Navigating the Era of Disruption: How Emotions Can Prompt Job Crafting Behaviors

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Abstract

Environmental disruptions can disturb the status quo. This can create the need for employees to navigate rapidly evolving demands in their work environment, often before formalized strategic plans can be developed and/or implemented. As such, understanding how employees experience and respond to these disruptions is critical for effective strategic human resource management. Drawing on appraisal theories of emotion, we argue that employees' appraisals of how the disruption has impacted their work can elicit discrete emotions (e.g., frustration and pride). In turn, these emotions can encourage employees to address challenges and opportunities by engaging in job crafting behaviors. Importantly, job crafting behaviors can have implications for subsequent employee outcomes (e.g., performance and well-being). We test our predictions using a three-wave survey ($N = 402$) in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic – an unexpected environmental disruption that sparked rapid change. Theoretically, our findings provide insight into why and how employees can self-initiate changes to their jobs in response to environmental disruptions as well as how job crafting behaviors impact employee outcomes. Practically, our findings provide insight and guidance to SHRM practitioners on how to effectively support and manage employees before, during, and after environmental disruptions.

Keywords: appraisal theory, emotions in the workplace, job crafting, performance, performance management, environmental disruption, COVID-19

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"The pandemic changed the way we work in very profound and wide-ranging ways. Some people immediately became remote workers, navigating the challenges of blending their home and work lives. Others kept reporting to their place of employment, facing myriad concerns ranging from safety to new demands and ways of working. Facing these changes and challenges was no small task. They changed us in a number of ways." -- Moran (2021).

Environmental disruptions can profoundly impact human resource management systems. Given that environmental disruptions are often unexpected and create a displacement of existing systems (Ehrlich, 1981), it is not always possible to have detailed strategic plans for managing specific environmental disruptions. Indeed, many organizations are unprepared for these situations (Ernst & Young, 2020). As such, environmental disruptions can thrust employees into circumstances in which they must actively *navigate* and *adapt* to unplanned and rapidly evolving changes, often without specific guidance from the organization (e.g., while a strategic response is being coordinated). This raises important questions about how employees experience and adapt to work-related changes created by disruptions as well as how employees' responses can impact their subsequent performance and well-being. Understanding the answers to these questions can have important implications for effective strategic human resource management (SHRM).

Drawing on appraisal theories of emotion (e.g., Lazarus,), our general argument is that employees' appraisals of the environmental disruption can guide how employees adapt to changes in their work environment. More precisely, we argue that employees can appraise (i.e., cognitively evaluate) how the disruption has impacted their work. In turn, these appraisals can elicit discrete emotions that guide employees on how to behaviorally respond. In the context of the workplace, we propose that employees' discrete emotions can prompt job crafting behaviors that involve reshaping and/or redefining their job (e.g., Bindl et al.,). We argue that these behaviors can facilitate adaptation to the disrupted environment, which can influence employees'

outcomes (e.g., performance and well-being) as well as have implications for effective SHRM before, during, and after environmental disruptions. Figure displays our theoretical model.

We make three theoretical contributions. First, while previous research has focused on how employees may accept or resist formalized change initiatives (e.g., Oreg et al., 2018), we illuminate how employees experience and navigate the changes created by environmental disruptions. Drawing on appraisal theories of emotion (e.g., Lazarus, 1991), we argue that environmental disruptions can initiate appraisal processes that facilitate employees' adaptation to their environment. More precisely, employees can appraise whether the environmental disruption has created changes that have improved or worsened their work. In turn, these appraisals can prompt emotional and behavioral responses to facilitate adaptation. By examining these processes, we answer calls to provide a nuanced understanding of how employees experience and adapt to change in the workplace (e.g., Oreg et al., 2018), with a specific focus on adaptation to changes prompted by environmental disruptions.

Second, negative emotions are often characterized as being "dysfunctional" for adapting to change and it is often recommended that organizations try to mitigate employees' negative emotions (for discussions, see Kiefer, 2005; Oreg et al., 2018). However, appraisal theories indicate that positive *and* negative emotions are important because they can prompt behaviors that facilitate adaptation to the environment. That is, negative emotions can be *functional* by guiding employees on how to adapt to environmental disruptions. By examining employees' emotional experiences as they navigate environmental disruptions, we highlight the functional nature of positive and negative emotions, thereby challenging key assumptions in the literature.

Third, while the job crafting literature has examined individual and organizational factors that may influence job crafting behavior (for a review, see Zhang & Parker, 2019), we examine

how the changes created by an environmental disruption can prompt job crafting behaviors. That is, we examine environmental disruptions as a contextual influence that can prompt employees to engage in behaviors to adapt to changes in their work environment. More precisely, a key theoretical tenet of appraisal theories of emotions is that appraisal processes can elicit discrete emotions (Lazarus, 1991). In turn, these discrete emotions can prompt behaviors that enable individuals to adapt to their environment. Given that environmental disruptions can displace existing arrangements in the workplace, we argue that appraisal processes can prompt employees to self-initiate changes to their jobs (i.e., engage in job crafting behaviors; Bindl et al., 2019) to address opportunities and challenges created by the environmental disruption. Whereas promotion-oriented job crafting behaviors broaden one's job scope to focus on opportunities, prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors narrow one's job scope to address challenges. Importantly, we argue that job crafting behaviors can have implications for employees' subsequent performance and well-being. That is, *how* employees behaviorally respond to the changes created by the environmental disruption can have implications for employee outcomes. By examining how appraisal processes influence employees' behaviors and outcomes, we answer calls to understand *why* employees may engage in promotion and prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors as well as the consequences of these behaviors (e.g., Bindl et al., 2019).

Finally, we argue that job crafting behaviors can have implications for effective SHRM. While job crafting behaviors have been associated with critical outcomes for employees (e.g., career success; Seibert et al., 2001), these behaviors should support the organization's broader goals to have positive outcomes for organizations (Grant et al., 2009). Recently, scholars have called for an enhanced understanding of job crafting behaviors to inform SHRM strategies (e.g., Lee & Lee, 2018). Thus, we also aim to enhance our theoretical understanding of job crafting

behaviors with the goal of providing SHRM practitioners with practical guidance for effectively

managing these behaviors (e.g., Tsui, 2019).

We examine our research questions in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic – an

environmental disruption that sparked a global health and economic crisis. Importantly, this

environmental disruption also prompted radical shifts in the way that people work (Kramer &

Kramer, 2020). We collected our data during the first government-imposed lockdown in the

United Kingdom (May 2020). This provided the opportunity to examine how employees

experience and adapt to an unexpected environmental disruption in which "individuals and entire

workforces [were] thrust essentially overnight into new ways of working" (Tector et al., 2020).

That is, the COVID-19 pandemic provided the opportunity to examine an environmental

disruption in which employees experienced a significant displacement of working arrangements,

which required them to navigate rapid change and novel circumstances.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

By definition, environmental disruptions involve a displacement of existing arrangements

(Ehrlich, 1981). More precisely, environmental disruptions reflect a disturbance to the status quo

that requires individuals to adapt. Importantly, environmental disruptions are distinct from

environmental uncertainty, which reflects unexplained variability in the environment and is often

assumed to be an aversive state (see Griffin & Grote, 2020). Whereas environmental uncertainty

motivates individuals to engage in strategies to regulate uncertainty in the environment,

disruptions focus people on adapting to the challenges and/or opportunities in their environment.

We argue that the COVID-19 pandemic reflects an environmental disruption because it

destabilized existing arrangements. That is, the implementation of lockdowns and extensive

safety protocols by the government displaced working arrangements and created changes within

organizations. For example, many employees were faced with navigating sudden changes in their work environment and some employees had to completely change work environments (i.e., work from home). Further, many organizational practices no longer aligned with the new demands in the environment. While this displacement created many challenges, it also created opportunities for new ideas and practices to emerge. Taken together, this highlights how environmental disruptions can destabilize existing practices and create the need for employees to *adapt*.

Implicit in our above argument is the notion that environmental disruptions can serve as a key contextual variable that can influence employees and their behaviors in organizations (see Bamberger, 2008; George & Jones, 1997; Johns, 2006). That is, environmental disruptions can serve as a contextual factor that can initiate adaptive processes. More precisely, environmental disruptions can prompt employees to appraise how their work has been impacted, which can initiate emotional reactions and job crafting behaviors to adapt to these changes.

Given the characteristics associated with environmental disruptions, we propose that appraisal theories of emotion (e.g., Lazarus, 1991) may be especially insightful for understanding how employees adapt to work-related changes that have been prompted by an environmental disruption. A key premise of appraisal theories is that changes in the environment can prompt individuals to initiate an adaptive process that involves appraisals (i.e., evaluations of how the environment has impacted or may impact the individual) as well as emotional and behavioral responses to facilitate adaption to the environment. More precisely, appraisals are geared toward detecting changes in one's environment and assessing the implication of these changes for the relationship between oneself and the environment (i.e., individuals typically appraise whether factors in their environment may harm or benefit them). Importantly, these appraisals can elicit specific types of discrete emotions that capture the meaning of these changes for the individual.

For example, frustration can emerge when changes in the environment are assessed as containing an unresolved challenge. Moreover, appraisal theories indicate that once a discrete emotion is elicited, it can motivate individuals to engage in specific behaviors to address the concern or opportunity (e.g., Lazarus, 1991). That is, appraisals can elicit discrete emotions and prompt behavioral responses that are intended to facilitate adaptation to the environment.

