

# **THE RELATIONSHIP OF PERFORMANCE AND PERSONAL FACTORS IN JOB CRAFTING**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This study is about the concept of job crafting. Job crafting represents individual work and job change that is not revealed to management and does not include management in decision making. Fundamentally, employees are choosing to engage in a form of shadow job-redesign that may or may not run counter to what management desires.

The purposes of this study focus on two distinct yet related areas: the relationship of reported job crafting behavior to supervisor assessment of individual performance, and the exploration of individual factors that may drive individual interest towards engaging in job crafting behavior. There has been little research completed on job crafting, in general, and virtually no research on the relationship between the concept and job performance.

The research questions that this study addresses are: (a) is there a relationship between job performance (success on the job) and one's self-report of engaging in job crafting behavior; (b) what are some of the features of job crafting activity in a sample of employees; (c) what forms does job crafting take in the particular context studied; and (d) what behavioral stimuli or drivers may serve to motivate or propel the behavior? With regard to this last item, the work of Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) suggests that three variables: belonging, self-esteem, and perceived control, help to explain the motives of individuals engaged in actual job crafting behavior. In this study these three variables serve as a starting place to examine some of the possible antecedents of job crafting.

There are practical implications of this research as it may influence both future research and management practice. First, it is helpful to reinforce, empirically, that job crafting does take place on the job, and that it may be related to overall job performance. Second, it is desirable to ascertain indications of the quantity and characteristics of the behavior as this information would likely add credibility to the concept and support theory-building.

## **BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH**

**The Concept of Job Crafting.** In their work, Wrzesniewski & Dutton (2001, p. 179) define job crafting as, . . . the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work. There is the aspect of modifying the cognitive, relationship 'doing' part of a job purely for affecting performance and results. There is also the aspect that relates to one's identity with the job, that is, the relationship of one's self with the job. Part of a person's social identity is shaped by their work and this relationship has been widely demonstrated in the literature (for example, Brief & Nord, 1990; Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999).

For purposes of this exploratory study, job crafting has occurred when an individual initiates a change in the task or relational features of their work that is intended to be relatively permanent that is, on-going, and that serves some personal interest or need that may or may not benefit others or the organization. It is thought and action-based.

Job crafting represents another dimension of work (behavior) and by implication, relates to motivation, job involvement, work identity, job satisfaction, extra-role behavior, personal autonomy and related constructs. Job crafting provides an outlet for individual creativity and may be categorized as a form of extra-role behavior on the job, that is, activity that extends beyond the formal requirements of work.

In terms of extra-role behavior, the research that does exist regarding the concept of job crafting reinforces the organizational citizenship behavior [OCB] conceptualization as many job crafting episodes reported in the literature to date are in the service of others or the organization.

The most material difference between OCB and job crafting is that OCB is aimed primarily at individual behavior that is enacted in the service of others and/or the organization, while job crafting is aimed at personal needs. Further, OCB is often episodic in nature and usually is not made part of an individual's continuing job role. These features create real differences in the two concepts.

The existing literature gives very little specific information with regards to the frequency and amount of job crafting behavior that might take place in a work setting. In reflection of the work of Wrzesniewski & Dutton (2001) and others, this paper takes the position that many, if not most, employees do at some time, engage in what is defined here as job crafting behavior. It seems reasonable to proceed with the notion that some baseline frequency marker should be explored. To this end the following hypothesis is expressed:

Hypothesis 1 – in the sample selected for study, approximately 40 per cent of the employees will report having engaged in some form of job crafting behavior in the past 12 months.

**Personal Interest, Motivation, and Antecedents.** In their analysis of research that describes changes in work, Wrzesniewski & Dutton (2001) conclude that three needs probably supply the motivation for such changes. First, is the basic need for control or mastery. The idea is that some people desire to make part of their work their own, that is, they wish to have more personal control over the work. Second, in order to enhance their self-esteem, some people desire to create a positive view or sense of self in their work. In terms of social identity theory as explained by Ashforth & Mael, (1989), people want positive images of work in their own eyes and in the eyes of others, hence they make changes in the work that they believe make the work more attractive. Finally, changes in jobs are made to establish linkages or connections with others to address needs of belonging or connectedness.

