


Employability Development during Internships: A Three-Wave Study on a Sample of Psychology Graduates in Italy

Journal of Career Development
2023, Vol. 0(0) 1–17
© The Author(s) 2023
Article reuse guidelines:
sagepub.com/journals-permissions
DOI: 10.1177/08948453231161291
journals.sagepub.com/home/jcd


Alessandro Lo Presti¹ , Arianna Costantini² , Jos Akkermans³ ,
Riccardo Sartori⁴ , and Assunta De Rosa^{1,3} 

Abstract

This study adopts a resource perspective to investigate the development of graduates' resource-based employability across a 1-year internship. We examined factors referring to agency (job crafting in the form of crafting challenges and crafting resources) and context (organizational social socialization tactics) as mechanisms contributing to employability development during initial work experiences (internships). Data were collected in Italy from 316 master graduates in psychology at three time points. Longitudinal structural equation modeling results showed that baseline employability was positively associated with job crafting. However, job crafting was only significantly associated with employability at the end of the internship among those reporting high crafting resources *and* medium-to-high organizational social socialization tactics. Hence, beyond a focus on proactivity only, organizational support and opportunities to form social networks are essential to sustain interns' employability development.

Keywords

employability, job crafting, internship, school-to-work-transitions, socialization tactics

Introduction

As the school-to-work-transition (hereafter, STWT) is changing from a one-off choice of occupation toward a series of learning cycles including exploration, trial, and mastery (De Vos et al.,

¹Dipartimento di Psicologia, Università Degli Studi Della Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli", Caserta, Italy

²Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Trento, Rovereto, Italy

³Department of Management and Organization, School of Business and Economics, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

⁴Department of Human Sciences, University of Verona, Verona, Italy

Corresponding Author:

Alessandro Lo Presti, Dipartimento di Psicologia, Università degli studi della Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli," Viale Ellittico, 31, Caserta, Italy.

Email: alessandro.lopresti@unicampania.it

2019), emerging adults need to engage in continuous learning and proactive behaviors to achieve career success and make successful career transitions (Akkermans et al., 2021). Hence, the chances to acquire and maintain employment are strongly driven by individuals' taking charge behaviors, that is, agency, through which they self-direct their career and work-related choices and can improve their employability further (Lo Presti et al., 2022).

Because the STWT constitutes the first significant career transition for graduates, it is critical that they successfully navigate it, as research shows it may impact their long-term career success (Steiner et al., 2021). In this scenario, internships' popularity has increased among Higher Education Institutions (hereafter, HEI) to support a successful STWT and improve graduates' employment outcomes. Yet, though research supports the value of internships in this process (Helyer & Lee, 2014), it is still unclear *how* internships contribute to the individual's ongoing learning cycles during the STWT.

Given how dynamic STWTs have become (De Vos et al., 2019), examining possible mechanisms explaining employees' perceptions of how their employability—an individual's potential in the internal/external labor market (Forrier & Sels, 2003)—develops in relation to these transitions is critical. Such insights would also provide HEI and (future) employers with practical evidence of the value of offering internships. Moreover, there are not many studies focusing on how dynamic employability is, and research on employability development has been conceptually fragmented (Forrier et al., 2018), with employability often only used as a predictor *or* as an outcome variable. This oversight is problematic because without a clear understanding of the underlying mechanisms involved in employability development, it is hard to establish whether and how initiatives designed to support STWTs by sustaining high employability can be effective. Thus far, much research on employability has drawn upon an exclusively agentic perspective, with employability seen as a personal asset that determines one's success in the labor market (Forrier et al., 2018). However, scholars have recently called for a more nuanced understanding of employability as influenced by agentic and structural factors since the individual (i.e., agency) *and* the context (i.e., structure) matter in shaping employability perceptions (Delva et al., 2021).

Building on these considerations, this study looks at how employability develops during a time of gaining initial work experience, namely, during a 1-year internship among fresh psychology master graduates. In doing so, we investigate the role of job crafting—that is, proactive behaviors through which individuals seek to increase their perceived job resources and challenging demands (Tims & Bakker, 2010) — as an agentic mechanism, and organizational social socialization tactics—that is, initiatives through which organizational members provide support and opportunities to form social networks and develop a sense of community (Jones, 1986) — as a structural boundary condition of employability development during the STWT. In doing so, we adopt a resource-based view of employability (Lo Presti & Pluviano, 2016), which sees employability as an asset that develops and improves over time.

This study extends prior research and makes three main contributions. First, we examine the role of agency, in the form of job crafting, in the STWT, to shed light on a potential agentic mechanism for employability development. In doing so, we also contribute to job crafting research by investigating how it contributes to graduates' employability development (Akkermans & Tims, 2017). Second, we contribute to the employability literature by examining the development of employability over time, particularly during the STWT. In doing so, we highlight how employability, as a personal resource, might be malleable over one year. This approach follows recent calls for more longitudinal and transition-focused employability studies, examining the resources that may foster or hamper its development (Forrier et al., 2018). Third, following recent calls for a more context-sensitive understanding of employability (Akkermans & Kubasch, 2017), we explore the interplay between agency (i.e., job crafting) and context (i.e., organizational social socialization tactics) in employability development during STWT. This is relevant to clarify how

the co-existence of individual and contextual factors represents a resource that graduates can draw upon to enhance their employability at the beginning of their careers.

Internships as a Context

Internships can take place either before or after graduation and can take various forms (e.g., traditional vs. e-internship; graduate scheme vs. practicum). Despite these differences, they all share a common emphasis on being executed during a relatively short-term period, featuring practical work experiences that allow students to receive training and gain experience in a specific field or career area of their interest. The popularity of internships is partially due to their consideration as experiences enabling individuals to develop skills and workplace understanding before moving into the labor market (Helyer & Lee, 2014). Internships are a relevant context to study the development of employability as individuals can develop their human and social capital, define their vocational plans, improve their sense-making abilities, and learn to behave effectively in the labor market (Guile & Lahiff, 2013).

