



**Utrecht University**

Interpersonal Forgiveness in Workplace Relationships

*A study examining the associations between forgiveness, rumination, forgiveness climate and work performance.*

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## **Abstract**

Conflicts occur inevitably and may also happen between colleagues at work. Forgiveness is an example of a productive response to these conflicts. It helps to restore positive work relationships, that are important for an organization's productivity. The current study examined whether there was an association between forgiveness and work performance (task and contextual). Further, it is investigated whether rumination mediated and forgiveness climate moderated this association. The sample consisted of 108 participants (21 – 64 years) who have been recruited from various organizations in the Netherlands. The results showed that there only was an association between forgiveness and contextual performance. No significant effects were found for the association between forgiveness and task performance, rumination as a mediator or forgiveness climate as a moderator. However, in additional exploratory analyses, it appears that when individuals are able to forgive their offender completely this is associated with forgiveness climate. Further, it has been found that forgiveness mediate the association between forgiveness climate and contextual performance. This finding suggests that a forgiveness climate in an organization might be important to stimulate forgiveness among employees and this might increase their contextual performance. Finally, implications for further are discussed.

*Keywords:* Forgiveness, Rumination, Work Performance (task and contextual), Forgiveness Climate

## **Introduction**

Organizations have rapidly developed over time. Along with these developments, cooperation between employees has been highly increased, such as the dramatically expanding amount of working in teams (Jiang, 2010). In organizations, positive relationships are important to enhance effectiveness and productivity of an organisation, which would gain more profit (Beal, 2003). On the other hand, when relationships are at their worst, relations can be a toxic and destructive source of negativity, pain and depletion (Dutton & Ragins, 2017).

It is a major challenge for employees to stay positive and work effectively. One of the greatest challenges is dealing with possible conflicts. Regardless whether relationships between colleagues are positive or negative, conflicts are inevitable. A conflict is the result of the tension between colleagues because of real or perceived differences (Fehr & Gelfand, 2012). Furthermore, trends toward globalization and the cooperation among employees in organizations suggest that the frequency and intensity of interpersonal conflict at work will only continue to increase (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008). Research by Statistics Netherlands shows that one in five employees had a short-term conflict with a colleague in 2016; 13 percent had a conflict with a manager; seven percent with the employer and about two percent of the employees had a long-term work conflict last year.

When a conflict, inevitably, occurs, there are different ways to respond. Individuals can have productive or destructive reactions to a conflict (Ayoko, Callan & Härtel, 2008). Destructive reactions are often associated with negative emotions such as hostility, annoyance and frustration (Ayko et al., 2008), whereas productive reactions on conflicts refer to positive outcomes, such as learning form a specific conflict. Forgiveness can be seen as a productive reaction and can be defined as a cognitive, emotional and behavioural response to interpersonal conflicts (Lawler, Edmondson, Jobe, Jones, Piferi & Younger, 2005). This means that forgiveness transforms strong negative cognitions, emotions and behaviour into more neutral or more positive cognitions, emotions and behaviours, such as trust, empathy, loyalty and benevolence towards the offender (McCullough, Root, & Cohen, 2006; McCullough & Witvliet, 2002). Thus, forgiveness helps to restore the relationship with the offender to its original positive state (Chung & Beverland, 2006).

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Forgiveness can be classified as a trait or state. ‘Trait forgiveness’ represents an individuals’ characteristic which makes one a forgiving person or not. This differs from ‘state forgiveness’, which refers to individuals who forgive others depending on the specific contexts of interpersonal injustices or conflicts at a given point in time (Kim & Enright, 2016; Toussaint & Webb, 2005). The present research specifically focuses on ‘state forgiveness’ in an organization. This focus is chosen to investigate what impact the context (why, how and who) might have on individuals to forgive after they are involved in a specific conflict at work.

However, it is still unknown what the role is of forgiveness in the workplace. Previous research mostly focuses on the causes of forgiveness, for example when, how and why employees of a conflict choose forgiveness as a response (Fehr et al., 2012; Tripp, Bies & Aquino, 2007). However, the consequences of forgiveness in the workplace, for example on work performance, has received limited scientific attention and is sparsely investigated by organizational researchers. The current study therefore focuses on the consequence of forgiveness in the workplace. Especially, the association between forgiveness and work performance is investigated. In addition, it is examined whether rumination mediates and if a forgiveness climate moderates the relation between forgiveness and work performance.

### **Forgiveness and Work Performance**

As mentioned before, the present research focuses on the consequences of forgiveness in the workplace and especially on the association between forgiveness and work performance.

Work performance can be distinguished into task performance and contextual performance. Task performance and contextual performance are two distinct dimensions of behaviour at work that can contribute independently to effectiveness outcomes for organizations and particularly for supporting long-term successes (Griffin, Neal, & Neale, 2000). Task performance reflects how well and effective an individual performs the duties required by the job. Task performance is in direct relation to the organization's technical core, for example selling merchandise in a retail store, teaching students at the university or executing operations in a hospital (Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994).

In contrast, contextual performance refers to the aspects of an individual’s performance which contribute to the social and psychological core of an organization. Contextual

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performance can make individuals (employees) feel socially and psychologically better about their job, which can be beneficial for their task performance (Griffin et al., 2000). Examples of contextual performance are helping and cooperating with colleagues, volunteering to carry out task activities that are not formally part of the job and defending the organization (Motowidlo, & Van Scotter, 1994).

There is some indirect evidence that forgiveness is positively associated with both task and contextual performance. For example, individuals who are able to forgive others show higher levels of well-being (Toussaint et al., 2005). Well-being can be characterized when individuals subjectively believe that they are happy, experience more positive emotions and are less sensitive to negative emotions (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000). Similarly, individuals who may have more difficulties to forgive may suffer from a dysfunctional psychological well-being, with symptoms such as depression, low self-esteem or high levels of stress (Hall, & Fincham, 2005; Harris et al., 2006; McCullough, Bellah, Kilpatrick & Johnson, 2001). Forgiveness helps to protect against these symptoms of well being and to maintain higher levels of well-being (Toussaint, et al., 2018). According to the *happy-productive worker hypothesis* (dates from the Human Relations Movement of the 1930s) employees who have higher levels of well-being, and are therefore happier, more confident and more satisfied with their job, are more productive and show higher levels of work performance (Taris & Schreurs, 2009; Wright, Cropanzano, & Bonett, 2007).

