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A state-of-the-art overview of job-crafting research: current trends and future research directions

Job-crafting
trend overview

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Abstract

Purpose – In celebration of the 25th anniversary of the founding of *Career Development International*, a state-of-the-art overview of recent trends in job-crafting research was conducted. Since job crafting was introduced twenty years ago as a type of proactive work behavior that employees engage in to adjust their jobs to their needs, skills, and preferences, research has evolved tremendously.

Design/methodology/approach – To take stock of recent developments and to unravel the latest trends in the field, this overview encompasses job-crafting research published in the years 2016–2021. The overview portrays that recent contributions have matured the theoretical and empirical advancement of job-crafting research from three perspectives (i.e. individual, team and social).

Findings – When looking at the job-crafting literature through these three perspectives, a total of six trends were uncovered that show that job-crafting research has moved to a more in-depth theory-testing approach; broadened its scope; examined team-level job crafting and social relationships; and focused on the impact of job crafting on others in the work environment and their evaluations and reactions to it.

Originality/value – The overview of recent trends within the job-crafting literature ends with a set of recommendations for how future research on job crafting could progress and create scientific impact for the coming years.

Keywords Approach crafting, Avoidance crafting, Job crafting, Collaborative crafting, Interpersonal relations, Employee behavior

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of *Career Development International* this year, it struck us that it is the 20th anniversary of the construct of job crafting, which was first labeled as such by Wrzesniewski and Dutton in 2001. As many researchers have argued ever since, a good fit between a person and a job is likely to result in meaningful, engaging work and good performance (Bruning and Campion, 2018; Slemp and Vella-Brodrick, 2014; Tims and Bakker, 2010). At the core of job crafting lies the idea that individuals make changes to certain aspects of their work or work roles, on their own initiative, to better align their job with their skills,



abilities and preferences. [Wrzesniewski and Dutton \(2001\)](#) proposed that similar jobs come to be experienced and crafted differently when performed by diverse individuals. Based on case studies, these authors concluded that individuals change the task and relational boundaries of their jobs by altering the job activities or the way they perceive their jobs. The self-initiated changes result in a different work design and social environment, which allow the person to change their work identity and the meaning of their work. Since this first publication on job crafting, multiple researchers alluded to it (e.g. [Harris et al., 2004](#); [Parker and Ohly, 2008](#)); however, it took several more years until empirical job-crafting studies appeared in scientific journals (e.g. [Ghitulescu, 2007](#); [Lyons, 2008](#); [Leana et al., 2009](#)), and especially from 2010, several highly cited papers were published (e.g. [Berg et al., 2010b](#); [Tims et al., 2012](#)). After this period, a vast increase in interest in this topic is visible from several trend analyses (e.g. [Gemmano et al., 2020](#); [Zhang and Parker, 2019](#)). Thus, it is interesting to take this festive occasion to look at the current state of job-crafting research, celebrate all contributions so far and distill how this research has developed in recent years.

This paper starts with a brief exploration of how job crafting is currently defined in the literature and then moves on to identify current trends in job-crafting research. To do so, we organize the paper according to the focus of current studies that either look at job crafting from an individual, team or social perspective. For each of these perspectives, we focus on the current trends in job-crafting research. To identify the relevant and current literature, we used the Scopus, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar search engines and based ourselves on research from recent years (2016–2021), using “job crafting” and “crafting” as keywords. Furthermore, we only focused on peer-reviewed, English articles. As our goal is to provide an overview of recent trends in job-crafting studies, we then focused on new ways of studying job crafting [rather than studies answering similar research questions, e.g. work characteristics as antecedents of job crafting; work engagement as an outcome of job crafting, which have already been reviewed recently by others (e.g. [Lazazzara et al., 2020](#); [Zhang and Parker, 2019](#))]. We present these newer trends below, after first introducing job crafting in the next section.

Job crafting

At present, while different operationalizations of job crafting exist, the most common approaches are the role-based approach offered by [Wrzesniewski and Dutton \(2001\)](#) and the resources-based approach offered by [Tims et al. \(2012\)](#). In short, while Wrzesniewski and colleagues distilled three types of job crafting and defined them as individuals making (1) changes to the amount, scope, and/or type of job tasks (i.e. task crafting); (2) changes to the quality and/or quantity of social interactions at work (i.e. relational crafting); and (3) changes to the way one perceives the job (i.e. cognitive crafting), Tims and colleagues embedded job crafting within the Job Demands–Resources model (JD-R; [Demerouti et al., 2001](#)). Hereby, they defined four job crafting dimensions, which are (1) increasing structural job resources (e.g. crafting more decision-making latitude or developing oneself); (2) increasing social job resources (e.g. crafting support from colleagues); (3) increasing challenging job demands (e.g. crafting more tasks or responsibilities) and d) decreasing hindering job demands (e.g. crafting fewer cognitive or emotional demands). Despite some overlap between these two approaches ([Demerouti, 2014](#); [Tims, 2013](#)), there are differences in the studies building on each of these approaches. For example, studies examining task, relational and cognitive crafting have generally used qualitative research designs, whereas studies focusing on the JD-R approach were mostly quantitative. Moreover, the latter approach does not consider cognitive crafting as an actual change in the job design, whereas the former approach regards this as an important aspect of job crafting.

Several recent studies have tried to bring these two prominent approaches together and suggested that there may be a higher-order job crafting factor, called approach and avoidance crafting ([Bruning and Campion, 2018](#); [Zhang and Parker, 2019](#)); or similar to some extent

promotion and prevention crafting; Bindl *et al.*, 2019; Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019). Approach crafting refers to effortful actions through which employees try to gain positive or desirable outcomes, whereas avoidance crafting refers to actions to prevent negative outcomes (Zhang and Parker, 2019). More specifically, Zhang and Parker refer to approach and avoidance crafting as a job-crafting *orientation*, the highest level of the hierarchical structure of job crafting they propose. One level lower specifies whether the crafting is behavioral or cognitive in *form*, followed by the *content* of what is crafted (i.e. job demands or job resources) at the lowest level. With this three-level hierarchical structure of job crafting, they propose eight new job crafting dimensions (approach behavioral demands crafting, avoidance cognitive resource crafting, etc.) and, as such, integrate the two original job-crafting approaches.

However, given the recent advancement of these job crafting dimensions, we are unaware of empirical studies examining job crafting as a hierarchical construct, instead studies have positioned task, relational, and cognitive crafting, increasing job resources, and increasing challenging job demands as part of approach crafting, and decreasing hindering job demands as part of avoidance crafting (e.g. Harju *et al.*, 2021; Mäkikangas, 2018; Petrou and Xanthopoulou, 2020). In the next section, we provide an overview of the trends visible from individual, team and social perspectives within this research.

