sales employees in the field (Berson et al., 2015). As a result, supervisors tend to use more distal spatial construal of issues and employees tend

TABLE 17.1 Types of Psychological Distance in Supervisor–Employee Relationships

<i>Distance Dimensions</i>	<i>Basis of Supervisor–Employee Asymmetry in Distance Dimensions</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
Social Distance (who)	Power (Magee & Smith, 2013)	Asymmetric dependence between individuals (e.g., supervisor–employee relationship) produces asymmetric social distances, such that supervisors habitually feel more distal from others, compared to their employees.
Temporal Distance (when)	Temporal Depth (Bluedorn & Jaussi, 2008; Hunt & Ropo, 1996)	The complexity and the scope of managerial work causes supervisors typically to construe issues over larger temporal distances, compared to their employees.
Spatial Distance (where)	Geographical Dispersion (Berson et al., 2015) Virtual Workplace (Henderson, 2011)	Supervisors regularly work across larger geographical distances and are embedded in activities across locations, so they typically perceive issues across larger spatial distances, compared to their employees.
Hypothetical Distance (whether)	Access to Information (Ashford et al., 2009)	Supervisors typically have access to high-level information about strategy, processes, and procedures, which causes them to include more contingency factors in their judgments, and hence typically consider the benefits of proposed changes as less likely, compared to their employees.

to use more proximal spatial construal of issues. Contemporary practices of telecommuting, flex desks, and virtual teams (Kahai, 2013) also suggest more distal geographical construals by supervisors compared to employees who typically have more localized contacts and responsibilities.

Fourth, supervisors and employees often differ in their views of *hypotheticality* (i.e., whether an event or change is likely or unlikely to occur). This is because

their positions and activities cause them to focus on and have access to different information (Ashford et al., 2009). This information asymmetry can influence their views of probability. For example, employees may think that a change in the work flow is feasible and likely, but the supervisors may be aware of interdependencies with other departments that would cause difficulties and thus view the idea as less realistic.

In sum, we expect that supervisors and employees will often differ in their psychological distance from an idea, event, or issue and this will influence the ways they construe change-oriented ideas. Employees who make suggestions for change are close to the specifics of the issue, low in psychological distance, and more likely to frame their suggestions in concrete and proximal terms. In contrast, supervisors who must make sense of employee ideas for change are not so close to the specifics of the issue, high in psychological distance, and more likely to process and construe the idea in abstract and distal terms. As a result, construal fit of employees as senders and supervisors as receivers will often be low and will impede supervisor sensemaking as well as their judgments of proactive voice effectiveness.

Interplay between Framing of Proactive Voice and Psychological Distance

Proposition 1 proposed that construal fit between employee voice framing and supervisor psychological distance predicts supervisor judgments of voice effectiveness. The prior section, however, argued that supervisors and employees generally tend to construe issues and events differently. Next, we extend and refine these ideas – both generally (P4) and specifically (P5–P10) to explicate the effects of construal fit and misfit on supervisor judgments of voice effectiveness.

If employees construe and frame their suggestions for change, based on their own perspective and their own psychological distance (e.g., concrete and less abstract construal), their message will tend not to fit their supervisor's psychological distance. This will produce construal misfit and misunderstanding, with negative implications for supervisor judgments of voice effectiveness. Thus, we argue that judgments of proactive voice effectiveness hinge on the extent to which employees frame their change-oriented suggestions in ways that are consistent with their supervisor's psychological distance from the issue. Restated, supervisors typically have a high psychological distance to issues and construe issues abstractly. Therefore, we posit that employee proactive voice will be evaluated as more effective when employees use high-level framing and emphasize abstract aspects of the issue and idea.

Proposition 4: *Framing of change-oriented ideas that emphasizes high-level, abstract construal positively predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. Conversely, framing that emphasizes low-level, concrete construal negatively predicts proactive voice effectiveness.*

Next, we draw on prior conceptual and empirical work on Construal-Level Theory (for a review, see Trope & Liberman, 2010) to identify six dimensions of construal level that can be used to describe the ways employees construe and frame their proactive voice ideas (see summary in Table 17.2). We then posit effects on proactive voice effectiveness as a function of supervisor psychological distance from the issue. Each dimension offers a contrast between framing that is low in abstraction (concrete) and framing that is high in abstraction (abstract). The first dimension contrasts framing of a voice-related issue in terms of feasibility, which is more concrete, versus desirability, which is more abstract. The second dimension of framing contrasts a focus on costs, which tend to be more specific, with a focus on benefits, which tend to be more general and abstract. The third contrasts context-specific information (concrete) with context-independent information (abstract). The fourth contrasts exemplars which are specific (concrete) with categories that are more general (abstract). The fifth contrasts proactive voice framing arguments that are peripheral (concrete) versus central (abstract). Finally, the sixth dimension contrasts framing that is informal (concrete) with framing that is formal (abstract).

Feasibility (concrete) vs Desirability (abstract)

Employees can frame their proactive voice by emphasizing feasibility or desirability of their proposed change. Feasibility framing focuses on the “how” of the proposed change. Feasibility highlights the concrete means that can be used to bring about the improvement. For example, employees could emphasize specific ways in which their idea could be accomplished, such as by rescheduling work shifts or changing processing procedures. In contrast, desirability framing focuses on reasons “why” the proposed change is a good idea. Desirability highlights the abstract end-results of the proposed change. For example,

TABLE 17.2 Types of Framing for Employee Voice

<i>Propositions Regarding Voice Framing</i>				
	<i>Framing = Low in Abstraction</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Framing = High in Abstraction</i>	<i>Examples</i>
P4	Low-Level Framing	Concrete	High-Level Framing	Abstract
P5	Feasibility	How	Desirability	Why
P6	Costs	Negatives	Benefits	Positives
P7	Context-Specific	Non-normative	Context-Independent	Normative
P8	Exemplars	Specifics	Categories	General
P9	Peripheral	Secondary issue	Central	Core issue
P10	Informal	Impolite	Formal	Polite

employees could explain ways that their idea would result in increased customer satisfaction. According to Construal-Level Theory, feasibility and desirability arguments differ in construal level. Feasibility framing illustrates low-level, concrete construal, and desirability framing illustrates high-level, abstract construal (Trope & Liberman, 2010).

Prior work has demonstrated that psychological distance increases the salience and importance of (more abstract) desirability over (more concrete) feasibility features of an issue. For instance, Fujita and colleagues (2008) demonstrated that participants preferentially attended to feasibility features for an upcoming (proximal) purchase, but they focused on desirability features for a purchase in the distant future. Within the political domain, voters were more easily swayed by concrete “how” appeals (feasibility) when the temporal distance to the election was short but were influenced by “why” appeals (desirability) when they expected to vote in the distant future. According to H. Kim and colleagues (2009), fluency in information processing explains these construal fit effects. When issues are considered proximal, feasibility arguments are salient and influential. In contrast, when issues are considered distal, desirability arguments are salient and influential. Taken together, this empirical evidence suggests that temporal distance enhances the effect of desirability arguments and discounts the persuasiveness of feasibility appeals.

Applying these conceptual insights and empirical findings to the domain of proactive voice, we argue that employees can increase the effectiveness of their change-oriented suggestions by framing their ideas more abstractly, in terms of desirability. This is because supervisors, due to their position (e.g., power, job complexity, global activities) generally use high-level construal and value high-level descriptions of changes. Consequently, proactive voice should generally be judged as more effective by supervisors when employees emphasize desirability more than the feasibility of their idea. Thus, we predicted that construal fit influences judgments of proactive voice effectiveness.

Proposition 5: *Framing of change-oriented ideas that emphasizes desirability positively predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness and framing that emphasizes feasibility negatively predicts proactive voice effectiveness.*

Costs (concrete) vs Benefits (abstract)

Previous conceptualizations and operationalizations of voice behavior have contrasted negative framing (complaining voice, Chiaburu et al., 2015; prohibitive voice, Liang et al., 2012; destructive voice, Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014) with positive framing (e.g., promotive voice, Liang et al., 2012; constructive voice, Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014; prosocial voice, Van Dyne, Ang, & Botero, 2003) of suggestions, concerns, and opinions. For example, employees can emphasize

how current procedures create problems for maintenance and quality, and therefore should be changed (negative framing). Alternatively, employees can explain how their proposed changes to current procedures would result in more effective ways of working (positive framing). According to Construal-Level Theory, arguments against or in favor of an action differ in construal level. Trope and Liberman (2010) position negative features as subordinate to positive features because attending to negative features requires the presence of positive features. In contrast, attending to positive features does not require negative contrasts. For example, if supervisors recognize the benefits of an employee idea, they might ask about potential costs of the idea, but they are unlikely to ask about potential costs unless they are already aware of the benefits. Accordingly, costs are low-level, concrete construal, and benefits are high-level, abstract construal.

Several empirical studies support the Construal-Level Theory notion that the relative influence and persuasiveness of highlighting costs and benefits in messages depends on psychological distance because costs are salient when the psychological distance is low and benefits are salient when the psychological distance is high (Trope & Liberman, 2010). For example, meta-analytical results on the valence effects of message framing show that message effectiveness does not depend on valence per se because positive framing is not always effective (Freling, Vincent, & Henard, 2014). Instead, effectiveness is a function of construal fit, such as matching a negatively framed message with low psychological distance and matching a positively framed message with high psychological distance. Similarly, the series of experiments conducted by Eyal, Liberman, Trope, and Walther (2004) consistently showed that costs were more salient to proximal decision-making events and benefits were more salient to distal decision-making events. In sum, research demonstrates the value of matching cost-based arguments with proximal issues and benefit-based arguments with distal issues.

Combining Construal-Level Theory arguments with the above empirical findings and applying them to the domain of proactive voice effectiveness, we propose that voice framing that emphasizes benefits predicts positive supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness, and framing that emphasizes costs predicts negative judgments of voice effectiveness. This is because supervisors generally perceive issues from a large psychological distance, adopt high-level construals, and find abstract messages that emphasize benefits more compelling than concrete messages that emphasize costs. Thus, we posit that construal fit influences supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness.

Proposition 6: *Framing of change-oriented ideas that emphasizes benefits positively predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness and framing that emphasizes costs negatively predicts proactive voice effectiveness.*

Context-specific (concrete) vs Context-independent (abstract)

When employees engage in proactive voice, they aim to alter the status quo in the workplace. Supervisors, however, often identify with the status quo because they developed or have endorsed existing procedures. Thus, employees need to consider the manner in which they describe their proposed change. According to Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010), an individual's psychological distance to an event, issue, or concern determines the extent to which they incorporate context-specific information (e.g., specific incident, unique circumstances) into their judgments or whether they rely on context-independent information (e.g., enduring values, ideology, norms) (Ledgerwood, Trope, & Chaiken, 2010). For example, employees could speak up to change a procedure because it would reduce conflict between two coworkers (concrete). In contrast, they could explain how their proposed change would contribute to a more harmonious workplace, thereby tying it to broader work norms (abstract). In sum, context-specific framing is low-level construal, and context-independent framing is high-level construal.

Substantial empirical evidence attests to the important role of psychological distance in determining whether individuals evaluate and react based on context-specific information versus context-independent information. For example, Eyal and colleagues (2008) demonstrated that individuals used context-specific information in making morality judgments about actions that were temporally and socially close. More specifically, individuals used attenuating situation-specific information, causing them to judge immoral acts less stringently and judge moral acts less positively. In contrast, they used context-independent moral principles in making judgments that were temporally and socially distal, causing them to judge immoral acts as more offensive and moral acts as more virtuous. Ledgerwood and colleagues (2010) reported similar findings for the use of context-specific versus context-independent information. When individuals expected a policy to be implemented in the near future, they were more likely to assimilate an incidental stranger's perspective on the issue (i.e., context-specific information) versus sticking to their personal ideological values (i.e., context-independent information). Thus, empirical research shows that temporal distance enhances the effect of context-independent arguments and discounts the persuasiveness of context-specific arguments.

Applying these conceptual and empirical insights to proactive voice, we argue that supervisor judgments of the effectiveness of change-oriented suggestions will be positive when ideas are framed using context-independent information and negative when framing is context-specific. In sum, we propose that construal fit predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness.

Proposition 7: *Framing of change-oriented ideas that emphasizes context-independent aspects positively predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness and framing that emphasizes context-specific aspects negatively predicts proactive voice effectiveness.*

Exemplars (concrete) vs Categories (abstract)

When employees make suggestions for change, they can rely on exemplary, case-specific arguments or they emphasize more general appeals based on broad categories. For example, employees can emphasize one specific example that illustrates their idea (concrete). This could include focusing on how their proposed change would facilitate coordination between two members of the team. Alternatively, they could emphasize a more general description of their idea that fits an overall category (abstract). This could include explaining how their proposed change would improve the work flow, contribute to overall enhanced coordination of work in the team, and reduce slack. Although prior voice research has not investigated differences in these types of framing, Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010) suggests that framing messages in terms of specific exemplars or general categories is more or less effective depending on psychological distance. This is because exemplars and categories differ in construal level. Exemplars focus on specific, concrete examples. In contrast, category-based suggestions focus on more general, abstract ideas. Thus, exemplars are low-level construal, and categories are high-level construal.

Prior empirical work has demonstrated that the persuasiveness of arguments and the evaluation of decisions both depend on construal fit between category-versus exemplar-based construal and psychological distance. For example, Fujita and colleagues (2008) demonstrated that arguments which were framed in terms of exemplars were more persuasive when they pertained to the near future and arguments that emphasized categories were more persuasive when they focused on the distant future. Burgoon and colleagues (2013) reported similar results for observer judgments of decision making because judgments depended on the decision maker's use of case-specific or aggregate information and their physical distance from the issue. Decision makers who were more distant and relied on case-specific information were evaluated less positively. Overall, research has demonstrated the value of emphasizing specific exemplar-based arguments for proximal issues and emphasizing category-based arguments for distal issues.

Extending these conceptual arguments and prior research findings to the voice domain, we propose that employee voice will be viewed as more effective by supervisors if it emphasizes categories. In contrast, voice will be viewed as less effective when it emphasizes exemplars. This is because using more abstract categories is consistent with the supervisor's psychological distance. Accordingly, drawing on Construal-Level Theory, we propose the following:

Proposition 8: *Framing of change-oriented ideas that emphasizes categories positively predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness and framing that emphasizes specific exemplars negatively predicts proactive voice effectiveness.*

Peripheral (concrete) vs Central (abstract)

When speaking up, employees can suggest changes in peripheral or secondary aspects of an issue. Alternatively, they can suggest changes in central, goal-related aspects of an issue. For example, a product design team member could emphasize changes in the color or changes in the design of a product. In most cases, color would be a peripheral feature of the product and design would be central to the product. According to Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010), peripheral and central arguments differ in construal level, and the relative salience of peripheral versus central features depends on psychological distance. In sum, peripheral framing is low-level, concrete construal, and central framing is high-level, abstract construal.

Empirical work demonstrates differences in the salience of peripheral versus central features of an issue depending on psychological distance. For example, Liviatan and colleagues (2008) demonstrated that people placed more emphasis on peripheral information (e.g., physics ability) when evaluating the work of a similar student, but they emphasized central information (e.g., work quality) when evaluating the work of a dissimilar student (social distance). Likewise, Kray (2000) demonstrated that people gave more weight to peripheral job attributes (e.g., salary, location) when making choices for themselves but gave more weight to central job attributes (e.g., job satisfaction) when advising socially remote others. Thus, empirical research shows that psychological distance enhances the effect of central arguments and discounts the persuasiveness of peripheral arguments.

Combining the above theoretical arguments based on Construal-Level Theory with these empirical results, we propose that employee voice that emphasizes core or central features of the idea will be viewed as high in effectiveness by supervisors. In comparison, an emphasis on peripheral features will trigger negative supervisor evaluations. Again, this is based on construal fit arguments because supervisors typically are psychologically distant from employee jobs and routines. Thus, focusing on core features will make more sense and be more meaningful to supervisors. In sum, we posit the following effects:

Proposition 9: *Framing of change-oriented ideas that emphasizes central information positively predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness and framing that emphasizes peripheral information negatively predicts proactive voice effectiveness.*

Informal (concrete) vs Formal (abstract)

Employees also can frame their change-oriented suggestions using an informal style or a formal style. To our knowledge, no prior work has considered the effects of informal versus formal framing of voice. Nevertheless, application of

Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010) suggests the value of differentiating informal and formal framing of suggestions because informal and formal arguments differ in construal level. Informal framing includes casual comments about a specific event, on a specific day. In contrast, formal framing involves more thought and preparation and it is more abstract. As an example of informal framing, an employee might experience frustration with a complex work process and make a quick suggestion that the procedures should be changed so that step 3 is done before step 2 and step 5 is eliminated. In contrast, an employee might make an appointment in advance to talk with the supervisor about procedures and arrive with an executive summary of a well-developed, written proposal, as an example of formal framing. According to Construal-Level Theory, informal framing is low-level construal, and formal framing is high-level construal.

Empirical research shows that informal versus formal framing has differential effects, depending on psychological distance. In general, informal framing is concrete and represents a low-level construal that fits psychologically close contexts. In contrast, formal framing represents a more abstract construal of the situation or event and is more salient and effective in psychologically distant contexts. For example, Stephan, Liberman, and Trope (2010) demonstrated that individuals framed advice to others in less polite language when they expected them to read the message in the near future. In contrast, they used more polite language when they expected them to read the message in the distant future. In addition, observers expected actions framed in colloquial language to occur in the near future, whereas they expected actions framed in formal language to be enacted in the distant future. Overall, in their series of studies, Stephan et al. (2010) showed that psychological distance increased the salience and appropriateness of more formal and polite language.

Applying Trope and Liberman's (2010) theorizing to proactive voice suggests that formal expression of voice will be viewed as more effective by supervisors because they generally construe issues at a larger psychological distance. Thus, based on application of Construal-Level Theory to proactive voice, we propose that construal fit influences the relationship between voice and supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness.

Proposition 10: *Framing of change-oriented ideas that is formal positively predicts supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness and framing that is informal negatively predicts proactive voice effectiveness.*

Discussion

In this chapter, we drew on the voice and proactivity literatures to delineate similarities and differences in proactive versus reactive voice and theorized that the proactive/reactive nature of voice influences supervisor judgments of voice

effectiveness. We argued that proactive voice has especially promising potential for organizational improvement but at the same time has high risk of being misunderstood and/or de-valued by supervisors. We then used Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010) as a conceptual lens for elucidating six specific ways that employees can frame their change-oriented suggestions so that they fit the supervisor's psychological distance from the issue and lead to favorable supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. More specifically, we posited that the interaction of proactive employee framing of voice with supervisor psychological distance (construal level) has mediated effects on supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness, via supervisor sensemaking. Restated, supervisors should evaluate voice as more effective when employees proactively frame their change-oriented suggestions in relatively abstract terms that fit the supervisor's generally high level of psychological distance from the issue.

Theoretical Contributions

Prior work has theorized about and investigated different ways that employee's framing of change-oriented ideas (e.g., positive versus negative framing; Whiting et al., 2012) and supervisor's cognitive biases (e.g., epistemic, ideological, and existential motives; Chiaburu, Farh, & Van Dyne, 2013) facilitate or inhibit voice effectiveness. Our approach expands upon this prior work in several ways. First, by taking a Construal-Level Theory perspective we account for employee and supervisor perspectives on the issue. This is because Construal-Level Theory explains effectiveness based on simultaneous consideration of the event and the psychological distance of each individual from the event. This is important because accounting for either actor's perspective separately would be incomplete and would shed light on only one side of the interaction. Thus, our theorizing responds to recommendations for more contextualized, integrated, and dynamic theorizing in the voice domain (Morrison, 2014) and general calls for inclusion of context in the consideration of organizational behavior (Johns, 2006).

Second, our theorizing highlights construal level and psychological distance as two previously overlooked features of the voice framing and voice sensemaking process. Thus, acknowledging these processes should not only inform future research, but also shed light on existing empirical work. For example, although prior research demonstrates that voice that occurs early in the process is better received than voice that occurs later in the process (Whiting et al., 2012), our theorizing suggests that this may hold only for voice that is framed at an abstract construal level (e.g., desirability, benefits, context-independent, categories, central information, and formal expression). Thus, the reverse may apply to voice that is framed at a concrete construal level (e.g., feasibility, costs, context-specific, specific exemplars, peripheral information, and informal expression).

Third, we developed the argument that voice construal level is a key aspect of voice behavior that influences judgments of proactive voice effectiveness.

The six framing propositions (P5–10) elaborated on different ways to express voice in less versus more abstract terms and provide implications for judgments of effectiveness based on the typical construal level of the target of voice. Specifically, for upward change-oriented communication from employees to supervisors, we have highlighted the typical concrete (low abstraction) nature of employee construals and the contrasting, typically highly abstract nature of supervisor construals. This naturally occurring discrepancy influences supervisor sensemaking and their construal of voice and also provides a novel explanation for why supervisors often evaluate voice behavior as low in effectiveness. Thus, our propositions go beyond most prior voice theorizing which has focused on frequency of voice and instead emphasize framing of voice as a key factor that influences judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. Accordingly, our theorizing suggests the value of applying these ideas about the importance of employee framing to different types of voice (e.g., promotive, prohibitive, challenging, complaining, supportive, defensive, constructive, destructive). For example, our theorizing on cost- versus benefit-based framing can shed light on the effectiveness of prohibitive and promotive types of voice, which respectively express employee concerns about existing practices, incidents, and behaviors that may harm the organization (“what is/can be wrong/harmful”) and their ideas for how to improve future organizational functioning (“what can be better”) (Liang et al., 2012). Our theorizing also suggests the value of considering other aspects of voice styles and tactics (e.g., informal vs formal; context-specific vs context-independent).

Finally, our theorizing introduces a novel set of factors that has not been included in prior theorizing about supervisors’ reactions to voice and judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. More specifically, prior work has delineated the impact of supervisors’ motivated cognition (Chiaburu et al., 2013), cognitive biases, action bias, and organizational structural constraints (Ashford et al., 2009). By complementing this past research with the joint effects of construal level and psychological distance, our application of Construal-Level Theory can guide researchers to consider other, often unconscious, factors that cause employees and supervisors to construe events differently, with subsequent implications for judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. Consistent with recent applications of Construal-Level Theory in the leadership domain (Berson & Halevy, 2014; Berson et al., 2015), we hope that our use of this conceptual lens stimulates empirical research that considers the implications of construal level and construal fit on voice behavior and proactive voice effectiveness.

Extending Current Research

The theoretical model developed in this chapter provides initial directions for future research on proactive voice effectiveness. Construal-Level Theory, however, provides additional avenues for future research. Below, we extend our

discussion of implications for future research by elaborating on seven specific recommendations for future theorizing and research.