Based on these previous findings, the idea that more forgiveness in the workplace may be associated with work performance is supported. Therefore, it is expected that there is a positive association between forgiveness and work performance. Furthermore, there is no reason to expect that there is a different effect between task and contextual.

### **Forgiveness, Rumination and Work Performance**

How can the association between forgiveness and work performance be explained? Although many underlying factors may help explain the association between forgiveness and work performance, in the present research, the mediating role of rumination is examined. It is expected that forgiveness is related to work performance because it reduces rumination levels.

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Rumination can be defined as “a class of conscious thoughts that revolve around a common instrumental theme and that recur in the absence of immediate environmental demands requiring the thought” (Martin & Tesser, 1996). Rumination is a response to many different types of emotions and circumstances, for example focusing on negative thoughts about an offender of a conflict (Barber, Maltby & Macaskill, 2005; Edmondson, 2004).

Research indicates that state forgiveness is strongly related to rumination. Forgiveness is about letting go of revenge or grudges towards the offender (Exline, Baumeister, Bushman, Campbell & Finkel, 2004). State-oriented individuals, who have difficulties in forgiving others, tend to ruminate more because they have difficulties in releasing these feelings and will continue to negatively focus on the conflict and the offender (Edmondson, 2004; Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005). Thus, when an individual is not able to forgive, this results in more rumination (Barber et al., 2005).

Additionally, research indicates that, if rumination occurs, it results in several negative outcomes which can affect work performance. First, several longitudinal studies have shown that when individuals ruminate more they have higher levels of depressive symptoms over time. Additionally, rumination results in negative reviews of an individual self or future, which is related to depression (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2000). According to Harvey et al., (2011), symptoms of depression may consequently have an impact on work performance in general because, for example, it reduces concentration and causes a poor motivation. Further, rumination is associated with poor sleep quality and can cause increased levels of fatigue (Querstret & Cropley, 2012). This results in a negative work performance which includes absenteeism and occupational accidents (Kompier, Taris, & Van Veldhoven, 2012). At last, according to Harrington and Loffredo (2010), rumination was even the most powerful negative predictor of well-being. Research suggested that periods of rest and recovery are important for maintaining well-being because it will bring some relief from, for example, negative experiences, such as a conflict. Rumination hinders the recovery process because due to the continuous negative thoughts, rest cannot be reached optimally. As a result the psychological well-being and therefore a greater work performance may be affected (Sonnentag, 2003; Cropley & Zijlstra, 2011).

Drawing on the findings mentioned above, it is known that when an individual has difficulties to forgive this is related to higher levels of rumination. Rumination has several

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negative outcomes. These outcomes, taken separately, have a negative impact on work performance. In the current research, it is expected that rumination plays a mediating role on the association between forgiveness and work performance. This implies that when an individual has difficulties to forgive after a conflict, this results in more rumination and these higher levels of rumination, in turn, results in lower work performance.

### **Forgiveness, Forgiveness Climate and Work Performance**

As mentioned before, individual differences explain why forgiveness is related to work performance. Additionally, an organization, including a forgiveness climate, might also explain why individuals forgive and this taken together could have an impact on their work performance.

A forgiveness climate is an organizational-level phenomenon that explains when and why employees respond to conflict prosocially. An organization that hosts a forgiveness climate, stimulates their employees to be more forgiving, empathic and benevolent towards an offender in a conflict (Fehr et al., 2012; Guchait, Lanza-Abbott, Madera & Dawson, 2016).

As discussed previously, it is expected that when employees are already able to forgive this might result in a greater work performance. This association could possibly be even stronger when an organization has a forgiveness climate. As when employees experience difficulties in forgiving others, a forgiveness climate could stimulate them to be more forgiving (Fehr et al., 2012). Furthermore, a forgiveness climate motivates employees to have more compassion and to be more understanding of their colleagues perspective after a conflict (Fehr et al., 2012).

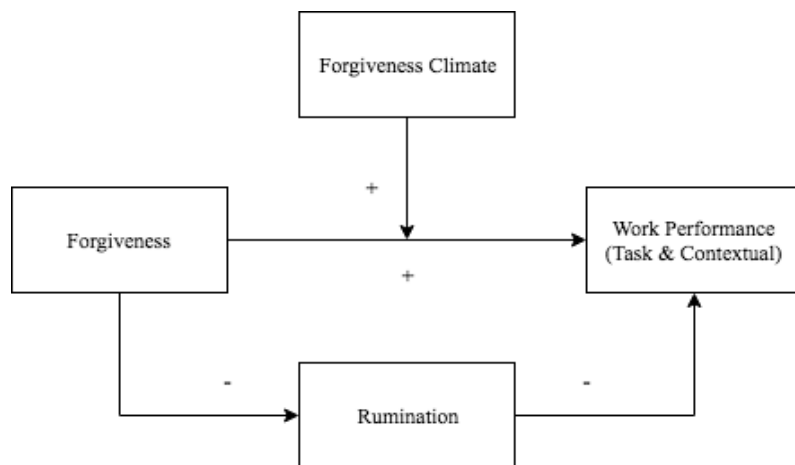
The present study examines the expectation that a forgiveness climate within an organization moderates the association between forgiveness and work performance. This indicates that when organisations includes a forgiveness climate there is a stronger association between forgiveness and work performance than for organisations without a forgiveness climate. A forgiveness climate may be beneficial for work performance if employees have a low state of forgiveness by stimulating them to do so. Additionally, a forgiveness climate is a major advantage for work performance when individuals already have a high state of forgiveness and thus are already able to act on this comfortably by being able to forgive when they feel this is needed.

