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Managerial perceptions of employee motivation

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MANAGERIAL PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

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A Research Project

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graziadio Business School

School of Business and Management

Pepperdine University

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

in

Organization Development

———————————————————

by

Caroline Kimrey McRee

July 2018

This research project, completed by

CAROLINE KIMREY MCREE

under the guidance of the Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the faculty of The Graziadio Business School in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Date: July 2018

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Abstract

This qualitative research study examined managerial perceptions of employee motivation. A widely studied yet complex topic, motivation continues to allude managers, leading to managerial assumptions about what is motivating to employees. The purpose of this study was to explore employee motivation through the co-participation of managers and subordinates in a job crafting intervention. A 1-hour version of the Job Crafting Exercise was conducted for eight managers and eight subordinates for a total of 16 research participants. Three weeks following the job crafting intervention, an open-ended survey was distributed separately to managers and subordinates. Findings indicated changes in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of subordinate's jobs, and an increase in motivation as a result of co-participation in a job crafting intervention. Managers also gained greater insight about subordinates through participating in the Job Crafting Exercise and made actionable next steps with employees at the conclusion of the intervention.

Keywords: Motivation, Perception, Job-Crafting, Manager

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Throughout the past century researchers have explored what propels people to work. However, a large disconnect remains regarding what managers perceive as motivating and what actually motivates an employee (Kovach, 1987). Kovach (1980) asserts, "Today's manager is no closer to understanding employee 'motivation' than his counterpart of 50 years ago" due to the shift in employee attitudes and changes in what motivates them (p. 54). Motivation is commonly understood as intrinsic when it focuses on the inward desires which move a person to act based on pure interest or anticipated enjoyment in the activity itself (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In contrast, extrinsic motivation is driven by the expectation of an external outcome such as pay.

Kovach (1995) challenges that in the United States "organizations have done a better job of satisfying the basic or 'deficit' needs of the worker than they have in satisfying the ego or self-fulfillment needs" (p. 94). A great deal of research has been done postulating compensation as the believed predominate motivating factor from the manager's perspective (e.g., Lindahl, 1949; Kovach, 1987; Nelson, 1999; Olafsen, Halvari, Forest, & Deci, 2015). Because getting paid is an explicit characteristic and agreement between the employer and the employee, research shows the predominate assumption in the workplace setting is that motivation will be more extrinsically than intrinsically based (DeVoe & Iyengar, 2004). A series of laboratory experiments aimed at examining the assessments individuals made of employees' motivations, found participants were more likely to predict that others would be more motivated by extrinsic rewards than themselves, and less motivated by intrinsic rewards than themselves (Heath, 1999).

Nelson (1999) argued managers often neglect placing a concerted effort on employee motivation until it was already lost. He found managers focused on what was urgent, and by the time they realized there was a motivation deficit, morale had decreased and employees had quit. The discrepancy between managerial perceptions of employee motivation and reality may yield valuable information about the overall manager employee relationship (Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993). Managerial perceptions of employee motivation had consequences on personnel practices such as performance evaluation. In a global, cross cultural study of Citigroup employees, Defoe and Iyengar (2004) found managerial perceptions of employee motivation were strongly associated with employee performance evaluation.

The literature substantially revealed both individual and managerial perceptions of employee motivation are incorrect. Based on this assertion, how then do organizational leaders discover the truth behind what motivates their employees? While there is a paucity of research regarding specific ways to close the gap between managerial assumptions of employee motivation and employees' real motivations, only two techniques are mentioned in the literature.

One suggested method to more accurately ascertain employees' real motivators is frequent administration of attitude surveys. As management routinely issues surveys to their employee population, they would be alerted to potential dissatisfaction and realize the needs of employees (Kovach, 1987). The second method proposed in the existing literature to reconcile the difference between managerial assumptions of motivation and the real motivation of employees is job enrichment (Herzberg, 1987). While the theory of job enrichment has evolved since the 1960s (Cummings & Worley, 2015), it generally

refers to the management practice "of making jobs more satisfying by increasing the skill variety, task identity, significance of the task, autonomy, and feedback from the work itself" (p. 788).

While attitude surveys and job enrichment have merit in particular contexts, these methodologies are insufficient for managers to adequately comprehend employee motivation. Even if employers faithfully and regularly administered attitude surveys, or dedicated a significant amount of time and energy to job enrichment planning and evaluation, the reality is all individuals possess "multiple motives to any course of action," (Wrzesniewski et al., 2014, p. 5). Most importantly, however, both of these methods make employee motivation exclusively a task or function of the manager.

Fortunately, behavioral science research offers a new methodology that engages employees in the active process of making work increasingly more meaningful: job crafting. Rather than traditional job design approaches to work satisfaction where management controls job components and characteristics (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), job crafting is a process that is conducted by the employee through alterations of the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of their job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Job crafting is distinct from, yet accompanies, job design (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) and social information processing (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) "offering an alternative view on the direction of the relationship among work, motivation, and meaning" (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 194). These unique features make job crafting the ideal vehicle by which this research study explores managerial perceptions of employee motivation.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to explore managerial perceptions of employee motivation.   This study seeks to answer several questions:

1.   How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence changes in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job?

2.   What can managers learn about their subordinates through co-participation in a job crafting intervention?

3.   How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention impact the way managers and subordinates work together?

4.   How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence motivation?

Significance of Study

McGregor (196) noted "Behind every managerial decision or action are assumptions about human nature and human behavior" (p. 33). This study continues the age-old conversation about employee motivation, but is distinctive in its approach of engaging managers and employees simultaneously by way of a job crafting intervention. While many studies exist on the subject of employee motivation, and the job crafting body of research is growing rapidly, no existing research was located which directly involved managers in the subordinate's experience job crafting. To the researcher's knowledge, this is the first research study to involve both managers and employees in a co-participation of the Job Crafting Exercise. This study will add to the existing literature on job crafting, extending opportunities for its application within organizational life.

Study Setting

The study organization is an information technology company headquartered in Birmingham, Alabama, and operates in states throughout the Southeast region of the United States. It is a nationally recognized cloud service provider, hardware and software reseller, and professional services engineering firm that owns and operates three data centers in the Southeast. There are a total of 325 employees across the Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee primary office locations. A privately held organization, in 2017 the study organization did $146 million in sales, and is a leading partner and reseller of Cisco, Microsoft, EMC, and VMware technology products. This study employs eight managers and eight subordinate pairs for a total of 16 employees located in the Birmingham, Alabama office headquarters.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to managerial perceptions of employee motivation, describing the need for the study and why it is important. Four chief objectives are explored throughout the study, guiding the design, data collection, and analysis procedures:

1. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence changes in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job?

2. What can managers learn about their subordinates through co-participation in a job crafting intervention?

3. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention impact the way managers and subordinates work together?

4.   How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence motivation?

The purpose and significance of the study were discussed, as well as the research study setting.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature relevant to employee motivation and job crafting. The chapter begins with an overview of motivation and three motivational constructs: psychological needs, will, and personal causation. Motivation and management are discussed by examining employee need satisfaction and managerial beliefs about employee motivation. Job crafting is then introduced, exploring the role of others in the job crafting process and the factors leading to job crafting success. The chapter concludes with remarks on how to expand the job crafting literature.

Chapter 3 details the design and methodology used to gather data used in the study. The research purpose and research design are introduced along with the data instrumentation and research study sample. A detailed report of the data collection and data analysis procedures used in the study is included.

Chapter 4 reports the results of the study. The findings related to changing the boundaries in a subordinate's job are discussed. Managerial discoveries about subordinates are examined, and the findings related to the way managers and subordinates work together. The impact of the study on both subordinates' motivation and managers' understanding of subordinate's motivation is addressed.