First, our theorizing has emphasized how employees can enhance supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness by framing their suggestions in high-level abstract ways. However, supervisors can also proactively reflect on the employee's psychological distance from the issue and use this information in making sense of the suggestion. For example, if supervisors want to encourage voice, they can think about the possible similarities and differences in their own psychological distance from the issue compared to the employee's perspective. This should help them "bridge the gap" and ensure they don't miss out on useful suggestions because they did not understand the employee's perspective (Smith & Trope, 2006). Thus, in addition to proactive employee voice framing, proactive supervisor sensemaking of voice can facilitate proactive voice effectiveness. Accordingly, we also encourage future research on situational factors (e.g., manageable work load) and individual differences (e.g., perspective taking) that should facilitate proactive supervisor sensemaking. For example, managers who are under a lot of time pressure should be less likely to try to construe an issue from the employee's perspective because they have fewer cognitive resources (Parker, Atkins, & Axtell, 2008) and they tend to stick to their current understanding of the issue (Chiaburu et al., 2013).

Second, enacting and interpreting voice behavior involves affective processes (Chiaburu et al., 2013; Grant, 2013). Accordingly, future research can extend our theorizing by explicitly incorporating the role of affect. For example, Trope and Liberman (2010) proposed that affect and psychological distance are inter-related, and this may have implications for proactive voice effectiveness. To illustrate, empirical work on Construal-Level Theory and emotions has demonstrated that receiver pride (abstract construal level) facilitates persuasion more than joy (concrete construal level) when psychological distance is high, but not when psychological distance is low (Karsh & Eyal, 2015). Hence, judgments of voice effectiveness should be positive when employees trigger abstract emotions, such as pride, in their supervisor.

Third, although we delineated a range of factors that shed light on why employees and supervisors tend to construe change-oriented ideas differently, future research should develop these ideas in more depth and further specify situations which influence high versus low supervisor psychological distance. For example, supervisors with complex task responsibilities, who lead teams across spatial and/or temporal distances or those who are involved in strategic decision making, should be more likely to use high-level, abstract construals. In contrast, those with jobs that require great attention to detail, close supervision of employees, and short-term time lines, should be more likely to use low-level, concrete construals.

Fourth, Construal-Level Theory suggests additional framing factors that should influence proactive voice effectiveness beyond the six we included in

our model. For example, Trope and Liberman (2010) argued that novelty versus familiarity may constitute another distance dimension. Thus, novel (versus familiar) suggestions should be more effective when supervisor psychological distance is high. Considering the relatively recent emergence of Construal-Level Theory, scholars will continue to enhance and expand the perspective and this will provide additional ideas and examples of how framing influences effectiveness.

Fifth, we have proposed that mismatches in construal level are less likely for reactive voice (compared to proactive voice) because requests for input provide cues about the supervisor's construal level regarding the issue. As a consequence, it should be easier for employees to frame their ideas, suggestions, or concerns in a manner that is consistent with the supervisor's construal level, and this should positively predict judgments of voice effectiveness. Future research, however, should investigate this notion and examine relationships between psychological distance, voice framing, and judgments of voice effectiveness.

Sixth, in order to maintain simplicity in our theorizing, we limited our theoretical framework to supervisor judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. Employees, however, can also direct their change-oriented suggestions to coworkers, skip-level leaders, or leaders in charge of other departments (Detert et al., 2013; Detert & Trevino, 2010). Thus, it would be useful to extend our propositions to these different targets who, by virtue of their position and the nature of their work, most likely construe issues differently from employees. For example, we expect that coworkers and skip-level leaders would construe the same issue at different psychological distances. Thus, if employees want to be effective, they need to tailor their change-oriented ideas to fit the more concrete versus more abstract mindsets of different targets.

We conceptualized "effectiveness" as the extent to which a supervisor judges a proposed change as useful, legitimate, and compelling. While this is an important first step for defining voice effectiveness, there are additional, complementary ways to conceptualize and operationalize voice effectiveness. For example, prior work has investigated supervisor's endorsement of voice (Burris, 2012), supervisor's solicitation of subsequent voice (Fast et al., 2014), supervisor's intention to recommend the idea to others (Burris, 2012), and unit effectiveness as a consequence of implementing voice (Detert et al., 2013). Future research should examine the extent to which construal fit has implications for these other criteria of voice effectiveness.

Finally, expanding the application of Construal-Level Theory to the broader proactivity literature may help shed light on previous empirical findings and trigger new avenues for research. For example, Construal-Level Theory has the potential to add depth to the conceptualization, operationalization, and functioning of future work selves and associated proactive career behaviors (Strauss et al., 2012). This is because future work selves refer to representations of the self in the future that encapsulate individually significant hopes and aspirations in relation to work. In essence, future work selves are construals of the self.

Hence, applying Construal-Level Theory suggests that the motivational force of future selves may depend on the individual's psychological distance to their future work self. While prior work has shown that the salience and elaboration of future work self are important for these representations to motivate proactive work behavior, future research can also draw on Construal-Level Theory to investigate psychological distance and abstract versus concrete construal levels as factors that influence the motivational salience of future work selves. Construal-Level Theory could also shed light on factors that facilitate or inhibit proactive goal generation and striving (Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, & Hagger-Johnson, 2012; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). Just as a leader's communication instills motivation in followers when the construal-level of the supervisor's message fits the follower's psychological distance to the leader (Berson & Halevy, 2014), self-generated proactive goals should foster proactive motivation when the construal-level of these goals fits the employee's psychological distance to the event or change. Consequently, psychological distance and construal level have the potential to advance research on proactive goal generation and striving processes.

Practical Contributions

Organizations need proactive behaviors, such as proactive voice, to remain competitive in dynamic business environments. At the same time, however, today's workplace, with its increasing geographical dispersion, temporal distance, social separation, and uncertainty, reduces the likelihood that employees and supervisors will construe events similarly. Hence, proactive voice may often be misunderstood and evaluated negatively. Below we discuss practical implications of our theory building for managers and employees so that organizations can gain the benefits of proactive voice.

Proactive voice is self-initiated. Thus, a critical first implication for employees is the importance of framing change-oriented suggestions to fit their supervisor's psychological distance. Given that employees do not necessarily consider proactive voice as one of their work responsibilities (Van Dyne, Kamdar, & Joireman, 2008), it is likely that they do not spend a lot of time thinking about how to frame their proactive voice suggestions. Our application of Construal-Level Theory positions construal fit as key to judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. Thus, employees should "manage up" by proactively framing their ideas so they fit their supervisor's construal level. Managers can sensitize employees to the importance of appropriate framing by being supportive of proactive behaviors and describing the types of messages that get their attention and support. They also can explain the importance of "knowing your audience" and tailoring the message to the receiver. They can emphasize the value of thinking about the supervisor's perspective before speaking up with suggestions for change and describing their ideas in a manner that will facilitate

the supervisor's sensemaking. In sum, an important practical implication of our theory building is that employees need to be proactive in expressing their ideas for change, but they also need to be proactive in how they frame their change-oriented ideas so that their expressions fit the construal level of the supervisor.

Second, for organizations and supervisors to reap the benefits of proactive voice, supervisors need to exert effort to proactively make sense of employee suggestions. Thus, even though supervisors may initially think that some employee suggestions, opinions, or concerns are irrelevant, ill-informed, or unhelpful, they need to proactively engage in sensemaking such that they account for the employee's typical level of construal. Restated, understanding the employee's psychological distance from the issue and how this may have influenced the framing used by the employee to express the idea should enhance supervisor perspective taking and make it more likely that they understand employee ideas and can potentially benefit from considering these ideas. Organizations can help supervisors develop this skill by offering training programs and work contexts (e.g., workload, time pressure; Parker et al., 2008) that encourage perspective taking and construal fit.

Third, organizations can also take actions to reduce mismatch of employees' and supervisors' construals. For example, they can frame their communications to supervisors in generally abstract terms whereas they can frame their communications to employees in more concrete terms and then encourage both parties to be mindful of the typical construal level of the other person. More specifically, organizations can encourage supervisors and employees to adopt each other's perspectives on important work issues such that each gains a better understanding of the other person's work world. In addition, organizations can manage communication and information such that employees and supervisors have time and information to fine-tune their framing and sensemaking to one another's situation.

Conclusion

Much of the work on voice has investigated factors that cause employees to speak up with suggestions for change, under the assumption that voice entails benefits for organizations. Much less work has examined whether and under what circumstances organizations reap these benefits. In this chapter, we built a conceptual model of when and why supervisors consider employee proactive voice to be effective. Thereby we emphasized that employees should not only be proactive in speaking up with suggestions for change, but also need to proactively frame their voice to enhance supervisor sensemaking and judgments of proactive voice effectiveness. Just as leaders need to adapt their leadership style when they want to motivate followers, followers should tailor their voice framing if they want to proactively change the status quo by speaking up. We hope our theorizing and propositions trigger voice research that deepens our understanding of proactive voice effectiveness.

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THE DARK SIDE OF PROACTIVE BEHAVIOR

When Being Proactive May Hurt Oneself, Others, or the Organization

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Proactive employees engage in anticipatory, self-directed, future-focused behavior that seeks to bring forth change in themselves or the work environment in a positive way (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). Thus, proactive behavior includes acts like modifying a job to fit one's skills and abilities, seeking feedback, taking charge, voicing concerns, preventing problems, selling issues, scanning the environment, and so forth. Over the past twenty years, researchers have developed different ways of conceptualizing and categorizing the various proactive behaviors that have been identified in the literature (e.g., Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker & Collins, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013). In this chapter, we adopt the categorization scheme developed by Parker and Collins (2010), which suggests that there are three principal forms of proactive behavior: *proactive work behavior*, which includes taking charge, voice, individual innovation, and problem prevention; *proactive person-environment (PE) fit behavior*, which includes feedback inquiry/monitoring, job change negotiation, and career initiative; and *proactive strategic behavior*, which includes strategic scanning and issue-selling credibility/willingness.

Although researchers conceptualize and categorize proactive behavior in different ways, there is general agreement that such behaviors contribute to both personal and organizational effectiveness (Crant, 2000; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Grant, Gino, & Hofmann, 2011; Parker & Collins, 2010). Indeed, in an era when organizations continually seek to do more with less, they are increasingly reliant on employees who do not just follow policies and procedures, but who instead act proactively to find ways of improving themselves, the work they do, and their surroundings (Grant et al., 2011). Likewise, as organizations have become flatter and empowerment has increased, employees have more discretion to behave proactively and may feel more responsible

to do so (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012; Fuller, Marler, & Hester, 2006; Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). Moreover, as the employment relationship has evolved, employees often cannot count on their employer to provide career management and, thus, they bear greater responsibility for managing themselves (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Furthermore, those who are proactive tend to be more effective and experience greater career success (Vos, Clippeleer, & Dewilde, 2009; Crant, 1995; Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999). Taken together, the literature suggests that employees who behave proactively are both more successful themselves and contribute more to the success of their organizations.

Although proactive behavior has a clear upside for individuals and organizations, researchers have noted that such behaviors sometimes have a downside (Belschak, Den Hartog, & Fay, 2010). For instance, Bateman and Crant (1993) noted that proactive behaviors, even if well intentioned, sometimes lead to unexpected or undesired outcomes. Bolino, Valcea, and Harvey (2010) argued that employees may feel burdened by the expectation to be proactive, and that there may be friction between employees who are proactive and those who are not. They also suggested that organizations that rely too heavily on proactive behaviors may lose control of their ability to socialize employees, which could result in a less functional organizational culture. Unfortunately, the idea that proactive behavior is a double-edged sword has seldom been the principal focus of research. Indeed, in most cases, the potential negatives associated with behaving proactively are only briefly mentioned, sometimes in the context of unexpected empirical findings (e.g., Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001). As such, we lack a clear understanding of how proactive behavior could be harmful to individuals and organizations. Gaining insight into the dark side of proactive behavior is important because employees who experience negative outcomes as a result of their proactive behavior will be less likely to engage in such behavior in the future (Bolino, Harvey, & Bachrach, 2010); likewise, if proactive behavior results in negative outcomes for organizations, managers may need to be judicious about encouraging such behavior.

The principal goal of this chapter, then, is to review the literature on proactive behavior, but with the intention of focusing exclusively on the dark side of specific proactive behaviors. In particular, we identify and explain how different types of proactive work behaviors might have negative effects for the employees who engage them, the colleagues who are affected by them, and the organization as a whole. Further, we present integrative statements regarding the three broad categories of proactive behavior identified by Parker and Collins (2010). Finally, we outline some directions for future research that explore when, why, and how proactive behavior could hurt oneself, others, or the organization. By addressing the dark side of proactive behavior, we contribute to the development of a complete conceptualization of proactive behavior that includes both its positive and negative aspects (Fineman, 2006).

The Dark Side of Proactive Work Behaviors

Proactive work behaviors include taking charge, voice, individual innovation, and problem prevention; all behaviors that focus on taking control of, and bringing about change within, the internal organizational environment (Parker & Collins, 2010). In this section, we discuss the dark side of these behaviors. Table 18.1 provides a summary of this discussion.

Taking charge was identified as a type of proactive behavior by Morrison and Phelps (1999) and describes instances in which employees voluntarily and proactively change the way work is conducted within their organization. For instance, employees may develop and implement new processes for doing their job, modify old procedures to make them more effective, and introduce

TABLE 18.1 The Dark Side of Proactive Work Behavior

<i>Proactive Behavior</i>	<i>Examples of Potential Dark Side</i>
<i>Proactive Work Behavior</i>	
<i>Taking charge</i>	
<i>For employees</i>	Taking charge may be stressful Employees may not be rewarded for taking charge and could be penalized
<i>For teammates</i>	Employees may sometimes be penalized if they do not take charge One employee's taking charge behavior could make another employee's job more difficult
<i>For the organization</i>	Too many employees trying to take charge at the same time may lead to chaos
<i>Voice</i>	
<i>For employees</i>	Voice can hinder career progress Employees who engage in voice may be seen as threatening to supervisors and coworkers Supervisors may penalize employees who engage in voice Voice behavior may be viewed negatively when employees lack the right skills or motives
<i>For teammates</i>	When supervisors encourage voice that they never intend to consider, it leads to intra-group conflict Voice may only enhance unit effectiveness if it is directed towards those who can solve problems
<i>For the organization</i>	Too much voice is associated with low levels of work-unit performance When supervisors fail to respond to voice, voice is associated with higher unit-level turnover

(continued)

TABLE 18.1 (continued)

<i>Proactive Behavior</i>	<i>Examples of Potential Dark Side</i>
<i>Individual Innovation Behavior</i>	
<i>For employees</i>	Innovation behaviors are stressful and emotionally draining Innovation often results in failure, which can be discouraging and lead to burnout
<i>For teammates</i>	Innovation behaviors may distract employees from their in-role tasks Innovative behaviors can create conflict among group members and undermine cohesion and potency Innovative behavior that occurs after the development phase may lead to opposition and frustration
<i>For the organization</i>	If innovation behavior undermines the well-being, commitment, and performance of individuals and groups, it is likely to harm organizational performance
<i>Problem Prevention</i>	
<i>For employees</i>	Spending too much time preventing problems may distract employees from core responsibilities Employees may be frustrated if they are unsuccessful in preventing recurring problems
<i>For teammates</i>	If teammates and supervisors disagree about the existence or nature of problems, problem prevention may lead to friction and conflict
<i>For the organization</i>	If problems are misidentified, problem prevention may result in the misallocation of time, attention, and resources which may ultimately undermine organizational efficiency and effectiveness

improved ways of doing things in their work unit. In general, research has focused on the antecedents of these behaviors, and this work suggests that employees are more likely to take charge when they feel responsible for making constructive changes, feel confident that they can do so, and feel that their managers are open to constructive change efforts (Fuller, Marler, Hester, and Otondo, 2012; Morrison & Phelps, 1999).

What has received less attention is the possibility that taking charge could have negative implications for the employees who take charge and those who are affected by their actions (including colleagues and the organization). This is somewhat surprising because in the paper introducing this construct, Morrison and Phelps acknowledge (1999: 416) that the very notion that taking charge will make organizations more effective is “a bit simplistic.” Indeed, they note that while workers may intend to take charge in ways that improve the organization, their attempts may fall short, or even backfire. They also mention the possibility that various stakeholders may view the implications of taking charge differently.

For instance, it is possible that improving the way things get done in one employee's job could make another employee's job more difficult. Morrison and Phelps (1999) further suggest that an employee who engages in excessive levels of taking charge may do more harm than good, and it seems equally likely that too many employees trying to take charge at the same time could potentially create a chaotic and dysfunctional organizational environment.

Recent research also suggests that some employees may not get credit for taking charge, which raises questions about whether unacknowledged proactivity increases inequity in the appraisal process. Specifically, using a composite measure of proactivity that included taking charge, Grant, Parker, and Collins (2009) found that proactive behavior had only a weak or non-significant effect on supervisors' performance evaluations of employees who expressed low prosocial values or negative affect. Likewise, Fuller et al. (2015) found that supervisors only reward subordinates' taking charge behavior with a higher performance ratings when the supervisor feels that enacting positive changes in the workplace is part of his/her job. Another study also highlighted a potential downside of taking charge for employees who *fail* to engage in such behavior. In particular, Fuller et al.'s (2015) findings suggest that employees who work for supervisors with proactive personalities tend to be penalized (in terms of their performance ratings) when they exhibit relatively low levels of taking charge. This may lead employees who work for proactive supervisors to feel pressured to engage in such behaviors if they want to be seen favorably, which could increase their feelings of job stress and turnover intentions (Bolino, Turnley, Gilstrap, & Suazo, 2010; Strauss & Parker, 2014).

Voice describes instances in which employees alert managers to organizational problems, share constructive (and sometimes unpopular) opinions about organizational issues, and encourage others to get involved (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Like research on other proactive behaviors, studies of voice often highlight its contribution to the effective functioning of organizations. However, more so than for other forms of proactivity, a number of studies have also noted the potential dark side of voice behavior. In particular, several researchers have pointed out that voice is a risky behavior that can disrupt interpersonal relationships and which may be seen as threatening by managers (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998); likewise, Seibert et al. (2001) found a negative relationship between voice and career progress. Research also indicates that some employees have implicit voice theories that make them reluctant to engage in voice (Detert & Edmondson, 2011). For instance, employees often believe that engaging in voice might be seen as bypassing or embarrassing the boss, that pointing out problems can derail your career, and that it is unwise to engage in voice unless you have data or solutions to back up your ideas. Recent studies, then, have sought to understand when voice may benefit employees and when it may do them harm. This work indicates that the positive effects of voice are often contingent upon situational factors.

In particular, it has been noted that supervisors may be reluctant to listen to suggestions from their subordinates, even when the suggestions are constructive.

For instance, Fast, Burriss, and Bartel (2014) found that supervisors who feel less competent regarding their managerial ability tend to be threatened by employees who engage in voice. These supervisors are less likely to seek out input from subordinates, are more likely to negatively evaluate employees who speak up, and are less likely to implement voice. Unfortunately, research suggests that employees may suffer when their voice is not heard. For instance, Tucker and Turner, (2015) found that employed teenagers who engaged in high levels of safety voice, but worked for supervisors who were the least open to voice, were the most likely to suffer work-related injuries.

Employees who engage in voice are more likely to be evaluated favorably when they know how to appropriately regulate their emotions (Grant, 2013), include a solution for the problem they have voiced, are considered trustworthy, have relevant expertise, and speak up early in a process (Whiting, Maynes, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2012). Building upon this work, Maynes and Podsakoff (2014) argued that voice can be categorized as supportive (e.g., supporting or defending organizational policies), constructive (e.g., offering suggestions for new policies), defensive (e.g., speaking out against changes to organizational policies), or destructive (e.g., making derogatory comments about organizational policies). Their work suggests that employees who engage in supportive and constructive voice tend to be seen and evaluated more positively (e.g., as having a positive impact on the organization), while employees who engage in defensive or destructive voice tend to be viewed more negatively (e.g., as having a negative impact on the organization). Moreover, their findings suggest that constructive and supportive voice is more likely to be supported by others than defensive and destructive voice. Research has also found that the effects of voice may depend on the degree to which employees and managers agree about how often employees engage in voice. Specifically, Burriss, Detert, and Romney (2013) found that subordinates are more likely to be given lower performance evaluations and to be fired when they overestimate the amount of voice behavior they display (relative to their supervisors' evaluations of subordinate voice), while employees who underestimate their voice behavior tend to receive higher performance ratings and are less likely to be fired. The authors speculate that employees who overestimate their voice may also be arrogant and have difficulty accepting criticism and negative feedback, while employees who underestimate their voice may be modest and believe that engaging in constructive voice is an expected part of their job; thus, supervisors respond more favorably to employees who underestimate, rather than overestimate, their voice behavior. Overall, this line of work highlights some of the potential dangers of engaging in voice for employees.

Research indicates that the effects of voice on group and organizational effectiveness are complex. For instance, voice can result in intra-group conflict. Specifically, de Vries, Jehn, and Terwel (2012) suggest that "pseudo voice" (in which supervisors encourage their subordinates to engage in voice that supervisors

never actually intend to act upon) leads to higher levels of intra-group conflict. They argue that pseudo voice creates a negative organizational atmosphere that fosters aggression and counterproductive work behavior; furthermore, they argue that employees who resent pseudo voice opportunities often direct their dissatisfaction at their coworkers (who are less threatening) which causes friction within the group. Other research suggests that voice is only constructive when it is directed towards those who can solve problems. Along these lines, Detert, Burris, Harrison, and Martin (2013) found that, while voice tends to facilitate unit effectiveness when it is directed at the unit's leader, voice tends to undermine unit effectiveness when it is shared among coworkers. They argue that whereas leaders have the power to act upon the concerns and suggestions voiced by employees, their peers do not. As a result, when employees voice their concerns to peers, it may be a harmful distraction that contributes to dissatisfaction rather than an impetus for positive change.

The findings of Mackenzie, Podsakoff, and Podsakoff (2011) suggest that too much voice can undermine organizational effectiveness. In a study of 150 limited-menu restaurants, they found an inverted U-shaped relationship between voice and work unit performance; in other words, work-unit performance was highest at moderate levels of employee voice. While their research indicates that voice may have positive implications, they emphasize that voice is unlikely to facilitate organizational effectiveness unless managers trust the employees who engage in voice, see them as knowledgeable and capable, and believe that employees want to see the organization succeed; otherwise, managers may be unwilling to act upon employee voice. Moreover, when managers are unwilling or unable to respond to employee voice, it may have harmful implications. For instance, McClean, Burris, and Detert (2013) found that voice behavior is associated with higher unit-level turnover when supervisors are unresponsive.

Individual innovation behavior describes the generation of creative ideas, the search for new products, technology, and ways of doing things, and the promotion of new ideas (Parker & Collins, 2010; Scott & Bruce, 1994). Like other types of proactive behavior, research has often focused on identifying the antecedents of innovation behavior (Unsworth & Parker, 2003); this work suggests that personal (e.g., openness to experience, creativity) and situational factors (e.g., climate for innovation, supervisor, and peer support) affect individual innovation behavior (Anderson, De Dreu, & Nijstad, 2004; Hammond, Neff, Farr, Schwall, & Zhao, 2011; Janssen, 2000, 2005; Unsworth & Parker, 2003; Wu, Parker, & de Jong, 2014). However, researchers have recognized that there can be a dark side to innovation behavior for those who innovate, those around innovators, and the organization as a whole.