### **Research questions**

In sum, the current study examines the association between forgiveness and work performance. Positive work relationships are beneficial for an organisation. However, conflicts at work are inevitable, regardless whether work relationships are positive or negative. Whether a conflict actually causes damage to work relationships depends on the way individuals respond to such conflict. Forgiveness is an example of a productive reaction, which can restore a work relationship after a conflict. Because the importance of forgiveness in the workplace has received only limited attention from organizational researchers and the association with work performance remains unexplored, the present study focuses on this association and therefore importantly contributes to the existing literature. Additionally, it is examined whether rumination is a mediator and whether forgiveness climate is a moderator within the association between forgiveness and work performance. Within this study the following hypotheses are tested (Figure 1):

1. Forgiveness is positively associated with work performance
2. forgiveness and work performance are positively associated through reduced levels of rumination.
3. A relatively higher forgiveness climate within an organization culture strengthens the positive relationship between forgiveness and work performance.

*Figure 1. Process model forgiveness, rumination, work performance and forgiveness climate*





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## **Method**

### **Participants**

The present study had to recruit at least 100 participants based on the power analysis (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner & Lang, 2009). Therefore, the research sample consisted of 108 participants, in which 65,74 % (N = 71) were female and 34,26 % (N = 37) are men. Of all participants, 124 were excluded from the analyses because of missing incomplete submissions. Therefore, the response rate was 46.55%. The participants had an average age of 38.44 years ( $SD = 13.75$ ) with a minimum age of 21 years and a maximum of 64 years. Of all participants, 43 were in junior management, 54 in middle management and 11 in top management. Furthermore, within the participants group, 62 were regularly employed, 37 were temporarily employed, 2 were independent entrepreneurs, and 7 of them had their own company with its own personnel. According to the questionnaire, participants worked an average of 33.50 ( $SD = 9.48$ ) hours a week based on their employment contract. In reality, they worked more than their contract stated, ( $M = 41.98$ ,  $SD = 13.39$ ).

### **Design**

The current research had a correlational design. The research was conducted at a single moment and all participants had to complete the same questionnaire. All the included variables in this research were continuous. The independent variable was the level of forgiveness, the dependent variable was work performance (task and contextual), rumination was included as the mediator and forgiveness climate as moderator.

### **Procedure**

Participants were recruited by contacting multiple contact persons from various organizations within the Netherlands and from the researcher's own network. The recruited participants had to complete multiple self-report questionnaires on how they deal with possible conflicts in their organisation. Qualtrics was used as an online platform to process the data collection. Before they started the self-reported questionnaires, participants were informed about the purpose of this study. They also received the informed consent with essential information regarding the explanation of their voluntary participation and the anonymity, confidentiality and importance of

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the study (Appendix A). They also had to fill in the ethical approval form and they were made aware that they had the possibility of being able to withdraw at any time (Appendix A). The current research was also ethically approved by the Faculty Ethics Review Committee of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Utrecht.

In the questionnaire, participants were first asked to complete their demographic data. After this has been done, they were asked to recall a recent incident in which they felt offended or hurt by one of their colleagues. An example is: *‘Door mijn baas een boze uitstorting over me heen gekregen, deze was zeer onterecht.’* Then they received questions about the incident. Participants were asked how well the relationship was with the offender at the time of the offense (commitment) on a scale from 1 to 7 ( $M = 4.83$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ), how severe they thought the incident was, with three items (e.g., ‘how intense was the incident’) on a scale from 1 to 7 ( $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = 4.33$ , Cronbach’s .88), how long ago the incident took place ( $M = 5.01$ ,  $SD = 10.00$ ), within the range [1, 26], how often the victim had to work with the offender ( $M = 4.79$ ,  $SD = 1.51$ ) and if the offender was their leader ( $N = 53$ ) or not ( $N = 55$ ). Finally, the participants completed questionnaires measuring their forgiveness, rumination, work performance, and forgiveness climate. 75 of the 108 participants completed the survey within the expected 15 minutes. The other 33 participants have times varying between 15 minutes and 31 hours. It is expected that these participants might not have had the opportunity to fill in the questionnaire at once.

## **Measures**

In this study, for assessing the four key variables Dutch questionnaires are used.

**Forgiveness.** For assessing self-reported interpersonal forgiveness the The Transgression-related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM) was used (McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, & Worthington, 1998; adapted by Karremans, Van Lange, & Holland, 2005). This inventory was a 12-item measure, which assesses motivations towards a transgressor. The TRIM consisted of three subscales: The Positive Forgiveness scale (4 items), composed of statements such as “Ik heb de ander dit voorval helemaal vergeven”, the Revenge scale (4 items), composed of statements such as “Ik zou willen dat de ander op een of andere manier ‘teruggepak’t’ wordt, wanneer ik aan het voorval denk” and the Avoidance scale (4 items), composed of statements such as “Ik zou wat afstand willen nemen van de ander, wanneer ik aan

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het voorval denk”. The participants were asked to indicate the extent, to which they agree with each statement, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7) (see Appendix A). Negative items were recoded into positive items, such that a higher score indicated more forgiveness (item, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12) and for the analyses the average of all items taken together has been used. The internal consistency for all these items together was good (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .89$ ).

**Rumination.** Rumination was measured by the Rumination questionnaire (Pronk, Karremans, Overbeek, Vermulst, & Wigboldus, 2010). This inventory consisted of 4 items. These items were statements which were assessed on a scale of 1 (= strongly disagree) t/m 7 (= strongly agree). An example of a statement is “Ik denk nog vaak aan die kwetsende collega terug” (Appendix C). For the analysis, all items were used and the internal consistency was good (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .88$ ).

**Work performance.** To measure work performance the Work Performance questionnaire was used (Koopmans, et al., Bernaards, 2014; Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, De Vet & Van Der Beek, 2014). This inventory was a 13-item measure, which assesses task and contextual performance. An example of a question of task performance was: “lukte het mij om mijn werk zo te plannen, dat het werk op tijd af was”. An example of a question of contextual performance was: “ben ik uit mezelf met nieuwe taken begonnen, als mijn oude taken af waren”. The items were statements which were related to work activities at work in the past two months. The statements were assessed on a scale of 1 (= hardly ever) t/m 7 (= nearly always ) (Appendix A). For the analysis, the Work Performance scale was divided in the Task Performance scale (5 items). The internal consistency was acceptable (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .67$ ) and the Contextual Performance scale (7 items), in which the internal consistency was good (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .85$ ). Both scales were used for the analysis and the total internal consistency was acceptable (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .78$ ).

