University of Pennsylvania
ScholarlyCommons

Management Papers

Wharton Faculty Research

2011

Being There: Work Engagement and Positive Organizational Scholarship

Nancy P. Rothbard
University of Pennsylvania

Shefali V. Patil
University of Pennsylvania

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.upenn.edu/mgmt_papers

Part of the Management Sciences and Quantitative Methods Commons

Being There: Work Engagement and Positive Organizational Scholarship

Abstract
In this chapter, we examine the psychological state of employee work engagement. Our objective is to provide an overview of the engagement construct, clarify its definition, and discuss its behavioral outcomes. We discuss the development of the work engagement construct, which has led to many inconsistencies among scholars about its definition. We clarify that engagement captures employees' strong focus of attention, intense absorption, and high energy toward their work-related tasks. Work engagement is important to the positive organizational scholarship (POS) field because engagement can lead to a number of positive outcomes, such as in-role and extra-role performance, client satisfaction, proactivity, adaptivity, and creativity. Managers, however, must ensure that employees have adequate resources and sufficient breaks, so that engagement does not lead to burnout or depletion. We encourage scholars interested in studying engagement in the future to investigate the contextual moderators that affect the relationship between engagement and employee behavior and examine the differential effects of the components of engagement—attention, absorption, and energy.

Oxford Handbooks Online

Abstract and Keywords

In this chapter, we examine the psychological state of employee work engagement. Our objective is to provide an overview of the engagement construct, clarify its definition, and discuss its behavioral outcomes. We discuss the development of the work engagement construct, which has led to many inconsistencies among scholars about its definition. We clarify that engagement captures employees' strong focus of attention, intense absorption, and high energy toward their work-related tasks. Work engagement is important to the positive organizational scholarship (POS) field because engagement can lead to a number of positive outcomes, such as in-role and extra-role performance, client satisfaction, proactivity, adaptivity, and creativity. Managers, however, must ensure that employees have adequate resources and sufficient breaks, so that engagement does not lead to burnout or depletion. We encourage scholars interested in studying engagement in the future to investigate the contextual moderators that affect the relationship between engagement and employee behavior and examine the differential effects of the components of engagement—attention, absorption, and energy.

Keywords: Engagement, energy, attention, absorption, internal resources

Today's dynamic and high-pressure workplace raises interesting questions about employee work engagement—the degree to which employees are focused on and present in their roles. Indeed, as the pace of work increases and the phenomenon of being available around the clock become more prevalent with the rise of smart phones and other technologies, the importance and the limitations of work engagement become even more central. On the one hand, being available 24/7 can facilitate work and create flexibility in one's life; but on the other hand, it can also threaten to strain employees' attentiveness and engagement with their work tasks as they reach their cognitive and motivational limits. The scholarly study of engagement in organizations has risen in popularity over the past several years (Rich, LePine, & Crawford, 2010). For example, engagement took center stage in Issue 1, Volume 1 of the newly established journal, *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, in which the opening article was devoted to an examination of the meaning of employee engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008), followed by 13 commentaries on the topic.

Although generating a great deal of intellectual inquiry, research on engagement is still nascent and encompasses a broad array of constructs from traits, to psychological states, to behaviors (Macey & Schneider, 2008). In this chapter, we focus on engagement as a psychological state, and more specifically, engagement as psychological presence in a role. Engagement is important to organizational scholarship in particular because it is a psychological process that helps to explain the quality of participation in role activities (Rothbard, 2001). Especially in the context of studying positive organizational scholarship (POS), engagement may be a (p. 57) key ingredient for employee and organizational success.

Yet, even within research that examines engagement as a psychological state, inconsistencies in construct definition and measurement have arisen. Thus, in this chapter, we aim to outline the various ways psychological engagement has been defined and measured, consolidate and clarify these measurements and related constructs, and present a unified definition of the engagement construct as psychological presence in a role. We then describe the contributions of engagement to POS, with respect to behavioral outcomes of psychological engagement and what managers can do to foster engagement.

Development of the Work Engagement Construct

Recent interest in the study of work engagement has led to a proliferation of construct dimensions and operationalizations for measurement. Although scholars agree that engagement is a multidimensional construct, there is little consensus as to its dimensions and valid measurement (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Newman & Harrison, 2008). In an

effort to provide construct clarity, we begin by reviewing the development of the psychological engagement construct and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of its current conceptualizations.

Kahn's (1990, 1992) examination of work engagement laid the groundwork for recent research on work engagement as a psychological state. Kahn (1990, p. 694) defined engagement as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles." Kahn (1992) suggests that engagement captures an employee's psychological presence, or "being there." Psychological presence is defined as the extent to which people are attentive, connected, integrated, and focused in their role performances. Engagement has important implications for an individual's own success and that of the organization. Indeed, Kahn (1992) states that engagement is a measure of "what enables the depths of workers' personal selves to come forth in the service of their own growth and development and that of their organizations" (Kahn, 1992, p. 322). It can also be seen as a negotiable relationship in which a person both drives personal energies into role behaviors (self-employment) and displays the self within the role (self-expression). As such, it explains the holistic investment of the self into one's work role (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Goffman, 1961; Kahn, 1990). Seen in this way, engagement can be differentiated from alienation at work (Blauner, 1964) or psychological absence. In such states of alienation, employees appear mechanical, robotic, and inauthentic (Hochschild, 1983), and estrange themselves from others (Seeman, 1975). In contrast, engaged employees are able to access their considerable energies and talents in the fulfillment of work-related tasks and goals.

Building on Kahn's (1990, 1992) work on psychological engagement and presence, Rothbard (2001 , p. 656) defines engagement as "one's psychological presence in or focus on role activities." Rothbard (2001) draws on Kahn's notion that engagement and psychological presence involve being attentive and focused on a role and elaborates on this concept by suggesting that there are two critical components of role engagement: attention and absorption. Attention is defined by a person's cognitive availability and the amount of time one spends focused on a role. Absorption is defined by the intensity of the person's focus and the degree to which a person is engrossed in a role.