According to Janssen, Van de Vliert, and West (2004), innovative behaviors are often stressful and emotionally draining because being innovative not only involves the use of cognition and creativity, but also frequently involves promoting and implementing one's ideas and finding ways to navigate the potential

minefields created by coworkers and supervisors who are resistant to change. Janssen and his colleagues (2004) outline a number of factors that can increase the costs associated with individual innovation. In particular, the costs of being innovative may be higher when employees are pushing for change in core (rather than peripheral) processes or activities and when the innovation involves larger-scale ideas that have broad implications and consequences for everyone in the organization. Further, while coworkers may be receptive to innovation that makes their jobs easier, they are likely to resist innovation when they feel threatened or lack the skills needed to implement the changes that would be required. Organizational context and national culture can also influence whether innovative behaviors succeed or fail. For instance, innovation is more likely to be well received in organic cultures than in mechanistic ones, and innovative behaviors are likely to be resisted in countries that are characterized by high uncertainty avoidance where employees may have a tendency to prefer old ideas over new ones (Janssen et al., 2004).

Because being innovative often requires both the ability to create and to persevere in the face of obstacles, such behavior is frequently stressful. Further, attempts at innovation may often fail, which can be discouraging and lead to burnout (Janssen et al., 2004). Building on this idea Janssen (2004) tested a model involving innovation behavior, fairness, and stress. His findings suggest that innovative behavior is most stressful in work environments where both distributive and procedural justice are low. Beyond stress, research also suggests that being innovative and creative can distract employees from focusing on other aspects of their work that require attention (Miron, Erez, & Naveh, 2004). Moreover, because employees are typically rewarded based on fulfilling their in-role responsibilities, engaging in innovative behaviors at the expense of one's in-role performance could have negative career implications (Bergeron, 2007).

Janssen (2003) argued that employees who engage in innovative behavior are more likely to have conflict with their coworkers and poorer coworker relations. Further, he found that innovative behavior and conflict with coworkers and coworker dissatisfaction was stronger among employees who were highly involved with their jobs (because such workers are more invested in their work and have more at stake than those who are less highly involved in their jobs). Moreover, when innovative behaviors result in group conflict, it can result in lower levels of group cohesion and group potency and higher levels of group ineffectiveness (Janssen et al., 2004). Furthermore, Ford and Sullivan (2004) argue that innovative behavior that comes after the development phase, when a group has already established its goals and is focusing on implementation or execution, is likely to be met with opposition, to lead to frustration, and to undermine group performance. Thus, innovative behavior, if it is not properly managed, could undermine the well-being, commitment, and performance of individuals and groups, which may, in turn, have a negative effect on organizational effectiveness.

Problem prevention is the final proactive work behavior identified by Parker and Collins (2010) and describes instances in which employees prevent work barriers and challenges from recurring (Frese & Fay, 2001). For instance, employees may investigate the root cause of an organizational problem or spend time figuring out how to prevent recurring issues they observe at work. While the findings of Parker and Collins (2010) indicate that problem prevention is a distinct construct, they found that it is highly correlated with taking charge. Few studies have investigated the correlates of problem prevention, so we lack research findings regarding the outcomes that are uniquely associated with this type of proactivity. Nevertheless, it is likely that the dark side of other types of proactive work behaviors will be also be associated with problem prevention. Thus, it is possible that employees who spend too much time trying to prevent problems may be distracted from their own work and could experience frustration if they are unable to prevent issues from recurring. Likewise, employees and their peers and supervisors may not always agree about what is problematic in the workplace and which problems are worth trying to prevent. Further, if problems are misidentified by employees, it could result in the misallocation of time, attention, and resources, which may ultimately undermine organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

The dark side of proactive work behavior can be summarized by the following integrative statement:

Integrative Statement: The dark side of proactive work behavior for individuals often stems from the stress, lack of rewards, punishment, and frustration that may result from enacting such behaviors. The dark side of proactive work behavior for teammates and supervisors often results from disagreement over the necessity, proper timing, value, and focus of proactive behaviors and the potential friction and conflict that this may create. The dark side of proactive work behavior for the organization often results from the cumulative negative effects of such behaviors for individuals and groups or from an excessive level of proactive work behavior in the organization.

The Dark Side of Proactive PE-Fit Behaviors

Proactive PE-fit behaviors include self-initiated actions that attempt to improve the compatibility between the employee's attributes (e.g., knowledge, abilities, values) and the organizational environment or requirements of the job (Ashford, Blatt, & Vandewalle, 2003). Specific types of PE-fit behavior include feedback-seeking (both inquiry and monitoring), job change negotiation, and career initiative (Parker & Collins, 2010). This section focuses on the dark side of these types of proactivity. Table 18.2 provides a summary of this discussion.

Feedback-seeking can take place either through inquiry or monitoring (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). *Feedback inquiry* involves directly seeking out information about one's performance from others, while *feedback monitoring* occurs when

TABLE 18.2 The Dark Side of Proactive P-E Fit Behavior

<i>Proactive Behavior</i>	<i>Examples of Potential Dark Side</i>
<i>Proactive P-E Fit Behavior</i>	
<i>Feedback-Seeking</i>	
<i>For employees</i>	Employees invest time in seeking feedback, but the feedback received may not be helpful Feedback-seeking can be stressful, especially for employees in rapidly changing organizations or when employees feel that they cannot act upon the feedback received Negative feedback may damage employees' self-image or hurt their feelings Employees who ask for feedback may be viewed negatively, especially if they are low to average performers or minorities When others attribute employees' feedback-seeking to impression management motives, this behavior can damage employees' reputations
<i>For teammates</i>	Feedback-seeking may damage relationships with co-workers Co-workers who provide feedback may be offended if the feedback seeker does not use the information as expected
<i>For the organization</i>	Feedback may hurt, not help, employee performance
<i>Job Change Negotiation</i>	
<i>For employees</i>	May increase work-family conflict Others may view employees who engage in job change negotiation as selfish Unsuccessful job change negotiations lead to more stress and less satisfaction
<i>For teammates</i>	Can lead to perceptions of unfairness and less cooperation among co-workers Benefits for one employee may come at the expense of other employees Can lead to resentment between employees Some employees will be more likely to negotiate job changes successfully than others
<i>For the organization</i>	May be difficult to change negotiated deals as organizational needs change
<i>Career Initiative</i>	
<i>For employees</i>	Can lead to more stress and negative perceptions of work-life balance Unsuccessful attempts may lead to frustration and feelings of alienation Can lead to less job satisfaction

<i>For teammates</i>	Can weaken connections with coworkers as employees focus on their own careers
<i>For the organization</i>	Can lead to reduced organizational commitment May increase turnover Employees may come to see their goals as in conflict with goals of the organization Unsuccessful career management may lead employees to have a more transactional relationship with their employers

employees collect information on their performance indirectly by comparing their performance to that of others or by inferring what others think about their performance from situational cues (Ashford & Cummings, 1983).

Feedback-seeking is especially important in situations where ambiguity is high or when others' perceptions of one's work are unclear. For example, it has been suggested that feedback-seeking is more important when the employee is new to the job (Ashford & Cummings, 1985), when the employee does not feel closely attached to colleagues (Wu, Parker, & de Jong, 2014), or when the employee is working remotely, in a knowledge-based organization, or in a highly diverse work unit (Ashford et al., 2003). Proactively seeking feedback can provide valuable information about how others perceive one's work and how one's performance can be improved. Working from this perspective, most research has emphasized the positive outcomes associated with feedback-seeking. Specifically, previous research suggests that feedback-seeking helps employees clarify role expectations, evaluate the appropriateness of their work behavior, and increase their work performance (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Morrison, 1993a). In addition, feedback-seeking is associated with greater job satisfaction and reduced turnover (Morrison, 1993b). On the whole, then, proactive feedback-seeking would appear to be a highly desirable behavior.

However, the outcomes of feedback-seeking are not universally positive. Naturally, the value of feedback-seeking is partly dependent on the quality of the information obtained. Thus, feedback-seeking only increases performance when the quality of feedback is high (Nae, Moon, & Choi, 2015). At other times, feedback-seeking may not yield the expected results. For example, Ashford and Black (1996) found no relationship between feedback-seeking and the subsequent job control that employees perceived. In such situations, then, feedback-seeking is unlikely to result in a positive payoff for the time invested in the process.

In other instances feedback-seeking is likely to yield mixed results, benefiting some employees and hurting others. For instance, while feedback-seeking can reduce stress for some employees, that result does not hold in all situations. In particular, feedback-seeking was actually associated with more (rather than less) stress six months after the initial organizational transition in highly turbulent

organizational environments (Ashford, 1988). Furthermore, feedback-seeking is especially likely to lead to stress when people receive suggestions that they do not think they can act upon or when the feedback received hurts their feelings or harms their self-image (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Morrison & Bies, 1991; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990).

Similarly, prior research indicates that feedback-seeking has mixed results for the way that others view the individual requesting the assessment of his/her performance. For example, feedback-seeking often enhances the reputation of good performers (Morrison & Bies, 1991). Paradoxically, poor performers, who are most in need of the information that can result from feedback inquiry, can actually further damage their reputation by seeking the opinions of others regarding their work (Ashford et al., 2003). Even average performers can suffer damage to their reputations during feedback-seeking (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992). In addition, feedback inquiry may hurt the reputations of minorities if the request leads to the enactment of negative stereotypes on the part of the person whose opinion is being solicited (Roberson, Deitch, Brief, & Block, 2003). Similarly, while feedback-seeking is more important in culturally diverse workplaces, the potential problems associated with that feedback and the potential costs to the person seeking feedback may be higher in such situations (Ashford et al., 2003).

The motive that observers ascribe to the individual seeking feedback also plays a large role in determining whether the employee's reputation is enhanced or harmed by feedback inquiry. Feedback inquiry is often used as a form of impression management (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992; Anseel, Lievens, & Levy, 2007; Lam, Huang, & Snape, 2007). However, even among high performers, when observers attribute impression management motives to the feedback seeker, the action has a detrimental effect on the employee's image (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Specifically, whereas seeking negative feedback that would be useful to improve performance enhanced an individual's reputation among subordinates, peers, and supervisors, seeking positive feedback actually hurt an individual's reputation with these three groups (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Similarly, feedback-seeking only has a positive influence on the quality of leader-member exchange relationships when supervisors perceive that the subordinate's behavior is driven by a desire to improve his/her performance rather than by the motivation to manage impressions (Lam et al., 2007). Ultimately, then, whether feedback-seeking helps or hurts one's reputation is often determined by the attributions that others make regarding the reasons for the inquiry. Thus, based on the results obtained in studies of other proactive behaviors and impression management activities, it may be that feedback-seeking is more likely to do more harm than good when utilized by those with low situational awareness (Chan, 2006) or by those who are low self-monitors (Turnley & Bolino, 2001).

There has been far more research on feedback inquiry than on feedback monitoring. However, there may be some specific downsides to a heavy reliance on

feedback monitoring as a means for understanding and improving one's performance and fit with the organization. In particular, feedback monitoring requires the interpretation of sometimes subtle clues or conflicting pieces of information (Ashford, 1989). Thus, it requires a great deal of inference which makes it even more prone to ego-protecting biases and distortion than feedback inquiry (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). As a result, managers who rely heavily on feedback monitoring may have less accurate perceptions of how they are viewed by others (Ashford & Cummings, 1983).

While there has been relatively little research that directly examines how feedback-seeking hurts organizational functioning, the outcomes discussed above provide some insight into how feedback-seeking may be harmful to colleagues or to the organization as a whole. Specifically, it is well documented that feedback-seeking is often a form of impression management, whereby individuals solicit input from others in an effort to highlight their own accomplishments and enhance their reputation (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992). As with other forms of impression management, this type of proactive behavior has the potential to damage relationships in the organization. For instance, colleagues may resent the fact that they are made to look worse in comparison or that they now feel pressure to engage in the same type of self-enhancing feedback inquiry. Thus, feedback-seeking that is perceived to be image driven may hurt relationships between colleagues. Additionally, these relationships can be harmed based on the type of feedback that is received. People may resent receiving criticism even when they have asked for feedback (Baumeister, 1999). Moreover, those who have been asked for their feedback may resent it when that feedback is not acted upon (Ashford et al., 2003). Finally, prior research indicates that some feedback, even if taken, can actually end up harming rather than helping employee performance (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996).

Job change negotiation involves individual attempts to alter aspects of one's work role and the conditions of one's employment so that they better fit with one's skills, abilities, interests or needs (Ashford & Black, 1996). Originally conceptualized as a form of proactive socialization, job change negotiation now includes the actions of employees at all stages of career development (Parker & Collins, 2010). Common forms of this type of proactive behavior include negotiating the task assignments, role expectations, and flexibility allowed in a particular job, asking for idiosyncratic employment deals, and job-crafting (Ashford & Black, 1996; Rousseau, 2005; Wrzesniewski, LoBuglio, Dutton, & Berg, 2013).

By reconfiguring work roles to better fit the talents and desires of individual employees, it is generally thought that there will be benefits in terms of employee satisfaction, commitment, motivation, performance, and work-life balance (Hornung, Rousseau, & Glaser, 2009; Liu, Lee, Hui, Kwan, & Wu, 2013). However, prior research indicates that these expected outcomes do not always result from this type of proactive behavior (Ashford & Black, 1996) and that renegotiated roles can sometimes even increase work-family conflict

(Hornung, Rousseau, & Glaser, 2008). In addition, more so than in other areas, prior research has highlighted some of the downsides that can occur from this type of proactivity (Rousseau, 2001). In particular, job change negotiation often results in a mixture of positive and negative consequences. For example, people may benefit from job change negotiation by altering their jobs to make them more satisfying and rewarding. However, authors have speculated that those who do so may also be viewed by colleagues, or even by supervisors, as difficult or selfish (Grant & Ashford, 2008). In addition, those who unsuccessfully attempt job change negotiation (e.g., who have a requested change denied) often end up feeling more stressed and less satisfied (Rousseau, 2001).

Even when job change negotiation has positive consequences for the one who bartered the agreement, the arrangement may create negative consequences for others or for organizational functioning. For instance, many forms of job change negotiation result in situations where the role expectations or rewards for one individual are different from those of his or her peers. Thus, job change negotiation can lead to perceptions of unfairness and to reduced cooperation among employees (Rousseau, Ho, & Greenberg, 2006). In addition, job change negotiation can result in greater flexibility or a more attractive work role for one employee, but that may come at the expense of another employee who now has less flexibility or who now has to take on less desirable tasks (Rousseau, 2005). As a result, this type of proactivity can create resentment and friction among colleagues (Ho, 2005; Hornung, Rousseau, Glaser, Angerer, & Weigl, 2010).

Likewise, job change negotiation creates situations in which certain employees are more likely to benefit than others. Employees who are better liked or who have closer working relationships with their supervisors are more likely to successfully negotiate changes to their jobs or roles (Rousseau, 2001), and employees who share lower-quality relationships with their supervisors may feel aggrieved by the special treatment that others receive (Bolino & Turnley, 2009). In addition, older and more experienced workers, employees with health issues or young families, and individuals with time-consuming hobbies and second jobs are more likely to be afforded idiosyncratic work arrangements (Rousseau, 2005). Obviously, that means that other individuals who are performing similar roles, but who do not share these characteristics, are less likely to be able to successfully negotiate these unique arrangements. Additionally, there are times when people specifically engage in job change negotiation in an effort to reduce their workload or to decrease the span of their jobs (Rousseau et al., 2006). Likewise, there are times that people proactively craft their jobs to their own liking, but do so in ways that are not organizationally sanctioned or approved (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). In cases like these, proactive job changes may harm organizational productivity rather than help it.

Finally, job change negotiation may work well in the short-term but create longer-term difficulties. Specifically, job changes are typically negotiated between

an employee and his/her supervisor, although sometimes the negotiation takes place with a recruiter, human resource specialist, or upper-level manager (Hornung et al., 2009). Over time, the unique role that the employee has negotiated for himself or herself may no longer make sense from an organizational perspective, but it may be difficult to renegotiate without creating resentment. Moreover, when reporting relationships change, a new supervisor may become responsible for the fulfillment (or the perceived lack of fulfillment) of the special work arrangements that he or she never personally agreed to and that may no longer be productive.

Career initiative involves an individual's proactive attempts to promote his or her career by engaging in career planning, skill development, and discussions with upper-level managers (Tharenou & Terry, 1998). Organizations today expect employees to be more proactive in managing their careers (Bambacus & Bordia, 2009), and self-initiated career planning is especially important in the context of boundaryless careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Mirvis & Hall, 1994). Moreover, prior research indicates that taking personal responsibility for career management leads to enhanced perceptions of control over one's career (King, 2004). In addition, career planning is associated with intrinsic indicators of career success (e.g., satisfaction), extrinsic measures of career success (e.g., salary growth and number of promotions) and satisfaction with life in general (King, 2004; Seibert et al., 1999, 2001).

Thus, on balance, career initiative is generally associated with positive outcomes. However, there can also be a downside to this type of behavior for the individuals who engage in it. For instance, the process of career planning may increase employee stress levels and may have a negative effect on employees' perceptions of work-life balance (Sturges, 2008). Also, in those instances where career initiative does not lead to the desired career outcomes, employees may become frustrated and alienated from their job (King, 2004). While it may be more important to engage in career planning when one's prospects are bleak, that is also when this type of proactivity is most likely to result in frustration. Indeed, those who are most engaged in career planning are sometimes the most dissatisfied (Hall, Waddell, Donner, & Wheeler, 2004). While the direction of causality is often unclear (worrisome employment circumstances may lead to dissatisfaction which leads to career planning), it seems apparent that career planning does not always reduce dissatisfaction and sometimes increases it.

Likewise, there are also instances in which employee career initiative can have a deleterious effect on organizational functioning through a weakening of the employee-organization bond. Actively engaging in career planning can reduce commitment (Bambacus & Bordia, 2009) and increase turnover (Wolff & Moser, 2010). Also, as people focus more and more attention on their individual career success, there is the risk that doing so will lead them to perceive that personal goals are incompatible with team and organizational objectives (Feldman & Weitz, 1991). Finally, when career management does not lead to the desired outcomes,

it is possible that individuals may take a more instrumental or transactional view of their relationship with their colleagues and their organization (Crites, 1969).

The dark side of proactive PE-fit behavior can be summarized by the integrative statement that follows:

Integrative Statement: The dark side of proactive P-E fit behaviors for individuals often stems from the increased stress, dissatisfaction, and disillusionment or from the harm to one's image that may result from engaging in such behaviors. The dark side of proactive P-E fit behavior for colleagues generally results from the conflict or inequity that such behaviors can create or from the fact that enhancing one employee's work role may have deleterious effects on the work roles of his or her teammates. The dark side of proactive P-E fit behavior for the organization often results either from a weakening of the employee-organization relationship or from instances in which jobs are redesigned in ways that no longer meet organizational needs.

The Dark Side of Proactive Strategic Behaviors

In this section, we discuss the dark side of proactive strategic behaviors. Table 18.3 provides a summary of this discussion. Proactive strategic behaviors are distinct from other forms of proactive behavior because they focus on improving the organization's strategic fit with the external environment (Parker & Collins, 2010).

Strategic scanning is a behavior in which employees proactively look outside the organization to identify new opportunities, such as emerging markets, and potential threats in the environment in order to influence the strategic direction of the organization (Parker & Collins, 2010). At a general level, scanning is often a precursor to other proactive behaviors such as innovation, but scanning is specifically concerned with gleaning information about the organization's fit with its external environment (Parker & Collins, 2010).

TABLE 18.3 The Dark Side of Proactive Strategic Behavior

<i>Proactive Behavior</i>	<i>Examples of Potential Dark Side</i>
<i>Proactive Work Behavior</i>	
<i>Strategic Scanning</i>	
<i>For employees</i>	When employees perceive threats to their organizations, they may experience anxiety, disillusionment, and frustration Employees who are highly committed to the organization may experience dissonance if they come to perceive that their organization is moving in the wrong strategic direction

<i>For teammates</i>	Teammates may experience anxiety, disillusionment, frustration, and decreased organizational commitment when employees share negative information that emerged from strategic scanning
<i>For the organization</i>	An organization's employees are less likely to remain committed to it if they perceive that its strategic direction is inappropriate When employees perceive threats to the organization, they are more likely to leave the organization Future competition can result as employees depart the organization in order to pursue opportunities identified through strategic scanning

Issue-Selling

<i>For employees</i>	Employees who engage in issue-selling may be seen as deviants Fellow employees and supervisors may look down upon issue-sellers because they perceive issue-selling behavior as an attempt to harm the organization or as merely an impression-management ploy Employees may lose credibility when their issue-selling attempts are not successful or lead to negative organizational outcomes Issue-selling may lead to decreased in-role performance, harming issue-selling employees' careers Employees who issue-sell may experience increased stress, work-family conflict, and fatigue When employees' issue-selling attempts are unsuccessful, they may experience decreased feelings of efficacy and increased burnout
<i>For teammates</i>	Teammates may become involved in fellow employees' issue-selling attempts, leading to the same potentially harmful outcomes that the initiating employees face Teammates may feel threatened by employees whose issue-selling attempts involve their job roles or areas of expertise
<i>For the organization</i>	Too much issue-selling can interfere with an organization's critical activities Top management may not receive accurate information when employees frame issues in order to be more successful in selling them, making it difficult for top management to appropriately address the issues When top management does not respond to employees' issue-selling attempts, employees may become less committed to the organization, leading to negative outcomes such as increased turnover

To date, very little research has considered strategic scanning. As with other forms of proactive behavior, the current literature on scanning has primarily explored its antecedents. Consistent with the predictors of other proactive behaviors, employees who scan for strategic opportunities tend to have a strong organizational commitment (Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Parker & Collins, 2010). However, unlike other proactive behaviors, employees who engage in strategic scanning are more likely to have experience in organizational roles that emphasize forward-thinking and strategic planning (Parker & Collins, 2010). Howell and Sheab (2001) found that employees who have higher intellectual curiosity and broader ranges of interest are also more likely to engage in environmental scanning. The key outcome of strategic scanning is generally thought to be issue-selling behavior (Dutton & Ashford, 1993).

Research on the negative outcomes of strategic scanning has yet to be undertaken, but reconsidering the role of strategic scanning highlights the potential for undesirable consequences for both the proactive employee and the organization. Implicit in models including strategic scanning behavior (e.g., Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Howell & Sheab, 2001) is the assumption that employees engage in scanning in order to help the organization. These models also suggest that when employees recognize an opportunity or threat, their main focus is on deciding whether or not to bring this information to the top management through issue-selling attempts.