**Forgiveness climate.** Finally, the Forgiveness Climate was measured with the four items adopted from a four-item Forgiveness Climate Scale developed and validated by Cox (2011). An example of an item is: “We hebben geen wraakgevoelens” and all items were rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (= strongly disagree) to 7 (= strongly agree) (Appendix A) (Cox, 2011; Guchait et al., 2016). All The average score on all items was used for the analyses. The internal consistency was acceptable (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .71$ ).

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### **Statistical analyses**

After the data collection the data was analysed, by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 26 van IBM Statistics and PROCESS-macro by Andrew F. Hayes. First of all, participants who could not recall a conflict were removed from the data. Secondly, remaining participants who did not complete the questionnaire or didn't fill in some questions were also removed from the data.

For the analyses, work performance was divided into task performance and contextual performance and therefore the hypotheses were tested for both variables separately.

First, the descriptive analysis was conducted. Furthermore, a correlation analysis was also conducted to assess the size and direction of the linear relationship between the variables forgiveness, rumination, work performance (task and contextual) and forgiveness climate, a bivariate Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was calculated. It was also considered whether control variables should be included.

PROCESS, by Andrew F. Hayes, was used for testing all of the three hypotheses. All the hypotheses, importantly, were significant if zero does not occur in the confidence interval (CI 95%).

For the first two hypotheses, model 4 and the percentile bootstrap estimation approach with 1000 samples was used. For the first hypothesis, the independent variable was forgiveness and the dependent variable was work performance (task & contextual). For the second hypothesis, the independent variable was forgiveness and the dependent was work performance (task & contextual), with rumination as mediation variable.

For the third hypothesis, model 7 and the percentile bootstrap estimation approach with 1000 samples was used. The independent variable was forgiveness, the dependent variable was work performance (task & contextual) and the moderation variable was forgiveness climate.

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## **Results**

### **Descriptive and Correlation Analysis**

The descriptive analysis showed the average and the standard deviation of the variables (table 1). Most importantly, the average of forgiveness, task- and contextual performance and forgiveness climate was rather high and the average of rumination was low, which indicates that most individuals were able to forgive, performed well, experienced a forgiveness climate in their organization and didn't ruminate that much.

Furthermore, a bivariate Pearson's correlation has been implemented and the correlations can be seen in table 1. Most importantly, the correlation between forgiveness and work performance (task and contextual) was for contextual performance significant, moderate and positive  $r(108) = .19, p = .05$  and for task performance non-significant (table 1). This suggests that there might be a relation between forgiveness and context performance, which means that when an employee is able to forgive this is better for their contextual performance. Furthermore, the correlation between forgiveness and rumination was significant, moderate and positive  $r(108) = -.60, p < .001$  but the correlation between rumination was for both task- and contextual performance non-significant (table 1). This finding suggests that the ability to forgiveness might result in less rumination. The correlation between task- and contextual performance was significant, weak/low and positive  $r(108) = .40, p < .001$ . This weak correlation might suggest that there is a difference between task- and contextual performance. Additionally, the correlation between forgiveness and forgiveness climate was significant, moderate and positive  $r(108) = .23, p < .02$ . Therefore, there is a suggestion that forgiveness and forgiveness climate might be associated.

Before testing the hypotheses, the following control variables were included: commitment, severity and time to verify if they affected work performance (task and contextual). The results revealed that both severity and commitment did not correlate with both task - and contextual performance (table 1). Additionally, time did not correlate with contextual performance, but did correlate with task performance. Therefore, for the further analysis conducted on task performance, time was included as a control variable. All three control variables correlated with forgiveness, which replicates previous research (Fincham, Jackson

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& Beach, 2005; Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro & Hannon, 2002; Karremans, Van Lange, Ouwerkerk & Kluwer, 2003).

Additionally, it was tested, through an independent samples t-test whether there was an impact on work performance (task and contextual) between men and women and between the victim's whether their offender was their leader or not. This independent t-test did not reveal significant differences between men and women and between whether the offender was the leader or not, for both task- and contextual performance.

Based on these findings, it could be suggested that there is a significant relation between forgiveness and contextual performance and that there could be an association between forgiveness and forgiveness climate. Furthermore, there is no reason to include the control variables in the following analyses.

Table 1

*Descriptives and correlations*

	M (SD)	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. Forgiveness	5.06 (1.14)	-.60**	.02	.19*	.23*	.28**	-.43**	-.39**
2. Rumination	2.77 (1.50)		-.17	-.18	-.19	-.29**	.38**	.14
3. Task Performance	5.01 (.72)			.40**	.08	.10	.08	.20*
4. Contextual Performance	5.29 (.79)				-.02	-.04	-.01	.07
5. Forgiveness Climate	5.10 (.95)					.05	-.10	.09
6. Commitment	4.83 (1.34)						.16	-.12
7. Severity	4.08 (4.33)							.29**
8. Time	4.77 (9.71)							

*N* = 108

\*\* . Correlation is significant at  $p < .01$

\* . Correlation is significant at  $p < .05$

## **Confirmatory Analyses**

### **Hypothesis 1&2: Forgiveness, Rumination and Work Performance (Task & Contextual).**

To test the first and the second hypothesis, a mediation analysis was performed. First, task performance was included as an outcome variable. For task performance, controlled for 'time', we did not find a significant total effect (forgiveness on task performance;  $b = .07$   $SE = .06$ , 95% CI [-.05 to .20]), neither a direct effect (forgiveness on task performance, controlling for rumination;  $b = -.01$ ,  $SE = .08$ , 95% CI [-.16 to .15]), nor an indirect effect (rumination mediating the association between forgiveness and task performance;  $b = .08$   $SE = .07$ , 95% CI [-.04 to .22]). Also the explained variance of the total model was significant,  $R^2 = .08$ ;  $F(3, 103) = 2.91$ ;  $p = .04$ . We only found a significant association between forgiveness and the mediator rumination,  $b = -.84$ ,  $t(108) = .11$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-1.06 to -.62], but not between the mediator rumination and the dependent variable task performance,  $b = -.09$ ,  $t(108) = -1.68$ ,  $p = .10$ , 95% CI [-.21 to .02].

