

Altering Proactive Behaviour: Individual Level Interventions that Influence Cognitive-
Motivational States

Justin John Wallace
Department of Psychology
Macquarie University
Sydney
NSW 2109
Australia
September 2011

Submitted in partial requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	4
Abstract	6
Introduction	8
Individual Level Interventions: Using Cognitive and Behavioural Skills Training to Increase Learning Self-Efficacy	43
Introduction.....	43
Methods	55
Results	60
Discussion.....	62
A New Measure of Change Orientation: Uncovering Its Relationship with Proactive Behaviour	73
Introduction.....	73
Method.....	87
Results	91
Discussion.....	100
Influencing Change Orientation: Examining the Malleability of Change Orientation and its Effects on Proactive Behaviour.....	111
Introduction.....	111
Study 3.....	122
Method.....	126
Results	134
Discussion.....	139
Study 4.....	143
Method.....	146
Results	149
Discussion.....	151
General Discussion.....	154
References.....	163
General Discussion	167
Appendix 1	181
Appendix 2	188
Appendix 3	196
Appendix 4	197
Appendix 5	200
Appendix 6	201
Appendix 7	202

Appendix 8	204
Appendix 9	206
Appendix 10.....	207
Appendix 11.....	208

Acknowledgments

It has certainly been a long and winding road during my candidature. Although in many respects it was a solitary journey, I could not have made it this far without the support and encouragement of the following people. First amongst these is my beautiful wife, Anna. I would like to thank her for all her support, encouragement and patience over the last four years. She was always there for me when I needed her the most. Secondly, I would like to thank my parents Graeme and Alma for all their support during my journey to doctoral status. I would not have been able to make it without all their help. I would also like to express my gratitude to Vera and Stephen whose generosity was much appreciated during my candidature.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Ben Searle for his supervision and encouragement. His guidance was greatly appreciated when I was unsure of how to proceed with my research. I am also indebted to Dr. Alan Taylor for his help in navigating through some complicated statistical analyses. Furthermore, I would like to thank Dr. Julie Fitness for her guidance and for generously sharing her time. Her comments and feedback were very helpful.

I would also like to thank my fellow PhD students, Victoria Smith and Jennifer Keen. It was always nice to catch up over a cup of coffee and share our experiences on this journey.

I declare that this thesis submission is entirely my own work and that Dr. Ben Searle, Dr. Alan Taylor, and Dr. Julie Fitness provided me with guidance and supervision only. To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material which has been accepted for the award of another degree or diploma at a university or other institute of higher learning except where due acknowledgment is made in the text.

The studies contained in this thesis have not yet been submitted for review to any academic journals. However, the results of the literature review and Study 2 have been presented at two separate conferences. I will be submitting the papers contained in this thesis to journals in the near future.

Justin J. Wallace

Abstract

The overall goal of my program of research has been to alter proactive behaviours by using individual level interventions to influence their antecedents. In the first chapter of this thesis, I begin by defining and summarizing the different conceptualisations and models of proactivity that exist in the literature. Next I identify five key antecedents of proactive behaviour, namely, self-efficacy/role breadth self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Parker, 1998), felt responsibility (Frese & Fay, 2001), control orientations (Frese & Fay, 2001), change orientation (Frese & Fay, 2001) and flexible role orientation (Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997). Based on the literature, I propose different individual level interventions that may influence these antecedents, with the goal of increasing proactive behaviour.

In Study 1, I use Parker, Williams and Turner's (2006) model of proactive behaviour to alter proactive behaviours via a proximally related variable, learning self-efficacy. My results suggested that there is a positive relationship between learning self-efficacy and proactive feedback seeking, but that learning self-efficacy was not affected by teaching either cognitive or behavioural skills.

In Study 2, I explored the relationship between change orientation and proactive behaviour. Existing research did not appear to include either a standardised formal definition of change orientation, or a reliable measure to assess the relationship between this antecedent and proactive behaviours. Therefore, I developed a formal definition and scale to measure this construct, which provided a useful starting point for future research. Using the new measure of change orientation, I identified a curvilinear relationship between this construct and a particular proactive behaviour, namely innovation suggestions.

In Studies 3 and 4, I further explored the relationship between change orientation and proactive behaviour. In particular, I sought to examine the malleability of change orientation and to ascertain whether modifying change orientation might lead to a difference in proactive behaviour displayed. My results suggest that change orientation is indeed malleable in a negative direction and that altering change orientation leads to an increase in anticipation of future outcomes (a proactive behaviour).