Job crafting from an individual perspective

Trend 1: in search of a deeper understanding of job crafting

Differential and nonlinear effects of job crafting on outcomes. Over the past years, studies paid particular attention to nuances in the predictors or outcomes of approach and avoidance crafting. For example, Harju *et al.* (2021) showed that while approach crafting has generally been linked to positive outcomes, such as work engagement and job performance (e.g. Dubbelt *et al.*, 2019; Hulshof *et al.*, 2020; Kooij *et al.*, 2017b), it can also come at a cost. Specifically, although approach crafting increased job complexity and work engagement, it also increased workload, which, in turn, increased burnout over time. For avoidance crafting, these authors found evidence for the expected decrease in job complexity, which translated into decreased work engagement and increased burnout. Investigating different forms of employee well-being (i.e. work engagement, job satisfaction, workaholism and burnout) as antecedents of approach and avoidance crafting over time, Hakanen *et al.* (2018) found that work engagement predicted job crafting over a four-year period, while job satisfaction was unrelated to job crafting. Workaholism positively predicted two forms of approach crafting (i.e. increasing structural job resources and increasing challenging job demands), and burnout positively predicted decreasing hindering job demands and negatively predicted increasing structural job resources. It thus seems that active positive (i.e. work engagement) and active negative (i.e. workaholism) well-being states are more likely to trigger approach-crafting behaviors, whereas a passive negative state (i.e. burnout) is more likely to predict avoidance crafting and less likely to predict approach crafting.

Finally, with a meta-analysis, Boehnlein and Baum (2020) confirmed that approach crafting is associated positively with different types of employee well-being (e.g. work engagement, job satisfaction) and job performance (i.e. in-role and extra-role performance), but found no significant associations between avoidance crafting and these outcomes. However, taking into account aspects of cultural conditions, such as collectivism, performance orientation and uncertainty avoidance, as moderators, in some cases, the relationships between avoidance crafting and performance became positive. These findings further substantiate that understanding why and when approach and avoidance crafting result in different outcomes reflects an important step forward.

While earlier research has mainly focused on linear relationships between job crafting and outcomes, curvilinear relationships are also considered. Dierdorff and Jensen (2018) found a

curvilinear relationship between approach crafting and performance (i.e. job proficiency and citizenship behavior). The relationship with performance was negative for low to moderate levels of approach crafting, whereas it became positive for moderate to high levels of approach crafting (operationalized as increasing structural and social job resources and increasing challenging job demands). Based on role theory, these authors argued that with high levels of job crafting, the changes become more visible, allowing colleagues and supervisors to indicate which changes are seen as functional for performance. The U-shaped relationship was not supported for avoidance crafting and performance outcomes, and also not for the relationship between approach or avoidance crafting and attitudinal outcomes (i.e. job satisfaction and affective commitment) – the latter were positive and linear.

Interactions between approach and avoidance crafting. Another interesting aspect recently explored is whether approach and avoidance forms of job crafting interact with each other, as employees can engage in both types of crafting simultaneously (Mäkikangas, 2018). When one engages in approach crafting, this may buffer the negative consequences of avoidance crafting. This buffering process seems important because decreasing hindering job demands is considered to drain energetic, cognitive and/or emotional resources that may be compensated by simultaneously crafting job resources. Indeed, Petrou and Xanthopoulos (2020) reported that the relationship between decreasing hindering job demands and performance was positive when employees also engaged in increasing social and structural job resources. In addition, the relationship between decreasing hindering job demands and employability orientation was negative when increasing challenging job demands was low compared to high. Thus, the authors showed that different forms of approach crafting can buffer the relationship between avoidance crafting and different outcomes (i.e. performance or employability orientation).

Similarly, yet focusing on work engagement as the outcome variable, Seppälä *et al.* (2020) found that increasing challenging job demands boosted the relationship between avoidance crafting and work engagement, whereas increasing social job resources buffered the relationship between avoidance crafting and work engagement. These interaction effects were only found for employees faced with organizational job design changes as opposed to those who did not face such changes. No interaction effect was found between decreasing hindering job demands and increasing structural job resources.

Interestingly, another study reported no support for the idea that the combination of avoidance and approach crafting could buffer against negative outcomes. Specifically, Fong *et al.* (2021) examined whether the negative relationship between supervisor-observed avoidance crafting and supervisor support could be buffered by approach crafting. The authors suggested that the nonsignificant finding could be the result of supervisors being more likely to believe that avoidance crafting is detrimental to employee performance and perceive it separately from approach crafting.

Job crafting as a way to address misfit. Although an incongruity between the employee and the job characteristics has been suggested to trigger job crafting behaviors to reduce the misfit, it is only recently that studies started to examine the role of misfit in job crafting. Vogel *et al.* (2016) demonstrated that high levels of job crafting (and leisure activity) buffered employees experiencing value incongruence against the negative indirect effects of value incongruence on performance via work engagement. Tims *et al.* (2016) did not find evidence that a person–job misfit predicted job crafting, instead they reported that job crafting predicted person–job fit over time, which, in turn predicted meaningfulness.

Focusing on another type of misfit, career dissatisfaction, Wang *et al.* (2020) found that employees only crafted their relationships and tasks when they had high levels of social support at work and a high level of occupational self-efficacy. No direct relationship was found between career dissatisfaction and both types of job crafting, highlighting the importance of personal and job resources for addressing a career-related misfit with proactive

crafting behaviors. Furthermore, while role overload, which can also be classified as a form of misfit, related negatively to approach crafting, Solberg and Wong (2016) also found that perceived adaptivity and leader need for structure changed the negative relationship into a positive relationship. Specifically, role overload related positively to approach crafting when adaptivity was high and leader need for structure was low. In this situation, the employee feels that it is possible to adapt and create change and experience their work environment as autonomous, which allows them to deal with their role overload by crafting their jobs.

Finally, the role of overqualification has been studied as a type of misfit. Overqualified employees were more likely to withdraw from their work if they experienced little autonomy or if they engaged in low levels of job crafting, whereas the opposite was found for those who experienced high levels of autonomy in their work and often engaged in job crafting (Debus *et al.*, 2020).

Summary. Recent studies focused on testing the main assumptions of job crafting and its boundaries, showing that avoidance crafting may sometimes be necessary to protect the well-being of employees and that even approach crafting can come at a cost. Furthermore, it might be important that employees simultaneously use approach-crafting strategies to ensure that they not only expend resources by decreasing their demands but also gain new resources that help and motivate them. Lastly, job crafting has been shown effective as a strategy to address multiple types of misfits although this relationship likely depends on personal and contextual resources.

Trend 2: uncovering new forms of job crafting

Over time, scholars have introduced several new forms of job crafting (see Table 1 for an overview of the crafting construct). Within the JD-R approach of job crafting, *optimizing demands* has been added (Demerouti and Peeters, 2018), which refers to avoidance crafting activities that make work more efficient, simplify procedures and eliminate obstacles (Constantini *et al.*, 2021). Thus, rather than avoiding or withdrawing from hindering job demands, it focuses on actively addressing these demands by improving the work conditions or tasks. In contrast to decreasing hindering job demands, optimizing job demands related positively to work engagement (Constantini *et al.*, 2021; Demerouti and Peeters, 2018; Tian *et al.*, 2021).

Another addition to the different forms of job crafting is referred to as *job crafting toward strengths and interests* (Kooij *et al.*, 2017a). Kooij and colleagues argued that job crafting needs to improve the fit between personal resources (i.e. strengths and interests) and the job. The authors found no support for a direct relationship between the job crafting intervention and an increase in subsequent job-crafting behaviors but demonstrated that participation in their intervention increased strengths (but not interests) crafting and person–job fit among older workers. For younger workers, this relationship was negative, which might indicate that younger employees solve a potential person–job misfit differently; rather than using strengths crafting, they may engage in developing themselves (Kooij *et al.*, 2017a). Building on this finding, a second job-crafting intervention study introduced *developmental crafting* as a third form of job crafting, which refers to the employee’s personal need to develop oneself. Kuijpers *et al.* (2020) found no direct relationships between the intervention and an increase in job-crafting behaviors but did find that the job-crafting intervention related positively to dedication and absorption (but not vigor) via interests crafting for those employees who reported a high (versus low) workload (i.e. moderated mediation). Strengths and developmental crafting were unaffected by the intervention, and only strengths crafting was positively associated with vigor, dedication and absorption. In short, in this particular study, most effects were found for interests crafting rather than strengths or developmental crafting. Therefore, the authors argued that interest crafting might be easier for employees, as it may require less self-awareness compared to the other two forms of job crafting.

| | Definition | Example behavior |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Crafting work-related activities</i> | | |
| Approach versus avoidance crafting | <p><i>Approach crafting</i> involves seeking and acting to achieve positive aspects cognitively and behaviorally (Zhang and Parker, 2019)</p> <p><i>Approach role crafting</i> involves the self-initiated enlargement of the incumbent's work role to include elements of work and related activities not originally in the formal job description (Bruning and Campion, 2018, p. 507)</p> <p><i>Approach resource crafting</i> involves the active design of systems and strategies to organize the tangible elements of work, which can involve managing behavior or physical surroundings (Bruning and Campion, 2018, p. 507)</p> <p><i>Avoidance crafting</i> involves escaping and moving away from negative aspects cognitively and behaviorally (Zhang and Parker, 2019)</p> <p><i>Avoidance role crafting</i> involves consciously, proactively and systematically reducing the work role, work requirements, effort expenditures, or task accountability (Bruning and Campion, 2018, p. 508)</p> <p><i>Avoidance resource crafting</i> involves the systematic removal of oneself, either mentally or physically, from a person, situation, or event through changes to one's job (Bruning and Campion, 2018, p. 508)</p> | <p>Telling colleagues jokes to get everybody to laugh, adding activities that ensure the quality of deliverables (Bruning and Campion, 2018)</p> <p>Looking for software to work more efficiently, setting deadlines a week before the actual deadline (Bruning and Campion, 2018)</p> <p>Delegating work to the assistant, designing shortcuts to cut back time of tasks (Bruning and Campion, 2018)</p> <p>Leaving the office for some time to think about the next task, avoiding unfriendly colleagues at work (Bruning and Campion, 2018)</p> |
| Promotion versus prevention crafting | <p><i>Promotion crafting</i> represents a "gains" approach whereby the employee adds to and extends existing job aspects (Bindl et al., 2019, p. 607)</p> <p><i>Promotion-focused crafting</i> involves making things happen, i.e. employees change their work role boundaries and work role perceptions in a promotion-focused self-regulatory way to realize gains in motivation, health, and performance (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, p. 31)</p> <p><i>Prevention crafting</i> represents active changes to one's job that will prevent negative outcomes from occurring (Bindl et al., 2019, p. 607)</p> <p><i>Prevention-focused crafting</i> is about keeping things from happening, i.e. employees change their work role boundaries and work role perceptions in a prevention-focused self-regulatory way to avoid losses in motivation, health, and performance (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019, p. 31)</p> | <p>Actively trying to meet more people at work, actively taking on more tasks, and thinking about new ways to view the job (Bindl et al., 2019)</p> <p>Seeking to approach gains in motivation and health through increasing their job resources like job autonomy (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019)</p> <p>Ignoring unenjoyable parts of the job, simplifying tasks or only interacting with people that are enjoyable to work with together (Bindl et al., 2019)</p> <p>Seeking to avoid losses in health and motivation through reducing hindering job demands (Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019)</p> |

Table 1.
Overview of crafting constructs

(continued)

| | Definition | Example behavior |
|---|--|---|
| Optimizing demands | A crafting strategy aimed at the simplification or optimization of work processes to make them more efficient (Demerouti and Peeters, 2018, p. 3) | Making work processes more efficient, simplifying work procedures, and eliminating obstacles at work (Demerouti and Peeters, 2018) |
| Job crafting toward strengths and interests | <i>Job crafting toward strengths</i> refers to the self-initiated changes that individuals make in the task boundaries of their work to make better use of their strengths (Kooij et al., 2017a, p. 972) <i>Job crafting toward interests</i> refers to actively looking for tasks that match one's interests (Kooij et al., 2017a, p. 972) | Crafting tasks toward having more customer interaction in case one's strength is building relationships (Kooij et al., 2017a) A history teacher who has an interest in music incorporating music when teaching or collaborating with a colleague who teaches music (Kooij et al., 2017a) |
| Developmental crafting | The initiatives that employees take to realize their potential by creating developmental opportunities for themselves (Kuijpers et al., 2020, p. 3) | Looking for opportunities to use different current skills in one's work, looking for tasks through which to develop oneself, and looking for tasks that activate unused knowledge and skills (Kuijpers et al., 2020) |
| Career crafting | An individual's proactive behaviors aimed at optimizing career outcomes through improving person-career fit (De Vos et al., 2019, p. 129) Proactive behaviors that individuals perform to self-manage their career and that are aimed at attaining optimal person-career fit (Tims and Akkermans, 2020) | Deliberately thinking about what one would like to achieve career wise or making sure that significant persons at work are up to date about one's performance and results (Tims and Akkermans, 2020) |
| <i>Crafting the boundaries of nonwork and work-related activities</i> | | |
| Time-spatial crafting | The extent to which employees reflect on specific work tasks and private demands, actively select workplaces, work locations, and working hours, and then potentially adapt the place/location of work and working hours or tasks and private demands to ensure that these still fit to each other (Wessels et al., 2020, p. 2) | Starting work after bringing the children to school, working on important tasks in the morning as they are the most productive hours, going to the office in the afternoon for a meeting, working in an open office space to collaborate with colleagues (Wessels et al., 2020) |
| <i>Crafting nonwork-related activities (continued)</i> | | |
| Leisure crafting | Proactive pursuit and enactment of leisure activities targeted at goal setting, human connection, learning and personal development (Petrou and Bakker, 2016, p. 508) | Writing a novel next to work or voluntary activities to help elderly people (Berg et al., 2010a) |
| Home crafting | Changes that employees make to balance their home demands and home resources with their personal abilities and needs, in order to experience meaning and create or restore their person-environment fit (Demerouti et al., 2020, p. 1,013) | Creating variety in home duties, searching for challenging activities next to work, making sure that activities after work are mentally, emotionally, or physically less intense (Demerouti et al., 2020) |

(continued)

Table 1.

| | Definition | Example behavior |
|---|--|---|
| Team perspective on job crafting | | |
| <i>Crafting work-related activities</i> | | |
| Collaborative crafting (also interchangeably referred to as team crafting, shared crafting, collective crafting) | Collaborative crafting refers to the process by which groups of employees determine together how they can alter their work to meet their shared work goals (Leana et al., 2009) Team crafting as the extent to which team members combine efforts to increase structural and social job resources as well as challenging job demands, and to decrease their hindering job demands (Tims et al., 2013) | Team members together decide which job resources they need to accomplish their tasks and together ensure that they mobilize these resources, challenge themselves by learning new skills that can be applied in their current tasks, or proactively solve team issues together (Tims et al., 2013) |
| Social perspective on job crafting | | |
| <i>Others' perception of crafting work-related activities</i> | | |
| Supervisor/colleague-rated crafting | Supervisor/colleague rates an employee's job crafting behaviors (i.e. changing aspects of the job on his or her own initiative to better align the job with his or her skills, abilities, and preferences) (Fong et al., 2021, p. 1,219) | Supervisor/colleague notices that the employee avoids tasks and interactions that are part of the job duties (i.e. avoidance crafting). Contrarily, the supervisor/colleague notices that the employee often engages in some tasks and interactions that are over and above the job duties, seeks extra feedback from others at work, or proposes to change a specific work routine to make it more efficient (i.e. approach crafting; Fong et al., 2021) |

Table 1.

Furthermore, Zhang et al. (2021) reported that overqualified employees who strongly identified with their organization were more likely to craft toward their strengths, which, in turn, related to vitality and supervisor-rated task performance. Contrarily, overqualified employees engaged in interests crafting irrespective of their level of organizational identification. In turn, crafting toward interests was related to vitality, but not supervisor-rated task performance. The authors concluded that crafting toward strengths benefits both the individual and the organization (i.e. vitality and task performance), whereas crafting toward interests mainly benefits the individual (i.e. vitality).

Crafting beyond the work domain. Recognizing that job crafting principles have the potential for extension to other domains than the current job, over the past years, researchers have also introduced constructs reflecting job crafting in the career and boundaries between the work and nonwork domain. *Career crafting* refers to proactive behaviors that aim to optimize career outcomes (e.g. employability, career success) by improving one's person-career fit (De Vos et al., 2019; Tims and Akkermans, 2020). Career crafting involves lifelong proactive career behaviors that broaden career-relevant resources and explore career options so that individuals can respond to both the changing nature of jobs and their personal changes in needs, values, and/or interests (Lee et al., 2021). Other researchers have focused on examples of job crafting throughout someone's career – across jobs and roles – as well as family, organizational and environmental influences on these careers (Vidwans and Du Plessis, 2019; Vidwans and Whiting, 2021). A recent intervention study operationalized career crafting as job crafting, which reflects the short-term career, and career self-management, which addresses the long-term or series of jobs that form the career (Van Leeuwen et al., 2021). The authors

found that the intervention group increased their behaviors to reduce hindering job demands and increased their career self-management behaviors compared to their baseline and the control group. No results were found for other types of job crafting (i.e. increasing social job resources, job crafting toward strengths and interests) nor for employability perceptions. Another study that also links job crafting to enhanced person-career fit is the study by [Plomp et al. \(2019\)](#), in which job crafting was found to relate to employability (see also [Lysova et al., 2018](#)).

Leisure crafting refers to the proactive changes individuals make in their private life to experience enjoyment and meaning ([Berg et al., 2010a](#)) through activities and experiences that are not possible during work time. [Petrou and Bakker \(2016, p. 508\)](#) defined leisure crafting as the “proactive pursuit and enactment of leisure activities targeted at goal setting, human connection, learning and personal development.” They found that employees who experienced high job demands and low job autonomy engaged in leisure crafting when their home situation provided them the autonomy to craft, suggesting a compensation effect. In another study, [Petrou et al. \(2017\)](#) supported the compensation hypothesis by showing that leisure crafting was related to meaning-making when job crafting opportunities were low. Studying leisure crafting of academics, [Jones \(2021\)](#) concluded similarly that academics used leisure crafting to relieve job-related stress and to compensate for unfulfilled needs at work. Interestingly, in this qualitative study, spillover was found as well in which leisure crafting experiences informed crafting behaviors in their job.

[Demerouti et al. \(2020\)](#) focused on the spillover of job crafting to home crafting (*work-home crafting*), which refers to the idea that approach crafting at work may result in the motivation to sustain this behavior in the home domain. Approach job crafting was indeed positively related to approach home crafting, and even more so when there was high autonomy at home. No support was found for a potential compensation effect for avoidance crafting. Additionally, avoidance crafting did not cross from the work to the home domain when employees experienced low autonomy at home. Finally, in the current coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, job and home demands were found to enhance emotional exhaustion among teleworkers, whereas leisure crafting was found to reduce emotional exhaustion ([Abdel Hadi et al., 2021](#)).

A final new construct that emerged from job crafting is *work-life balance crafting*, which was already introduced by [Sturges \(2012\)](#) as proactive, self-initiated and goal-oriented physical (e.g. working from home), relational (e.g. managing expectations of supervisors/friends regarding workload) and cognitive (e.g. defining their view on work-life balance) crafting techniques to shape one's work-life balance. Recently, [Gravador and Teng-Calleja \(2018\)](#) found that particularly actions to protect private time (e.g. avoiding overtime) and to work efficiently (e.g. employing time management strategies, working in one's most productive time) were associated with work-life balance. Other researchers have taken a more contextual look at work-life balance crafting, for instance, by looking at co-working couples who run their own businesses together and how they individually and dyadically engage in job crafting to create a balance between their work and life ([Dreyer and Busch, 2021](#)), or by looking at work-life balance among forced telecommuters due to the COVID-19 pandemic ([Caringal-Go et al., 2021](#)). The contextualized approaches revealed similar patterns with regard to managing where and when to work and when not (see also *time-spatial job crafting*; [Lazauskaite-Zabielske et al., 2021](#); [Wessels et al., 2020](#)) but also distinct forms of work-life balance crafting, such as asking for spousal support to protect personal time.

Summary. New forms of job crafting have emerged and have broadened to include the boundaries between work and nonwork domains as well. Bringing together these different types of crafting, [De Bloom et al. \(2020\)](#) proposed integration by focusing on how personal role identities related to different domains can inspire crafting behaviors to satisfy individual needs within or across each domain.

Job crafting from a team perspective

Collaborative crafting

Collaborative crafting, also referred to as team, collective or shared job crafting, has recently received more scholarly attention after it was initially defined by [Leana et al. \(2009\)](#) as the process by which two or more team members collectively determine how they can alter the task, relational and cognitive boundaries of their work to meet their shared work goals. [Tims et al. \(2013\)](#) argued that collaborative crafting is theoretically similar to individual job crafting, and refers to the way teams together combine their efforts and decide how to craft their jobs. Thus, collaborative crafting is a collective effort by team members, which is spontaneously triggered by their intrinsic motivation, and aimed at achieving team goals or objectives ([Iida et al., 2021](#)). In doing so, not every team member has to craft the same aspects of their jobs; instead, it is the implicit process of collectively synergizing efforts and deciding together what and how to craft in a goal-directed manner ([Mäkikangas et al., 2017](#); [Tims et al., 2013](#)). Team members can engage in individual and team job crafting simultaneously ([Leana et al., 2009](#); [Tims et al., 2013](#)), though they may serve a different purpose ([Mattarelli and Tagliaventi, 2015](#)). Next, we focus on the scholarly attention that this topic has received in more recent years and uncover its trends.

Trend 3: revived interest for individual characteristics and (team) work outcomes of collaborative crafting

Individual characteristics relevant for collaborative crafting. Scholars have sought to uncover which individual characteristics can play a role in facilitating collaborative crafting. [Mäkikangas et al. \(2017\)](#) found that perceived self-efficacy for teamwork and team member's positive affect were associated with daily collaborative crafting. Also, personality traits, including extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness, were positively associated with team job crafting via insight orientation, which ranged from superficial consciousness to a more complex comprehension of emotional events ([Gori et al., 2021](#)). Interestingly, the authors did not find this relationship or mediation for emotional stability, which they attributed to emotionally stable employees being less inclined to craft their jobs.

Individual work outcomes of collaborative crafting. Other recent studies focused on the outcomes of collaborative crafting. One of the most established relationships is between collaborative crafting and employee work engagement ([Leana et al., 2009](#); [Tims et al., 2013](#)). Building on these earlier findings, both [Llorente-Alonso and Topa \(2019\)](#) and [Hu et al. \(2019\)](#) showcased that collaborative crafting was positively associated with individual work engagement. [Uen et al. \(2021\)](#) found that collaborative crafting was positively related to individual innovative work behavior, mediated by team psychological capital. Furthermore, [Alonso et al. \(2019\)](#) showed that collectively engaging in job crafting was associated with more job satisfaction. Finally, collaborative crafting was positively associated with the job performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment of tour leaders, especially when they perceived to receive low levels of organizational support ([Cheng et al., 2016](#)). The authors highlight the importance of interpersonal relationships in crafting the relational boundaries of the tour leader's work in response to receiving insufficient resources in their workplace.

Collaborative crafting positively impacts team-level work outcomes. Collaborative crafting can also benefit teams and their performance. Relatedly, employee engagement is associated positively with team performance, especially when the team is engaged in high levels of shared crafting ([Mäkikangas et al., 2016](#)). As an alternative way of establishing collaborative crafting, the authors used a dispersion measure of individual approach-crafting responses to examine the extent to which an employee's individual job-crafting experiences were shared by fellow team members. Yet, this relationship did not hold for shared crafting efforts to increase their challenging job demands. Possibly, these extra challenges initiated by a couple

of team members, such as starting a new project, could lead coworkers to experience an increase in their workload, thereby hindering their perceived team performance.

Furthermore, using a composite measure for collaborative crafting, [Luu \(2017\)](#) demonstrated that teams resolved service failures to serve the customer better (i.e. team service recovery performance) as an indirect result of collaborative crafting, whereby team work engagement mediated this positive relationship. In addition, the author demonstrated that the relationship between collaborative crafting and team work engagement was moderated by their service culture to prioritize the needs of others above their own, which encouraged team members to serve and care about the customers' needs and interests in doing their work. This study shows that collaborative crafting can also positively impact persons who are not directly involved in the team. Moreover, [Iida et al. \(2021\)](#) found strong correlations at the hospital ward-level between collaborative (task, relational and cognitive) crafting and team job satisfaction, alongside workplace social capital and psychological distress. Lastly, this flexibility to collectively make adjustments to team members' job resources and demands was positively related to team creativity ([Chen et al., 2021](#)).

Summary. These recent findings show that similar to individual job crafting, collaborative crafting contributes to individual work outcomes, including employee performance, work engagement and job satisfaction as well as team-level outcomes, such as team work engagement, team (service recovery) performance, team job satisfaction and team creativity. Hereby, the studies stress the importance of team factors (e.g. team player behavior) and personality characteristics (e.g. conscientiousness, agreeableness and extraversion) to stimulate collaborative crafting.

Trend 4: the need for social interactions and high-quality relationships to dynamically negotiate collaborative crafting efforts

Relationships and social interactions with team members. Team-member exchange, referring to an individual's overall perception of the quality of the relationship within the team, was found to be positively related to collaborative crafting ([Hung et al., 2020](#)). Furthermore, [Mäkikangas et al. \(2017\)](#) argued that collaborative crafting requires interactions between team members that go beyond simply discussing the team's work planning for that day. Using two daily surveys after their weekly meetings to measure approach and avoidance team crafting, the authors found that an innovative team climate and connecting leadership were positively associated with daily collaborative crafting. This result suggests that when a team has clearly defined shared goals and supports each other for being innovative, which is fostered by positive interactions, they feel more motivated to craft their team's way of working on a daily basis.

Relationships with and among leaders. Using a composite job crafting measure, [Chen et al. \(2021\)](#) revealed that having a humble leader was positively related to collaborative crafting, especially when the leaders had a high leader–leader exchange (LLX), which, in turn, related to higher team creativity. In contrast, when humble leaders had a poor relationship with upper management, their team members were less likely to engage in collaborative crafting. Chen and colleagues explain this finding by stressing that humble leaders with high-quality relationships with their leaders enjoy higher status in the organization, giving themselves and their team members the confidence to challenge themselves to learn new skills through collective job crafting. Also, these leaders can provide their team members better access to resources that they can use to craft their jobs and, in turn, be more creative with the diverse information they can access. The relationship that leaders have with their team members is also vital: collaborative crafting mediated the relationship between leader–member exchange and job satisfaction ([Pan et al., 2021](#)).

Summary. This trend underscores the importance of social interactions, one of the most crucial elements of successful teamwork ([Salas et al., 2015](#)), for collaborative crafting to thrive.

These recent studies highlight the necessity of promoting open and trusting high-quality relationships and engaging in frequent social interactions between team members, leaders and potentially other stakeholders for the collaborative crafting efforts to be successful.

Individual job crafting from a social perspective

Trend 5: embedding individual job crafting within its social environment

The impact of the social work environment on individual job crafting. Recent job crafting studies have started to acknowledge the important role of the social environment in individual job crafting. Some studies have focused on showing that the social work environment could impact employee job crafting (see meta-analysis by [Wang et al., 2020](#)). For example, approach crafting was found to be stimulated by social interactions with others, such as customer participation ([Loi et al., 2020](#)), and through feedback ([Bizzi, 2017](#)). Furthermore, social support from colleagues or supervisors was positively associated with seeking resources ([Audenaert et al., 2020](#); [Huyghebaert-Zouaghi et al., 2021](#); [Kerksieck et al., 2019](#)) and seeking challenges ([Audenaert et al., 2020](#)). With regard to avoidance crafting, [Audenaert et al.](#) found that colleague support was not associated with avoidance crafting, but [Huyghebaert-Zouaghi et al. \(2021\)](#) found that colleague support was positively associated with avoidance crafting. These inconsistent findings are difficult to explain, as they may depend on the specific samples (i.e. convenience versus elderly care sample) or the inclusion of other predictors (i.e. supervisor support).

In addition, the leader–member exchange relationship ([Radstaak and Hennes, 2017](#)), and leadership styles, including transformational leadership ([Hetland et al., 2018](#); [Wang et al., 2017](#)), servant leadership ([Bavik et al., 2017](#); [Harju et al., 2018](#)), empowering leadership ([Audenaert et al., 2020](#)), employee-oriented leadership ([Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2018](#)) and humble leadership ([Ding et al., 2020](#)) were positively associated with approach crafting. However, leadership was neither associated with avoidance crafting (e.g. [Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2018](#); [Radstaak and Hennes, 2017](#); [Wang et al., 2017](#)) nor examined in previous research (e.g. [Bavik et al., 2017](#); [Harju et al., 2018](#); [Hetland et al., 2018](#)). These studies illustrate that the social context that surrounds job crafters may facilitate or constrain job-crafting behaviors.

The impact of individual job crafting on the social work environment. Conversely, studies have also shown that job crafting can impact others in the social work environment, such as colleagues. [Tims et al. \(2015\)](#) already demonstrated this by showing that employee avoidance crafting was associated with their colleagues' reported conflict with the job crafter, as well as their colleagues' workload and burnout. Building on this earlier finding, recent research further examined how job crafting may influence colleagues. For instance, [Bakker et al. \(2016\)](#) found that job crafting behaviors (both approach and avoidance crafting) could be modeled between colleagues, meaning that job-crafting behaviors can spread across colleagues. Additionally, [Demerouti and Peeters \(2018\)](#) found that this modeling effect was stronger when the workload was high, autonomy was low and the interpersonal relationship between the two colleagues was good.

Summary. A new research trend emerged that focused on how job crafting can be shaped by the support from, and relationships with, colleagues, supervisors and leaders. Additionally, the reverse has also been examined: job crafting could also influence this same social environment through impacting the job characteristics and well-being of their colleagues and the colleagues' job-crafting behavior.

Trend 6: an others' perspective on job crafting

Recent studies are also moving from an individual perspective to an others' perspective, building on the premise that job crafting can be observed, evaluated and reacted to by

colleagues and supervisors. Previous studies have shown that peer- and self-rated job crafting were correlated with each other (Tims *et al.*, 2012). More recently, Fong *et al.* (2021) found that there were also moderate correlations between self- and supervisor-rated job crafting. These findings demonstrate that job crafting can be observed by colleagues and supervisors, which motivated follow-up studies to examine how others may react to job crafting when they observe these endeavors.

Colleague and supervisor reactions to job crafting. Trying to account for some of the inconsistent outcomes in job crafting studies (i.e. particularly those of avoidance crafting on well-being and performance outcomes), Tims and Parker (2020) argued that it would be crucial to involve the job crafter's colleagues in this process as colleagues may co-determine the successfulness of job crafting for the job crafter. That is, depending on how a colleague perceives and responds to the crafted change, the job crafter may experience positive (e.g. work enjoyment) or negative (e.g. stress) outcomes. Specifically, Tims and Parker argued that when the job crafting has a positive (vs negative) impact on colleagues, the colleague would attribute a high (vs low) prosocial motive to the crafting behavior. In turn, the high (vs low) prosocial motive attribution would result in a positive (vs negative) colleague response.

In a vignette study, Fong *et al.* (2019) showed that colleague-observed approach crafting was associated with an increase in their willingness to cooperate with the job crafter and a decrease in expected conflict with the job crafter, whereas the opposite results were found when the colleague observed avoidance crafting. These reactions, in turn, influenced the work enjoyment of both the colleague and the job crafter. Importantly, these reactions were determined by their perception of the contribution of the crafted change; if colleagues perceived the change to contribute (versus not contribute) to their work, they responded with a higher willingness to cooperate and expected less conflict with the job crafter.

Drawing on the framework of wise proactivity (Parker *et al.*, 2019), Fong *et al.* (2021) explored whether approach crafting could balance the three needs of wise proactivity, namely the needs of the job crafter, the needs of their social surroundings, as well as the strategic needs and interests of the company due to its focus on gaining resources and challenges. In contrast, avoidance crafting might be in line with the individual's needs but misaligned with the needs of the task, social and strategic context and therefore may be considered as "unwise" by supervisors. Using a vignette experiment and a supervisor–employee dyadic study, Fong and colleagues showed that when supervisors observed avoidance crafting, they reacted by decreasing their support to the employees, and this relationship was not buffered by approach crafting. From the study, it appeared that supervisors perceived avoidance crafting as destructive changes, and hence, as unwise proactivity, which informed their negative reaction to the employee.

Moreover, Dierdorff and Jensen (2018) discussed how colleague and supervisor reactions to job crafting could influence employee job performance. Drawing on role theory (Katz and Kahn, 1978), those authors showed that there was an U-shaped relationship between job crafting and colleague- and supervisor-rated job performance. Specifically, they found that colleagues and supervisors gave a higher performance rating to the job crafter when they engaged in low or high levels of crafting, and a lower performance rating when they engaged in medium levels of crafting. Even though they did not empirically test the mechanism, the authors theorized that a low level of crafting likely does not conflict with the employees' work roles, whereas with a moderate level of job crafting, the changes become more visible to colleagues and supervisors, while the motivation for the crafting behavior is not clear to them yet. Without sufficient feedback, a moderate level of job crafting is less likely to fit the role expectations of colleagues and supervisors, which resulted in a lower performance rating. Yet, when crafting is at a high level, the crafting behavior is highly visible for colleagues and supervisors to react to (i.e. to give feedback), which informs the employee about which changes are more likely to fulfill the role expectations, and to generate a good performance rating.

Factors influencing the evaluations and reactions of others toward job crafting. Fong *et al.* (2021) further found that supervisors' negative reactions to avoidance crafting depended on employee characteristics. Specifically, when employees with high political skills engaged in avoidance crafting, they received less negative supervisor reactions compared to those with low political skills. Besides colleague and the job crafter characteristics, Dierdorff and Jensen (2018) suggested that work characteristics and the social interactions between colleagues could moderate the U-shaped relationship between job crafting and performance ratings. They found that high autonomy strengthened the positive consequences of job crafting on performance ratings when crafting is at low to moderate levels, whereas high ambiguity weakened the positive consequences of job crafting on performance ratings when crafting was at moderate to high levels. High social support weakened the negative consequences of job crafting on performance rating from supervisors but not from colleagues when crafting was at low to moderate levels. Finally, interdependence at work was not a significant moderator in the U-shaped relationship between job crafting and performance ratings.

Summary. Job-crafting research that focused on the perspective of colleagues and supervisors provided evidence that when others observe job crafting, they evaluate and react to it, and that these positive or negative reactions have implications for the job crafter (and sometimes even the colleagues') well-being and performance. Furthermore, colleague and job crafter characteristics, as well as the characteristics of the work environment could influence the relationship between observed job crafting and others' reactions.