Employability Development

Employability development is particularly important during the STWT when young people need to develop and mobilize their personal resources that contribute to acquiring employment and building their careers (Akkermans et al., 2021). Although the construct of employability has been thoughtfully explored in recent years (Fugate et al., 2021), less is known about its *development* and particularly the mechanisms underlying its malleability (Forrier et al., 2018). Moreover, up to now there is not a general agreement on its definition, as several conceptualizations, sharing a common emphasis on individual perceptions, have been advanced. Scholars usually differentiated between an *output-based* perspective on employability (i.e., one's perceptions of how likely they can obtain employment, i.e., perceived employability; Vanhercke et al., 2015) and an *input-based* perspective on employability (i.e., the personal strengths that increase the individual's chance in the labor market, i.e., movement capital; Forrier et al., 2018). In recent years, scholars have begun integrating these perspectives to unify our understanding of employability development (Fugate et al., 2021). For instance, Forrier et al. (2015) conceptualized input-based (e.g., competence-based employability and movement capital) and outcome-based (e.g., perceived employability) employability. According to them, employability-related competencies and resources, like the resource-based perspective we adopt in this study, can predict perceptions of employability, and, ultimately, career transitions and outcomes.

In fact, within the input-based perspective, Lo Presti and Pluviano (2016) recently advanced a resource-based definition of employability suggesting that employability encompasses abilities, competencies, and self-perceptions as resources that contribute to one's ability to gain career success and secure employment. Hence, we adopt this definition because it emphasizes the dynamic nature of the aspects that define one's overall employability, which is relevant when zooming into employability development. In particular, resource-based employability encompasses four dimensions that contribute to an individual's potential in the labor market: (1) *Human capital and professional development* concern individuals' acquired competencies and efforts for developing new knowledge and abilities to enhance present and future career chances; (2) *Social capital and networking* refer to the whole set of attitudes and behaviors to improve one's social capital within work contexts; (3) *Career identity and self-management* refer to individuals' awareness of their professional experience and ability to make sense of it consistently with specific present and future career objectives; finally, (4) *environmental monitoring* refers to the awareness of the external context and information-seeking useful to develop a career (Lo Presti et al., 2019).

Job Crafting for Employability Development

While internships offer a chance to experience the workplace directly, research suggests that graduates need to assume a proactive role to learn and make the best out of it (Helyer & Lee, 2014). This is consistent with a general increased emphasis on workers' responsibility for securing work, which implies that proactive efforts are now key to allowing individuals to become or remain employable (Forrier et al., 2018). Indeed, considerable evidence shows that engaging in proactive work behaviors involving self-initiated, anticipatory actions, such as job crafting, is related to favorable work outcomes (Zhang & Parker, 2019). Specifically, job crafting represents a process by which people make proactive changes in their tasks or work relationships (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Individuals craft their work by proactively increasing perceived resources and seeking challenges¹ (Tims & Bakker, 2010). *Crafting resources* could take the form of increasing structural or social resources (e.g., asking for performance feedback, trying to learn new things), and deals with efforts to collect a higher amount of perceived job resources, that is, aspects that are useful to achieve goals and reduce hindering demands. Differently, *crafting challenges* consists of seeking new and challenging tasks at work (e.g., voluntarily taking on new responsibilities) and refers to behaviors aiming at pursuing challenging job demands, which require sustained physical or psychological efforts but promote mastery (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Hence, while the underlying mechanism is similar, they deal with different job characteristics — job resources versus job demands — which may be differently involved in employability development during STWT, making it worthwhile to investigate these dimensions separately.

Research on job crafting has mainly been conducted among workers and showed that job crafting leads to positive results as individuals experience higher control in their jobs and perceive higher fit and meaning in their activities (Zhang & Parker, 2019). Indeed, meta-analytic evidence shows that the job crafting behaviors considered in this study contribute to more positive work attitudes and better performance (Rudolph et al., 2017). Moreover, previous research showed that career competencies (a type of career resource somewhat similar to resource-based employability) lead to higher job crafting, which in turn fosters employability perceptions (Akkermans & Tims, 2017). This finding supports the idea that individuals with generally higher employability levels display more frequent behaviors to identify and pursue developmental opportunities, of which job crafting is an example. Moreover, it is likely that in the context of initial work experiences, job crafting may represent an essential mechanism in employability development by making the work experience more resourceful and challenging, thereby potentially enhancing employability over time because of the greater chances job crafters create for themselves to use their strengths and have access to a greater pool of resources.

Overall, evidence suggests that individuals reporting higher employability are likely to display higher proactivity during initial work experiences, as they are more active in developing their competencies and professional social networks. Accordingly, it is likely that by crafting additional perceived job resources and challenging demands, graduates will experience more opportunities for development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), resulting in enhanced employability. For example, graduates with higher employability will feel more confident in engaging in discussions with other professionals about their work and establishing new positive work relationships, eventually contributing effectively to reach work goals. These perceptions will likely drive them to ask for feedback, advice from colleagues, or more responsibilities (i.e., craft their job) more often because they possess the necessary resources. Subsequently, these proactive behaviors will contribute to their skills and ability to acquire employment, enhancing their employability further.

From a theoretical perspective, this is consistent with the Conservation of Resources theory (hereafter, COR theory; Hobfoll, 2001) which assumes that people strive to retain, protect, and build resources to cope with stress and improve their well-being, where resources are defined as

“those objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by the individual or that serve as a means for attainment of these objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies” (p.516). Based on COR theory, we argue that interns reporting higher employability will engage more frequently in job crafting as a way to attain more resources and thus further enhance their employability, consistently with the notion of *resource gain cycle* advanced by [Hobfoll \(2001\)](#). Based on this reasoning, we propose:

Hypothesis 1: *Job crafting, specifically (a) crafting resources and (b) crafting challenges behaviors, will mediate the positive relationship between employability assessed at the beginning and at the end of the internship.*

The Moderating role of Organizational Social Socialization Tactics

As argued above, we propose job crafting as an underlying mechanism of employability development during internships. However, these initial work experiences occur within firms and institutions, implying that organizational factors likely play a role in determining the development of employability ([Forrier et al., 2018](#)). In particular, organizational socialization tactics, that is, those methods and techniques organizations use to facilitate newcomer adjustment ([Jones, 1986](#)), are likely critical for graduates' employability development because they provide the knowledge and skills to make the work environment more understandable ([Kim & Moon, 2021](#)). Indeed, studies showed that graduates are generally unfamiliar with the differences between college and work, leading to job disappointment when false expectations are formed ([Tuononen et al., 2019](#)). Hence, initial work experiences such as internships may be regarded as a particular phase of a broader socialization process, during which graduates learn the basic knowledge to participate in workplace settings, which differ substantially from the structured academic environments they come from ([Lo Presti et al., 2022](#)). As such, organizational socialization tactics may strengthen the effectiveness of job crafting on employability development by providing contextual resources helpful to enhance the positive role of graduates' agency on initial employability development.