Applying appraisal theories of emotion to environmental disruptions, we argue that employees can be especially concerned with how an environmental disruption has changed the meaningfulness and effectiveness of their work (i.e., two critical goals for employees). Those who perceive that the disruption has created changes that improved or worsened their circumstances can be motivated to respond to these changes in an effort to adapt. Moreover, we propose that employees' behavioral responses can have implications for their outcomes (e.g., performance and well-being). Later, we provide our theoretical argument for these relationships, beginning with why employees are likely to assess how the environmental disruption has resulted in changes to the meaningfulness and effectiveness of their work.

Environmental Disruptions and Changes in Meaningfulness/Effectiveness of Work

Meaningfulness of work reflects employees' perceptions that their work has broader significance (e.g., Gibson et al., 2019). Importantly, most employees aspire to have meaningful work, especially since meaningful work enhances many employee outcomes (e.g., well-being; for a meta-analytic review, see Allan et al., 2018). Indeed, scholars have noted that "the quest for meaningful work is a central and defining feature of organizational life" and meaningful work is often considered even more important than salary or job security (Carton, 2018, p. 324).

We argue that employees are likely to assess how an environmental disruption has improved or worsened the meaningfulness of their work. Meaningfulness of work may be

especially important because the COVID-19 pandemic created rapid change in what was

perceived as meaningful work by society and individuals. For example, many jobs previously

viewed as being low status changed into "key" or "essential" jobs (e.g., grocery store cashiers).

The pandemic also called into question the meaningfulness of work for many employees. Thus,

the nature of the disruption likely focused employees' attention on this important goal.

We also examine work effectiveness, which reflects employees' perceptions that they

have been able to adequately complete their work (e.g., Fox & Spector, 1999). Work

effectiveness is important for achieving many individual and/or organizational goals. For

example, work effectiveness can satisfy employees' psychological needs and is associated with

the attainment of personal goals. Thus, employees are likely motivated to respond to changes in

their work effectiveness (especially detriments) because this can have significant implications for

them. Moreover, many employees experienced changes in their work effectiveness because of

the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, new safety protocols created challenges for those who

worked in their normal physical workplace setting whereas others were forced to navigate a rapid

transition to work-from-home (e.g., using new technology). Thus, employees' perceived changes

to work effectiveness are important from a theoretical and practical perspective in this context.

Taken together, we examine employees' appraisals of whether the COVID-19 pandemic

created changes that improved or worsened the meaningfulness and effectiveness of their work.

We focus on these aspects because they reflect important employee goals that are likely to have

been impacted by the disruption from the COVID-19 pandemic. In the next sections, we examine

how appraisals related to changes in the meaningfulness of work and work effectiveness can

initiate emotional and behavioral responses to facilitate adaptation to the disrupted environment.

For discrete emotions, we focus on pride and frustration because these emotions are

likely to reflect the nature of the changes created by the environmental disruption and their meaning for employees. More precisely, appraisal theories of emotions (e.g., Lazarus, 1991) indicate that discrete emotions reflect the underlying meaning of individuals' appraisals. Whereas pride is elicited by appraisals that reflect that one is making a valuable contribution, frustration is elicited by appraisals that one is dealing with unresolved challenges. By contrast, other discrete emotions capture different meanings. For example, anger reflects people's interpretation that another individual has committed "a demeaning offense against me and mine" whereas compassion reflects being moved by another person (Lazarus, 1991, p. 122). Thus, we focused on pride and frustration because these emotions are consistent with our focus on the changes created by the environmental disruptions and what these changes mean for employees. Taken together, we argue that frustration and pride are theoretically relevant for changes in the meaningfulness of work and work effectiveness as well as the COVID-19 context.

To examine how employees behaviorally respond, we focus on job crafting behaviors – a subset of proactive work behaviors that can be initiated by employees to "shape, mold, and redefine their jobs" from prescribed requirements (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 180). We argue that job crafting behaviors can arise in the context of environmental disruptions because, by definition, these events create a displacement of existing systems. That is, the status quo is unlikely to be appropriate and employees must shift their work in some manner to adapt (e.g., to take advantage of opportunities and address challenges created by the disruption). Job crafting is typically conceptualized as involving promotion-oriented or prevention-oriented behaviors. While both sets of behaviors reflect approach motivations to self-initiate changes, these behaviors differ in their focus on *how* people make changes (Bindl et al., 2019). More precisely, promotion-oriented job crafting behaviors reflect employees' attempts to broaden their tasks to

leverage resources and opportunities in the environment (e.g., seeking out new projects; Parker & Bindl, 2016; Parker & Collins, 2010). By contrast, prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors focus on narrowing tasks to address demands and challenges, minimize obstacles, and/or prevent negative work outcomes (e.g., redirecting effort to the most critical aspects of the job; Bindl et al., 2019).[1]

We begin by focusing on how employees may respond to changes that *improved* the meaningfulness of their work or work effectiveness as well as how these appraisals may prompt pride and promotion-oriented behaviors. Next, we outline how employees may respond to the *worsening* of these aspects and how these appraisals may prompt frustration and prevention-oriented behaviors. Hereafter, we refer to promotion and prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors as promotion and prevention-oriented behaviors or job crafting behaviors.

Understanding How Improvements in the Meaningfulness and Effectiveness of Work Relate to Pride and Promotion-Oriented Behaviors

Discrete emotions capture the meaning underlying people's appraisals of the relationship between themselves and the environment. Pride is elicited by appraisals that one is "responsible for a socially valued outcome or for being a socially valued person" (Mascolo & Fischer, 1995, p. 66). That is, pride emerges in response to appraisals that indicate one's goals are being facilitated (i.e., one is providing social value) and this is attributed to oneself (i.e., "I am proud of what I am doing") (Tracy & Robins, 2007). Within the context of the pandemic, we argue that improvements in the meaningfulness of work are likely to elicit pride because this reflects the assessment that employees are making positive and socially valued contributions through their

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[1] While previous conceptualizations of prevention-oriented behaviors also included withdrawal (e.g., Tims et al., 2012), Bindl et al. (2019) recently argued that prevention-oriented behaviors reflect an approach motivation. We align our theorizing and operationalization with this revised conceptualization.

work. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic elevated the perceived status of many jobs (e.g., cleaning staff) because these jobs are important for organizational and societal functioning (Kramer & Kramer, 2020). Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic also highlighted how employees were helping others through their work (i.e., illuminated the social value of their work). Given that meaningful work is a key goal for most employees (e.g., Carton, 2018), we argue that employees are likely to appraise changes that enhance the meaningfulness of their work as being conducive with their goal and attributable to themselves (i.e., they are responsible for the work they do and the contributions they make through their work). Therefore, we propose that experiencing improvements in the meaningfulness of work is positively related to pride.

Positive emotions are hedonically rewarding and may be experienced as empowering, which can motivate people to continue to interact with the environment to maintain or enhance these emotions (e.g., Fredrickson, 2001; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2009). Moreover, pride can motivate people to maintain a positive self-concept and achieve social goals (e.g., sustain or enhance behaviors that are socially valued and/or enhance their social status or worth; Tracy & Robins, 2004). As such, we propose that pride can encourage employees to engage in behaviors that can connect them with the environment in ways that maintain and/or continue to elicit the feeling that one is doing work that provides social value or social status. That is, pride can encourage employees to shift their job to take advantage of emerging opportunities, try novel ways of completing tasks, expand their work scope, and/or think about their job more holistically. In other words, pride can prompt promotion-oriented job crafting because these behaviors can support or enhance employees' ability to maintain the meaningfulness of their work and make contributions that have social value. Taken together, we propose that changes that enhance the meaningfulness of work can elicit pride, which in turn can prompt promotion-oriented behaviors.

Hypothesis 1: Pride mediates the relationship between changes in the meaningfulness of work and promotion-oriented job crafting behaviors.

The relationship between work effectiveness and pride is less clear. Although attributing responsibility for improved work effectiveness to oneself may elicit pride, employees may be unlikely to experience an improvement of effectiveness in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, improvements in effectiveness that do occur may be attributed to the circumstances rather than to oneself. For example, employees that no longer have to attend in-person meetings may experience improved effectiveness. However, this may not elicit pride because this improvement in work effectiveness is attributable to a policy change rather than one's own contributions. Further, those that experience improvements in effectiveness may not perceive that this is valued and/or recognized by others. Thus, we examine the relationship between effectiveness and pride, but do not make a formal hypothesis.

Understanding How the Worsening of Meaningfulness and Effectiveness of Work Relate to Frustration and Prevention-Oriented Behaviors

Frustration occurs when people experience challenges or hindrances in their environment that they perceive to be outside of their control and for which they do not attribute blame to a specific individual (e.g., Lazarus, 1991). Within the context of an environmental disruption, we propose that frustration is likely to be elicited in response to experiencing a worsening of the meaningfulness or effectiveness of one's work. This is because employees are motivated to achieve or maintain meaningful and effective work; changes that detract from these goals are likely to be experienced as a hindrance. Since these hindrances are attributable to changes from a disruption (i.e., a pandemic) rather than a specific entity (e.g., a manager or the organization), this is likely to elicit frustration. Thus, we argue that changes that diminish the meaningfulness

of work and work effectiveness can prompt frustration.

