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What do you do and who do you think you are?

Activities speak louder than words

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CHAPTER 1
Introduction

Over the past decades the nature of work has been subject to constant change (Cascio, 1995; Grant & Parker, 2009; Parker, 2014; Sparks, Faragher, & Cooper, 2001). Globalization and rapid technological changes have made work more complex, more knowledge-based, and nearly impossible to perform individually, making teamwork essential. At the same time, employees are increasingly working outside traditional organizational boundaries with the introduction of new ways of working, cross-cultural teams, and online (team)work, phenomena which simultaneously supply and demand flexibility of employees (Spreitzer, Cameron, & Garrett, 2017). This increasing need for flexibility is also evident in the increased use of flexible contracts, the emergence of the gig-economy, growing job insecurity, the shift towards boundaryless careers, and the de-jobbing of organizations (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001; Savickas et al., 2009; Singh, 2008; Sparks et al., 2001; Spreitzer et al., 2017). These changes are driven by organizations competing globally and striving to decrease their costs while increasing efficiency and creativity, which oftentimes becomes manifest in downsizing, restructuring, and outsourcing efforts (Bresnahan, 1999). Computerization and robotics are also starting to fundamentally change what employees do, and how, where, and when they do it (Frey & Osborne, 2013).

The changes that occur to what employees do may entail the addition of activities that are incompatible with who employees feel they are (professionally) or the cessation of activities that employees experience as core to their professional identity. Some physicians, for example, have quit their job upon not "feeling like a physician" anymore. That is, their image of what it means to be a physician did not match the increase in administrative work they experienced (Heijne, 2015a, 2015b). Incongruence may develop between how organizations see work (in terms of what they require employees to do) and how employees see their work or themselves at work. Such incongruence is problematic, because it is likely to negatively affect well-being and (thereby) the job performance of employees (Petriglieri, 2011; Taris & Schreurs, 2009). Not all changes to what employees do result in incongruence, because work and the way employees experience work can also change commensurably. Incongruence must be identified before it can be addressed, and this may be accomplished by reflecting on what employees (are asked to) do and how employees perceive or experience those tasks.

Researchers and practitioners alike need to reflect more on what is done in terms of work activities in order to expedite the assessment of whether

particular work activities are (still) congruent with not only what is valued by the organizations but also professional identity, especially when work activities change(d). Contemporary research, however, seldom addresses what employees do, even though detailed studies on what employees do, such as the Hawthorne studies (Sonnenfeld, 1985), formed the foundation of scientific management and the human relations movement decades ago. It is probably in part due to the mainly descriptive and qualitative nature of such studies on detailed activities that they have mostly disappeared from organizational research (Barley & Kunda, 2001). Without detailed studies on the work activities of employees, both researchers and practitioners lack critical input on how work may be organized to simultaneously optimize the performance and well-being of employees. Moreover, what employees do in terms of work activities can likely be measured more reliably than how employees experience or foresee change in their work (Voskuijl & van Sliedregt, 2002). It is thus time to redress the relative absence of studies on what employee do.

WHAT EMPLOYEES DO AND WHO THEY ARE

This dissertation sets out from the notion that understanding of what employees do yields the opportunity to assess whether those work activities are congruent with who employees are, so as to ensure that they do not constrain but optimize employee well-being (i.e., not doing too much) and performance (i.e., clearly contributing to the organization). To do so, I draw from three distinct literatures; job analysis, calling, and identity. Each of these literatures helps to understand what employees do, how they see their work, and how they see themselves against the back-drop of the changing nature of work. First, job analysis, in shedding light on how to collect and analyze information about jobs, may be used to address the lack of research about what employees do. Second, calling offers insights that explain why those employees, who do what they love instead of just working for money or career advancement, may unintentionally do more than they can handle in terms of well-being. Third, identity theory may be used to explain incongruences between what employees do and who they are at work and why certain employees are better equipped to deal with changes that affect identity than others. Below I introduce these literatures and suggest where more research is needed and why.

