

TIP Sheet

What is Job Crafting?

Job crafting is a work redesign strategy led by the employee - from the bottom up instead of from the top down by the manager. Job crafting involves shaping the way you do your work, in a way that makes your job more engaging and meaningful.¹

It occurs when an individual alters aspects of their own tasks in order to improve the fit between their work and their individual preferences.

Job Crafting Practices

In every job there are two types of job characteristics: job demands and job resources². Job characteristics that require a large amount of effort, time or resources and are therefore associated with a cost are known as *job demands*. Conversely, job characteristics that assist employees in achieving goals, whilst also reducing associated costs are known as *job resources*.

Examples of job demands

- Time pressures
- Physical or cognitive demands
- Unclear goals

Examples of job resources:

- Training courses
- Support from colleagues & manager
- Autonomy

Job crafting practices focus on changing the job demands and resources present in a job and fall into one of four categories related to the way they increase or decrease these:

Increasing structural resources

- Relates to the content of the work, and the way that the work is done.³
- Example: Provide autonomy in the way tasks can be done

Increasing social resources

- Relates to the amount of support an employee feels they have, and the quality of feedback they receive.⁴
- Examples: Adding more meaningful social interaction or seeking additional feedback

Increasing challenging demands

- Relate to stimulating and novel tasks as well as appropriate time pressure and workload. They are classed as positive as they lead to personal growth⁵.
- Examples: Adding stimulating tasks to a job or actively seeking out training

Decreasing hindering demands

- Relate to those pressures that hinder an employee's ability to function optimally and achieve goals, thereby preventing personal growth.⁶
- Examples: Removing difficult or unenjoyable tasks or altering unrealistic time demands.

References

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TIP Sheet

Tips to craft you own job

1. Evaluate Current State

Write a list of all the major tasks you do, how important they are, how often you do them and how time consuming they are. You should also consider how much of your job is individual and how much is

collaborative. It may also be useful to analyse your own strengths and weaknesses as well as your current position within any team you are involved in at work.

2. Set Goals

This step mainly involves you determining how your job would look if it were a good fit for you. Think about what you enjoy doing, what you do not enjoy doing, what your strengths are and how your job would look if it were to fit in with your preferences. However, make sure to keep the scope of your position in mind; you will still have your current responsibilities and tasks to complete. The change will come in any extra tasks you may have, how you do your tasks and the way you interact with others around you. Once you have determined what your desired job looks like, set some concrete goals. These goals should

speak directly to specific changes in your work design that you wish to make. Try to ensure that your goals, should they be achieved, are not going to adversely affect anyone in your team. In the setting of goals, it is also important to keep in mind that one's motivation to complete that goal is determined by: the likelihood to the goal being achieved, the importance of the goal and the level of support in achieving the goal.¹ Therefore, it is important that goals are realistic, relevant to the needs of the individual and likely to be supported by colleagues.

3. Make a Plan

This stage is concerned with the development of a detailed plan to achieve the goals that have been set. Keeping this in mind, consider how you may engage in job crafting practices to achieve your goals. For example, how might you recruit more social resources or add some challenging tasks to your job in order to transform a task that you find disorganised into one that is more efficient? Again, it is important to consider how your actions may affect other people in your workplace. For example, research has demonstrated that the benefits from

engaging in job crafting to reduce hindering demands may be minimal and may actually place further pressure on team members.² Therefore, it is recommended that your plan is focussed around increasing resources and challenging job demands. This does not mean that issues you are facing at work should not be challenged. Instead, focus on increasing resources so that you can fix these issues rather than simply ignoring or passing them along

4. Engage in Job Crafting

This step involves simply enacting the plan and attempting to craft the job toward your desired state. Remember, you should execute your plan in a way that is respectful of your colleagues. For example, ensure

you ask supervisors to endorse important changes you may wish to make.

5. Evaluate New State

You should endeavour to evaluate any job crafting interventions you completed in the workplace. It is important for you to know if an intervention worked and why or if it did not work and why. Whether your intervention was successful or not also relates to how close the new state of your work is to your desired state. Therefore, it may be

useful for you to look at the ways your job and motivations have been altered. This new work state will also have implications for the next time you wish to engage in job crafting. Finally, you may want to think about you can sustain changes moving into the future, and how future job crafting attempts can be supported.

References

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