Importantly, frustration is accompanied by increased attention and desires to address the concern (e.g., Lazarus, 1991). Accordingly, frustration can focus employees on the aspects of their job that are creating hindrances and motivate them to address these obstacles. As such, we propose that frustration may prompt employees to narrow their focus to a limited number of tasks to resolve issues that may be detracting from the meaningfulness of their work or work effectiveness. That is, by focusing their attention on the hindrance, employees may be able to adapt to the environmental disruption by addressing and/or overcoming challenges that have been created. Thus, we argue that frustration can prompt prevention-oriented behaviors to address challenges and mitigate negative outcomes. Taken together, we argue that the perceived worsening of meaningfulness and effectiveness of work can elicit frustration thereby propelling prevention-oriented behaviors.

Hypothesis 2a: Frustration mediates the relationship between changes in the meaningfulness of work and prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors.

Hypothesis 2b: Frustration mediates the relationship between changes in work effectiveness and prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors.

Understanding How Promotion-Oriented and Prevention-Oriented Job Crafting Behaviors Relate to Subsequent Performance and Well-Being

Although the underlying goal of appraisal processes is to facilitate adaptation (Lazarus, 1991), we argue that it is important to examine the benefits and costs of these responses for employees. More precisely, while appraisal processes should align employees with the new environment (i.e., enhance performance), these processes may also have broader implications for employees (i.e., impact well-being). To examine these implications and to contextualize these

outcomes for environmental disruptions, we focus on performance adaptivity and environmental mastery to reflect performance and well-being, respectively.

Performance Adaptivity. Performance adaptivity refers to employees' performance in response to emergent requirements, such as the extent to which employees have successfully coped with, responded to, and/or supported changes in a dynamic environment (Griffin et al., 2007). Performance adaptivity is distinct from job crafting. Whereas job crafting focuses on employees' self-directed action to make changes to their work, performance adaptivity focuses on whether employees are effectively performing in the disrupted environment.

We argue that both promotion-oriented and prevention-oriented behaviors can enhance performance adaptivity, but for disparate reasons. More precisely, both promotion-oriented and prevention-oriented behaviors encourage individuals to approach their environment in an effort to adapt. However, promotion-oriented behaviors focus employees on taking advantage of opportunities in the environment (i.e., doing the "right things"). That is, promotion-oriented behaviors may enhance performance by building resources, improving flexibility, and/or creating new expertise. These resources can be used to sustain and enhance performance (i.e., adapt to performance requirements in the disrupted environment). By contrast, prevention-oriented behaviors focus on narrowing attention or tasks to avoid losses or address specific issues (Bindl et al., 2019). This can focus employees on "doing things right." As such, prevention-oriented behaviors may not build new resources, but rather direct employees' attention towards critical issues. Thus, prevention-oriented behaviors can help employees address challenges related to their core job requirements, which should enhance their performance in the new environment. Taken together, we propose that both promotion-oriented and prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors can enhance employees' performance adaptivity.

Hypothesis 3: Promotion-oriented job crafting behaviors (H3a) and prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors (H3b) positively relate to performance adaptivity.

Environmental Mastery. While appraisal processes are intended to facilitate employees' adaptation to changes in their environment (Lazarus, 1991), we argue that how employees adapt to opportunities and challenges in their work environment is likely to have broader implications for their well-being. To contextualize well-being for environmental disruptions, we focus on environmental mastery – a subdimension of psychological well-being that reflects people's positive functioning in their environment (Ryff, 1989). More precisely, environmental mastery reflects the extent to which people feel in control of their lives and environment, including their general sense of being able to deal with and not feel overwhelmed by changes in the surrounding context (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). We argue that this dimension of well-being is especially important in the context of environmental disruptions because it highlights employees' personal adjustment and well-being in the "new" environment.

We propose that promotion-oriented behaviors positively contribute to environmental mastery. More precisely, promotion-oriented behaviors may contribute to the satisfaction of employees' psychological needs by enhancing their feelings of competence (Strauss & Parker, 2014). Promotion-oriented behaviors can also shape the work environment to align with employees' preferences and values, which can enable employees to achieve gains in the environment. Importantly, these features positively contribute to well-being (see Deci & Ryan, 2000). Taken together, we argue that promotion-oriented job crafting can adjust the scope of work to enhance the satisfaction of employees' needs, enable goal attainment, and promote employees' sense of control over their environment. This should have positive implications for employees' subsequent well-being (i.e., promote environmental mastery).

Hypothesis 4: Promotion-oriented behaviors positively relate to environmental mastery.

By contrast, prevention-oriented behaviors may detract from employees' environmental mastery because they have narrowed their focus to manage the most critical issues in their work. That is, prevention-oriented behaviors may come at a cost (Ji et al., 2021). More precisely, prevention-oriented behaviors require employees to exert energy and resources to address challenges. We argue that this narrowed focus may diminish the opportunity for employees to reinforce their own needs and preferences in this environment or build resources through need satisfaction (i.e., they are focused on the demands of the situation rather than aligning the job with their own needs and preferences). This may also undermine employees' sense of control over their broader environment because they are focused on a limited set of tasks. That is, prevention-oriented behaviors require resources to be invested. Prevention-oriented behaviors are also less likely to contribute to resource gain to offset resource losses or build further resources. Taken together, we propose that prevention-oriented behaviors may detract from environmental mastery – a critical subdimension of well-being (Ryff, 1989).

Hypothesis 5: Prevention-oriented behaviors negatively relate to environmental mastery.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

We collected our data during the COVID-19 pandemic (May 16-May 30, 2020). During the data collection period, the United Kingdom was under a government-imposed lockdown. Non-essential workers were required to work from home to limit the spread of the virus whereas those who were deemed to be "key" or "essential" workers were allowed/required to work in their normal workplace setting but were subject to tightened health and safety protocols.

We used a three-wave survey design, with each survey wave separated by one week. We

chose a one-week time separation between the survey waves because this was enough time for

the effects to emerge (e.g., for change to initiate employee responses and for employee responses

to impact performance and mastery outcomes). Moreover, a 1-week time separation is also long

enough to curtail common method bias since participants are unlikely to remember their

responses from a week ago (see Podsakoff et al., 2012). Importantly, a 1-week time separation is

also short enough to be appropriate from a theoretical perspective (i.e., time periods that are too

long may introduce other alternative explanations; see George & Jones, 2000). However, we

measured discrete emotions and job crafting behaviors in the same wave because appraisal

theories indicate that discrete emotions typically prompt an immediate behavioral response (e.g.,

Lazarus, 1991). Thus, measuring emotions and job crafting behaviors in the same wave ensures

that we capture these short-term effects.

We assessed appraisals at T1, discrete emotions and job crafting behaviors at T2, and

employee outcomes (performance adaptivity and environmental mastery) at both T2 and T3.

Participants were recruited from Prolific (see Palan & Schitter, 2018) and paid £2 per survey. To

be included in the sample, participants had to be over 18 years old, employed full-time or part-

time by an organization in the United Kingdom, working during the data collection period (e.g.,

not laid off or furloughed), and had an 85% or higher approval rate for survey completion on

Prolific. We followed best practices for online data collection by screening for inattentiveness

and checking for consistency in reported gender/age across surveys (see Cheung et al., 2017).

Participants ($n = 497$) who successfully completed T1 and met the criteria for inclusion

were invited to T2 ($n = 443$) and T3 ($n = 423$). Thus, our retention rate between T1 and T3 was

85.11%. We removed three respondents who did not pass the consistency or attention checks,

two who were no longer working, and 16 who did not provide usable data (i.e., did not fully

complete the surveys). The final sample ($N = 402$) was 59.5% female, average age of 41.68 ($SD = 11.02$), 39.6% had an undergraduate degree (while 24.8% had a graduate degree), 55.0% worked in the private sector (41.3% in the public sector), 47.0% identified as key workers, and 60.5% reported working from home during data collection. The most common industries represented were government and public administration (12.9%), health care and social assistance (10.4%), finance and insurance (9.0%), other manufacturing activities (6.5%), and retail (6.5%).

We examined whether there were any significant differences between respondents who participated in the first wave versus our final sample, using a Welch's t-test because this does not assume equal variances between samples. Results indicated that respondents in the final sample were older ($M = 41.68$, $SD = 11.02$) compared to respondents to the first wave ($M = 38.97$, $SD = 10.22$), $t(251.71) = 6.88$, $p = .009$. Respondents in the final sample also had fewer financial concerns ($M = 2.34$, $SD = 1.21$) compared to respondents to the first wave ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 1.41$), $t(168.79) = 7.04$, $p = .009$. Controlling for these variables did not significantly impact our results.

Measures

Unless otherwise indicated, question stems focused the scale on the past week and response anchors ranged from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a great extent).

Changes in meaningfulness of work and work effectiveness (T1) were measured with scales originally developed to capture how organizational change has impacted different aspects of the job and whether the effect was positive or negative (e.g., Kiefer, 2005; Paterson & Cary, 2002). We modified the scales to capture employees' appraisals of the changes they experienced because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also conducted a small focus group with MBA students to determine the most relevant items for the COVID-19 context and adapted the scales

accordingly. For the final scale, the question stem was: "Please think about the **changes that you**

have experienced in your job since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and how these

impacted your own job and work. Overall, did the job changes worsen or improve the following

aspects of your job/work since the outbreak of the pandemic?" The response anchors were: 1

(very much worsened), 2 (worsened), 3 (neither/nor), 4 (improved), and 5 (very much improved).