Approaching the construct of engagement from a different theoretical tradition, Maslach, Schaufeli, and colleagues conceptualized engagement as the opposite of job burnout. In their Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), Maslach and Leiter (1997) and Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) define job engagement as the opposite end of a continuum between engagement and burnout. They also define the engagement construct as an indicator of work-related well-being. Accordingly, they operationalize engagement in the following way: Energy is the opposite of exhaustion, involvement is the opposite of cynicism and depersonalization, and efficacy is the opposite of reduced professional efficacy. Initially using the same scale to measure burnout and engagement, they assumed that low scores on exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy would automatically imply engagement. In an important development, Schaufeli and colleagues proposed a new construct, based on the belief that the opposite of burnout did

not necessarily capture the construct of engagement. In a measurement study in which they treated engagement and burnout as distinct factors, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) recharacterized engagement as consisting of three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor refers to having high levels of energy and mental resilience; dedication refers to being challenged, inspired, and enthusiastic about one's work; and absorption is defined as fully concentrating and being engrossed in one's work. Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) conceptualize (p. 58) work engagement as the antipode of burnout and as a "positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by … a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior" (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, pp. 4–5).

Although several empirical studies have utilized the Schaufeli and Bakker (2004, 2003) measure, and the theoretical distinction between burnout and engagement is an important one, several problems have been identified with this approach and scale (Newman & Harrison, 2008; Rich, LePine, & Crawford, 2010; Zhang, Rich, & LePine, 2009). In particular, Zhang, Rich, and LePine (2009) argue that despite Schaufeli and colleagues' attempt to operationalize engagement as the positive antipode of burnout, the continued theoretical dependence on burnout constrains the incremental contributions to the literature. For example, in their handbook of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) claim vigor and dedication are direct opposites of exhaustion and cynicism, two dimensions from Maslach's scale of burnout. Moreover, Zhang, Rich, and LePine (2009) argue that the highly correlated subdimensions of this measure prevent the concept from providing comprehensive analyses. In addition, the measurement of the Schaufeli and Bakker (2004, 2003) engagement subscales is problematic, in that the items that comprise the subdimensions of vigor, dedication, and absorption have conceptual overlap with other well-established constructs (Newman & Harrison, 2008). For example, the dedication scale has items such as "I am enthusiastic about my work" and "I am proud of the work that I do." Both of these items conceptually overlap with the notion of positive affect. Indeed, enthusiasm and pride are two of the items on the Positive Affect Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The conceptual overlap between these items in particular is problematic because confounding positive affect with engagement makes it very difficult to know what is driving the findings—positive affect or engagement. The other items on the dedication subdimension refer to the meaningfulness of and perceived challenge of work, both of which have been conceptualized as antecedents of engagement (Kahn, 1990). The vigor dimension also represents a mixing of constructs within the subscale by simultaneously referring to energy, perseverance, and resilience. The absorption subscale is the cleanest one, with the exception of one item "I feel happy when I am working intensely," which confounds affect and engagement. Thus, the conceptual overlap with other constructs in the literature and the mixing of these constructs within the subscales makes interpretation of these dimensions problematic.

As a result, recent work by Rich and colleagues has gone back to the earlier theorizing of Kahn (1990, 1992) and Rothbard (2001) to develop a measure of engagement that includes three components: physical, emotional, and cognitive engagement (Rich, LePine, & Crawford, 2010). In their conceptualization, physical engagement involves the purposeful exertion of physical energy in one's role–it draws from Brown and Leigh's (1996) measure of work intensity. Emotional engagement involves high pleasantness and activation of positive affect in the work role. It is derived from Russell and Barrett's (1999) research on core affect and the generalized emotional state of pleasantness. Finally, cognitive engagement builds on Rothbard's (2001) scales of absorption and attention. Rich and colleagues have taken a meaningful step in measuring engagement as a construct that is broad and distinct from burnout. Moreover, going beyond Rothbard's (2001) more narrow conceptualization of engagement as a cognitive state to include physical energy is an additional strength of this paper. Moreover, as Spreitzer, Lam, and Quinn (2011; Chapter 12) discuss in this Handbook, energy is likely to be a subdimension of being engaged in one's work.

Two issues with this approach should be addressed. First, the emotional engagement subcomponent is difficult to disentangle from the construct of positive affect, as we have indicated in the discussion of the Schaufeli and Bakker measure. Indeed, affect may be a critical construct that relates to engagement in important ways (e.g., Rothbard, 2001). However, to build good theory about engagement, it is important to understand that positive and negative affect can both relate to engagement in important ways and that the combination of positive affect and engagement may result in very different outcomes than the combination of negative affect and engagement. In Rothbard's (2001) work on engagement in work and family roles, positive and negative affect from one role were both related to attention and absorption in that role, but had differential effects on attention and absorption in other roles. In other words, absorption and attention did not necessarily evoke a positive emotional state. It is possible that an employee could be very absorbed and attentive to a task but still feel frustrated and annoyed due to the difficulty of the task.

(p. 59) Second, although Rich et al. (2010) make distinctions among the physical, emotional, and cognitive components of engagement, they collapse the notions of attention and absorption into one construct within cognitive engagement, and on this six-item scale, only include one of the absorption items from Rothbard's (2001) scale. Thus, it is not surprising that they do not find a distinct factoring of attention and absorption within the cognitive engagement subscale. However, the evidence suggests that these two subdimensions of engagement are distinct and, although highly related to one another, can have different antecedents and outcomes (Perry-Smith & Dumas, 2010; Rothbard, 2001; Rothbard & Wilk, working paper).

In sum, we believe the Rich et al. (2010) approach is a step in the right direction. Based on the two issues discussed above, however, we propose that work engagement be conceptualized and measured such that there are three subcomponents: attention,

absorption, and energy. Appendix 5.1 shows the items for each of these subscales. Moreover, we advocate careful attention to the way in which affect is used in modeling and theorizing about engagement.

Work Engagement and Related Constructs

Engagement is related to but distinct from other constructs in the literature. Macey and Schneider (2008) refer to several attitudes, such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job involvement, that they include under a broad umbrella of state engagement. We take a different approach and contend that the distinctions between engagement and these related constructs are important particularly because these related constructs might be antecedents or outcomes of engagement.

First, engagement is distinct from organizational commitment and job satisfaction, both of which are attitudes toward the organization and job, respectively. These constructs differ from engagement in that engagement, defined as one's psychological presence in a role, is not an attitude (Saks, 2006). Moreover, engagement may result from greater organizational commitment and job satisfaction, as individuals may be willing to bring more of themselves to their work when they have a positive attitude toward their organization and the job.