Among the different tactics that organizations can use to support newcomers' adjustment, research shows that interpersonal relationships play a critical role, including organizational learning and guiding interns' proactive efforts in seeking information ([Beenen & Pichler, 2014](#)). Specifically, organizational *social* socialization tactics refer to those initiatives allowing experienced organizational members to provide social support to newcomers while acting as role models and providing opportunities to form social networks and develop a sense of community ([Cable & Parsons, 2001](#)). In the context of initial work experiences, such as during internships, organizational social socialization tactics can expose graduates to existing organizational and professional norms and values. This experience can enrich their knowledge of field-specific do's and don'ts that determine what is acceptable and what is not in pursuit of employment opportunities ([Delva et al., 2021](#)). As such, these organizational factors likely either contribute or enhance other resources' contribution to employability development.

Integrating this reasoning with the previous hypothesis and following recent proposals on the importance of combining agency and context in understanding employability ([Forrier et al., 2018](#)), we propose that organizational social socialization tactics interact with graduates' job crafting to enhance their employability. That is, we expect that, during the internship, organizational social socialization tactics strengthen the role of proactively crafting job resources and challenges for employability development. Theoretically, this is again consistent with COR theory: the positive relationships and knowledge gained through organizational social socialization tactics will provide graduates with access to a greater pool of potential resources and challenges they can craft, thereby contributing more strongly to their employability development. In line with this

reasoning, [Cai and colleagues \(2023\)](#) also argued that organizational socialization tactics may provide access to additional resources, albeit being valuable resources themselves that could be helpful to newcomers to cope with anxiety and uncertainty during organizational entry for acquiring further resources and improve their adaptation and career development. Accordingly, we argue that interns perceiving stronger organizational socialization tactics will feel more comfortable and facilitated in crafting their job because of greater opportunities to learn about the values of their new setting, thus further increasing their employability. We propose:

Hypothesis 2: *Organizational social socialization tactics will moderate the positive effect of job crafting, specifically (a) crafting resources and (b) crafting challenges behaviors, on employability at the end of the internship, such that these will be stronger at higher values of the moderators.*

Method

Participants and Procedure

Our study focused on the internship carried out by psychology graduates to be listed in the national chartered psychologists register after passing a state exam, consistently with Italian national regulations (Law. 56/89 and DM-239/92). Specifically, in Italy, after graduating in psychology (MA level), to become a chartered psychologist, it is compulsory to attend a two-semester (i.e., one year) internship in organizations (e.g., hospitals, day-time centers, HR departments) affiliated with the university and freely chosen by the graduates, where they are supervised by chartered psychologists. After this internship, graduates have to pass a state exam and then register in the national register of psychologists. The main aim of the internship is to carry out supervised activities within a specific professional area to integrate knowledge while acquiring new skills, experiencing the future professional role, and preparing to become an autonomous practitioner. We collected data in Italy from 316 interns in Psychology (degrees: applied psychology, clinical psychology, cognitive psychology) recruited within a single university. They had just obtained a master's degree in psychology at the time of the first data collection and started their year of the internship.

Baseline data (Time 1; T1) were collected at the beginning of the internship (initial $N = 710$). Data at Time 2 (T2) were collected at the end of the first semester (i.e., after six months from baseline data), while data at Time 3 (T3) were collected at the end of the second and final semester (i.e., after twelve months from the baseline data). The questionnaires were presented along with the documentation needed from the university to manage the internship. Participation was voluntary and aimed at evaluating the interns' internship experience and providing the university with data useful for tailoring curricula and student services. In sum, 272 (86.1%) women and 44 (13.9%) men completed all three questionnaires (response rate = 44.51%). No significant differences emerged between those who completed all three waves and those who did not in terms of demographic information and variables' mean values at T1. The mean age was 28.43 years ($SD = 5.56$; one missing value). Gender distribution was consistent with the Italian national distribution of psychology students (women = 83.2%, men = 16.8%; [Almalaurea, 2021](#)), while age was significantly ($t = 6.60, p < .001$) higher than the Italian national one for graduates' profiles ($M = 26.3$ years).

Measures

Employability was measured at T1 and T3. We used the scale by Lo Presti et al. (2019) to measure resource-based employability. The scale consists of 28 items (e.g., “*Developing new competencies about my occupation is easy to me*,” “*I think I have a clear plan for my career*”). Cronbach’s alphas were .94 at T1 and .95 at T3. Responses were collected through a 5-point scale (0 = “not at all,” 4 = “completely”). Previous studies using this scale have showed support for its reliability and validity (Lo Presti et al., 2020).

Job crafting was assessed at T2. We used eight items from the Italian translation (Costantini et al., 2021) of the job crafting scale developed by Petrou et al. (2012) to measure the dimensions of crafting resources (five items², e.g., “I contacted other people from work to get the necessary information for completing my tasks”) and crafting challenges (three items, e.g., “I ask for more tasks if I finish my work”). Cronbach’s alphas were .76 and .84, respectively. All items were rated on a 5-point frequency scale (0 = “never” to 4 = “very often”). Previous studies using this scale have showed support for its reliability and validity (Cheng et al., 2022).

Organizational social socialization tactics were measured at T2. We used the scale by Cable and Pearson (2001), adapted for interns (replacing “job” with “internship” in the items) to assess social socialization tactics. A sample item is “*Almost all of my colleagues have been supportive of me personally*.” Cronbach’s alpha was .67. All items were rated on a 5-point frequency scale (0 = “completely false” to 4 = “completely true”). Previous studies using this scale have showed support for its reliability and validity (Song et al., 2015).

Statistical Approach

Since our model includes latent variable interactions, traditional model fit indices used in structural equation modeling are unavailable (Maslowsky et al., 2015). Accordingly, we used a two-step estimation procedure for estimating our latent moderated structural model (Klein & Moosbrugger, 2000) using the XWITH command in Mplus software (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2019). Specifically, after ensuring the fit of the measurement model (see preliminary analyses), we estimated the structural model without the latent interaction terms. Then, we estimated the structural model with the latent interactions (cf. Muthén, 2012).

Employability was modeled as a second-order factor reflected by its four dimensions because our sample size did not comply with the rule of thumb of at least 10 cases for each parameter to be estimated (Kline, 2015). The two job crafting dimensions, that is, crafting resources and crafting challenges, were modeled as two latent factors reflected by their respective items, just like social socialization tactics. Auto-regression relationships were included to control for T1 levels of employability on employability at T3. Mplus version 8.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2019) was used for all analyses.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Measurement Models and Invariance of Employability. Before testing our model, we examined the measurement model for employability at T1 and T3. Based on modification indices, covariances were estimated between some items within the same factors. Results from CFA indicated that the models at two different time points fit the data well: at T1, $\chi^2_{(331)} = 571.60$, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .05; standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) = .05; at T3: $\chi^2_{(331)} = 662.34$, RMSEA = .06; SRMR = .06. We then tested configural and metric invariance to

investigate whether employability was measured consistently across the two time points (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010). We compared a freely estimated—unconstrained—model ($\chi^2_{(1475)} = 3132.55$, RMSEA = .06; SRMR = .07) with a restricted model in which corresponding latent factor loadings were set to be equal ($\chi^2_{(1502)} = 3167.09$, RMSEA = .06; SRMR = .08). Results showed a nonsignificant Satorra–Bentler scaled chi-square difference (Satorra & Bentler, 2001; $SBS-\Delta\chi^2 = 11.20$; $\Delta df = 27$; $p = 1.00$), suggesting that the factor structure of employability at both time points is the same and that its measures are similar over time.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses. We further tested the factorial structure of our study variables by comparing a hypothesized five-factor model where each latent construct (i.e., crafting resources, crafting challenges, and organizational social socialization tactics) was indicated by its items, except for employability at T1 and at T3 that was reflected by respective first-order indicators and relative items, with three alternative models. Results are displayed in Table 1 and show that our proposed five-factor model fits the data better than the alternative ones.

Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables are reported in Table 2. As can be seen, crafting resources was significantly positively related to employability at T1 and T3. Similarly, crafting challenges was significantly positively associated with employability dimensions at T1 and T3. Organizational social socialization tactics were significantly positively related to employability at T1 and T3.

Results from a paired samples *t*-test showed that employability scores were significantly higher after ($M = 2.89$, $SD = .52$) than before the internship ($M = 2.66$, $SD = .51$), $t(315) = -9.54$, $p < .001$. Specifically, there was a significant increase in all the dimensions of employability after the internship, with the largest effect size observed in the dimension of human capital and professional development, Cohen's $d = 0.52$.

Hypotheses Testing

The structural model without the latent interaction terms displayed acceptable fit indices: $\chi^2_{(2174)} = 3644.33$, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .06. In estimating this model, items from the same variables were allowed to covary, as well as the two approach crafting dimensions. Based on acceptable

Table 1. Results of Confirmatory Factor Analyses ($N = 316$).

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Measurement models							
5-Factor model: EMP T1, CR, CC, OSST, EMP T3	3345.93	2142	1.56	.90	.90	.04	.06
4-Factor model: (Combined: CR/CC), EMP T1, OSST, EMP T3	3393.52	2146	1.58	.90	.89	.04	.06
3-Factor model: (Combined: CR/CC/OSST), EMP T1, EMP T3	3450.93	2149	1.61	.90	.89	.04	.06
1-Factor model	6054.16	2164	2.80	.69	.67	.08	.09

Notes. χ^2 = chi-squared; df = degrees of freedom; χ^2/df = normed chi-squared; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residuals. EMP T1 = Employability Time 1; CR = Crafting Resources; CC = Crafting Challenges; OSST = Organizational Social Socialization Tactics; EMP T3 = Employability Time 3.

model fit, we then proceeded to test the hypothesized interaction effects between job crafting and organizational social socialization tactics. Results are presented in Figure 1.

Employability at T1 was positively related to crafting resources ($B = .61, p < .001$; 95%CI = [.33, .89]), and crafting challenges at T2 ($B = .50, p < .001$; 95%CI = [.24, .75]). Controlling for employability at T1, neither crafting resources ($B = .02, p = .63$; 95%CI = [−.06, .10]) nor crafting challenges ($B = .03, p = .48$; 95%CI = [−.05, .10]) at T2 were significantly related to employability at T3, providing no support for Hypothesis 1.³

Regarding the moderating role of organizational social socialization tactics measured at T2, results showed that they were significantly positively related to employability at T3 ($B = .15$,

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among the Study Variables.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Gender	.86	.35	—					
2. Age	28.43	5.56	−.02	—				
3. Employability T1	2.66	.51	.02	.22***	—			
4. Crafting resources T2	2.68	.68	−.11*	−.11	.22***	—		
5. Crafting challenges T2	2.15	1.01	−.08	−.06	.22***	.51***	—	
6. Organizational social socialization tactics T2	3.16	.65	−.02	.05	.12*	.22***	.10	—
7. Employability T3	2.89	.52	−.03	.15**	.66***	.28***	.27**	.18**

Notes. $N = 316$.

M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation. Gender 0 = Female; 1 = Male; T1 = Time 1; T2 = Time 2; T3 = Time 3.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

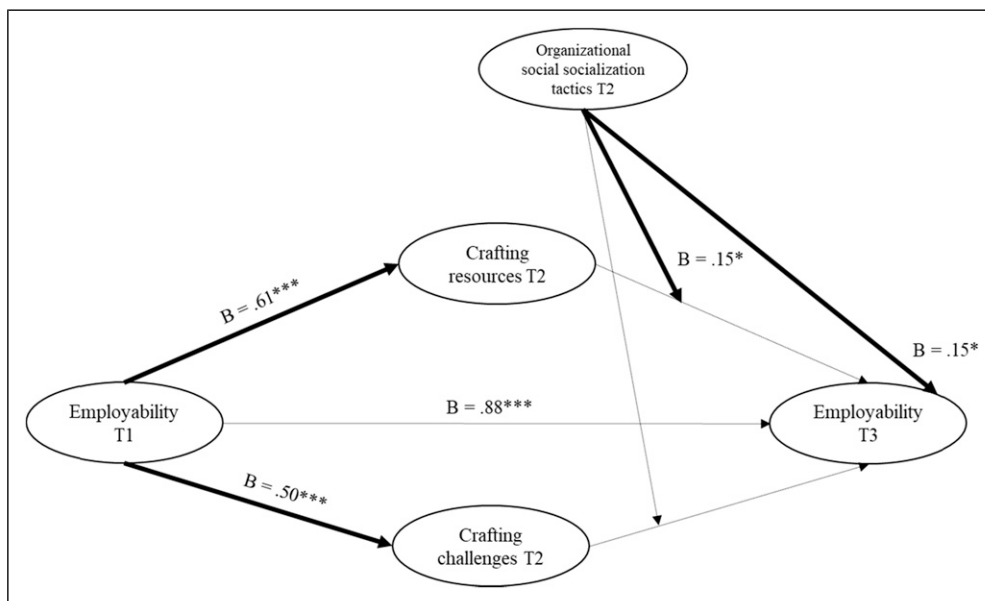


Figure 1. Results from the Final Model ($N = 316$).