Chapter 5 summarizes the findings of the study by interpreting the findings with the existing literature. Implications of this study for the broader organization

development community are shared, as well as limitations of the study. The chapter

concludes with recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to examine managerial perceptions of employee motivation by way of a job crafting intervention. While there is a vast amount of research on motivation, the goal of this chapter is to explore the seminal studies on motivation, how managers perceive and act on employee motivation, and how the emerging field of job crafting contributes to motivational literature.

Motivation

Motivation has been studied extensively over the course of the past century. Researchers have explored motivation through constructs such as needs satisfaction, will, and personal causation. While separate, each of these lenses provide a view and understanding of the implications for comprehending motivation in the workplace.

Psychological Needs. Maslow's (1943) seminal work on human motivation examined the interrelatedness and prepotency of five basic human needs: physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. The presence of one need builds on the prior satisfaction of a more urgent, intense need. Maslow (1943) proposed organisms are dominated by unsatisfied needs, which drives their behavior to fulfillment. Once an unsatisfied need has been satiated, one is able to seek a "higher" motivation. Individuals who attain self-actualization are self-sufficient from their physical and social environment, and draw on latent resources within (Maslow, 1970, p. 136).

Building on Maslow's (1943) theory of needs, McClelland (1961) sought to determine the primary motivational drivers in the human experience. In the 1960s, he developed human motivation theory, also referred to as learned needs theory, which states humans have three primary motivators: need for achievement, need for affiliation,

and need for power (McClelland, 1961). McClelland's (1961) theory shows how psychological needs translate to motivational drivers which drive behavior.

Ryan and Deci (2000) expanded the literature concerning psychological needs by highlighting the inherent human drive all individuals possess to pursue a deepened, more holistic sense of self. Coined self-determination theory, Ryan and Deci (2008) identified three psychological needs as basic and universal to all people: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Ryan and Deci (2000) avowed "human beings can be both self-motivated, driven, and vigorous, while at other times, apathetic, indifferent, and negligent of responsibility" (p. 68). Central to this theory is the idea that individuals intrinsically seek to pursue their interests, utilize their faculties, and seek and conquer optimal challenges" (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 43).

When autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs have not been met, self-determination theory points first to the social environment and then to the developmental environment to understand which need has or is being frustrated (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 74). Autonomy, competence, and relatedness "provide a classification framework for whether the environment sustains or combats human functioning and flourishing" (Ryan, 2002, p. 6). Self-determination theory provides a differentiated view of motivation in that it investigates the nature of the motivation being expressed, and "the perceived forces that move that move a person to act" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 69).

Will. Continuing the theoretical conversation concerning motivation, cognitive theorist Lewin contended intentionality and will were critical motivational constructs (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 36). Lewin (1951) attested it was "not the intensity of the intention to act which brought about the action, but the larger goals of will, or needs, on

which intention depends" (p. 112). With the social scientific knowledge that needs drive intention, cognitive theorist Vroom (1964) examined the willful, controlled choices individuals make "based on varied, voluntary responses" (p. 9). Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) consists of three concepts, valence, expectancy, and force, "demonstrating the relationship between choice preceding a course of action and the psychological processes simultaneously occurring along with behavior" (pp. 14-15). This theory is built on the premise individuals choose one behavioral option over another based on their belief their efforts will help them achieve their desired performance goals.

Personal Causation. Unlike Lewin (1951) and Vroom (1964), DeCharms (1968) believed the "foundation upon which motives are built is the desire towards personal causation" (pp. 269-270). DeCharms (1968) defined personal causation as "man's primary motivational propensity is to be effective in producing changes in his environment" (p. 269). Instead of motivation being based primarily on needs, will, or intention, DeCharms' (1968) research emphasized the power of the individual to make things happen in one's environment and in the world. Accentuating the subjective nature of motivation, DeCharms (1968) believed personal knowledge and experience informed motivation and self-initiated change. DeCharms (1992) attested "humans are not pawns, but have origin experiences in which they experience the self as the cause of desired changes" (pp. 325-326).

Motivation is a varied and complex topic. The relevant literature identifies the predominant origins of motivation deriving from psychological needs, intentionality, will, choice, and personal causation. Motivational theory describes the central human experience that moves or drives people to choose, behave, or decide something for

individual, specific reasons. It continues to provide a degree of explanation for why people do the things that people do. Based on these premises, motivational literature offers insight into the unique needs and drives of each person, and the self-possessed individual capacity to pursue fulfillment of those needs and drives.

Management and Motivation

Employee Need Satisfaction. As discussed previously, psychological needs are directly related to individual motivation. When people enter an organization, they bring their needs into the teams, task forces, and managerial relationships to which they belong. Herzberg's (1966) motivation hygiene theoryg, also known as two-factor theory, contributes to motivational theory within the context of employees needs and satisfaction. Man has dual needs, and the factors that produce job satisfaction are distinct from the factors that lead to dissatisfaction (p. 76). Herzberg (1966) distinguishes hygiene factors from motivational factors. Hygiene factors are the factors which are extrinsic to the work, such as salary, supervision, or company policy. Motivation factors, by contrast, are intrinsic to the work, such as the nature of the task itself, advancement, or recognition, because they allow for personal growth (Herzberg, 1966).

Managerial Beliefs About Employee Motivation. "In the real world, motivation is highly valued because of its consequences: Motivation produces." (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 69). Managers are constantly seeking ways to motivate employees, because organizational goals and directives must be met in order for the organization to survive and remain competitive. Considering carrot or stick approaches to motivation, some managers utilize positive or negative tactics, such as reducing employees time spent at work, or fluctuating employees' wages, presuming these methods effect employee

motivation (Herzberg, 1987). Herzberg (1987) contends this is not motivation, but a threat or reward creating short-term movement at best. True motivation occurs when an employee needs no outside stimulation, but has the desire to do something from within.

Beliefs shape behavior. The beliefs managers hold about employees and what motivates them is displayed in the actions they employ. A common theory of management is an authoritarian approach, utilizing human activity to meet organizational demands as described in McGregor's (1972) Theory X. The assumptions and beliefs contained in Theory X portray management as the controller of various organizational elements towards economic ends, and regarding people, it is management's responsibility to get things done through people (McGregor, 1972, p. 118). Theory X adherents believe employees cannot be trusted to work conscientiously on their own, but rather require close supervision to stay on track.

Lindahl's (1949) pioneering study of workers and foremen in 24 plants illuminates managerial beliefs of employee motivation. Workers and foremen were asked to rank ten factors most important to workers' desires. The highest ranking item for workers was "full appreciation of work done," and the highest ranking item foreman believed most motivating to their workers was "good wages". Kovach (1987) conducted a similar study in 1946, 1981, and 1986 with industrial workers and supervisors. Each group was issued a survey and asked to rank ten "job reward" factors. In 1946, the number one reward factor identified by workers was "full appreciation for the work being done" and in 1986, "interesting work" (1987, p. 59). Supervisors were also asked to rank job reward factors based on how they thought workers would respond. At each interval across the 40-year period, supervisors ranked "good wages" as the believed highest

motivating factor, with "job security" second. Kovach (1987) found not only were the actual and perceived job rewards very different, but the managerial perceptions of employee motivation lacked understanding of extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors.

In contrast, managers who believe management is responsible for organizing work efforts towards profitable economic ends, and employees are able to be motivated, develop, and take responsibility towards organizational goals, align with McGregor's (1972) Theory Y. This participatory philosophy of management creates space for people to develop themselves and direct their own behavior towards organizational aims (McGregor, 1972, p. 122).