Second, engagement also differs from the construct of job involvement. Lodahl and Kejner (1965) define job involvement as the importance of work to an employee and the effect his or her performance has on the individual's self-esteem. Likewise, Kanungo (1982) defines job involvement as a cognition regarding one's psychological identification with his or her job, which is dependent on the individual's needs and the potential of the job to satisfy those needs. Fulfillment of these needs is consequently tied to one's self-image. In contrast, psychological engagement refers to the way in which individuals actually employ themselves during the performance of their work (Saks, 2006). It does not measure the reflection of needs fulfillment on the self. Moreover, May, Gilson, and Harter (2004) indicate that engagement may be an antecedent of job involvement—that is, increased cognitive availability and intensity of work performance can lead to the satisfaction of needs generated from job fulfillment. Alternatively, job involvement, defined as identification with a role, may be an antecedent to engagement in that those with greater psychological identification with a role and attachment to it may be more likely to be attentive and absorbed in the performance of that role (Rothbard, 2001).

Defining the Work Engagement Construct

Being There: Work Engagement and Positive Organizational Scholarship

As can be seen from the above discussion of engagement and related constructs, even within the perspective of engagement as a psychological state, the construct of engagement has been through considerable development and change. As such, we would like to be clear about our definition of work engagement. Consistent with the initial theorizing of Kahn (1990), the subsequent adaptation by Rothbard (2001), and work by Rich et al. (2010   ), we define individual work engagement as an employee's psychological presence in a role—or "being there." It is the person's focus of attention, their   absorption, and their available energy directed toward work-related tasks.

In the process of defining engagement, we draw on work from various traditions. Of importance for POS, the construct of work engagement has roots in the notion of authenticity and the idea that there can be value in bringing one's whole self to work in terms of the types of resources (i.e., energy, perseverance, information) that can be harnessed to benefit the work. Kahn's (1990, 1992) definition of engagement captured the value of employing the whole self as "what enables the depths of workers' personal selves to come forth in the service of their own growth and development and that of their organizations" (Kahn,   1992, p. 322). In this way, engagement can be seen as a dynamic process in which a person both pours personal energies into role behaviors (self-employment) and displays the   (p. 60)   self within the role (self-expression), exhibiting a type of authenticity, or a true expression of their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs (Argyris, 1982).

In clarifying the definition of engagement, it is also important to note that engagement does not inherently mean the expression of "positive" affect. This stands in contrast to perspectives on engagement that equate engagement with high positive affect (e.g., Bakker & Oerlemans,   2011; Chapter 14). We propose that psychological presence conceived as focus of attention, absorption, and energy, and the notion of authentic self-expression can be associated with either positive or negative affect. In particular, one can be engaged in something because it is a problem that needs to be solved, and this can be associated with negative affect; or, one can be engaged in an activity that is joyful (Rothbard,   2001). Likewise, authenticity implies that the employee will express his or her true self at any point in time, as shown in Kahn's (1990, 1992) ethnographic studies of architecture workers and camp counselors. For example, Kahn found that an engaged senior designer at an architecture firm empathized with other people's positive or negative feelings, whereas a disengaged camp counselor became bland and superficial in addressing her campers (i.e., exhibiting affective neutrality). In these examples, engagement as represented in the senior designer example was expressed both as positive and negative affectivity, whereas disengagement was expressed as affective neutrality. The notion that engagement is conceptually distinct from positive and negative affectivity is an important one that should be taken seriously in future work on engagement as it has powerful implications for the outcomes of engagement. As we briefly discussed in the previous section, engagement that is associated with positive

affect can lead to quite different outcomes from engagement associated with negative outcomes (Rothbard, 2001).

Additionally, in defining engagement, we want to reiterate that engagement is conceptually distinct from burnout and not simply the opposite of burnout. Although burnout is characterized by exhaustion, cynicism, and a decline in efficacy for a prolonged period of time (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), engagement represents a different motivational construct that involves a proactive garnering and application of resources to fully concentrate and dedicate oneself to a certain task. This conceptual distinction is especially important as too much engagement could potentially lead to burnout. We will continue this discussion of excessive, continuous engagement and burnout in our section on POS.

In sum, as we have defined it, the engagement construct consists of both cognitive and physical subcomponents. We suggest that scholars continue to examine two cognitive subcomponents—absorption and attention—as these have shown differential effects on outcomes (Rothbard, 2001).   Attention   refers to material resources within a person that can be applied to a given task. It is a resource-based motivational construct because it relies on the exertion of resources as a source of motivation.   Absorption   , on the other hand, refers to one's capacity and ability to apply those resources with intensity   . Last, engagement consists of a physical component in the form of   energy   that can be directed toward a task.

Sustaining Engagement

Although up to this point we have concentrated solely on engagement as a static construct, there is a dynamic and temporal aspect of work engagement that should be examined as well. Questions of whether individuals can sustain high levels of engagement over time are critical to explore. Indeed, in one recent study of state engagement, being too engaged in work led to greater work–family interference (Halbesleben, Harvey   , & Bolino,   2009), suggesting that there can be negative consequences of excessive focus on work. How, then, can engagement be effectively harnessed over time? Drazin, Glynn, and Kazanjian (1999) developed a theoretical argument about creative engagement at the group level and suggested that it is the   shifts   in (as opposed to sustained) engagement that are most beneficial for creativity. In contrast to being the opposite of burnout, sustained engagement could possibly lead to negative effects such as burnout (Kunda, 1992). Particularly with respect to groups with high collective engagement, individuals may alternate between episodes of intense individual work/concentration and downtime. In a recent study of software development teams, Metiu and Rothbard (working paper) found that individuals were highly engaged, but took "time-outs," breaks to replenish their energy and refocus. Such time-outs led to increased engagement and thus increased performance on the project team.

This notion that periods of disengagement or breaks can sustain engagement over time is consistent with research on recovery experiences (i.e., respite) and work engagement. For example, in a study of 527 Finnish employees, Sonnentag and (p. 61) Fritz (2007) found that employees who tend to disconnect from their jobs when not at work are more likely to exhibit work engagement (Sonnentag, Niessen, & Neff, 2010). In Chapter 66 of this Handbook, Sonnentag, Niessen, and Neff discuss additional studies (e.g., Kuhnel & Sonnentag, in press; Sonnentag, 2003; Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005; Sonnentag, Binnewies, & Mojza, in press; Westman, 1999) that consistently demonstrate that psychological detachment from work can foster increased engagement with work over time.

