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THESIS

**A Multilevel study on the Contagion of Job Crafting between
Coworkers and the Relationship between Job Crafting and Adaptivity.**

Richard Arts 3346145

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Supervisors:

Maria Peeters - Utrecht University

Evangelia Demerouti - Eindhoven University of Technology

Abstract

This study of 55 dyads of coworkers working within the same unit examined the contagion of *job crafting* which, framed within the *Job-Demands Resources Model*, consists of three distinct behaviors: *seeking challenges*, *seeking resources* and *reducing demands*. We hypothesized that seeking resources, seeking challenges and reducing demands are transferred from one employee (partner) to the other (actor) on a daily basis. Moreover, job crafting was expected to positively relate to the coworkers' daily adaptation to changes. Daily adaptation to changes was measured both by self-report and peer-report. Participants completed a general questionnaire and a daily survey over three workdays. The hypotheses regarding the contagion of job crafting were tested with multilevel analyses, using an actor-partner interdependence model. Results partly confirmed the contagion of job crafting for the dimension of seeking challenges. Moreover, day-level seeking resources and day-level seeking challenges were positively related to day-level team member adaptivity self-rated and day-level seeking resources was positively related to day-level team member adaptivity other-rated. These results imply that stimulating job crafting within organizations is valuable, because it spreads around and aids in the coworkers' adaptivity to changes within their unit.

Keywords: job crafting, coworkers, team member adaptivity, actor-partner interdependence model, diary study

In today's organizations, the need for employees to be proactive is increasing rapidly (Parker, Williams & Turner, 2006). Organizations want employees to be flexible and self-initiating in order to successfully adapt to reorganizations and changing work tasks (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010). Also, proactivity has beneficial effects for the employees themselves (higher performance, career satisfaction, better fit between job and individual), the team (better assessment by customers, team's job satisfaction, team's organizational commitment and team performance) and the organization (organizational success and financial performance) (Bindl & Parker, in press). These diverse beneficial effects make proactive behavior an interesting topic to study more in-depth.

A promising concept of proactive behavior at work is *job crafting*. "Job crafters are individuals who actively compose both what their job is physically, by changing a job's task boundaries, what their job is cognitively, by changing the way they think about the relationships among job tasks, and what their job is relationally, by changing the interactions and relationships they have with others at work" (Wrzesniewsky & Dutton, 2001 p.2), with the goal of becoming more engaged, satisfied, resilient and thriving at work (Berg, Dutton & Wrzesniewsky, 2008).

In this article, an attempt is made to increase knowledge of job crafting on a daily basis. The primary goal of this article is to prove that day-level job crafting can be transferred between two co-workers within the same unit. The second goal of this article is to study the relationship between day-level job crafting and the degree to which employees adapt to changes within their work unit on a daily basis.

Job crafting framed in jobdesign theory

There are several aspects that make job crafting a unique concept (Tims, Bakker & Derks, 2012). First of all, employees usually craft their jobs without consulting their supervisors, because job crafting is aimed at changing the boundaries and conditions of job tasks, the relationships at work, and the meaning of the job, instead of the job itself (Tims et al., 2012). Secondly, job crafting may very well have a short-term focus (e.g. changes made to deal with a high-workload workweek). Thirdly, job crafting is not necessarily in line with the goals of the organization (Tims et al., 2012). Lastly, job crafting has positive effects on work engagement in general (Tims et al., 2012) and on a daily basis (Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli & Hetland, 2012).

Some well-known job design theories have positioned job crafting as a promising new concept in organizational studies (Grant & Parker, 2009; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). Scholars (Tims & Bakker, 2010) have used another job design theory to incorporate job crafting within a theoretical framework: the Job Demands-Resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti,

Bakker, Nachreiner & Schaufeli, 2001). *Job demands* are aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological effort (e.g. work load, time pressure, work-home commuting, and emotional demands). *Job resources* are those aspects of the job that aid in achieving work goals, reduce job demands or stimulate personal development, such as feedback, social support, supervisor support, and autonomy. High job demands require sustained effort, potentially causing energy depletion and health problems. This process is known as the health impairment process (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti & Xanthopoulou, 2007). High job resources, on the other hand, aid in achieving work goals which makes employees more committed and motivated; this is the motivational process. A final notion of the JD-R model is that an employee is engaged at work when there is a combination of high demands and high resources, because this creates a challenging but manageable work environment. Work engagement is defined as a positive, work-related state of mind that is characterized by high levels of energy and resilience (vigor), strong involvement in one's work (dedication), and full concentration in one's work (absorption) (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá & Bakker, 2002).

The conceptualization of job crafting within the JD-R framework by Tims et al. (2012), consists of four distinct behaviors, namely: (1) increasing structural job resources; (2) increasing social job resources; (3) increasing challenging job demands; and (4) decreasing hindering job demands. Structural job resources are resources inherent to the job, such as autonomy and personal development. Social job resources are provided by the colleagues at work, such as feedback and advice from colleagues and supervisors (Tims et al., 2012). Job crafters are expected to seek more of both types of job resources. This is because people with many job resources are better able to deal with high demands (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2007; Hobfoll, 1989), and increasing job resources aids in achieving work goals. Employees are not expected to lower their resources, because job resources are positively related to work outcomes (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Challenging job demands are demands that an employee wants to increase to experience an active and challenging job, such as; interesting projects, new projects, extra tasks and new possibilities to learn. Employees are expected to increase challenging job demands, because boredom leads to absenteeism and lowered satisfaction (Tims et al., 2012). Demands can also become hindering, especially in cases of high workload. Employees will decrease these hindering demands by, for example, making work emotionally or mentally less intense or avoiding too much social contact. Employees will decrease these demands because prolonged exposure to high job demands in combination with low levels of job resources may lead to negative health consequences such as burnout (Tims et al., 2012). Whether demands are perceived as challenges or hindrances depends on the evaluation of these demands under the current circumstances.