Job analysis: what employees do

Job analysis is essential to understand what employees do and is defined as the "process through which one gains an understanding of the activities, goals, and requirements demanded by a work assignment" (Sanchez & Levine, 2012, p. 398). In other words, job analysis is a process or a technique of collecting and analyzing all work-related information and data (i.e., job information) (Morgeson & Dierdorff, 2011) aimed at understanding rather than solely describing jobs. Such understanding is critical for the majority of strategic HR practices, including selection, performance management, compensation, and training (Schneider & Konz, 1989; Voskuijl, 2005). There is a wide range of job information types that can be collected (Prien, Prien, & Gamble, 2004), that are oftentimes broadly categorized either as work-oriented (i.e., referring to the objective aspects and the nature of the job) or worker-oriented (i.e., referring to the human attributes required for job performance) (Sackett & Laczo, 2003).

In spite of its centrality to HRM, job analysis has recently been criticized for its failure to address the dynamic nature of work (Sanchez & Levine, 2012). Indeed, much of the work in the job analysis literature departs from the assumption that jobs are stable and standardized entities, whereas our previous discussion on the constant change that is part of work nowadays is a clear indication that for an increasing number of employees the opposite might be true. In addition, employees nowadays are oftentimes actively encouraged to proactively change the content of their own job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and even those within the same occupation seldom perform exactly the same tasks (Fine, 1996). Despite some by now rather dated innovations in job analysis in the form of strategic job analysis (Schneider & Konz, 1989), competency modelling (Shippmann et al., 2000), and the creation of the Occupational Information Network (O*Net; Peterson et al., 2001), there is no method in job analysis that adequately addresses the aforementioned issues associated with the changing nature of work.

Specifically, there is an unresolved debate in job analysis about what type of job information is most suitable that has a bearing on the ability to capture dynamic and non-standardized work. It is widely acknowledged in the job analysis literature, that not all forms of job information are equally useful as some are more prone to bias than others (Dierdorff & Morgeson, 2009; Harvey & Wilson, 2000; Morgeson & Campion, 1997, 2000). Employees, for example, are likely to inflate their ratings of the abilities that are needed due to self-presen-

tation bias (Morgeson, Delaney-Klinger, Mayfield, Ferrara, & Campion, 2004). However, there is no agreement on which form of job information is superior in accuracy. This is reflected in the ongoing debate between proponents of detailed, context-specific forms of job information (Harvey, 2009; Harvey & Lozada-Larsen, 1988; Harvey & Wilson, 2000, 2010) and numerous proponents of abstract, general forms of job information (Peterson et al., 2001). The general preference in job analysis is for the latter more abstract and general job information, which may insufficiently capture the unstandardized and complex nature of work nowadays.

In sum, job analysis can offers relevant insights on how to collect and analyze information about what employees do. However, job analysis as a field needs to resolve several methodological issues in order to continue to inform researchers and practitioners alike about what employees do in 21st century workplaces (Sanchez & Levine, 2001, 2012). Chapter 2 of this dissertation aims to examine to what extent text mining, or "the discovery and extraction of interesting, non-trivial knowledge from free or unstructured text" (Kao & Poteet, 2007, p. 1), is a viable means of analyzing job information by comparing its output to the output obtained through current job analysis methods such as interviews and observations. In addition, I also aim to show the value of understanding what employees do in terms of well-being, by linking specific tasks collected by means of both these forms of job analysis to job satisfaction, work overload, and emotional exhaustion.

Calling: how (some) employees see their work

In general, three different orientations towards work are distinguished in the extant literature, namely a job, career, or calling orientation (Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997). Employees with a job orientation are mainly motivated by the financial aspects of their job, and employees with a career orientation are mainly driven by opportunities to advance their careers. Finally, employees with a calling orientation are mainly motivated by the work itself. Calling is defined as a relatively stable, subjective approach to work that derives from a sense of purpose, and the drive to contribute to society (Duffy & Dik, 2013). Although the experience of calling is commonly associated with certain jobs such as teachers, doctors, or priests, Wrzesniewski et al., (1997) have argued that it can actually be found in a wide variety of occupations. During the past decades the societal attention for the ideal of experiencing work as a calling

seems to be growing. This is reflected in employees who increasingly look for purposeful, enjoyable, and motivating work, the many available self-help books aimed at helping individuals find their passion, and the experienced pressure in western society to find fulfilment in work rather than in family, leisure activities, or non-paid work (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2015).