The concept of breaks is also consistent with other research on the effects of scheduled downtime, social interactions with colleagues (Hollander, 1958), and informal joking (Bechky, 2006). Of course, in some groups, downtime is informally and naturally induced by group members to prevent boredom (Roy, 1959), whereas in other groups, downtime needs to be mandated or encouraged by management. Recent research on redesigning the workday advocates forced intermittent downtime (Elsbach & Hargadon, 2006), which challenges the general notion that job complexity at all times is a requirement for creativity (Oldham & Cummings, 1996). Levinthal and Rerup (2006) also discuss an analogous process of mindlessness (synonymous with disengagement) and mindfulness (synonymous with engagement) that follows a temporal approach. Interruptions in mindlessness lead to consciousness and then the subsequent adoption of new routines, a form of creativity (Cyert & March, 1963).

In addition to the importance of recovery and respite for energy replenishment at the general work and personal-being levels (Fritz & Sonnentag; 2005; Halbesleben, Harvey, & Bolino, 2009), scholars have also demonstrated the importance of respite at the task level. For example, experimental research has shown that disengaging from a core work problem and engaging in a distracting task is associated with better decision making on the initial set of complex problems (Dijksterhuis, Bos, Nordgren, & Van Baaren, 2006). Moreover, research finds that creative breakthroughs often occur after a break that follows an intense period of concentration because the break provides time for subconscious processing of the problem (Csikszentmihalyi & Sawyer, 1995). Thus, it is important for future research to conceptualize engagement, not as a continuous process filled with constant intensity, but rather as a noncontinuous process with intermittent exhibitions of disengagement followed by renewed focus.

Engagement and Positive Organizational Scholarship

Having defined what we mean by engagement—one's psychological presence in a role—we next consider why engagement has the potential to contribute to POS. Engagement in a role is thought to lead individuals to do their work in a way that better supports

organizational effectiveness (Kahn, 1992; Saks, 2008). In some research, this has been taken to mean that engagement leads people to do what they are supposed to do in their roles better (Kahn, 1992; Saks, 2008), whereas in other research, engagement has been thought to lead employees to engage in discretionary behaviors beyond what they are supposed to do in their roles (e.g., Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004; Macey & Schneider, 2008). Both of these outcomes are central to further developing POS.

We illustrate how engagement, as a construct, fits into a positive view of organizational behavior by discussing the link between the psychological state of engagement and several behavioral outcomes, especially those highly relevant to POS scholars. Additionally, we discuss what managers can do to promote employee engagement in their workplaces, and therefore increase the likelihood that several positive behaviors will be exhibited by employees.

Engagement's Link to Positive Behavioral Outcomes

In the preceding discussion, we have discussed engagement as a psychological state—conceptualizing engagement as the manner or process in which work is conducted, not as a behavioral outcome (Saks, 2008; cf. Macey & Schneider, 2008). Investigating the behavioral outcomes of engagement is critically important to further understand the benefits of the engagement construct for scholarly research and the broader practical implications of engagement in today's workplace. In other words, what are the behavioral benefits of highly engaged employees? In the following section, we discuss several possible behaviors that may result from greater psychological engagement in work.

One key reason why engagement has captured the interests of scholars and managers is that across a wide array of studies using different operationalizations of engagement, many studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between engagement and performance. Specifically, engagement has been linked to increased in-role (Schaufeli, Taris, & Bakker, 2006) and extra-role behaviors (Macey & (p. 62) Schneider, 2008; Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004). This translates into increased productivity and efficiency in increasingly competitive global work environments (Masson, Royal, Agnew, & Fine, 2008). Along these lines, engagement has been shown to lead to a variety of positive behaviors—increased task performance and exhibition of organizational citizenship behaviors (Rich et al., 2010), enhanced overall performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007), specific business-unit (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002) and client-related performance (Salanova, Agut, & Peiro, 2005), and client satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Last, Metiu and Rothbard (working paper) show that individual engagement can lead to group-level collective energy, in the form of mutual focus of attention, intensity of interactions among team members, increased coworker motivation, and positive interaction rituals.

The context or situation, such as the team or organization in which an individual works, can also moderate the effects of engagement on various behaviors. In other words, engagement may lead to different behavioral outcomes depending on the context. For example, Griffin, Parker, and Neal (2008) identify two key contextual moderators: uncertainty and interdependence. Under conditions of uncertainty, inputs, processes, and outputs of work systems lack predictability. In such situations, engagement may lead individuals to be more responsive and adaptive to change (Griffin et al., 2008; Saks, 2006) because they are vigilant and attentive to their work. Moreover, the focus of attention and cognitive availability of engaged employees may lead them to enact more proactive or anticipatory behaviors (Grant & Ashford, 2008) that can assist in dynamically creating emergent roles that are necessary for dealing with change and uncertainty (Saks, 2008). Thus, under conditions of uncertainty, engagement may lead to more proactive and adaptive behaviors. In contrast, under conditions of certainty, expectations are clear and predictable, and thus, engagement is likely to lead to better team and individual task performance because an individual's focus of attention can be directed toward the core tasks that comprise the job.

A second contextual moderator of the effects of engagement on behavioral outcomes is interdependence, in which individuals need to cooperate and coordinate in order to achieve shared goals (Bond & Smith, 1996). When interdependence is low, similar to situations of certainty and stability, engagement can lead to better individual task performance. However, when interdependence is high, individual work engagement alone may not be enough to sustain group outcomes such as better team coordination, cooperation, and unification. Indeed, individual engagement may be a necessary but insufficient condition that needs to be coupled with shared and inspiring goals, identification with the group, and patterns of relational interaction that support such group-level outcomes (Metiu & Rothbard, working paper).

In addition to contextual moderators, the relationship between engagement and behaviors can be affected by which subcomponent of engagement is primarily activated. Engagement is defined as people's focus of attention, their absorption, and their available energy directed toward work-related tasks. Attention captures both an inward and outward focus and is likely to lead to better task performance and impression management. In particular, Rothbard and Wilk (working paper) find that employee attention, but not absorption, is significantly related to supervisors' perceptions of the employee's engagement. This is perhaps because attentive employees are vigilant about their task, but also about the workplace around them and may be more likely to engage in impression management techniques to control other's perceptions of them than those who are less attentive or than those who are highly absorbed in their work. Indeed, the items often used to measure absorption refer to being engrossed and losing track of time. Absorption, the second component of engagement, has an inward focus, and while it may not lead to better impression management and perceived performance (Rothbard & Wilk, working paper), it may very well lead to greater creativity, which can benefit from more solitary and intense idea generation (Griffin et al., 2008). The proposed relationship between absorption and creativity is similar to the studies on independent brainstorming

and idea generation, in which production of ideas is greater when individuals work alone to brainstorm (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987). Individuals who are absorbed in their work and working alone may be less likely to engage in negative social behaviors such as social loafing (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987) and groupthink (Aldag & Fuller, 1993), thus increasing their concentration and subsequent creativity.