Notes. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. T1 = Time 1; T2 = Time 2; T3 = Time 3. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

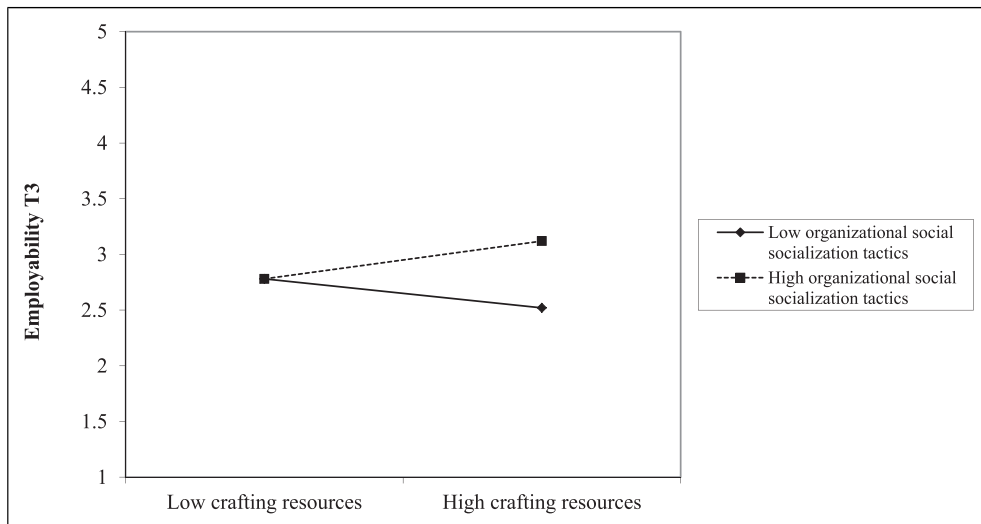


Figure 2. The interaction between crafting resources and organizational social socialization tactics for employability at Time 3.

$p = .03$; 95%CI = [.01, .28]), and that they moderated the relationship between crafting resources and employability at T3 ($B = .15$, $p = .03$; 95%CI = [.02, .28]), but not between crafting challenges and employability at T3 ($B = -.06$, $p = .31$; 95%CI = [-.18, .06]), hence providing support for Hypothesis 2a but not 2b. A simple slope analysis revealed that the relation was not significant for low (mean-1SD; $B = .08$, $p = .25$; 95%CI = [-.06, .22]), while it was significant for medium ($B = .14$, $p < .001$; 95%CI = [.07, .22]) and high levels (mean + 1SD; $B = .20$, $p < .001$; 95%CI = [.09, .32]) of organizational social socialization tactics. The interaction was plotted and is displayed in Figure 2. The figure shows that medium and high organizational social socialization tactics, together with high crafting resources behaviors, resulted in higher employability at the end of the internship. Hence, proactively seeking more resources had a role in improving employability when interns could benefit from organizational initiatives that provided them with social support, and opportunities to form social networks and develop a sense of community.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this study, we examined whether resource and challenge job crafting behaviors might be a mechanism contributing to employability development during initial work experiences. Moreover, we looked at the possible moderating role of organizational social socialization tactics. Adopting a resource-based perspective on employability (Lo Presti et al., 2019), we first proposed that graduates reporting higher employability at the beginning of their 1-year internship would be better equipped to improve their work characteristics through job crafting, resulting in higher employability at the end of the internship. Moreover, we hypothesized that organizational social socialization tactics might amplify the positive role of job crafting on graduates' employability by providing access to more resources that are useful to channel proactive efforts in ways that fit with context-specific rules (Delva et al., 2021). Our findings partially supported our hypotheses. Although more employable graduates reported engaging in more frequent job crafting to seek additional resources and challenges in their internship, these proactive behaviors alone did not

make them more employable at the end of the internship. However, organizational social socialization tactics played a key role here. Specifically, we found that job crafting in the form of crafting resources related to higher employability at the end of the internship only if graduates experienced at least medium or high levels of organizational social socialization tactics.

Theoretical Implications

Our study contributes to three main streams of research: 1) agency in the STWT, 2) employability, and 3) the role of context for employability development.

Agency in the STWT. Based on previous research on the key role of proactive behaviors to cope with labor market turbulence and successfully navigate the STWT (Akkermans et al., 2021), we hypothesized job crafting as a potential mechanism underlying graduates' employability development during initial work experiences. Consistent with the available evidence (Akkermans & Tims, 2017), we found that higher employability at graduation was related to more frequent job crafting (i.e., crafting resources and challenges) during the internship. However, surprisingly, job crafting was not associated with higher employability at the end of the internship after controlling for baseline employability. A possible explanation for this unexpected finding is that job crafting represents a short-term adjustment, making it primarily an effective strategy to achieve *immediate* adaptation and functioning, but is unrelated to longer-term employability development, at least unless contextual factors (see our discussion section on "The role of context for employability development") are taken into account. Hence, it seems that job crafting is effective to promote person-job fit (Tims et al., 2021), but perhaps not person-career fit (De Vos et al., 2019). Related to this, in this study, our focus was on understanding if and how proactive behaviors to make the work environment a better fit for oneself could result in higher employability, a personal asset that is unbound to a specific work context. With this in mind, our findings suggest that job crafting alone is not sufficient to promote employability development, for which proactive strategies that focus on one's career (e.g., career self-management or career crafting; Tims & Akkermans, 2020) may be better suited.