This conceptualization has been slightly adapted by Petrou et al. (2012) in order to study job crafting with a daily diary methodology. In their conceptualization there is no distinction between social job resources and structural resources. Rather, this job crafting dimension is called '*seeking resources*'. Furthermore, 'increasing challenge demands' is renamed to '*seeking challenges*' and 'decreasing hindrance demands' is renamed to '*reducing demands*', both carrying the same meaning as the original dimensions. The final conceptualization put forward by Petrou et al. (2012) consists of three distinct behaviors: *seeking resources*, *seeking challenges*, and *reducing demands*. The conceptualization with three dimensions has already been used in a daily study and been confirmed in both a general and day-level measure (Petrou et al., 2012). For this reason, the conceptualization of Petrou et al. (2012) is used in this study for both the general and day-level measure.

Day-level job crafting

Common sense tells us that not every day at work is the same. Indeed, many variables important for organizational studies fluctuate on a daily level: workload and work-family interaction (Repetti, 1993; Butler, Grzywacz, Bass, & Linney, 2005), mood (Repetti, 1993), health complaints and recovery (Repetti, 1993; Binnewies, Sonnentag & Mojza, 2009) and work performance (Binnewies et al., 2009). Proactivity also fluctuates over time due to a person's affective state and workplace factors (Ohly & Fritz, 2010; Sonnentag, 2003). Methods are needed that shed light on the short term dynamics of important variables, because these dynamics are important to understand and explain behavior at work.

Correlational studies do not grasp these short-term dynamics. Diaries are a method to collect data at the daily level or even several times a day and allow work and organizational psychologists to study thoughts, feelings and behaviors within the natural work context as well as characteristics of the work situation which may fluctuate on a daily basis (Ohly, Sonnentag, Niessen & Zapf, 2010). One advantage of this method is the reduction of retrospective bias, because data are collected close to the event (Ohly et al., 2010). Another advantage is that a researcher can control for the situational context (Ohly et al., 2010). Diary studies are able to show how states change over time and how states and behaviors translate into other states and behaviors within short periods of time. Therefore, diary studies add to our understanding of important processes in the work context (Ohly et al., 2010). A diary study is needed to study the short term dynamics of the imitation and modeling of co-workers' day-level job crafting behaviors and to study the effect day-level job crafting has on daily adaptation to changes in team roles.

Day-level constructs are defined as momentary states, fluctuating on a daily basis and characterized by intraindividual variation (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2009), while general-level variables reflect individual tendencies and show inter-individual variation only (Petrou et al., 2012). By

measuring both categories of variables; researchers can control for the individual tendencies (general-level variables) and study the unique effect of the day-level predictors on day-level outcomes (Petrou et al., 2012) Regarding the above notions, in this article job crafting will be conceptualized as a proactive behavior, occurring both as an individual tendency and as a daily behavior, aimed to gain a more positive experience of the job, and consisting of three distinct dimensions; *seeking resources*, *seeking challenges* and *reducing demands*.

Contagion of job crafting

Employees affect each other's emotional states; Westman (2001) was the first to describe a process whereby negative emotions of an employee can be crossed over to other colleagues. Employees become more engaged by interacting with colleagues who are high in engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2009), and the same counts for workaholism (Bakker, Demerouti & Burke, 2009). This emotional crossover between individuals is known as emotional contagion; The tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize facial expressions, vocalizations, postures, and movements with those of another person and, consequently, to converge emotionally (Hatfield, Cacioppo & Rapson, 1994, p. 5). Is there '*contagion of job crafting*' between individuals as well? And, if so, is it also an automatic process? Contrary to facial expressions, postures, and movements, job crafting is a complex behavior that consists of verbal and nonverbal behavior. If *contagion of job crafting* exists, it is therefore expected to be a conscious process by which employees actively observe and imitate each other's job crafting behaviors. What do we know about employees affecting each other's behavior?

Recently hired subordinates imitate supervisor's behaviors to become 'socialized' in the organization (Weiss, 1977). "Organizational socialization is the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member"(Louis, 1980b, pp. 229-230) and is as a lifelong process which is important during an individual's entire career (Feldman, 1989; Morrison & Hock, 1986). Changes in one's existing job role or one's formal job, small or large, may trigger a need to redefine what is important in the organization and what is expected: resocialization (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein & Gardner, 1994). As mentioned before, proactivity is becoming more important for organizations and the work roles of the employees (Parker et al., 2006) and it makes sense for employees to study each other's proactive behaviors and imitate them. One learning theory that explains the organizational socialization process is the social learning theory (Weiss, 1977).

The social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) points out that learning takes place in a social setting and focuses on people learning from one another through imitation, observation and

modeling behavior This learning process needs two conditions to take place; 1) the employee observing/imitating/modeling the behavior must believe he or she can execute the behavior as well (self-efficacy), and 2) the employee observing/imitating/modeling the behavior must expect positive outcomes by executing the behavior (Bandura, 1977). People are more likely to model or imitate others when they admire them or have good relationships with them (Bandura, 1977).