Last, engagement is characterized by high energy. This high energy may fuel extra-role, proactive behaviors (Grant & Ashford, 2008), such as organizational citizenship behaviors (Organ, 1988), seeking feedback (Ashford, Blatt, & VandeWalle, 2003), (p. 63) taking initiative in pursuing personal and organizational goals (Frese & Fay, 2001), expressing voice (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001), taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), and crafting jobs (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Such proactive behaviors may require "extra" energy outside of that which is required for the completion of specified tasks, and highly engaged employees who have greater amounts of energy may be more capable of meeting those "extra" energy requirements.

The Downside to Engagement: Burnout and Workaholism

Although engagement can lead to many positive behavioral outcomes, as we have discussed above, it is important to acknowledge that there may be downsides to engagement. In particular, there may be detrimental effects of too much engagement, without the opportunity for recovery and respite. Indeed, too much work engagement may result in both burnout and workaholism, an extreme, negative form of engagement.

First, there may be an upper limit for how engaged individuals can be without having effects on strain, time allocation, and functioning in other roles. Recent research, drawing on conservation of resources theory, shows that, for some employees, being highly engaged at work is associated with greater work–family and strain-based conflict (Halbesleben, Harvey, & Bolino, 2009). Moreover, if engagement leads to negative affect in a particular situation, even a moderate level of engagement may be depleting, leading to lower levels of attention, absorption, and energy overall (Rothbard, 2001).

Second, too much engagement at work may be evidenced by workaholics, who tend to be very absorbed and attentive employees who are devoted to their jobs, often working long hours without breaks. When engagement is associated with the pressing, almost addicting need to work (Bonebright, Clay, & Ankenmann, 2000) and the sacrifice of family and social lives for the sake of work, it may lead to negative outcomes for the individual. However, it is important to note that there is an important distinction between engagement and workaholism. Although engagement is an intermittent motivational state, workaholism is a stable, steady, and sustained outlook on work. This is why workaholism has been shown to lead to poor mental health; extreme perfectionism (and decreased self-esteem for not reaching high goals); social and relationship problems, particularly with respect to work–family conflict (Bakker, Demerouti, & Burke, 2009); and overall poor psychological and physical well-being (Burke & Matthiesen, 2004). Moreover,

workaholics have been shown to have long-term health problems and suffer from eventual burnout (Piotrowski & Vodanovich, 2008). Importantly, we view the relationship between work engagement and workaholism as correlational and not causal. The antecedents of workaholism are distinct from engagement, but if engagement is associated with workaholic behaviors, then deleterious outcomes may result.

What Managers Can Do to Increase Engagement

If engagement is likely to lead to several positive behaviors, it is important for us to understand what managers can do to encourage greater engagement while recognizing the importance of respite and recovery. First, a key factor for increasing work engagement is psychological safety (Kahn, 1990). Psychological safety refers to being able to employ one's self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career—it allows an employee or team member to engage in interpersonal risk-taking (Edmondson, 1999). When employees perceive psychological safety, they are less likely to be distracted by negative emotions such as fear, which stem from worrying about controlling perceptions of managers and colleagues. In addition to being a significant distraction, dealing with fear requires intense emotional regulation (Barsade, Brief, & Spataro, 2003), which takes away from the ability of an individual to fully immerse him or herself in his or her work tasks. Psychological safety, on the other hand, decreases such distracters and allows an employee to expend his or her energy toward being absorbed and attentive to work tasks. Managers can initiate psychological safety in the workplace by introducing effective structural features, such as coaching leadership and context support (Hackman, 1987). Team leader behavior can greatly influence the behavior of members, leading to greater trust (Tyler & Lind, 1992). Supportive, coaching-oriented, and nondefensive responses to employee concerns and questions can lead to heightened feelings of security, as opposed to authoritarian and punitive leadership (Edmondson, 1996). Autonomy, especially in decision-making (Salanova, Agut, & Peiro, 2005), and feedback from coaches (in the form of information and rewards) also leads to such safety (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Edmondson, 1999; May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004) and consequently increased work engagement.

(p. 64) A second factor for increasing work engagement is the balance between the demands and resources that an employee has. Job demands often stem from time pressures, high-priority work, shift work, and physical demands. Both demands and resources can increase engagement, but it is important that employees perceive that they have sufficient resources to deal with their work demands (Rich et al., 2010). Challenging demands require that employees be more attentive and absorbed, and direct more energy toward their work. These high demands can often be an energizing force themselves, by helping employees achieve their goals and by stimulating their personal growth (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). But, such energy will be depleting, if employees perceive that they do not have enough control to tackle these challenging demands (Karasek, 1979). Perceived control is increased with the granting of sufficient resources, such as managerial and collegial support. Similar to the effects of psychological safety, adequate resources ensure that employees are not hindered by distracters that can limit the attention, absorption, and energy that they put toward their work. Sufficient resources are thus especially crucial to sustaining a positive level of engagement that does not eventually lead to discouragement or burnout. The relationship between adequate resources and engagement has been discussed by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli's (2001) Job Demand–Resources (JD-R) occupational stress model, which

suggests that job demands that force employees to be attentive and absorbed can be depleting, if not coupled with adequate resources. The relationship has also been evidenced in a 2-year longitudinal study of Finnish health care workers: Having adequate job resources was a strong predictor of work engagement (Mauno, Kinnunen, & Ruokolainen, 2007; also see Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006 and Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008). Therefore, managers should ensure that the resources they provide for their employees are commensurate with the demands placed on them.

Another set of factors that are critical for increasing work engagement involve core self-evaluations and self-concept (Judge & Bono, 2001). Self-esteem, efficacy, locus of control, identity, and perceived social impact may be critical drivers of an individual's psychological availability as evident in the attention, absorption, and energy directed toward their work. Self-esteem and efficacy are enhanced by increasing employees' general confidence in their abilities (Rich et al., 2010), which in turn assists in making them feel secure about themselves and less self-conscious about how other people are perceiving or judging them (Kahn, 1990). Employees also gain increased control and efficacy when they perceive that they are receiving important returns on their physical, cognitive, and emotional investments (Kahn, 1990). Managers can attain this by increasing the significance of their task (i.e., the extent to which the job improves the welfare of others (Hackman & Oldham, 1976)). When employees see their tasks as significant, they feel that their own actions are improving the welfare of others (Grant, 2007, 2008; Small & Loewenstein, 2003). Finally, core self-evaluations can be enhanced by increasing an employee's identity with his or her role (May et al., 2004). This can be done by increasing employee opportunities for job enrichment and increasing the internalization of organizational goals, so that employees perceive deep meaning in their work. By increasing employee core self-evaluations, managers are ensuring that employees will want to intrinsically feel motivated to engage in their work, and will feel they are capable of exerting such high energy in their jobs.