Second, for contextual performance, we did find a significant total effect (forgiveness on contextual performance;  $b = .14$   $SE = .07$ , 95% CI [.01 to .27]). But we did not find a direct effect (forgiveness on contextual performance, controlling for rumination;  $b = .09$   $SE = .08$ , 95% CI [-.07 to .26]) and neither an indirect effect (rumination mediating the association between forgiveness and contextual performance;  $b = .05$   $SE = .05$ , 95% CI [-.06 to .14]). Also the explained variance of the total model was non-significant,  $R^2 = .04$ ;  $F(1, 107) = 4.50$ ;  $p = .04$ . We only found a significant association between forgiveness and the mediator rumination,  $b = -.79$ ,  $t(108) = -7.66$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-.99 to -.58], but not for association between the mediator rumination and the dependent variable contextual performance,  $b = -.06$ ,  $t(108) = -.93$ ,  $p > .001$ , 95% CI [-.18 to .07].

These findings might indicate for testing the first hypothesis, there was a significant association between forgiveness and contextual performance, but not for task performance. For testing the second hypothesis, it appears that rumination did not mediate the relation between forgiveness and both task- and contextual performance.

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**Hypothesis 3: Forgiveness, Forgiveness Climate and Work Performance (Task & Contextual).**

For the third hypothesis, a moderation analysis was performed. First, for task performance, controlled for time, the main effect for both forgiveness and forgiveness climate and the interaction effect on task performance were non-significant (table 2). This indicates that a high level of forgiveness climate does not strengthen the effect of forgiveness on task performance. The explained variance of this model was also non-significant  $R^2 = .05$ ,  $F(4, 102) = 1.46$ ,  $p = .22$ .

Table 2

*Regression results for the prediction of task performance from forgiveness and forgiveness climate*

Predictor	$\beta$	$p$	95% CI
Forgiveness	.07	.31	-.07, .20
Forgiveness Climate	.02	.83	-.13, .17
Forgiveness x Forgiveness Climate	-.01	.84	-.13, .11

\* Significance at  $p \leq .05$

Secondly, for contextual performance, the main effect on forgiveness was significant for contextual performance:  $b = .14$ , 95% CI [.006 to .276],  $t = 2.06$ ,  $p = .04$ . The main effect of forgiveness climate and the interaction effect on contextual performance were non-significant. Thus, for contextual performance, a high level of forgiveness climate does not strengthen the effect of forgiveness on contextual performance either (table 4). The explained variance of this model was also non-significant  $R^2 = .04$ ,  $F(3, 104) = 1.51$ ,  $p = .22$ .



Table 3

*Regression results for the prediction of contextual performance from forgiveness and forgiveness climate*

Predictor	$\beta$	$p$	95% CI	
Forgiveness	.14	.04	.01,	.28
Forgiveness Climate	-.05	.55	-.21,	.11
Forgiveness Climate x Forgiveness	-.02	.72	-.11,	.15

\* Significant at  $p \leq .05$

### **Explorative Analyses**

Explorative analyses have been conducted to find out why there are no significant results of the hypothesis regarding rumination as mediator and forgiveness climate as moderator between forgiveness and work performance (task and contextual).

Firstly, there is a significant correlation (Table 1), a total effect and a main effect (Table 3) found between forgiveness and contextual performance, but not for task performance. There was also a significant correlation between rumination and forgiveness (Table 1). There was no significant relation between rumination and contextual performance, but based on these findings it can be suggested that instead of rumination as a mediator, forgiveness might mediate the association between rumination and contextual performance. However, the explorative mediation analyses revealed that this was not the case. This indicates that neither rumination was a mediator between forgiveness and contextual performance, nor was forgiveness a mediator between the association rumination and contextual performance,  $b = -.04$   $SE = .04$ , 95% CI [-.12 to .03].

Secondly, now that it has been established that forgiveness is linked to contextual performance, it is possible to examine which different subscales, independently, of forgiveness are related to contextual performance. As mentioned before, the forgiveness scale is divided in three subscales: positive forgiveness, avoidance and revenge. Results show that only positive forgiveness was significant positively associated,  $r(108) = .25$ ,  $p = .01$ , with contextual performance. The sub-scales avoidance and revenge were not significantly associated with contextual performance.

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Finally, there wasn't a significant moderation analysis of forgiveness climate on the association between forgiveness and contextual performance. However, forgiveness climate is significantly associated with forgiveness and, in turn, forgiveness is significantly associated with contextual performance. Therefore, it is examined whether forgiveness might be a mediator between the association forgiveness climate and work performance. In this possible mediation, a forgiveness climate might result in more forgiveness among employees and this might lead to a better contextual performance. A mediation analysis revealed that there was indeed a significant indirect effect of forgiveness on the association between forgiveness climate and contextual performance,  $b = .04$   $SE = .03$ , 95% CI [.00 to .12]. This indicates that forgiveness mediates the relation between forgiveness climate and contextual performance.

## **Discussion**

It is a major challenge to maintain positive relationships with others. In organizations, these positive relationships are very important. Unfortunately, these relationships can be threatened and disturbed by conflicts, which inevitably occur. However, the way in which relationships are affected depends on how individuals respond to each other in a conflict. Forgiveness, for example, is a productive response that helps to restore the relationships. Previous research mostly focused on the causes of forgiveness. The consequences of forgiveness are hardly investigated and had limited attention from organizational researchers. Therefore, the current study focused on the consequences of forgiveness in the workplace and its association with work performance. Additionally, it is examined whether rumination mediates and a forgiveness climate moderates the relation between forgiveness and work performance.

### *Theoretical implications*

First of all, it was expected that there was a positive relation between forgiveness and work performance, without expecting that there would be a difference between task- and contextual performance. According to the results, forgiveness was surprisingly only associated with contextual performance and not with task performance. An explanation for this finding could be that contextual performance includes activities, such as helping and cooperating with a colleague, that ultimately contribute to task activities and processes (Borman & Motowidlo,

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1997). It may be reasonable to assume that when participants were not able to forgive a specific colleague after having a conflict, they may no longer be intrinsically motivated to help or cooperate with this colleague, whereas lacking forgiveness does not necessarily affect task performance.