As each person experiences unique psychological needs and a unique drive towards need fulfillment and personal causation, managers' understanding of both human nature and how their role influences employee motivation is paramount. Studies have shown that managerial perceptions of employee motivation can be incorrect (Kovach, 1987; Lindahl, 1949). Kovach (1980) exhorts:

> As a manager, you need to remember that you cannot motivate people. That door is locked from the inside. What you can do, however, is to create a climate in which most of your employees will find it personally rewarding to motivate themselves and in the process contribute to the company's attainment of its objectives (p. 59).

Job Design. A key component of managerial and employee functioning is the nature of job design. The most basic definition of job design is the "actual structure of jobs employees perform" (Oldham & Fried, 2016, p. 20), with the job characteristics model (JCM; Hackman & Oldham, 1976) focusing on employees' attitude and motivation arising from the qualities comprising the job design itself. Over the past 50 years, much organizational research has been centered around the subject of job design

(Oldham & Fried, 2016). Job design is often understood from a top-down perspective, where organizational leaders create jobs and determine the right skill set and knowledge set needed to fill the jobs (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Job characteristics theory focused attention on the attributes of a job, and how those attributes provide a conducive setting for high levels of motivation, satisfaction, and performance (Hackman & Oldham, 1980, p. 59).

Job Crafting

The meaning of work is an age-old question. People find meaning in their work both internally and externally, and both affect the level of commitment to their work (Wrzesniewski, Rozin, & Bennett, 2002). Job crafting introduces a complementary, yet different perspective from traditional job design. Job crafting emerges from the bottom-up and is not dependent on the manager nor the design of the job, rather the motivation of the individual job holder. Employees are hired by an organization, and regardless of place within the organization, they can individually craft, or alter, job functions based on their own needs and preferences (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

"Work in the twenty-first century increasingly will be changed by the necessity for more employees to actively craft their own work lives, as opposed to having them created by others" (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 197). Job crafting founding theorists Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) conceived the concept of job crafting as the latitude employees take to alter aspects of their job, thereby modifying work meaning and work identity.

Psychological needs are not only present when studying human motivation, they are actively at work when an individual is job crafting. Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) assert employees are motivated to job craft based on three inherent human needs:

1.   The need for control due to the threat of alienation

2.   The need for a positive self-image at work

3.   The need for connection with others (p. 181).

It has been shown that basic need satisfaction can be increased through a job crafting intervention (Van Wingerden, Bakker, & Derks, 2017). "Employees who proactively craft their job by adapting their job demands and resources engage in self-determination and consequently satisfy their basic needs. By satisfying their basic needs, employees become engaged at work" (Van Wingerden et al., p. 172).

There are three specific ways an employee job crafts: changing the task boundaries of a job, the relational boundaries, or the cognitive task boundaries (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Task crafting is concerned with "changing the number, scope, and type of job tasks" (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 185). An example of task crafting might be an accountant devising a new way to file taxes to make their job less repetitive. Relational crafting involves "changing the quality or amount of interaction with others at work, or both" (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 185).

An example of relational crafting is a financial analyst who decides to begin communicating with clients via video conferencing, rather than email. The third form of job crafting, cognitive crafting, occurs "when employees change the cognitive task boundaries of their jobs" (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 185). An example of

cognitive crafting is a nurse owning responsibility for information and "insignificant" tasks in order to provide superior care for a patient because they see their work as patient advocacy (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 185).

Several researchers have used job demands-resources theory (JD-R; Demerouti et al., 2001) to frame their studies of job crafting (e.g., Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012; Van Wingerden, Bakker, & Derks, 2017). Nearly 20 years ago, JD-R theory was introduced as a way of understanding working conditions as either job demands or job resources. Both job demands and job resources are "differentially related to specific outcomes" (Demerouti et al., 2001, p. 499). A recent study applied the principles of JD-R theory to a job crafting intervention. This study revealed that employees' participation in a job crafting intervention led to an increase in job crafting behaviors and basic need satisfaction (Van Wingerden, Bakker, & Derks, 2017).

The Role of Others in Job Crafting. To date, job crafting has primarily been an individual activity, altering one's job in ways meaningful to the individual. Often managers are unaware of individuals participating in job crafting behaviors (Lyons, 2008; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). While job crafting is most often a self-initiated action by the employee, research has shown managers can facilitate and/or support job crafting (Van Wingerden, Bakker, & Derks 2017; Wrzesniewski, 2003). Although designed to be an individually based activity, opportunities exist to examine job crafting from a collective approach instead of just individuals (Leana et al., 2009; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). In the last decade, collaborative crafting has provided a unique addition to job crafting literature in that it "incorporates the social embeddedness that both enables and constrains individual behavior" (Leana et al., 2009, p. 1185).

Tims, Bakker, Derks, and Rhenen (2013) broadened the study of job crafting from the individual to the team level based on the premise that team job crafting is positively related to team performance by way of team work engagement. Surveying individuals and teams in a large occupational health services organization, they found at both the individual and the team level, job crafting is related to team performance via work engagement. This study provides empirical evidence job crafting is as influential on the team level as it is the individual level.

Integrating social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) and JD-R theory (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012), Bakker, Rodríguez-Muñoz, and Sanz Vergel (2016) examined imitation of job crafting behaviors amongst employee dyads. The results indicated when employees craft in their own work environment, seeking support or feedback from others, colleagues are likely to also craft in a similar way. This is an important contribution to the job crafting literature, demonstrating job crafting is not merely "an individual level phenomenon" (Bakker, Rodríguez-Muñoz, & Sanz Vergel, 2016, p. 185). Job crafting contains interpersonal and social implications for participating organizations.

Factors Attributing to Job Crafting Success. Research has shown multiple factors can effect job crafting success. Using the task autonomy dimension of job characteristics theory as a guiding framework (Hackman & Oldham, 1975), Bizzi (2016) noted individuals with high task autonomy believe the work quality is contingent to their efforts. This research study explored the effects of network contacts' job characteristics (defined as the employees an individual regularly communicates with regarding task related issues) on individual job crafting. The results revealed that the task autonomy and feedback from network contacts positively influences individual effectiveness job

crafting on task related areas (Bizzi, 2016). If managers want to support employee's task crafting efforts, this study urges them not only to be cognizant of their direct reports' tasks, but also the tasks of the individuals in their direct reports' surrounding network.

Another factor effecting job crafting success is the personality of the job crafter. Bakker, Tims, and Derks (2012) conducted a study among 95 dyads of colleagues examining how employees with a proactive personality would be more likely to job craft, leading to higher performance and engagement. The study methodology required self-ratings and peer-ratings of the colleague dyads, with the peer-ratings indicating the "relationship between specific job crafting behaviors and colleague ratings of performance - an effect that is mediated by work engagement" (Bakker, Tims, & Derks, p. 1372). Bakker, Tims, and Derks' (2012) results indicated that as employees proactively modify their work environment, they both remain engaged and perform well.

Along the same vein of a proactive personality, self-efficacy has been noted as leading to job crafting success. Strong belief in personal capacity increases the likelihood an individual will craft from the bottom up, to meet job demands in addition to personal developmental desires Miraglia, Cenciotti, Alessandri, and Borgogni (2017). Miraglia and colleagues (2017) designed a study on the basis of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), where self-efficacy is foundational to human agency, exploring job crafting as a mediator between self-efficacy and job performance. A reciprocal relationship was found between the two, highlighting self-efficacious employees:

> were more likely to alter the task and social boundaries of their work by trying to develop their abilities and learn new things, taking on extra tasks, volunteering for new projects and asking for support and advice from colleagues and super-visors—essentially, by engaging in crafting behaviors (Miraglia et al., 2017, p. 264).

