



# Research on Reshaping Organizations from the Perspective of Employee Self-Management

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**Abstract.** As a "bottom-up" emerging management strategy, job crafting has attracted extensive attention in the field of management in recent years. This method focuses on the autonomy of employees and encourages them to adjust job requirements and resource allocation according to personal needs and abilities in order to achieve a better match with work. This study aims to deeply explore the internal mechanism of job crafting and how it promotes the improvement of organizational performance and the advancement of organizational change at the individual and team levels.

Future research can further explore how individual-organization interaction factors and organizational environmental factors affect the implementation and effectiveness of job crafting. For example, the mutual adaptation and role positioning of employees and organizations in the organizational socialization process, as well as the support and promotion effects of factors such as organizational culture and leadership style on job crafting. These studies will help to more comprehensively understand the complexity and multidimensionality of job crafting and provide more abundant and in-depth theoretical support and practical guidance for organizations.

**Keywords:** job crafting; performance improvement; organizational change; organizational culture

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background

In today's increasingly volatile social environment, enterprises need to respond quickly to external changes through innovation. Innovation has thus become a core competitive factor for enterprise development. Innovation not only depends on the institutional construction of the organization but also on the subjective initiative of employees.

In today's social and economic context, the creativity and subjective initiative of employees have become an important source of the core competitiveness of organizations. <sup>[1]</sup>

In the traditional top-down work design theory, employees have very low participation, and their subjective initiative and innovation ability are not well reflected and exerted, but rather are more manifested as a passive acceptance and obedience. [2]

Different from the traditional work design concept, this positive-value-oriented, bottom-up active work design behavior realizes the organic combination of individual development needs and work characteristics.

At the same time, with the development of the times, the internal and external environments faced by enterprise organizations are becoming increasingly complex and changeable. The traditional strict work design model can no longer ensure the efficient operation of the organization. Employees have more and more specificities, higher and higher knowledge levels, and stronger and stronger self-awareness. It is difficult for the organization to use a work plan applicable to all employees to make each employee work at the highest efficiency. The subjective initiative of employees is becoming more and more important, and enterprise organizations are also beginning to rely on employees to actively adjust their work. [3]

## **1.2 Relevant Research**

In view of the above problems, this paper aims to discuss whether and how individual-organization interaction affects job crafting and under what conditions it affects job crafting. This study selects the mediating role of individual-organization value fit and the moderating role of climate to explore its impact on job crafting.

The main contents of this study are: (1) The role of employees' self-management in job crafting, (2) The exploration of organizational team job crafting. (3) The mediating role of individual-organization value fit and the moderating role of organizational climate in job crafting.

# **2 The Impact of Employees' Self-Management on Job Crafting**

## **2.1 Self-Management**

Self-management is a unique management concept. It advocates deep empowerment at the grassroots level of the organization, aiming to stimulate the intrinsic motivation and innovation spirit of grassroots employees to change passive management into active management, and then continuously improve, innovate, and surpass oneself, promoting the continuous development and progress of the organization and realizing the common vision and goals of the organization.

### **2.1.1 The Manifestation of Self-Management in Teal Organizations.**

In Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, "self-actualization" is at the top, but he also mentioned "self-transcendence." [4] Organizational evolution will not stop there. Some studies on teal organization cases have shown that evolutionary organizations have made major breakthroughs in the following three aspects:

First, the key to the effective operation of evolutionary organizations is a peer-based system that requires neither hierarchy nor consensus, even on a large scale.

Second, compared with evolutionary organizations, other types of organizations have always encouraged people to bring only a narrow "professional self" to the workplace and leave other parts of the self outside the workplace door. In contrast, teal organizations have developed a system and practices that invite people to show their inner integrity and work with their "whole person."

Third, evolutionary organizations are regarded as having life and their own sense of direction. Organization members are invited to listen to and understand what the organization wants to be and what purpose it wants to serve, rather than attempting to predict and control the future.

### **2.1.2 How to Achieve Self-Management in a Team.**

With the disappearance of the pyramid structure, evolutionary organizations need to recreate many of the most basic organizational processes - from decision-making, investment, information transmission, to performance evaluation, compensation mechanisms, and so on. In a word, self-management requires a series of "interlocking" architectures and practices.

#### **1. Adopt a suggestion process in decision-making**

In principle, anyone in the organization can make a decision, but before making a decision, this person must seek advice from all parties who may be affected by the decision and those who are proficient in the decision matter. The suggestion process enhances the initiative and creativity of the organization.

#### **2. Handle disputes through a conflict resolution process**

In the absence of hierarchy, the conflict resolution process is the cornerstone of cooperation. The conflict resolution process can handle different opinions on technical decisions, interpersonal conflicts, values, and performance issues in specific situations.