As soon as the association between forgiveness and contextual performance had been found, it was examined which subscale of forgiveness was associated with contextual performance. It appears that only 'positive forgiveness' was associated with contextual performance. This indicates that when participants no longer had a 'grudge' and had completely forgiven the offender, this was better for their contextual performance. The sub-scales 'avoidance' and 'revenge' were not associated with contextual performance. This indicates that when participants no longer wanted to take revenge on the offender or wanted to avoid the offender, this was not associated with contextual performance.

The second hypothesis, in which rumination mediates the association between forgiveness and work performance (task and contextual), is not confirmed. However, there was found a significant association between forgiveness and rumination. This was in accordance with previous research, which indicated that forgiveness was strongly related to rumination (Edmondson, 2004; Barber, et al., 2005; Sonnentag et al., 2005). How is it possible that rumination is not a mediator between forgiveness and contextual performance? In the exploratory analysis it is examined whether forgiveness, instead of rumination, might mediate the association between rumination and contextual performance because rumination and forgiveness are associated but it is not clear which is the other's predictor. The results revealed that forgiveness did not mediate between the association rumination and contextual performance either. Another explanation could be that other mechanisms mediate the relationship between forgiveness and contextual performance, such as for example the commitment to a colleague (Finkel et al., 2002). When an employee is not able to forgive, this could result in less self-interest or motivation to maintain a close relationship with their offender. However, the commitment to colleagues is important because it ensures close working relationships, which fulfill the need for intimacy or security (Finkel et al., 2002). In these good working relationships employees want to work and cooperate with each other which could be beneficial for their contextual performance (Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996). Therefore, commitment could be

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positively associated with contextual performance. Whether commitment might mediate the association between forgiveness and contextual performance could be a potential topic to be examined in future research.

The third, and also the last hypothesis, in which a forgiveness climate moderates the relation between forgiveness and work performance (task and contextual), was not confirmed. From the results it appears that there is an association between forgiveness and contextual performance, not with task performance. There is also an association between forgiveness and forgiveness climate, which might hint towards a mediating role of one of these two variables. Based on these findings, it was therefore examined whether forgiveness might be the mediator between a forgiveness climate and contextual performance. This suggestion has been confirmed and this indicates that forgiveness mediate the association between forgiveness climate and contextual performance. This might indicate that when an organization includes and stimulates a forgiveness climate, employees probably are more willing to forgive, which might result in a better contextual performance. Additionally, it could still be that other mechanisms strengthen or weaken the association between forgiveness and contextual performance, for example commitment. Commitment increases the response to forgive, because when individuals are more committed and dependent on their relationship with their offender, they are more willing to forgive compared to those who were weakly committed to the offender (Karremans et al., 2003; Tsang, McCullough & Fincham, 2006). Thus, in further research it can be examined whether the commitment with a colleague, with whom an individual has a close relationship, might have an impact on the forgiveness and if it strengthens their work performance.

*Practical implication*

The results that have been found in the current research might be valuable to various organisations. Importantly, the results must be treated with great caution because no causal associations can be drawn. It appears that forgiveness might play an important role in the workplace. Forgiveness transforms strong negative cognitions, emotions and behaviour into more positive ones towards the offender, whereby the relationship can be restored (McCullough, Root, & Cohen, 2006; McCullough & Witvliet, 2002). This restored relationship is effective and beneficial for an organization because employees will effectively cooperate together again and

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they will help each other with working tasks whenever is necessary (Jiang, 2010: Beal, 2003). Furthermore, the current research has found evidence for the association between a forgiveness climate and forgiveness. Therefore, the current research could be a trigger for organisations to reflect on their own forgiveness climate and consider whether any improvement is needed. Importantly, further research will have to reveal whether stimulating such a forgiveness climate actually leads to more forgiveness among employees and if this positively influences their work performance.

*Strengths, Limitations and Future Research*

The current research has its strengths and areas for improvement. One of the greatest strengths is that no research had been done prior into the association between forgiveness and work performance. The current research is examining this relationship for the first time and may therefore be a relevant addition to scientific research. Another strength of the current research was that participants had to recall an actually happened conflict, which enhances the ecological validity. The last strength was the age of the participants varies widely (21 - 64 year). This is therefore relatively representative of the overall population. However, there are also a number of limitations that can be a recommendation for further research.

First, the correlational design of the current research was a limitation because no causal conclusions could be made. Therefore, as mentioned before, the associations that have been found will have to be treated with great caution. For future research, it is advisable to conduct a longitudinal study. This study is effective because it determine variable measurements over time. Therefore, it is possible to establish possible causal relations and to see whether forgiveness has an impact on work performance.

Another limitation is, besides the fact that the age of the participants varied, the majority of the participants had an University degree (59,3%). Previous research indicates that highly educated individuals tend to forgive more than less educated individuals. Highly educated individuals were more focused on restoring the relationship than taking revenge. Less educated individuals appear to be more concerned about the injustice that was done to them (Azar, Mullet & Vinsonneau, 1999). Additionally, it appears that highly educated individuals show higher levels of work performance, both task and contextual, because they are willing to contribute

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more effectively to their organization (Ng & Feldman, 2009). In the current research the average scores on forgiveness and work performance (task and context) were relatively high and based on these findings it is possible this is due to the majority of the highly educated participants. For further research, it is recommended that the participants will have to be more varied in terms of education. This way the score on forgiveness will be more reliable and valid within a specific group.

Furthermore, the current research might involve a recall bias. This implies that those, who were recently versus longer ago involved in a conflict, may have had a better recall of the conflict and filled in the questionnaire with more precision. A recall bias occurs when participants, who did not have to deal with a conflict recently, might either fail or have difficulties to recall this specific conflict (Tarrant, Manfreda, Bayley & Hess, 1993). A possible solution for the recall bias would be to reduce the recall period for reporting to a shorter period than the 6 six months, which currently is used. However, this seems unlikely a problem in this study as controlling for time since offense did not change the pattern of results.