Based on the theory of organizational socialization, the fact that job crafting is becoming increasingly important in one's work roles, and the explaining paradigm of the social learning theory, we expect that:

Hypothesis 1: Partner's day-level job crafting is positively related to actor's day-level job crafting.

1a Partner's day-level seeking resources is positively related to actor's day-level seeking resources.

1b Partner's day-level seeking challenges is positively related to actor's day-level seeking challenges.

1c Partner's day-level reducing demands is positively related to actor's day-level reducing demands.

Job crafting and team member adaptivity.

Job crafting consists of several dimensions that have contradicting features, such as seeking challenges and reducing demands. Seeking challenges and seeking resources are positively related to work engagement (general and day-level), employability and performance, but reducing demands is not (Tims et al., 2012; Petrou et al., 2012).

However, all job crafting behaviors are part of a creative and improvised process that captures how individuals *adapt* their jobs. (Wrzesniewsky & Dutton, 2001). Job crafting helps employees *adapt* to uncertain and changing work conditions and is particularly viewed as a strategic advantage during organizational change (Van den Heuvel, Demerouti, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2010). The changes people make by crafting their jobs are also called *adaptations* (Van den Heuvel, Demerouti & Peeters, 2012).

The link between job crafting and *adaptivity to changes* has not been studied before. This is remarkable, since one of the most characteristic features of job crafting is that it helps the employee adapt to changes at work in order to gain a more positive experience of the job. The degree to which individuals cope with, respond to, and/or support changes that affect them is called *adaptivity* (Griffin, Neal & Parker, 2007). Therefore, this concept is valuable for studying the relationship between job crafting behaviors and adaptivity to uncertain and changing conditions.

Adaptivity is important for the various roles of an individual; the individual him/herself, the individual as team member, and the individual as member of the organization. Adaptive behavior

contributes to effectiveness for all these three roles: *Individual task adaptivity* (e.g. adjusting to new equipment and work processes), *team member adaptivity* (e.g. respond constructively to team changes), and *organization member adaptivity* (e.g. cope with changes the way the organization operates) (Griffin et al., 2007). These concepts are positioned as new concepts of work performance (Griffin et al., 2007).

We have studied the contagion of job crafting behaviors between two employees working within the same unit. It is interesting to study how these two employees adapt to changes that affect their unit and to changes in the way their unit works by crafting their jobs. Therefore, we have decided to study the relationship between job crafting and *team member adaptivity*. “Team member adaptivity reflects the degree to which individuals cope with, respond to, and/or support changes that affect their roles as members of a team” (pp. 331 Griffin et al., 2007). Team member adaptivity is similar to the concept “interpersonal adaptability” by Kozlowski, Gully, Nason & Smith (1999). Kozlowski et al. (1999) argued that “adaptability is the capability of the team to maintain coordinated interdependence” when dealing with nonroutine events and that this capability requires team members to modify their work roles as contingencies emerge. This implies that team member adaptivity is a day-to-day challenge for all team members. Because job crafting helps employees adapt to changes at work we expect a positive relationship between all job crafting dimensions and team member adaptivity on a daily level. This leads to the second hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Day-level job crafting is positively related to day-level self-reported team member adaptivity.

2a Day-level seeking resources is positively related to day-level self-reported team member adaptivity.

2b Day-level seeking challenges is positively related to day-level self-reported team member adaptivity.

2c Day-level reducing demands is positively related to day-level self-reported team member adaptivity.

Self-rated and other-rated team member adaptivity

When self-report questionnaires are used to collect data at the same time from the same participants, common method variance (CMV) may be of major concern (Chang, Witteloostuijn & Eden, 2010). CMV means that there might appear to be a correlation between variables which is actually caused by their common source (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003). CMV can cause systematic measurement errors that provides researchers with false observed relationships (Chang et al., 2010). Even though views on CMV differ, it is generally accepted that researchers

must try to avoid it (Chang et al., 2010). One way to overcome this phenomenon is to use different sources of information (Chang et al., 2010).

That is exactly what has been done in this study, by using both self-reported team member adaptivity and other-reported team member adaptivity. Moreover, for reports of work performance there are additional reasons to incorporate colleagues as another source of information. Peer appraisals of work performance are a more valid measure of work performance than self-appraisals because there are fewer biases (Thornton, 1980).

To increase the objectivity of the results regarding the relation between job crafting and team member adaptivity, both self-reported and other-reported team member adaptivity are used.