However, other plausible reactions point out some of the negative outcomes that are possible from strategic scanning behavior. Most notably, employees who engage in strategic scanning may come to perceive that their organizations face threats that may be difficult or impossible to overcome. Of course, it is important to note that employees' perception of the situation may not be accurate. They may feel that a threat is insurmountable because they cannot envision a way to get past it, even if an organization's top management would be able to do so. This type of situation may lead to several detrimental psychological reactions, especially for employees who are strongly committed to their organizations. For instance, they may experience anxiety, disillusionment, and frustration. Further, employees may experience dissonance because the organization to which they are highly committed is, at least in their eyes, on the wrong path. This is likely to lead to lower organizational commitment (Dutton & Ashford, 1993) which, in turn, can lead to turnover. This could be especially damaging if the organization is, in fact, facing critical threats and needs the talents of those employees to overcome a challenging environment. Employees who are concerned about organizational failure may share their concerns with other employees, leading to lower organizational commitment and higher turnover for others as well.

Other damaging outcomes of strategic scanning are also plausible. One area that has not been explored is whether employees also engage in strategic scanning to protect their own interests. That is, rather than watching out for threats in order to aid the organization, employees may be on guard for negative signals

in the environment in an attempt to avoid unpleasant career outcomes for themselves, such as downsizing or restructuring due to hostile takeovers. Although this behavior may be beneficial to employees, who will be in a better position to proactively manage their careers, organizations may lose key employees as a result. And, even employees who do initially engage in strategic scanning in order to support their organization may be motivated to act in ways that are not in its interests. For example, an employee who recognizes the potential for a new product or market may be motivated to leave the organization to undertake an entrepreneurial venture in order to capitalize on the changing environmental landscape. This may be especially true for employees with proactive personalities since research has linked this disposition to entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors (Crant, 2000). Although Parker and Collins (2010) did not find a link between proactive personality and strategic scanning, they pointed out that entrepreneurial activities need to be explored as possible proactive strategic behaviors. For organizations, then, strategic scanning could not only lead to turnover, but also to future competition.

Issue-selling is a proactive strategic behavior in which employees affect organizational change by bringing attention to issues that impact the organization's strategic effectiveness (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). It differs from related constructs, such as voice and taking charge, with its emphasis on drawing attention to issues related to the organization and its external environment (Parker & Collins, 2010). Parker and Collins (2010) explored *issue-selling willingness* and *issue-selling credibility* as two aspects of this behavior. Issue-selling willingness reflects the amount of effort an employee is willing to invest in selling an issue, and issue-selling credibility is a measure of an employee's past success in selling issues to top management (Ashford, Rothbard, Piderit, & Dutton, 1998). Situational factors such as perceived organizational support, the presence of high-quality relationships, and favorable issue-selling norms are positively related to issue-selling willingness (Ashford et al., 1998). Parker and Collins (2010) investigated dispositional antecedents of issue-selling and found that consideration of the future was positively related to both aspects of issue-selling, whereas proactive personality and conscientiousness were positively related only to issue-selling credibility. They also found that performance goal orientation was negatively related to both credibility and willingness.

Ostensibly, proactive strategic behaviors lead to positive outcomes for the employee (e.g., higher performance evaluations) and the organization, but the literature on issue-selling also points to the potential downsides of this behavior. Although employees sometimes engage in issue-selling as a form of impression management (Dutton & Ashford, 1993), employees seem to recognize that issue-selling also entails image risk. Qualitative research on organizational change showed that employees who initiated changes were more likely to be well-known within an organization, but they were less likely to be seen as promotable (Frohman, 1998). This finding suggests that

successfully selling an issue, a form of initiating organizational change, can lead to less than favorable impressions. Perceptions of image risk are frequently studied as predictors of issue-selling behaviors (e.g., Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, Hayes, & Wierba, 1997; Ashford, et al., 1998; Dutton, Ashford, Lawrence, & Miner-Rubino, 2002), illustrating that many employees anticipate reputational damage as one of the possible outcomes of this behavior.

There are several ways in which an employee's image can be harmed as a result of issue-selling. As Dutton and Ashford (1993) explain, employees can be tainted by association with issues that are seen as unsuitable by their colleagues. Employees who exhibit issue-selling behaviors may be seen as deviants (Dutton et al., 1997). And, instead of viewing employees who engage in issue-selling as assets to the organization, supervisors may see such employees as ingratiating sycophants or as annoyances who disrupt the normal work flow (Grant et al., 2009). Employees with high negative affect face even greater image risk because their supervisor is more likely to attribute their issue-selling behaviors to bad attitudes or malicious intentions (Grant et al., 2009). Lastly, poor results can undermine an employee's credibility (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). The damage to an employee's reputation can be severe enough to lead to consequences such as ostracism, a demotion, or even termination (Dutton & Ashford, 1993).

In addition to experiencing negative social outcomes, employees who issue sell may experience negative personal consequences as well. Issue-selling requires employees to make heavy investments of their time, energy, and resources (Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, & Lawrence, 2001). Although the costs of these investments have yet to be explored, research on other extra-role behaviors has shown that investments like these can lower employees' in-role performance, hurting their chances of being promoted (Bergeron, 2007). They can also lead to stress, work-family conflict, and fatigue (Bolino, Hsiung, Harvey, & LePine, 2015; Bolino & Turnley, 2005; Halbesleben, Harvey, & Bolino, 2009). Because proactive behavior also requires employees to go beyond their normal job roles (Crant, 2000), similar outcomes might be expected for issue-selling. Further, if employees' attempts to sell issues fall on deaf ears, then employees' sense of efficacy may be negatively affected, and employees may also experience burnout (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004).

The effects of issue-selling occasionally go beyond an individual employee. In some cases, employees attempt to build coalitions in order to gather resources and increase support for their viewpoint (Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Dutton, et al., 2001). As others become involved in the issue-selling attempt, they may also face the negative outcomes discussed above. Thus, they risk being seen in an unfavorable light and losing credibility as well. Issue-selling could also cause others around the employee to feel threatened or challenged (Grant et al., 2009). And, because employees who issue-sell construe their roles so broadly, it is possible that coworkers may feel that their roles are being impinged upon by the proactive employee (Parker & Collins, 2010).

Issue-selling can also result in negative outcomes for organizations. Excessive issue-selling can impair an organization's ability to perform its essential activities (Bateman & Crant, 1999). Issue-selling may divert attention away from other important or valuable topics because managers are likely to champion their own ideas (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). After employees decide to engage in issue-selling, they make a series of decisions about how to present, package, and contextualize the issues in order to maximize their success in selling them (Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Dutton et al., 2001). Information may become distorted as employees frame discussions in a way that improves their ability to sell issues, making it difficult for top management to effectively resolve the original problem. When issues that employees are concerned about are not given attention by the organization, they may feel less committed (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). Some employees are motivated to sell issues because of their strong identification with (Parker & Collins, 2010) or commitment to the organization (Grant & Ashford, 2008). For these employees, unsuccessful issue-selling may affect their commitment even more negatively, which may have harmful organizational implications. Furthermore, when employees have failed to sell an issue, they may be hesitant to bring forward issues in the future (Dutton & Ashford, 1993).

The dark side of proactive strategic behavior can be summarized by the following integrative statement:

Integrative Statement: The dark side of proactive strategic behavior for individuals often results from the harmful psychological consequences they experience and negative attributions others may make when employees engage in these behaviors. The dark side of proactive strategic behavior for teammates and supervisors frequently results from the conflict, misplaced priorities, and reputational damage that can be a byproduct of these types of actions. The dark side of proactive strategic behavior for the organization often stems from decreased commitment and increased turnover and from dysfunctional activities and information processing that results from proactive strategic behaviors that are misguided.

Discussion

As noted in the introduction of our chapter, proactive behavior is vital for organizations that wish to successfully compete in the 21st century, and organizations are often on the lookout for employees who are proactive and reward them for acting accordingly (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker & Collins, 2010). Nevertheless, as discussed here, and as others have noted in earlier work, there may also be a dark side of proactive behaviors (Belschak et al., 2010; Bolino et al., 2010). Research is now beginning to offer us a more complete and nuanced view of the pluses and minuses associated with proactive behaviors. In this chapter, we have discussed research that has investigated and/or uncovered some of

the costs associated with proactive behavior. Nevertheless, additional work is needed to better understand when being proactive may hurt oneself, others, or the organization. Below, we describe some potential avenues for future research that might be useful in each of these areas.

Future Research on When Being Proactive May Hurt Oneself

One thing that is clear from our review of the literature is that, thus far, the majority of the research on the dark side of proactive behavior has focused on the potential harm that may befall employees who are proactive. Indeed, being a proactive employee can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, proactive employees are often lauded and rewarded for their proactive behavior (e.g., Crant, 2000; Seibert et al., 1999, 2001); on the other hand, engaging in such behaviors may sometimes be unrewarded and viewed with skepticism and hostility by some supervisors and coworkers (e.g., Bergeron, 2007; Bolino et al., 2010). Furthermore, there may be personal costs for engaging in proactive behaviors because enacting these behaviors can consume employees' time, energy, attention, and other resources; likewise, even when successful, behaving proactively can be stressful and frustrating (Ashford, 1988; Halbesleben et al., 2009; Grant et al., 2009; Janssen et al., 2004).

Although researchers have been successful in highlighting some of the potential harm done to proactive employees, this research has been somewhat scattered and has tended to focus on the isolated effects associated with specific types of proactive behaviors. In other words, this research often focuses on how engaging in a specific type of proactive behavior (e.g., voice, innovation, taking charge, feedback-seeking) leads to a specific type of negative consequence (e.g., poor image, lower performance ratings, or stress). Therefore, we encourage future researchers to develop and test theoretical frameworks that study these effects in a more holistic and comprehensive way. For instance, such research might use a specific theoretical framework (e.g., job demands-resources theory, conservation of resources theory) to understand the stress associated with enacting multiple proactive behaviors. Alternatively, researchers might develop theoretical models that simultaneously consider the different costs associated with engaging proactive behavior (e.g., image costs, resource costs) as well as the contextual factors (e.g., employee social or political skill, organizational climate, supervisor support) that influence whether such behaviors tend to have favorable or unfavorable consequences. Because we know that proactive behaviors often have beneficial effects and can be resource-enhancing, it would also be useful to develop theoretical models that consider both the benefits and costs that accrue to proactive employees, how employees manage those benefits and costs, and how the benefits and costs of behaving proactively affect the tendency of employees to continue being proactive over time. Recent work in the area of organizational citizenship behavior suggests that self-regulation theory, diary studies, and longitudinal studies may

be useful for understanding how employees process feedback related to their proactive behavior over time (e.g., Bolino et al., 2012; Ilies, Scott, & Judge, 2006; Lemoine, Parsons, & Kansara, 2015).

Future Research on When Being Proactive May Hurt Others

One of the biggest gaps we identified in our review is research exploring the ways in which proactive behaviors may harm coworkers. In many cases, researchers simply mentioned the potential harm that proactive behaviors could cause to coworkers rather than systemically exploring these effects and how they emerge. Thus, more theoretical and empirical work exploring this issue would certainly be worthwhile. In particular, what happens to coworkers when an employee takes charge of work processes or sells an issue that will have negative implications for some of his or her coworkers? One theoretical perspective that may be useful for exploring coworker responses is reactance theory, which suggests that people get upset when they feel like their freedom is threatened or diminished (Brehm, 1966). As noted in our review, when some employees proactively change the work environment (e.g., through voice, innovative behavior, issue-selling) it affects other employees. Reactance theory suggests that when changes restrict colleagues' freedom to behave in the future as they have in the past, it is likely to elicit unfavorable reactions. Future research, then, might seek to understand how certain proactive behaviors cause harm to others by restricting the flexibility and job control they once enjoyed.

Our review also highlighted the ways in which some proactive behavior could undermine cohesiveness and contribute to team conflict (e.g., Rousseau, 2005). It would be helpful, though, to build more comprehensive, theoretically grounded, models that address the implications of multiple proactive behaviors on team functioning and performance. For example, researchers might utilize the input-process-outcome (IPO) model (McGrath, 1964), which has often been used to understand team effectiveness (Mathieu, Maynard, Rapp, & Gilson, 2008), to develop models that address the complex and potentially harmful effects of proactive behavior on team performance. Models built around the IPO might explain how different types of proactive behaviors may influence or interact with inputs (e.g., diversity, faultlines, team personality, competencies) and processes (e.g., collective cognition, shared mental models, team confidence, trust, cohesiveness) to increase or hinder team performance, including team affect and viability.

In addition, future research should examine situations in which employee proactivity creates increased inequity within work groups. While the potential for unfairness has been noted as a possible outcome of some types of proactivity, such as job change negotiation (Ho, 2005; Rousseau, 2001, 2005), few empirical studies have examined the impact that such actions have on colleagues. Likewise, while it is clear that proactivity can influence performance ratings

(Grant et al., 2009), it is unclear how often proactivity makes performance evaluations less accurate or how often the comparisons generated have an unfair effect on other employees. Ultimately, then, much more work is needed to examine the deleterious effects that proactive behaviors may have on coworkers.

Future Research on When Being Proactive May Hurt the Organization

While proactive behaviors are thought to be critical to the effective functioning and performance of organizations, research examining the effects of proactive behaviors, either helpful or harmful, on organizational-level indicators of performance is lacking. In part, this may be due to the fact that most of the research in this area has tended to focus on identifying different types of proactive behaviors and their antecedents. Further, proactive behaviors are typically conceptualized and investigated at the individual level, which means that multi-level, longitudinal models will need to be developed and tested to understand how these behaviors influence organizational-level performance. Although some studies have looked at the effects of specific types of proactive behaviors, like voice, on unit-level performance (Mackenzie et al. 2011) or unit-level outcomes like turnover (McClellan et al., 2013), we lack theory and data explaining when and why individual-level proactive behaviors may be positively, or negatively, linked with firm-level indicators of financial or market performance (e.g., return on assets, earnings per share). Clearly, developing and testing models like this would be complicated and somewhat daunting (see Schneider, Hanges, Smith, and Salvaggio (2003) for an example), but understanding when proactive behaviors contribute, or potentially detract from, the bottom line would be insightful. An alternative approach would be to develop models that do a better job of explaining how some of the harmful effects that have already been identified at the individual level (e.g., stress) and group level (e.g., conflict, tension) may funnel up and have an impact on unit-level and firm-level performance. Ideally, such models would employ an integrated approach that addresses the combined effects of multiple proactive behaviors rather than simply addressing the individual effects of specific proactive behaviors.

Practical Implications for Employees and Organizational Leaders

Finally, our review of the literature suggests that there are some practical implications that employees and organizational leaders should consider with regard to the dark side of proactive behavior. In particular, employees who engage in proactive behavior must be aware that there are risks associated with behaving proactively. So, before employees speak out, take charge, sell issues, seek feedback, and so forth, they should keep the potential risks and harm that may befall them in mind.

Indeed, although they may be rewarded for acting proactively, it is also possible that their proactive behavior may go unrecognized or elicit punishment and disapproval on the part of others, especially those who question the employees' motives or the value of their proactive behaviors. Likewise, while behaving proactively can be energizing, it can also be depleting, stressful, and frustrating. Organizational leaders, then, should be aware that proactive behaviors must be properly managed in order to make sure that they have helpful rather than harmful effects on the organization. For organizations that want their employees to be proactive, it means that a careful evaluation of the rewards and punishments associated with proactive behavior should be undertaken. It may also mean that managers need to be cognizant of the potential pitfalls that may be associated with a proactive work environment, including the stress associated with such behavior, the potential for conflict between employees regarding proactive endeavors, and the issues that might arise when certain employees are adversely affected by the proactive behaviors of their peers. Indeed, if managers wish to promote proactive behavior among their subordinates, they themselves may need to be more proactive in addressing the potentially harmful effects of such behaviors.

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19

TEAMS AND PROACTIVITY

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Teams are broadly defined as groups of individuals that socially interact with one another (face-to-face, virtually, or more likely some combination of both) and complete tasks interdependently (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). A frequent (and increasing) hallmark of organizational teamwork is that it occurs in unpredictable, ever-changing contexts (Mathieu, Maynard, Rapp, & Gilson, 2008; Wageman, Gardner, & Mortensen, 2012). To overcome and thrive in such uncertainty – which arises from both general (e.g., teammates not knowing how to interact with one another; Tuckman, 1965; Oldham & Hackman, 2010) and unique (e.g., project teams assigned a novel task; Gardner, Gino, & Staats, 2012) sources – teams must be proactive (Griffin, Neal, and Parker, 2007; Oldham & Hackman, 2010; Williams, Parker, & Turner, 2010).

To date, an overwhelming majority of proactivity scholarship has been conducted at the individual level of analysis. Yet, research also demonstrates, both empirically and conceptually, that proactivity can collectively emerge at higher levels, including teams (Crant, 2000; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Williams et al., 2010). In this chapter, we provide a retrospective and prospective overview of this research domain. We begin with a definition of team proactivity, as well as a brief discussion of its similarities and distinctions with individual level proactivity. Next, we discuss two research streams that helped establish the foundation for modern conceptualizations of team proactivity – self-managed work teams and team empowerment – with the goal of providing a richer context for the construct's emergence. We then establish a conceptual model of team proactivity based on the results of a comprehensive literature review. Finally, we offer a discussion of key implications of current team proactivity scholarship and promising future research directions.

Defining Team Proactivity

As described elsewhere in this book, individual level proactivity stems from workers' orientations and motivational approaches toward their tasks (e.g., proactive personality (Bateman & Crant, 1993), proactive motivation (Parker, 2000; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010)) and is manifested in self-initiated actions aimed at significantly improving a future situation or altogether constructing a new, more favorable set of circumstances (e.g., proactive behaviors, proactive performance; Crant, 2000; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). In contrast to someone who simply "goes with the flow" (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 103), proactive individuals approach work with a "grab the bull by the horns" mentality. Common behavioral examples of individual proactivity include: generating novel ideas in anticipation of upcoming challenges, seeking feedback from others to better address future problems, and implementing changes to one's work methodologies (Parker et al., 2006; Williams et al., 2010). Importantly, researchers generally agree that proactivity is not composed of an explicit set of behaviors, but instead reflects a more parsimonious process of "anticipating, planning, and striving to have an impact" (Parker et al., 2010: p. 829; see also Grant & Ashford, 2008, and Griffin et al., 2007).

The construct of team proactivity shares substantive definitional and functional overlap with individual level proactivity. Team proactive performance, for instance, is defined as "the extent to which a team engages in self-starting, future-focused action that aims to change the external situation or the team itself" (Williams et al., 2010, p. 302). Examples of team proactive behaviors include: anticipating (versus reacting to) future problems, searching from within or scanning the external environment for innovative solutions, and modifying work processes (Chen, Farh, Campbell-Bush, Wu, & Wu, 2013; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Williams et al., 2010). Likewise, similar to its individual level counterpart, team proactive behaviors typically occur within teams displaying proactive motivational states – herein referred to simply as "proactive states" –, defined as collectively-focused, emergent properties that are derived from a combination of compositional (e.g., members' personality), contextual (e.g., team leadership, reward systems), and other reciprocal influences that occur as members interact with one another (e.g., vicarious learning, role-modeling). Finally, much in the same way that individual level proactive behaviors have desirable influences on many key individual level outcomes (Bateman & Crant, 1999; Crant, 2000), especially in highly uncertain and interdependent contexts (Griffin et al., 2007), higher levels of team proactivity are commonly associated with desirable team outcomes, including higher performance, enhanced learning, and increased satisfaction (e.g., Baer & Frese, 2003; Druskat & Kayes, 2000; Hyatt & Ruddy, 1997; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Tesluk & Mathieu, 1999).

Importantly, even though researchers have typically conceptualized and operationalized team proactivity using primarily behavioral criteria (and likewise

have used the terms “team proactivity” and “proactive performance” or “proactive behaviors” interchangeably; e.g., Crossley, Cooper, & Wernsing, (2013), we are careful to delineate between the *attitudinal/psychological* aspects (i.e., the proactive states reflecting a team’s cognitive, motivational, and affective orientation toward teamwork) and the *behavioral/interactional* manifestations (i.e., team proactive behaviors) of proactivity. Although both are relevant to the broad notion of team proactivity, viewing them independently allows us to develop a more accurate theoretical model of proactive teams.

Specifically, conceptualizing proactive states and behaviors as independent – albeit proximal and reciprocal correlates of one another – better accommodates the temporal, episodic nature of team interactions. For example, proactive states might initially act as predictors of proactive behaviors, but later may be influenced by the behaviors themselves (as well as the reactions/outcomes of those behaviors) as teams move through performance episodes (Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001). Likewise, a delineated view permits the realistic possibility that teams may not always need to engage in proactive behavior, though they may need to be *ready to engage* in such behaviors (dynamic shifts between proficiency and proactivity; i.e., ambidexterity (Parker, 2014)). As a result, our approach acknowledges and accommodates that teams are complex, and often outright “messy”, entities (Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas, & Cohen, 2012, p. 58).

Distinguishing Individual and Team Proactivity

Given the somewhat analogous relationships between individual and team level proactive behaviors, it is hardly surprising that team members’ individual dispositions, attitudes, and behaviors often serve as important antecedents to team proactivity. However, a team’s proactive states and behaviors are based on more than just the simple aggregation of team member characteristics; rather, they reflect collective properties that simultaneously influence, and are reciprocally influenced by, a team’s internal and external interactions (Williams et al., 2010). Thus, even though dispositional (e.g., proactive personality (Bateman & Crant, 1993), learning goal orientation (Parker & Collins, 2010)) and situational factors (e.g., work design (Parker et al., 2010), leadership (Li, Harris, Boswell, Xie, 2011; Strauss, Griffin, & Rafferty, 2009)) act as primary drivers of individual proactive behaviors, their effects on teams may be significantly muted or enhanced depending on the extent and nature of team members’ interactions.

There are several reasons why the antecedents of individual level proactivity may not always accrue favorably to the team level. First, proactivity scholars have established that individuals’ proactive actions can be directed toward multiple foci (e.g., themselves, their team, or the organization; Grant, Parker, & Collins, 2009; Griffin et al., 2007), which means that even a team of like-minded proactive individuals is not guaranteed to achieve higher-level proactive outcomes (e.g., a group of individuals focused only on proactive behaviors that benefit

themselves). Second, classic research on “strong situations” (Bem & Allen, 1974; Mischel, 1977) suggests that some elements of a team’s context (e.g., an imposing leader, rigid organizational rules) may reduce (increase) the ambiguity associated with expected behaviors and, consequently, subdue (enhance) proactive expressions irrespective of individuals’ dispositional preferences. A third perspective posits that teams’ compositional and contextual inputs (which are antecedents to team behaviors; e.g., I-P-O/ IMOI models) are dynamic and significantly influenced by experiences in prior episodes (Bell & Fisher, 2012; Mathieu, et al., 2008). As a result, some team composition variables (e.g., mean levels of individual proactive personality) can have limited (or at least fleeting) predictive validity depending on the team’s episodic history. For example, members may enhance or subdue their dispositional motivations to better fit the existing context (e.g., members who are ridiculed for their proactive suggestions in a prior episode may stay silent in a future episode).