Finally, the last limitation was that the questionnaire was a self-report. It is therefore not possible to draw precise conclusions, for example for work performance or whether an organization includes a forgiveness climate or not, because the questions were answered only by the participants themselves. For further research, other individuals, such as for example colleagues, manager, leader of the participant, should also be included to answer the questions about the different variables, such as work performance and forgiveness climate. Their answers can be compared and this way, the data would be more reliable and valid.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the purpose of the present research was to examine whether there was a relation between forgiveness and work performance. Furthermore, it was examined whether rumination mediates and a forgiveness climate moderates this relationship. The most important findings of the current research is the positive relationship between forgiveness and contextual performance. However, surprisingly, this was not found for task performance. The hypotheses, in which rumination mediates and forgiveness moderates the relation between forgiveness and work performance were also not confirmed. However, subsequent analyses showed that when an

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organization hosts a forgiveness climate, this might stimulate their employees to be more forgiving. This might eventually result in a better contextual performance. The current research adds to science with respect to forgiveness in the workplace because there is no previous research into the association between forgiveness and work performance.

It can be concluded that forgiveness is important for maintaining positive relationships, which might have possible beneficials for an organisation, such as increasing contextual performance of employees.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Informed Consent**

Beste deelnemer,

Voor een wetenschappelijk onderzoek van de Universiteit Utrecht willen wij graag een aantal vragen stellen over hoe u met conflicten omgaat op het werk. Het is hiervoor van belang dat u minimaal 10 uur per week werkzaam bent binnen een organisatie. Indien dit bij u het geval is, vragen wij u vriendelijk om aan dit onderzoek mee te doen. Het onderzoek bestaat uit een aantal korte vragenlijsten. Het beantwoorden van deze vragen zal maximaal 10-15 minuten in beslag nemen. De ethische commissie van de Universiteit Utrecht heeft officieel toestemming gegeven voor dit onderzoek. Alle gegevens worden vertrouwelijk en volledig anoniem behandeld. U bent vrij om op elk gewenst moment te stoppen met het onderzoek. Mocht u vragen of opmerkingen hebben over het onderzoek, de contactgegevens van de onderzoekers worden weergegeven aan het eind van de vragenlijst.

Alvast bedankt voor uw medewerking!

Indien u de introductie heeft gelezen en mee wilt doen aan dit onderzoek, klik dan op 'Ik ga akkoord' om door te gaan met het onderzoek.

Ik ga akkoord

### **Introductie**

Enkele aandachtspunten bij het invullen van de vragenlijst zijn:

Vult u de vragenlijst alstublieft in zonder te overleggen met uw collega's. Voor het slagen van het onderzoek is het van belang dat u alle vragen invult. Maak bij twijfel toch een keuze. Denk niet te lang na bij het invullen van de vragen. De eerste indruk is vaak het beste.

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**We starten met enkele algemene vragen over uzelf en uw werk.**

Wat is uw geslacht?

- Man (1)
  - Vrouw (2)
  - Anders, namelijk (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Wat is uw leeftijd? (in jaren invullen)

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Wat is uw hoogst behaalde diploma?

- Geen onderwijs/ Basisonderwijs/ Cursus inburgering of cursus Nederlandse taal (1)
  - LBO/ VBO/ VMBO/ MBO 1 (2)
  - MAVO/ HAVO/ ULO/ MULO (3)
  - MBO 2, 3, 4 (4)
  - VWO/ Gymnasium (5)
  - HBO (6)
  - WO/ Universiteit (7)
-

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Past uw functie het beste binnen junior, midden of senior management (als u moest kiezen)?

- Junior management (1)
  - Midden management (2)
  - Top management (3)
- 

Sector Binnen welke organisatiesector bent u werkzaam?

- Publieke sector (1)
  - Particuliere sector (2)
  - Commerciële sector (3)
  - Anders, namelijk (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Als u een inschatting zou moeten maken van de omvang van de organisatie waar u werkt, waarbij 10 een grote organisatie is (+1000 werknemers) en 1 een kleine organisatie (minder dan 10 werknemers). Wat is dan de grootte van uw organisatie?

	Heel Klein	Heel groot
	1	10
Grootte van uw organisatie ()		

Sinds wanneer werkt u binnen uw organisatie? (schrijf uw antwoord op in jaren)

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Wat voor een dienstverband heeft u?

- Ik heb een vast dienstverband (1)
  - Ik heb een tijdelijk dienstverband (2)
  - Ik werk als zelfstandige zonder personeel (ZZP) (3)
  - Ik heb een eigen bedrijf met personeel (4)
- 

Hoeveel uur werkt u aan de hand van uw arbeidscontract? (antwoord in uren per week)

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Hoeveel uur werkt u daadwerkelijk gemiddeld per week (inclusief reistijd en overuren)?  
(antwoord in uren per week)

---

Beantwoord s.v.p. de onderstaande vragen zo serieus mogelijk. Ondanks dat mensen graag sociale relaties met anderen aangaan op het werk, is het onvermijdelijk dat ze zich, zo nu en dan, beledigd of gekwetst voelen door een collega. We vragen u om een situatie voor de geest te halen waarin u zich beledigd of slecht behandeld voelde in het **afgelopen half jaar**. U mag hier gerust even de tijd voor nemen. Denk aan het ergste voorval en beschrijf het hieronder kort.

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Er volgen nu enkele vragen over het voorval dat u zojuist beschreven heeft.

Op het moment van het voorval, hoe goed was de relatie met de persoon die u kwetste?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
De relatie was...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Hoe kijkt u tegen het voorval aan in mate van intensiteit?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hoe ernstig was het voorval?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hoe gekwetst was u door wat de ander heeft gedaan?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hoe hevig was het voorval?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Wanneer heeft het voorval plaatsgevonden? (geef aan hoe lang geleden; in maanden)

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Hoe vaak moet u met de desbetreffende collega samenwerken?