Expanding the Job Crafting Literature. In their development of job crafting theory, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) note the effects of job crafting on work outcomes are not the predominate motivators to engage in job crafting practices. While the job crafting literature is still growing regarding the relationship between job crafting and job performance (Lyons, 2008), several studies evidence the positive impact job crafting is having on factors such as well-being and employee performance (e.g., Bakker, Tims, & Derks, 2012; Miraglia, Cenciotti, Alessandri, & Borgogni, 2017; Petrou et al., 2012).

Regarding the positive association between job crafting and job performance specifically, Miraglia, Cenciotti, Alessandri, and Borgogni (2017) found job crafters receive higher performance evaluations due to the agency they employ in their work environment, amplifying job resources, and taking on interesting projects. There is also a growing body of evidence supporting a positive relationship between job crafting and work engagement (Bakker, Tims, & Derks, 2012; Petrou et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2012).

As job crafting gains organizational adoption, Wrzesniewski (2003) warns, "the feedback employees receive on their job crafting actions may either create more possibilities for job crafting or may inhibit job crafting to occur in the future" (p. 165). By incorporating multiple parties, such as key stakeholders, managers, and team members into the individual's job crafting context, Kira et al. (2010) proposed collaborative work crafting contributes both to the individual's personal resources and the organizational aims. Organizations can support job crafting behaviors by coupling top-down strategies with bottom-up strategies, allowing employees the space for job crafting

to occur and a level of autonomy to modify their jobs in ways that satisfy their personal needs and goals (Miraglia, Cenciotti, Alessandri, & Borgogni, 2017).

Summary

The study of motivation across psychology and the behavioral science disciplines will continue to be an area of interest for academics and practitioners alike. The literature thoroughly demonstrates psychological needs, intentionality and will, and personal causation are core motivational constructs. This study adds to the extensive body of knowledge concerning motivation in an organizational context, specifically within managerial and subordinate relationships. This study expands the fairly new field of job crafting research in meaningful ways for organizational leaders seeking to engage employees and increase motivation in the workplace. The next chapter details the methods used in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

This chapter describes the research purpose, design, sample, protection of human subjects, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

Research Purpose

This study examined managerial perceptions of employee motivation. Four research questions were explored:

1. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence changes in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job?

2. What can managers learn about their subordinates through co-participation in a job crafting intervention?

3. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention impact the way managers and subordinates work together?

4. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence motivation?

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative research design to address the four research questions previously identified. Content analysis was used to summarize the data into meaningful categories. This analysis technique compiles a large quantity of data into a few well-defined themes, capturing research participants outlook on the research subject (Cummings & Worley, 2015).

The Job Crafting Exercise was conducted over the course of one week in three, one-hour workshops. To preserve time during the Job Crafting Exercise, all participants

were given instructions prior to the workshop to write down the main tasks included in their job. They were then asked to classify those tasks into three categories: most time and energy, medium amount of time and energy, and least time an energy based on how much time and energy they currently spend on each task. An example task list and subsequent classification was provided.

Job Crafting Exercise: Workshop 1 for Managers. The first workshop was for managers only. The researcher facilitated the Job Crafting Exercise, and the managers completed the exercise. Each of the workshops featured two structured reflection periods: one immediately following the "Before Sketch" and one following the "After Diagram." These will be explained in the Instrumentation section below. During Workshop 1, managers were paired with a peer during the reflection exercise, debriefing their own experience completing through the exercise.

At the close of the workshop, it was explained that what they completed as individuals, their subordinates would complete during the second workshop. The role would change when the manager transitioned from Workshop 1 to Workshop 2. In Workshop 1, the manager was the participant; however, in Workshop 2 the manager was asked to be a humble inquirer. Managers were instructed to listen, be curious, ask questions, and suspend their judgment.

Job Crafting Exercise: Workshop 2 for Managers and Subordinates. The second workshop was for both managers and subordinates. After the Job Crafting Exercise, each of the eight subordinates completed the exercise as individuals. Managers were seated next to subordinates, observing as their subordinate completed the exercise. During the two structured reflection periods, managers and subordinates were paired

together, and the discussion was focused on the subordinate's experience completing the exercise.

All participating managers and employees were issued an open-ended survey three weeks following the intervention.

Data Instrumentation

The Job Crafting Exercise by Berg, Dutton, and Wrzesniewski (2013) was utilized for the job crafting intervention delivered to managers and employees. It is a prepackaged workbook containing the materials individuals need to complete steps within the Job Crafting Exercise. It has been used by a variety of companies such as Google, Logitech, and VMware (Giang, 2016). The job crafting exercise is a two-hour workshop aimed at guiding participants through a "Before Sketch" and an "After Diagram." The workshop was condensed to one hour for this research study. The "Before Sketch" allows participants an opportunity to assess how their time and energy is spent at work. The "After Diagram" helps participants detect how to craft a more ideal, yet realistic, version of their job. The workshop concludes by having participants create an Action Plan to make the "After Diagram" a reality. The workshop was delivered by the researcher who is internal to the organization.

Sample

To recruit participants for this study, purposive sampling was used due to the nature of the research design and study aims. Research was conducted at the researcher's organization, an information technology company in the Southeast. The research sample was limited to employees located in the Birmingham, Alabama office, who also report to a manager in the Birmingham, Alabama office.

An initial recruitment email was sent to 103 individuals. The target sample population was six managers and six subordinates, with 12 total research participants. 18 respondents indicated an interest in participating. Managers of the 18 respondents were contacted and told at least one of their subordinates indicated an interest in participating in the study. They were then asked if they were interested in participating alongside their subordinate. Thus, eight managers and eight subordinates were recruited, for 16 total research participants.

The target goal for the research population was to have representation from a variety of functional areas across the business. Five of the eight managers were director level middle managers, spanning human resources, sales, and business process divisions. Three of the eight managers were executive level managers. The eight subordinates represented public cloud, enterprise and commercial sales, marketing, and human resources divisions.

Data Collection Procedures

Data was collected using the survey issued to all participants three weeks following the intervention. The survey was issued via email. The email to participating managers contained a unique link to an open-ended, four question survey managed in the internet platform SurveyMonkey. The email to participating subordinates contained a separate unique link to an open-ended, four question survey also managed in SurveyMonkey. Survey questions are provided in Table 1 and 2 below. Participants were told the survey would take approximately 15 minutes to complete and were given 10 days to complete the survey.

Table 1.

Job Crafting Exercise Survey Questions: Managers

Survey Question Number	Survey Question
Q1	Describe your experience of doing the Job Crafting Exercise with your subordinate.
Q2	What did you learn about your subordinate through co-participating in the Job Crafting Exercise?
Q3	Has anything changed in the way you and your subordinate work together since co-participating in the Job Crafting Exercise? If so, what and how?
Q4	In what ways did this exercise help you understand how your subordinate is motivated?

Table 2.

Job Crafting Exercise Survey Questions: Subordinates

Survey Question Number	Survey Question
Q1	Describe your experience of doing the Job Crafting Exercise with your manager.
Q2	How did co-participation in the Job Crafting Exercise impact the way you do your work? (For example: the tasks you perform, your interactions, with others, and/or how you view your job)
Q3	Has anything changed in the way you and your manager work together since co-participation in the Job Crafting Exercise? If so, what and how has it changed?
Q4	Do you feel more motivated? If so, what would you attribute that to?

The questions included on the subordinate and managerial surveys correspond to the study's research questions. Table 3 illustrates the relationship between the survey questions and the research questions.

Table 3.