Related, in contrast to simplified compositional views of teamwork (i.e., team outcomes are in large part the combined product of individual members’ efforts and behaviors; Kozlowski & Klein, 2000), prior research establishes that many team outcomes are the product of more complex compilations (Bell, 2007; Chan, 1998; Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). Indeed, this notion is generally embedded in even the most primal justifications for teamwork: That teams can achieve synergist gains (Hackman, 1987) that push them to be “more than the sum of their parts”. Exemplifying this axiom, members can impose reciprocal influences on one another (e.g., Grant & Patil, 2012; Li, Kirkman, & Porter, 2014) through processes like social and vicarious learning (e.g., Manz & Sims, 1981; Mayer, Aquino, Greenbaum, & Kuenzi, 2012), social information processing (e.g., Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Turner, 1991), and role modeling (e.g., Lockwood & Kunda, 1997, 1999). Likewise, research suggests that some team members simply have disproportionate roles and influences on overall team outcomes (i.e., star performers; Crawford & LePine, 2013; Grant & Patil, 2012; Humphrey, Morgeson, & Mannor, 2009; O’Boyle & Aguinis, 2012). Thus, even though the antecedents and consequences of individual proactivity established in other chapters of this book may sometimes accrue to higher levels of analysis (e.g., teams), these relationships should not necessarily be assumed to be homologous (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Williams et al., 2010). Rather, team proactivity is dependent on collective and interdependent action among members.

The Origins of Team Proactivity

Although the term “team proactivity” has received increasing attention over the last two decades, the basic notion that successful teams must go beyond passive and adaptive action has a much longer history. In fact, aspects of proactivity are rooted in the fundamental origins of modern day organizational teaming. Seminal works, for instance, argue that one of the major advantages

of using teams over individual-based work arrangements is that teams are capable of enhancing motivation and, by extension, the likelihood of uncovering new and improved methods beyond the status quo (Hackman, 1987; Leavitt, 1975). This latter possibility undoubtedly explains a significant portion of why organizations have been so eager to adopt team-based arrangements for tasks that were traditionally completed by individuals in more hierarchical, control-based arrangements. Yet, prior research is also clear in suggesting that proactive responses are hardly a certain outcome in teams. Teams can fall prey to “process losses” and other dysfunctions that foster feelings of wasted time (Hackman, 1987), increased conflict (Alderfer, 1977), and the adoption of below normal productivity norms (Whyte, 1955). As a result, members may adopt overly passive and reactive approaches to their taskwork and environment (Oldham & Hackman, 2010; Williams et al., 2010).

Beyond the implicit undertones of proactivity found in much of the early seminal teams’ research, there have also been several specific inquiries into constructs related to team proactivity that significantly predate the current literature. For example, research that emerged on the use of self-managing coal mining teams in post-World War II Britain from the Tavistock Institute (Trist & Bamforth, 1951) preceded research on team proactivity by over a half-century. Similarly, the Swedish socio-technical movement, most often associated with the Volvo Corporation in the 1960s and 1970s (Pasmore, 1995), Proctor & Gamble’s use of teams in the early 1960s, the so-called Topeka work system at a General Foods pet food plant in the late 1960s, and the Rushton Quality of Work Project in Pennsylvania in the mid-1970s all featured the use of teams with proactive components as a way to combat common team dysfunctions (Gibson & Kirkman, 1999). Although these approaches have demonstrated notable utility, they hardly represent a “magic bullet” for enhancing team proactivity and, in some cases, have produced negative effects on worker outcomes.

Given the slippery slope that separates effective organizational teaming and collective dysfunction, it is not surprising that researchers and practitioners have, so far, and will continue to, iteratively advance concepts and models that best facilitate team proactivity and battle against myriad pitfalls. Below we describe two early streams of research that have significantly influenced modern-day conceptualizations of team proactivity: self-managing work teams and team empowerment.

Self-Managing Work Teams

Self-managing work teams, as the name implies, are teams of workers that manage themselves. They are distinguishable from traditional teams in that they display an increased sense of autonomy and behavioral control over how work is accomplished. This sense of autonomy and control is then thought to promote proactive orientations toward taskwork.

Researchers, to date, have operationalized self-managing work teams using team design elements and emergent properties (i.e., team self-management). Design perspectives, which emanate from socio-technical systems theory, conceptualize self-management as a primarily structural aspect of work (Pasmore, 1995). That is, work can be designed to be more autonomous by decentralizing authority and removing hierarchical structures in a team setting (which is why the construct is sometimes referred to as autonomous team working; Cordery, Mueller, & Smith, 1991). Distinct from, albeit related to, this view is that team self-management can be an emergent set of collective behaviors born from workers' *beliefs* regarding autonomy and behavioral control irrespective of the team's structure. For example, some self-managing teams do have an assigned external leader, sometimes called a coordinator, coach, or even *unleader* (Manz & Sims, 1984). In the present context, we view self-managing work team *design* as a more distal predictor of the emergent state of team self-management. This conceptualization is ideal in that it allows us to acknowledge that teams can potentially engage in self-management processes without necessarily having the classic elements of self-managing work team design.

Empirical research supports the theoretical premise of self-managing work teams. Researchers have found that the use of self-managing work teams is associated with greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment as well as modest increases in productivity (Banker, Field, Schroeder, & Sinha, 1996; Campion, Medsker, & Higgs, 1993; Campion, Papper, & Medsker, 1996; Cohen & Ledford, 1994; Cordery et al., 1991; Goodman, Devadas, & Griffith-Hughson, 1988; Hyatt & Ruddy, 1997; Pearson, 1992; Wall, Kemp, Jackson, & Clegg, 1986). Scholars have also found that self-managing work teams have a much stronger effect on team performance for tasks that are higher, rather than lower, in uncertainty (Cordery, Morrison, Wright, & Wall, 2010), underscoring the importance of team proactive behavior in contexts requiring creativity and innovation (Chen et al., 2013).

Interestingly, however, self-managing work teams may also present tradeoffs. For example, in a manufacturing setting, Wall and colleagues (1986) found that self-managing team structures resulted in higher levels of labor turnover than more traditional hierarchical structures. This surprising effect, they reasoned, might be due to some workers' resistance to/discomfort with autonomous work arrangements or, separately, an organization's decreased ability to keep less conscientious workers in line with company policies (i.e., self-managed employees were more likely to be dismissed for severe disciplinary reasons). Providing some related support to this possibility, Cordery and colleagues (1991) found that autonomous work groups displayed higher levels of absenteeism than more traditional work groups. These tradeoffs do not appear to be representative of all contexts, though. Other studies have reported that self-managing work teams actually *reduce* absenteeism (Pearson, 1992; Seers, Petty, & Cashman, 1995). Therefore, the apparent "dark sides" of self-managing work teams – employees'

resistance or willingness to exploit the lack of hierarchy – may be the product of unmeasured contingency variables, such as the strength of the local labor market (employees will abuse self-managing work team designs more when other jobs are plentiful; see Wall et al., 1986) or team size (Kirkman & Shapiro, 1997), among countless other possibilities.

Team Empowerment

Team empowerment is defined as increased task motivation due to team members' collective, positive assessments of their tasks within an organizational context (Kirkman & Rosen, 2000). The team empowerment construct consists of four dimensions, including *potency*, or the collective belief of a team that it can be effective; *meaningfulness*, or the extent to which team members feel an intrinsic caring for their tasks; *autonomy*, or the degree to which team members believe that they have freedom to make decisions; and *impact*, or the extent to which team members feel that their tasks make significant organizational contributions (Kirkman & Rosen, 1997). The four dimensions combine in compensatory fashion to constitute the overall construct of team empowerment. Therefore, despite the fact that teams might have very little autonomy, members could still experience some level of team empowerment to the extent that they felt a collective sense of potency, a high level of meaningfulness in the work, and a sense that the team's work has impact on stakeholders (cf. Spreitzer, 1995).

Similar to the self-managing work team literature, there is a distinction between the emergent properties and structural aspects in the team empowerment literature. For example, the four-dimension conceptualization of team empowerment refers specifically to the psychological view; that is, one in which team empowerment consists of a set of cognitions related to intrinsic motivation (Chen, Kirkman, Kanfer, Allen, & Rosen, 2007). Conversely, the structural conceptualization of team empowerment refers to empowering structures, policies, and practices, rather than a set of collective cognitions, the latter essentially being a team's cognitive *reaction* to a set of empowering structural elements (Mills & Ungson, 2003; Spreitzer, 2008). Consistent with our treatment of self-management, we view structural empowerment as an antecedent to psychological empowerment, though we again acknowledge that psychological empowerment is not necessarily dependent on structural empowerment.

Team empowerment and self-managing work teams overlap in regards to their emphasis on autonomy, yet empowerment represents a broader construct (Chen et al., 2007; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). That is, even though it is possible for a self-managing team to also be empowered, an empowered team does not necessarily have to be a self-managed one. Because of this feature, the concept of empowerment can be applied to a broader set of pre-existing team arrangements. Recent meta-analyses of team empowerment (Maynard, Mathieu, Gilson, O'Boyle, & Cigularov, 2013; Seibert, Wang, & Courtright, 2011) found

that the construct was strongly positively related to team performance (i.e., both self- and other-rated).

Even though self-managing work teams (i.e., autonomy, control) and team empowerment (i.e., potency, meaningfulness, autonomy, impact) have each enjoyed time in the spotlight of team scholarship, the domain of proactivity has since expanded such that self-managing work teams and empowerment represent only a small, albeit critical, correlate of team proactivity. In the section below, we surmise that self-managing work team *design* and *structural* empowerment characteristics operate as contextual antecedents of team proactive behaviors by way of facilitating teams' proactive states, namely team empowerment and self-management.

Toward a Model of Team Proactivity: An IMOI Framework

To date, some scholars have explored proactive behavior (and theoretically similar constructs) in teams as an important outcome of team characteristics, including compositional attributes, contextual variables, and emergent states (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Williams et al., 2010). Other scholars, however, have conceptualized proactivity as a process-like predictor of other more distal team outcomes (Druskat & Kayes, 2000; Hyatt & Ruddy, 1997; Tesluk & Mathieu, 1999). Taken together, the constellation of prior research findings and theoretical arguments suggests that team proactivity occupies a central position affecting how a team's inputs are converted into meaningful outputs. Accordingly, we use an input-mediator-outcome-input (IMOI) framework (Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, & Jundt, 2005) to advance a complete theoretical view of team proactivity.

IMOI frameworks operate similar to classic input-process-outcome (I-P-O) models (e.g., Gist, Locke, & Taylor, 1987; Hackman, 1983; McGrath, 1984; Steiner, 1972), but feature two notable distinguishing characteristics. First, extending Marks and colleagues' (2001) recurring phase model of team performance and addressing more recent calls to incorporate dynamism into team models (Mathieu et al., 2008), IMOI models allow for outcomes in one episode to significantly alter (or altogether become) inputs in a subsequent performance episode (a feedback loop formally denoted by the second "I" in IMOI). Second, and especially salient for the concept of team proactivity, IMOI frameworks conceptually allow for mechanisms beyond just team processes – most notably emergent states – to, directly and indirectly, influence team outcomes (Ilgen et al., 2005). Team processes are defined as “members' interdependent acts that convert inputs to outcomes through cognitive, verbal, and behavioral activities directed toward organizing taskwork to achieve collective goals” (Marks et al., 2001: p. 357). Distinct from processes, emergent states are dynamic constructs reflecting “member attitudes, values, cognitions, and motivations” (Marks et al., 2001: p. 357); they share reciprocal influences with team inputs, processes, and

outcomes. In short, processes capture the action of members, whereas emergent states reflect the collective psychological characteristics of the team (Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Mathieu et al., 2008).

As noted previously, researchers have most frequently relied on behavioral criteria (i.e., proactive performance, proactive behavior) to operationalize team proactivity. For example, Kirkman and Rosen (1999) used a referent-shifted (to the team-level) version of Bateman and Crant's (1993) individual level proactive performance measure that includes items about a team's actions toward initiating improvement and proactively preventing future problems. Similarly, Williams and colleagues (2010) used original items focusing on teams' use of initiative to make the most of opportunities as well as their propensity to generate novel ideas and solutions. Because operationalizations like these focus on team members' actions and behaviors rather than their psychological attributes, they reflect a specific team process we refer to herein as *team proactive behaviors* in our model. This terminology, albeit substantively congruent with the more commonly used proactive performance label, does not carry the unintentional connotation that proactivity reflects only a final-stage outcome for teams.

In addition to team proactive behaviors, an important aspect of team proactivity is a team's collective belief regarding, or orientation toward, proactive action. That is, just as some seminal individual level studies have conceptualized and demonstrated that proactive actions are the product of a person's fundamental way of thinking about or approaching his or her work (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Parker et al., 2010), so too might teams develop emergent states that influence their proactive behaviors and interaction patterns. Acknowledging this possibility, we argue that teams can develop *proactive states* that are reciprocally influenced by proactive behaviors.

Even though the emergent state and behavioral aspects of team proactivity have rarely been theorized independently in the team proactivity literature, there is some implicit precedence for this approach. For example, Bunderson and Sutcliffe (2003) found that management teams' ability to proactively learn – an important behavior associated with team proactivity – was significantly influenced by their overarching *climate* for proactive learning. Similarly, Fay, Lührmann, and Kohl (2004) found that unit-level proactivity climate influenced collective performance through proactivity-like functions (i.e., entrepreneurial behaviors). In their seminal work, Kirkman and Rosen (1999) noted that a precondition of team proactive performance is a team's "proactive orientation toward jobs, management, and organizations" (p. 62). Finally, even some measures that have been commonly adapted as proactive performance metrics confound behaviors with attitudinal items. One of the items used in Kirkman and Rosen (1999), for instance, refers to the extent to which a team "*likes to overcome obstacles to our ideas*" (emphasis added; item was modified from Bateman & Crant, 1993).

Acknowledging that team proactivity comprises both a team's state and behaviors, and likewise distinguishing between them, is important for clarifying the

conceptual understanding of proactivity as a team-level construct. This point may be obscured somewhat in the literature by researchers' tendency to examine proactivity, and more specifically proactive behaviors, in team contexts that generally reward such behaviors (e.g., complex tasks, uncertain environments). However, it is theoretically plausible – and likely highly desirable from a practical perspective – that a team operating in a stable, largely controlled environment would display a strong proactive state without actually having to frequently enact proactive behaviors that deviate from “the script.” For example, specialized surgical teams often perform patient surgeries by following specific, well-defined protocols, but must also be constantly mindful of potential hazards and anticipate events that deviate from the status quo. Similarly, teams that remain intact over multiple performance episodes may not need to display proactive behaviors equally across all episodes, such that maintaining or investing in a team's proactive states, even when proactive behaviors are not imminently needed, may yield value (similar to the idea of real options and slack resources in other research domains).

Below we review the team proactivity literature to theoretically establish the inputs (i.e., antecedents) and outputs associated with teams' proactive states and behaviors. A summary of our model is presented in Figure 19.1.

Antecedents to Team Proactivity

Researchers have identified a substantive number of antecedents to team proactive behavior. These antecedents, which include individual, team, and organization level constructs, have been shown to differentially predict team proactive behavior through both distal and proximal means. Distal predictors, notated in our model as team inputs, can be broadly classified into *compositional* and *contextual* categories. Compositional variables reflect attributes of individual team members, and contextual variables encompass factors that are typically applicable to the team as a whole (e.g., ambient stimuli; Chen & Kanfer, 2006; Williams et al., 2010). In contrast, proximal predictors typically include emergent properties that make up teams' proactive states. Importantly, and as noted above, these proactive states are likely to share reciprocal causal relationships with team proactive behaviors. Finally, the dynamic and episodic nature of teamwork implies that the distal inputs and proximal states that drive team proactive behaviors can be significantly influenced by the outputs from a prior performance episode (Ilgen et al., 2005; Marks et al., 2001).

Compositional Antecedents

From a compositional perspective, logic suggests that team proactive behaviors will be affected in large part by the proactive orientations of individual team members. Supporting this position, Williams and colleagues (2010) found that team members' mean levels of proactive personality significantly predicted team

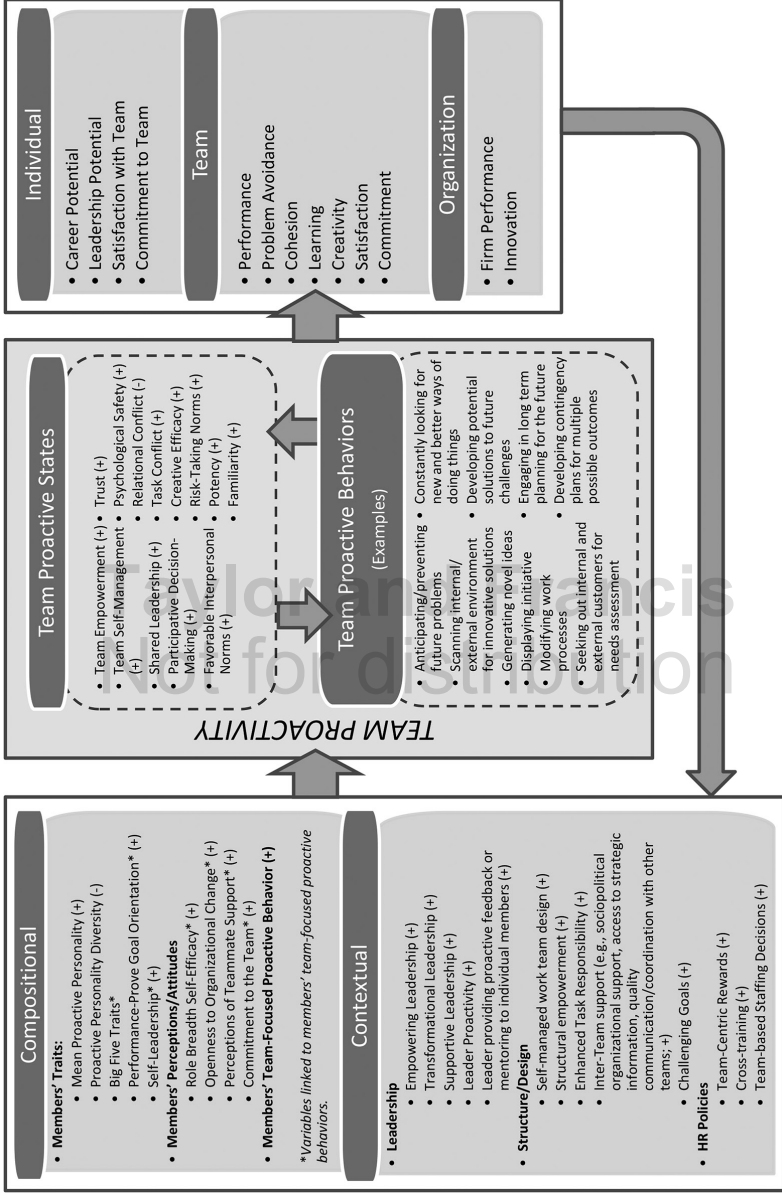


FIGURE 19.1 An IMO Model of Team Proactivity based on Literature Review

self-management, which, in turn, positively influenced proactive behaviors in a sample of petrochemical plant operations teams (team self-management was operationalized as an emergent state, rather than a team design characteristic). Moreover, Williams et al. (2010) found that proactive personality diversity (i.e., the within-team standard deviation of proactive personality) was associated with less favorable interpersonal norms (i.e., an emergent state reflecting a positive, often informal code of conduct within teams that regulates members' behaviors), which then inhibited team proactive behaviors. Favorable interpersonal norms, they argued, are critical for team proactivity because they reduce the perceived risk of going "off script"; and, they share functional overlap with constructs such as trust in coworkers (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006), psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999), and high care atmospheres (Zarraga & Bonache, 2005).

Prior work also suggests some intriguing nuances in the general individual proactivity-team proactivity relationship. Specifically, individuals' proactive behaviors can be directed toward individual, team, or organizational initiatives (Griffin et al., 2007), which thus implies that team members' individual proactive expressions need to be focused on improving the *team's* situation (rather than their own or the organization's) in order to significantly affect proactivity at the team level (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Grant et al., 2009). Importantly, individuals' team-focused proactive behaviors do not require coordination and collective action from team members and, thus, are distinct from team proactive behaviors. Nonetheless, because individuals' team-focused behaviors may serve as important antecedents to team proactivity, we briefly summarize research on the predictors of individuals' team-focused proactive behaviors.

Across two organizations, Griffin and colleagues (2007) found that individuals' perception of supportive teammates, role breadth self-efficacy (i.e., "the extent to which people feel confident that they are able to carry out a broader and more proactive role, beyond traditional prescribed technical requirements"; Parker, 1998, p. 835), and openness to change (i.e., a favorable view toward the possible consequences of various organizational change initiatives; Miller, Johnson, & Grau, 1994) each positively and significantly influenced members' team-focused proactive behaviors. Neal, Yeo, Koy, and Xiao (2012) found that individuals' trait conscientiousness (positively) and neuroticism (negatively) independently influenced team-focused proactive behaviors; and, Hirschfeld, Jordan, Thomas, and Feild (2008) observed that extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience were each significantly correlated with team-focused proactive behaviors. Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) reported that individuals' performance-prove goal orientation (i.e., a focus on achieving high-performance levels to appease/impress others) and commitment to the team were significant predictors of proactive behaviors aimed at helping group members and colleagues. Finally, Hauschildt and Konradt (2012) identified individuals' self-leadership, a comprehensive self-influence process (Manz, 1986), as a significant predictor of team-focused proactive behavior.

Contextual Antecedents

To date, researchers have highlighted a broad set of contextual factors that predict team proactivity. Across a variety of organizational work teams, Kirkman and Rosen (1999) found that teams with empowering leadership, greater task responsibility, team-based human resource policies (i.e., team-centric rewards, cross-training and staffing decisions), and a supportive social structure (i.e., sociopolitical support in the organization, access to strategic information, high levels of coordination and communication with other teams, and significant volition over rules and policies) were significant predictors of team empowerment, which in turn predicted team proactive behavior. Using a field experiment, Martin, Liao, and Campbell (2013) confirmed the positive effect of empowering leadership styles on work unit proactive behaviors. In a cross-level study, Li, Chiaburu, and Kirkman (in press) found that team-directed empowering leadership was positively related to individuals' taking charge behavior, particularly when organizational support climate was low. Hyatt and Ruddy (1997) and Wang and colleagues (2010) similarly argued for, and empirically confirmed, the team empowerment-team proactive behavior relationship.