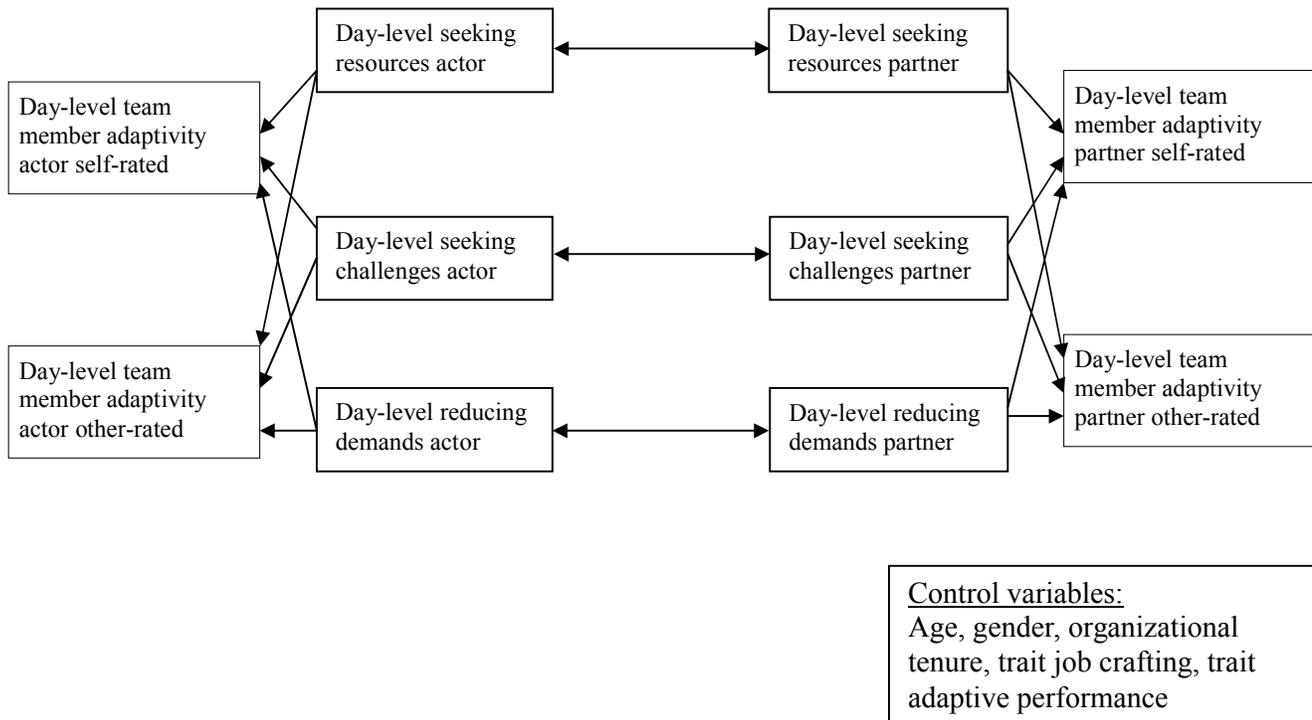
Hypothesis 3: Actor's day-level job crafting is positively related to partner's ratings of actors day-level team member adaptivity.

3a Actor's day-level seeking resources is positively related to partner's ratings of team member adaptivity.

3b Actor's day-level seeking challenges is positively related to partner's ratings of team member adaptivity.

3c Actor's day-level reducing demands is positively related to partner's ratings of team member adaptivity.

All hypotheses combined provide the following *work model*.



Method

Procedure and participants

101 employees working in a wide range of different sectors and organizations were approached to participate in the study. These 101 employees were asked to participate in the study simultaneously with a colleague with whom they worked closely together on a daily basis. Ultimately, 55 dyads completed the study (response rate 54%).

Data were collected using a printed booklet consisting of a general questionnaire and a diary survey consisting of three identical daily measurements. Demographics were part of the general questionnaire. The general questionnaire could be filled out at any moment during the study. The three daily measurements had to be filled out at the end of each workday by both members of the dyad. We instructed the participants to try to use consecutive workdays for the diary study. Due to a large percentage of the participants working part-time, and the fact that the dyad had to fill the diary study out on the same days, gaps of several days between the studied workdays exist. When both members of the dyad completed the general questionnaire and the diary survey, they were requested to send the printed booklet back to the researcher. All participants received a voucher of €10 for their willingness to participate in the study.

Data from 55 dyads of colleagues (N = 110 participants, N = 330 days) were used to test the hypotheses. The sample consisted of 66 women (60%) and 44 men (40%), with a mean age of 40 years (SD = 12.3). Participants worked at their current organization for 10 years on average (SD = 9.3) and had an average work contract of 33 hours a week (SD = 8,7). 23% of the participants had a supervisory function and 73% of the sample lived together with a partner. The most common sectors that participants worked in were; healthcare (33%), education (18%), business services (15%), and trade (9%). 65% of the sample finished higher education. 261 participants (79%) indicated that they experienced a change in their work recently. These 261 participants experienced a mean of 3.09 changes recently, amongst others; working with new tasks, working with new technology, working with new products, different way to work with colleagues, etc. This means that most the majority of the sample is working in a changing and dynamic organization and that day-level adaptivity is an important concept to study within this sample.

Measures (see attachment for all items)

General questionnaire

General level of job crafting. For measuring general level of job crafting we used a scale based upon Petrou et al. (2012) who used a modified version of Tims et al's. (2012) job crafting scale. We selected 10 items that were used by Petrou et al. (2012). The items were selected because they had the highest factor loadings on the three dimensions of job crafting. Exactly the same items are used for the day-level measure. Respondents indicated how often they conducted each behavior during the past three months using a scale ranging from 1 = never to 5 = often. *Seeking challenges* consists of three items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .78$), such as "I ask for more tasks if I finish my work". *Seeking resources* included four items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .61$), an example item is: "I ask others for feedback on my job performance". *Reducing demands* included three items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .77$), e.g. "I try to ensure that my work is emotionally less intense".

General level of team member adaptivity: self-rated. This measure was a Dutch translation of the team member adaptivity scale, developed and tested by Griffin et al. (2007). The measure includes three items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .54$), such as "Dealt effectively with changes affecting my work unit (e.g., new members)". Respondents had to indicate the degree to which they agreed to each of the items on a scale ranging from 1 = totally disagree to 5 = totally agree.