	Vrijwel nooit (1)	Ze er zelden (2)	Zelden (3)	Soms (4)	Vaak (5)	Ze er vaak (6)	Vrijwel altijd (7)
Ik moet met de desbetreffende collega samenwerken...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

-----

Is degene die u heeft gekwetst uw leidinggevende?

- Ja (1)
- Nee (2)

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Denk nu nog eens terug aan het voorval dat u hiervoor beschreven heeft. Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Helemaal mee oneens (1)	Mee oneens (2)	Beetje mee oneens (3)	Niet oneens/ niet eens (4)	Beetje mee eens (5)	Mee eens (6)	Helemaal mee eens (7)
Ik heb mijn collega dit voorval helemaal vergeven.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ook als ik aan dit voorval denk, heb ik het beste met mijn collega voor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ook als ik aan het voorval denk, wil ik dat we gewoon een goede werkrelatie behouden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik heb mijn wroeging helemaal opzij gezet met betrekking tot dit voorval.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik zou willen dat mijn collega op één of andere manier	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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‘teruggepakt’  
wordt,  
wanneer ik  
aan het  
voorval  
denk.

Ik zou willen  
dat mijn  
collega ook  
iets  
vervelends  
overkomt,  
wanneer ik  
aan het  
voorval  
denk.

Ik wil dat  
mijn collega  
krijgt wat  
hij/zij  
verdient,  
wanneer ik  
aan het  
voorval  
denk.

Ik zou  
eigenlijk  
willen dat  
mijn collega  
ook op één  
of andere  
manier  
gekwetst  
wordt,  
wanneer ik  
aan het  
voorval  
denk.

Ik zou wat  
afstand  
willen  
nemen van

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mijn collega,  
wanneer ik  
aan het  
voorval  
denk.

Ik zou het  
moeilijk  
vinden om  
heel aardig  
tegen mijn  
collega te  
doen,  
wanneer ik  
aan het  
voorval  
denk.

Ik zou mijn  
collega  
liever  
vermijden,  
wanneer ik  
aan het  
voorval  
denk.

Ik vertrouw  
mijn collega  
niet  
helemaal,  
wanneer ik  
aan het  
voorval  
denk.



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De volgende vragen betreffen of u nog wel eens terugdenkt aan het conflict en de desbetreffende collega.

	Helemaal mee oneens (1)	Mee oneens (2)	Beetje mee oneens (3)	Niet oneens/niet eens (4)	Beetje mee eens (5)	Mee eens (6)	Helemaal mee eens (7)
Ik denk nog vaak terug aan die kwetsende collega.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik pieker wel eens over die kwetsende collega.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Er komen regelmatig spontaan gedachten over die kwetsende collega in me op.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die kwetsende collega laat me niet los.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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De volgende uitspraken hebben betrekking op uw werkzaamheden in het **afgelopen half jaar**.

	Vrijwel nooit (1)	Ze er zelden (2)	Zelden (3)	Soms (4)	Vaak (5)	Ze er vaak (6)	Vrijwel altijd (7)
Het lukte mij om mijn werk zo te plannen, dat het werk op tijd af was.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik hield voor ogen welk resultaat ik moest behalen met mijn werk.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Het lukte mij om hoofdzaken van bijzaken te scheiden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Het lukte mij om mijn werk goed uit te voeren met zo min mogelijk tijd en inspanning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik heb een optimale planning gemaakt.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik ben uit mezelf met nieuwe taken begonnen, als mijn oude taken af waren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik heb uitdagende werktaken op me genomen, als die er waren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik heb gewerkt aan het bijhouden van mijn vakkennis.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik heb gewerkt aan het bijhouden van mijn werkvaardigheden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Ik kwam met creatieve oplossingen voor nieuwe problemen.

Ik heb extra verantwoordelijkheden op me genomen.

Ik zocht steeds naar nieuwe uitdagingen in het werk.

Ik had een actieve inbreng in werkoverleg of vergaderingen.



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Als laatste volgen er nog vragen betreffende de omgang tussen werknemers binnen uw organisatie.

	Helemaal mee oneens (1)	Mee oneens (2)	Beetje mee oneens (3)	Niet oneens/ niet eens (4)	Beetje mee eens (5)	Mee eens (6)	Helemaal mee eens (7)
Op mijn werk vergeven werknemers elkaars fouten/ vergissingen/ overtredingen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Op mijn werk hebben werknemers geen wraakgevoelens.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Op mijn werk zijn werknemers bereid om de meeste fouten/ vergissingen/ overtredingen over het hoofd te zien.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Op mijn werk zijn werknemers in staat om samen te werken, ondanks onze verschillen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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## **Debriefing**

Beste deelnemer, Dit is het einde van de vragenlijst. Bedankt voor uw deelname aan dit onderzoek. In dit onderzoek kijken we naar hoe u met conflicten omgaat op het werk. Specifiek zijn we geïnteresseerd in de vraag of een meer vergevingsgezinde houding ten aanzien van conflicten samenhangt met een betere werkprestatie en minder burn-out. Bijvoorbeeld doordat vergeving ervoor zorgt dat mensen minder gaan piekeren en hierdoor beter hun aandacht op het werk kunnen richten. Daarnaast is er gekeken naar de rol van het klimaat van de organisatie. Zo zou het mogelijk kunnen zijn dat een meer vergevingsgezinnd klimaat op de werkvloer (dus dat werknemers in staat zijn andermans fouten te vergeven) zorgt voor een betere omgang met conflicten. Als dit zo is dan zouden organisaties en bedrijven specifiek beleid kunnen gaan voeren m.b.t. conflicthantering van hun medewerkers.

Als er nog klachten zijn of u wilt feedback geven over het onderzoek, dan kan dat hier:

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Als er achteraf nog iets is dat u wilt bespreken of uiten naar aanleiding van dit onderzoek, dan kunt u contact opnemen met Dr. Reine van der Wal ([R.C.vanderWal@uu.nl](mailto:R.C.vanderWal@uu.nl)). Voor klachten kunt u bij een onafhankelijke klachtenfunctionaris ([klachtenfunctionaris-fetcsocwet@uu.nl](mailto:klachtenfunctionaris-fetcsocwet@uu.nl)).