Discussion and future research suggestions

In this overview of recent job-crafting studies, we particularly focused on identifying new trends in this active research field to take stock of where the field is going and to provide future research directions. Based on our overview, it has become clear that recent job-crafting studies are mainly focused on gaining a better understanding of individual job crafting in terms of its predictors, its outcomes, and the processes leading to these outcomes (e.g. see recent meta-analyses and reviews of Bruning and Campion, 2018; Lazazzara *et al.*, 2020; Rudolph *et al.*, 2017; Zhang and Parker, 2019). However, some interesting new research areas were evident that we summarized as trends. At the individual level, the first trend captures studies focused on gaining a deeper understanding of job crafting, namely by (1) trying to understand when approach and/or avoidance crafting could result in differential outcomes; (2) looking at nonlinear relationships of job crafting with outcomes; (3) examining interactions between approach and avoidance crafting; and (4) testing whether job crafting can indeed address person–job misfits. The implication of these new research areas is that it becomes clear that a better understanding of job crafting involves going a step further by investigating the boundary conditions relating specific job-crafting strategies to specific outcomes, their combined impact on outcomes, and when these strategies are successful in achieving a better person–job fit. This knowledge can be used to inform job-crafting interventions as many of them have not resulted in a compelling increase in job-crafting behaviors (Oprea *et al.*, 2019).

The second trend at the individual level is identified as increasing our understanding of the different forms of job crafting, including introducing additional approach and avoidance-crafting behaviors (e.g. optimizing demands; crafting toward strengths and interests) but also illustrated crafting in new areas, such as career crafting, leisure crafting, and crafting at the boundaries between work and nonwork domains. While job crafting initially only applied to the job, it appears that the idea that individuals can be proactive in any life domain to satisfy a needs discrepancy (De Bloom *et al.*, 2020) is gaining traction, which broadens the scope and impact that job crafting may have.

The trends at the team level showcase that research on collaborative crafting is expanding our understanding of individual and team factors associated with collaborative crafting and

its outcomes. Positive outcomes of collaborative crafting appear similar at both the individual- and team-level, including performance, work engagement, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, team members with a high self-efficacy for teamwork and positive affect or certain personality traits are more likely to engage in collaborative crafting (i.e. high conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion).

The other trend that we uncovered from a team perspective on job crafting is the importance of relational factors. Besides developing high-quality relationships among team members, between leaders and their team members, and among leaders, leadership styles also appeared to be crucial for engaging in collaborative crafting. Similarly, from the social perspective, we identified that recent studies started to acknowledge the important role of the social environment in individual job crafting. Specifically, these studies showed that when the relationships between employees and stakeholders in the social environment, such as customers, colleagues, and supervisors, are positive, employees engaged in higher levels of approach crafting. Moreover, leadership styles, such as transformational leadership, employee-oriented leadership, and servant leadership, were found to be positively associated with approach crafting. In contrast, the impact of the social environment on avoidance crafting is less clear in the literature, probably because most studies in this trend focused on approach crafting. Taken together, these studies show that the social environment can play an important role in stimulating job-crafting behaviors, which implies that job crafting does not take place in a vacuum.

A final trend that we identified from a social perspective on individual job crafting is that recent studies moved away from an individual perspective on job crafting to study job crafting from the perspective of others. These studies revealed that when colleagues and supervisors observed approach crafting, they evaluated and reacted to it positively, whereas the opposite was found for avoidance crafting. Interestingly, these reactions had implications for employee well-being and performance and depended on characteristics of the job crafter (e.g. political skills), and the work environment (e.g. autonomy, ambiguity, and social support). These findings highlight that in certain work contexts, job crafting may actually have an impact beyond the job crafter and instigates a social influence process to encourage or discourage its occurrence.

Suggestions for future research

Future research areas for the individual perspective on job crafting. Based on the overview of trends in current job-crafting research, several future research areas can be recommended (see [Figure 1](#) for a summary). We applaud future research that further dives into the boundary conditions and mechanisms through which job crafting is associated with its outcomes. While job-crafting outcomes (and antecedents) have often been studied ([Boehnlein and Baum, 2020](#); [Frederick and VanderWeele, 2020](#); [Lichtenthaler and Fischbach, 2019](#); [Oprea et al., 2019](#); [Rudolph et al., 2017](#)), the studied mechanisms and boundary conditions are rather limited (see [Figure 4 of Zhang and Parker, 2019](#)), though it is evident that this research is emerging at the moment. A multilevel perspective on job crafting may be helpful to examine the personal and contextual influences that co-determine job-crafting outcomes. Another interesting way forward is to clearly establish whether there is a dark side of crafting: is the general conviction that approach crafting is best used by employees justified (e.g. [Cullinane et al., 2017](#); [Lazazzara et al., 2020](#); [Plomp et al., 2019](#); [Van Wingerden et al., 2017](#)), or are there situations in which it can actually relate to negative outcomes? While the study by [Harju et al. \(2021\)](#) suggests that there are possible costs to approach crafting, the opposite may also be studied: are there benefits associated with avoidance crafting and when do these benefits emerge?

Another suggestion for future research relates to the emergence of additional job-crafting strategies within the overarching approach and avoidance-crafting dimensions as well as new and broader crafting strategies. It would be interesting to see more research that

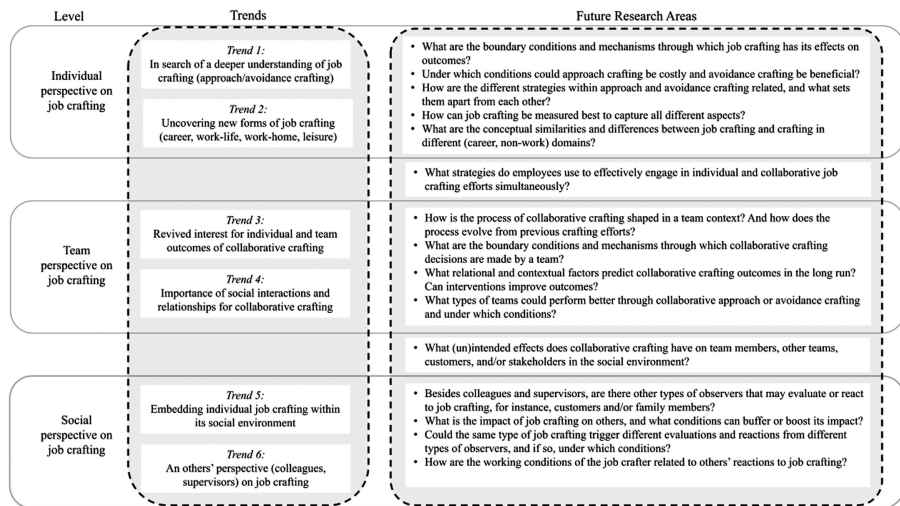


Figure 1.
Overview of the trends and future research areas for the job-crafting perspectives

examines how the different strategies within approach and avoidance crafting are related to each other and what the added value is of each of them in the prediction of job-crafting outcomes. Moreover, several existing job-crafting dimensions have received less attention, such as cognitive and relational crafting, and the dimension decreasing hindering job demands reflecting avoidance crafting. In addition, the coexistence of multiple job-crafting approaches may be confusing. Although several researchers have tried to overcome these challenges by integrating the different approaches (e.g. [Bruning and Campion, 2018](#); [Zhang and Parker, 2019](#)), the emergence of new measures and additional approaches needs to be theoretically and empirically justified, preferably in relation to existing (job) crafting measures so that incremental validity can be examined. Attention should also be paid to the conceptual similarities and differences between the different forms of crafting within the work and nonwork domains.

