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PROACTIVITY DIRECTED TOWARD THE TEAM AND ORGANIZATION:
THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT, AND ROLE-BREADTH SELF-
EFFICACY

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ABSTRACT

Employees' proactive behaviour is increasingly important for organisations seeking to adapt in uncertain economic environments. This study examined the link between leadership and proactive behaviour. We differentiated between organizational leadership and team leadership and proposed that transformational leadership by team leaders would enhance commitment to the team, which would predict team member proactivity. In contrast, transformational leadership by leaders of the organization would enhance commitment to the organization, which we expected to predict organization member proactivity. Transformational leadership on both levels was expected to increase employees' role-breadth self-efficacy, the confidence necessary to engage in proactive behaviour. Our results demonstrate the importance of leadership as an antecedent of proactive work behaviour and suggest that leadership at different levels influences proactivity via different mediators. Team leaders seem to facilitate proactivity by increasing employees' confidence to initiate change. Organizational leaders on the other hand increase proactivity by enhancing employees' commitment to the organization.

PROACTIVITY DIRECTED TOWARD THE TEAM AND ORGANIZATION:
THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT, AND ROLE-BREADTH SELF-
EFFICACY

Employees' proactive work behaviours are crucial to organizational success in rapidly changing economic environments (Crant, 2000; Frese & Fay, 2001; Parker, 2000) and are especially important in uncertain environments where the most effective work behaviours cannot be prescribed in advance (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007). Proactive individuals take self-directed action to anticipate or initiate change in the work system or work roles (Grant & Ashford, in press). Proactive behaviour is crucial in the process of innovation, influencing the transition from idea generation to idea implementation (Rank, Pace, & Frese, 2004).

In recent years, considerable research has sought to identify both individual factors (e.g., Bateman & Crant, 1993, Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996), and contextual characteristics (e.g., Fay & Sonnentag, 2002; Frese & Fay, 2001; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006) that might influence proactive behaviour. Leadership is one potentially important contextual influence on proactivity (Crant, 2000). However, recent studies of proactivity have not demonstrated a link between leadership and proactive behaviour (Frese, Teng, & Wijnen, 1999; Parker et al., 2006). These studies have investigated supportive leadership, which might not be the most important leader behaviour for promoting proactivity.

The current study investigates transformational leadership. Transformational leaders influence followers' values, attitudes, and emotions (Bass, 1985) and motivate followers to perform beyond their expectations (Yukl, 1998). We propose that transformational leaders are likely to encourage proactive work behaviours because

they focus on change and improvement. Indeed, the positive influence of transformational leaders on organizational performance could result primarily from their impact on proactive work behaviours (Bass, 1990).

This study extends previous research linking leadership and proactivity, in three ways. First, we distinguish between the team and organizational level when considering both transformational leadership and proactivity. Leaders at each level can motivate employee behaviours via different psychological processes (e.g., Chen & Bliese, 2002). Proactive behaviours can also be targeted toward change at different levels such as the individual task, the team, or the organization (Griffin et al., 2007). *Team member proactivity* is aimed at changing the team situation and the way the team works. *Organization member proactivity* refers to individual behaviour that changes the way the organization works and is focused not only on work groups or departments but on the organization as a whole, going beyond organizational citizenship behaviours (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000).

Second, we directly compare proactivity with other forms of behaviour and develop differential hypotheses for proactivity. In particular, we distinguish *team member proficiency* from team member proactivity and *organization member proficiency* from organization member proactivity. Proficiency describes tasks that can be planned and specified in advance such as core tasks. Proactivity involves self-starting goals and active displays of initiative that can be differentiated from both core task performance and also from passive aspects of citizenship such as adjusting to changing work conditions (Griffin et al., 2007). Previous research concerning proactivity and leadership has treated performance as a unitary construct or has included proactivity as a part of citizenship behaviours (e.g., Bono & Judge, 2003). Proactivity is a specific form of motivated behaviour at work (Bateman & Crant,

1993), and different from task performance and citizenship behaviours (Parker et al., 2006; Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2006). It is not a reaction to external demands, but self-starting and directed towards the future. Proactive behaviour promotes change (e.g. Campbell, 2000; Crant, 2000; Frese & Fay, 2001; Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Parker, 2000) and plays a unique and crucial role in the process of innovation (Rank, Pace, & Frese, 2004).