Changes to meaningfulness of work was measured with 3 items ("How meaningful your job

feels"; "Your sense of purpose at work"; "How much you feel you can contribute to society with

your job"), changes to work effectiveness consisted of 5 items ("How effectively you can work";

"The quality of your performance"; "How motivated you feel at work"; "How well you are able

to achieve your personal goals at work"; "How distracted you get at work").

Pride and frustration (T2) were assessed with single items (proud, frustrated). This

measurement strategy aligns with common practice for unidimensional emotions with high face

validity (e.g., Barclay & Kiefer, 2019). The question stem was: "Think about work during the

last week. To what extent have you felt the following at work in the last week?"

Promotion-oriented and prevention-oriented behaviors (T2) were assessed with the

promotion-oriented and prevention-oriented sub-scales for task and cognitive job crafting

behaviors from Bindl et al. (2019). Consistent with best practice recommendations for measuring

job crafting behaviors (see Zhang & Parker, 2019), we collapsed the items into separate scales

for promotion-oriented behaviors (8 items, e.g., "I actively took on more tasks in my work") and

prevention-oriented behaviors (5 items, e.g., "I tried to simplify some of the tasks that I worked

on"). We also excluded a cognitive crafting item that emphasized passive and hedonically

focused (versus proactive) behavior (i.e., "I focused my mind on the best parts of my job, while

trying to ignore those parts I didn't like"). Given the nature of the pandemic, we did not measure

relationship or skill crafting because we thought that these behaviors may be less relevant in the

initial stages of the pandemic when our data was collected (e.g., many employees were unable to

meet new people at work or seek new training given the urgency and suddenness of the context).

Performance adaptivity (T2 and T3) was assessed with Griffin et al.'s (2007) scale (3

items; "I have adapted well to changes in core tasks", "I coped with changes to the way I have to

do my core tasks", "I dealt effectively with changes affecting my core tasks"). We selected this

sub-dimension of performance because it captures the extent to which employees have adapted

to changes in their work system, work roles, and/or environment. Moreover, performance

adaptivity is especially important in contexts where job requirements can be emergent.

Environmental mastery (T2 and T3) was assessed with Ryff et al.'s (2010) scale (3 items;

"I felt I was in charge of the situation in which I live", "The demands of everyday life often got

me down (reverse coded)", "I was good at managing the responsibilities of daily life").

Control Variables. Following best practices for the use of control variables (e.g., Becker

et al., 2016), we report our main analyses *without* control variables for two reasons. First,

providing the main analysis without control variables can provide confidence that our findings

are not driven by the inclusion of covariates in the analysis. Second, including multiple control

variables in analyses may detract from the interpretability of the coefficients and/or inadvertently

bias the results. However, we conducted *supplemental* analyses to examine the effects of the

control variables and provide evidence for the generalizability of our findings. More precisely,

we examined demographic control variables (i.e., gender, age, tenure) and control variables

related to the COVID-19 pandemic (i.e., working from home, feeling safe and protected in the

workplace, having adequate equipment/Internet to work from home, taking care of primary

school children or younger at home, taking care of family members in separate homes, key

worker status, financial concerns). We also measured employees' interaction with their

supervisor because this may influence employees' willingness or ability to engage in job crafting

behaviors. Further, given that 80% of the population was reporting enhanced anxiety during the

pandemic (Roy et al., 2020), we also assessed anxiety at work (one-item, "anxious"). We

assessed anxiety alongside pride and frustration with the same question stem/scale anchors. The

above constructs were each measured with one item.

To rule out the alternative explanation that our effects were driven by personality or by

the opportunity to engage in job crafting behaviors, we also examined proactive personality and

work autonomy. Proactive personality was assessed with 3 items adapted from Griffin et al.

(2007). The question stem was: "To what extent does the following apply to you at work in

general?" The items were: "Generally, I come up with ideas to improve the way in which my

core tasks are done"; "Generally, I initiate better ways of doing my core tasks"; "Generally, I

make changes to the way my core tasks are done". Autonomy was measured with 3 items

adapted from Morgeson and Humphrey (2006) to suit the COVID-19 context. The question stem

was: "To what extent does the following apply to you at work since the outbreak of the

pandemic?" The items were: "The job provides me with significant autonomy in making

decisions or carrying out the work"; "I am able to choose the way to go about my job"; "The job

gives me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work."

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations.

Before testing our hypotheses, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to

confirm the factor structure of our measurement model using Mplus Version 8.1 (Muthén &

Muthén, 2011). The six-factor measurement model included the multi-item constructs (i.e.,

changes in meaningfulness of work, changes in work effectiveness, promotion and prevention-oriented behaviors, performance adaptivity, and environmental mastery) and had an acceptable fit to the data (χ^2 (309) = 680.470, $p < .001$; CFI = .901, TLI = .888, RMSEA = .055, SRMR = .069). Moreover, our measurement model fit the data better than alternative models, including a one-factor model ($\Delta\chi2$ (15) = 1366.404, $p < .001$); a three-factor model based on temporal ordering (with T1 changes in meaningfulness of work and work effectiveness combined, T2 promotion and prevention-oriented behaviors combined, and T3 outcomes combined; $\Delta\chi2$ (12) = 2000.539, $p < .001$); and a model combining variables of the same theoretical constructs ($\Delta\chi2$ (9) = 1245.384, $p < .001$). We also examined common method variance by adding an unmeasured method factor to the six-factor model (see Podsakoff et al., 2003, 2012). However, including an unmeasured method factor did not significantly increase model fit, suggesting that common method variance did not significantly impact our results ($\Delta\chi^2$ (1) =0.253, $p = 1.000$).

Analytic Strategy

To test our hypotheses, we used a path model (TYPE=GENERAL) and maximum-likelihood estimation (ML) in Mplus Version 8.1. Our path model used measured instead of latent variables to remain within the suggested ratio of parameters to observations (e.g., Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988). The path model also included non-hypothesized links (i.e., relationships between changes to work effectiveness and pride, between pride and prevention-oriented behaviors, and between frustration and promotion-oriented behaviors as well as the direct effects of change on job crafting; see dotted lines in Figure 2). This ensured that our analyses provide a rigorous test of our hypotheses and control for shared variance with other variables. We also controlled for employee outcomes (performance adaptivity and environmental mastery) measured at T2 on these outcomes measured at T3. We used this strategy to enhance

confidence that job crafting behaviors predict T3 performance adaptivity and environmental

mastery beyond T2. Thus, the model included paths from T2 outcomes to T3 outcomes as well as

paths from emotions and job crafting behaviors to T2 outcomes. Corresponding sets of variables

were allowed to correlate to account for the variance between them (i.e., changes, emotions, job

crafting behaviors, and outcomes).

As discussed above, we conducted our main analyses *without* demographic, contextual

(i.e., COVID-19 related), or personality control variables and then conducted supplemental

analyses with these control variables included in the model. Note that our results remained

substantively similar with and without these control variables included in the model.

Hypothesis Testing

The overall model demonstrated a good fit, ($\chi^2(14) = 34.74$, $p = .002$; CFI = .98, TLI =

.95, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .03). Figure 2 presents the results of our hypothesis tests.

H1 predicted that pride mediates the relationship between changes in meaningfulness of

work and promotion-oriented behaviors. Results indicated a positive relationship between

changes in meaningfulness of work (T1) and pride (T2) ($\beta = .55$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$). Pride was

positively related to promotion-oriented behaviors ($\beta = .38$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$). There was a

significant indirect effect between changes in meaningfulness of work and promotion-oriented

behaviors via pride (indirect effect = .21 $SE = .03$; 95% CI [.145, .270]). H1 was supported.

H2a predicted that frustration mediates the relationship between changes in

meaningfulness of work and prevention-oriented behaviors. Results indicated a negative

relationship between changes in meaningfulness of work (T1) and frustration (T2) ($\beta = -.20$, SE

$= .05$, $p < .001$). Frustration was positively related to prevention-oriented behaviors ($\beta = .25$, SE

$= .05$, $p < .001$). There was a significant indirect effect between changes in meaningfulness of

work and prevention-oriented behaviors via frustration (indirect effect = –.50; *SE* = .02; 95% CI [–.083, –.018]). H2a was supported. H2b predicted that frustration mediates the relationship between changes in work effectiveness and prevention-oriented behaviors. Results indicated that there was a negative relationship between changes in work effectiveness (T1) and frustration (T2) (β = –.33, *SE* = .05, *p* < .001). There was a significant indirect effect between changes in work effectiveness and prevention-oriented behaviors via frustration (indirect effect = –.08; *SE* = .02; 95% CI [–.125, –.041]). H2b was supported.

H3 to H5 examined the relationships between job crafting behaviors with T3 employee outcomes (controlling for T2 employee outcomes). Promotion-oriented (β = .22, *SE* = .05, *p* < .001) and prevention-oriented behaviors (β = .11, *SE* = .05, *p* = .018) were positively related to performance adaptivity. Promotion-oriented behaviors were positively related to environmental mastery (β = .12, *SE* = .04, *p* = .002) whereas prevention-oriented behaviors were negatively related to environmental mastery (β = –.09, *SE* = .04, *p* = .014). H3, H4, and H5 were supported.