Employability. Graduate employability has, thus far, been mainly examined through a higher education lens (Tuononen et al., 2019), focusing on conceptualizations that hardly converge with career studies (Akkermans & Kubasch, 2017). This study adopted a resource perspective on employability (Lo Presti & Pluviano, 2016) to examine graduates' initial employability development. In doing so, we synthesize research from the graduate employability literature and the STWT (cf. Akkermans et al., 2021). We found that all four employability dimensions considered in this study (i.e., human capital and professional development, social capital and networking, career identity and self-management, and environmental monitoring) increased during the internship. This evidence is significant in light of recent research questioning how malleable employability is (Forrier et al., 2018), particularly during the STWT, and previous research reporting that perceived employability tends to be relatively stable over one year, probably because employability self-perceptions are relatively resistant to change (Mäkikangas et al., 2013). Enriching this literature, our findings offer empirical support that employability can change over time and, specifically, it can *increase* during a 1-year internship after graduation. Hence, these findings support the idea that internships may represent a valuable context for initial employability development, probably because of the several real-work experiences that help foster employability competencies (e.g., networking, professional development, labor market awareness).

The role of context for employability development. Although employability's importance in career studies is increasing (Akkermans & Kubasch, 2017), some scholars have argued that most of the available evidence is built upon an agentic lens, seeing employability as solely depending on the individual (Forrier et al., 2018). Conversely, Delva et al. (2021) called for a more nuanced

understanding of employability by integrating contextual factors that may shape it. Responding to this call, we focused on organizational social socialization tactics as a moderator of the associations between job crafting and employability during an internship. We hypothesized that providing graduates with social support, mentors, and networks would help them craft their internship activities more effectively. We found support for our hypothesis regarding crafting resources behaviors. Specifically, we detected a conditional effect where crafting resources was significantly related to higher employability at the end of the internship *only* when organizational social socialization tactics were medium or high, while this effect was *null* at lower levels of these socialization tactics. This confirms that agency alone (i.e., job crafting) is not sufficient to develop employability, highlighting the importance of contextual factors (i.e., in our study, organizational social socialization tactics) in making agency work when it comes to employability development. Our results show that graduates need to obtain additional resources from their internship provider to effectively craft their work environment in a way that ultimately benefits their employability development. When organizational contexts lack this type of support, interns' proactivity to increase resources risks being ineffective for their employability development.

However, against our expectations, organizational social socialization tactics did not moderate the link between crafting challenges and employability. Stated differently, graduates' crafting challenges behaviors did not enhance their employability regardless of the level of socialization tactics they received during their internship. This result may imply that graduates, who experience their first work experience, already have enough new challenges to focus on (e.g., getting used to their first job, forming their vocational identity; cf. [Akkermans et al., 2021](#)). Therefore, taking on even more challenges does not positively impact their employability, even if combined with structural organizational support. Overall, our findings on the role of socialization tactics show that providing (social) resources to graduates likely helps them craft additional resources (i.e., a resource gain cycle; cf. [Hobfoll et al., 2001](#)). This interplay of receiving and creating resources seems a fruitful approach to becoming more employable during initial work experiences.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study is not without limitations. First, our sample included only psychology graduates in Italy, which may limit the generalization of our findings to other cultural contexts and degrees, as psychology students in Italy are mainly women ([Almalaurea, 2021](#)) and may be familiar with the concepts of employability and organizational behavior. Furthermore, our participants were not involved in pre-graduation work experiences (i.e., practicum) as a part of their educational curricula, as happens in other countries (e.g., the US). Based on this, future studies may involve more heterogeneous samples, including different academic majors, intra-curricular practice-oriented initiatives, and other types of university degrees. Our sample age was slightly, yet significantly higher than the nationally representative sample, which may be related to prior and ongoing work experiences that may have delayed the degree completion. Accordingly, data on prior and ongoing work experiences may be collected and controlled for in future studies. Second, the attrition rate was about 55%, which is acceptable considering that participation in the study was not compulsory. However, it is possible that those who completed all the questionnaires were more motivated, and maybe more proactive than the dropout sample, thus having an impact on our results in terms of higher statistical significance given the nature of the examined phenomena. Third, while we assessed employability at multiple time points, we assessed job crafting only once (also because at T1 graduates were not actually involved in any internship and hence could not enact any crafting behavior) as we hypothesized it as a mediating mechanism. However, as employability and job crafting are both dynamic constructs, future studies should include a full longitudinal assessment of our variables to control for autoregressive paths and disentangle

different effects. Moreover, the organizational social socialization tactics scale showed a reliability coefficient slightly lower than the traditional .70 cut-off, hence its results should be interpreted cautiously. Fourth, all our study variables were assessed with self-report measures. Future studies could try to replicate our findings also using third-party evaluations (e.g., from supervisors) or objective measures (e.g., actual implemented socialization practices), to further advance our understanding of the mechanisms underlying employability development during internships. Fifth, we assessed only organizational social socialization tactics, while future studies could also include other tactics (e.g., organizational content socialization tactics) that may provide further insights and practical implications. For example, perhaps organizational social socialization tactics may primarily tap into crafting social resources, whereas organizational content socialization tactics may enable young adults to craft their structural resources and challenges. This also connects to the role of other structural and contextual factors that have proven to be impactful during the STWT, like racial/ethnic background and socio-economic status (Novakovic & Fouad, 2013) and that should be included in future studies to provide a more integrated depiction of structure factors into play (Deprez et al., 2021).

Practical Implications

We can draw three main practical implications from this study. First, our findings confirm the value for HEI of including internships within or at the end of their academic curricula (Helyer & Lee, 2014) as they may be a powerful tool to enhance graduates' employability. Although in this case, the internship was compulsory for practicing as a psychologist, HEI should invest in promoting internship opportunities for their students and graduates, monitor the quality of these internships, and adequately engage their stakeholders to increase the range of internship opportunities (Chillas et al., 2015). Moreover, HEI could invest in promoting their students' employability through, for instance, more innovative curricula (i.e., human capital and professional development), organizing events with potential prospective employers (i.e., social capital and networking), as well as providing tailored career and placement services (i.e., career identity and self-management). Second, graduates and their HEI need to consider the positive role of job crafting in the form of crafting resources as it may foster their employability, yet only when graduates receive adequate social support (see below). In particular, HEI could promote a more positive attitude and propensity towards job crafting among students and graduates through job crafting interventions (Costantini et al., 2020). Third, organizations and institutions offering internships should be aware of the benefits of providing formalized socialization tactics, especially those targeting social aspects (Guile & Lahiff, 2013), to foster interns' employability. In fact, although employability is an individual resource, our findings show that organizational social socialization tactics are essential to provide graduates the resources they need to channel their proactive efforts effectively and hence increase their employability.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