Third, we investigate psychological mediators of the relationships between transformational leadership and proactivity. In particular we focus on the role of commitment and role-breadth self-efficacy. We first propose that transformational leadership at the team level enhances commitment to the team, which in turn enhances proactive behaviours directed toward the team. In contrast, transformational leadership at the organizational level is proposed to enhance commitment to the broader organization, which enhances proactive behaviours directed towards the organization. We further propose that transformational leadership at the team level and at the organizational level will both be positively related to employees' role-breadth self-efficacy. In general, self-efficacy increases an individual's sense of control and their belief that they can be successful. Role-breadth self-efficacy specifically describes individuals' confidence in their ability to take on proactive, integrative, and interpersonal tasks, such as implementing new work procedures (Parker, 1998). Individuals with high role-breadth self-efficacy have the confidence that they can take on new roles within the team and contribute to the wider goals of the organization. We thus expect role-breadth self-efficacy to enhance proactivity at the team and organization level.

Data were collected in a self-report study of employees in an Australian public sector organization. The research framework we explore is outlined in Figure 1. We explain each relationship in more detail below.

Insert Figure 1 about here

The factors that enhance proactive work behaviour include contextual factors such as the type of work environment (Parker et al., 2006), individual differences in personality (e.g., Crant, 2000), and proactive motivational states or orientations (Frese & Fay, 2001). Our model investigates leadership as the primary contextual factor and includes role-breadth self-efficacy' and commitment as the more proximal motivational states. Each of these factors is explained in more detail below. We also control for tenure within the organization, the personality variable of negative affectivity, and a common method marker variable (Lindell & Whitney, 2001) as part of our assessment of common method variance. The controls variables are described in the Methods section.

Motivators of proactive behaviour

Individual motivation is likely to be an important predictor because proactivity is difficult to prescribe within an organization and much proactive behaviour depends on individual choice. We propose that affective commitment to either the team or the organization will be an important motivator for proactive behaviour directed toward the team or the organization respectively. Commitment refers to the emotional bond between individuals and broader groups such as teams, professions, unions, and organizations. Although the relationship between commitment and core task behaviours has received broad support (e.g., Vandenberghe, Bentein, & Stinglhamber,

2004)), research on proactivity and commitment is scarce (Den Hartog & Belschak, in press), and empirical support for commitment as an antecedent of proactivity has been mixed. Parker et al. (2006) found proactive work role behaviour on an individual level to be unrelated to affective organizational commitment. However, their study assessed general affective commitment and its relationship to task-focused proactivity. Den Hartog and Belschak (2006) found that personal initiative, a specific form of proactive behaviour, was related to commitment to the team.

There are two reasons to propose that commitment specific to the team and to the organization is important for proactivity. First, affective commitment involves the experience of positive affective states that are likely to encourage engagement in proactive behaviours (Parker, 2007). Positive affect can promote more spontaneous and innovative behaviours (George, 1990), promote a more responsible long-term focus (Isen & Reeve, 2005), and motivate individuals to set more difficult and challenging goals (Ilies & Judge, 2005). Second, affective commitment involves psychological attachment to a social entity beyond the individual. Employees' attachment to their organization is an important motive for engagement in behaviour that will benefit the organization. Den Hartog and Belschak (2006) have shown that affective commitment explains a unique proportion of variance in proactive behaviour over and above the influence of general work affect.

We propose that previous research has not consistently identified commitment as an antecedent of proactive behaviour because of the non-correspondence of the focus of commitment and the target of proactive behaviour. Foci of commitment are the individuals and groups an employee is attached to (Reichers, 1986). Being affectively attached to one's organization does not necessarily lead to a greater readiness for proactive work behaviour focused at the team. Williams and Anderson's

(1991) research on organizational citizenship suggests that the relationship between commitment and employee behaviours will be stronger when the foci of commitment are consistent with the beneficiaries of these behaviours. Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) found commitment to a specific target a better predictor of behaviour relevant to this target than general organizational commitment. Specific foci of commitment might primarily relate to proactive behaviour targeted at corresponding foci (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2006). We expect commitment to the team and the organization to predict proactivity targeted towards corresponding foci. Because commitment has also been shown to predict task performance (e.g., Vandenberghe et al., 2004), we expect these commitments to also predict employees' proficiency, which is their fulfilment of prescribed or predictable requirements (Griffin et al., 2007).

H1a: Team commitment is positively related to team member proactivity and team member proficiency.

H1b: Organizational commitment is positively related to organization member proactivity and organization member proficiency.

In addition, employees need to feel confident in their ability to engage in proactive behaviour. As proactive work behaviour can involve questioning the *status quo* it is not always perceived as a positive behaviour, and can involve high social costs (Crant, 2000). With proactive behaviours requiring both risk taking and effort, individuals' role-breadth self-efficacy is particularly important for these behaviours (Parker, 1998, 2000). Role-breadth self-efficacy refers to employees' confidence in taking on new roles and challenging tasks and to carry out "a range of integrative and interpersonal tasks" (Parker, 2000, p. 450). It has repeatedly been shown to be a

proximal predictor of proactive behaviour (e.g., Griffin et al., 2007; Parker et al., 2006).

We expected role-breadth self-efficacy to be particularly important for both team and organizational proactivity, even more than for individual task proactivity, because these activities require individuals to go beyond their core task and to show initiative in a broader context. Individuals who report high role-breadth self-efficacy should also be more likely to have confidence that they can take on new roles within the team and contribute to the wider goals of the organization. Therefore, we proposed the following hypotheses.

H2a: Role-breadth self-efficacy will be positively related to employees' team member proactivity.

H2b: Role-breadth self-efficacy will be positively related to employees' organization member proactivity.

Role of leadership

Transformational leadership motivates employees to go beyond standard expectations by transforming followers' attitudes, beliefs, and values as opposed to simply gaining compliance (Bass, 1985; Yukl, 1999). Bass (1990) suggests that one reason transformational leadership can increase performance (see Judge & Piccolo, 2004, for a recent review) is because of its impact on proactive work role behaviours. To date there has been little research connecting leadership to proactivity or the psychological processes through which transformational leadership enhances proactivity. In the current study we focus on two psychological mechanisms through which transformational leaders influence employees' proactive behaviour.

First, transformational leadership behaviours have been associated with followers' identification with the leader and their identification with and attachment

to the concerned group or organization (e.g., Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003). We thus focus on commitment to the team and to the organization as mediators in the relationship of transformational leadership and proactivity. Second, research suggests that transformational leaders increase followers' efficacy beliefs (Shamir, Zakay, Brainin, & Popper, 1998). We investigate whether employees' role-breadth self-efficacy mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and proactivity. Below we describe the relationship between leadership and those two motivational constructs in more detail.

The impact of leadership on followers' commitment

Leadership is considered a key determinant of organizational commitment (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Transformational leaders link a group's or organization's mission and goals to collective values and ideologies; they emphasize the collective identity of the group or organization and display exemplary behaviours (Shamir et al., 1998). Researchers interested in charismatic leadership behaviours have also suggested that such leaders enhance followers' identification with the leader, and followers' their identification with and attachment to the concerned group or organization (Kark et al., 2003). Thus, transformational leaders create high levels of organizational commitment (Avolio, Zhu, Koh, & Bhatia, 2004).

Avolio et al. (2004) found the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment was moderated by the structural distance between leaders and followers. Transformational leadership of an indirect senior supervisor was more closely related to employees' organizational commitment than was transformational leadership of immediate supervisors. The organization as a whole, and an employee's immediate work unit present different foci of commitment. Leadership at different levels is likely to enhance commitment at corresponding

organizational levels. Distant senior leaders might still enhance employees' commitment to their work group and immediate supervisors can influence followers' organizational commitment, but we expect leadership behaviours of distant senior leaders to result in commitment to the organization, while immediate leaders are more likely to affect employees' commitment to their work groups. Thus, it is proposed that:

H3a: Team leaders' transformational leadership is positively related to followers' team commitment.

H3b: Organizational leaders' transformational leadership is positively related to followers' organizational commitment.

The impact of leadership on followers' role-breadth self-efficacy

There is broad support for the positive effect of transformational leadership on self-efficacy (Avolio et al., 2004; Kark et al., 2003; Rafferty & Griffin, 2004), on employees' confidence to successfully perform particular tasks (Bandura, 1986). In fact, there is some empirical evidence that leaders affect their followers' efficacy beliefs and that those beliefs mediate the influence of leadership on performance (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). For example, Eden (1992) found that followers' increased confidence in their ability to perform mediates the effect of leaders' expressions of high expectations on followers' effort and achievement. Transformational leadership thus influences employees' general self-efficacy; their confidence to successfully perform their current roles. Emphasizing change and development, it can also be expected to enhance their role-breadth self-efficacy; their confidence to take on new roles.

Not all aspects of transformational leadership are equally likely to affect employees' role-breadth self-efficacy. Previous research connecting employees' role-

breadth self-efficacy to leadership behaviours found no relation with supportive leader behaviours (Parker et al., 2006; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Rafferty and Griffin (2006) reported that inspirational communication, which involves the expression of positive and encouraging messages to followers, and developmental leadership behaviours, or leaders' behaviours focusing on followers' development and improvement, positively affect followers' role-breadth self-efficacy (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Parker et al. (2006) suggested that role-breadth self-efficacy would be enhanced by leadership behaviours that supported employees in being more self-directed. Intellectual stimulation refers to the degree to which leaders solicit followers' ideas and stimulate and encourage creativity in followers (Bass, 1985). We expect that intellectual stimulation will enhance individuals' confidence in their ability to take on proactive, integrative, and interpersonal tasks. We therefore focus on inspirational communication and intellectual stimulation as dimensions of transformational leadership that will affect employees' role-breadth self-efficacy. Thus, it is proposed that:

H4a: Team leaders' transformational leadership will be positively related to followers' role-breadth self-efficacy.

H4b: Organization leaders' transformational leadership will be positively related to followers' role-breadth self-efficacy.

METHODS

The study was based on a survey of employees in an Australian public sector agency. Employees were engaged in a range of administrative and management tasks to deliver human resource management services to other agencies. The organization comprised 320 employees, of which 196 employees participated in the survey

representing a response rate of 61.3%. The sample comprised 54.9% females, the average age of respondents was 39.3 years (SD = 11.0 years) and the average length of tenure was 3.9 years (SD = 2.2 years).

Measures

Transformational leadership. Employees rated the leadership of both their unit leader and senior leaders in the organization. Items were based on the intellectual stimulation and inspirational communication subscales of the transformational leadership measure reported by Rafferty and Griffin (2004). Each subscale comprised three items and responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An example item for intellectual stimulation asked to what extent either unit leaders or senior leaders “challenged me to think about old problems in new way”. An example item for inspirational communication was “says things to make me proud to be a member of this organization”. Exploratory factor analysis of the items resulted in two factors with Eigen values greater than one, accounting for 68% of the variance. All team leader items loaded on one factor and all organization leader items loaded on the other factor. Relevant loadings were all above .30 and all cross-loadings were below .30. Alpha reliabilities were .90 for team leader transformational leadership and .92 for organization leader transformational leadership.

Organizational commitment. Organizational commitment was assessed by three items from Allen and Meyer’s (1990) affective commitment scale. Employees rated each item both in terms of their attachment to the work unit and their attachment to the organization as a whole. An example item was “I feel emotionally attached to my organization”. Responses ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Exploratory factor analysis of the items resulted in two factors with Eigen values greater than .90, accounting for 75% of the variance. All team leader items loaded on

one factor and all organization leader items loaded on the other factor. Relevant loadings were all above .30 and all cross-loadings were below .30. Alpha reliabilities were .73 for team commitment and .89 for organizational commitment.

Role-breadth self-efficacy. Employees' role-breadth self-efficacy was assessed by three items with highest factor loadings in the measure developed by Parker (1998). Role breadth self efficacy refers to "the extent to which people feel confident that they are able to carry out a broader and more proactive role, beyond traditional prescribed technical requirements" (Parker, 1998, p. 835). Employees were asked how confident they would feel carrying out new tasks such as: contacting people outside the company (e.g. customers and suppliers) to discuss problems; analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution; and designing new procedures for the work group. The response scale ranged from 1 (not at all confident) to 5 (very confident). Alpha reliability was .86.

Work role performance. Four dimensions of work role performance were used based on Griffin et al.'s (2007) nine dimensions of work role performance. Each dimension was assessed by items that asked participants to rate the frequency with which they engaged in each behaviour over the past six weeks ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (all the time).

Team member proficiency was assessed by three items that asked the degree to which the employee carried out tasks that supported the team and could be specified in advance. An example item was "coordinated your work with co-workers" (alpha = .69).

Team member proactivity was assessed by three items that asked the degree to which the employee carried out tasks that supported the team and involved self-

starting and initiative that could not be specified in advance. An example item was “suggested new ways to make your team more effective” (alpha = .90).

Organization member proficiency was assessed by three items that asked the degree to which the employee carried out tasks that supported the organization as a whole and that could be specified in advance. An example item was “presented a positive image of the organization” (alpha = .85).

Organization member proactivity was assessed by three items that asked the degree to which the employee carried out tasks that supported the organization and involved self-starting and initiative that could not be specified in advance. An example item was “come up with ways of increasing the efficiency within the organization” (alpha = .92).

Exploratory factor analysis of the items resulted in four factors with Eigen values greater than one accounting for 69% of the variance. All items loaded on the appropriate factor above .3 and no cross loadings were above .3.

Control measures and common method variance.

To account for alternative explanations and to assess the extent of common method variance we included a number of control measures. First, we included tenure as a substantive construct that might explain positive relationships among the focal variables of the study. Individuals with longer tenure might have more responsibilities and seniority that require higher levels of proactivity. If these individuals also have a more positive perception of leadership, then a spurious relationship between leadership perceptions and proactivity will be found. Second, we included negative affectivity as a dispositional measure of affect that might systematically influence the hypothesized relationships. For example, negative affectivity might influence the way individuals report their levels of commitment. If negative affectivity also relates to the

level of proactivity reported by individuals then it constitutes another potential spurious relationship. Third, based on the recommendations of Lindell & Whitney (2001), we included a control measure that was not expected to relate to the hypothesized constructs. For this purpose we used a measure of work-home conflict. Incorporating this construct into the hypothetical model assesses the extent of common method variance because the correlations with this measure estimate the upper limit of method variance.

In summary, we included a potentially substantive common cause (tenure), a potential method-related factor (negative affectivity), and a theoretically unrelated factor (work-home conflict) as control variables in all analyses. Tenure was assessed by the total number of years each employee had been employed in this specific organization. Negative affectivity was measured with five items from the neuroticism sub-scale of Costa and McCrae's (1989) NEO-PI five-factor personality inventory. Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) and the alpha reliability was .72. Work-home conflict was measured with three items based on Frone and Yardley (1996). Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and the alpha reliability was .75.

RESULTS

Correlations among all the measures in the study are reported in Table 1. We investigated the hypothesized relationships among constructs through path analysis using Lisrel VIII (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). Scale scores for each construct were used to evaluate the hypothetical model in Figure 1. To provide a comprehensive test of potential relationships, we included paths from both leadership constructs to all three mediators and from all three mediators to the four performance dimensions. We

also included the control variables of tenure, negative affectivity, and work-home conflict by estimating paths from each control variable to all other variables in the model as well as correlations among the control variables.

Insert Table 1 about here

The estimated path model showed a reasonable fit to the data (χ^2 (df = 12) = 39.87, $p < .01$, GFI = .96, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .11), although the RMSEA was higher than typically accepted. Examination of residuals and fit indices suggested that a path from team leader transformational leadership to organization member proficiency would substantially improve the fit. Addition of this path resulted in a model that reproduced a covariance matrix that was not statistically significantly different to the raw covariances (χ^2 (df = 11) = 15.30, $p > .05$, GFI = .98, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .04). Therefore, we retained this modified model as the basis for assessing each hypothesis. Significant paths and covariances for the final model are shown in Figure 2. The figure shows the results for three models after the inclusion of different control variables to assess the degree of common method variance. The first model included only tenure, the second model added negative affectivity, and the third model added work-home conflict. Very little change was observed after the inclusion of these additional variables suggesting that common method variance was not a substantial explanation for the covariances on which our analyses were based.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Hypothesis 1a proposed that team commitment would be positively associated with team member proactivity in addition to team member proficiency. This

hypothesis was not supported because the prediction of team member proactivity was not significant ($\beta = .05$, *n.s.*). Organizational commitment was significantly associated with organization member proactivity ($\beta = .24$, $p < .01$) as well as organization member proficiency ($\beta = .32$, $p < .001$), supporting Hypothesis 1b.

Figure 2 shows that role-breadth self-efficacy was significantly associated with both team member proactivity and organization member proactivity ($\beta = .43$, $p < .001$ and $\beta = .45$, $p < .001$ respectively). This result supported Hypotheses 2a and 2b. In addition, role-breadth self-efficacy was also significantly associated with team member proficiency and organization member proficiency ($\beta = .25$, $p < .01$ and $\beta = .22$, $p < .01$ respectively). These paths were not part of the hypothesized model as it was expected that role-breadth self-efficacy would be less important for proficiency compared to proactivity. To test whether it was more strongly associated with proactivity than with proficiency we estimated two constrained path models. The first model constrained to equality the paths from role-breadth self-efficacy to team member proficiency and to team member proactivity. The second model constrained the paths from role-breadth self-efficacy to organization member proficiency and organization member proactivity. Both constraints resulted in a significant decrement in fit (χ^2 (df = 1) = 10.28, $p < .001$ for team member constraints and χ^2 (df = 1) = 14.51, $p < .001$ for organization member constraints), supporting the proposition that role-breadth self-efficacy would be more strongly associated with proactivity than with proficiency.

Hypothesis 3a proposed that team leader transformational leadership would be positively related to unit commitment and this hypothesis was supported ($\beta = .27$, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 3b proposed organization leadership would be positively associated with organizational commitment and this hypothesis was also supported ($\beta = .62$, $p <$

.001). In addition, organization leader transformational leadership was significantly associated with team commitment ($\beta = .26, p < .001$), which was not expected.

Hypothesis 4a and 4b proposed that transformational leadership from team leaders and from organization leaders would be positively associated with role-breadth self-efficacy. Team leader transformational leadership was significantly associated with role-breadth self-efficacy ($\beta = .18, p < .05$) supporting Hypothesis 4a. However, the relationship between organization leader transformational leadership and role-breadth self-efficacy was not significant ($\beta = -.13, p > .05$), failing to support hypothesis 3b.

Overall, core elements of the proposed model were supported. Organization leadership was related to organizational commitment, which in turn was positively related to organization member proactivity. Team leadership was positively related to role-breadth self-efficacy, which in turn was positively related to team member proactivity. Although leadership at both levels showed mediational links with proactivity, some aspects of the model were not supported. Team leadership was positively related to team commitment, but the latter variable was not positively related to team member proactivity as expected. Organization leadership was not significantly related to role-breadth self-efficacy as expected.

DISCUSSION

Proactive behaviour plays a crucial role in the innovation process and contributes to the overall effectiveness of an organization (e.g., Baer & Frese, 2001; Rank et al., 2001; Van Gelderen, Frese, & Thurik, 2000). In dynamic and uncertain environments, employees who show initiative, think ahead, and create new opportunities, help to create more adaptive and creative organizations. Our study

provides new information about the reasons employees engage in these proactive behaviours and the way leaders can support them. Our starting point is the importance of distinguishing proactivity from other forms of work performance. Often performance is evaluated globally so that proactive and proficient behaviours are combined in a single evaluation. Not only is it useful to distinguish proactive behaviour from proficient behaviours, the distinction between behaviours directed toward the team and to the organization provides promising avenues for evaluating and rewarding individual behaviour that has long-term benefits for organizations. Below we discuss the benefits of viewing commitment, leadership, and efficacy in relation to proactivity at this more fine-grained level.

Commitment

The experience of commitment to an organization can influence a wide range of work behaviours including effort and absenteeism (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Past research on commitment and proactivity has focused on core task proactivity (Parker et al., 2006) or has connected multiple types of commitment to a general measure of initiative (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2006). Affective organizational commitment has even been considered a non-proactive motivational state in relation to task proactivity (Parker et al., 2006). In contrast to previous research, our study suggests that organizational commitment can indeed be related to proactivity. We identified this relationship by focusing on the link between commitment specific to the organization and proactivity directed toward benefiting the organization. Individuals who felt a strong attachment to the organization were more likely to report suggesting and implementing initiatives to improve the organization. The result was observed after controlling for other explanations such as their role-breadth self-efficacy and a dispositional measure of negative affectivity.

Leadership

Our results suggest that leaders at both the team and organizational level might play an important role in developing the proactivity of employees, but that different levels of leadership are likely to affect proactivity in different ways. In our study, team leadership was uniquely related to role-breadth self-efficacy, the confidence to take on new roles; as expected, role-breadth self-efficacy was in turn related to both team member proactivity and organization member proactivity. This result suggests that team leaders have a particularly important role in developing employees' confidence necessary to suggest and implement new ideas. Team leaders might aim to develop this confidence through intellectual stimulation and inspirational communication, the transformational leadership behaviours investigated in our study.

In comparison to team leaders, organizational leaders have more control over the symbolic organizational processes that are more likely to influence processes related to commitment rather than efficacy. Indeed, in our study, transformational leadership on the organizational level seemed to play a more important role in developing feelings of attachment and identity about the team and the organization. These perceptions and feelings might provide an essential rationale for engaging in proactive behaviours. This rationale is important because proactive behaviour can be risky for the individual and create uncertainty more generally in the organization. Not only do individuals need the confidence to engage in these behaviours, they need to feel that these behaviours contribute to a collective outcome that is valued. This process seems particularly important for those proactive behaviours that are directed toward changing the broader organizational context rather than the local team. The results add to previous research that identifies differential links between efficacy

beliefs, commitment, and upper and lower level leaders (Avolio et al., 2004; Chen & Bliese, 2002).

Role-breadth self-efficacy

Finally, our results point to the pervasive importance of role-breadth self-efficacy in organizations for both proactive and proficient performance. We found the confidence to perform tasks beyond one's prescribed job role not only predicts proactivity, but also proficiency. With role-breadth self-efficacy being a powerful predictor of all four performance dimensions in our study, our results suggest that this is a mechanism through which team leaders can increase behaviours that are important for organizational performance.

Limitations of the study

Limitations of the current study should be noted. We relied on self-report questionnaire ratings of proactive behaviour, which might have inflated the relationships among measures and which do not give information about the content of specific activities such as implementing innovations or championing new ideas. However, factor analyses supported the proposed differentiation among constructs at each level, and Griffin et al. (2007) found self-reports of proactivity were related to ratings of suggestions made by groups and by internal clients' perceptions of proactivity at different levels. These results suggest that self-reports of proactivity can be a useful way to explore psychological processes related to proactivity. Future research should incorporate external indicators of proactivity at work when exploring links between leadership perceptions and proactivity.

A further limitation of this study was a focus on a single level of analysis.

Within our theoretical framework it was important to establish links among perceptual

measures. However, we did not assess systematic variation between team leaders because of the relatively small sample size, and we did not assess systematic variation among organizational leaders because the study was conducted within a single organization. It will be important to extend our analysis to include multiple teams in multiple organizations.

The sample of Australian public sector employees might limit the generalisability of the results to private sector organizations. However, the jobs undertaken by employees in the sample covered a wide range of human resource activities that are typical of many large organizations. Therefore, we consider the roles and responsibilities of employees in this sample are comparable to those in other countries and organizations.

Conclusion

Proactivity by employees is an important source of capability for organisations. Proactive behaviour depends on individuals who are motivated and self-starting, and our results suggest the organisation can play an important role in developing these attributes. Senior leaders can help build the commitment necessary to engage in proactive behaviours that support the organization while team leaders can build the confidence to take on the challenge of being proactive.