We tested serial mediations in a follow-up analysis. All were significant at a 5% or 10% significance level, providing further support for the overall model. The results of the serial mediations are as follows: the relationship between changes in meaningfulness to performance adaptivity via pride and promotion-oriented behaviors (indirect effect = .05 *SE* = .01, *p* < .001; 95% CI [.020, .071]); the relationship between changes in meaningfulness to environmental mastery via pride and promotion-oriented behaviors (indirect effect = .03 *SE* = .01; *p* = .005, 95% CI [.007, .040]); the relationship between changes in meaningfulness and performance adaptivity via frustration and prevention-oriented behaviors (indirect effect = –.01 *SE* = .00, *p* = .061; 90% CI [–.011, –.001]); the relationship between changes in meaningfulness and environmental mastery via frustration and prevention-oriented behaviors (indirect effect = .01 *SE*

= .00; *p* = .055; 90% CI [.001, .009]); the relationship between changes in effectiveness and

performance adaptivity via frustration and prevention-oriented behaviors (indirect effect = –.01

SE = .01, *p* =.044; 95% CI [–.018, .000]); the relationship between changes in effectiveness and

environmental mastery via frustration and prevention-oriented behavior (indirect effect = .01 *SE*

= .00, *p* = .039; 95% CI [.000, .015]).

As noted above, to provide a rigorous test of our hypotheses and control for shared

variance, we also included non-hypothesized links in our path model. Results indicated that

changes in work effectiveness were not significantly related to pride (β = .04, *SE* = .05, *p* =

.414). Pride marginally predicted prevention-oriented behaviors (β = .11, *SE* = .06, *p* = .074),

while frustration positively predicted promotion-oriented behaviors (β = .19, *SE* = .05, *p* < .001).

Changes in meaningfulness directly predicted promotion-oriented behaviors (β = .16, *SE* = .06, *p*

= .005), but not prevention-oriented behaviors (β = .02, *SE* = .06, *p* = .782). By contrast, changes

in work effectiveness directly related to both promotion-oriented behaviors (β = .20, *SE* = .05, *p*

< .001) and prevention-oriented behaviors (β = .17, *SE* = .06, *p* = .002).

Supplemental Analyses

We present an overview of our supplemental analyses (full results available from the

authors).

Reverse Causality Model. To provide further confidence in the temporal ordering of

discrete emotions and job crafting, we ran a supplemental model that reverses the order of

emotions and job crafting behaviors. The supplemental model yielded a less acceptable fit on all

indicators. The fit indices were: $\chi^2(14) = 62.50$, *p* < .001; CFI = .96, TLI = .88, RMSEA = .09,

SRMR = .04. Due to this supplemental model being non-nested, we used BIC as an indicator to

compare the fit with the hypothesized model. The hypothesized model yielded a lower BIC by

27.8, suggesting the hypothesized model has a significantly better fit (i.e., a difference of 10 or more points provides strong evidence for a better fitting model; see Raftery, 1995).

Supplemental Control Variable Analyses. To ensure that our results were not biased by sample attrition (i.e., participants in our final sample were older and had fewer financial concerns than participants in the first wave) and to provide confidence in the generalizability of our findings, we reanalyzed our hypotheses accounting for the above noted theoretically relevant control variables. To maintain the suggested ratio of parameters to observations, we ran these supplemental analyses in "batches" (e.g., a model with demographics and proactive personality control variables, a model with COVID-19 related variables, a model with work autonomy and interaction with supervisor, and a model with financial concerns and anxiety). The results with and without control variables were substantively similar and all hypothesized indirect effects remain significant.

Analyses Examining Employee-Related Characteristics as Antecedents to Change. Our argument is premised on the notion that employees' appraisal processes are initiated in response to experiencing a displacement of existing arrangements. As such, we explored _who_ was most likely to experience changes in an exploratory fashion (i.e., by adding employee characteristics as antecedents to "changes" in the hypothesized path model). Being a key worker and feeling safe/protected in the workplace were positively related to changes in the meaningfulness of work (but were unrelated to changes in effectiveness). Autonomy and interaction with one's supervisor were positively related to changes in meaningfulness and effectiveness. Anxiety was negatively related to changes in meaningfulness and effectiveness. Experiencing financial concerns was positively associated with changes in work effectiveness. Interestingly, having small children at home or taking care of family members did not significantly relate to changes in effectiveness.

Our measures of change asked respondents to indicate the degree to which they had experienced change since the outbreak of the pandemic. Response anchors ranged from 1 to 5, with the midpoint of our scale, 3, representing no change. Scores that were significantly higher than this midpoint represented an improvement whereas scores that were significantly lower than this midpoint represented a worsening. Overall, meaningfulness of work generally improved for most employees (i.e., significantly differed from the scale midpoint of 3) during the COVID-19 pandemic ($M = 3.20$, $SD = .80$), one-sample t-test, $t(401) = 5.14$, $p < .001$. By contrast, work effectiveness generally worsened ($M = 2.88$, $SD = .69$), $t(401) = -3.50$, $p = .001$.

DISCUSSION

How do employees experience, navigate, and adapt to environmental disruptions? Our findings reveal that employees can appraise the impact of the disruption on their own work (e.g., changes in the meaningfulness of their work and work effectiveness), which can prompt discrete emotions and job crafting behaviors to facilitate adaptation. Moreover, promotion and prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors can promote employees' subsequent performance (i.e., performance adaptivity), but these behaviors have differential effects for well-being (i.e., environmental mastery). Below, we discuss the theoretical and practical implications of our findings as well as the broader implications for strategic human resource management (SHRM).

Environmental Disruptions as a Contextual Influence

Scholars have argued for the importance of considering how environmental factors can serve as contextual variables that can impact employees and their behaviors in organizations (e.g., Bamberger, 2008; Johns, 2006). Given that environmental disruptions are conceptualized as displacing existing arrangements, we argued that these disruptions can initiate adaptive processes. However, the emergence of appraisal processes and how these processes unfold may

not be unique to environmental disruptions. For example, although environmental disruptions may prompt individuals to perceive a worsening of their work effectiveness and feel frustration, this relationship is likely to transcend the specific context of environmental disruptions.

The broader environmental context may also influence relationships between variables (e.g., Bamberger, 2008; Cappelli & Sherer, 1991; Johns, 2006).

For instance, environmental disruptions may be especially adept at creating the circumstances that can support the emergence of job crafting behavior as an adaptive behavioral response. This is because employees may no longer be able to conform to the status quo and must instead adapt to shifting environmental demands. Moreover, an environmental disruption that also has a high degree of uncertainty may accentuate the relationship between changes in work effectiveness and frustration because this may highlight that one's goals are being hindered and that resolving the issue may not be straightforward due to the variability in the environment. In these cases, it is possible that other processes may also be activated (e.g., strategies to regulate variability so that effective job crafting can occur; also see Griffin & Grote, 2000).

Importantly, leaders may also be able to shape the emergence of job crafting (e.g., Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012). Our correlation table provides some evidence for this interpretation; employees who had more interaction with their supervisor reported enhanced meaningfulness and work effectiveness, pride, job crafting behaviors (promotion and prevention-oriented), performance adaptivity, and environmental mastery. Similar relationships were also observed for work autonomy. Taken together, this implies that leadership and the work context can have a positive and influential role in supporting employees throughout adaptive processes.

While our study examined the impact of COVID-19 at work, our findings also point to the importance of understanding these processes under more 'normal' situations (i.e., situations

without an acute environmental disruption) and showcases opportunities for SHRM to support a diversity of employee needs. For example, working from home was associated with less meaningfulness of work and lower pride. Given that these aspects are critical for promoting employee well-being, employees who work from home may experience higher risk to their well-being and may be especially likely to benefit from initiatives that support well-being. By contrast, key workers were more likely to report enhanced meaningfulness of work, pride, and promotion-oriented behaviors. While these effects can be beneficial for employees, it may also be important to ensure that employees do not experience role overload as they broaden their job scope to take advantage of opportunities. Similarly, anxiety was associated with lower meaningfulness of work, work effectiveness, pride, performance, and well-being but higher frustration. This highlights the pervasive impact of anxiety and how it may detract from employees' ability to effectively adapt. However, anxiety need not have detrimental effects (e.g., Barclay & Kiefer, 2019). Instead, HRM practitioners may be well served to have support systems in place to ensure that anxiety can have beneficial rather than detrimental effects (for a discussion, see Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). Taken together, our findings highlight how SHRM scholars and practitioners may need to adopt a more holistic approach that considers how employees' circumstances and surrounding context may create challenges or opportunities that need to be effectively managed to support employee performance and well-being.

Appraisals of Meaningfulness of Work and Work Effectiveness

Our findings indicate that the *same* environmental disruption may not be experienced in the same way by all employees. This suggests the importance of focusing on how employees are appraising the implications of the disruption for their own work. Moreover, the changes that follow from environmental disruptions may not be uniformly negative for employees, but rather

may also have positive implications. Thus, it is critical to identify how the environmental

disruption has created changes for employees' day-to-day work as well as how these changes are

appraised by employees. Importantly, we focused on changes related to meaningfulness of work

and work effectiveness because these aspects were prevalent for employees' experiences during

a global pandemic. However, other environmental disruptions (e.g., natural disasters) may

prompt different types of changes, challenges, or opportunities. Thus, our findings highlight that

effectively managing the impact of environmental disruptions requires an understanding of the

disruption and its implications from the perspective of *employees*.