ORCID iDs

Alessandro Lo Presti  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0138-462X>

Arianna Costantini  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9061-1547>

Jos Akkermans  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2870-6921>

Riccardo Sartori  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4212-9844>

AssuntaDe Rosa  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4432-1741>

Notes

1. While initial conceptualizations of job crafting also encompassed the dimension of “reducing demands,” accumulating evidence shows that this substantially differs from other approach-oriented behaviors that define job crafting (e.g., Costantini et al., 2021; Zhang & Parker, 2019). Accordingly, reducing demands is not considered in this study.
2. The original subscale includes six items. In our study, the item “I try to learn new things at work” was dropped because it showed a low factor loading.
3. To understand better this finding, we run an analysis considering the dimensions of employability separately. We modeled autoregressive paths to control for each respective construct at T1. Results showed that social capital and networking at T1 significantly predicted crafting resources ($B = .69, p = .03$) and crafting challenges at T2 ($B = .89, p < .001$), and crafting challenges at T2 significantly predicted environmental monitoring at T3 ($B = .12, p = .04$). However, the indirect effect of social capital and networking on environmental monitoring via crafting challenges was not significant ($B = .08, p = .13$).

References

- Akkermans, J., Blokker, R., Buers, C., Van Der Heijden, B., & De Vos, A. (2021). Ready, set, go! School-to-work transition in the new career. In A. Marshall & J. Symonds (Eds.), *Young adult development at the school-to-work transition: International pathways and processes* (pp. 77–106). Oxford University Press.
- Akkermans, J., & Kubasch, S. (2017). # trending topics in careers: A review and future research agenda. *Career Development International*, 22(6), 586–627. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-08-2017-0143>
- Akkermans, J., & Tims, M. (2017). Crafting your career: How career competencies relate to career success via job crafting. *Applied Psychology*, 66(1), 168–195. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12082>
- Almalaurea (2021). Profilo dei laureati [graduates' profile]. Almalaurea. Available at <https://www2.almalaurea.it/cgi-php/universita/statistiche/tendine.php?config=profilo>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands–resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 22(3), 273–285. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000056>
- Beenen, G., & Pichler, S. (2014). Do I really want to work here? Testing a model of job pursuit for MBA interns. *Human Resource Management*, 53(5), 661–682. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21584>
- Cable, D. M., & Parsons, C. K. (2001). Socialization tactics and person-organization fit. *Personnel Psychology*, 54(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2001.tb00083.x>
- Cai, D., Li, Z., Xu, L., Fan, L., Wen, S., Li, F., & Guan, Y. (2023). Sustaining newcomers' career adaptability: The roles of socialization tactics, job embeddedness and career variety. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, (00). <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12423>
- Cheng, S. Q., Costantini, A., Zhou, H., & Wang, H. J. (2022). A self-enhancement perspective on organizational socialization: Newcomer core self-evaluations, job crafting, and the role of leaders' developmental coaching. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 31(6), 908–921. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2022.2077724>
- Chillas, S., Marks, A., & Galloway, L. (2015). Learning to labour: An evaluation of internships and employability in the ICT sector. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 30(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12041>

- Costantini, A., Demerouti, E., Ceschi, A., & Sartori, R. (2020). Implementing job crafting behaviors: Exploring the effects of a job crafting intervention based on the theory of planned behavior. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 58(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886320975913>
- Costantini, A., Demerouti, E., Ceschi, A., & Sartori, R. (2021). Evidence on the hierarchical, multidimensional nature of behavioural job crafting. *Applied Psychology*, 70(1), 311–341. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12232>
- Delva, J., Forrier, A., & De Cuyper, N. (2021). Integrating agency and structure in employability: Bourdieu's theory of practice. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 127(June 2021), 103579. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2021.103579>
- Deprez, J., Peeters, E. R., & Gorgievski, M. J. (2021). Developing intrapreneurial self-efficacy through internships? Investigating agency and structure factors. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, 27(5), 1166–1188. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-09-2020-064>
- De Vos, A., Akkermans, J., & Van der Heijden, B. (2019). From occupational choice to career crafting. In H. Gunz, M. Lazarova, & W. Mayrhofer (Eds), *The routledge companion to career studies* (pp. 128–142). Routledge.
- Forrier, A., De Cuyper, N., & Akkermans, J. (2018). The winner takes it all, the loser has to fall: Provoking the agency perspective in employability research. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 28(4), 511–523. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12206>
- Forrier, A., & Sels, L. (2003). The concept employability: A complex mosaic. *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 3(3), 102–124. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJHRDM.2003.002414>
- Forrier, A., Verbruggen, M., & De Cuyper, N. (2015). Integrating different notions of employability in a dynamic chain: The relationship between job transitions, movement capital and perceived employability. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 89(August 2015), 56–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2015.04.007>
- Fugate, M., Van der Heijden, B., De Vos, A., Forrier, A., & De Cuyper, N. (2021). Is what's past prologue? A review and agenda for contemporary employability research. *Academy of Management Annals*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2018.0171>
- Guile, D., & Lahiff, A. (2013). *Internship: Conventional wisdom, models and recommendations*. Institute of education, University of London.
- Helyer, R., & Lee, D. (2014). The role of work experience in the future employability of higher education graduates. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 68(3), 348–372. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12055>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (2001). The influence of culture, community, and the nested-self in the stress process: Advancing conservation of resources theory. *Applied Psychology*, 50(3), 337–421. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1464-0597.00062>
- Jones, G. R. (1986). Socialization tactics, self efficacy and newcomers adjustment to organizations. *Academy of Management Journal*, 29(2), 262–279. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/256188>
- Kim, K., & Moon, H. K. (2021). How do socialization tactics and supervisor behaviors influence newcomers' psychological contract formation? The mediating role of information acquisition. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 32(6), 1312–1338. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2018.1521460>
- Klein, A., & Moosbrugger, H. (2000). Maximum likelihood estimation of latent interaction effects with the LMS method. *Psychometrika*, 65(4), 457–474. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02296338>
- Kline, R. B. (2015). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling*. 4th. Guilford publications.
- Lo Presti, A., Capone, V., Aversano, A., & Akkermans, J. (2022). Career competencies and career success: On the roles of employability activities and academic satisfaction during the school-to-work transition. *Journal of Career Development*, 49(1), 107–125. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0894845321992536>
- Lo Presti, A., Ingusci, E., Magrin, M. E., Manuti, A., & Scrima, F. (2019). Employability as a compass for career success: Development and initial validation of a new multidimensional measure. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 23(4), 253–275. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijtd.12161>