3. evolutionary organizations focus on measuring the performance of teams or process nodes rather than individual performance

In terms of performance evaluation, evolutionary organizations will announce the performance achievements to all employees to create a competitive atmosphere, which is a healthy pressure among colleagues. In terms of performance management, the performance and results of evolutionary organizations are for the entire team.

## **2.2 Job Crafting**

### **2.2.1 The Concept of Job Crafting.**

Job crafting was first proposed by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2021). They defined it as "operational or cognitive changes made by individuals in job tasks and job relationships." [5] Based on the traditional top-down work design concept, Wrzesniewski and Dutton introduced a new model of employee-led, bottom-up work design. In this new model, employees enhance their match with the environment by adjusting their work relationships, work tasks, and self-cognition.

### **2.2.2 Antecedent Variables of Job Crafting.**

The antecedent variables of job crafting mainly include three parts: subjective employee personal factors, objective organizational and environmental factors, and subjective-objective interactive individual-environment interaction factors.

The characteristics, motives, abilities, and value orientations of employees will all affect their job crafting. First, biographical characteristics and personality traits related to employees' personal characteristics can significantly affect job crafting. Employees with a calling work value orientation are more likely to engage in job crafting behavior than employees with a livelihood value orientation. [6]

Objective job task characteristics and organizational environments will affect job crafting. Berg's (2020) research found that the challenge of job tasks can affect job crafting. He believes that the challenge of job requirements can positively stimulate proactive behaviors represented by job crafting; Leana's (2021) research found that a good social relationship atmosphere and trust relationship between organizations can well promote job crafting.

Like organizational environmental factors, the interaction between employees and the organizational environment is also an important factor affecting job crafting. [7]

Tim and Bakker (2020) once mentioned that the degree of person-job fit will affect job crafting. When there is inconsistency between an individual's abilities, needs, and value orientations and the work environment, they will tend to make changes to this mismatch and then generate job crafting.

### **2.2.3 Outcome Variables of Job Crafting.**

Job crafting is a spontaneous active adjustment behavior of employees. The direct beneficiary is the employee himself/herself, and it has a very positive impact on employees as individuals (Zhang Chunyu, 2022). First of all, job crafting has a very positive effect on the meaning of employees' work and can help employees understand and recognize the value of work. Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2021) believe that job crafting can enable employees to gain a sense of meaning in the work scenario and discover the meaning of their own work.[8] Then they will have a closer connection with work, and further, it will also affect their sense of meaning in life.

Job crafting is not only beneficial to employees but also very beneficial to organizations. High job crafting means that employees are willing to seek changes in the work scenario and also means that employees have invested more energy in work, all of which are very beneficial to the improvement of organizational performance. Secondly, employees who have engaged in job crafting have a stronger connection with the organization and often can generate higher organizational commitment.

## **2.3 The Exploration of Team Job Crafting**

Compared with the increasingly mature research on individual-level job crafting, the exploration of team job crafting is still in the development stage. Team job crafting does not mean that every team member has to reshape their work in the same aspect. On the contrary, it is an implicit process of collective collaborative efforts and jointly

decides what to reshape and how to reshape in a goal-oriented way to finally achieve team goals.

### **2.3.1 Research on the Conceptual Aspect.**

Based on the theoretical framework of job crafting role theory, Leana et al. (2021) extended job crafting to the team level for the first time and proposed collaborative job crafting, that is, employees re-organize and design work in a collaborative way to achieve team common goals.

Tims et al. (2023) emphasized that team job crafting does not mean that every team member has to reshape their work in the same aspect. On the contrary, it is an implicit process of collective collaborative efforts and jointly decides what to reshape and how to reshape in a goal-oriented way to finally achieve team goals.

### **2.3.2 Empirical Research.**

Scholars mainly discuss the impact of team job crafting on individual-level and team-level variables. Among them, in terms of the impact on individual-level variables, Uen et al. (2021) found that with team psychological capital as a mediator, team job crafting is positively correlated with individual innovative work behavior.

Alonso et al. (2019) pointed out that team job crafting is positively correlated with individual job satisfaction. Team job crafting can also promote individual work performance and organizational commitment, especially when individuals believe that they have a low level of organizational support.

Regarding the impact on the team level, McClelland et al. (2024) found that team job crafting positively improves team work engagement and in-role team performance through team control, team interdependence, and team efficacy.

In general, team job crafting plays a very important role in employee development and organizational performance. Conceptually, team job crafting is more complex than individual job crafting. In the future, a more detailed definition of the structural dimensions of team job crafting is needed. More crucially, in the selection of theoretical perspectives, future research needs to apply a theoretical framework consistent with team-level research to more accurately verify and explore its differentiated impact instead of simply copying the research logic at the individual level to the research of team job crafting.

## **3 The Match of Individual-Organization Values in Job Crafting**

### **3.1 Organizational Identification**

#### **3.1.1 The Concept of Organizational Identification.**

At present, there are mainly three types of definitions of organizational identification. [9] The more unified one is the definition from a cognitive perspective. Scholars who advocate this generally believe that organizational identification is a cognition of members' sense of belonging to the organization based on the formation of consistent

values between members and the organization. It emphasizes individuals' understanding of a certain group.