The literature on calling initially focused on uncovering the benefits that experiencing work as a calling has for both the individual employee and the organization. Research has shown, for example, that employees who see their job as a calling tend to be more satisfied with their job and life, experience career success, enjoy their work, are intrinsically motivated, and even appear less likely to suffer from emotional exhaustion (Duffy, Douglass, Autin, England, & Dik, 2016; Hirschi & Herrmann, 2012; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Furthermore, research shows that organizations benefit from employing individuals who see their work as a calling in terms of a heightened commitment and organizational identification, and lower turnover intentions of these employees as compared with employees who do not (Cardador, Dane, & Pratt, 2011; Duffy, Dik, & Steger, 2011). Still underrepresented in this stream of research about the benefits of calling are the behavioral consequences (Elangovan, Pinder, & McLean, 2010).

Recently attention in the calling literature has been shifting from uncovering the benefits of calling towards possible risks and negative consequences for both the individual employee and the organization. Indeed, there is growing evidence for a darker side to calling (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2015; Cardador & Caza, 2012). For example, calling is associated with employees making high sacrifices in terms of their remuneration, personal time, and physical comfort. In addition, employees with a calling appear to be more vulnerable to exploitation by their employers, and take longer to recover from work, which eventually could overshadow the aforementioned buffering effects of calling against emotional exhaustion (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Clinton, Conway, & Sturges, 2017; Schabram & Maitlis, 2017). Despite growing evidence supporting the risks of experiencing work as a calling, the dark side to calling is still being questioned, because negative consequences of calling have been captured almost exclusively in qualitative studies, and quantitative studies on the topic so far have yielded inconclusive results (Duffy et al., 2016).

In sum, addressing the role of work as a calling can offer relevant insights on how employees differ in their subjective experience of work and how this is associated with their well-being and performance. Previous work suggests

that calling may be a double-edged sword with both positive and negative consequences (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). I propose that the behavior of employees may be the missing link between the positive and negative outcomes of having a calling. As is outlined in more detail below, in Chapter 3 I propose that employees with a calling are likely to be driven to continuously expand their job, which results in positive behaviors towards the organization on the one hand and work overload on the other.

Identity: how employees see themselves

Identity is defined as the answer to the question "who am I?" (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016), and has become inextricably linked to what an individual does (Christiansen, 1999). In identity theory, it is proposed that although individuals have multiple identities, that are based, for example, on organizational membership, professional roles, nationality, and gender (Caza & Wilson, 2009; Ramarajan, 2014), they generally feel as 'one'. However, work is an important factor that impacts how we see ourselves, especially since individuals spend most of their waking hours at work, and because work has become an ever more important part of our lives. Besides income, work provides employees with a place to learn more about who they are, a way of relating to others, and a ways of finding a place in society (Selenko et al., 2018). This is reflected, for example, in how difficult it is for individuals to deal with unemployment, because they are less able to relate to the working population and as a result may suffer from a negative self-concept. The other way around, identity influences work because how employees see themselves at work helps them to make sense of their behavior, attitudes, and well-being (Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008). Identity may thus explain what employees do, why they do it, and whether they enjoy it or not. Identity is the lens through which employees make sense of the world of work and navigate life (Ramarajan, 2014).

On the one hand, identity research has shown that doing those things that are congruent with identity can be a way to verify and affirm a positive self-concept (Shamir, 1991). Tasks that are congruent with (professional) identity and that bring satisfaction and meaning are thus important because of the opportunities for self-verification and identity expression that they provide. Interestingly, however, those very tasks may become harmful when the identity affirmative nature of these tasks leads employees to continue executing them even in the face of emotional stress or work overload. On the other hand, the

identity literature has garnered evidence that doing things that are incongruent with one's identity and the associated threat that is experienced while engaging in such tasks is stressful too (Petriglieri, 2011; Semmer, Jacobshagen, Meier, & Elfering, 2007).