- Lo Presti, A., Magrin, M. E., & Ingusci, E. (2020). Employability as a compass for career success: A time-lagged test of a causal model. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 24(4), 301–320. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijtd.12198>
- Lo Presti, A., & Pluviano, S. (2016). Looking for a route in turbulent waters: Employability as compass for career success. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 6(2), 192–211. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386615589398>
- Mäkikangas, A., De Cuyper, N., Mauno, S., & Kinnunen, U. (2013). A longitudinal person-centred view on perceived employability: The role of job insecurity. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 22(4), 490–503. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2012.665230>
- Maslowsky, J., Jager, J., & Hemken, D. (2015). Estimating and interpreting latent variable interactions: A tutorial for applying the latent moderated structural equations method. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 39(1), 87–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025414552301>
- Muthén, B. O. (2012). Latent variable interactions. Retrieved from <http://www.statmodel.com/download/LV/Interaction.pdf>
- Muthén, L. K., & Muthén, B. O. (1998-2019). *Mplus user's guide. Eighth Edition*. Muthén and Muthén.
- Novakovic, A., & Fouad, N. A. (2013). Background, personal, and environmental influences on the career planning of adolescent girls. *Journal of Career Development*, 40(3), 223–244. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845312449>
- Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., Peeters, M. C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Hetland, J. (2012). Crafting a job on a daily basis: Contextual correlates and the link to work engagement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33(8), 1120–1141. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1783>
- Ployhart, R. E., & Vandenberg, R. J. (2010). Longitudinal research: The theory, design, and analysis of change. *Journal of Management*, 36(1), 94–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206309352110>
- Rudolph, C. W., Katz, I. M., Lavigne, K. N., & Zacher, H. (2017). Job crafting: A meta-analysis of relationships with individual differences, job characteristics, and work outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 102(October 2017), 112–138. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2017.05.008>
- Satorra, A., & Bentler, P. M. (2001). A scaled difference chi-square test statistic for moment structure analysis. *Psychometrika*, 66(4), 507–514. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02296192>
- Song, Z., Chon, K., Ding, G., & Gu, C. (2015). Impact of organizational socialization tactics on newcomer job satisfaction and engagement: Core self-evaluations as moderators. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 46(April 2015), 180–189. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2015.02.006>
- Steiner, R., Hirschi, A., & Akkermans, J. (2021). Many roads lead to rome: Researching antecedents and outcomes of contemporary school-to-work transitions. *Journal of Career Development*, 49(1), 3–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08948453211063580>
- Tims, M., & Akkermans, J. (2020). Job and career crafting to fulfill individual career pathways. In J. W. Hedge & G. W. Carter (Eds.), *Career pathways: From school to retirement* (pp. 165–190). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190907785.003.0010>
- Tims, M., & Bakker, A. B. (2010). Job crafting: Towards a new model of individual job redesign. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 36(2), 1–9. <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC89228>
- Tims, M., Twemlow, M., & Fong, C. Y. M. (2021). A state-of-the-art overview of job-crafting research: Current trends and future research directions. *Career Development International*, 27(1), 54–78. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-08-2021-0216>
- Tuononen, T., Parpala, A., & Lindblom-Ylänne, S. (2019). Graduates' evaluations of usefulness of university education, and early career success – a longitudinal study of the transition to working life. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 44(4), 581–595. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2018.1524000>
- Vanhercke, D., Kirves, K., De Cuyper, N., Verbruggen, M., Forrier, A., & De Witte, H. (2015). Perceived employability and psychological functioning framed by gain and loss cycles. *Career Development International*, 20(2), 179–198. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-12-2014-0160>

- Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J. E. (2001). Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work. *Academy of Management Review*, 26(2), 179–201. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.2001.4378011>
- Zhang, F., & Parker, S. K. (2019). Reorienting job crafting research: A hierarchical structure of job crafting concepts and integrative review. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 40(2), 126–146. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2332>

Author Biographies

Alessandro Lo Presti (Ph.D. in Organizational Psychology, University of Bologna, 2008) is Associate Professor of Work and Organizational Psychology at the Department of Psychology of the University of Campania “Luigi Vanvitelli.” His research interests include: employability, career development and success, job insecurity, work-family interface, among the others. Off from work, he loves spending his time with his wife Stefania, his children Luca and Elia, his cat Tux and his dog Vanilla. He enjoys travelling, running, and hiking.

Arianna Costantini (Ph.D. in Human Sciences—Organizational Psychology, University of Verona, Italy, 2020) is currently a Postdoctoral Researcher in Work and Organizational Psychology at the Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science of the University of Trento, Italy. Her research interests include job crafting and proactive job redesign, remote/hybrid working, and the work-family interface. She is inspired daily by her son and enjoys spending her free time discovering new places, dancing, and dining with friends.

Jos Akkermans (PhD in Work and Organizational Psychology from Utrecht University, the Netherlands) is an Associate Professor at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands. His research interests include career shocks, sustainable careers, and employability. Furthermore, he studies the role of HRM in supporting the work and careers of non-standard workers, such as freelancers, gig workers, and entrepreneurs. Jos is a Past Chair of the Academy of Management Careers Division and a current Associate Editor for the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. He is a proud dad of three wonderful children and loves to walk with his two beautiful Bernese Mountain Dogs, Aska, and Yoda.

Riccardo Sartori (Ph.D. in Perception and Psychophysics, University of Padova, 2004) is an Associate Professor of Work and Organizational Psychology at the Department of Human Sciences of the University of Verona. He is also a Psychotherapist. His research interests include assessment (personal and organizational), human resource management, training and development, innovation, organizational well-being, among others. When he does not work, he likes spending time with his partner and friends, walking in the nature, reading and writing poems.

Assunta De Rosa is a double-degree PhD candidate at the University of Campania “Luigi Vanvitelli” and at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Her work focuses on career competencies, career shocks, and sustainable career. She is an affiliate member of AIP (Italian Association of Psychology). During her free time, she enjoys travelling, reading books, watching TV series and movies.