Diary survey

Day-level job crafting. Exactly the same items were used to measure the day-level job crafting as the general-level job crafting. The participants had to indicate to what degree the items

applied to their situation on that workday. *Day-level seeking challenges* consists of three items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$), such as "Today... I have asked for more tasks if I finish my work". *Day-level seeking resources* included four items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .62$), a sample item is "Today... I have asked others for feedback on my job performance". *Day-level reducing demands* included three items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$), e.g. "Today... I have tried to ensure that my work is emotionally less intense". The scale ranged from 1 = totally applies to me to 5 = totally does not apply to me.

Day-level team member adaptivity self rated. Exactly the same items were used for this measure as the general level team member adaptivity self-rated measure (Griffin et al., 2007). The items were phrased in such a way that participants indicated how well the items applied to their situation on that workday on a scale ranging from 1 = totally to 7 = not at all (Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$). An example item is "Today... I dealt effectively with changes affecting my work unit (e.g., new members)".

Day-level team member adaptivity other rated. Again, the same items were used for this measure (Griffin et al., 2007). This time, the items were phrased in past tense and were phrased to make clear that the rating had to be given to a colleague and not to his or herself. A sample item is "Today, my colleague... dealt effectively with changes affecting his/her work unit (e.g., new members)". Participants indicated how well the items applied to their colleagues on that workday on a scale ranging from 1 = totally to 7 = not at all (Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$).

Strategy of Analysis

The main hypothesis of this study is that contagion of job crafting takes place between the actor and the partner (two colleagues) of the same dyad. Data that are collected in such studies are nonindependent (Hox, 2010), in this case because both members of the dyad are exposed to the same work environment, which is unique and different from the work environments of all the other dyads. To study nonindependent data, we used the actor-partner interdependence model (APIM; Kenny & Cook, 1999). APIM divides data collected from dyads in multiple levels. The dyads are the highest level (level 3, between-dyad, $N=55$), then the individuals nested within this dyad (level 2, between-person, $N = 110$), and three repeated measurements (days) nested within the individuals (level 1, within-person, $N = 330$). With this method of analysis, *partner effects* can be calculated: how a person's independent variable affects his/her partner's dependent variable (Campbell & Kashy, 2002). Because both members of the dyad affect one another simultaneously, the partner effects in APIM are reciprocal (Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2009). The MLwiN program (Rasbash, Browne, Healy, Cameron, & Charlton, 2000) was used to test the multilevel hypotheses. Day-level

variables (see above) were job crafting, and self-rated & other-rated team member adaptivity. Person level variables were job crafting and team member adaptivity. We measured no variables on the dyad level. Predictor variables in multilevel analyses should be centered to get unbiased results (Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2009), so in this article all predictor variables and control variables are centered to the grand mean. In all analyses the following control variables were used; age, sex and organizational tenure. For the contagion hypotheses, we controlled for general-level job crafting. General-level team member adaptivity was used as a control-variable for hypotheses 3 and 4.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and correlations among the study variables. Organizational tenure is significantly negatively related to general-level seeking resources and general-level seeking challenges, meaning that newcomers seek more resources and challenges than people who have been working at the organization for a longer time. The general-level job crafting dimensions are significantly positively related to the correspondent day-level job crafting dimensions. All three day-level job crafting dimensions are significantly positively interrelated, but for the general-level job crafting dimensions only general-level seeking resources and general-level seeking challenges are positively related. The day-level Team Member Adaptivity measures (self-rated and other-rated) are positively correlated. The general-level Team Member Adaptivity measure is significantly correlated with the self-rated day-level team member adaptivity measure and is not related to the other-rated day level team member adaptivity measure.

Table I. Means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables

| | M | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|----|
| 1.Age | 40.33 | 12.25 | - | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.Sex | - | - | -.16** | - | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.Organizational Tenure | 10.08 | 9.30 | .64** | -.27** | - | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.General-level seeking resources | 3.60 | 0.53 | -.18** | .08 | -.26** | - | | | | | | | | |
| 5.General-level seeking challenges | 2.99 | 0.91 | -.26** | -.07 | -.25** | .31** | - | | | | | | | |
| 6.General-level reducing demands | 1.84 | 0.71 | -.07 | -.16** | -.03 | .02 | .10 | - | | | | | | |
| 7.General-level TM adaptivity | 3.92 | 0.49 | .02 | .16** | -.10 | .09 | .17** | -.02 | - | | | | | |
| 8.Day-level seeking resources | 2.90 | 0.63 | -.10 | -.07 | -.16** | .47** | .24** | .21* | .07 | - | | | | |
| 9.Day-level seeking challenges | 2.18 | 0.80 | -.04 | -.03 | -.10 | .16** | .37** | .20* | -.07 | .46** | - | | | |
| 10.Day-level reducing demands | 1.99 | 0.65 | -.12* | -.03 | -.02 | -.02 | .10 | .53** | -.12* | .27** | .47** | - | | |
| 11.Day-level TM adaptivity SR | 3.16 | 0.83 | .10 | -.14** | .08 | -.03 | -.01 | .15** | .12* | .47** | .36** | .22* | - | |
| 12.Day-level TM adaptivity OR | 3.14 | 0.84 | .04 | -.03 | .04 | -.11 | -.14* | .06 | .03 | .07 | .10 | .12* | .34** | - |

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed). Day-level scores are averaged across 3 days. SR = self-rated, OR = other-rated. TM = team member.

Hypothesis Testing

To test the contagion of job crafting between two coworkers, by examining the relationship between day-level job crafting of the partner and day-level job crafting of the actor (hypothesis 1), we examined a model containing the intercept, the control variables (general-level job crafting of actor, age, gender and organizational tenure), and the predictor (day-level job crafting partner). Table 2, 3 and 4 present unstandardized estimates, standard errors, and *t* values for all predictors of the model, for seeking resources, seeking challenges and reducing demands respectively.