There is research related to the foregoing ideas. The socioanalytic theory of Hogan and Warrenfeltz (2003) supports these (need-based) assertions as they have argued that people have innate biological needs for (a) status, power, and control of resources; (b) acceptance and approval; and (c) order and predictability. Frese & Fay (2001) report that people will take initiative at work if they believe it will result in having more control. And Parker (1998) has argued that acquiring new skills and mastering new responsibilities help to enable personal autonomy.

The work of Schmitt, Cortina, Ingerick, & Wiechmann, (2003), which offers a more trait-based view of motivation in the work environment, supports the assertions as well by concluding that extroversion, tenacity, and self-regulatory characteristics, among others, are predictors of motivation. Adjunct to these interpretations and depending on intention and/or outcomes of job crafting, the result of the behavior could mirror organizational citizenship behavior [OCB] as exemplified in the work of Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine & Bachrach, (2000). In addition, behavior that leads to some work/job modifications may help an individual to accept other, or cope better with less desirable aspects of their work activities that are not readily open to job crafting.

There are two additional concepts that relate to the matter of antecedents or motives for the engagement in job crafting behavior and they are proactive behavior and personal initiative. These concepts have received much recent attention in the literature. In terms of definition and classification, it may be possible to include within one or both of these concepts the behavior we have labeled, job crafting. Crant (2000) has suggested that proactive behavior may have broad impact in an organization and thus may be regarded as a high leverage concept as contrasted with just another fad of management. At the individual level, proactive behavior in an organization is usually a form of self-initiated, future-oriented action that is attempting to create improvements in current conditions or oneself (see, Crant, 2000; Unsworth & Parker, 2003). It is about change, at the least.

The second related concept is what Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel (1996) have labeled personal initiative. This is defined as behavior that is basically self-starting (that is, it is not an explicit requirement of the job; it is doing a thing without being told to do it); persistent (overcoming some obstacles to create change), and proactive. In the collective, Frese and Fay (2001) refer to this group of actions as “active performance concepts” because the concepts suggest that workers develop their own goals, and take actions that go beyond the tasks assigned to them by management.

For our purposes in this paper, the position is taken that in the context of a job, the behavior of job crafting is a more specific term that either of the above two concepts although job crafting behavior is certainly proactive in nature and it includes the individual exercising personal initiative. In concluding this section on the motivation and antecedents of job crafting behavior, the following three related yet distinct hypotheses are offered. Job crafting behavior will be positively and significantly related to:

Hypothesis 2 A – need for belonging,  
Hypothesis 2 B – need for control, and  
Hypothesis 2 C – need for self-esteem.

**Performance and Job Crafting.** The work of Wrzesniewski & Dutton (2001) did not directly address the matter of the relationship of engaging in job crafting behavior and job performance and this relationship requires some attention. If positive outcomes are achieved as a result of job crafting, then the encouragement and/or reinforcement of job crafting could be desirable. There is some research supportive of this idea. For example, Conti & Warner (2002) propose a model that encourages work that maximizes the use of the worker's judgment, knowledge, creativity, intelligence and initiative so that customer's needs are best served. Some of the studies of the concept of empowerment of employees such as those of Wellins, Byham & Wilson, (1991); and Pearson (1992); are supportive of these ideas. There is also the issue of direction of relationship, that is, does job crafting positively influence performance, or vice-versa. In this exploratory study only the basic relationship is examined.

If changes in jobs were not aligned with organizational objectives or were hostile to organizational objectives and manager needs, then the job crafting activity could become a problem for the organization, work groups, and other employees. Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) repeatedly state that job crafting is not necessarily performed in the service of the goals of the organization. Yet, many of the examples of job crafting they cite make it clear that positive changes in performance and other benefits to the organization accrue. The exploratory study of Lyons (2006b) reinforces these findings. In that study, most job crafting episodes reported were in the service of job or organization goals and values. These findings in the collective seem to suggest that the performance of the individual engaged in job crafting is satisfactory, at the least.

In this study the measure of employee performance used to examine relationships with job crafting behavior is a supervisor rating of employee performance. While there is a relatively broad literature that addresses the weakness of supervisor ratings of employee performance (see, for example, Fried, Tiegs, &

Bellamy, 1992), the fact remains that first and second-level supervisors and managers are the most common source of performance information regarding employees. The evaluation of employee performance and subsequent efforts in providing feedback, mentoring, and training are among the most important tasks of supervisors and managers. Recent meta-analytic research by Viswesvaran, Schmidt, and Ones (2005), in which more than 300 studies of rating scales of performance covering a period of 25 years were examined, concluded that after controlling for various error sources there may be a general performance factor.