Employees' Emotional Experiences in the Context of Environmental Disruptions

Our findings indicate that employees' emotional experiences can play a *functional* role in

facilitating employees' adaptation to change. From an employee perspective, frustration is

adaptive because it focuses employees on addressing obstacles in their environment (Lazarus,

1991). However, this is a stark contrast to the deeply held assumption that negative emotions are

"dysfunctional" for navigating change and that managers must curtail negative emotions to

mitigate employee resistance to change (see Oreg et al., 2018). Thus, it is critical to recognize

that the "functionality" of emotions may be quite different depending on the perspective that is

adopted (e.g., employee versus organization). Moreover, employees' negative emotions are not

necessarily detrimental for change, but rather can have *adaptive* functions for employees.

While frustration prompted prevention-oriented behaviors, as expected, frustration also

unexpectedly prompted promotion-oriented behaviors (see Figure 2). Given that the COVID-19

pandemic is an evolving and unprecedented context, employees may find it difficult to ascertain

an effective or appropriate course of action to address challenges (i.e., there may be an unclear

problem or solution). Under these circumstances, promotion-oriented behaviors (e.g., shifting

tasks to leverage opportunities) may be more effective than trying to address specific problems. That is, frustration can prompt employees to address challenges and, in some circumstances, the best way to do this may be to identify and pursue novel opportunities in the environment. This adds to the importance of recognizing that frustration can promote adaptation. However, it also raises theoretical questions about whether these benefits become less apparent over time. More precisely, people may be willing to weather frustration with short-term challenges, but longer-term challenges may raise questions about what the organization should be doing to remove these barriers, which may contribute to negative outcomes (e.g., resentment, cynicism, and burnout). Although positive emotions (e.g., excitement, happiness) have been recognized as being important for employees' acceptance of formal change initiatives (e.g., Oreg et al., 2018), our findings indicate that employees can experience *pride*. Importantly, this emotion can prompt employees to leverage opportunities in their environment. These findings further highlight the benefits of adopting an employee perspective to better understand how employees appraise and emotionally respond to change. An employee perspective may also provide insight into downstream experiences. For instance, employees whose meaningfulness was improved due to an environmental disruption may have difficulties adjusting to a later loss of meaningfulness as new arrangements are made (e.g., loss of key worker status and the social recognition that comes with it after the pandemic).

Promotion versus Prevention-Oriented Job Crafting Behaviors

Our findings also highlight that discrete emotions may prompt employees to self-initiate changes in their jobs in response to environmental disruptions. Although the broader proactive behavior literature has recognized the importance of affect (e.g., Parker et al., 2010), the job crafting literature has emphasized employees' needs, motivations, and characteristics of the job

(e.g., Bindl et al., 2019; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Our findings provide further support for the notion that employees' emotions can serve as antecedents for job crafting behaviors and highlight the importance of recognizing the differential effects of discrete emotions for promotion and prevention-oriented behaviors. This suggests that adopting a nuanced perspective of affect in the context of proactive behaviors may provide further insights into these behaviors.

Previous research has shown that job crafting can enable employees to be more responsive and adaptive to formalized change initiatives, which can promote innovation and sustainability (e.g., Le Blanc et al., 2017). Similarly, our findings imply that employees may drive change and innovation through their behavioral responses to environmental disruptions. This suggests the importance of exploring how SHRM and organizational processes can be set-up to support/leverage this source of potential strategic advantage. For example, organizations that introduce more flextime or encourage permanent work-from-home arrangements may need to consider how this can impact employees' job crafting behaviors and how to effectively manage the (dys)functional implications that can arise from these behaviors. By considering these aspects, organizations may be well-positioned to effectively innovate when environmental disruptions occur and on an ongoing basis. Further, it is important to explore how job crafting before, during, and after disruptions may impact innovation and sustainability for employees and organizations (e.g., employees who engaged in job crafting before an environmental disruption may be better able to effectively employ this strategy during disruptions).

Understanding the Impact of Job Crafting on Employee Outcomes

Our findings indicate that both promotion and prevention-oriented behaviors can enhance performance in the short-term. However, it is possible that these strategies may have differential effects in the long-term. More precisely, promotion-oriented behaviors may enable employees to

continue to build resources and satisfy their psychological needs, thereby contributing to positive resource gain spirals and enhancing long-term performance (Fredrickson, 2001). Moreover, these behaviors may also enhance performance over a wider domain of tasks by encouraging employees to broaden their job scope, enhance flexibility, and develop their expertise. By contrast, prevention-oriented behaviors may enhance performance, but for a narrow set of tasks. This may not create as many opportunities to build resources, broaden expertise, or create positive resource gain cycles. Moreover, it is possible that prevention-oriented behaviors may not persist once employees have addressed challenges and adapted to their environment. That is, prevention-oriented behaviors may offer a short-term solution that requires the investment of resources but has limited benefits for enhancing employees' resources over the long-term.

Although our findings indicated a positive relationship between prevention-oriented behaviors and short-term performance, previous research has found a negative relationship (e.g., Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018, 2019). There are at least two explanations for this difference. First, prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors have recently been reconceptualized to focus on approach motivations to better align with the definition of proactive behaviors. As such, previous findings for a negative relationship between prevention-oriented behaviors and performance may have been driven by withdrawal-related items in the prevention-oriented job crafting measures (i.e., engaging in withdrawal behaviors can undermine performance; see Podsakoff et al., 2009). Second, given the above resource argument, it is possible that prevention-oriented behaviors have differential effects in the short and long-term. More precisely, although prevention-oriented behaviors may promote short-term adaptation, it may be difficult to sustain these behaviors over a long period, which may detract from performance (e.g., Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2019).

With respect to environmental mastery, differential effects for promotion and prevention-

oriented behaviors were observed. Consistent with our theorizing that promotion-oriented

behaviors can build resources thereby enhancing well-being, these behaviors were positively

related to environmental mastery. By contrast, prevention-oriented behaviors were negatively

related to environmental mastery. This is consistent with the argument that these behaviors may

require the investment of resources in a narrow scope of tasks without creating opportunities to

build resources. Overall, this suggests that prevention-oriented behaviors may help employees

adapt to their environment, but this may come at a personal cost (also see Petrou et al., 2015).

Importantly, a recent review of the literature indicated that there is "considerable space"

for theorizing related to relationship between proactive behaviors and well-being (see Ji et al.,

2021, p. 263). We echo this call and encourage future research to explore how the effects of job

crafting may change and evolve over time. For promotion-oriented behaviors, this includes

exploring resource gain spirals as well as potential detrimental effects that may emerge over time

(e.g., when employees add too much complexity to their job; see Harju et al., 2021). For

prevention-oriented behaviors, this includes resource loss spirals as well as how potential

detrimental effects can be mitigated and managed by employees and the organization.

Practical Implications for Employees and Managers

Our findings highlight several practical insights for employees and managers. For

employees, environmental disruptions can be an inherently emotional experience and how they

navigate this experience may have implications for their performance and well-being. Notably,

environmental disruptions that improve the meaningfulness of work may be especially helpful

for encouraging employees to embrace opportunities and promote adaptation. As such,

organizations may benefit from highlighting the meaningfulness of employees' work (e.g.,

showcasing the positive impact and significance of employees' work for others; Hackman &

Oldham, 1980) and by taking active steps to ensure work remains meaningful as the disrupted

environment settles and either becomes the "new normal" or undergoes further changes.

While organizations may not be able to develop formalized plans for managing a specific

and novel environmental disruption, they may benefit from having a strategy for how to assess

and respond to the impact of disruptions on their employees. This should include identifying

which employees are likely to experience changes because of disruptions, what job aspects or

goals are likely to be impacted, and how the worsening or improvement of these aspects can be

effectively managed. Moreover, proactively planning for disruptions (e.g., providing flexibility

in working arrangements, ensuring that employees have access to adequate equipment for

circumstances that are likely to arise during environmental disruptions) and proactively trouble-

shooting issues is likely to be helpful for managing these situations. For example, practicing

contingency plans (e.g., providing training for new technology or trying out flexible working

arrangements) *before* these arrangements need to be implemented may ease the burden on

employees and enable them to focus on responding to an environment disruption when it occurs.

Although managers have been cautioned that negative emotions prompt resistance to

change (see Oreg et al., 2018), our findings indicate that recognizing the adaptive functions of

negative emotions may help managers support employees as they navigate and adapt to change.

For example, while frustration can prompt prevention-oriented behaviors to curtail issues and

promotion-oriented behaviors to leverage opportunities, managers may support employees by

ensuring that performance expectations during challenging times are reasonable, clear, and

flexible as well as by prioritizing tasks to help employees focus their energies on critical issues.

To benefit from job crafting behaviors, managers need to resist the urge to view these

behaviors as a threat or distraction (Frese & Fay, 2001). Instead, managers should emphasize key

goals but provide employees with sufficient autonomy on *how* to accomplish these goals. However, this also places an onus on managers to ensure that employees understand the organization's goals to ensure that employees' job crafting aligns with these goals. Processes may also need to be implemented to maintain alignment between employees' work, the organization's goals, and the environment. For example, rather than providing employees with a set job description, managers may need to co-create and actively manage expectations with employees on an ongoing basis. This is likely to require high trust and effective communication between managers/employees and ensuring that employees have the needed autonomy, skills, confidence, and support for 'intrapreneurial' behaviors (i.e., seeking opportunities within the internal organizational environment). This may shift expectations for employees, managers, and the processes that are needed within the organization (Lee & Lee, 2018).