Correlation Between Research Questions & Survey Questions

Research Question	Subordinate Survey, Manager Survey, or Both	Question Number	Question
1. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence changes in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job?	Subordinate	Q2	How did co-participation in the Job Crafting Exercise impact the way you do your work? (For example: the tasks you perform, your interactions, with others, and/or how you view your job)
2. What can managers learn about their subordinates through co-participation in a job crafting intervention?	Manager	Q2	What did you learn about your subordinate through co-participating in the Job Crafting Exercise?
3. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention impact the way managers and subordinates work together?	Both	Subordinate: Q3 Manager: Q3	**Subordinate**: Has anything changed in the way you and your manager work together since co-participation in the Job Crafting Exercise? If so, what and how has it changed? **Manager**: Has anything changed in the way you and your subordinate work together since co-participating in the Job Crafting Exercise? If so, what and how?
4. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence motivation?	Both	Subordinate: Q4 Manager: Q4	**Subordinate**: Do you feel more motivated? If so, what would you attribute that to? **Manager**: In what ways did this exercise help you understand how your subordinate is motivated?

Data Analysis Procedures

Because this research study was qualitative, narrative data was analyzed using content analysis. Each of the survey responses were recorded and saved. Each respondent was classified as manager or subordinate and assigned a corresponding question number. The responses were read and reviewed multiple times, and the researcher recorded impressions throughout the content analysis process. The focus of the analysis began by looking at individual responses to the survey questions, and then in context of the two groups: managerial responses and subordinate responses. Themes were identified from the narrative data, and emergent categories were constructed from the themes.

Summary

This chapter outlined the research methodology used in the study. The purpose of the study and research questions were restated. The research design, sample, population, protection of human subjects provided an explanation of the measures taken to conduct the action research. A description of the instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis summarizes the tools and procedures used during the research study. The findings are presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter presents the findings of this research study based on the open-ended survey responses from managers and subordinates who participated in the Job Crafting Exercise.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore managerial perceptions of employee motivation. Four research questions were used to frame the survey questions and subsequent data analysis. The research questions are:

1. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence changes in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job?

2. What can managers learn about their subordinates through co-participation in a job crafting intervention?

3. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention impact the way managers and subordinates work together?

4. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence motivation?

This chapter is organized by research question, and the corresponding findings emerging from the data collected.

Changing Boundaries in Subordinate's Job: How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence changes in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job? To answer the first research question, responses from the subordinate surveys were analyzed to determine what changes may have

occurred in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job from co-participation in a job crafting intervention. In Table 4, the themes are presented, along with excerpts taken directly from the subordinate surveys. The number of respondents contributing to each theme are recorded in the table. Three main categories emerged: (a) working with others (i.e., working with team members, communicating with others, working with manager); (b) awareness (i.e., awareness around tasks, likes/dislikes, feelings, purpose of tasks, perspective); and (c) focus and goals (i.e., focus, achieving goals, overall objective).

Table 4.
Influence of a Job Crafting Intervention on Changing Boundaries in Subordinate's Job

Theme	Excerpt	N
Working with Others		6
Team goals Inclusion of team members Communication with others Working with manager Sparked discussion	"…doing it with my boss gave me the chance to share those thoughts with him which was really great."	
Awareness		5
Tasks Job likes/dislikes Personal feelings about job Purpose of tasks Perspective Big picture	"It really gave me the opportunity to sit down and evaluate the portions of my job that I like and don't really care for…which I had never really thought about before that."	
Focus & Goals		3
Focus Achieve goals Focus on overall objective Team members in setting goals	"I'm more focused now on how the things I'm doing now can help me achieve my and my team's broader goals."	

N = 8

  Working with Others. Six subordinate respondents mentioned working with others as a change influenced by co-participation in a job crafting intervention.

Respondents described working with others in language reflective of including others (i.e., team members), sparking discussion and further conversation with their manager, and communication with other employees. Two respondents referred to working with others specifically in the exercise of setting and achieving goals. One respondent noted, "It helped me to remember to include the other team members, not just myself or my manager, in the exercise of setting my goals and targets." An emphasis on communication and discussion emerged in the data, both in the context of conversing with other employees and with managers.

Awareness. Five subordinate respondents alluded to a greater sense of awareness or a perspective shift as a change influenced by co-participation in a job crafting intervention. The language respondents used reflected a newfound perspective on the tasks composing their job role. One respondent wrote, "It made me more aware of my daily tasks and how they fit into a greater whole. Sometimes work just becomes a bunch of daily tasks, and it's easy to lose sight of the bigger picture." The revelation about tasks also extended to a greater purpose in tasks, with one respondent recounting how tasks which are annoying and seemingly unimportant to him or her actually help his or her manager. Another respondent described a perspective shift on the nature of small tasks: "It helped me see the big picture a little more clearly so that when I work on small tasks, I can still focus on the overall objective that I worked with my manager to identify." Finally, one respondent described how co-participation in a job crafting intervention gave them greater insight about their personal feelings regarding their job:

> It really gave me the opportunity to sit down and evaluate the portions of my job that I like and don't really care for or what I would like to do more of, which I had never really thought about before that…It shed a lot of light on why I feel the

way I do about my job some days and possible ways I can improve my attitude and work life.

Focus and Goals. Several subordinate respondents mentioned an increased focus and attention to goals as a change influenced by co-participation in a job crafting intervention. Multiple respondents refer to the job crafting intervention highlighting actions of setting and achieving personal and team goals. One respondent wrote, "I'm more focused now on how the things I'm doing now can help me achieve my and my team's broader goals."

The word "focus" was used three times in respondents' reflections. The first instance of the word focus indicated this individual's deliberate intention to connect his or her work to his or her team's goals. The second instance of the word focus reflected the respondent's new attentiveness to the overall objective, rather than isolating work to small tasks. The third instance of the word focus described how the respondents' tasks enable his or her manager to achieve greater focus.

Discovery: What can managers learn about their subordinates through co participation in a job crafting intervention? To answer the second research question, responses from the managerial surveys were analyzed to depict the ways managers can learn about their subordinates through co-participation in a job crafting intervention. Table 5 points out the major themes which emerged, with excerpts taken directly from the managerial surveys. The number of respondents contributing to each theme are recorded in Table 5. Three main categories emerged: (a) knowledge about task and time (i.e., enjoyment of and interest in task; time allocation; work prioritization); (b)

subordinate's feelings (i.e., confidence; cares; aspirations); and (c) alignment (i.e., how elements such as values and passions are aligned with tasks).

Table 5.

Managerial Discoveries About Subordinates

Theme	Excerpt	N
Knowledge About Task and Time		5
Enjoyment of tasks Time allocation Varying task interests How prioritizes work Preference on where to focus efforts	"I was pleased to hear that they enjoy many of the tasks they do with their job."	
Subordinate's Feelings		5
Confidence Cares Aspirations Preferences Greater understanding - values, passions, strengths Motivations	"I learned they have confidence in themselves and their abilities to do their job successfully."	
Alignment		2
Values, passions, and work tasks	"I learned more about her passions, values and strengths than I realized before. It helped me to think about how those align with the role she is in."	

N = 8

Knowledge About Task and Time. Five out of seven managerial respondents noted learning various things regarding their subordinate's task preferences and time allocation. Two respondents commented they learned how their subordinate spent their time and how they prioritized their work. One respondent wrote, "I learned…where she

would prefer to focus her efforts." In regard to task interest, one manager reported the insight, "The biggest lesson learned is just because certain tasks don't get me excited, it doesn't mean others (in this case my subordinate) don't get excited about them." Another respondent expressed, "I was pleased to hear that they enjoy many of the task they do with their job."