Future Directions

Throughout this chapter, we have mentioned numerous directions for future research on work engagement. Because engagement is a psychological state that focuses on attention, absorption, and energy directed toward work, we see this construct as an important and central one for research in organizational behavior and positive organizational behavior, in particular. To push forward research in this area, we focus on six issues that warrant more attention.

Measuring Engagement

We have discussed several approaches that scholars have used to measure engagement and the benefits and drawbacks of each. We suggest that researchers continue to explore multiple dimensions of engagement, but focus on the three subcomponents shown in Appendix 5.1 (attention, absorption, and energy).

Subcomponents of Engagement

Similarly, given that some empirical evidence also suggests that the specific subcomponents of engagement have different effects on behavioral outcomes, we propose that future research look more closely at these relationships. For example, it is possible that intense absorption is coupled with decreased impression management behaviors, such as boasting about one's accomplishments (Ferris, Judge, Rowland, &   (p. 65) Fitzgibbons,   1994), which causes managers to perceive absorbed employees less positively (Rothbard & Wilk, working paper). On the other hand, attentive employees are perhaps more vigilant about their task and the workplace around them, making them more likely to engage in impression management techniques to control other's perceptions of them. High energy, the third component of engagement, may be related to other behaviors, such as proactive behaviors that require "extra energy   ." Thus, we encourage future scholars to examine the outcomes that result from each of the subcomponents of engagement, rather than simply aggregating them into an overarching construct, unless they do indeed operate similarly.

Contextual Moderators

We have discussed a few contextual moderators of the relationship between engagement and behaviors; namely, uncertainty and interdependence (Griffin et al.,   2008). We encourage scholars to continue to search for additional contextual moderators of the relationship between engagement and behavioral outcomes. Some potential moderators include task-related moderators, such as routine versus creative or complex work assignments; group-related moderators, such as temporary versus permanent work groups; and organization-related moderators, such as security and psychological safety that might result from downsizing versus job-secure organizations.

Longitudinal Designs

In discussing several potential antecedents and consequences of engagement, such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and role performance, we noted that it is highly likely that these constructs relate to one another in a dynamic fashion, such that

they are reciprocally related to engagement. Figure 5.1 provides a diagram of these proposed relationships. However, future research should examine these dynamic relationships empirically to help us better understand the role that engagement plays as a process linking important organizational antecedents and outcomes. An important way to do so is to examine the relationships between engagement and related constructs over time. We encourage scholars to utilize longitudinal designs to examine the ebb and flow of engagement in future research. It would also be interesting to explore if and how each of the subcomponents of engagement—attention, absorption, and energy—are affected over time and in similar or different ways.

Levels of Analysis
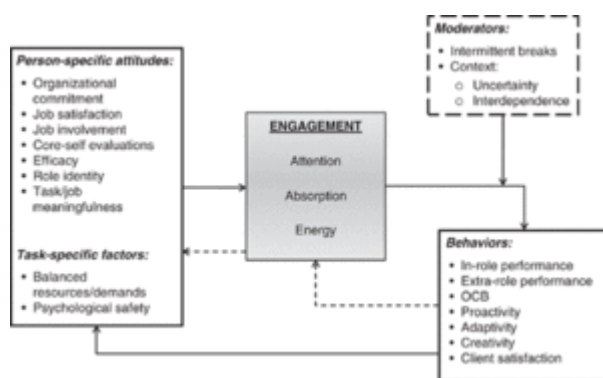
Click to view larger

Fig. 5.1 A theoretical framework of work engagement.

Most research on engagement to date has examined it as an individual-level construct; however, engagement can also be exhibited at the group and organizational levels of analysis. At the group-level of analysis, very recent empirical work (Metiu & Rothbard, working paper) demonstrates the

nonadditive effects (Hertel, Kerr, & Messe, 2000; (p. 66) Kohler, 1926) of individual engagement on group engagement for a team working on a complex task. However, more work needs to be done to understand what the antecedents and consequences of engagement at the individual, group, and organizational levels are.

Conclusion

Work engagement is an important construct that can lead to a number of positive outcomes, such as in-role and extra-role performance, client satisfaction, proactivity, adaptivity, and creativity. Managers, however, must ensure that employees have adequate resources and sufficient breaks, as well as psychological safety, so that engagement does not lead to burnout, depletion, or distraction. We encourage scholars interested in studying engagement in the future to investigate the contextual moderators that affect the relationship between engagement and employee behavior and to examine the

differential effects of the components of engagement: attention, absorption, and energy. It is an exciting time to be engaged in research on engagement.

References

Aldag, R.J., & Fuller, S.R. (1993). Beyond fiasco: A reappraisal of the groupthink phenomenon and a new model of group decision processes. Psychological Bulletin, 113, 553–552.

Argyris, C. (1982). Reasoning, learning, and action: Individual and organizational, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ashford, S.J., Blatt, R., & VandeWalle, D. (2003). Reflections on the looking glass: A review of research on feedback-seeking behavior in organizations. Journal of Management, 29, 773–799.

Ashforth, B., & Humphrey, R. (1995). Emotion in the workplace: A reappraisal. Human Relations, 48(2), 97–125.

Bakker, A.B., & Demerouti, E. (2008). Towards a model of work engagement. Career Development International, 13, 209–223.

Bakker, A.B., Demerouti, E., & Burke, R. (2009). Workaholism and relationship quality: A spillover-crossover perspective. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 14(1), 23–33.

Bakker, A.B., Demerouti, E., & Verbeke, W. (2004). Using the job demands–resources model to predict burnout and performance. Human Resource Management, 43(1), 83–104.

Bakker, A.B., & Demerouti, E. (2008). Towards a model of work engagement. Career Development International, 13, 209–223.

Bakker, A.B., & Oerlemans, W.G.M. (2011). Subjective well-being in organizations. In K. Cameron & G. Spreitzer (Eds.), Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship. Oxford University Press.

Barsade, S.G., Brief, A.P., & Spataro, S.E. (2003). The affective revolution in organizational behavior: The emergence of a paradigm. In J. Greenberg (Ed.), OB: The state of the science (2nd ed., pp. 3–52). Hillsdale, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.

Blauner, B. (1964). Alienation and freedom: The factory worker and his industry. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bond, R.A., & Smith, P.B. (1996). Culture and conformity: A meta-analysis of studies using Asch's (1952, 1956) line judgment task. Psychological Bulletin, 119, 111–137.

Bonebright, C.A., Clay, D.L., & Ankenmann, R.D. (2000). The relationship of workaholism with work-life conflict, life satisfaction, and purpose in life. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 47 (4), 469–477.

Brown, S.P., & Leigh, T.W. (1996). A new look at psychological climate and its relationship to job involvement, effort, and performance. Journal of Applied Psychology, 81 , 358–368.

Burke, R.J., & Matthiesen, S.B. (2004). Workaholism among Norwegian journalists: Antecedents and consequences. Stress and Health, 20 , 301–308.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Sawyer, K. (1995). Creative insight: The social dimension of a solitary moment. In R. Steinberg, & J. Davidson (Eds.), The nature of insight (pp. 329–361). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cyert, R.M., & March, J.G. (1963). A behavioral theory of the firm. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Demerouti, E., Bakker, A.B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W.B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. Journal of Applied Psychology, 86 (3), 499–512.

Diehl, M., & Stroebe, W. (1987). Productivity loss in brainstorming groups: Toward the solution of a riddle. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53 (3), 497–509.

Dijksterhuis, A., Bos, M.W., Nordgren, L.F., & van Baaren, R.B. (2006). On making the right choice: The deliberation-without-attention effect. Science, 311 , 1005–1007.

Drazin, R., Glynn, M.A., & Kazanjian, R.K. (1999). Multilevel theorizing about creativity in organizations: A sensemaking perspective. Academy of Management Review, 24 , 286–307.

Edmondson, A.C. (1996). Group and organizational influences on team learning. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, Boston.

Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. Administrative Science Quarterly, 44 , 350–383.

Elsbach, K.D., & Hargadon, A.B. (2006). Enhancing creativity through "mind-less" work: A framework of workday design. Organization Science, 17 , 470–483.

Ferris, G.R., Judge, T.A., Rowland, K.M., & Fitzgibbons, D.E. (1994). Subordinate influence and the performance evaluation process: Test of a model. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 58 , 101–135.

Frese, M., & Fay, D. (2001). Personal initiative (PI): A concept for work in the 21st century. Research in Organizational Behavior, 23 , 133–188.

Fritz, C., & Sonnentag, S. (2005). Recovery, well-being and job performance: Effects of weekend experiences. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 10 , 187–199.

Goffman, E. (1961).   Asylums   . Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Press.

Grant, A.M. (2007). Relational job design and the motivation to make a prosocial difference.   Academy of Management Review, 32   , 393–417.

Grant, A.M. (2008). The significance of task significance: Job performance effects, relational mechanisms, and boundary conditions.   Journal of Applied Psychology, 93   , 108–124.

Grant, A.M., & Ashford, S.J. (2008). The dynamics of proactivity at work.   Research in Organizational Behavior, 28   , 3–34.

Griffin, M.A., Parker, S.K., & Neal, A. (2008). Is behavioral engagement a distinct and useful construct?   Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 1   , 48–51.

(p. 67)   Hackman, J.R. (1987). The design of work teams. In J.W.E. Lorsch (Ed.),   Handbook of Organizational Behavior   . Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Hackman, J.R., & Oldham, G.R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory.   Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 16   , 250–279.

Hakanen, J.J., Bakker, A.B., & Schaufeli, W.B. (2006). Burnout and work engagement among teachers. Journal of School Psychology,   43 , 495–513.

Halbesleben, J.R., Harvey, J., & Bolino, M.C. (2009). Too engaged? A conservation of resources view of the relationship between work engagement and work interference with family.   Journal of Applied Psychology, 94   (6), 1452–1465.

Harter, J.K., Schmidt, F.L., & Hayes, T.L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A metaanalysis. Journal of Applied Psychology, 87   , 268–279.

Hertel, G., Kerr, N.L., & Messe, L.A. (2000). Motivation gains in performance groups: Paradigmatic and theoretical developments on the Kohler effect.   Journal of Personality and Social Psychology   79 (4), 580–601.

Hollander, E.P. (1958). Conformity, status, and idiosyncrasy credit.   Psychological Review, 65 , 117–127.

Hochschild, A.R. (1983).   The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling   . Berkeley: University of California Press.

Judge, T.A., & Bono, J.E. (2001). Relationship of core self-evaluations traits–self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability–with job satisfaction and job performance: A meta-analysis.   Journal of Applied Psychology, 86   , 80–92.

Kahn, W.A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work.   Academy of Management Journal, 33   , 692–724.

Kahn, W.A. (1992). To be fully there: Psychological presence at work. *Human Relations, 45* (4), 321–349.

Kanungo, R.N. (1982). *Work alienation: An integrative approach*. New York: Praeger Publishers.

Karasek, R. (1979). Job demands, job decision latitude and mental strain: Implications for job redesign. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 24*, 285–306.

Kohler, O. (1926). Kraftleistungen bei Einzel- und gruppenarbeit [Physical performance in individual and group situations]. *Industrielle Psychotechnik 3,* 274–282.

Kuhnel, J., & Sonnentag, S. (in press). How long do you benefit from vacation? A closer look at the fade-out of vacation effects. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*.

Kunda, G. (1992). *Engineering culture: Control and commitment in a high tech corporation*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

LePine, J.A., & Van Dyne, L. (2001). Voice and cooperative behavior as contrasting forms of contextual performance: Evidence of differential relationships with big five personality characteristics and cognitive ability. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86* (2), 326–336.

Levinthal, D.A., & Rerup, C. (2006). Crossing an apparent chasm: Bridging mindful and less-mindful perspectives on organizational learning, *Organization Science, 17* (4), 502–513.

Lodahl, T.M., & Kejner, M. (1965). The definition and measurement of job involvement. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 49*, 24–33.

Macey, W.H., & Schneider, B. (2008). The meaning of employee engagement. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 1*, 3–30.

Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W.B., & Leiter, M.P. (2001). Job burnout. In S.T. Fiske, D.L. Schacter, & C. Zahn-Waxler (Eds.), *Annual Review of Psychology, 52*, 397–422.