Our findings also point to the importance of developing leadership and managerial skills related to recognizing employees' emotional experiences, detecting when employees need autonomy/support, building trust in one's employees to facilitate the co-creation of performance expectations, and providing the conditions and processes that can support job crafting behaviors (e.g., effective communication). Developing ambidextrous leadership skills (e.g., Rosing et al., 2011), which balance closing behaviors (e.g., helping employees narrow their focus to get the job done) and opening behaviors (e.g., encouraging creativity and experimentation), may be especially beneficial for effectively managing employees' proactive behaviors.

Implications for SHRM

Our findings also have broader implications for SHRM. Later, we provide examples of how the insights from our study may be leveraged by SHRM practitioners to promote organizational effectiveness before, during, and after environmental disruptions.

Strategic Visioning & Change Management. Our findings highlight that job crafting can be a challenge and a source of strategic advantage for organizations. As a potential challenge, organizations should ensure that their employees understand the organization's strategic vision. This can guide employees towards changes that are aligned with the organization's goals and objectives. Moreover, SHRM practitioners may be well-served to consider employees' self-initiated changes when designing strategic initiatives. For example, employees' job crafting behaviors may have already created "bottom-up" changes that need to be considered in formalized change initiatives, raised employees' expectations for autonomy and flexibility, and/or increased the tendency for employees to feel disempowered by formalized strategic initiatives (e.g., because they have been navigating the situation using their own judgment). Thus, it is important for SHRM practitioners to consider how employees' self-initiated bottom-up changes may facilitate or hinder top-down initiatives and strategic visioning.

As a source of strategic advantage, employees are likely to identify opportunities and challenges that may not be visible to SHRM practitioners and those in higher organizational levels. Enhancing communication between these levels so that employees' experiences and insights can be leveraged is critical for effectively managing environmental disruptions and engaging in strategic visioning. More foundationally, creating the conditions that enable proactive behaviors to flourish may help organizations spur innovation, adjust to change, and inform strategic visioning on an ongoing basis. As such, highlighting the importance of proactive behaviors for the organization's mission may promote these behaviors beyond the environmental disruptions in which they may have emerged and create the conditions that can support the continuation of these behaviors (also see Bateman & Crant, 1999).

Enhancing EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) and Employee Well-Being. SHRM

trends emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic include an enhanced focus on EDI and employee well-being in organizations (e.g., Forbes, 2020). Job crafting can enable employees to shift their work in ways that accommodate their own needs (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and promote well-being, as indicated by our findings. Thus, supporting job crafting behaviors may be an effective strategy to align with these goals. However, our findings highlight the importance of creating the conditions that can encourage *promotion*-oriented job crafting behaviors because these behaviors are more likely to foster employee well-being. Importantly, recent evidence suggests that the perceived presence of human resource management systems can be a key factor promoting job crafting behaviors because this may provide additional resources that can encourage employees to engage in these behaviors (Hu et al., 2021). This suggests that SHRM has a key role to play in creating the circumstances that promote job crafting. Doing so may also promote key SHRM objectives (e.g., EDI and employee well-being).

Navigating Technological Innovations. Another significant SHRM trend relates to digital innovation (Forbes, 2020). New technologies, such as virtual/augmented reality and artificial intelligence, are expected to impact how employees learn, are onboarded, are trained as well as how they can complete their work. While providing opportunities to learn these technologies and their associated skills is important for implementing technology in the workplace, SHRM practitioners may also benefit from encouraging employees to consider how they can leverage this technology in unique and innovative ways to better support the specific needs of their own work. That is, exposing employees to the technology and then allowing them to engage in job crafting to incorporate the technology into their work may enhance its positive impact.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Directions

We tested our hypotheses with a sample of employees from the United Kingdom that

were working during the COVID-19 pandemic. We acknowledge that the nature of the work

and/or characteristics of the employees who remained working are likely to have differed from

those who were laid off or furloughed. Moreover, while our participants were from a range of

industries, we did not have information about the specific nature of their jobs. This may have

implications for the generalizability of our findings (e.g., some jobs may be more conducive to

job crafting behaviors than others). Given the pandemic and importance of social distancing, we

collected our data online following best practices for online surveys (see Cheung et al., 2017)

and for reducing common method bias (see Podsakoff et al., 2012). Importantly, this strategy

allowed employees' experiences to be captured as the pandemic was unfolding.

Given our focus on appraisals, discrete emotions, and behaviors that may not be easily

observable by others (especially in the pandemic context), we used self-report measures. We

separated our survey waves by 1 week to reduce common method bias and enhance confidence

in the temporal ordering of our variables. This also allowed sufficient time for the effects to

emerge. However, we measured emotions and job crafting behaviors in the same wave because

emotions are theorized to serve as short-term reactions with immediate behavioral implications

(Lazarus, 1991). Future research should examine reciprocal effects (e.g., promotion-oriented

behaviors may elicit further pride, which may prompt additional promotion-oriented behaviors).

Our measures of promotion and prevention-oriented job crafting behaviors focused on

task and cognitive crafting. We did not examine skill or relationship crafting because we

reasoned that these behaviors may be less likely in the initial stages of an unexpected disruption.

For example, while employees may have learned new skills (e.g., virtual communication tools)

during the COVID-19 pandemic, these skills may not reflect *proactive* skill crafting. More

precisely, skill crafting typically reflects employees' self-motivated attempts to enhance their

skillset with the goal of accumulating resources that may be useful for their future work self

(e.g., to prepare oneself for a higher-level position or a new job; Strauss et al., 2012). Moreover,

skill crafting has been argued to come at a cost, such that developing skills that are not currently

needed may diminish resources that are needed to take care of the day-to-day tasks in one's

current job. These "costly" future-oriented behaviors may have been less likely to emerge in the

initial stages of the disruption (i.e., at the time of data collection). However, these behaviors may

gain prominence as people navigate the disruption and start to prepare for the future, especially if

the disruption puts their current job at risk. Future research may benefit from examining when

the various types of job crafting are likely to be used as well as how these job crafting behaviors

can impact additional employee (e.g., turnover) and organizational (e.g., innovation) outcomes.

We focused on the COVID-19 pandemic as an example of an environmental disruption.

However, the nature of this disruption may have unique features that may not generalize to other

disruptions. For example, the pandemic was an unexpected and global phenomenon. Further,

many decisions were made by governments rather than organizational leaders (e.g., lockdowns,

mandatory safety protocols). These features may not characterize other disruptions. This

suggests that it is important to consider how future disruptions may differentially impact

geographic regions, industries, and/or certain types of work.

Moreover, while employees are likely to engage in appraisal processes to understand and

adapt to environmental disruptions, the nature of these appraisals and therefore the ensuring

emotions and behaviors may be different for other disruptions. For instance, employees may

experience anger, shame, or disgust if they perceive that their organization's actions prompted a

toxic spill (i.e., the organization was to blame versus the pandemic in which the organization did

not hold responsibility). This may prompt employees to engage in skill or relationship crafting to

build resources and networks to enable them to leave the organization (i.e., job crafting may be aimed at advancing their own self-interest rather than to adapting to the disruption or supporting the organization). Thus, it is important to contextualize appraisal processes to the specific disruption as well as its specific challenges and opportunities.

While we focused on employees' assessments of whether the disruption resulted in changes in meaningfulness of work and work effectiveness, future research may benefit from further exploring the nature of employees' primary and secondary appraisals related to these changes (e.g., how employees appraise their coping potential, future expectations). This may provide further insight into the emotions that are likely to arise and offer a point of intervention. For example, managers may be able to promote pride by helping employees appreciate how changes in their work can positively enhance their self and/or social esteem (Lazarus, 1991). Similarly, examining future expectations may also predict people's emotional and behavioral reactions. For example, people may have a better sense of how to navigate disruptions for which they have experience or for which there is precedence (e.g., natural disasters). Future research should also examine the generalizability of our findings with similar disruptions (e.g., later lockdowns) and/or whether these effects sustain as people adjust to the "new normal" (e.g., after people have navigated the initial learning curve). For example, employees may experience disparate emotions if organizational processes return to the "old normal" (e.g., disappointment for those who no longer benefit from enhanced meaningfulness; relief for those who have their effectiveness restored). Similarly, having experienced previous environmental disruptions may impact how future disruptions are interpreted and responded to. For example, gaining experience with new technologies due to the COVID-19 pandemic may provide employees with more confidence to adjust to disruptions created by subsequent digital technology innovations.

Previous experiences may also impact how employees interpret environmental uncertainty; if employees expect variability in their environment, this may be perceived as less disruptive. Thus, it may also be fruitful to examine how employees' history impacts the way they appraise, experience, and respond to environmental disruptions.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a significant environmental disruption for employees and organizations around the world. It is clear that "business is not as usual" (SHRM President Johnny Taylor in Lee, 2020). Given that environmental disruptions are expected to continue, it is critical for SHRM scholars and practitioners to understand the implications of how employees experience, navigate, and adapt to these disruptions. Importantly, employees can be invaluable drivers of change through their own attempts to adapt to opportunities and challenges in their work environment. However, these efforts can impact employee outcomes as well as have important implications for HRM systems and processes. Given that SHRM practitioners are extremely well positioned to create the conditions for supporting job crafting behaviors (see Lee & Lee, 2018), we encourage SHRM scholars and practitioners to consider how job crafting behaviors can be best supported before, during, and after environmental disruptions. Doing so is likely to provide strategic advantages that can facilitate employee and organizational adaptation.