Several seminal studies on the impact of (in)congruence between work and identity have been published in recent years. A study among medical residents, for example, showed that a mismatch between what physicians do and their professional identity invoked experiences of violation that needed identity adjustments by the medical residents to be resolved (Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006). On the one hand, congruence between work and identity can sometimes also lead employees to wither because it limits their flexibility and creates a form of tunnel vision (Kira & Balkin, 2014). On the other hand, incongruence between identity and how others see someone at work could have positive consequences when being misidentified at work is the result of colleagues seeing someone, for example, as a leader and encouraging that employee to fill this new role (Meister, Jehn, & Thatcher, 2014). Most of the triggers for incongruence that have been discussed in the identity literature have focused on events such as role transitions or trauma (Ibarra, 1999; Maitlis, 2009; Pratt et al., 2006). Missing from this line of research, however, is work that takes into account how incongruence can be the result of changes within jobs.

Another important stream of identity research focuses on identity work, defined as all actions targeted at "forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening, or revising one's identity in order to strive for coherence and distinctiveness in one's self-concept" (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003, p. 1165). This research is grounded in the assumption that individuals can actively and deliberately form, construct, shape, adjust, and reframe their identity (Brown, 2015). Even though individuals are subject to automatic identity processes driven by organizations or social structures (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016) and generally strive for a relatively stable and coherent understanding of who they are at work in order to function effectively, employees are thought to constantly engage in some form of identity work (Brown, 2015). In light of the changing nature of work, organizations increasingly expect their employees to be flexible and capable of dealing with changes that may impact how they see themselves at work. It is also acknowledged in the identity literature, however, that changing one's identity is not easy, in that it requires a lot of resources, and is associated with fear, vul-

nerability, frustration, and unhappiness (Maitlis, 2009; Winkler, 2016). Identity change may thus become a struggle for (some) employees. Surprisingly, much less is known, about why some employees appear to be better equipped than others to respond to identity-related changes.

In sum, focusing on identity can help provide insights into how employees' self-concepts co-determine what employees do and how they feel, and how the things that employees do and how they see themselves are related. However, the identity literature has not sufficiently accounted for the fact that what many employees do is subject to constant change nowadays and that more attention is needed to account for the differences between individuals in dealing with identity-related change. I aim to make a first step in Chapter 4 with the development of the work identity rigidity scale that operationalizes the extent to which employees are reluctant to change who they are at work. Moreover, change comes with the risk of instigating incongruence between identity and work. Investigating the separate activities that make up a job in order to capture such potential mismatch between doing what you are and what you are not may be a piece in the puzzle to solving this and is depicted in an identity focused theoretical model of meaningful work in Chapter 5.

OVERVIEW AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation sets out to contribute to the extant literature on job analysis, calling and identity, by examining what contemporary employees do, because it is important to determine whether work activities are sufficiently congruent with employees' self-concept to optimize rather than constrain or damage their well-being and performance. Below I briefly introduce these chapters.

Using job analysis in **Chapter 2**, I set out to address the need for fine-grained studies about what employees do (Barley & Kunda, 2001). Specifically, in an effort to resolve the debate about which information is most suitable to inform researchers and practitioners alike about what employees do (Sanchez & Levine, 2012), I argue for the task based decomposition of jobs or occupations (Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991). Tasks capture nuanced differences in what employees do (Fine, 1996; Sanchez, 1994; Singh, 2008), can be accurately collected and analyzed (Dierdorff & Morgeson, 2009; Harvey, 2009; Morgeson & Campion, 1997, 2000), and are easy to comprehend by key stakeholders (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). The automatic discovery and extraction of insights

from unstructured text, called text mining (Kao & Poteet, 2007; Kobayashi, Mol, Berkers, Kismihók, & Den Hartog, 2017a, 2017b), offers a novel and relatively inexpensive and quick means of collecting tasks from untapped and potentially rich textual sources of job information (McEntire, Dailey, Osburn, & Mumford, 2006; Sanchez & Levine, 2001). In Chapter 2, by comparing and contrasting a text mining based job analysis to a task inventory, I aim to examine to what extent the former can inform researchers and practitioners about what employees do in terms of tasks. I also explore the value of using a task-level perspective, by showing that individual tasks differ in the extent to which they are related to employee well-being.