Scholars have also identified other leadership styles as positive predictors of team proactive behaviors. In a study of roadwork crews, Tesluk and Mathieu (1999) found that supportive leadership, from both internal and external sources, was significantly correlated with crews' problem-management strategies, a broad construct consisting of several proactive behaviors (e.g., experimenting with new ways to complete work and instigating preventive maintenance steps before problems arise). Williams et al. (2010) demonstrated that transformational leadership positively influenced team proactive behaviors by way of fostering favorable interpersonal norms. Similarly, in a cross-level study, Strauss and colleagues (2009) found that team transformational leadership enhanced individuals' role breadth self-efficacy, which then prompted them to engage in more team-focused proactive behaviors. Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) likewise found support for a link between transformational leadership and individuals' interpersonal proactive behaviors (i.e., conceptually analogous to individuals' team-focused proactive behavior, discussed above).

Interestingly, researchers have also suggested that team leader characteristics, including their dispositional traits and discretionary behaviors (i.e., behaviors that are directed to specific team members rather than the team as a whole; Chen & Kanfer, 2006), may significantly influence team proactivity. For example, Crossley and colleagues (2013) found that manager proactivity influences the degree to which challenging goals are set for a team, which could presumably alter members' own motivations and behaviors. Grant and Ashford (2008) and Williams et al. (2010) also highlight the possibility that leaders' discretionary actions, such as proactively providing feedback or mentoring for individual team

members, may fulfill the functional role of proactivity, irrespective of members' actual behaviors. Similarly, it is possible that a team leader could proactively scan a team's external environment or politically advocate for a team's best interests on his or her own, then use a directive style (i.e., the antithesis to empowering leadership) when delegating tasks and responsibilities to members based on the findings from their own proactive behaviors. In this scenario, a leader's individual proactive action may act as a functional substitute for the traditional conceptualization of team proactive behavior, which assumes members' coordinated proactive actions.

Given that many teams do not rely entirely (or at all) on a single, formally-identified leader to guide members' behavior (e.g., self-managed work teams), it is not surprising that a number of non-traditional leadership conceptualizations have also been advanced as predictors of team proactive behavior. In many cases, these constructs reflect emergent properties akin to the original theoretical premises of team empowerment and self-managing work teams previously described. For example, Tesluk and Mathieu (1999) and Williams et al. (2010) both found that team self-management was significantly correlated with proactive action. Erkutlu (2012) reported a significant relationship between a conceptually related construct, shared leadership, and team proactive behaviors. Similarly, Lantz, Hansen, and Antoni (2015) found participative decision-making enhanced teams' senses of shared meaning, which promoted increased proactive behavior.

Researchers have also uncovered significant relationships between team proactive behavior and other team constructs reflecting teams' collective beliefs and interactional properties. For example, using a diverse sample of South Korean teams, Shin and Eom (2014) identified the positive influences of team creative efficacy and risk-taking norms on team proactivity. Tesluk and Mathieu (1999) found that a gestalt variable labeled "teamwork processes" – including potency, coordination, and familiarity – was predictive of proactive behaviors. Despite their terminology, subsequent scholarship would likely classify potency ("the collective belief of a group that it can be effective"; Shea & Guzzo, 1987, p. 335) and familiarity ("the knowledge group members have about specific job, crew, and work-environment configurations"; Goodman & Leyden, 1991, p. 578) as dynamic states that demonstrate a reciprocal relationship with behavioral process-like variables (cf. Marks et al., 2001).

Tesluk and Mathieu (1999) also found a significant positive relationship between proactive problem management and team cohesion (i.e., a social and motivational bond between team members; Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003). Their conceptual model specified cohesion as a terminal team outcome reflecting team viability, but more recent research suggests it can operate as an emergent state that simultaneously influences, and is influenced by, process variables (e.g., Barrick, Bradley, Kristof-Brown, & Colbert, 2007; Marks et al., 2001). van Geffen, Den Hartog, and Belschak (2014) similarly found that lower

levels of relationship conflict positively affected team proactivity. Taken together, these findings are generally consistent with Williams and colleagues' (2010) finding that favorable interpersonal norms are conducive to higher levels of team proactivity. Interestingly, however, van Geffen et al. (2014) noted that teams might benefit from some types of *disharmony*; specifically, they found that task conflict was positively associated with team proactivity. Thus, there appears to be meaningful nuance in how members' relationships with one another affect proactivity, such that interpersonal harmony and some degree of task-related friction can each independently, and *positively*, influence proactivity.

Finally, research suggests that members' commitment to a team is also a significant correlate of team proactivity. For example, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) and Strauss and colleagues (2009) each theorized that member commitment to a team was an important antecedent of team-focused proactive behavior. Others, however, have conceptualized commitment as an outcome variable (e.g., Kirkman & Rosen, 1999), which raises some questions of causal ordering. These questions arise, at least in part, from methodological limitations, but might also be the product of the episodic nature of teamwork, such that commitment might be an outcome in one episode and then an antecedent in the next (or vice versa). In a similar vein, some researchers have also argued that shared leadership in teams is the product of team proactivity (Chiu, 2014), which suggests that proactivity may be particularly prone to reciprocal influences.

Consequences of Team Proactivity

Researchers have also uncovered a number of individual, team, and organizational level consequences of team proactive behaviors. For example, Hyatt and Ruddy (1997) identified team proactive behaviors as an important determinant of team effectiveness, specifically better response times and manager-rated performance. Kirkman and Rosen (1999) conceptualized team proactive behavior as a final stage outcome rather than a mediating/process variable but did find significant bivariate correlations between proactive behaviors and effectiveness outcomes, including team productivity and customer service ratings. Tesluk and Mathieu (1999) concluded that teams engaging in proactive problem-solving are more effective because they do not encounter as many performance barriers compared to less proactive teams. In a sample of student project teams, Druskat and Kayes (2006) similarly found that proactive problem-solving (i.e., "anticipating and heading off problems through proactive investigation, assessment, and action"; p. 333) positively predicted team performance and team learning. Shin and Eom (2014) further expanded the criterion domain to include creative performance. Integrating these findings with classic models of organizational-level phenomena, a logical implication is that proactive teams can influence – both indirectly and directly (e.g., top management teams, product development teams, etc.) – organizational innovation (Daft, 1978; West & Altink, 1996), creativity

(Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993), and learning (Brown & Duguid, 1991; March, 1991), along with several other important outcomes.

Kirkman and Rosen (1999) also found significant relationships between team proactive behaviors and attitudinal criteria, namely job satisfaction and member commitment (toward the team and the organization). Tesluk and Mathieu (1999) similarly found a small, albeit significant effect for proactive problem-solving on team satisfaction. As noted above, they also argued that enhanced team cohesion was also a product of greater proactivity.

Finally, research suggests that individuals who engage in team-focused proactive behaviors may also help themselves. Hirschfeld and colleagues (2008, 2011), for instance, found that team-oriented proactivity was associated with greater perceptions of leadership potential and career advancement potential. One explanation for these findings is that being on a proactive team helps individual members build their reputational capital and strengthen their social networks, which can ultimately enhance their inter- and intra-organizational mobility.

Implications and Future Research

Beyond the obvious conclusion that more research is needed, our review of the team proactivity literature suggests several implications and directions for future research. First, our review and synthesis suggest that the broad concept of team proactivity comprises two salient, reciprocally-related constructs: team proactive states and team proactive behaviors. One implication of this view is that future research should investigate the nature of the relationship *between* proactive states and behaviors. Rather than a simple uni-directional relationship (i.e., states predict behaviors), researchers might be particularly well-served to consider more complex reciprocal relationships between teams' proactive states and behaviors.

To this point, we suspect there may be important moderators and boundary conditions that influence the relationship between proactive states and behaviors. The level of a team's task interdependence, for instance, could moderate the state-behavior relationship such that the relationship would be more strongly positive in teams with higher, rather than lower, levels of task interdependence. The rationale here might be that in order for a proactive state to produce proactive team behaviors, team members would actually have to work interdependently and rely on one another to accomplish tasks in a proactive fashion (otherwise, the effects might be targeted more toward individual level proactive behavior). Future research on moderators would challenge the assumption that the constructs that compose a proactive state will always be associated with teams' proactive behaviors.

A second important future research direction is to identify a complete set of individual differences and member characteristics that lead to team proactivity. Beyond the scant (but important) research linking team proactivity with select personality variables (e.g., Big 5, proactive personality) and logical

assumptions that individuals' prior tendencies to engage in proactive behaviors will aggregate to the team level, there is a dearth of scholarship that informs the ideal composition for a proactive team. Addressing this gap would be particularly useful for managers trying to select team members for projects that have uncertain or constantly changing tasks. Yet, as discussed previously, we also acknowledge that recent research increasingly encourages a move away from simple composition/aggregation models (i.e., every member of the team has equal influence on team level properties) toward more complex compilation models (i.e., certain team members have more influential impact on team properties than others; Crawford & LePine, 2013; Humphrey et al., 2009). Thus, an important aspect of subsequent inquiries should be to also consider and elucidate the mechanisms by which a few individuals might disproportionately influence an entire team's level of proactivity. Our review of the literature suggests that the processes by which this transfer of proactivity occurs in teams are sorely in need of research attention.

Recent work in tangential team domains provides some clues for addressing these questions. It is possible, for instance, that one or two team members with very high levels of proactive personality might initiate team proactive behaviors through role modeling, persuasion, or symbolic gestures (cf. Grant & Patil, 2012; Li et al., 2014). Similarly, principles of social network theory (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011; Brass, 1984; Tichy, Tushman & Fombrun, 1979) might also inform the processes leading to team proactivity. For example, incorporating individual members' network position (i.e., central vs peripheral) and/or overall team network characteristics (i.e., density, centralization) might help researchers explain why certain individuals can exhibit disproportionate influences on team outcomes and, related, the conditions by which individual proactive behaviors transfer to team level proactive behaviors. Further, social network perspectives can also inform scholars of how social influence patterns are diffused in teams (Baldwin, Bedell, & Johnson, 1997; Balkundi & Harrison, 2006), which could be useful for applying theories of social learning (Manz & Sims, 1981) and social comparison (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007; Festinger, 1954) toward understanding how one individual's or a few select members' proactivity spreads (or stagnates) across other members over repeated performance episodes.

A third direction researchers should pursue is understanding how proactive states actually emerge in teams. Longitudinal approaches and observational or critical incident methodologies would be especially useful in this aim. Based on the extant team literature, our suspicion is that the emergence of proactive states may take significant time to develop and, further, may not be entirely linear; that is, proactive states might emerge fitfully, with increases and decreases in levels due to internal and external forces affecting teams. Yet, it is also possible that proactive states may emerge quite quickly without prompts in some teams. Indeed, research on other emergent team properties, namely trust, highlights that team members are sometimes more willing to be vulnerable to one another

in a team's infancy (when teammates do *not* know one another well) than they are in later episodes when they have established relationships (i.e., *swift trust*; Meyerson, Weick, & Kramer, 1996). Given that trust, psychological safety, and favorable interpersonal norms were all identified as proximal antecedents in our model, it is thus possible that team proactivity may sometimes come easier for newly formed teams than one might assume. This presents an interesting paradox, as newly-formed teams may be proactively-inclined but lack the task- or context-specific knowledge to effectively employ proactive behaviors (*cf.* Harris, Li, Boswell, Zhang, & Xie, 2014). In contrast, mature teams (with more knowledge) may actually know which specific proactive actions could help the team, but choose to be passive anyway. Of course, we suspect progressions of proactivity are complex and significantly nuanced, which presents myriad opportunities for future research.

In a similar vein, many types of teams may go through episodic phases when proactive behavior is unnecessary or even counterproductive (e.g., routine tasks), but then encounter new or highly unpredictable tasks in a subsequent episode that do require high degrees of proactive behavior. In such cases, teams must be mindful to fight the adoption of a passive, routinized status quo. We suspect this is where the role of proactive states becomes paramount. Thus, a key research question is how teams can maintain a strong proactive state – or perhaps quickly activate a dormant proactive state – when a pressing need for continuous proactive behavior is lacking.

Our literature review uncovered a number of distal and proximal antecedents of proactive behavior that are likely to remain beneficial, even when proactive action is not required. Likewise, some antecedents may be able to be “redirected” from proactive action toward other desirable team behaviors depending on the task type. For example, by designing teamwork to be more autonomous and empowering, members may promote learning processes that can enhance routine task proficiency, in the short-term, without compromising the possibility of proactive action in the long-term. The likelihood of teams being able to effectively switch their focus from one mentality to another may be dependent on having a flexible team leader or, more simply, having members that are amenable to change. Related, recent research on ambidexterity may yield important insights for understanding how teams can more effectively shift between proficiency and proactivity (Parker, 2014). Of course, such research will again require longitudinal designs across multiple performance episodes, a request often made in future research directions, but rarely heeded. This is particularly important given the increased influence of episodic models of team performance (Ilgen et al., 2005; Marks et al., 2001).

Fourth, in line with recent research on the “Too-Much-of-a-Good-Thing” (TMGT) effect (Pierce & Aguinis, 2013), future research should also explore the possibility of a “dark side” of team proactivity. Despite the general research trend of finding positive linear relationships between team proactivity

and various outcomes, there are some potential theoretical rationales for why too much proactivity might result in more negative outcomes for individuals, teams, or organizations. For example, because team proactivity requires a collective form of self-starting and taking initiative behavior, there might be a set of adverse effects associated with peer pressure and role overload (Bergeron, 2007; Bolino & Turnley, 2005; Bolino, Turnley, Gilstrap, & Suazo, 2010), such as high levels of stress, burnout, and absenteeism/turnover; and, lower levels of job satisfaction. Highly proactive teams might have no effect, or perhaps even negative consequences, in organizations within environments that are relatively stable and predictable, requiring less innovation. Such dark side research has become increasingly popular for many management constructs, particularly those that, on the surface, seem to have overwhelmingly positive impact on outcomes that organizations truly value.

Finally, because our theoretical model is inherently multilevel, we encourage future scholarship to more rigorously and explicitly investigate multilevel theories and models of team proactivity (see Chen, Mathieu, & Bliese, 2004, for a review). Our review, for instance, revealed numerous examples of studies addressing the predictors of team-focused proactive behaviors by *individuals*. Even though these studies are especially helpful given the relative dearth of team proactivity studies, a logical next step is to explore how and why individual actions ascend (or do not ascend) to higher levels of analysis. Beyond the upward influences of individuals to the team level, cross-level models of team proactivity also have the potential to demonstrate important downward influences from teams to individuals. Finally, more work needs to be done to uncover the links between proactive teaming and organizational level outcomes. To date, many of the relationships posited are based on theory alone without empirical substantiation. By establishing and examining a complete nomological network of multi-level conceptualizations of proactivity, scholars can provide a better understanding of how the construct operates within and across multiple levels of analysis.

Methodological Considerations

Based on our calls for future research, there are several methodological issues that need to be addressed in future research. First, we recommend that researchers be mindful to distinguish between proactive states and proactive behaviors. As discussed previously, researchers have sometimes measured one construct but treated it like the other or, more commonly, intermingled aspects of both climate and behavior in their measures. Doing so is understandable given the relative infancy of team proactivity research – and to be clear has not prohibited advancements altogether –, but it likely has “muddied the waters” somewhat. This tendency may be especially problematic when considering the possibilities described above in which teams’ proactive action may be differentially important across various performance episodes.

However, to this end, we also note that there is currently no generally accepted measure of team proactivity states. Thus, an obvious research opportunity is to develop a sound measurement instrument. Importantly, because proactive states share conceptual overlap with a number of other emergent states, we recommend that researchers use established, rigorous measurement protocols to ensure a valid and reliable measurement tool. The development of such measures is not limited to surveys, of course, and could (should) extend to multiple other research methods (e.g., observations, interviews, and critical incidents).

Second, to ascertain the role of composition vs compilation processes, researchers need to explore techniques beyond simply averaging individual proactive behavior scores when assessing proactive processes at the team level. As noted above, researchers can employ social network analysis to identify key team members that play more important roles and then use weighted-average scores to assign more influence to those specific team members' proactive behavior scores. We also encourage researchers to explore various types of social networks (e.g., communication, workflow, friendship) when evaluating compilation perspectives, as different conceptualizations may yield different results.

Third, there may also be utility in examining within-team dispersion on individual proactive behavior. Based on these analyses, different and potentially meaningful team patterns might emerge. For example, at very low levels of dispersion, all team members would have the same (or similar) levels of individual proactive behavior, regardless of the actual level itself. At moderate levels of dispersion, each team member would have a relatively unique level of proactive behavior across the entire spectrum of proactivity. At very high levels of dispersion, there are likely to be two camps of proactive behavior, one with very low levels and one with very high levels. Each level of dispersion is likely to create very different team dynamics associated with proactivity at the team level of analysis. Researchers could explore mean and dispersion levels simultaneously to ascertain the effects of their important interactions. Applying this methodology to proactive personality, Williams et al. (2010) found that member proactive personality diversity was negatively related to positive interpersonal norms, which ultimately, impeded team proactive performance.

Finally, our review uncovered a number of contextual predictors of proactivity that were largely treated as ambient stimuli affecting each team member in the same way. Yet this belies the possibility that some predictors may have significantly different effects on individual members. Various leadership behaviors and styles, for instance, were indirectly and directly related to team proactive behavior. Interestingly, however, research suggests that leaders often differentiate their relationships across team members (e.g., LMX differentiation; Henderson, Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2008; Liden, Erdogan, Wayne, & Sparrowe, 2006). Given that differentiation has been linked to a number of important outcomes related to teamwork, including individual member engagement (Harris, Li, & Kirkman, 2014) and critical team emergent states (Hooper & Martin, 2008),

we urge researchers to fully evaluate the extent to which predictors of team proactivity constructs represent ambient or discretionary constructs. Similar to our points above, moving beyond means and toward consensus may better elucidate the mechanisms by which team proactivity emerges.

Managerial Implications

From a practical perspective, our review of the team proactivity literature shows that, on the whole, managers would be wise to cultivate the conditions (i.e., proactive states) that ultimately promote team proactive behaviors. Such states likely include the various elements shown in our summary model at the individual, team, and organizational levels. For example, at the individual level, managers could use selection systems and testing to identify those team members with proactive personalities, previous performance records of proactive behaviors, and personality traits such as conscientiousness and extraversion.

At the team level, managers should attempt to increase levels of team empowerment, promote a high trust, psychologically safe environment, and engender norms within the team that motivate high levels of team proactivity. To enhance team empowerment, Kirkman, Mathieu, Cordery, Rosen, and Kukenberger (2011) recommend that leaders: use task-oriented (e.g., help team members create performance goals), interpersonal-oriented (e.g., facilitate open and candid discussions between team members), resource acquisition-oriented (e.g., ensure proper staffing levels for team projects), and external boundary spanning-oriented (e.g., ensure team member efforts are aligned with overall organizational mission or initiatives) behavior. To increase psychological safety, managers should be highly accessible, ask for team members' input, and encourage team members to discuss their own mistakes in a constructive manner (see Edmondson, 2012; Edmondson et al., 2001). In terms of creating more facilitative team norms, our review suggests that helping team members become more familiar with one another, encouraging participative decision-making, and instilling collective confidence may be especially salient for enhancing team proactivity.

At the organizational level, managers would be well-served to ensure that organizational systems, such as performance evaluation and reward systems, and organizational structures, are aligned with team proactivity. For example, team members could be evaluated and rewarded based on supervisor and/or peer assessments of proactive behavior. Similarly, structural obstacles to proactive behavior, such as overly bureaucratic processes or autocratic leaders, should be minimized to allow proactive behavior to flourish.

Conclusion

Due to increasing volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity in today's business environment, the role of proactivity in organizations has gained in

importance. Our review of the team proactivity literature has shown that even though some progress has been made on understanding proactivity at the team level, much work remains to be done. We hope our discussion of team proactivity provides a helpful overarching theoretical framework to guide such research. By understanding how to enhance team proactivity, researchers and managers can harness this important aspect of teams to maximize organizational performance in today's organizations.

Note

- 1 Related scholarship has used similar groupings for distinguishing between individuals' proactivity targets. Notably, Grant and Ashford (2008) and Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) outlined pro-self (i.e., benefiting one's own situation), prosocial (i.e., helping group members and colleagues), or pro-organizational (i.e., improving the organization's situation) forms of proactive action; and, Hirschfeld, Thomas, and Bernerth (2011) delineated between autonomous proactivity and team-oriented proactivity.

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CONCLUSION

New Perspectives and Directions for Understanding Proactivity in Organizations

Uta K. Bindl and Sharon K. Parker

The growth of research on proactivity in organizations shows that it is an appealing and important topic in management and organizational research. However, research on proactivity in the workplace has been complex and dispersed, as demonstrated by the chapters in this volume. While each individual chapter is rich in information and insights, and thus stands alone in its value, our focus here is on identifying themes across chapters that we find most interesting and informative for generating future progress in the field of proactivity in organizations. We start by identifying core themes as well as interesting idiosyncrasies in proactivity research thus far, and outline their implications for future research directions. We then summarize what we consider, based on the contributions in this volume, to be the most important practical implications of the research for promoting a more proactive workforce. We conclude this volume by encouraging future avenues of proactivity research that go beyond the scope of what proactivity researchers have thus far predominantly focused on.

Core Themes and Idiosyncrasies in Proactivity Research

In reviewing the contributions of this volume, it is apparent that some aspects of proactivity are rather indisputable. All of the researchers in this volume agreed the need for, and importance of, studying proactivity in light of the nature of modern workplaces. For instance, De Stobbeleier et al. (Chapter 2 in this volume) noted that dynamic workplaces require feedback to be exchanged on a more continuous basis than the traditional annual performance appraisal, hence establishing proactive feedback-seeking as a key agenda for contemporary workplaces. Similarly, Sonnentag (Chapter 3) argued that employees, in modern protean and boundaryless careers, need to agentially develop themselves

and their work. Meanwhile, Wang et al. (Chapter 4) argued that today's complex and unpredictable workplaces evoke the need for employees to adapt to change as well as self-initiate change in their jobs. Likewise, Ong and Ashford (Chapter 6) put forth that "firms that actively cultivate the proactivity of its middle managers and employees will be better able to deal with hectic, fast-changing and complex environments". And so on! There is consensus that the changing demands of contemporary organizations highlight the ubiquitous nature of proactivity for achieving both individual and organizational end goals.

In what follows, we illustrate interesting controversies that exist across different domains of proactivity and discuss how different approaches can meaningfully complement and learn from one another. We focus in our discussion on three key parameters that we consider essential in understanding proactivity at work, and that we encourage all future research to explicitly consider in investigations of proactivity: *Time*, *Process*, and *Context*.

The Role of "Time" for Understanding Proactivity

All proactivity researchers would likely agree that is important to consider "time" as a relevant parameter when studying proactivity in organizations, although the degree of deliberate emphasis on "time", across different domains of proactivity research, has varied greatly. Indeed, scholars in some domains of proactivity have yet to start considering the role of time. For instance, Belschak and Den Hartog (Chapter 7) observed in their review of foci of proactivity that "the extant literature on different foci of proactive behavior assumed a static perspective to date" (p. X). Further, those domains of proactivity research that have incorporated the role of time in proactivity, have done so in idiosyncratic ways. We highlight these communalities and differences in the measurement of time in proactivity research next.