The foregoing discussions of prior research that demonstrates positive outcomes from job crafting and the use of supervisor ratings of employee performance suggests the hypothesis to examine which is:  
Hypothesis 3 – Job crafting behavior will be positively and significantly related with supervisor ratings of employee performance.

**Context and Opportunity.** We then have the issues of job context and opportunity to engage in the job crafting behavior. Some types of jobs, some job venues, and some organizations, other things being equal (e.g., interpersonal dynamics), will offer opportunities, invitations, and incentives to employees to modify their jobs. For example, the very nature of the job and the level and amount of direction and/or supervision received may influence the likelihood of job crafting activity taking place as employees perceive opportunities to make changes on their own. Some work (job, task) environments are much more open and loose than other environments with reference to such things as: work pace, processes and procedures, authority structure, centralization of decision making, and monitoring of performance. In the present study, for example, the work environment of the study participants probably encourages self-initiated changes in jobs. The details of the environment are discussed later in this paper.

## **SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH**

Earlier sections of this paper have revealed that there has not been a lot of empirical research directed at the crafting of jobs or work by employees. Of the research that does exist, much of it is of the observational - anecdotal variety where individuals in different organizations in a variety of jobs were observed as they went about their normal job duties (see, for example, Benner, et al., 1996). Other research has relied on interviews of employees where specific questions were asked about job duties, changes in duties, and special initiatives to change work practices. This research is represented in the work of Cohen & Sutton, (1998); Fine (1996); Fletcher (1996); and Jacques (1993). These observations help to establish the need for the present study.

These studies have clearly demonstrated that job crafting as defined in this study does, indeed, take place and it usually takes place without the knowledge of managers or others. What has not been given much attention in the literature is the extent to which job crafting takes place in terms of frequency, type, magnitude of changes in work, and the like. Empirical research regarding the antecedents and/or individual personality characteristics relating to job crafting is practically non-existent. Further, research (Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1992; Staw & Boettger, 1990) that has examined employee-initiated job crafting normally assumes that only employees in jobs that offer them substantial autonomy will be able to make job modifications. These findings and conclusions support the need for the present, exploratory study. In the sections of the paper that follow, the details of the research are presented. The hypotheses under consideration are summarized here.

Hypothesis 1 – in the sample selected for study, approximately 40 per cent of the employees will report having engaged in some form of job crafting behavior.

Job crafting behavior will be positively and significantly related to:

Hypothesis 2 A – need for belonging,

Hypothesis 2 B – need for control, and

Hypothesis 2 C – need for self-esteem.

Hypothesis 3 – Job crafting behavior will be positively and significantly related with supervisor ratings of employee performance.

## METHOD

Interviews of job holders will ascertain: (a) if they engage in job crafting behavior that is self-initiated and not related to any direction from management, (b) how frequently such behavior occurs, (c) what forms the actual behavior takes; and (d) how participants perceive their opportunities to engage in such behavior. Interviews of job holder's supervisors will provide performance ratings of each job holder.

**Participants.** The participants in this study are 94 sales representatives of a large, consumer products firm. These participants are outside sales representatives who work in various districts in a nine-state area in the Northeast and Middle Atlantic sections of the U.S. Most of their time is spent making sales calls on business, government, and other organizations. For the most part, they work with little direct contact with other organization employees. The original sample size of participants was 102, however, owing to illness and other factors, complete data was available for 94 members of the group. The original sample is the entire population of sales representatives in the nine-state area.

These particular employees were selected for this study for several reasons: (a) they all do the same, general type of work, (b) they work for the same firm and are subject to the same job requirements, conditions, organizational policies and requirements, and (c) they were available as they are participants in a larger, longitudinal study about motivation and performance.

Details of the group: Men 76 (81%), Women 18 (19%); Racial composition: Asian 3 (3 %), African American 9 (10%), White 82 (87%); average age of the entire group was 33 years, and average number of years working with the organization was 6.3 years. All of the participants held a college degree with 11 of the group of 94 with a community college degree; the majority had a B.A. or B.S. degree. Also participating in this study were the seven district sales managers who had oversight responsibility for the sales persons, among other duties.

**Procedure.** Each member of the study group was interviewed, individually, using a structured interview format. None of the interviews lasted more than 65 minutes. Each member interviewed agreed to participate in the study and completed (executed) a consent form to that effect. All of the interviews took place in early 2006. Interviews took place a few weeks after the participants had completed several tests and scales, including the measures used in this study. The same, trained interviewer conducted all of the interview sessions. A set of questions was used in a sequence of events methodological approach. The interviewer was trained to take notes of the interviews. Tape recording of interviews was completed as well. The notes of the interviewer were copied; the tape recorded interviews were transcribed.

Each one of the study participants was asked to tell a brief story of a time, within the past year, when: (a) They initiated and made some adjustment, change, modification in their work activity that was not part of any formal specification or prescription of how their work should be done nor part of any training or consequences resulting from training; or from any direct supervision received regarding work performance. The change could be of any type, size, scope, and so forth, however, in their minds the change must represent a substantial influence on their work activities; and (b) Assuming the positing of substantial influence (above), what form did the change take, that is, what actually took place in the change? What was done and why was it done? and (c) When having made such a change, how much effort went into the change; how long did it take; what was the level of interest in doing this; in personal terms: how do they evaluate or rate the interest they had in making the change; and how did they perceive the value or importance of the change in adjusting their work? (d) Finally, whether any changes were

made or not, how did they view or perceive their opportunity, their "chance" to make any changes at all in the work. Did they perceive some freedom or autonomy to engage in job change activity? Participants were asked and encouraged to report all such episodes that may have taken place in the past 12 months.

A team of two human resources professionals (team) that did not include the interviewer, reviewed all of the transcribed content and written notes of the interviewer and identified each job crafting episode reported by each participant. A total of 23 participants (24%) did not offer a single job crafting episode. The team segregated all interview material into job crafting episodes and applied ratings on several domains to each episode. This process yielded the information that follows.

1. Individual, discrete episodes of job crafting with a particular focus or content that participants said were self-motivated and not stimulated by management.
2. A quantity of job crafting episodes.
3. A rating of the magnitude and/or complexity, or "reach" of the specific change. The rating would be low = 1, moderate = 3, or high = 5.
4. A rating of the employee's interest in making the specific change with ratings of low = 1, moderate = 3, or high = 5.
5. An estimate of how many hours it took to fully execute and evaluate or assess the efficacy of the change with ratings of 1 = less than 10 hours, 3 = 11 to 20 hours, and 5 = more than 20 hours.
6. A rating of the employee's perception of the importance or significance of the particular change (episode) in relation to their work activities with ratings of low = 1, moderate = 3, or high = 5.

Other than the rating area that contributed to an individual score for each study participant that engaged in job crafting, the remaining variable to receive attention in the job crafting component of the results was that of opportunity to engage in personally-initiated changes in the job. The stimulus questions asked of the study participants were: Do you believe or perceive that you have had the opportunity to make some modifications in the work that you do? That is, if you decided that you could make improvements in what you do with regard to things like product knowledge, service to your customers, and such things, do you feel that you have the latitude to make changes in what you do, on your own, without anyone else's knowledge or approval? The participants supplied a rating for their perceived opportunity to change one's job represented as: no opportunity = 0, slight opportunity = 1, moderate opportunity = 2, and great opportunity to shape the job = 3.

In our sample, an employee who reports no job crafting episodes has a total score of 0, while an employee who reports three different job crafting episodes may attain a score of from 3 to 15 points. In addition, the team was required to achieve agreement on all classifications and ratings. The team also classified each job crafting episode by general content area. This task required considerable time and effort. The original coding of value/importance (6, above) of episodes by the team had an interrater reliability of .77. All other reliability measures for the different codings averaged .81.

Using a modified Q-Sort methodology (Brown, 1993), a different group of three individuals trained in Q-Sort methodology sorted the episodes by content type of each job crafting episode reported. This was a most important task as it identifies the specific content of the changes enacted by the participants, as well as their goals. This effort yielded interrater reliability of .89 per the original content classifications established (see paragraph above). No third-party effort was made to determine the effectiveness of the reported job crafting efforts for purposes of this study.

In addition to the information gathered regarding actual job crafting activity, the study participants also completed three measures that are intended to represent components of the possible motivational foundation for the job crafting behavior. Details of the three measures follow.

*Belonging.* Used in the study was a slightly adapted version of Anderman's (2002) Belonging Scale. With this scale, Anderman found that perceived belonging was significantly and positively correlated with self-esteem and overall performance. The scale has good reliability and with application of factor analysis the factor had an eigenvalue of 2.71 and explained 45.2 per cent of the variance. Cronbach's alpha at .78. One of the scale items reads: I feel like I am part of this organization.

*Control.* This measure contained 22 Likert-scale items that provide an overall index of how much control the worker experienced over the work environment (Dwyer & Ganster, 1991). Example: On the job, I believe I have much discretion over the use of my time. The scale covers a variety of work domains including control over the variety of tasks performed, the order of task performance, pacing, and the procedures and policies. A factor analysis of the items for a sample of 191 white-collar workers yielded a single factor. The scale used in that study yielded an internal reliability of .87.

*Self-esteem.* A self-report questionnaire measure was used (Winstok & Enosh, 2004), a measure of global self-esteem. The instrument contains eight items of the semantic differential form (Osgood, 1964). The scale consists of: strong-weak, smart-stupid, brave-coward, happy-sad, positive-negative, good-bad, winner-loser, and friendly-unfriendly. Reliability was tested with internal consistency analysis and reliability of the measures was found to be acceptable. Cronbach's alpha was .80.

Finally, the district supervisors provided for each sales person a rating of from 1 (low) to 7 (high) that was to represent job performance. The supervisors and the company did not normally use a single, overall rating for employee performance hence the supervisors were instructed to consider the most recently recorded performance ratings of employees and to select a rating from 1 to 7 that would most closely represent the performance ratings received by the employee as part of the regular employee evaluation system. As a result we have a performance measure ranging from 1 - 7 for each employee in the sample. Validity for this reductionistic approach is assumed as the supervisors have access to much contextual and performance information for each employee and have a strong basis for judgment.

## RESULTS

A total of 138 separate and distinct job crafting episodes was identified for the sample of 94 outside salesperson study participants. This total represents an average of 1.47 episodes per person and the finding is consistent with other research (Lyons, 2006a). Of the episodes reported and classified, 23 participants (24 per cent of total) reported no episodes, 28 (30 per cent) reported one episode, 27 (29 per cent) reported two episodes, and 16 (17 per cent) of participants reported three or more episodes. This latter group accounts for 56 job crafting episodes or an average of 3.5 episodes, each. As mentioned above, participants were asked to recall episodes that had taken place over the past 12 months. In sum, 71 (76 per cent) of the participants report one or more job crafting episodes judged by them as substantive and worthy of being identified. Interviewers corroborate the participants' assertions. This finding provides both rational and face validity for the behavior. Inter-rater reliability for interviewer and for classifier judgments of the episodes were at least .77. The self-reporting of the episodes supports Hypothesis 1 as a majority (76 per cent) of study participants did report the initiation of at least one job crafting episode.

As mentioned above in the Methods section, three individuals then used the Q-sort method to place the episodes into categories. The task was performed twice to be sure that the consensus votes for category placement was accurate and complete. There were 138 distinct episodes to categorize and the episodes were finally classified into five groups. Titles for the groupings represent a consensus of the interviewers, the author of the study, and individuals who performed the final sort of the data. Identification of each

category group, the number of episodes per category, and an example of episode content is offered in Table 1.

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Table 1 about here  
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A review of the content across categories reveals that nearly all of the episodes focus on one of the following areas: (a) improving or increasing sales, (b) setting the stage for relationship building and future sales, and (c) gaining customer confidence and appreciation. In addition, there was some evidence of building personal relationships with those purchasers or potential purchasers with whom the study participants had built a relationship based on factors other than business matters (for example, vacation plans, sports, the war in Iraq).

Responses to the stimulus questions concerning perceived opportunity to engage in personally-initiated changes in the job yielded results as: 20 (21 per cent) reported that they had virtually no such opportunity to modify their work. These subjects were all of the group (n=23) that chose not to report any episodes; 18 (19 per cent) reported that they perceived they had a slight opportunity to make changes; 37 (40 per cent) reported that they had moderate opportunity to make changes in their work; and 19 (20 per cent) said they perceived great opportunity to modify their work. Several subjects in this latter group said that they believed they had a responsibility to make positive changes in what they did on the job in order to improve sales (hence, their commissions) and build stronger relationships with their customers. Details are offered in Table 2.

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Table 2 about here  
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**Relationships Among Variables.** Intercorrelations were calculated among the variables: the job crafting score (see above in Methods section – it is the rating by the employee of the importance or significance of the actual change they made in their work, summed over n episodes they report), and belonging, control, self-esteem, and performance. Performance was a rating supplied by the salesperson's immediate supervisor. These relationships are shown in Table 3.

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Table 3 about here  
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Job crafting score represents the value place on an episode by the study participant and confirmed by the raters. These values are summed over the independent episodes offered by the individual participant and thus, reveal a score. As Table 3 demonstrates, the scores correlates significantly and positively with all four of the variables, in particular with the more personal, potentially motivating variables (need for: belonging, control, and self-esteem) and to a lesser extent with performance. All correlations are significant at the .05 level. This is both interesting and encouraging. The results support hypotheses 2A, 2B, and 2C as well as hypothesis 3. Also of interest is that without exception, although statistically significant, the performance measure correlates lower with all variables than does any of the other variable inter-correlations.

Regression analysis with job crafting episode score regressed on the four variables (belonging, control, self-esteem, performance) yielded an  $R^2$  (adjusted) of 80.8 percent. ANOVA results in an F of 112.68 and a p. of .001. These results are encouraging and they reflect and reinforce the high, positive inter-correlations among the variables. No moderator analysis was performed as part of this study although such analysis is to be considered for future research on the job crafting concept.

## DISCUSSION

In some studies of the extra-role behavior of employees (Wright, et al., 1993) it is suggested that such behavior may not be desirable, in general. There is very little evidence to suggest that job crafting behavior is undesirable. In this study we find a positive, significant correlation with supervisor rating of performance and incidence of job crafting behavior. That is, an independent measure of performance on the job is positively correlated with employee self-reports of engaging in job crafting behavior.

As mentioned earlier, the sample (n= 94) consisted of outside sales persons employed by the same firm with all sample members holding the same position of sales representative. These study participants probably had considerable control over their tasks, duties, and time.

Several limitations characterize the study. The sample size is not large, the data reported concerning job crafting behavior was entirely of the self-report type and there was no easy means to verify the reported behavior unless a particular change in job has been documented or carefully observed in practice. The focus, save the supervisor rating of performance, is on the individual's perspective and not on the perceptions of others (external) or on other, more objective evidence although independent interviewer and raters sought to objectify and validate self-reports using agreed-to criteria. And, while study participants were asked to recall job crafting events of the past 12 months, it is likely that many potential events were lost to memory or could not be readily recalled, hence the self-report approach likely contains some recency errors and memory loss/distortion.

Importantly, there is the validity question regarding the job crafting behavior. That is, how do we know that employee efforts are self-initiated changes in jobs that are initiated to suit personal needs and not necessarily the needs of the organization? The self-report information of job crafting events was tested in the interview using questioning and criteria (see Methods, above) to determine if employee supervisors, trainers, or others had suggested or demanded the changes that were made. In this study, only those changes that were not stimulated by others could be included. Participants were repeatedly reminded of this in the interviews. The examples of job crafting activities supplied by the study participants were not part of any organization plan, procedure, or program. To some extent then, face and rational validity is established. Yet, conclusive validity evidence is not established.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Earlier research did much to identify the *what* of job crafting behavior while this study is more focused on *what, how much, why*, as well as the relationship of the behavior to performance, overall, on the job. The information in the present study helps to establish some bounds for further study of the concept of job crafting, given the context in which the study was completed. Other organizational contexts may yield different results.

Heretofore, the frequency of the behavior has not been explored with much precision as nearly all previous research used very small samples and much of the research was of the anecdotal and observational variety. In the present study, given the limitations reported earlier, we have more information that helps to give additional definition to the behavior as presented in the seminal work of Wrzesniewski & Dutton (2001). The frequency aspect is likely tied to the context of the work as well as to the closeness of supervision, and specific job requirements and procedures. Future research should take these factors into account as variables such as these may serve as controls.

Implicit in this study was the assumption that outside sales representatives were employees with moderate to great opportunity for job crafting owing to the fact that they received very little direct supervision or direction once they received their initial training and moved beyond their probationary employment period with the organization. Yet, only 20 per cent of the sample reported that they had a substantial opportunity to make changes in their work. Another 40 per cent said they had no or slight opportunity to

make changes. In future research it may be desirable to use different means to assess opportunity as the gradations used in this study may be too coarse to render meaningful distinctions.

The present study does not establish cause-effect linkages, as it has not ascertained whether or not study participants have increased their sense of control, belonging, or self-esteem. Hence, there is the issue of these variables serving as outcomes as well as stimulants of behavior. Future research will need to carefully examine changes in self-perceptions related to both propensity to engage in job crafting behavior as well as the actual behavior as enacted. More study needs to be done to better isolate performance and the creative behavior labeled job crafting.

**Implications for Employers and Management.** In the present study and in virtually all of the studies reported in Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), organization-serving episodes of job crafting were reported. One should not rule out the idea that the low social desirability of reporting purely self-serving, detrimental-to-organization episodes were simply left out. Fulfilling one's own needs may or may not prove beneficial for the organization.

Contrast these considerations with management encouragement of employee self-initiative on behalf of organization needs and goals. For example, Conti & Warner (2002) propose a model that encourages work that maximizes the use of the worker's judgment, knowledge, creativity, intelligence and initiative so that customer's needs are best served. Some of the studies of the concept of empowerment of employees such as those of Wellins, et al., (1991); and Pearson (1992); are also supportive of these ideas.

Depending on intention and/or outcomes of job crafting, the result of the behavior could represent organizational citizenship as exemplified in the work of Podsakoff, et al. (2000). It is possible for one to make the case that job crafting that leads to positive outcomes for the organization is simply a form of OCB. However, the many positive outcomes reported could be linked to the self-report nature of the study design.

One aspect of job crafting that did not receive attention in this study but that is of importance is the potential influence of job crafting on the actual work or working conditions of others. An employee may not have sufficient grasp of how the outcomes of their efforts influence others in the firm, and customers. Managers may have knowledge of such effects and may find that a particular job crafting effort results in more harm than good. Of course, the opposite situation may hold and the change results in more good than the instigator had imagined. In a team-work context, job crafting behavior may tacitly result in some advantage (efficiency, effectiveness) for job crafters.

Managers and other employees may regard job crafting as a clandestine, end-run around the existing management system. Some managers may react negatively to such initiatives, regardless of outcomes if the activity is perceived as a challenge to authority, and is not perceived as a type of continuous improvement or personal initiative. Most experienced managers have probably engaged in job crafting of sorts themselves. It is not likely a foreign concept for many of them.

In closing, this study provides information about job crafting that heretofore has largely been absent from the literature. Greater definition and bounds have been given to the concept of job crafting to include its occurrence, frequency, forms it takes, and perceived opportunity to engage in job crafting. Important relationships regarding potential antecedents and outcomes of the behavior, namely, the needs for control, belonging, self-esteem, and individual job performance are illuminated. Other research has pointed to the existence of such relationships but has not provided much information to clarify them. Much more work remains. Larger samples sizes are required for future research and refinements in methods to obtain information and data are needed. Future research should include multiple job classes or types over a variety of organizational (work) contexts to identify further the extent of job crafting behavior and the

forms it takes.

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**Table 1****Categorizations of Job Crafting Episodes**

<b>Category of Job Crafting</b>	<b>Number per Category</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>Examples of Behaviors</b>
Personal Skill Development	38	28	Developing job aids or prompts to enhance listening skills
Task Function	33	24	Developing special customer surveys
Advancing Relationships	25	18	Communicate on-site w/staff (other than purchaser
Tactics Choices	25	18	Using empirically- grounded effective sales techniques
Maintaining Relationships	17	12	Guarantee at least some contact with actual purchaser
	138	100%	

**Table 2**

**Perceived Opportunity to Shape One's Job**

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Perceived Opportunity to Shape Job	Number of Subjects	Percent of Total
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No Such Opportunity	20	21
Slight Opportunity	18	19
Moderate Opportunity	37	40
Great Opportunity	19	20
	-----	-----
	94	100 %
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**Table 3**

**Intercorrelations Among Variables and Descriptive Statistics**

VARIABLES						<u>Descriptive Statistics</u>	
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
1. Job Crafting Episodes Value	1.00	.36*	.45	.61	.31	5.91	3.39
2. Belonging		1.00	.38	.31	.33	15.89	5.84
3. Control			1.00	.34	.26	93.16	38.40
4. Self-Esteem				1.00	.36	33.36	13.35
5. Performance [Supervisor Rating]					1.00	5.06	1.38

\* all correlations significant at .05