Subordinate's Feelings. Five out of seven managerial respondents described learning new things about their subordinate's feelings as a result of co-participating in a job crafting intervention. One manager respondent reported learning of his or her subordinate's self-confidence. Another manager gained insight into his or her subordinate's "real care about and her career and family aspirations." In addition to learning about direct report's self-possession and personal goals, one manager acquired a greater understanding "about her passions, values and strengths than I realized before." Two managers also described learning more about their subordinate's preferences as a result of the intervention, with one manager specifically referring to preferences as to where "to focus her efforts."

Alignment. A few managerial respondents reflected new realizations about how their subordinate's values align with their role as a result of co-participating in a job crafting intervention. One manager commented, "A lot of what I learned really just validated what I knew or suspected. It was very gratifying to learn that my subordinate's values, passions, and work tasks are all well aligned." Similarly, another manager expressed learning more about their subordinate's passions, values, and strengths, and that "helped me to think about how those align with the role she is in."

Working Together: How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention impact the way managers and subordinates work together? To answer the third research question, responses from both the managerial and subordinate surveys were analyzed to demonstrate how co-participation in a job crafting intervention impacted the way subordinates and managers work together. This section highlights the themes arising from both sets of survey responses.

Manager Responses. Seven out of eight managers who participated in the job crafting intervention answered this question. Table 6 illustrates the emerging themes, with excerpts taken directly from the manager surveys. The number of respondents mentioning each theme are recorded in the table. Two main categories emerged: (a) manager's awareness (i.e., appreciation, empathy, perspective); and (b) planning and tasks (i.e., focus, aligning tasks to values).

Table 6.

Impact of Job Crafting Intervention According to Manager Respondents

Theme	Excerpt	N
Awareness		3
Appreciation Greater understanding - subordinate's passions Perspective	"Now that I better understand my subordinate's top passions…"	
Planning & Tasks		5
Strategic focus - subordinate's aspirations Changing tasks - to align with values	"We also are focusing on tilting her daily duties more towards more valued work as pointed out during the Job Crafting Exercise."	

N = 8

Awareness. Multiple managerial respondents reflected concepts of awareness in their response to the impact the job crafting intervention had on their working relationship with their subordinate. After stating, "I appreciate their role and contribution more," one manager went on to say, "The exercise caused me to think about their role, expectations, and contributions from their perspective, something I don't often do." Another manager echoed a similar sentiment, noting they now better understood their subordinate's top passions. Illustrating a perspective shift that occurred, one manager respondent wrote, "Yes! I am looking at Marketing in a very different way these days…"

Planning and Tasks. Multiple managerial respondents mentioned the intentional actions they either had taken or would take as a result of co-participating in a job crafting intervention with their subordinate. One manager reported,

> Yes. We have her career and home aspirations front and center as we plan our week, month, and year. We are also focusing on titling her daily duties more towards more valued work as pointed out during the Job Crafting Exercise.

Another manager wrote that he or she was using the knowledge gained about his or her subordinate's top passions "to increase the opportunities they have to work in those areas as we head into 20xx." One manager mentioned he or she was "making changes to a few areas to make the department more meaningful to the company." Another manager expressed similar innovation stating, "We are trying new things to alter her approach so that she can get her job done and be effective without getting stuck and feeling frustrated."

Subordinate Responses. All eight subordinates who participated in a job crafting intervention answered this question. Table 7 illustrates the emerging themes,

with excerpts taken directly from the subordinate surveys. The number of respondents mentioning each theme are recorded in the table. Four main categories emerged: (a) no change (i.e., nothing has changed in the way the manager and subordinate work together since co-participating in a job crafting intervention); (b) good working relationship (i.e., expressions of how they have a positive working relationship with their manager); (c) created opportunities (i.e., conversation, better understanding, foundation); and (d) provided clarity (time and task allocation).

Table 7.

Impact of Job Crafting Intervention According to Subordinate Respondents

Theme	Excerpt	N
No change		5
Good working relationship		5
Good at communicating Always worked well together Great relationship before Worked well together Really good working relationship	"We have always been good at communicating on a regular basis."	
Created opportunities		3
Continue conversation Better understanding Foundation laid	"…I expect the conversation that was started in the Job Crafting Exercise will continue…"	
Provided clarity		2
Identify time allocation Validation of task and time allocation	"I guess it helped us both more clearly identify what I should be spending most of my time doing."	

N = 8

No Change. In response to the impact of the job crafting intervention on the manager and subordinate's working relationship, five out of eight subordinate respondents included the words "no," "not really," "not much," or "not anything" to describe the lack of change in their working relationship three weeks following the intervention. One subordinate respondent said, "it's still a little easy [researcher assumes the word early was meant here] to say since it has only been a few weeks."

Good Working Relationship. Five out of eight subordinate respondents made explicit, positive remarks about their working relationship with their manager irrespective of the job crafting intervention. One respondent emphasized the good quality and frequent communication they have with their manager. Two out of the eight subordinate respondents said, "we always worked well together" and "we already worked well together," continuing on to say "…and have always been open about workload, challenges, and desired types of work." Two out of eight subordinate respondents used similar phrasing to describe the positive relationship they have with their manager. One subordinate stated, "we have a really good working relationship," and another, "No [in reference to the research question]. But we had a great relationship before, so that's not to say the exercise wasn't a great one!"

Created Opportunities. In response to changes in the way subordinates and managers work together following co-participation in a job crafting intervention, three out of eight subordinate respondents referred to the experience as creating opportunities, either presently or for the future. One subordinate respondent mentioned "…my performance review is coming up, so I expect the conversation that was started in the Job Crafting Exercise will continue a bit in that." Another subordinate respondent reflected

that the intervention, "…gave us both a better understanding of our values, goals, etc."
and another recounted, "a foundation has been laid that will help in the future."

Provided Clarity. Two out of eight subordinate respondents mentioned that co-participating in a job crafting intervention helped provide clarity in regards to time allocation and tasks. One subordinate respondent wrote, "I guess it helped us both more clearly identify what I should be spending most of my time doing." After acknowledging their really good working relationship, another subordinate respondent reflected, "…this exercise provided great validation for both of us that I was working on the correct tasks and spending my time appropriately."

Influence on Motivation: How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence motivation? To answer the fourth research question, responses from both the subordinate and managerial surveys were analyzed to represent how co-participation in a job crafting intervention influences motivation. This section expounds upon the themes emerging from both sets of survey responses.

Manager Responses. Seven out of eight managers who participated in a job crafting intervention with their subordinate answered this question. Table 8 illustrates the emerging themes, with excerpts taken directly from the manager surveys. The number of respondents contributing to each theme are recorded in the table. Two main categories emerged: (a) insight into subordinate's perspective (i.e., self-perception, passions, values); and (b) created dialogue (i.e., dialogue, communication).

Table 8.

Influence of a Job Crafting Intervention on Subordinate's Motivation According to

Manager Respondents

Theme	Excerpt	N
Insight into Subordinate's Perspective		5
Self-perception Passions, values, responsibilities Uncover motivators	"It caused me to think more about how they see their role, contribution, and growth here."	
Created dialogue		2
Open communication Dialogue about motivations	"It's all about open up communication and this exercise did that for us."	

N = 8

Insight into Subordinate's Perspective. In response to how the job crafting intervention helped managers understand how their subordinate is motivated, five out of seven managerial respondents mentioned that the experience provided insight into their subordinate's perspective. One manager noted,

> It really helped me to understand and see their passions, values, and responsibilities from their perspective. It's now easier for me to look at their job through their lens as opposed to my own. This will help me better align them with their passions, which will benefit both them and the company.

One managerial respondent wrote that the exercise helped him or her understand his or her subordinate's perceptions. Another managerial respondent referred to the exercise revealing new insight about his or her subordinate's passions: "It helped me see

that teaching others is a passion. While I am looking for task to be completed, she wants to understand how those tasks help others."

Create dialogue. Regarding how co-participation in a job crafting intervention helped managers understand how their subordinates are motivated, two out of seven managerial respondents mentioned that the experience created dialogue with their employee. One manager wrote,

> In every way. Motivation is a difficult thing to capture and feed. This exercise was perfect in uncovering my subordinates motivators and creating a dialogue about how to tap into them. It's all about opening up communication and this exercise did that for us.

Another manager noted,

> In Sales, it's sometimes assumed that all sales people are motivated by money. That may be generally true to an extent, however, each of my reps are motivated by other factors. Hearing about those motivations through the Job Crafting exercise was helpful to better relate to my employee.

Subordinate Responses. All eight subordinates who participated in a job crafting intervention with their manager answered this question. In response to the question, "Do you feel more motivated?" seven out of eight subordinates indicated they felt more motivated by responding with "I do" or "Yes." The latter half of the question, "If so, what would you attribute that to" is addressed in the following section.

Table 9 illustrates the emerging themes, with excerpts taken directly from the subordinate surveys. The number of respondents contributing to each theme are recorded in the table. Three main categories emerged: (a) greater understanding (i.e., surrounding focus, goals, preferences.); (b) sense of empowerment (i.e., increased commitment, confirmation, fulfilling work); and (c) interaction with manager (i.e., managerial involvement and assurance).

Table 9.

Influence of a Job Crafting Intervention on Subordinate's Motivation According to

Subordinates

Theme	Excerpt	N
Greater Understanding		3
Focus Actions and goals Preferences Time allocation Analysis and language	"…I now have more focus and a clearer picture of how my actions play into bigger goals for myself and my team."	
Sense of Empowerment		4
Increased commitment Confirmation Fulfilling work Meaningful work Confidence Big picture	"Because I can see where I a spending my time and confirms on what I love about my job."	
Interaction with Manager		2
Managerial involvement Managerial assurance	"…the main factor is having my manager involved and actively interested in my goals, values and needs."	

N = 8

Greater understanding. Several subordinate respondents indicated the cause of their increased sense of motivation to be greater understanding. One subordinate respondent reported greater focus and clarity regarding both personal and team goals. Another subordinate reflected, "I have a better idea of what parts of my job I enjoy more." Another individual echoed this sentiment by describing greater understanding related to how he or she is spending his or her time. One respondent noted the job

crafting intervention helped them "put high-level thoughts and words to it [it meaning fulfilling work]."

Sense of empowerment. Four out of eight subordinate respondents implied a sense of empowerment when reflecting on an increased level of motivation. One subordinate respondent wrote that his or her newfound focus and understanding of personal and team goals "motivates me to delve a bit deeper into my job and go the extra mile when I can." Another respondent reported that understanding his or her time allocation "confirms on what I love about my job." The subordinate respondent who wrote the job crafting intervention helped them "put high-level thoughts and words to it" went on to say, "so that in the future, I can be more focused on making sure my work is meaningful to me and others."

Interaction with manager. Two subordinate respondents indicated a greater sense of motivation following the job crafting intervention because of the interaction generated with his or her manager. One subordinate wrote,

> I think the boost in motivation is mostly attributed to the fact that I have my manager's assurance that I'm working on what he wants me to work on and that we have addressed some of the tasks that I don't particularly like or think I spend too much time on. In those instances, I feel more confident now in how to handle them or see the bigger picture of why they're important (or not).

> Another subordinate noted, "…the main factor is having my manager involved and

actively interested in my goals, values and needs. This helps motivate me."

Summary

This chapter described the findings of the qualitative data gathered from 15 managerial and subordinate surveys following their co-participation in a job crafting

intervention. The main objective behind the survey questions was to answer the four research study questions. Content analysis was used to code responses into relevant themes and categories. The interpretation of the findings are discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore managerial perceptions of employee motivation. This qualitative study employed a job crafting intervention at the researcher's organization, where managers and subordinates co-participated in a 1-hour version of the Job Crafting Exercise. The purposive sample consisted of eight managers and eight subordinates. Three weeks following the exercise, managers and subordinates were each issued a survey requesting they describe their experience of co-participation in the Job Crafting Exercise with their respective manager or subordinate. The four questions on each survey were modeled after the four research questions.

This research study had four chief objectives guiding the research design, data collection and analysis, and resulting findings:

1. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence changes in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job?

2. What can managers learn about their subordinates through co-participation in a job crafting intervention?

3. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention impact the way managers and subordinates work together?

4. How does co-participation in a job crafting intervention influence motivation?

Building on the findings presented in Chapter 4, this chapter brings the research study to a close by summarizing the major findings, exploring the implications for organizational life and organization development practitioners, the study limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Interpretation of Findings

This section discusses the main findings of the data collected during the research study and presents interpretations of the meaning of the data. Data analysis was conducted by way of content analysis, noting and arranging managerial and subordinate survey comments into pertinent themes and categories. Conclusions were drawn for all four research questions, while also considering the existing literature within the management and organization development field. This section presents an interpretation of the findings, organized by the four research questions.

Changing Boundaries in a Subordinate's Job. To answer the first research question, responses from the subordinate surveys were analyzed to determine the influence co-participating in a job crafting intervention with their manager had on changing the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job. The three theme categories emerging from the subordinate responses possessed striking alignment with the three dimensions composing the Job Crafting Exercise: cognitive crafting, task crafting, and relational crafting. This can be seen in Table 10.

Table 10.

Relationship Between Theme Categories and Job Crafting Exercise Dimensions

Categories Emerging from the Data	Job Crafting Exercise Dimensions
Working with Others	Relational Crafting
Awareness	Cognitive Crafting
Focus & Goals	Task Crafting

Six subordinate respondents noted the job crafting intervention influenced changes in how they worked with others, including team members, their manager, and employees across the organization. This evidences what job crafting termed relational crafting, where employees alter their level of interaction with others. The idea that job crafting extends beyond the individual and influences other employees within the organization is largely supported in the existing job crafting literature (Bakker, Rodríguez-Muñoz, & Sanz Vergel, 2016; Tims, Bakker, Derks & Rhenen; 2013).

Five subordinate respondents indicated a greater level of personal awareness or increased perspective as a change influenced by the job crafting intervention. Many subordinate respondents mentioned a greater awareness of how their tasks fit within a larger picture, and one respondent described how the job crafting intervention provided them an opportunity to discern job likes and dislikes for the first time. The perception shift described in subordinate respondents resembles what job crafting calls cognitive crafting. These findings support examples found in Wrzesniewski and Dutton's (2001) original research, where female design engineers redefined their work identity from task executioners, to preservers, empowerment givers, and team creators, and restaurant kitchen employees from food preparers to culinary artists.

A few subordinates highlighted increased level of focus and greater attention to goals as changes influenced by the job crafting intervention. This finding refers to the ways individuals alter their tasks to make work more fulfilling by way of what job crafting terms task crafting. The job crafting research integrates theories of job design and social information processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), showing tasks are not objective, but socially constructed. Job crafters "interpret and use as feedback the

crafting actions they've taken in their own jobs" (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 188).