Differences of time frame across distinct domains of proactivity

Of the different proactivity domains, issue-selling research (e.g., Dutton & Ashford, 1993) has tended to consider proactivity as occurring over the longest period, explicitly describing issue-selling as a "process" or even "movement", rather than a single behavioral act (Ong & Ashford, Chapter 6). For instance, issue-selling research has investigated discrete episodes of issue-selling in the organization over long time frames, such as a one-year period (Bansal, 2003), and even over a six-year period (Howard-Grenville, 2007). Obvious advantages of using a longer time frame for studying proactivity are the inherent dynamics that can occur: proactivity can have different outcomes in the short-term, rather than in the long-term, and implementing bottom-up change in organizations likely requires a significant length of time. However, probably due

to the added complexity, researchers in issue-selling have not focused on the timing-related micro-dynamics of this overall grand issue-selling process, such as: When do issue-sellers speak up and raise their issues (Van Dyne, Cummings, McLean Parks, 1995; Liang, Farh, & Farh, 2012)? Does such voice depend on whether individuals are recovered from work (Sonnentag, 2003; Sonnentag, 2015) before they choose to do so on a given day? Here, research within other domains of proactivity that assume very short time dynamics, in comparison, might add to the picture.

In particular, much of the proactive voice literature (Davidson & Van Dyne, Chapter 17) has been based on laboratory experiments, thus investigating the momentary time dynamics of when individuals raise their ideas to higher-up individuals. Similarly, research on the role of recovery and affective processes for individuals' engagement in proactivity (e.g., Sonnentag, 2003; Cangiano, Parker, & Bindl, Chapter 13 in this volume) have contributed to understanding short-term processes, using daily diary research designs to assess how morning affect influences afternoon engagements in proactivity (e.g., Binnewies, Sonnentag, & Mojza, 2009), or how recovery from work over night influences morning engagement in taking charge at work (Sonnentag, 2003). We advocate that, moving forward, proactivity researchers should incorporate these existing insights on time from across distinct perspectives, in particular in closely related domains of proactivity, such as proactive voice and issue-selling, to inform an increased understanding of proactive phenomenon in their particular domain.

Differences of Time Frame within Domains of Proactivity

In other domains of proactivity, the measurement of time has varied extensively even within a given domain or literature – potentially leading to measuring quite distinct phenomenon under the same umbrella. In particular, job-crafting research emerged from qualitative, retrospective research on how hospital cleaners increased meaningfulness in their jobs, presumably over an extended period of time (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). In contrast, job-crafting research drawing on a Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) perspective (e.g., Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012; Wang, Demerouti, & Bakker, Chapter 4 in this volume), has employed diary designs to measure within-person variations in job-crafting on a daily basis. These two distinct approaches to conceptualizing job-crafting, through different lenses of time, could complement and learn from one another. For instance, Wang et al. (Chapter 4) critically noted that some outcomes of job-crafting occur quite instantaneously as a result of individuals' crafting efforts (for instance, experiencing greater needs satisfaction), whereas other outcomes take more time to manifest themselves (for instance, performance in the job, or changes to the overall job design of the incumbent). Likewise, Ong and Ashford (Chapter 6)

recommended for domains of proactivity that have used short time intervals—for instance, job-crafting research conducted from a Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) perspective—to consider the more strategic changes that occur in the overall organization. For instance, future research could consider whether short-term engagements in job-crafting are more successful (or essential) in times of organizational mergers, downsizing or expansions, when uncertainty in the organization is likely high.

Proactivity Dynamics and Short-Term Reciprocal Processes

Of additional importance is the idea that proactivity represents fluctuating and dynamic, rather than constant, intentions and actions of individuals in the organization. Questions that proactivity researchers across domains have begun to ask in this regard are “how will proactivity start and stop, how will earlier proactivity shape later actions, and how does success in proactivity shape future proactivity?”. Speaking to the notion of initiating versus stopping proactive engagement, De Stobbeleir and colleagues (Chapter 2) argued that individuals will likely start proactively seeking feedback at work when person-environment fit is low. Perceived misfit might inspire individuals to change the environment or themselves, by seeking feedback on the content of the area of change. The authors also proposed that repeated failure of reducing this misfit may lead individuals to abandon their proactive efforts, and even leave the job or organization altogether. Similarly, in line with previous conceptual work (Ashford & Barton, 2012), Strauss and Kelly (Chapter 12 in this volume) argued that proactivity is likely identity-driven, such that employees will choose to engage in proactivity in organizational contexts that are consistent with how they hope for and wish to see themselves as an individual. Importantly, as the authors note, proactive engagements, in turn, may also influence individuals’ revised identity at work.

The notion that what drives proactivity may also be an important outcome of proactivity itself has also been discussed in the context of investigating affective experience in proactivity (Cangiano, Bindl, & Parker, Chapter 13). The authors argued that, in particular, activated positive affect will often promote proactive engagement at work. In turn, activated positive feelings, e.g., of pride and enthusiasm, may result as a consequence of successful proactive engagement and produce upward spirals of proactivity over time. In contrast, Belschak and Den Hartog (Chapter 7) observed that, negative experiences with a particular focus of proactivity (e.g., failed *pro-organizational* proactive engagements) might lead individuals to change proactive goals to become more pro-self-focused in their expressions of proactivity at work. In this sense, the goals for proactivity may well change within individuals across time, based on their past and ongoing experiences in proactivity.

In sum, all of these considerations imply that what type of proactivity an individual will engage in over time, even within the same job and organization,

will likely vary depending on past experiences with proactivity, goal progress, supports within the environment, and one's personal development as an individual. The dynamics of this process of the disengagement of proactivity at work deserves further inquiry. How many times do you need to fail before quitting? Over which time frame? What role can others in the organization play? For instance, in the context of proactive feedback-seeking, does it matter which stakeholders (for instance, supervisors or management vs colleagues vs customers or clients) are involved in the failure experience? These sorts of questions highlight the value of considering proactivity as a goal process (and we will return to this point, in a later section), with recognition that proactive goal generation does not always flow automatically on to goal-striving, and that reflection processes post-proactivity will shape and drive future proactivity.

Life-Span Developmental Perspectives and Long-Term Development Processes in Proactivity

Assuming a more encompassing time frame altogether, research on aging in proactivity (Zacher and Kooij, Chapter 10) and also career proactivity (Sonnentag, Chapter 3) have employed life-span developmental perspectives to understanding proactivity. In these domains of research, the focus of time is on differentiating when and why employees – in their own time span of tenure in an organization and even throughout their life course – will engage in proactivity at work. For instance, as De Stobbeleir and colleagues (Chapter 2) also noted, employees' choice of whether to engage in proactive feedback-seeking when experiencing a person-environment misfit might depend on what life stage (e.g., being a young parent) and career stage (e.g., being close to retirement) they encounter themselves in.

More paradoxically, researchers in the domain of proactive personality (Crant et al., Chapter 8), where proactive personality has been defined as a rather stable tendency of individuals to impact on the environment across time and situations, similarly argued that some developments may occur over the course of one's life time. In particular, drawing on theories of personality development (e.g., Caspi et al., 2005), Wu and Li (Chapter 9), specifically proposed that “an individual can become more proactive at a dispositional, deep level if s/he encounters an environment that facilitates this tendency over a time period” (p. X). In contrast, as Zacher and Kooij (Chapter 10) conclude in their extensive review of aging and proactivity, research suggests that any notable changes in proactive personality within individuals – as a mere function of individuals' biological age – are rather unlikely.

Finally, one of the core tenets of proactivity is that employees engage in change-orientated action at work. To the extent that employees change their work environment or themselves, time becomes an important parameter to investigate change not only in terms of proactive employees changing the

environment – but also the reverse effects of transformed environments on behaviors and performance of these proactive individuals. In this vein, seminal research in the context of the transitioning economy of East Germany in the 1990s by Frese, Garst, and Fay, (2007) showed how work characteristics and personal initiative of employees displayed reciprocal effects across four years. Similarly, recent findings over a three-year period demonstrated recursive effects between work conditions (job demands and control) and proactive personality, indicating a complex and dynamic interaction of employees' proactivity with the external environment, over time (Li, Fay, Frese, Harms, & Gao, 2014).

In sum, several important timing-related issues deserve further consideration in proactivity research. These yield important implications for research methods in investigating proactivity. In particular, where possible, proactivity should be measured as a dynamic process, using within-person research designs that extend over a longer period of time and incorporating multiple observations. Such research should optimally also take into account different layers of the work environment that impact individuals and their goal processes. Finally, investigations that assess individuals' proactivity across organizational tenures or occupations over an individual's life course would yield fascinating insights into how proactivity in organizations may be promoted from the perspective of individuals, and their personal trajectories in proactivity, working for that organization at a given point in time.

The Role of "Process" for Understanding Proactivity

Related, although distinct, to the discussion of "time" in proactivity is the notion that even a single instance of proactivity at work may best be conceived of as a process. In the overall history of proactivity research in organizations, the conceptualization of proactivity as a process reflects a more recent development (see Parker & Bindl, Chapter 1). From the perspective of understanding proactivity as a process, several phases have been identified that include anticipating or envisioning a different future situation, planning to bring about the desired change, the externally observable act of implementing or enacting proactivity at work, and proactivity-related reflection and learning (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker et al., 2010; Frese & Fay, 2001). To distinguish these phases is likely important because employees might be motivated to take charge of changing a situation but never engage in implementing this change. Alternatively, employees might proceed to engage in an initiative without having carefully planned for it, rendering the quality of their actions inferior (see Brandstätter et al., 2003; De Vos et al., 2009; Raabe, Frese, Beehr et al., 2007). In sum, a process perspective allows for greater depth in investigating when proactivity will be effective versus when it fails in the workplace, and as we discuss below, different domains of proactivity have discussed the role of process for understanding proactivity at work, in distinct, and largely implicit, ways.

Conceptualizing Proactivity as a Process

Some scholars have explicitly adopted a process perspective on proactivity that varies in part from the overall four phases of the proactive process that we outlined below. In particular, of the different domains of proactivity, the issue-selling literature has most explicitly investigated the different phases of an overall process, differentiating particularly *issue packaging* from *selling* the issue. However, as Ong and Ashford (Chapter 6) in their review of the issue-selling literature note, more detailed understanding within the different phases of issue-selling is needed. For instance, “issue sellers could perhaps benefit from a better understanding of who they should be talking to, where they should hold these discussions, when the best times to speak up are, and how they should build and maintain coalitional support” (p. XX). In this vein, Davidson and Van Dyne (Chapter 17) make the case that employees who wish to engage in proactive voice will need to frame their concern or suggestions differently, dependent on the situation they are in – emphasizing the importance of planning considerations of individuals as part of the goal generation process. Empirical research in the voice literature, to date, has often neglected this idea that voice may represent a process; instead solely conceiving voice as a one-off, one-shot behavioral action.

Similarly, in the context of understanding career proactivity, Sonnentag (Chapter 3) concluded that both the more cognitive elements of career planning (such as career exploration, goal-setting, and developing specific career plans) and the more overt career proactive behaviors (such as networking, finding a mentor, and skill development) independently predict career success. These findings indicate the importance of investigating both parts of the process, rather than assuming career proactivity in one overarching measure.

Likewise, Bateman (Chapter 11) emphasized the importance of the initial step of the process, the generation of proactive goals. The author argued that different proactive goals require explicit investigation in their prediction of proactive behavior, in particular because proactive goals likely differ largely from organization-provided goals. In this vein, proactive goals are characterized by *behavioral discontinuity*, that is, proactive goals represent “a qualitative or dramatic quantitative change in a performance target and the behaviors required to meet it” (p. XX). Thus, proactive engagement likely involves distinct steps or a “proactive goal ladder”, that enable a translation of proactive goals into enacted proactivity at work (Bateman, Chapter 11).

Another domain of proactivity research that has explicitly started to focus on the importance of distinguishing proactivity as a process is research on affective experience at work (see Cangiano et al., Chapter 13). The authors proposed that while most research, to date, has focused on providing evidence for the importance of feelings (moods and emotions) for the implementation stage of proactivity, other phases in the proactivity process are likely informed by moods and emotions, thus requiring more empirical substantive investigation of

proactivity as a process. In this context, some research has begun to investigate how moods at work may encourage vs demotivate employees from engaging in proactivity, depending on the phase of the proactivity process in which specific feelings occur (see Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, and Hagger-Johnson, 2012).

Finally, focusing explicitly on the final phase of proactivity, Parker et al. (2010) included the element of reflection as an important core process of proactivity. These authors argued that reflection can, in some cases, result in learning that is then applied to current or future instances of proactivity. Exactly when and how individuals reflect on their proactivity, and how these reflections feed back in a dynamic way into the proactivity process, has had relatively little attention, although research suggests such learning occurs: For instance, an ethnographic study on issue-selling (Howard-Grenville, 2007) showed how individuals may learn from their past successes and failures, trying out different moves and tactics, to improve their issue-selling over time. To understand the reflection process and learning in proactivity more generally, we encourage proactivity scholars to borrow insights from related literatures, particularly, from leadership development. For instance, Lord and Hall (2005) distinguished between three stages of identity-based leader development, encompassing novice to intermediate to expert skill levels, which determine the degree of effort and automaticity individuals will typically use to engage in required behaviors. Research on proactivity could, similarly, incorporate the idea of *proactive novices*, *proactive intermediates*, and *proactive experts* to more comprehensively investigate how individuals choose to engage in the different phases of the proactivity process, as a function of their proactive development.

Integrating Different Forms of Proactivity within One Process

Across contributions in this volume, it is striking to observe that several authors referred to other forms of proactivity or proactivity domains in this volume as forming subparts, or being somehow linked, with achieving effective proactive outcomes in their own domain. For instance, De Stobbeleir et al. (Chapter 2) in their chapter on proactive feedback-seeking, suggested that feedback-seeking might sometimes form the input necessary to prompt or guide job-crafting at work (see Wang et al., Chapter 4). As such, these forms of proactivity may in some cases be subsumed in one overall episode of proactive engagement, where feedback-seeking takes on the role of a planning tactic, or initial action, towards implementing job-crafting at work. Similarly, Belschak and den Hartog (Chapter 7) discussed the notion of “spillovers” from proactive behavior with a specific focus, i.e., directed at the organization (pro-organizational), directed at the work group or colleagues (pro-social), or directed at achieving one’s personal fit with the environment (pro-self) to other forms of proactive behavior helping to achieve the same goal. Thus, proactive behavior addressing a particular focus,

such as job-crafting and feedback-seeking which likely help increase person-environment fit, may occur jointly in one episode of proactivity.

In addition, more macro-forms of proactivity may encompass several discrete forms of proactivity in one episode. In this vein, issue-selling (Ong & Ashford, Chapter 6) has been conceptualized as “a lengthy, ongoing influence process, involving various behaviors such as upward communication, negotiation, social networking, coalition building, and more” (p. XX). In turn, networking and upward communication (e.g., proactive voice), for instance, have been investigated as forms of proactivity, in their own right. To the extent that proactivity is conceived of as a process, the overarching goal connecting all of these discrete proactive behaviors is to sell one particular issue in the organization.

Finally, as Belschak and Den Hartog (Chapter 7) noted, distinct domains of proactivity research have implicitly constrained themselves in assuming that specific forms of proactivity are inseparably linked with specific proactive goals, while ignoring the possibility that a specific form of proactivity could well be applied in other contexts: For instance, the concept of personal initiative (Frese, Fay, Hilburger, Leng, and Tag, 1997) has implicitly assumed a pro-organizational focus of intending to improve the organizational environment; yet, most of the characteristics of personal initiative (to have a long-term focus, to be goal-directed and action-oriented, to persist in the face of barriers and setbacks, and to be self-starting and proactive) could be applied, and are very likely important, to the above examples of proactively pursuing feedback and crafting a job, too. Separating the form of the behavior from its motives or goal intentions may thus facilitate for future proactivity research to build on existing knowledge in domains of proactivity that have thus far been treated in isolation. In essence, we argue that much value arises in continuing to think of proactivity as a way of behaving or a set of interrelated phases or processes that can be applied to multiple topic domains, with an emphasis on increased synthesis of findings across these domains, rather than focusing on one domain of proactivity in isolation from others (see Parker & Bindl, Chapter 1).

The Role of “Context” for Understanding Proactivity

It is well established that context shapes the overall occurrence of proactivity, and this is a core theme of this volume (see, in particular, Ohly and Schmitt, Chapter 14; Den Hartog & Belschak, Chapter 7; Harris & Kirkman, Chapter 19). But context also operates in other ways, such as by determining the overall “proactiveness” of proactive behaviors, by rendering salient different motives that, in turn, evoke different forms of proactivity, and by shaping the relative effectiveness of proactivity. In this section, we highlight communalities and differences of how different proactivity literatures have incorporated the role of context.

Context Shapes the Degree of Proactivity

As noted above, a core theme in this volume is that context shapes the degree of proactivity in a workplace. In other words, proactivity researchers have established that key aspects of the work environment facilitate or impede proactivity at work, such as work design, leadership and teams, and climate in the organization (e.g., Baer & Frese, 2003; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006; Williams et al., 2010). These authors mostly argue that the context shapes the degree of proactivity through shaping individual's motivation (e.g., the can do, reason to, energized to motivational states discussed in Chapter 1; Parker & Bindl, in this volume), although as discussed above, the context might also promote proactivity via aiding the acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills (see, for example, Parker & Wu, 2014).

In an interesting twist on the role of context in promoting proactive behavior, Bateman (Chapter 11) proposed a "graded dimensionality" of proactive goals, arguing that the degree of proactivity is best understood as a continuous quality, in connection to the context in which it occurs. Bateman (Chapter 11) concluded that "the greater the personal causation relative to environmental causation, the greater the proactivity" (p. X). In addition, the author cautioned that truly proactive goals are relatively scarce, as revealed, for instance, in goal-related studies investigating the degree of proactivity of goals set by organizational leaders (Bateman, O'Neill, & Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2002). Similarly, in the context of career proactivity, Sonnentag (Chapter 3) proposed that organizational context determines whether some proactive career behaviors are truly proactive, or not. For instance, companies may already have mentoring programs in place and hence proactively seeking for a mentor might be less proactive in these highly supporting situations. Similarly, Sonnentag (Chapter 3) argued that skill development "might be pursued proactively or occur in the context of a mandatory participation in an organization's training program" (p. X).

Based on these above discussions, we encourage proactivity research to go back to its beginnings, in this regard: Initial research on proactivity started by carefully developing measures that were validated for proactivity in a given context. For instance, Parker et al. (2006) interviewed wire makers to determine exactly what was proactive behavior within that specific setting, and then used this knowledge to develop a context-specific measure of proactive problem-solving. Similarly, Frese and colleagues (1997) developed a contextual measure of personal initiative, largely based on situational interviews, etc. Over the years, the trend in proactivity research has moved towards "more generally" assessing proactivity using generic scales of taking charge, voice, feedback-seeking, and the like. We encourage future proactivity research to remember that proactivity is a continuum, not a dichotomy, and to consider how truly "proactive" the assessed behavior is within a given context.

Context Evokes Different Motives and Forms

Several bodies of research on proactivity show that different types of organizational context evoke distinct motives, or reasons, in employees to engage in proactivity at work. For instance, De Stobbeleir and colleagues (Chapter 2) argued that context (the type of misfit between the proactive individual and the environment) activates distinct motives of proactive feedback-seeking. Thus, in cases where demands from the environment exceed individuals' ability to do the job well, individuals will likely engage in feedback-seeking with an *instrumental motive*, whereas in contexts where abilities exceed demands from the environment, employees who engage in feedback-seeking will likely do so with an *impression management motive*. The authors also highlighted how leaders, other employees, or highly public events, can render such feedback-seeking socially less acceptable.

Similarly, in the context of safety proactivity, Curcurutu and Griffin (Chapter 5) proposed that researchers need to understand how and why employees will engage in proactive safety behavior. Specifically, the authors proposed that motivational bases matter for proactivity, such that employees may seek to engage in proactivity with a *protection* versus a *promotion* focus, i.e., either aiming to preserve efficiency and correct functioning, or to promote and generate constructive changes and improvements within a given context. In addition, the authors, drawing on socio-technical systems theory, also advanced the distinction of different targets of safety proactivity, differentiating between *person* versus *procedure*-orientated behaviors. Thus, employees may choose to direct safety proactivity mainly at supporting people or at improving procedures in a given organizational context.

Other proactivity literatures have focused on how organizational context renders specific issues as salient for employees. In particular, issue-selling research (see Ong and Ashford, Chapter 6) has further illuminated the role of context for motivating proactivity, focusing especially on contexts in which individuals are likely to sell issues. For instance, Sonenshein (2006) surveyed employees and identified a broad range of issues that employees have been prepared to raise issues on, including employee-related issues, diversity issues, community issues, ethical issues, and environmental issues. Mayer et al. (2013) identified as potentially relevant issues those also relating to public health, politics, human rights, and tax policies.

It is crucial to understand how different situations and contexts can elicit or dampen particular motives (or "reason to"), which then affect proactive behavior or its target. In this context, Strauss and Kelly (Chapter 12) offered an identity-based perspective on why employees engage in proactivity. As the authors argued, individuals may perceive a situation at work as relevant for proactive engagement dependent on whether their personal identity (their unique differences from other individuals), relational identity (role-related relationships

at work), or even collective identity (membership in groups) is activated in the workplace.

Relevant to all of the above discussion is the question of the extent that every context lends itself to proactivity. For instance, while job-crafting research has shown that employees in generally creative jobs, such as at Google, may greatly benefit from crafting their jobs (Wrzesniewski et al., 2012), and that bottom-line employees with simplified jobs, such as hospital cleaners, may increase the meaningfulness of their job by imagining themselves as part of the medical team (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), the same might not be true for all. Perhaps, investment bankers, surgeons, or nuclear plant engineers should not be as explorative in crafting their jobs. For instance, Harris and Kirkman (Chapter 19) argued that the most desirable option for medical teams may be to maintain a proactive orientation, whilst not frequently having to engage in overt proactive behaviors. The authors also noted the possibility that there may be “too much of a good thing” in regards to team proactivity, particularly in these regulated environments. Whether and how organizations should best encourage proactivity in high-reliability contexts remains to be investigated in the future.

Context Shapes Effectiveness of Proactivity

Context matters greatly in shaping the effectiveness of an individual's proactive efforts. Bolino, et al. (Chapter 18), in particular, discussed cases in which proactivity may be harmful, rather than beneficial, to organizations. The researchers concluded, based on an extensive review of the existing proactivity literature, that a large number of individual boundary conditions prevail that determine whether different forms of proactivity result in positive, versus negative, outcomes for proactive individuals themselves, for their coworkers and supervisors, as well as for the overall organization. Importantly, the researchers note that most existing insights on contingencies of effectiveness have been compiled in a rather piecemeal fashion, and future research will need to incorporate more integrative theoretical frameworks that comprehensively explain the effectiveness of proactivity in organizations.