### **3.1.2 The Basis of Identity Theory.**

(1) Identity theory regards identity as a key concept for understanding social structure and individual behavior in society. The interaction between individuals and society will prompt them to find their own roles and define themselves. Then, all individual behaviors will be based on this.

(2) Different from individual introspection, the core of social identity theory is that individuals feel the social categories they belong to and tend to the concept of group self. Social identity theory believes that after social identity is established, individuals will engage in some specific behaviors to meet their own social significance. In the process of social interaction, individuals define the groups they belong to and generate identification with the groups. After group identification is generated, starting from individual needs, they will deliberately highlight some advantages of themselves or the group to make some spontaneous efforts in order to satisfy self-esteem.

(3) Common points of identity theory and social identity theory

Identity theory and social identity theory have strong similarities. First of all, both theories emphasize the role of social interaction in constructing self-cognition and both believe that the interaction between individuals and society is the key to generating self-cognition. Secondly, both theories also emphasize the important mediating role of constructing self-cognition between social interaction and individual behavior.

## **3.2 The Mediating Role of Organizational Identification**

Based on identity theory analysis, organizational socialization involves a large number of interaction processes between the organization and individual employees. In these symbolic interaction processes between individual selves and society, they will reflect on themselves and their environment, reflect themselves from social relations, and generate self-cognition in the process of communication and interaction (Cooley, 2022). This self-cognition generated from the organizational environment is organizational identification.

## **3.3 Organizational Identification Promotes Job Demand Crafting**

Organizational identification means that individuals will establish a psychological sense of belonging to the organization. [9] Individuals will obtain emotional resource support from the organization and will choose to repay the organization with higher work efficiency. Then they will adjust their work requirements and carry out job demand crafting.

Secondly, organizational identification can promote job resource crafting. Organizational identification means that individuals can find their own positions and define themselves with organizational characteristics (Ashforth, 1992). [10] After moderate

positioning and definition, individuals can combine their own and organizational characteristics to better understand the direction of job crafting. This is beneficial for individuals to reasonably seek the job resources required by their positions and then carry out job resource crafting.

This chapter first introduces the theoretical basis of this study, identity theory and proactive behavior motivation theory. Identity theory includes two branches: identity theory and social identity theory. Both theories emphasize that the interaction between individuals and society can enhance individuals' generation of self-cognition and then affect individual behavior. At the same time, they also emphasize that the behavior generated by promoting self-cognition through social interaction has the characteristics of "spontaneity" and "altruistic orientation."

## 4 Conclusion

Job crafting means that employees can actively adjust their work according to personal characteristics, job responsibilities, and external environments, which can significantly improve the work performance of individuals and organizations and enhance the organizational adaptability. Making good use of employees' spontaneous and bottom-up job crafting can make up for the deficiencies of the centralized and top-down management model and improve organizational performance.

First, make organizational change move from "high shelves" to "the masses." By focusing on discussing the bottom-up influence process of employees' job crafting, it provides a micro foundation for the realization of organizational change and points out that job crafting can provide a realization mechanism based on a bottom-up process for organizational change. Secondly, the psychological processes and behavioral results of individuals and teams dynamically coping with job crafting explored in this study help enterprises and leaders more comprehensively and accurately understand the opportunities and challenges brought about by job crafting.

The teal paradigm regards the organization as an organism with its own evolutionary purpose, and puts listening to the organization's purpose in a supremely crucial position. Therefore, compared with traditional organizations, it completely rewrites all aspects of the organization's strategy, decision-making, marketing and product development, planning, budgeting and control, change management, etc. Its strategy is no longer formulated by top leaders but emerges organically from the collective wisdom of self-managing employees; its decision-making is no longer the traditional self-protective competitive decision-making behavior but regards everyone as a sensor and uses guided visualization exercises, etc.; its competition is no longer inspired by competitors but actively embraces "competitors" and pursues a common purpose together; its marketing and product development is no longer from the outside in and uses customer research and market segmentation to determine products but from the inside out and uses the purpose to determine products; its change management is no longer using a full set of change management tools to help the organization change from point A to point B but believes that "change" is no longer an important topic because the organization will continuously adapt and change independently.

Frederic Laloux pointed out that to establish an evolutionary organization or transform a traditional organization into a new organization that conforms to teal principles, architectures, practices, and cultures, two necessary conditions must be met: the founder or top leadership of the organization must integrate their worldview and psychological development level to a degree that matches the teal development stage; the owners of the organization must understand and embrace the "evolutionary-teal" concept. Research shows that the "evolutionary-teal" principles and practices can be applied regardless of industry or organization size. The only factor that determines success or failure is the worldview of the organization's top managers and owners.

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