The findings of this research study support the notion that tasks are socially constructed, as the intervention intentionally involved both managers and subordinates in the Job Crafting Exercise. Subordinates were given time to discuss their actual and desired tasks with their manager during the job crafting intervention. The findings also validate the existing research showing feedback from others has a positive effect on the individual's effectiveness task crafting (Bizzi, 2016). Based on these premises, it is clear co-participation in a job crafting intervention influences changes in the task, relational, and cognitive boundaries of a subordinate's job.

Managerial Discoveries About Subordinates. To answer the second research question, responses from the managerial surveys were studied to understand what managers might learn about subordinates through co-participation in a job crafting intervention. The study clearly found managers gained a greater sense of a subordinate's task and time interests, as well as greater insight into their subordinate's feelings.

Changes in the Ways Managers and Subordinates Work Together. To answer the third research question, data was collected from both managerial and subordinate surveys regarding changes in the ways managers and subordinates work together. According to managerial respondents, the findings clearly indicated that the job crafting intervention prompted subsequent managerial action. Managerial respondents referenced changes in planning with subordinates, as well as increasing the subordinate's opportunities to work within newfound areas of interest. The co-participation in a job crafting intervention also produced a greater sense of awareness about subordinates according to managerial respondents. As a result of gaining greater insight into their

employees, managers reported greater appreciation, empathy, and a changed perspective on the survey three weeks after the intervention.

Interestingly, the majority of subordinate respondents (five out of eight) reflected no change occurred in the way they and their manager worked together since co-participation in a job crafting intervention. In fact, five respondents took the opportunity to describe the positive qualities in their relationship with their manager. Subordinate respondents instead described how the job crafting intervention has and is creating opportunities for them in their working relationship with their manager. The findings also indicated increased clarity between managers and subordinates over the subordinate's time allocation and task prioritization.

Understanding Subordinates' Motivation. To answer the fourth research question, data was gathered from both managerial and subordinate surveys to assess the influence the job crafting intervention had on understanding subordinate's motivation. Managers were asked how the exercise helped them understand how their subordinate is motivated, and subordinates were asked if they felt more motivated, and if so, what they would attribute that to. The study found the majority of managers gained insight into their subordinate's perspective as a result of co-participation in a job crafting intervention. Managers described how the exercise helped them consider their subordinate's job from their point of view, and the things their subordinate was passionate about. Managerial respondents reported that the dialogue the job crafting intervention created with their subordinate helped uncover motivators, and how they might "tap into them."

The subordinate study results strongly indicated co-participation in a job crafting intervention led to increased levels of motivation among subordinates. Subordinate respondents attributed their renewed motivation to greater understanding, a sense of empowerment, and the interaction they had with their manager. The job crafting intervention provided the necessary conditions for subordinates to gain greater focus, clarity, and self-awareness, leading to increased motivation, confirmation, assurance, and confidence.

Implications

This research study contributes to the field of organization development by building upon the existing literature concerning employee motivation, while also adding notable contributions to the role managers play in influencing and gaining insight into subordinate's motivations. The intention of this study was to bring employee motivation to light in the working relationship between manager and employee. As the literature notes, far too often managers make assumptions about employee motivations (Kovach, 1987; Lindahl, 1949). This study sought to provide employees an opportunity to surface their authentic motivators in the company of their manager and co-create an action plan to make their "After Diagram" a reality. As a result of co-participating in a job crafting intervention, seven out of eight subordinates indicated they felt more motivated after completing the job crafting intervention. This has great implications for organizations interested in seeking to develop managerial relationships and understanding employee motivation.

This study expounds upon the existing job crafting literature by introducing a new application of the job crafting exercise. Job crafting is an accepted, growing approach to

bottom-up job design techniques. Job crafting has been traditionally delivered to and for individuals, with recent research extending the literature regarding the effects others have on job crafting effectiveness (Van Wingerden, Bakker, & Derks 2017; Wrzesniewski, 2003), and job crafting and teams (Bakker, Rodríguez-Muñoz, & Sanz Vergel, 2016; Tims, Bakker, Derks & Rhenen, 2013). However, at the time of this study, no existing research was located that directly involved managers in the employee's experience of completing the job crafting exercise. This study pioneered a novel research design where a job crafting intervention was delivered to manager and subordinate pairs. This contribution to the job crafting literature may afford scholars and practitioners new opportunities to expand the way job crafting is approached in organizations.

Limitations of Study

This research study has several mentionable limitations.

1. Researcher bias. At the time the study was conducted, the researcher was an employee within the organization. Potential bias or subjectivity by being a part of the fabric of the organizational culture are acknowledged.

2. Small sample size. The sample size of the research study was small, with eight participating managers and eight subordinates, for a total of 16 participants in one organization. As a qualitative study seeking to report rich, contextualized understanding of the human experience, the reality that this study was conducted with only one firm introduces the possibility for generalizability issues.

3.   Self-selected sample. The population was self-selected: subordinates indicated

an interest in participating, managers were then notified they had a subordinate

interested in participating (subordinate name not disclosed), and then managers

indicated if they were interested in participating. Self-selection increases the

likelihood that the participating manager and subordinate pairs already got

along. This small sample of participants may not reflect the broader population

of managers and subordinates in the study organization. Having a larger

sample size would have provided a greater amount of data to understand at a

more in-depth level the impact of the job crafting intervention on motivation.

Considering the size and maturity of the study organization and the purview of

the study, the findings may have limited applicability across other

organizations.

Recommendations for Future Research

One recommendation for future research is researchers could expand upon this

study by incorporating a pre-survey prior to the job crafting intervention. In the pre-

survey, managers could be asked to describe what they believe motivates their employee

and subordinates could be asked what motivates them. This would not only provide a

baseline analysis of either the accuracy or gaps in perceived motivation among managers

going into the intervention, but it would also reveal valuable data compared with a post-

survey to examine if motivational factors remained the same or changed.

A second recommendation to deepen the research findings would be to select an

alternate methodology. While much qualitative research has been conducted related to

job crafting, little quantitative research literature exists (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012).

A quantitative study could be conducted, asking managers to rank what they perceive motivates their employees, and subordinates could rank what motivational factors are actually motivating. Additionally, this study could be replicated, but the researcher could conduct interviews instead of data collection through surveys. If the data was collected using this methodology, the researcher could then prompt participants to describe their answers in greater detail and provide examples to further substantiate their thoughts.

Finally, a third recommendation for future research would be to expand the scope of the sample and research organization(s). This study used purposive sampling within the researcher's organization for convenience purposes. It would be advisable to have a much larger sample and the participation of multiple firms to deepen the findings. A further study could explore the effect of a job crafting intervention on managerial perceptions of employee motivation across variables in the research organization such as: industry, tenure of managers, quantity and quality of manager development programs, and evidence of managerial coaching.

Summary

A subject of psychological and organizational research for many years, the study of motivation continues to reveal motivational factors are specific to the individual. Managers have made assumptions about how individuals are motivated, only to find their perceptions are not always correct. Rather than bequeathing the responsibility of motivation to managers or organization leaders with traditional top-down job design approaches, the growing field of job crafting offers employees an alternative way to find greater levels of satisfaction and fulfillment at work through the bottom-up approach of job crafting. The findings of this research study suggest involving a manager in their

subordinate's experience of the job crafting exercise leads to greater managerial insight

and resulting action, and an increase in employee motivation.

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Appendix A: Protection of Human Subjects

Approval to conduct this study was obtained through the Pepperdine Institutional Review Board in November 2017, and by the research organization's Director of Human Resources in January 2018. The researcher also completed Human Subjects training online through the National Institute of Health of Extramural Research. The invitation to participate in each phase of the research, the intervention, and the survey, contained clear messages about the voluntary nature of participation. No financial incentives were offered to participants who agreed to be involved, nor were there any seeming risks.