Future research areas for the team perspective on job crafting. It would be interesting to integrate the individual-level job-crafting studies with the team-level literature to investigate the strategies and the conditions under which employees can effectively engage in individual and collaborative crafting at the same time or when and why it would be better to use either of them. Furthermore, we suggest that team-level job-crafting research could benefit from further investigating the dynamics of engaging in collaborative crafting. While recent studies have investigated predictors and outcomes of collaborative crafting (e.g. [Hu et al., 2019](#); [Mäkikangas et al., 2016, 2017](#)), little research has explicitly explored how the crafting process evolves in a team context. Future studies could include looking into aspects such as the communication of the crafting efforts, who in the team is involved during these interactions, how the team prioritizes the crafting efforts, and how they share the responsibilities related to executing the crafting of their jobs. Also, are there, and if so what, triggers that team members use to instigate conversations to discuss the crafting collectively? For example, could conflict, nearing deadlines, or a dropout, trigger the need for collaborative crafting? Thereby, it could also be interesting to uncover whether and how team members individually and collectively reflect on the consequences of their job-crafting efforts and whether they use this to further craft their jobs or careers.

Secondly, we encourage scholars to explore a broader range of teams and contexts (see [Cheng et al., 2016](#); [Mäkikangas et al., 2017](#); [Pan et al., 2021](#)). These studies could help

understand how job crafting could benefit each team type or context most. Possible distinctions are virtual, cross-functional or action teams, or communities of practice. Also, short-term teams could be more inclined to engage in collaborative avoidance crafting and self-managing teams might rely more on the feedback from their customer instead of a supervisor when engaging in approach crafting. Lastly, building on the social perspective of individual job crafting, future research could gain a deeper insight into the relational impact of collaborative crafting, including aspects such as group norms, team familiarity, team trust, or other individual or team network characteristics. That is, integrating the social and team perspective of job crafting could be useful to study the (unintended) consequences of collaborative crafting for fellow team members, other teams, customers, or stakeholders. Alternatively, it could be interesting to see whether team members frame the collaborative crafting around prosocial motives while in actual fact using it as a strategy to decrease their own hindering job demands. Such insights could also open the doors for more collaborative-crafting intervention studies (cf. [Kooij et al., 2017a](#); [Oprea et al., 2019](#)) as they can help team members to see the importance of collectively making changes to their jobs instead of solely doing so by themselves, while also making them aware of the consequences of their actions.

Future research areas for the social perspective on job crafting. Research looking at the implications of job crafting for colleagues and supervisors, as well as their reactions to job crafting is clearly in its infancy even though it represents a promising future research area. To further develop this research trend, it could be interesting to expand the focus of who is impacted by job crafting to other stakeholders, such as customers, suppliers, or even across domains to family members. Research has shown that customer participation can increase relational crafting ([Loi et al., 2020](#)) and that customers can be the target of job crafting when employees engage in avoidance crafting to avoid helping this customer. Additionally, approach crafting has been found to increase work–family conflict ([Zito et al., 2019](#)), showing that it can indeed impact family members. However, the conditions under which this happens and how these stakeholders evaluate and react to the crafting behavior remain a black box.

Future research that examines whether the impact of job crafting on others may differ based on characteristics of these others and the job crafter is also needed. For example, when an employee crafts his/her job by taking up new responsibilities at work, this crafting behavior may be appreciated by a customer, supervisor, or colleague because this can increase the employee's contribution at work that benefits the team as well, but this may not be appreciated by his/her partner as it may require putting in more work hours. Additionally, the work context in which the job crafting takes place may help to reveal when job crafting is positively or negatively evaluated and reacted to: If the colleague knows about the high workload or demanding home situation of the job crafter, he/she may be more supportive of avoidance crafting than when the job crafter has no such extenuating circumstances. Relatedly, approach crafting may be responded to negatively because the job crafter takes away opportunities of others to develop themselves or be involved in a new project.

Finally, across the individual, team, and social perspective on job crafting, we encourage scholars to methodologically contribute to the job-crafting literature. Many of the studies we cited employed cross-sectional research designs, although there were also longitudinal and experimental studies. While acknowledging that cross-sectional studies are sometimes sufficient ([Spector, 2019](#)), we encourage more rigorous studies as they may be better in explaining inconsistent findings, clarifying causal and reciprocal relationships, and helping to establish the (incremental) predictive validity of job crafting. Therefore, across these perspectives, we suggest that the avenues for future research presented above could benefit from using longitudinal research approaches with multi-source data, which differentiate between the types of (collaborative) job crafting and crucial contextual factors.

For example, at the individual level, another way of looking at the impact of different types of job crafting is to examine patterns of co-occurrence: rather than examining job-crafting

strategies as independent factors interacting with each other, they can be examined as behavioral patterns (cf. Mäkikangas, 2018). This person-centered approach allows one to explore which combinations of job-crafting strategies individuals employ and whether and why these combinations are positively or negatively related to job-crafting outcomes. However, it should be noted that the profiles identified with a person-centered approach are highly dependent on the sample characteristics, which reduces the generalizability of the findings.

At the team-level, multiple-wave panel studies, experiments, and longitudinal (case or intervention) studies are encouraged as they could help to evolve our understanding of the dynamic relationships that shape the job-crafting process and the long-term effectiveness of individual and collaborative crafting for the individual, team, and organization in terms of well-being, career, and performance. Furthermore, from the social perspective on job crafting, adopting a longitudinal design could allow future studies to test whether job crafting and its social implications are reciprocal in nature.

Beyond the trends from the individual, team, and social perspectives, future research is also encouraged to examine the role of job crafting from an organizational level. As job-crafting research continues to grow and places the individual front and center in the process of maintaining or improving their own work design to increase optimal fit with work or between work and private life, it is important to highlight that job crafting is complementary to organizational work design practices (Tims and Bakker, 2010; Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). As such, the focus on job crafting should not divert attention away from the responsibility of organizations to create good quality jobs in the first place. Yet, since job crafting is not always considered to be beneficial for them (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001), organizations, for instance, might be hesitant to encourage job or career crafting as these initiatives might increase the external employability of their employees. Therefore, we encourage scholars to study the interplay between organizational job redesign and individual job redesign, and to examine at which point they intersect. Another question that needs to be addressed better is how organizations (e.g. directors, managers) feel about facilitating job crafting (interventions) among employees, and who they perceive benefits most from the outcomes achieved through crafting.

In line with this organizational perspective, it is interesting for scholars to study and reflect on the impact that job crafting has on Human Resource (HR) practices. On the one hand, organizations could use control HR practices, including rules and guidelines, to discourage crafting activities that could harm the organization. On the other hand, organizations could improve the well-being of their employees through applying commitment HR practices, such as work–life balance training, that stimulate them to engage in crafting the boundaries of work and nonwork related activities, or activities in the home domain. As our trends highlight, research on the impact of HR training and other HR practices should not be limited to encouraging individual job crafting, as employees working in a team context could equally benefit from engaging in collaborative crafting. Overall, we encourage future research to study what the impact of specific HR practices is on the motivation or discouragement of crafting at the individual, team, and social perspective, and especially whether this can go hand in hand.

To conclude, while our trend overview showcases how far the job-crafting literature has progressed over the last years, we are also confident that there are numerous avenues for future research to further advance this lively field in the following years.

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Further reading

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