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Figure 1

Theoretical Model

Time 1 — Time 2 — Time 3 (controlling for Time 2)

Changes in Meaningfulness —H1→ Pride —H1→ Promotion-Oriented Behaviors —H3a→ Performance Adaptivity

Changes in Meaningfulness —H2a→ Frustration

Changes in Effectiveness —H2b→ Frustration

Frustration —H2→ Prevention-Oriented Behaviors

Promotion-Oriented Behaviors —H4→ Environmental Mastery

Prevention-Oriented Behaviors —H3b→ Performance Adaptivity

Prevention-Oriented Behaviors —H5→ Environmental Mastery

Figure 2

Path Analysis Results

Time 1   Time 2   Time 3
                                                         (controlling for Time 2)
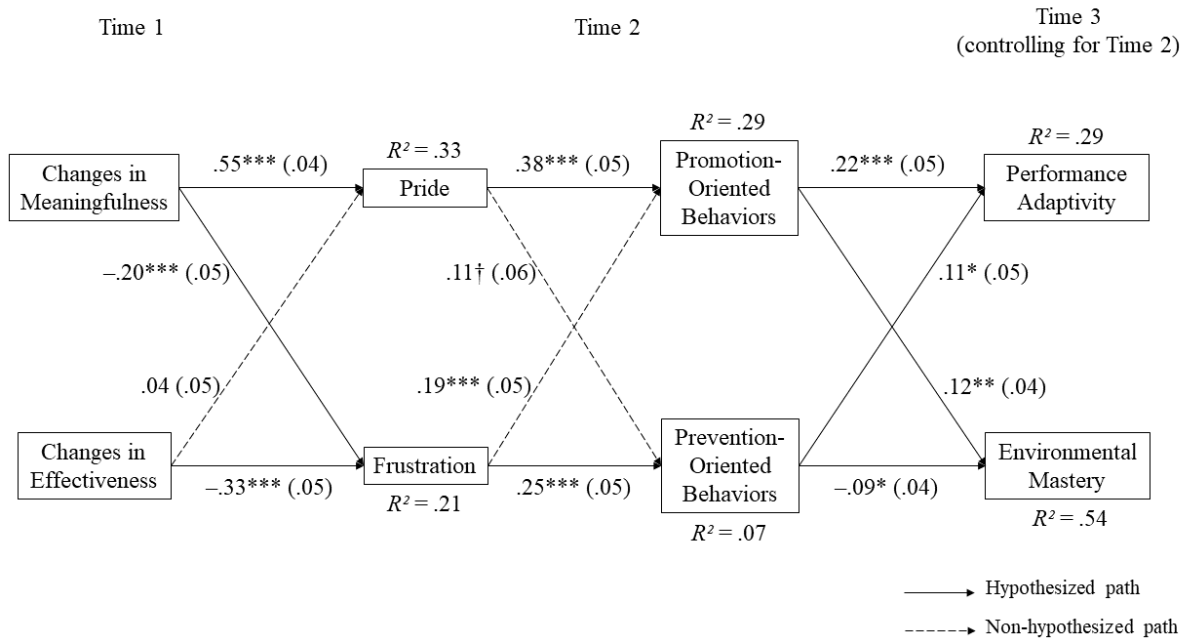
Note. $N = 402$. Values are standardized path coefficients with standard error estimates in parentheses. Direct effects and non-hypothesized paths indicated in dotted lines. For visual clarity, we have omitted the following links from the figure: direct effects from changes to job crafting behaviors and links from Time 2 outcome variables.

Changes in meaningfulness to promotion-oriented behaviors: $\beta = .16$, $SE = .06$, $p = .005$.

Changes in meaningfulness to prevention-oriented behaviors: $\beta = .02$, $SE = .06$, $p = .782$.

Changes in work effectiveness to promotion-oriented behaviors: $\beta = .20$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$.

Changes in work effectiveness to prevention-oriented behaviors: $\beta = .17$, $SE = .06$, $p = .002$.

T2 to T3 environmental mastery: $\beta = .70$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$.

T2 to T3 performance adaptivity: $\beta = .32$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$.

$\dagger\, p \leq .10$; $*\, p < .05$; $**\, p < .01$; $***\, p < .001$ *(two-tailed).*

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Zero-Order Correlations, and Reliabilities of Study Variables and Supplemental Control Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1. Gender [a]	.59	.49	---																							
2. Age	41.68	11.01	–.08	---																						
3. Working from home [b]	.60	.49	–.06	.01	---																					
4. Key worker [c]	.47	.50	.19***	.02	–.39***	---																				
5. Taking care of primary school children or younger	.29	.45	–.02	–.18***	–.00	.03	---																			
6. Taking care of family members in separate households	.06	.25	.09†	.10*	–.12*	.06	–.01	---																		
7. Anxiety	2.19	1.21	.32**	–.08	–.05	.02	.05	.10*	---																	
8. Financial concerns	2.34	1.21	.05	.04	–.07	–.06	.00	–.01	.32***	---																
9. Tenure (in years)	8.24	6.20	.02	.04***	.02	.09†	.06	.12*	–.05	–.05	---															
10. Feeling safe and protected at the workplace	3.42	1.25	–.08	–.01	.31***	–.18***	–.13*	–.06	–.25***	–.19***	–.08	---														
11. Having adequate equipment and Internet connection at home to work from home	3.97	1.20	–.08	.00	.36***	–.20***	–.03	–.02	–.03	–.12*	–.01	.26***	---													
12. Proactive personality	3.13	1.03	–.02	–.07	.14**	–.09†	–.06	–.05	–.02	.01	–.04	.07	.10†	**.93**												
13. Work autonomy	3.53	1.10	–.03	.01	.26***	–.14**	–.02	–.04	–.11*	–.09†	.02	.28***	.02***	.43***	**.92**											
14. Interaction with supervisor (T2)	3.08	1.14	.02	–.03	.02	–.02	–.02	–.07	–.08	–.07	.06	.13*	.06	.08	.16**	---										
15. Changes in meaningfulness of work [d]	3.20	.80	.05	–.08	–.11*	.18***	–.00	.02	–.21***	–.02	.00	.14**	.02	.06	.15**	.15**	**.87**									
16. Changes in work effectiveness [d]	2.88	.69	.01	.03	.03	–.08	–.08	.00	–.31***	–.01	.03	.17**	.14**	.08	.20***	.15**	.44***	**.82**								
17. Pride	2.64	1.23	.02	–.06	–.12*	.15**	.00	–.02	–.17***	–.09†	.01	.23**	.03	.18***	.25***	.22***	.57***	.28***	---							
18. Frustration	2.46	1.16	.08†	–.06	–.02	.03	.11*	.12*	.55***	.11*	–.07	–.34***	–.08	.03	–.21***	–.04	–.35***	–.42***	–.25***	---						
19. Promotion-oriented behaviors	2.25	.83	.08	–.07	–.02	.14**	.03	.02	.04	–.04	.01	.03	–.03	.35***	.31***	.26***	.39***	.29***	.47***	–.04	**.87**					
20. Prevention-oriented behaviors	2.24	.79	.02	–.21***	.04	–.03	.08	.02	.13**	.08	–.05	.00	–.02	.26***	.17***	.11*	.07	.11*	.10*	.14**	.45***	**.73**				
21. Performance Adaptivity (T3)	3.18	.93	.02	–.03	.05	.02	.03	–.03	–.09†	–.09†	–.01	.06	.13*	.29***	.31***	.18***	.19***	.23***	.24***	–.09†	.44***	.31***	**.74**			
22. Performance Adaptivity (T2)	3.23	.95	.00	–.04	.02	.07	–.08	–.02	–.10*	–.04	.03	.09†	.11*	.28***	.34***	.25***	.35***	.31***	.34***	–.21***	.53***	.31***	.47***	**.72**		
23. Environmental mastery (T3)	3.55	.93	–.09†	.16**	–.04	–.04	–.08†	–.06	–.46***	–.31***	.11*	.25***	.04	.16**	.28***	.19***	.29***	.27***	.35***	–.39***	.22***	–.04	.33***	.26***	**.77**	
24. Environmental mastery (T2)	3.53	.91	–.11*	.12*	–.07	–.00	–.08	–.02	–.44***	–.28***	.07	.23***	.08	.14**	.29***	.20***	.37***	.32***	.39***	–.42***	.20***	–.01	.28***	.34***	.73***	**.72**

Note. $N = 402$ ($N = 344$-402 for control variables because not all control variables were applicable to all participants).

Cronbach's alpha reliabilities are shown on the diagonal in **bold**.

[a] Gender: 0 = male, 1 = female; [b] Key worker: 0 = no, 1 = yes; [c] Working from home: 0 = no, 1 = yes; [d] Anchors range from 1 (very much worsened) to 5 (very much improved). † $p \leq .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$ *(two-tailed)*.