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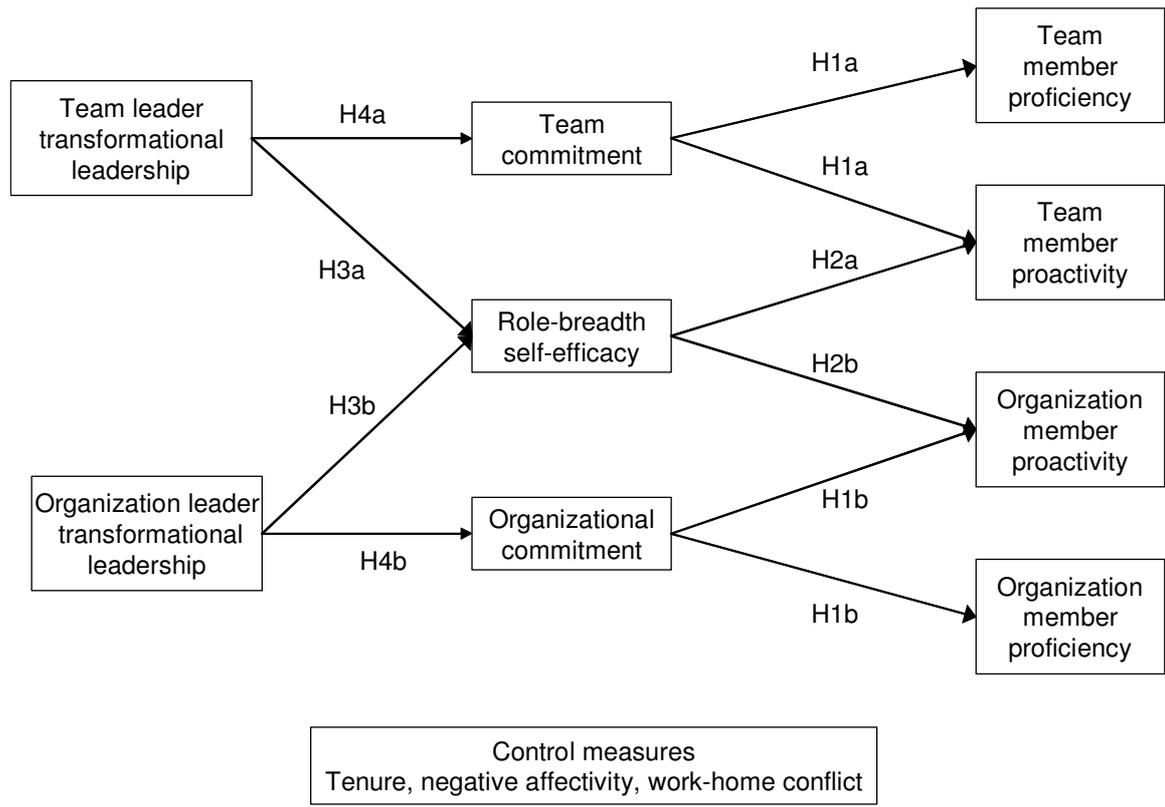
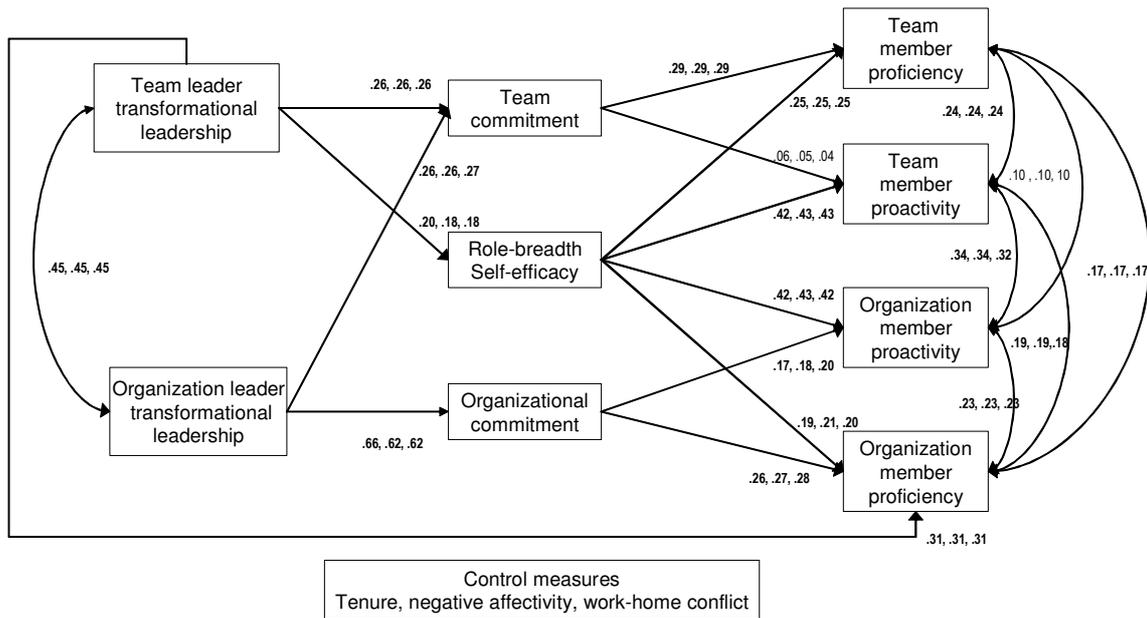


FIGURE 1
HYPOTHETICAL MODEL



Note: for clarity, correlations among team commitment, RBSE, and organization commitment not depicted. Paths from controls also not depicted.

FIGURE 2
FINAL PATH ESTIMATES FOR PATH ANALYSIS

TABLE 1
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ALL MEASURES (N = 186)

	Mean	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
1. Team member proficiency	3.88	0.66	1.00										
2. Team member proactivity	3.44	0.84	.39	1.00									
3. Organization member Proficiency	3.64	0.89	.33	.37	1.00								
4. Organization member proactivity	2.97	1.06	.30	.56	.48	1.00							
5. Team commitment	3.17	0.88	.32	.16	.42	.30	1.00						
6. Organization commitment	2.88	1.03	.18	.12	.44	.26	.62	1.00					
7. Role-breadth self-efficacy	3.69	0.95	.23	.42	.30	.44	.14	.06	1.00				
8. Team transformational leadership	3.12	0.89	.13	.23	.46	.18	.42	.44	.13	1.00			
9. Organization transformational leadership	3.15	0.87	.16	.11	.44	.22	.41	.68	.04	.59	1.00		
10. Tenure	11.58	10.33	-.10	.01	-.02	-.06	.03	.06	.04	.02	.06	1.00	
11. Negative affectivity	3.52	1.08	-.09	-.08	-.19	-.14	-.16	-.34	-.21	-.21	-.30	-.01	1.00
12. Work-home conflict	2.21	0.98	-.04	.15	-.04	.11	.01	-.13	.05	-.13	-.19	.06	.26

Note: All correlations above .14 $p < .05$, all correlations above .18 $p < .01$, all correlations above .24 $p < .001$