Relatedly, when investigating the core issue of whether proactivity is “effective”, from a contextual perspective, the question of “effective for whom?” needs to be considered. For instance, job-crafting researchers (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Wang et al., Chapter 4 in this volume) have emphasized that job-crafting – while most immediately benefiting the job incumbent themselves who aim to increase the meaningfulness of their jobs – might or might not benefit the overall organization, dependent on whether the job-crafting efforts are aligned or misaligned with organizational objectives (e.g., Demerouti, Bakker, & Halbesleben, in press). Similarly, recent research on job-crafting suggests that individuals with a high avoidance temperament (rather than, approach temperament; Elliot & Thrash, 2010) orientation may be more likely to reduce or

eliminate demands from their jobs (Bipp & Demerouti, in press). It is easy to imagine how such a type of “proactively simplifying one’s job” may be beneficial for the job incumbent, however, not necessarily for his/her team members (who might need to deal with the demands, in response), nor with the overall organization. In a related vein, Sonnentag (Chapter 3) additionally noted that career proactivity research has focused mainly on quantity, rather than on quality, of individuals’ career exploration, highlighting the need to consider context in determining effectiveness.

Finally, while the role of context has always been acknowledged to some extent in proactivity research, we would like to propose proactivity research should move deliberately into understanding the role of proactivity “in the service” of resolving particular contexts. In this vein, rather than controlling for context so as to generalize insights into how typical individuals in typical situations will behave, we propose the value of advancing insights into the nature and usefulness of proactivity for specific contexts, including those that go beyond organizational confines. For instance, scholars could use insights from existing proactivity research to consider how proactivity may help resolve the pressing challenges of our times: how to prevent climate change, how to reduce corruption, how to provide a more peaceful environment, or how to help resolve poverty in this world. There is scope for impact studies and evidence-based policy advice on proactivity, and we encourage proactivity researchers to “think big” and, indeed, to be proactive themselves in daring to challenge the status quo and cross boundaries of intra-disciplinary domains of proactivity research in ways that prove most impactful in helping our society and that may aim as far as improving the future of our world.

Practical Implications of Proactivity Research

In this section, we summarize some of the key practical implications of proactivity research that have been discussed by contributors of this volume, to help inform the practical application of research evidence, such as through future interventions in organizations. We discuss these themes within the different Human Resources functions to which they apply.

Recruitment and Selection for Proactivity

One of the core implications of the concept of proactive personality (Crant et al., Chapter 8) is that some individuals have a natural tendency to be proactive across time and situations. In turn, strong evidence on the powerfulness of proactive personality for overall proactive behavior in the workplace implies that organizations could usefully aim to select for this personality trait, especially where proactive behavior is core to one’s job performance. However, there is little or no research that assesses whether assessing proactive personality in

the process of personnel recruitment and selection adds value. As Crant et al. (Chapter 8) note, “we are unaware of any predictive validity studies that have used the proactive personality scale as a selection instrument, but the possibility is intriguing” (p. XX). An alternative, selection-focused approach to promoting proactivity in organizations could encompass selecting for those types of personality traits that are typically associated with more proactive behavior at work. In this vein, Wu and Li (Chapter 9) recommend one feasible avenue for organizations that wish to promote proactivity at work is “to recruit people who are more likely to engage in proactive behavior, such as those with higher extroversion, future orientation, positive self-perception, positive affectivity, and proactive personality” (p. X).

However, it is important to add some caveats. First, Crant et al. (Chapter 8) caution that the effectiveness of proactive personality is likely contingent on individuals’ additional ability to “read a situation” and to understand how proactivity might be interpreted by important stakeholders. Thus, it may not be advisable to simply select for proactive personality but rather, to test and select those individuals who are proactive and also high in situational judgment (Chan, 2006). In addition, research suggests that a part of being able to have a good situational judgment for proactivity certainly also stems from knowing one’s job well, and clearly understanding the implications of one’s actions in the organization. In this sense, selection for proactivity needs to go hand in hand with training and development that facilitate such in-depth understanding of the job and the organization (Parker & Wu, 2014).

In addition, even if proactive individuals are selected, organizational context can still suppress and constrain an individual’s natural level of proactivity. In other words, there is little point selecting a proactive individual and then putting her or him in an environment that stifles proactive action. Research has shown strong evidence for the power of the work environment on proactive behavior, independent of an individual’s proactive personality (e.g., Frese et al., 2007; Ohly & Schmitt, Chapter 14; Den Hartog & Belschak, Chapter 7), and, in turn, organizational context should always be considered in connection with selection.

Training and Development for Proactivity

It is also possible to enhance employee proactivity through training and development. Mensmann and Frese (Chapter 16), in particular, reviewed encouraging evidence that interventions or training can increase proactivity of employees (e.g., Raabe et al., 2007), entrepreneurs (e.g., Glaub, Frese, Fischer, & Hoppe, 2014), as well as job seekers (e.g., Eden & Aviram, 1993). In this context, Mensmann and Frese (Chapter 16) provided several important recommendations to organizations on how to train employees to become more proactive. The authors proposed that such training “is possible . . . with the development of an active mindset . . . which participants then interiorize and refine with the help of

action training within and outside of the training situation” (p. XX). They also recommended an evidence-based management approach (e.g., Rousseau, 2012) that largely draws on, and includes, participants’ own situation at work when training for personal initiative, highlighting the important roles of context and personal experience for developing proactivity at work.

An important consideration that should be made in training for proactivity is to examine which type of proactivity is most relevant for participants, given, for instance, their career stage and position in the organization. For instance, Zacher and Kooij (Chapter 10) conducted a systematic review of how age relates to different forms of proactive behavior at work. The researchers concluded that younger employees may be more interested in engaging in career-related proactivity, whereas older (50 years +) employees may be more motivated to engage in organization-related proactivity. These findings show that training for proactivity may need to be tailored to the participants’ individual circumstances and preferences at work. Importantly, Zacher and Kooij (Chapter 10) also concluded that older employees may face prejudices of other organizational members on becoming proactive in the organization. Hence, training for proactivity may need to extend beyond focal employees to include wider organizational development and elimination of biases towards different groups of individuals at work.

Further, although small in number, other studies, too, suggest it is possible to train individuals to be more proactive. For example, in the context of developing a proactive identity at work (see Strauss and Kelly, Chapter 12), Strauss and Parker (in press) compared two types of training interventions amongst police officers and police staff. For overloaded individuals, a problem-focused intervention that made salient individuals’ discrepancies between their status quo and their ideal work led to increased individual task proactivity (proactivity directed towards an individual’s work tasks). In contrast, and as theorized, a vision-focused intervention that made salient discrepancies between individuals’ status quo and an ideal future resulted in greater organization-member proactivity (proactivity directed towards improving the organization), albeit only for individuals with a future orientation. As well as their unique proactivity elements, both types of training incorporated elements of any successful behavioral change, such as goal-setting and action-planning.

Importantly, successful proactivity at work may be a function not only of motivation (which has been the core focus of proactivity research thus far), but also of having the skills, knowledge, and other resources (e.g., networks) to engage in this type of behavior at work effectively (Parker & Wu, 2014). For example, situational judgment (Chan, 2006), and need for cognition (Wu, Parker, and de Jong, 2014) both predict proactive work behavior and/or its effectiveness, highlighting a cognitive component of proactivity that has been rather underplayed (see also Parker & Liao, in press, on the proposed value of “wise proactivity”). Equipping individuals with the requisite knowledge,

and motivating deeper or more effective thinking, are likely to be important elements of any training and development efforts.

Organizational Design for Proactivity

Overall, researchers agree that organizational design plays a very important role in influencing proactivity, even for those employees that are dispositionally high in proactive personality. For instance, Wu and Li (Chapter 9) concluded that “favorable situational factors can play a role in facilitating proactive behavior for people who are prone to be proactive, motivating those who are not proactive in disposition to behave proactively, or/and have a long-term effect in building people’s proactivity at a deep, dispositional level” (p. X).

Thus, it may not be sufficient to “select” for proactive individuals, rather, context needs to be designed such that proactivity in staff is facilitated. Next, we summarize some of the core recommendations of contributors in this volume, on how context may promote proactivity:

Leading for Proactivity (Den Hartog & Belschak, Chapter 7): The authors argued that supervisors may exert considerable influence in either promoting or stifling proactivity in their subordinates. Thus, the authors overall concluded that “different types of leadership behaviors and leader characteristics (e.g., participative, ethical, supportive, and openness-signaling behaviors, leader mood) can stimulate proactivity whereas other elements of leadership (e.g., dominance, abusive supervision, lack of openness) may stifle employee proactivity” (p. XX). In particular, leaders who engage in role modeling and intellectual stimulation may be seen as signaling their openness to proactivity; similarly, to provide a vision likely enhances subordinates’ willingness to contribute to the organization; through individualized consideration, leaders may enhance perceived safety of proactive engagements in followers; finally, leaders who energize and inspire followers more broadly will create an important motivational pathway for proactivity at work.

Work Design for Proactivity (Ohly & Schmitt, Chapter 14): The authors concluded that, in the context of designing work characteristics to promote proactivity in staff, it is advisable to enhance employees’ job autonomy. In this vein:

... employees need to be able to make their own decisions on how to plan, schedule their tasks and which methods to use in their daily work. This could be accomplished by reducing unnecessary rules and regulations, eliminating bureaucracy, providing alternative and flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting or by establishing self-managing teams” (p. XX).

The authors also cautioned that employees need to be sufficiently trained and qualified in their jobs to become proactive.

Team Design for Proactivity (Harris & Kirkman, Chapter 19 in this volume): The authors recommended that organizations may promote proactivity in teams through different avenues. First, individual team members could be selected based on high proactive personality, previous proactive performance, as well as high conscientiousness and extraversion. Second, managers should increase team empowerment, as well as create a trusting and psychologically safe environment, and to “engender norms within the team that motivate high levels of team proactivity” (p. XX). At the organizational level, the authors also recommended for the use of team-based human resource policies, for instance, team-centric rewards, cross-training, and staffing decisions (see also Kirkman & Rosen, 1999), and cautioned for the removal of any structural hindrances, to promote greater overall team proactivity in organizations.

Finally, we would like to add a cautionary note to organizations in the context of using these existing insights as a “one size fits all” recipe to create a proactive workforce. What should be clear from our discussion of communalities and idiosyncracies across domains of proactivity is that organizations need to be considered in their unique contexts, to arrive at the most effective or utile approaches and interventions to promote a proactive workforce. For instance, although it has been argued that some aspects of organizational design may overall promote a proactive workforce – for instance, job autonomy or transformational leadership behaviors – researchers also suggest that it is important to consider unique characteristics of the organizational context that may facilitate or inhibit proactivity at work. For instance, in non-Western countries, transformational and empowering behaviors of leaders may be less effective in promoting proactivity in their followers if employees more generally assume a high power-distance stance in their interactions with authority (Wang et al., Chapter 4).

In sum, these existing insights from proactivity research are meant to provide overarching suggestions for types of levers for proactivity that organizations can generally draw on – however, to use these levers in the most meaningful and effective way will then highly depend on the resources, constraints, and particular context of the organization in question.

The Future of Proactivity Research

In this section, we encourage additional avenues for proactivity research that go beyond the scope of what proactivity researchers have predominantly focused on. In particular, based on the findings from this volume as well as our own observations of proactivity research, we advocate that future proactivity research should focus more substantially on improving measures and assessment approaches, on considering proactivity more greatly as a social phenomenon, as well as to move beyond individual-level proactivity.

Improving Measurement and Using Novel Assessment Approaches

An interesting perspective on the underlying challenges and opportunities of proactivity is provided by research on the most established way of measuring proactivity – “proactive personality” (see Crant et al., Chapter 8). As the authors report, the proactive personality scale has been used in upwards of 83 published articles in the past 20 years.

This scale is raising the question as to “how many items” do we need to fully measure the concept of proactivity. While the authors originally developed a 17-item scale, researchers have used 10-item versions (e.g., Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999), as well as six-item or even four-item versions (e.g., Parker & Sprigg, 1999) of the scale. In this context, Claes, Beheydt, and Lemmens (2005) showed that a 6-item version of the proactive personality scale was comparable across several different countries, suggesting that this core proactive personality construct is readily assessable even with few items. However, such systematic analyses are largely missing for proactive behavior measures, and future research should carefully investigate the best approaches for assessing distinct types of proactive behaviors at work, in particular for areas such as job-crafting (see Wang et al., Chapter 4), where a variety of scales have been developed. Similarly, other research domains in proactivity have noted that comprehensive measurements of core forms of proactivity, such as issue-selling (Ong & Ashford, in this volume) and foci of proactivity (Belschak & Hartog, Chapter 7) are still missing altogether.

Another question relating to measuring proactivity is the use of originally English-language scales across different languages and in different cultural contexts. Again, the proactive personality scale has been leading in terms of international use, including, as identified by Crant et al. (Chapter 8) across at least the following languages: Chinese, Dutch, Finnish, German, Italian, Turkish, and Spanish. However, as Crant et al. (Chapter 8; and, similarly, Claes et al., 2005) note, different languages and cultures may imply different meanings in overall scores of proactivity. Future research should now explore how different types of proactive behavior differ in their meanings across distinct cultural contexts. For instance, in the context of proactive voice, for employees to score 3 on a 5-point scale of proactively raising suggestions and voicing concerns (see Davidson & Van Dyne, Chapter 17) may have very different meanings across different cultural settings. Thus, we advocate that research needs to move beyond Western contexts to explore the meaning of proactive behavior at work across national cultures as well as, for instance, in highly distinct economic contexts, such as for employees in emergent economies.

Another area where future research may usefully employ novel paradigms is in the choice of study design: For instance, in the context of proactive career behaviors, Sonnentag (Chapter 3) argued for using a person-centric approach

to understand “profiles of proactivity”. In other areas of proactivity research, multi-level approaches may be particularly beneficial. For instance, in the case of issue-selling, to the extent that middle managers raise issues that affect the entire organization, or even society, this form of proactivity may inherently reflect a multi-level nature. Similarly, in the context of organizational safety, Curcuruto and Griffin (in this volume) argued that safety proactivity should be studied not only from the most dominant paradigm of individual behaviors but also as a team property or even as an organization-wide phenomenon. For instance, the authors argued that team mindfulness may be an expression of safety proactivity on a team level (see also Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007) and future research should investigate how safety proactivity across one level of analysis is informed by others. Similarly, team proactivity researchers (Harris & Kirman, Chapter 19) recommended future research to more explicitly incorporate the multi-level nature of organizations in studying proactivity at work.

Finally, we advocate that proactivity scholars from distinct domains “cross-pollinate” ideas on how best to assess proactivity. Issue-selling research has produced excellent examples of process-related research (Ong & Ashford, in this volume); job-crafting researchers (from the original Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, perspective) have used retrospective interview-based study designs; proactive voice researchers have mainly focused on laboratory-based experiments (Davidson & Van Dyne, Chapter 17); affect research has often used daily diary studies (see Cangiano et al., Chapter 13); personal initiative researchers have made an excellent use of field experiments and interventions (Mensmann & Frese, Chapter 16); and scholars investigating leadership, work design, and team-based proactivity have tended to use longitudinal field studies (Parker et al., 2006; Ohly & Schmitt, Chapter 14; Harris & Kirkman, Chapter 19). Most recently, research on proactive personality has even started to incorporate genetic measurements of proactivity, introducing yet another development of assessing proactivity at work (Li et al., in press). Based on this review, we advocate that different domains of proactivity should learn from others in advancing and complementing assessments of proactivity in their own domains.

Proactivity as a Complex Social Phenomenon

Proactivity has mostly been treated as a solitary action, by which an employee takes charge of and aims to implement changes to their work environment or themselves. However, researchers have recognized that employees might, themselves, not be able to implement proactivity without the support or co-operation of colleagues, for instance, in the context of low autonomy work (e.g., Vough, Bindl, & Parker, 2010). In other cases, employees might need to liaise with colleagues to achieve change in the entire team. For instance, job-crafting researchers have suggested the distinction between individual vs

collaborative job-crafting, where collaborative job-crafting consists of team members jointly determining how to alter task and relational boundaries of their jobs to meet common goals (Leana, Appelbaum, & Shevchuk, 2009). The extent to which individual team members contribute to such team proactivity may also vary. In this context, Harris and Kirkman (Chapter 19) argued that individual team members might differ in the extent to which they will influence overall team proactivity, dependent both on their individual network position, as well as on the team's social network characteristics, such as its density and centrality (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011). Similarly, findings by Williams, Parker and Turner (2010) indicate that high levels of heterogeneity in proactive personality in teams was associated with unfavorable group norms, and hence lower team proactivity indicating that the social context, through the composition of teams, may overpower individual predispositions to engage in proactivity.

Another example where proactivity will likely be a highly social phenomenon is the engagement in proactivity that goes beyond one's own work environment, such as in the case of proactive strategic behavior. In this context, issue-selling research (Ong & Ashford, Chapter 6) provide good evidence that successful proactivity may well consist of building coalitions with colleagues or other important stakeholders, and that public forums in the organizations may be used to influence top management to approve of one's issue. In turn, it can be argued that social behaviors, such as networking with colleagues, and one's network in the organization may be very important influencing factors, as well as mechanisms, by which individuals enact their proactivity. For instance, recent research by Sun and van Emmerik (in press) suggests that individuals' political skills, or their ability to influence other people, can impact on the effectiveness of proactive personality for performance. Similarly, a meta-analysis by LePine and colleagues (2008) showed that teams may be more effective in selling issues to management if they manage their own team dynamics well.

Researchers in this volume have also argued, in their different ways, that the broader social environment matters for understanding proactivity in individuals. For instance, Wu and Li (Chapter 9) described how leaders and peers, as well as the overall organizational climate, can help to shape employees' proactive personality over time. Similarly, in the context of career proactivity, Sonnentag (Chapter 3) argued that it will be important to consider the dyadic relationship of the mentee who proactively seeks out a specific mentor, as well as the mentor's characteristics, in more detail. Similarly, Davidson and Van Dyne (Chapter 17) argued, drawing on Construal-Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010), that "construal fit (the match between employee proactive voice framing and supervisor construal of the issue) predicts supervisor's sensemaking and judgments of proactive voice effectiveness" (p. XX). Many of these more specific processes remain empirically unclear, highlighting the need for future research to investigate social processes in proactivity at work.

Considering Proactivity Beyond Individuals

Most proactivity research to date has focused on individuals, both in understanding the level of proactivity, as well as in understanding the implications of proactivity in organizations. We encourage future proactivity research to expand its perspective in two core ways: first, to consider proactivity that occurs at the team and even organizational level of analysis and, second, to consider outcomes of proactivity that go beyond the focal proactive individual.

Turning to the former, comparatively little research to date has investigated questions of when teams or organizations as a whole may be more or less proactive. Here, most research has been conducted in the context of team-level proactivity. This body of research is compelling in arguing that proactivity exists at higher levels of the organization and is not only an individual-level phenomenon. In particular, Harris and Kirkman (Chapter 19) concluded that team proactive states and behaviors “are based on more than just the simple aggregation of team member characteristics; rather, they reflect collective properties” (p. X).

Some preliminary insights also exist on the construct of organization-level proactivity. For instance, Aragón-Correa (1998) found organizational proactivity to predict greater engagement in more modern environmental activities as well as more positive financial performance (Aragón-Correa, Hurtado-Torres, Sharma, & García-Morales, 2008). Some research has started to try and establish a link between how proactivity at the organization level may impact individual proactivity. In this context, Ramus and Steger (2000) investigated the consequences of organization-level proactivity directed at environmental activities (indicated as the company providing a published environmental policy supporting sustainable actions) and higher individual engagement in environment-related initiatives. Future proactivity research needs to more clearly understand the mechanisms and processes that underlie organizational proactivity.

Regarding the question of outcomes of proactivity, most research has focused on individual outcomes for the proactive individual themselves, such as performance and career success (e.g., Bindl & Parker, 2010, for a review). However, proactive employees often speak out on and raise issues that do not only concern themselves (e.g., Ong & Ashford, Chapter 6) and have a focus on proactivity that is pro-organizational, in impacting wider organizational processes not just those influencing their own job (Belschak & Den Hartog, Chapter 7). Whether these influences are positive for bystanders, such as colleagues and customers, other departments in the organization or the organization itself has not been sufficiently studied, to date. Even if proactivity meets the issue sellers’ goals, for instance, as Ong and Ashford (Chapter 6) argue, it might not represent the most effective use of the organizations’ scarce resources to draw it attention to and change processes in the organization as a response to an individuals’ proactivity. Similarly, employees who engage in job-crafting to increase meaningfulness in their work by eliminating a task they do not identify

with, might well leave this undesirable task to other colleagues who will need to complete it, as a consequence (Wang et al., Chapter 4), and research has only begun to investigate the effects of individuals' job-crafting on colleagues (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, in press).

Similarly, Bolino et al. (Chapter 18) proposed that proactivity may not always be beneficial. Drawing on the framework of proactivity by Parker and Collins (2010), the authors integrated existing evidence in the literature indicating that any form of proactivity (proactive work behaviors, proactive P-E fit behaviors, as well as proactive strategic behaviors) may result in substantial negative outcomes for proactive individuals, as well as other stakeholders in the organization. The authors additionally concluded that most proactivity research to date has focused on antecedents of proactivity only and that future research will be needed to fully illuminate the consequences of proactivity at work, in particular, with regard to how proactive employees impact on others in the organization. In this context, the authors noted that "one of the biggest gaps we identified in our review is research exploring the ways in which proactive behaviors may harm coworkers" (p. XX).

Finally, yet another question that remains unsolved is how proactive employees impact on stakeholders outside the organization. As Wu and Li (Chapter 9) argue, proactive personality can be developed over time through the design of, and interaction with, one's job. How this change in proactivity from work spills over into individuals' family lives, e.g., in their interactions with friends, spouses, and children, and whether this change will necessarily be positive – and from which perspective – remains unclear.

Concluding Remarks on the Future of Proactivity

As the ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus once famously remarked, "the only constant in life is change". To this end, given that uncertainty and change in organizations and, indeed, in the world is likely to remain high, we believe that proactivity in organizations will remain a fascinating and important topic for research in the foreseeable future. We hope that this chapter will help guide future research on proactivity in meaningful ways, and we encourage scholars to remain dynamic, novel, and explorative in their research approaches to proactivity. We also urge scholars to strike a balance between encouraging diverse and novel perspectives and integrating and bridge-building across existing topics and domains in proactivity research. Both of these divergent and convergent future directions are important to stimulate theoretical development and at the same time prevent the unmanageable proliferation of overlapping constructs. We wish researchers all the best for these future endeavors on understanding proactivity in organizations and on providing recommendations to management, workers, and policy makers on this important topic. And we hope to see, as a result, more individuals and teams making good things happen in organizations and beyond!

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