Masson, R.C., Royal, M.A., Agnew, T.G., & Fine, S. (2008). Leveraging employee engagement: The practical implications. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 1*, 56–59.

Mauno, A., Kinnunen, U., & Ruokolainen, M. (2007). Job demands and resources as antecedents of work engagement: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 70*, 149–171.

May, D.R., Gilson, R.L., & Harter, L.M. (2004). The psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety and availability and the engagement of the human spirit at work. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 77*, 11–37.

Metiu, A., & Rothbard, N.P. (working paper). More than just the sum of the parts: How individual engagement and disengagement give rise to group engagement.

Morrison, E.W., & Phelps, C. (1999). Taking charge: Extra-role efforts to initiate workplace change. Academy of Management Journal, 42, 403–419.

Newman, D.A., & Harrison, D.A. (2008). Been there, bottled that: Are state and behavioral work engagement new and useful construct "wines"? Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 1, 31–35.

Oldham, G.R., & Cummings, A. (1996). Employee creativity: Personal and contextual factors at work. Academy of Management Journal, 39, 607–634.

Organ, D.W. (1988). Organizational citizenship behavior—The good soldier syndrome. (1st ed.). Lexington, MA/Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company.

Perry-Smith, J., & Dumas, T.L. (working paper). Debunking the ideal worker myth: The effects of family configuration and temporal flexibility on work engagement.

Piotrowski, C., & Vodanovich, S.J. (2008). The workaholism syndrome: An emerging issue in the psychological literature. Journal of Instructional Psychology, 35(1), 103–105.

Rich, B.L., LePine, J.A., & Crawford, E.R. (2010). Job engagement: Antecedents and effectson job performance. Academy of Management Journal, 53(3), 617–635.

Rothbard, N.P. (2001). Enriching or depleting? The dynamics of engagement in work and family roles. Administrative Science Quarterly, 46, 655–684.

Rothbard, N.P., & Wilk, S.L. (working paper). In the eye of the beholder: The relationship between employee and supervisor perceptions of engagement and their effect on performance.

Roy, D.F. (1959). Banana time: Job satisfaction and informal interaction. Human Organization, 18(4), 158–168.

Russell, J.A., & Barrett, L.F. (1999). Core affect, prototypical emotional episodes, and other things called emotion: Dissecting the elephant. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 76(5), 805–819.

Saks, A.M. (2006). Multiple predictors and criteria of job search success. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 68, 400–415.

Saks, A.M. (2008). The meaning and bleeding of employee engagement: How muddy is the water? Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 1, 40–43.

Salanova, M., Agut, S., & Perió, J.M. (2005). Linking organizational resources and work engagement to employee performance and customer loyalty: The mediation of service climate. Journal of Applied Psychology, 90, 1217–1227.

Salanova, M., & Schaufeli, W.B. (2008). A cross-national study of work engagement as a mediator between job resources and proactive behavior: A cross-national study. International Journal of Human Resources Management, 19 , 226–231.

(p. 68) Schaufeli, W., & Bakker, A. (2003). Utrecht work engagement scale . Preliminary manual. Occupational Health Psychology Unit: Utrecht University, Holland.

Schaufeli, W., & Bakker, A. (2004). Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 25 , 293–315.

Schaufeli, W.B., & Salanova, M. (2007). Efficacy or inefficacy, that's the question: Burnout and work engagement, and their relationships with efficacy beliefs. Anxiety, Stress, and Coping, 20 (2), 177–196.

Schaufeli, W.B., Taris, T.W., & Bakker, A. (2006). Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hide: On the differences between work engagement and workaholism. In R. Burke (Ed.), Work hours and work addiction (pp. 193–252). Northhampton, UK: Edward Elgar.

Seeman, M. (1975). Alienation Studies. Annual Review of Sociology, 1 , 91–123.

Small, D.A., & Loewenstein, G. (2003). Helping a victim or helping the victim: Altruism and identifiability. Journal of Risk and Uncertainty, 26 (1), 5–16.

Sonnentag, S. (2003). Recovery, work engagement, and proactive behavior: A new look at the interface between non-work and work. Journal of Applied Psychology, 88 , 518–528.

Sonnentag, S., & Bayer, U. (2005). Switching off mentally: Predictors and consequences of psychological detachment from work during off-job time. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 10 (4), 393–414.

Sonnentag, S., Binnewies, C., & Mojza, E.J. (in press). Staying well and engaged when demands are high: The role of psychological detachment. Journal of Applied Psychology .

Sonnentag, S., & Fritz, C. (2007). The recovery experience questionnaire: Development and validation of a measure for assessing recuperation and unwinding from work. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 12 (3), 204–221.

Sonnentag, S., Niessen, C., & Neff, A. (2010). Recovery: Non-work experiences that promote positive states. In K. Cameron, & G. Spreitzer (Eds.), Handbook of positive organizational scholarship . Oxford University Press.

Spreitzer, G.M., Lam, C.F., & Quinn, R. (2010). Human energy in organizations: Implications for POS from six interdisciplinary streams. In K. Cameron, & G. Spreitzer (Eds.), Handbook of positive organizational scholarship . Oxford University Press.

Tyler, T.R., & Lind, E.A. (1992). A relational model of authority in groups. Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 25 , 115–191.

Watson, D., Clark, L.A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54, 1063–1070.

Westman, J.A. (1999). A test for the future. Gynecologic Oncology, 74(3), 329–330.

Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J.E. (2001). Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work. Academy of Management Review, 26(2), 179–201.

Zhang, Y., Rich, B.L., & LePine, J.A. (2009). Transformational leadership and job performance: The mediating role of job engagement. Presented in an interactive paper session at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Chicago, August 8–11.

(p. 69) Appendix 5.1

Work Engagement Scale

Attention

(from Rothbard, 2001)

I spend a lot of time thinking about my work.

I focus a great deal of attention on my work.

I concentrate a lot on my work.

I pay a lot of attention to my work.

Absorption

(from Rothbard, 2001)

When I am working, I often lose track of time.

I often get carried away by what I am working on.

When I am working, I am completely engrossed by my work.

When I am working, I am totally absorbed by it.

Nothing can distract me when I am working.

Energy

(from Rich, LePine, & Crawford,   2010)

I work with intensity on my job.

I exert my full effort to my job.

I devote a lot of energy to my job.

I try my hardest to perform well on my job.

I strive as hard as I can to complete my job.

I exert a lot of energy on my job.

Nancy P. Rothbard

Nancy P. Rothbard, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Shefali V. Patil

Shefali V. Patil, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania