BURDEN OR RESOURCE?

HOW PROACTIVITY AFFECTS MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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Introduction

Proactive behaviours are self-initiated and future oriented actions that employees take to change and improve themselves or their work environment (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). Being proactive can occur in several domains: for example, by anticipating problems and implementing ideas to prevent them from occurring (Crant, 2000; Frese & Fay, 2001), or by actively seeking feedback from others about one's performance (Ashford, 1986). Recent developments in the context of work have heightened the importance of proactive behaviour (Grant, Parker, & Collins, 2009). First, the environment in which organizations operate has become increasingly complex and uncertain. Therefore, employees and managers need to use their own initiative to determine what needs to be done in a given situation (Griffin, Neal, &Parker, 2007). Second, high levels of competition require greater capacity to innovate in order to create competitive advantage (Crant, 2000). Proactivity is an important element of innovation (Unsworth & Parker, 2008). Third, career structures are becoming more unpredictable and flexible, requiring employees to be self-directed and to take charge of their careers (Parker & Collins, 2010). Proactivity is thus a driving force for individual creativity, innovation, adaptability and flexibility, and hence is crucial for organizations' success.

Because of its importance, research on proactivity at work has primarily focused on the personal and environmental factors that facilitate the onset of proactive behaviour. We will briefly review this literature in the current chapter. However, to date there has been little attention given to how engaging in proactivity affects employees' health and well-being, which is our core focus in this chapter. Specifically, we consider how proactivity affects employee well-being and mental health, as well as physical health via stress-related processes. Although proactive behaviour might also affect individuals' physical health directly via influencing occupational safety (Didla, Mearns, & Flin, 2009), our focus here is on well-being and health. For example, questions we consider include: Does being proactive help to fulfil psychological needs, eliciting feelings of competence and autonomy,

and thereby promoting well-being? Do the obstacles and resistance faced when engaging in proactivity create feelings of stress? Can proactivity be considered as a resource for employee well-being? Are there factors that mitigate the effect of proactivity on well-being and mental health? Ultimately we propose that proactivity is likely to affect mental health and well-being in multiple ways, and that moderating variables and mediating processes need to be considered.

In the first section of this chapter, we provide a brief overview of research on proactivity, with a particular emphasis on its motivational underpinnings. As we elaborate later, understanding motivation is crucial for exploring the well-being outcomes of proactive behaviour. In the second section of the chapter, we introduce our overall model of the effects that proactivity might have on mental health and well-being. In the subsequent sections, we unpack this model. Drawing upon self-determination theory, as well as the Broaden and Build theory of emotions, in the third section we describe how being proactive at work might invigorate employees' well-being and/or prevent stress in the workplace. As part of this discussion, we review previous research that has looked at the interplay between related positive work behaviours (such as contextual performance) and health and well-being (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2010). We also consider how self-directed actions in the workplace have the potential to fuel one's self-confidence at work. However, factors beyond the immediate control of the individual need to be considered when looking at the consequences of proactive behaviour.

In the fourth section we introduce the resource-depletion pathway of proactivity, and discuss when and how proactive behaviour might be detrimental to employees' mental health and well-being. In section five, we examine the key role of feedback from peers and supervisors in moderating the proactivity/well-being relationship. Specifically, we investigate how receiving negative feedback can thwart needs satisfaction, undermine self-efficacy, and generate negative emotional reactions, thereby reducing the positive consequences of proactivity for well-being and mental health. In section six we discuss how motivations under which proactivity is performed can moderate its effects of well-being.

For example, we suggest that controlled forms of proactivity will be more consuming of personal resources and hence might harm individuals' well-being.

In the final section, we suggest practical implications for managers and practitioners of this research, such as how to create a work environment that encourages proactive behaviour that is good for mental health, as well as key areas and theoretical issues that need to be addressed in future research.

Proactive behaviour: A brief review

Although the term proactivity has been applied to a multitude of organisational behaviours across different topic domains, research has identified two core aspects that define any particular behavior as proactive. First, proactive behaviour is anticipatory: it involves thinking ahead about a future situation to prevent future problems or make the most of forthcoming opportunities. The second defining element of proactivity is that it involves taking control of a situation (or an anticipated situation) by initiating change. Thus, anticipating thinking and taking control of the situation are key features of proactivity (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). Inherent in both these elements is self-initiation. That is, scholars tend to agree that proactivity is self-starting behaviour in which the individual him or herself initiates action, rather than being directed to act. For instance, following instructions to improve a work procedure does not constitute proactivity, whereas self-initiating the implementation of solutions to problems is proactive.

Proactivity has been distinguished from less future-focused and change oriented behaviours such as core job performance, also referred to as job proficiency, and even adaptivity, which is concerned with adapting to change, rather than initiating it (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007). For example, from a performance perspective, employees are considered proficient on a given task based on the extent to which they are able to meet formalized requirements, implying clear standards against which performance can be assessed. Given its self-initiated nature, proactive behaviour

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cannot be easily assessed against standards and indicators (Parker & Collins, 2010). Similarly, proactive career behavior is distinct from other forms of career behavior that are less self-initiated. For example, proactive feedback seeking is distinct from receiving feedback insofar as the former involves actively seeking out feedback rather than waiting for feedback to be given by someone else (Ashford & Cummings, 1985).

Importantly, in contrast to the idea that proactivity is a type of extra-role behaviour, the perspective we adopt here is that all kinds of work behavior (e.g., task, extra-role, citizenship, safety) can be carried out more or less proactively (Griffin et al., 2007). For example, an individual can help another individual in a way that is proactive (e.g., anticipating that an individual might need help, and offering this support to them) or that is relatively passive (e.g., an individual might help another when requested). From this perspective, proactivity is a way of behaving, rather than a particular set of behaviours. Taking this perspective further, some scholars (Bindl et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2010) have argued that proactivity is a process that includes the generation of a proactive goal (envisioning, planning) and then striving for that goal (enacting, reflection).

Distal antecedents of proactivity

Unsurprisingly, given the importance of proactive behaviour in the workplace, efforts have been made to understand what kind of environment encourages proactivity, and which people are more likely to engage in such behaviour (Parker et al., 2006). Amongst the environmental antecedents of proactivity, previous studies have reported autonomy and co-worker trust to be significantly associated with proactivity at work. According to Parker (1998), autonomy stimulates proactivity because it allows people to master new tasks and to take on board greater responsibilities, thereby enhancing employees' self-efficacy, which is an important motivational driver of proactivity (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). Job control also facilitates the development of more flexible role orientations in which individuals' define their responsibilities broadly, which is a further motivational driver of proactive behaviour (Parker, 2000; Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997). Research on leadership

as an antecedent of proactivity has to date yielded somewhat inconsistent results (Frese & Fay, 2001; Parker & Wu, 2014), suggesting this is a complex relationship. In a recent review, Parker and Wu (2014) proposed multiple pathways through which team-oriented (e.g., transformational leadership) and person-oriented leadership inputs (leader-member exchange) can foster proactivity. For instance, leaders can enhance followers' self-efficacy by supplying them with opportunities to experience feelings of mastery at work (Bandura, 1982, 1986), and leaders can shape the work climate and the work design, which in turn can affect employees' likelihood of behaving proactively (e.g., see Parker et al., 2006).

Regarding personal differences, analyses suggest that some individuals are simply predisposed to be proactive. In this regard, the term proactive personality is generally referred to as the tendency to take action in order to influence one's environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Empirical evidence reports that individuals high in proactive personality tend to perform better (Thompson, 2005), have a successful career (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998), and be more creative and innovative (Parker et al., 2006). Thus, it seems that proactive personality, via its effect on proactive behaviour, yields several individual and organizational positive outcomes (Zhang, Wang, & Shi, 2012). Other individual differences that predict proactive behaviour include learning goal orientation (Sonnentag, 2003), consideration of future consequences (Grant et al., 2009), and need for cognition (Wu, Parker, & de Jong, 2011).

Motivational underpinnings of proactive behaviour

Proactivity, with its focus on change, often involves challenging the status quo, so it can be risky to one's image. In addition, proactive behaviour can consume a great deal of time, effort and resources (Bolino, Valcea, & Harvey, 2010). Why then do employees engage in proactive behaviour? This is an important question for the current chapter because, as we elaborate shortly, understanding the motivational underpinnings of proactivity will help to unpack its impact on well-being. Parker et

al. (2010) proposed a model of proactive motivation in which three key motivational states that prompt and sustain proactivity were identified: can do, reason to, and energized to.

'Can do' motivation

A '*can do*' motivational state includes self-efficacy perceptions (e.g., can I do it?), feasibility appraisals and attributions (e.g., is it attainable?), and the perceived costs associated with the proposed action (e.g., is it risky?). The concept of self-efficacy, originally introduced by Bandura in 1977, is commonly referred to as an individual's confidence about his or her ability to engage in and successfully complete a particular task. Self-efficacy is, therefore, a self-judgement about what one can do, regardless of one's objective skills and abilities (Bandura, 1986).

Self-efficacy perceptions are especially important because proactivity often entails potential psychological risk (Parker et al., 2010) and requires high levels of persistence (Frese & Fay, 2001). Many studies support the importance of self-efficacy perceptions for enhancing proactivity (Frese & Fay, 2001; Parker, 1998; Parker et al., 2006).

'Reason to' motivation

A 'reason to' motivation recognises that people need a motive, or reason, to engage in proactive behaviour. Parker et al. (2010) underlined the importance of internalised (or autonomous) motivation as stimulating proactivity, such as feelings of positive affect or engagement, intrinsic motivation/ interest, meaningfulness, flow and identified motivation. These authors also highlighted the importance of individuals having a personal sense of responsibility. For example, a more flexible role orientation, or feeling ownership for issues and goals beyond one's prescribed tasks (Parker, 2000; Parker et al., 1997), predicts proactive work behaviour (Parker et al., 2006).

One important motive for engaging in proactivity is to experience feelings of competence, autonomy, and relatedness. This idea stems from self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to self-determination theory, there are three basic and innate psychological needs that are

the basis of intrinsically motivated behaviour (Ryan & Deci, 2000): the need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Deci and Ryan maintain that fulfillment of these needs is essential for human well-being; an assertion that is supported by many studies (2000). Fay and Sonnentag (2012) showed that these basic psychological needs might be a driving force for proactivity. They argued that "proactive behaviour is a means to positively influence one's level of experienced competence" (p.77). This hypothesis was tested in an experience-sampling study with 52 employees. An analysis of within-subject fluctuations in daily proactivity across five working days showed that low self-reports of experienced competence during core tasks predicted a subsequent increase in time spent on proactive behaviour. As a result, Fay and Sonnentag's study seems to corroborate the idea that proactive goals are often challenging, and thus serve to fulfill employees' need to experience competence at work.

'Energised to' motivation

The '*energized to*' motivation is the most affect-related motivational state of proactivity. Parker et al. (2010) proposed that activated positive affect will stimulate proactivity inasmuch as positive affect and vitality help broaden action-thought repertoires (Fredrickson, 2001) and activate approach-action tendencies (Seo, Barrett, & Bartunek, 2004). Bindl, Parker, Totterdell, and Hagger-Johnson (2012) found evidence to support this prediction that positive affect was important in predicting the 'envisioning' of proactive goals, as well as their implementation. Additionally, a diary study by Fritz and Sonnentag (2009) showed that positive energized feelings promote taking charge behaviours, and a study by Hahn, Frese, Binnewies, and Schmitt (2012) showed that vigour is an important predictor of personal initiative amongst business owners.

Related to the 'energized to' pathway is the role of engagement in stimulating proactivity. Engagement refers to "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption" (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002, p.74). Salanova and Schaufeli (2008) showed that workers provided with adequate resources (i.e., job

control, feedback and task variety) were more prone to experience engagement and involvement in their job, which in turn translated into higher levels of proactive behaviour (for a review, see Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). In a similar vein, scholars have investigated how positive well-being might promote proactivity. Sonnentag (2003) showed that day-level recovery during off-work time was associated with increased engagement and proactive behaviour in the following day. Consistent with Hockey (2000), this suggests that employees are less inclined to invest extra effort when they feel insufficiently recovered. Conversely, when feeling recovered, people are more likely to fully immerse in their job and be more engaged, which in turns increases their likelihood to be proactive at work.

Just as motivation drives proactivity, motivation is also a potential outcome of proactivity, in a dynamic and reciprocal relationship. For example, individuals engage in proactivity when they have self-efficacy, but being proactive might also build self-efficacy. Likewise, whilst the desire for flow (i.e., a mental state of full immersion, involvement and enjoyment in the activity) might prompt proactivity, being proactive might then promote flow experiences by yielding a better match between personal skills and task challenges (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). We discuss these ways in which motivation might be an outcome of proactivity in the next section.

Mental health and well-being outcomes of proactivity

Many studies have highlighted the positive consequences of proactivity. In a field study, Van Dyne and LePine (1998) reported that employees engaging in voice behaviour were rated more favourably in terms of performance by supervisors six months later. In a similar manner, Grant et al. (2009) indicated that individuals displaying high levels of proactive behaviour were given better performance ratings by their supervisors, especially when employees had a high prosocial motivation and low negative affect. Thompson (2005) conducted a study on 126 employee-supervisor dyads and suggested that the relationship between proactive personality and job performance might be mediated by proactive behaviours like personal initiative and network building. In a meta-analysis, Fuller Jr.

and Marler (2009) found positive relationships between proactive personality and supervisor-rated job performance, and added that such an effect on performance "is stronger than that reported for any of the Big Five factors or the Big Five collectively" (p. 329).

However, the benefits of proactive behaviour are not confined to superior performance alone. Greenglass and Fiksenbaum (2009) reported that individuals engaging in proactive coping were more likely to have lower absenteeism, and this relationship was mediated by greater levels of positive affect. Research also suggests that proactive individuals are more prone to feel satisfied about their jobs (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000) and have a more successful career (Blickle, Witzki, & Schneider, 2009). There is thus some evidence of personal benefits from proactivity. Nevertheless, the health and well-being consequences of proactivity need more attention.

It is possible, for example, that an individual might be promoted more rapidly because of their proactivity, but still experience higher levels of psychological strain as a result. Over the past few years different perspectives are arising as to how proactivity may impact on well-being and mental health (Bolino et al., 2010). One crucial issue is whether proactive behaviour is beneficial for health and well-being (in a win-win situation), or if its positive effects on organisational performance tend to backfire on employees' well-being. The few articles that have examined this question have held rather different (if not opposite) views on this matter.

We seek to help move this literature forward by proposing a model of the effect of proactivity on mental health and well-being (see Figure 1). First, in understanding the effect of proactivity on well-being and mental health, we suggest it is important to distinguish short-term and more momentary effects from longer-term consequences. While long-term consequences over several years might be hypothesized, our focus in this chapter is to illustrate the shorter term well-being outcomes of proactivity, such as those associated with a particular proactive episode. Second, we propose two potential pathways. The motivation pathway identifies desirable consequences of proactivity and the way in which being proactive at work can boost self-efficacy perceptions, a sense of self-

determination, and activated positive affect (e.g., vitality), which in turn can fuel further proactivity.

The resource-depletion pathway, in contrast, illustrates how proactive behaviours might in some

situations backfire on employee well-being by depleting resources, generating job strain and role

overload. We argue that whether proactivity enhances is beneficial or detrimental to well-being

depends on two key moderators: the type of feedback resulting from proactive behaviours, and one's

motivations to be proactive.

Figure 1. Hypothesised well-being outcomes of proactive work behaviour
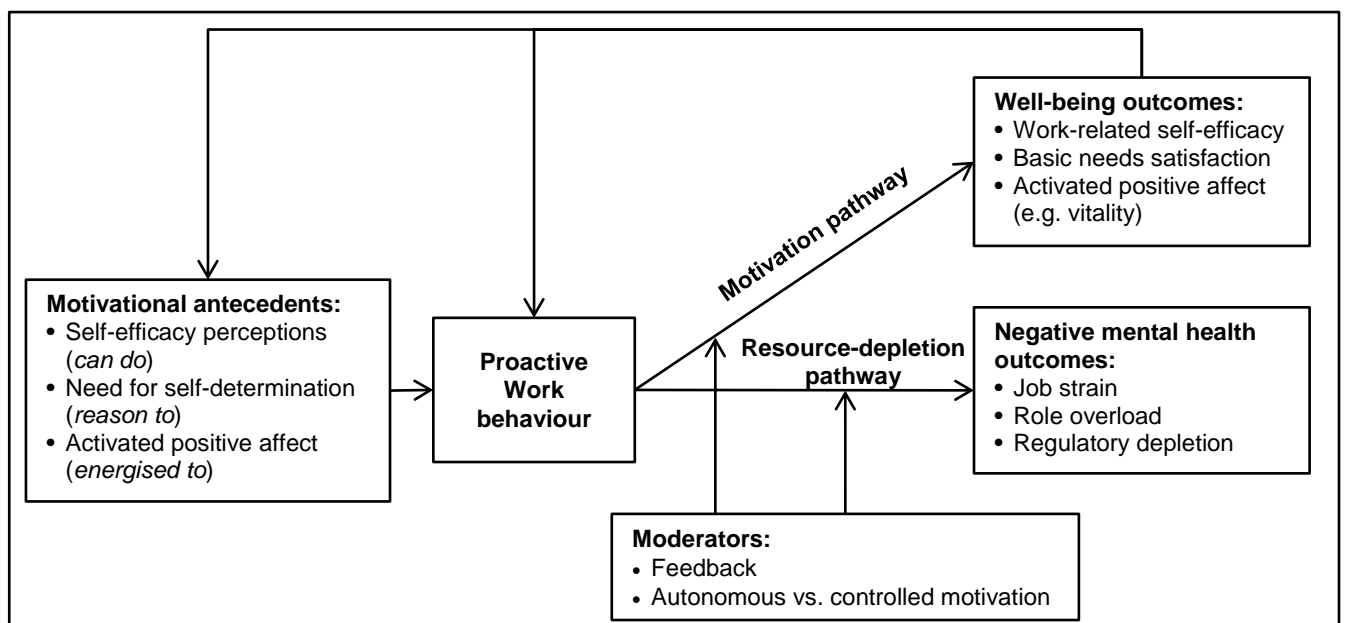
Well-being and mental health outcomes of proactive behavior: Motivation pathway

As previously discussed, activated positive affect is a powerful propellant for proactivity (Bindl et al., 2012; Hahn et al., 2012). Scholars have further suggested that such a relationship might be mutual, creating a positive spiral wherein, for example, experiencing vitality and positive affect fuels proactivity, which in turn generates more vitality (Strauss & Parker, 2014a). Successful attempts to be proactive at work are likely to fuel employees' confidence in their ability to carry out work-related tasks (self-efficacy), as well as a broader set of tasks that extends beyond their core duties (Parker, 2000). Hence, this confidence is crucial to determine whether or not an individual will behave proactively again in the near future. Additionally, proactivity can enhance feelings of competence, autonomy and relatedness, which in turn generate activated positive emotions (e.g., vitality) that facilitate the engagement in more proactivity.

A self-determination perspective: Satisfaction of basic needs as a mechanism

Drawing on self-determination theory, Strauss and Parker (2014a) argued that proactivity, as a self-initiated and discretionary behaviour, can substantially contribute to employees' well-being via the satisfaction of one's basic psychological needs. First, given its self-initiated nature, proactive behaviour is less likely to rely on effortful volition, as opposed to more monotonous activities that require self-control, such as repetitive routine tasks. This component of self-initiation has been previously associated with feelings of autonomy and self-direction (Koestner, Ryan, Bernieri, & Holt, 1984). Second, in light of its change-oriented focus, Parker et al. (2010) maintained that being proactive can increase challenging opportunities at work, thus facilitating the experience of competence and mastery (Massimini & Carli, 1988, as cited in Strauss and Parker, 2014). Finally, in spite of their self-initiated emphasis, engaging in proactive behaviour is likely to contribute to meeting the need of relatedness (Strauss & Parker, 2014a). Scholars have emphasized that proactive people are more likely to seek feedback from peers and build social networks, which in turn facilitates their career progression (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010; Morrison, 2002). In addition to

this, proactivity is potentially a way to actively shape interpersonal relationships and social interactions (Grant & Ashford, 2008), thus raising people's sense of relatedness at work.

In sum, researchers suggest that people engage in proactive behaviour motivated by the desire to provide for their basic needs (a 'reason to' pathway), and consequently, when they are proactive, individuals are likely to experience greater need fulfilment and, hence, more intrinsic motivation at work. Although a logical prediction, there are no empirical tests yet of the effect of proactivity on need satisfaction and well-being.

Self-efficacy as a consequence of proactivity: A confidence mechanism

As earlier discussed, self-efficacy perceptions are a crucial antecedent of proactive behaviours in organisational settings (Parker, 2000; Parker et al., 2010). When employees are confident in their ability to successfully complete tasks, they are more likely to engage in proactive behaviour. In this section, we propose and discuss why self-efficacy, aside from being a powerful determinant of proactivity, can also represent an important outcome of proactive efforts.

Self-efficacy is a rather malleable trait, subject to considerable intra-individual variations, depending on people's life experiences and emotions. According to Bandura (1982), there are four key experiences that contribute to the development of self-efficacy: enactive mastery (repeated performance accomplishments), modelling (vicarious experiences), verbal persuasion (convincing an individual of his or her ability to complete a task) and emotional arousal (a person's psychological state). The cognitive appraisal and integration of these four cues eventually determines one's self-efficacy. For the purpose of this chapter, we will focus on mastery, since not only it is the most important cue in determining the self-efficacy beliefs, but also the most relevant to our discussion around proactive behaviours.

Mastery is the most important cue in enhancing self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1982). As Gist (1987) states: "mastery is facilitated when gradual accomplishments build the skills, coping abilities,

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and exposure needed for task performance" (p. 473). This view of mastery as key determinant of self-efficacy is supported by a meta-analysis, in which Sitzmann and Yeo (2013) surveyed thirty-eight studies looking at the self-efficacy/performance relationship and concluded that "past performance enlightens assessments of confidence rather than confidence compelling higher performance" (p.564). Accordingly, it seems that the impact of past performance on self-efficacy is even more pronounced than vice versa.

These considerations around the experience of mastery are particularly relevant to proactive behaviour. Even in favourable circumstances, some individuals may not expose themselves to opportunities for mastery (Gist, 1987). For example, an employee with high job autonomy may perceive that they can control most aspects of their work and follow one's initiative, but may hold back from doing so because of fear or incapacity. We speculate that engaging in proactive behaviour is to a large extent about mastery, and should therefore enhance perceptions of work-related self-efficacy, above and beyond job characteristics.

Being proactive at work could be particularly beneficial for a specific subset of self-efficacy beliefs: role-breadth self-efficacy (RBSE). Parker (1998) defines RBSE as "the extent to which employees feel confident that they are able to carry out a broader and more proactive role" (p.835). Again, RBSE has been described as a situation-specific subset of self-efficacy, subject to considerable fluctuations over time (Parker, 1998). Previous research has identified RBSE as a crucial precursor for proactive behaviour (Parker, 2000; Parker et al., 2006).

Previous research has indicated that redesigning jobs can be an effective way to build employees' self-efficacy. Indeed, a relationship exists between work characteristics and self-efficacy at work. However, to date this relationship primarily appears to apply to the role of job autonomy. For example, Parker (1998) showed that work redesign practices like job enrichment (involving autonomy) are associated with RBSE, highlighting the potentially pivotal role of job redesign interventions in promoting RBSE. However, this author found that job enlargement (i.e., the breadth

of tasks and activities present in a job) was not predictive of RBSE. In a similar vein, a longitudinal study, Axtell and Parker (2003) reported a negative impact of job enlargement on RBSE, and concluded that "expanding the breadth of tasks employees carry out, without simultaneously increasing decision-making influence and involvement (…) is unlikely to enhance RBSE and, indeed, could decrease it". Both sets of authors highlighted the importance of the decision making responsibility implicit in autonomy for building mastery. Here, we suggest that being proactive is a necessary step in translating greater decisional power and job control and autonomy into heightened feelings of self-confidence. This is because engaging in self-initiated and self-directed actions can provide significant opportunities to experience mastery at work, thus building the belief in one's ability to successfully complete work-related tasks. Indeed Parker and Sprigg (1999) made a similar argument when they showed an interaction between proactive personality, job demands, and job control in predicting job strain. In line with their hypotheses, proactive personality moderated the interaction between job demands, job control and strain. That is, people need to have some degree of proactivity to make use of their job autonomy and successfully cope with demands at work.

Just as positive mastery experiences can fuel one's self-confidence, negative ones (e.g., failures) can decrease it (Gist, 1987). We discuss the potentially detrimental effect of negative feedback in the link between proactivity and mastery later in this chapter.

A broaden and build approach: Affect as a mechanism

Scholars have further argued that proactivity might have a more dynamic interaction with affect drawing on the Fredrickson's Broaden and Build theory (1998) of positive emotions (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Strauss & Parker, 2014a). This theory seeks to explain how and why positive emotions promote human flourishing. According to Fredrickson, experiencing feelings of positive affect encourages people to broaden their awareness and engage in exploratory actions. As a result, this process helps to create skills and resources, which, in turn, increase one's psychological resilience and the ability to cope with stressors. In a longitudinal study featuring 122 business

owners, Hahn et al. (2012) found that entrepreneurs' vigour was positively associated with task and relationship-oriented personal initiative. The researchers argued that business success might explain such a relationship: that is, proactive entrepreneurs are more likely to be successful, which in turn may generate greater psychological well-being (Hahn et al., 2012). Likewise, experiencing positive and activated feelings helps broaden people's thought-action repertoires, thus increasing their likelihood to take personal initiative. However, it should be mentioned that Hahn and colleagues' study is correlational in nature and, therefore, requires cautious interpretation when it comes to causal effects.

On a similar note, Fritz and Sonnentag (2009) maintain that people experiencing positive affective states are more likely to take charge and behave proactively. In turn, being proactive at work can create opportunities to satisfy basic needs and thereby increase vitality in what Strauss and Parker (2014a) call "positive upward spiral of (…) proactivity" (p.29). Along these lines, Salanova and Schaufeli (2008) have speculated that experiencing feelings of enthusiasm, inspiration and challenge at work could help broaden habitual ways of think and acting, which in turn can facilitate proactive behaviour at work.

In sum, scholars have argued that, just as positive emotions can stimulate proactive behaviour, proactivity can also result in positive affect, which then has the benefits of broadened thinking and resource building, resulting in more engagement in proactivity. Such a dynamic spiral has not yet been tested.

Empirically, there are very few articles on the potentially positive effects of proactivity on well-being (with the exception of Strauss & Parker, 2014b). However, there is some research on related constructs, such as creativity, innovation and citizenship behaviours, which we briefly consider here.

Creativity refers to the "production of novel and useful ideas in any domain" (Amabile, 1996, p.1); which has some parallels with proactivity (albeit tending to be more focused on generating, rather than implementing, new ideas). The overwhelming majority of research tends to describe workers' creativity as a win-win: not only do organisations that promote individual creativity benefit in terms of effectiveness, but also the very employees report greater job satisfaction and psychological well-being. This is because creativity creates new challenges for workers, as well as opportunities for personal and professional growth (Amabile, 1996). In addition to this, researchers have often associated creativity with the experience of positive energising emotions such as enthusiasm, optimism and happiness (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). According to Belschak and Den Hartog (2010), proactive behaviour is also to some extent related to organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB). Whilst OCB is distinct from proactivity in that it is not necessarily anticipatory or future-focused, it does share a discretionary emphasis. Meta-analyses have shown a consistent association of OCBs with reduced turnover and job satisfaction (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009).

The research on creativity, OCBs and well-being suggests largely positive well-being consequences, but there are some major limitations that should be considered. First, it should be noted that, although proactivity shares some common ground with OCBs and creativity, it is distinct. Some of the features of proactivity that make proactivity psychologically risky, and hence potentially threatening to well-being, such as the emphasis of proactivity on self-initiated change, do not apply to creativity or OCBs. Second, research looking at the well-being outcomes of creativity and OCBs is primarily correlational, thus not allowing for causal interpretations. It is quite plausible that more satisfied individuals with greater enthusiasm, for example, will be more likely to engage in these behaviours. Third, little is known about the underlying mechanisms that regulate the effects of innovation and creativity on well-being.

Negative outcomes of proactivity: A resource-depletion pathway

One criticism of the literature on proactivity concerns its overwhelming focus on its positive aspects (in terms of organisational effectiveness and career success), with insufficient attention to the potential costs associated with proactivity (Bolino et al., 2010), or the 'dark side'. In this section, we elaborate on the potentially negative consequences of proactive behaviour from a well-being perspective, and discuss the key moderating role of motivation in this process.

Drawing upon conservation of resources theory (COR theory; Hobfoll, 1989), Bolino et al. (2010) identified proactive behaviours as a potential source of employee stress. Previous research has indicated that proactive behaviour is likely to necessitate the exertion of energy and resources (Grant & Ashford, 2008). For instance, an employee trying to implement a new administrative procedure, which could result in greater organisational profits, will likely have to undertake extra work to design and test this initiative. The more proactive behaviours require resources, the more they will be stressful. Consequently, some types of voice might be less resource-demanding, and less stressful, compared to behaviours like personal initiative, idea implementation and proactive problem solving.

Empirical evidence for these speculations about the importance of resources has been provided by Parker, Johnson, Collins, and Hong (2012) in a quasi-experimental study: in line with COR theory, hospital doctors who did not experience negative affect (suggesting sufficient resources) made use of structural support to engage in greater proactive care and voice. In contrast, doctors who reported high levels of negative affect (suggesting insufficient resources) were more inclined to use the supplied support as a means to protect existing resources, thus resulting in lowered role overload. These findings imply that having a reasonable level of resources is necessary before engaging in proactivity.

Proactivity as a goal regulation process

The above considerations are consistent with the view of proactivity as a goal-regulation process requiring regulatory resources. Bindl et al. (2012) proposed a goal-regulatory model of

proactivity at work. Within this framework, the researchers recognized four different core elements of proactive behaviour: envisioning, planning, enacting and reflecting. First, people identify that something can be done to actively change the situation (envisioning); prepare a plan for action (planning); then engage in proactive behaviour (enacting); and finally reflect upon the implications of their proactive behaviour (reflecting). As a result, proactive behaviour is not just about simply acting in a proactive manner, but rather involves a goal-regulation process made of different phases, each of which is vital to yield the positive outcomes of proactive behaviour. Conceivably, some of these stages are more resource-demanding than others.

In this regard, an increasing body of research has started to look at self-regulation as a limited resource that, just like a battery, becomes depleted over use. That is, when we exert self-regulation in a task, our performance is likely to be poorer in a subsequent, unrelated task that also requires self-control. The term ego depletion is frequently used to refer to a loss of regulatory resources, which results in subsequent impaired performance in tasks that require the exertion of self-regulation. When people experience this state of depletion, they are more likely to fail to self-regulate afterwards. Accordingly, rather than being solely a matter of trait-like individual differences in personal resources, the ability to regulate one's behaviours, emotions and impulses largely depends on the regulatory capacity that we can avail of at a certain moment. For example, an experiment by Muraven, Tice, and Baumeister (1998) indicated that controlling emotions impairs subsequent self-regulation. Participants watched an emotionally distressing video clip. Participants who were asked to either show no emotion or exaggerate their emotions performed poorer on a following handgrip exercise compared to participants who spontaneously expressed their natural emotions. This approach, known as the strength model of self-control, has received a considerable amount of empirical support (Hagger, Wood, Stiff, & Chatzisarantis, 2010). Research in this field suggests that this ego depletion effect occurs across various domains; for example, controlling thoughts (Muraven, regulating emotions (Muraven et al., 1998), making decisions (Vohs et al., 2008), helping other

people (DeWall, Baumeister, Gailliot, & Maner, 2008), and resisting persuasion (Wheeler, Briñol, & Hermann, 2007). Consistent with COR theory, a considerable amount of research has linked chronic exertion of regulatory depletion (e.g., emotional labor) with outcomes detrimental for well-being and mental health such as burnout and emotional exhaustion (Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011; Schmidt, Neubach, & Heuer, 2007). In fact, burnout is a long-term outcome of stress, resulting from a constant loss of resources without the ability to replenish them successfully (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001).

One question that needs to be asked is whether proactive behaviour depletes regulatory resources and, if so, under what conditions. As a matter of fact, self-control often involves an intra-motivational conflict: we restrain our instincts and impulses in order to maximise our long-term goals. By way of illustration, a person dieting restrains his or her temporary food cravings to achieve the goal of losing weight. In terms of goal-regulation, self-control refers to the ability to guide one's own actions by setting performance standards and monitoring the progression towards these standards (Vohs & Baumeister, 2004). An implication of this is that the amount of goal regulation involved may affect the extent to which proactivity is perceived as demanding by employees. For example, voicing out a concern in a weekly meeting is conceivably a type of proactive behaviour that involves less goal regulation compared to longer-sustained activities requiring effortful daily striving, such as implementing a new work procedure. To summarise, when analyzing the potential impact of proactive behaviour on well-being, it is important to consider the amount of goal regulation involved in the proactive process.

Although to date, no empirical research has really looked at whether proactivity can deplete resources, the idea that positive organisational behaviours may backfire on employees' well-being has been already been discussed in previous research on similar constructs. For example, Bolino and Turnley (2005) have examined the costs associated with organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs), showing a positive association between ratings of citizenship behaviour at work and role

overload, job stress and work-family conflict. Additionally, individual innovation has been previously considered as an additional demand on employees: innovating may entail challenging the status quo, thus encountering resistance to change from co-workers and supervisors. Along similar lines, taking innovative initiatives has previously been found to be associated with conflict and frustration at work (Janssen, 2003). A plausible explanation of this relationship has been sought in an increased demand of resources: engaging in innovative work often requires complex problem solving, increased workload and resource investment (Janssen et al., 2004). Fairness in procedures is also a crucial aspect to consider when examining the well-being outcomes of positive organisational behaviours. In 2004, Janssen carried out a study among first-line managers from six organisations in which explored the link between innovative behaviour on stress and burnout. Consistent with Janssen's predictions, analyses showed that perceptions of distributive fairness moderate the impact of demanding innovative behaviours on stress reactions. Namely, employees perceiving their efforts and investments as 'under-appreciated' and 'under-rewarded' were more likely to experience high levels of stress, as opposed to innovators perceiving a fair balance between efforts and rewards (Janssen, 2004). Bolino and Turnley (2005) examined the costs associated with OCBs, showing a positive association between ratings of citizenship behaviour at work and role overload, job stress and work-family conflict.

Although OCBs and personal initiative are different from proactive behaviour, there is indeed some theoretical overlap. Research considering the potentially negative effects of OCBs and personal initiative is mostly correlational and does not allow drawing firm conclusions. However, previous research on the 'dark side' of positive organisational behaviours seems to give some support to our model of the effects of proactivity on well-being.

The moderating role of feedback

Feedback is considered a crucial managerial tool that not only provides employees with valuable information about their performance, but can also increase their work motivation (Earley, Northcraft, Lee, & Lituchy, 1990). Feedback is given to notify workers regarding the effectiveness and accuracy of their behaviours at work (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). In relation to motivation, Deci and Ryan (2002) argued that providing positive feedback (i.e., verbal rewards, praise) can support needs satisfaction and infuse a sense of accomplishment in employees that can increase intrinsic motivation at work. In support of these considerations, a meta-analysis of 128 experiments confirmed that whilst providing extrinsic rewards when achieving goals tends to decrease intrinsic motivation, verbal rewards and praises appear to enhance it (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999).

Previously we described how being proactive at work can fuel one's self-efficacy perceptions, increase self-determination, and generate positive activate feelings like vigour and vitality. Now, we consider the moderating role of feedback in relation to the motivation and resource-depletion pathways of proactivity. Specifically, we argue that receiving negative feedback can interfere with the development of self-efficacy (or even decrease it), disrupt the self-determination process and needs fulfilment, and potentially elicit negative emotional reactions such as anxiety and depression. Consequently we propose that feedback will moderate the effects of proactivity on self-efficacy, positive affect, need fulfilment, and hence proactivity. In addition to this, we draw upon COR theory to explain why negative feedback can render proactivity more resource-depleting.

How negative feedback can thwart needs satisfaction and undermine self-efficacy

Being proactive may expose individuals to criticism, complaints and blaming, which can surely harm the incumbents' well-being. By way of illustration, an employee may suggest a new method for carrying out work that, despite the efforts to be implemented, turns out to be under-appreciated by peers and supervisors. Ironically, even if the outcome of a proactive action was extremely positive for the organisation, the way other members or supervisors perceive this type of behaviour might be

opposite. In fact, the meaning people assign to human behaviours is, to a large extent, socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1992). As a consequence, the way others react and interpret our actions, attitudes and beliefs is determined by social interactions, and cannot rely on objective evaluations. On this note, Stobbeleir, Ashford, and Luque (2010) maintain that "proactive behaviours are particularly susceptible to social-construction processes" (p.348). This is indeed due to their discretionary and non-prescribed nature. Along these lines, Grant et al. (2009) found that supervisors' rating of proactive behaviour largely depend upon employees' values and level of positive affect.

Although the effects of positive feedback have been widely documented and explored in empirical research, less attention has been devoted to the motivational and well-being effects of negative feedback (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Across three studies, Baron (1988) explored the impact of criticism on task performance and self-efficacy. Consistent with his hypotheses, destructive criticism lowered participants' self-efficacy and hampered their subsequent task performance. From a motivational perspective, Vallerand and Reid (1984) found that providing college students with positive and negative feedback had a differential effect on their intrinsic motivation: as expected, receiving positive feedback increased intrinsic motivation, whilst negative feedback had a deleterious impact on it. These causal relationships were both mediated by students' perceived competence. Namely, when people receive negative feedback about their performance, this can impair their sense of competence, which in turn decreases intrinsic motivation.

It is important to note that the above mentioned studies on the effects of feedback were mainly focused on task-specific or job performance feedback. In our view, negative feedback is a key moderator by undermining the motivation effects of proactivity and by increasing feelings of resource depletion. We argue that the impact of feedback resulting from proactivity is likely to be more significant than feedback on job proficiency owing to the greater role played by psychological ownership in self-initiated and self-directed behaviours. Adopting self-determination theory as a theoretical framework, Shepherd and Cardon (2009) hypothesized that the intensity of negative

emotions triggered by project failure might vary as a function of the previously experienced feelings of self-determination carrying out the project. Namely, dedicating time, effort and energy in pursuit of a project that fuels feelings of autonomy, competence and relatedness may have intense negative emotional reactions on the individual in case the project failed.

One issue that emerges from this consideration is that feelings of self-determination as a result of proactive actions may actually have a double-edged sword effect on employees' emotional reactions: on one hand, successful attempts of proactive behaviour can generate a feelings of vitality; on the other hand, when proactivity results in unexpected negative feedback from peers and supervisors, it may generate intense negative emotional reactions, thwart needs satisfaction and undermine self-efficacy. On the contrary, receiving positive feedback and appreciation from others should elicit positive affect, and provide opportunities to accumulate resources (e.g., work-related self-efficacy). In fact, past research has shown that receiving positive feedback at work can indeed affect motivation and vitality (Mouratidis, Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Sideridis, 2008).

Previously we discussed how being proactive at work can fuel one's confidence at work. However, receiving unfavorable feedback from others after proactivity can interfere with this process. In two experimental studies, Baron (1988) examined how destructive criticism impacts on conflict, self-efficacy perceptions and task performance. In study 1, in line with his hypotheses, participants who received destructive criticism regarding their task performance reported negative feelings such as tension and anger. In the second experiment, subjects that received destructive criticism indicated lower self-efficacy and were more likely to set lower goals in subsequent tasks, compared to those who received constructive feedback or no feedback at all.

According to Bandura (1977) failures can have a more pronounced impact on self-efficacy beliefs when their causes are attributed to internal factors (e.g., ability), rather than situational factors. Because proactive behaviour is by nature self-initiated and self-directed, we speculate that receiving negative feedback as a result of proactive efforts may be perceived more ego threatening than

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feedback on task performance. As a consequence, an individual's self-efficacy is more likely to be decreased when negative feedback results from self-initiated actions.

Lowering employees' self-efficacy with negative feedback can also undermine future attempts to be proactive. Self-efficacy perceptions are, in fact, a key motivational antecedent of proactivity at work (can do motivation). As an example, if an employee's efforts to be proactive are reciprocated with blaming, reprimands and destructive criticism, then his or her confidence to be proactive again at a later time is likely to be undermined. Arguably, this effect might be more conspicuous for role-breadth self-efficacy, rather than work-related self-efficacy.

Feedback and Proactivity: A conservation of resources perspective

Being proactive at work often entails going beyond what is technically prescribed for employees. Proactivity, in fact, may well require careful planning, future-oriented thinking, and striving to achieve one's goals. While briefly voicing out a concern during a weekly meeting is still considered proactivity, other behaviours like creating, developing and implementing a new work procedure may indeed require considerably more time and energy. Such efforts can be an additional burden on employees on top of their core tasks. In other words, proactivity can consume resources. COR theory posits that individuals have an innate drive to create, retain, protect and foster resources personal resources (Gorgievski & Hobfoll, 2008; Hobfoll, 1989). Resources can either have an intrinsic value (e.g., support, status, self-esteem, autonomy) or an instrumental value (e.g., money, shelter). According to COR theory, stress ensues when these resources are threatened with loss, lost or when significant resource investments do not translate into resource gains.

From a conservation of resources perspective, receiving negative feedback or poor appreciation from co-workers and supervisors should trigger a protection of resources mechanism (Hobfoll, 1989). In fact, human beings have an innate desire to retain and protect resources. Within this framework, stress occurs when there is a perceived loss of resources or a lack of substantial gain after resource investments. In light of this, proactive behaviour that results in negative feedback from others might

be detrimental to their well-being. On the other hand, however, being praised with positive comments and appreciation for one's proactive actions may indeed diminish feelings of depletion and signal the individual that energy and effort have been well invested.

Another crucial aspect to consider is the outcome of proactive behaviour. Proactive efforts, in fact, do not always turn out to be successful. For instance, research on individual innovation suggests that experiencing failure may undermine employees' confidence to engage in innovative behaviour in the future (Guzzo & Shea, 1992), but also it may cause subsequent reprimands or blaming from peers and supervisors for the unfortunate endeavour. On the other hand, it should be mentioned that successful innovation provides opportunities for recognition and accomplishment at work, which were found positively associated with individual well-being (Janssen, Van de Vliert, & West, 2004). Although the research evidence is mainly correlational and necessitates cautious interpretation, it seems plausible that the outcome of one's proactive behaviour is likely to determine whether they will do so again in the future.

Autonomous vs. controlled proactivity

In the previous section we discussed the moderating role of feedback in relation to the well-being outcomes of proactive behaviour. We now turn our attention to another potentially crucial moderator: the motivations under which proactivity is performed. We suggest that the extent to which proactivity drains resources is closely related to the motivations that prompt people to engage in this type of behaviour. By definition, proactive behaviour is a self-initiated and self-directed action to cause change. Therefore, from a "reason to" perspective, proactivity should be located closer to the autonomous anchor on the autonomous-controlled motivation continuum. That is, proactive actions should be motivated by an innate interest or enjoyment in the task itself (intrinsic motivation) or because the proactivity helps to achieve goals that are extremely important to the self (identified and integrated regulation) (Parker et al., 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2008). For example, an employee constantly seeking feedback from peers and supervisors may not necessarily enjoy the feedback process itself,

but would perceive his or her proactive efforts as a means to become more competent at work. It has then been argued that such autonomously motivated proactivity should increase employees' vitality and enhance their well-being at work (Strauss & Parker, 2014a).

However, not all that glitters is gold. Scholars have recognized that organizations sometimes expect proactivity and seek to control it, suggested this behavior is not always autonomously motivated. Consequently, being consuming of physical and mental energy, proactivity could cause stress, especially when organizations expect individuals to engage in proactive behaviour (Bolino et al., 2010) thereby resulting in externally (rather than internally) regulated, or controlled, proactivity (Strauss & Parker, 2014a). For instance, a recently hired employee on probation may engage in proactive behaviour with the aim of increasing the likelihood to retain his or her new job. Under this scenario, proactivity is self-initiated, but the goal is to achieve or retain an extrinsic end, which is a more controlled form of proactivity. Such a scenario is arguably becoming increasingly common in organisations, particularly after the economic crisis in 2008 (Heyes, 2011). In a similar manner, restructuring and downsizing may also prompt people to pursue externally motivated actions (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004). Additionally, proactive behaviour may be performed as part of impression management strategies in order to gain promotions and monetary rewards.

According to self-determination theory, controlled behaviours can be extremely motivating. However, there is a differential impact of such motivation on well-being and subjective vitality: the more motivation lays at the intrinsic or autonomous end of the continuum, the greater its ability to generate energy and vitality (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2008). Consequently, to understand the impact of proactivity on well-being it is necessary to differentiate proactive behaviour into two different categories (although not mutually exclusive): controlled proactivity and autonomous proactivity. Autonomously regulated proactive behaviour is motivated by intrinsic needs and/or performed for its own sake. Conversely, controlled proactivity is self-serving behaviour performed effortfully for extrinsic reasons (e.g., impression management, social influence, job promotions). Under these

circumstances, proactivity is more likely to rely on effortful regulation and volition, thus depleting resources and reducing psychological vitality. Even in the case of integrated and identified regulation, proactive behaviour may involve self-control and willpower. As Bindl et al. (2012) suggested, some stages of proactivity (e.g., striving) are naturally more effortful and require regulatory mechanisms to achieve the proactive goal. Preliminary evidence for these considerations has been sought by Strauss and Parker (2014b), who investigated how motivation moderates the impact of proactive work behaviour on job strain. Specifically, they indicated that, when controlled motivation is high and autonomous motivation is low, proactivity tends to be associated with greater job strain, both in the short (two weeks) and long-term (eight months).

Moreover, Fay and Sonnentag (2012) showed that employees engage in proactivity as a means to address their need for competence when their experienced competence in core tasks is low. Arguably, when employees carry out repetitive, tedious and/or boring tasks, they pursue proactive goals to counteract such feelings and experience competence at work. On the other hand, when they feel competent at work, they are less likely to behave proactively. Additionally, Sonnentag (2003) found that day-level recovery was significantly associated with proactive work behaviour: rested and refreshed workers are more prone to engage in proactive behaviour.

Hence, it appears that a careful consideration of motivational underpinnings is essential to predict whether proactive behaviour is bound to have a positive vs. negative effect on an individual's well-being and subjective vitality. Namely, the motivations under which proactive behaviours are performed should moderate the impact of proactivity on well-being and mental health. This is also in line with COR theory, insofar as people perceiving a resource loss (e.g., job stress), have a tendency to preserve existing resources, rather than investing effort in discretionary behaviour (Parker et al., 2012).

Practical implications

The present chapter offers several implications to practitioners. First, our review suggests that there can be many positive effects of proactivity on well-being, and these should be harnessed for positive spirals. Being proactive at work can serve as a powerful means to build one's confidence at work and provide opportunities to feel competent, autonomous and related to others in the workplace, thus increasing intrinsic motivation. These motivational effects can be particularly important in jobs whose core tasks do not provide many chances to feel self-determined at work (Fay & Sonnentag, 2012). However, taking charge and making things happen at work is a process that requires substantial goal-regulation to be carried out. Past research has indicated that 'going the extra mile' and/or using one's personal initiative can often entail further demands on top of core duties (Bolino & Turnley, 2005; Bolino et al., 2010). To prevent role stressors from arising and causing strain, managers should provide structural and emotional support to proactive employees.

It is also essential to acknowledge the potentially pivotal role of feedback in determining the well-being outcomes of proactivity. As we discussed, feedback can interfere considerably with the positive outcomes of proactive behaviour. As discussed previously, providing negative feedback to outcomes resulting from proactive behaviours may trigger a conservation of resources mechanism, which may discourage further attempts to be proactive in the future. Feedback, therefore, should be contingent and behaviour-oriented, rather than outcome-oriented. Positive reinforcement is also crucially important: employees' proactive actions should be praised by supervisors in order to encourage more proactivity. Given its self-initiated and self-directed nature, supervisors' feedback to proactive behaviour should be focused on propelling the subordinates' need for competence, autonomy and relatedness, as these are key motivators to be proactive in the workplace (Fay & Sonnentag, 2012; Strauss & Parker, 2014a).

Given its goal-regulatory nature, controlled forms of proactive behaviour can be detrimental for employees (Strauss & Parker, 2014b). Indeed, organisations should indeed strive to create an

environment that facilitates self-directed behaviours and encourages personal initiative. However, it is important to avoid implementing reward systems using incentives that can trigger extrinsic motivations. By way of illustration, formally assessing frequency and valence of proactive behaviours in performance appraisals may give the impression that proactivity is 'expected' from employees.

Future research

The issue regarding the consequences of proactivity on well-being is an intriguing one, which could be usefully explored in future research. The model we proposed in this chapter provides an obvious starting point. From a methodological viewpoint, research looking at the outcomes of proactive behaviour from a well-being perspective is scarce and inadequate (mostly correlational). Particularly, we advocate the use of longitudinal studies to unveil the mechanisms through which proactivity may enhance or undermine employees' mental health. Intensive longitudinal methods, such as experience sampling studies (Bolger & Laurenceau, 2013; Larson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1983) are specifically useful to look closely at consequences of proactive work behaviour from an episodic type of approach. For instance, scholars should investigate whether, and under what conditions, being proactive at work can increase employees' self-efficacy.

From a theoretical perspective, future research should aim to reveal the role of feedback in relation to well-being and proactivity. As we discussed, feedback is likely to moderate the motivational and resource-depleting effects of proactivity. Understanding how feedback interacts with proactivity can offer particularly useful managerial implications. Research needs to be conducted to establish whether, and under what circumstances, proactivity can deplete regulatory resources. We recommend testing this effect using experimental procedures such as the dual-task paradigm (see Hagger et al., 2010). Although laboratory testing may sound problematic to study self-initiated and self-directed behaviour, previous research has attempted to objectively assess proactive behaviour in a controlled environment. For instance, Grant and Rothbard (2013) measured proactive

behaviour in terms of initiatives taken to correct errors in a draft glossary of business terms for high school students. While using experimental procedures may indeed cause external/ecological validity issues, it can be extremely important to investigate the regulatory nature of proactivity. Understanding when and how behaving proactively can cause resource depletion can give useful indications to practitioners as to how they should encourage proactivity at work. In future investigations, it might be also useful to look at the interplay between feedback and motivation. By way of illustration, providing positive feedback and intrinsic rewards on controlled proactivity may ultimately change motivations to be proactive, without generating resource depletion and stress.

Finally, it would be interesting to assess the effects of job insecurity on the motivations to be proactive. In an ever-increasingly globalized world, job insecurity and work intensification are on the rise (Guillén, 2001). Proactive behaviours are crucial for organisations to survive in today's dynamic work contexts. However, a lack of job security may create extrinsic incentives to be proactive at work to impress supervisors, thus increasing the likelihood to retain a job. Feeling compelled to be proactive in order to preserve one's job may well place an additional burden on employees, increasing stressors associated with their role. From a different viewpoint, taking charge and voice behaviours challenging the status quo may threaten one's job security, particularly if the wrong action is taken (Parker et al., 2010).

Conclusions

Taking charge and making things happen at work is an increasingly important behaviour for organisations willing to succeed and thrive in complex and dynamic environments. Unsurprisingly, proactivity has generated considerable interest among researchers and practitioners. Yet, over two decades of research on proactive behaviour have largely neglected to consider the outcomes of this crucially important behaviour from a well-being perspective. In this chapter, we first summarised key research findings on proactivity to identify its distal antecedents and motivational underpinnings.

Furthermore, we drew upon key well-being theories and research evidence to suggest pathways through which proactivity can enhance or undermine employees' well-being and mental health.

As we discussed, it is important to distinguish between positive and desirable consequences of proactivity (e.g., self-determination, self-efficacy, and vitality) and potentially negative outcomes (e.g., role overload). We believe it is crucial to understand the variables that determine whether proactive behaviours will energise employees or cause strain. In this chapter, we identified feedback and motivations to be proactive as key moderators in our model. We suggest practitioners to design or revise feedback systems and rewards in order to maximise the mental health benefits of proactivity whilst minimising its drawbacks. Overall, we recommend that scholars begin to consider the well-being outcomes of proactivity, and advocate the use of longitudinal studies to assess intra-individual change and development in relation to proactive behaviour and personal resources.

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