Table 2

Actor-Partner Interdependence Model of the Contagion of Day-level Seeking Resources (dependent variable = day-level seeking resources actor)

| Variables | Model | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-------|-----------|
| | Estimate | SE | t |
| Intercept | 3.021 | 0.086 | 35.128*** |
| Control Variables | | | |
| Age | 0.001 | 0.006 | 0.167 |
| Sex | -0.131 | 0.113 | -1.159 |
| Organizational Tenure | -0.004 | 0.008 | -0.500 |
| General-level Seeking Resources Actor | 0.564 | 0.103 | 5.476*** |
| Partner Effects | | | |
| Day-level Seeking Resources | 0.055 | 0.057 | 0.965 |
| Day-level Seeking Challenges | -0.031 | 0.054 | -0.574 |
| Day-level Reducing Demands | 0.134 | 0.058 | 2.310* |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 3

Actor–Partner Interdependence Model of the Contagion of Day-level Seeking Challenges (dependent variable = day-level seeking challenges actor)

| Variables | Model | | |
|--|----------|-------|-----------|
| | Estimate | SE | t |
| Intercept | 3.810 | 0.110 | 34.636*** |
| Control Variables | | | |
| Age | 0.005 | 0.007 | 0.714 |
| Sex | -0.037 | 0.145 | -0.255 |
| Organizational Tenure | -0.005 | 0.010 | -0.500 |
| General-level Seeking Challenges Actor | 0.306 | 0.078 | 3.923*** |
| Partner Effects | | | |
| Day-level Seeking Resources | -0.070 | 0.062 | -1.129 |
| Day-level Seeking Challenges | 0.154 | 0.059 | 2.610** |
| Day-level Reducing Demands | 0.045 | 0.063 | 0.714 |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 4

Actor–Partner Interdependence Model of the Contagion of Day-level Reducing demands (dependent variable = day-level reducing demands actor)

| Variables | Model | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-------|-----------|
| | Estimate | SE | t |
| Intercept | 4.086 | 0.084 | 48.643*** |
| Control Variables | | | |
| Age | -0.006 | 0.005 | -1.200 |
| Sex | 0.072 | 0.111 | -0.649 |
| Organizational Tenure | 0.007 | 0.007 | 1.000 |
| General-level Reducing Demands Actor | 0.425 | 0.075 | 5.667*** |
| Partner Effects | | | |
| Day-level Seeking Resources | 0.070 | 0.054 | 1.296 |
| Day-level Seeking Challenges | -0.003 | 0.052 | -0.058 |
| Day-level Reducing Demands | 0.097 | 0.055 | 1.763 |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Results of APIM analyses support the bidirectional contagion of seeking challenges ($t = 2.610$; see Table 3), but does not support the bidirectional contagion of seeking resources and reducing demands (no main effect; $t = 0.965$, ns, see Table 2 and $t = 1.763$, ns, see Table 4). This supports hypothesis 1b, but does not support hypotheses 1a and 1c. We found an additional result which was not part of our hypotheses; reducing demands by the partner is positively related to seeking resources by the actor ($t = 2.310$; see Table 2).

To test the relationship between day-level job crafting and day-level team member adaptivity self-rated (hypothesis 2) and other-rated team member adaptivity (hypothesis 3), we examined a model containing the following elements; the intercept, the control variables (general-level team member adaptivity, age, gender and organizational tenure), and the predictor (day-level job crafting). Only the dependent variable is different for both hypotheses; hypotheses 2 (team member adaptivity self-rated) and hypotheses 3 (team member adaptivity other-rated). Table 5 and 6 present unstandardized estimates, standard errors, and t values for the predictors of these models, for team member adaptivity self-rated and team member adaptivity other-rated respectively.

Table 5
The relationship between job crafting and team member adaptivity self-rated

| Variables | Model | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-------|-----------|
| | Estimate | SE | t |
| Intercept | 2.684 | 0.107 | 25.084*** |
| Control Variables | | | |
| Age | 0.004 | 0.007 | 0.571 |
| Sex | -0.252 | 0.141 | -1.787 |
| Organizational Tenure | 0.002 | 0.010 | 0.200 |
| General-level Team member Adaptivity | 0.226 | 0.138 | 1.638 |
| Predictors | | | |
| Day-level Seeking Resources | 0.216 | 0.063 | 3.429*** |
| Day-level Seeking Challenges | 0.203 | 0.059 | 3.441*** |
| Day-level Reducing Demands | -0.046 | 0.066 | -0.743 |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 6

The relationship between job crafting and team member adaptivity other-rated

| Variables | Model | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-------|-----------|
| | Estimate | SE | t |
| Intercept | 2.814 | 0.135 | 20.844*** |
| Control Variables | | | |
| Age | 0.001 | 0.009 | 0.111 |
| Sex | -0.063 | 0.177 | -0.356 |
| Organizational Tenure | 0.003 | 0.012 | 0.250 |
| General-level Team member Adaptivity | 0.027 | 0.174 | 0.155 |
| Predictors | | | |
| Day-level Seeking Resources | 0.163 | 0.072 | 2.264* |
| Day-level Seeking Challenges | -0.029 | 0.069 | -0.420 |
| Day-level Reducing Demands | -0.113 | 0.076 | -1.487 |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Results of the analyses show that day-level seeking resources and day-level seeking challenges are positively related to self-rated day-level team member adaptivity ($t = 3.429$ and $t = 3.441$; Table 5). Such relationship was not found between day-level reducing demands and self-rated team member adaptivity ($t = -0.743$, ns; Table 5). This supports hypotheses 2a and 2b, and does not support hypothesis 2c.

In support of hypothesis 3 (relationship between day-level job crafting and day-level team member adaptivity other-rated), we found a significant relationship between day-level seeking resources and day-level team member adaptivity other-rated ($t = 2.264$; Table 6), but not for the two other job crafting dimensions; seeking challenges ($t = -0.420$, ns; Table 6) and reducing demands ($t = -1.487$, ns; Table 6). This support hypotheses 3a, but does not support hypotheses 3b and 3c.

Discussion

In the present study, we examined the daily contagion of job crafting behavior between two coworkers. The results clearly show that contagion of job crafting is possible, in this case for the 'seeking challenges' dimension. There is no daily contagion of reducing demands and seeking resources between coworkers. Daily job crafting has beneficial effects for colleague's self-rated and other-rated team member adaptivity. Seeking resources and seeking challenges are positively related to self-rated team member adaptivity and seeking resources is positively related to other-rated team member adaptivity. No results were found for the relationship between reducing demands and team member adaptivity.

One of the most significant findings of this study was that contagion of seeking challenges takes place. This is in line with theories of organizational socialization (Louis, 1980b), social learning (Bandura, 1977) and emotional contagion (Hatfield et al., 1994); all arguing that coworkers affect each other's emotional states and behavior at work. Especially since proactivity is a characteristic that becomes increasingly important for organizations (Parker et al., 2006), it is even more likely that coworkers observe, model and imitate proactive behaviors. This is in line with the finding that contagion of creativity takes place between coworkers as well (Zhou, 2003), especially in a period (1990- early 2000s) during which organizations became aware that creativity contributes to organizational innovation, effectiveness and survival (Shalley, Zhou & Oldham, 2004).

We found an additional result which was not expected. Day-level reducing demands of the partner was positively related to day-level seeking resources of the actor. This finding makes sense. The two coworkers in this study worked together in the same unit. If one employee decides to reduce the demands, by making work emotionally, physically or mentally less intense (Petrou et al., 2012), it is likely the coworkers within that unit experience a higher emotional, physical or mental workload. As a result, these coworkers will seek extra resources to deal with these increased job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). This finding indicates that there are other processes at work between coworkers within the same unit other than imitation/modeling. Employees' actions within a work unit also affects the coworkers because they share the work environment and work on the same tasks.

There is no contagion of reducing demands. Why? First of all, reducing demands is not positively related to work engagement (Tims et al., 2012; Petrou et al., 2012). In this study, we found no positive relationship between reducing demands and team member adaptivity. These findings raise questions regarding the positive effects of reducing demands on employees' wellbeing and motivation. Employees might not see the benefits of reducing demands and therefore may not imitate or model colleagues who reduce their demands. This is in line with the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) which argues that employees only imitate or model the behaviors of others if they expect positive outcomes by executing these behaviors. Moreover, reducing one's demands by making work emotionally, physically or mentally less intense (Petrou et al., 2012), if working in a team or unit, is associated with social loafing (George, 1992). Social loafing is the tendency of individual effort to decrease when people work in groups rather than individually (George, 1992). Because we studied the contagion of reducing demands between coworkers working within the same unit, it is possible they viewed the reduction of demands by their coworkers as a sign of social loafing, therefore not modeling or imitating these behaviors.

There is also no contagion of seeking resources. The above line of reasoning does not apply to seeking resources, because seeking resources, contrary to reducing demands, is associated with

positive effects on motivation and wellbeing (Tims et al., 2012; Petrou et al., 2012). For the contagion of job crafting, several workplace factors could act as a prerequisite. Bakker & Xanthopoulou (2009) for example, showed that the crossover of work engagement is moderated by the frequency of communication. In order to discard the contagion of seeking resources completely, first several moderators should be tested, such as autonomy, task interdependency and frequency of communication.

We expected positive relationships between all job crafting dimensions and team member adaptivity, both self-rated and other-rated adaptivity. We found such relationships for seeking resources and seeking challenges on team member adaptivity self-rated and seeking resources on team member adaptivity other-rated. The significant relationships are in line with studies arguing that job crafting allows employees to adapt to changes in work tasks (Petrou et al., 2012) and is a strategic advantage during organizational change (Van den Heuvel et al., 2012). The fact that seeking resources is positively related to team member adaptivity self-rated and other-rated strengthens the objectivity of this finding (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Seeking challenges is only related to team member adaptivity self-rated but not to other-rated, which makes this relationship more questionable but not unlikely. Reducing demands is not related to team member adaptivity at all, which is not as expected. As stated before, reducing demands is not viewed positively in general. However, we expected that reducing demands would help employees adapt to changes at work, just like the other two job crafting dimensions. It is possible that reducing demands is not related to adaptivity within the team, because reducing demands within a team is possibly viewed as social loafing (George, 1992) and therefore does not help employees adapt to changes that affect their team roles.