In **Chapter 3**, I aim to develop insights about how experiencing work as a calling can be stressful despite the clear associated benefits. This is relevant as employees increasingly strive to do work that they love and enjoy rather than to do work solely as a way of making a living (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2015). Here I specifically argue that experiencing work as a calling is an energetic and motivational force that drives employees' behavior (Elangovan et al., 2010). Employees with a calling are expected to proactively shape their own job through bottom up, physical, and cognitive changes in their tasks and relations, which is encapsulated in the job crafting construct (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). In crafting their job, employees who see their work as a calling impact their well-being and performance by (pro)actively changing what they do. These employees are motivated and driven to contribute and take on more and more, the downside of which is that it could result in overloading themselves. Job crafting may thus explain how calling can have concomitant positive and negative outcomes for employees and their employers while simultaneously elucidating the behaviors associated with calling (Elangovan et al., 2010). Specifically, in Chapter 3, I aim to explain how employees with a calling, through job crafting, may unintentionally end up doing more than they can handle in terms of work load, even though concurrently their colleagues and the organization may benefit from their helping behavior and burgeoning contribution.

Chapter 4 sets out to address the increasing need for employees to change their identity. The dynamic context of work makes this process more difficult for employees who have a rigid and unchangeable identity. Conversely, employees who are able to actively shape their identity are found to have higher job satisfaction, lower turnover intentions, higher task performance, higher commitment, better workplace adjustment, and better health and well-being

(Lee, Park, & Koo, 2015; Swann, Johnson, & Bosson, 2009) than employees who do not. Despite the acknowledgement that changing one's identity is difficult (Maitlis, 2009; Winkler, 2016), virtually nothing is known about why certain employees may struggle more with identity work than others. I argue that it is relevant to take into account the extent to which employees have an unfavorable attitude toward identity-related change to understand why some employees can successfully adjust who they are and facilitate those who struggle at this. Work Identity Rigidity (WIR) captures this unfavorable attitude and is defined as the extent to which employees feel reluctant and unwilling to change their work identity, even when required (Cardador & Caza, 2012). In Chapter 4, I set out to develop and in multiple studies validate the WIR scale as a measurement tool to capture this attitude.

Chapter 5 sets out to address the impact of incongruence between what employees do and who they are. Identity theory can explain why changes in work activities may have nontrivial implications for well-being and performance. However, an overarching model is missing. I argue that meaningfulness, defined as the significance that work holds (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003), forms the link between what employees do, how they see themselves, and consequently how they feel and perform. Building upon the work reported in Chapter 2, the focus is on the individual work activities as sources of meaningfulness, since some activities allow employees to make sense of who they are and/or hold significance for the organization (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010), whereas other activities may be devoid of meaning. The nuance of simultaneously doing things that are meaningful and meaningless may explain why changes in one's job can offset the balance between doing what you are and what you are not. Specifically, I focus on professional work, defined as work that requires a certain level of knowledge, autonomy, and altruism (Hodson & Sullivan, 2012, p. 260), as professionals tend to identify strongly with what they do (Pratt et al., 2006). In Chapter 5, I outline my model of meaningful work for professionals with 'doing what you are' and 'doing what matters' as sources of meaningfulness at the level of work activities, and propose consequences for well-being and performance for eight activity types.

In **Chapter 6**, I address the overall theoretical and practical implications of this dissertation and the application of the three literatures to understand (the congruence between) what employees do, how they see their work, and how they see themselves. In addition, I address the limitations of these studies and point out avenues for future research.