Limitations, Strengths, and Avenues for Future Research

One limitation of this study was the low Cronbach's α for the general-level measure of team member adaptivity, which is much lower than the reported value in the original study with the exact same items (Griffin et al., 2007). The values of Cronbach's α for the day-level measure of team member adaptivity (self-rated & other-rated) were high and similar to the value in the original study (Griffin et al., 2007). The large difference in reliability might explain why general-level team member adaptivity and day-level team member adaptivity show no significant correlation (see Table 1) and are not significantly related in the tested models (see Table 5 and Table 6). Using a different measure of general-level measure of team member adaptivity is advised. Despite the low Cronbach's α , we used the general-level measure of team member adaptivity in this study anyway because it only acted as a control variable for the second and third hypothesis and was not an important dependent or independent variable in this study.

A final limitation of the present study is that participants chose the coworker of the dyad themselves, which could have been a coworker they liked or had a good relationship with. Social learning theory argues that people are especially likely to imitate or model behaviors executed by others if they like them or have good relationships with them (Bandura, 1977). This implies that the contagion of job crafting we found does not apply to all working dyads and probably only applies to working dyads who like each other. However, we conducted some analyses regarding the quality of the relationship between the partner and actor as moderator for the contagion of job crafting and did not find any significant results. This increases the likelihood that the contagion of job crafting can be generalized to all working dyads within the same work unit.

A clear advantage of this diary study is that retrospective bias is reduced (Ohly et al., 2010) and that the daily fluctuations of the variables in this study can be examined in more detail. Also, the use of multiple measures of team member adaptivity (self-rated and peer-rated) contributes to the objectivity of the relationship between job crafting and team member adaptivity (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Especially for measures of work performance it is important to use multiple measures (Thornton 1980; Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988).

Our results clearly suggest that job crafting is transferred between coworkers working within the same unit. More research is needed to the contagion of job crafting, both for day-level and general-level. Other processes between coworkers regarding job crafting should be studied as well. As we found in this study, reducing demands of the partner leads to seeking resources of the actor within the same unit. In future research it is therefore important to realize that coworkers affect each other in multiple ways; not only by modeling each other's behavior but also because they share the same working environment. In order to study only the contagion effect, it is a good idea to study coworkers that have non-interdependent and separate tasks but are able to observe and model each other.

As already stated above, moderators need to be tested that may act as a prerequisite for the contagion of job crafting, because the contagion process is probably depending on many other workplace factors. Possible moderators are autonomy, task interdependency and frequency of communication. Now that we know that job crafting is transferred between coworkers, the underlying theoretical mechanisms should be studied more extensively in relation to this process; social learning theory, organizational socialization and emotional contagion. Finally, more research is needed to study the relationship between job crafting and adaptivity of employees to changes in work tasks, changes in work roles and changes in work in general.

Practical Implications

Our findings have an important implication for organizations that strive towards happy and productive employees. First, organizations should stimulate job crafting, and especially the behaviors ‘seeking resources’ and ‘seeking challenges’. Seeking challenges spreads around among coworkers and both behaviors have beneficial effects on team member adaptivity, and possibly on performance as a result. New trainings are appearing that stimulate job crafting among employees, with positive results (Van den Heuvel et al., 2012). Stimulating positive behavior that spreads around is an efficient way to contribute to a happy and productive workforce.

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Attachments

Items used to measure variables

General survey

General level of job crafting.

| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Regularly | Often |
|---|-------|--------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| <i>Seeking resources</i> | | | | | |
| I ask others for feedback on my job performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I ask colleagues for advice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I ask my supervisor for advice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I try to learn new things at work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>Seeking challenges</i> | | | | | |
| I ask for more tasks if I finish my work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I ask for more responsibilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I ask for more odd jobs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>Reducing demands</i> | | | | | |
| I try to ensure that my work is emotionally less intense. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I make sure that my work is mentally less intense. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I try to ensure that my work is physically less intense. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

General level of team member adaptivity: self-rated.

| | Completely disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Completely agree |
|--|---------------------|----------|---------|-------|------------------|
| I deal effectively with changes affecting my work unit (e.g., new members). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I learn new skills or take on new roles to cope with changes in the way my unit works. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I respond constructively to changes in the way my team works. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Diary survey

Day-level job crafting.

| | Totally applies | Applies | Applies somewhat | Does not apply | Totally doesn't apply |
|---|-----------------|---------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Seeking resources</i> | | | | | |
| Today.... | | | | | |
| ...I have asked others for feedback on my job performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...I have asked colleagues for advice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...I have asked my supervisor for advice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...I have tried to learn new things at work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>Seeking challenges</i> | | | | | |
| Today.... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...I have asked for more tasks if I finish my work. | | | | | |
| ...I have asked for more responsibilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...I have asked for more odd jobs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>Reducing demands</i> | | | | | |
| Today... | | | | | |
| ...I have tried to ensure that my work is emotionally less intense. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...I made sure that my work is mentally less intense. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...I have tried to ensure that my work is physically less intense. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Day-level team member adaptivity self rated (Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$)

| | Totally applies | Applies | Applies somewhat | Does not apply | Totally doesn't apply |
|--|-----------------|---------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Today.... | | | | | |
| ...I dealt effectively with changes affecting my work unit (e.g., new members). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...I learned new skills or take on new roles to cope with changes in the way my unit works. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...I responded constructively to changes in the way my team works. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Day-level team member adaptivity other rated. (Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$)

| | Totally applies | Applies | Applies somewhat | Does not apply | Totally doesn't apply |
|---|-----------------|---------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Today my colleague.... | | | | | |
| ... Dealt effectively with changes affecting his/her work unit (e.g., new members). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...learned new skills or take on new roles to cope with changes in the way his/her unit works. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ...responded constructively to changes in the way his/her team works. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |