

Job Engagement and Job Performance

These researchers theorized that engagement provides a more comprehensive explanation of relationships with performance than do well-known concepts such as job involvement, job satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation that focus on more narrow aspects of the self. They defined engagement as the investment of an individual's complete self into a role, or job. The study examined the relationships between value congruence, perceived organizational support, and core self-evaluations with the mediating constructs of job engagement, job involvement, job satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation. The outcomes of job performance and organizational citizenship behavior were the ultimate concern. The study included 245 full-time firefighters and their supervisors employed by four municipalities. The researchers found no differences among the four fire departments. The firefighters completed questionnaires concerning the seven motivational and affective variables while their supervisors completed

questionnaires about the firefighters' performance and OCBs. The results demonstrated that engagement was significantly more important than job involvement, job satisfaction, or intrinsic motivation in affecting performance and OCBs. In addition, the study found that higher levels of value congruence, perceived organizational support, and core self-evaluations were associated with higher levels of job engagement. Although the research supports theory advancement in the importance of engagement, the results demonstrate in a practical way that engaged firefighters performed better fighting fires and in emergencies while simultaneously being more helpful, courteous, and involved in organizational matters. Therefore, engagement is important to a wide range of behavioral activities.

SOURCE: B.L. Rich, J.A. Lepine, and E.R. Crawford, "Job Engagement: Antecedents and Effects on Job Performance," *Academy of Management Journal* 53 (2010): 617–635.

physically, cognitively, and emotionally as they perform their jobs and work roles. For example, Gallup's Q was used to improve engagement for a clinical nutrition group at St. Mary's/Duluth Clinic Health System.⁴⁰ Full engagement requires the strategic management of one's energy in response to the environment.⁴¹ Being fully engaged in one's work role and job can be highly appropriate and yet demand energy, time, and effort. Like the firefighters in the science feature, engaged employees are more likely to perform extra-role behaviors at work. Their high engagement enables them to be more efficient in completing specific work goals, leaving time to take on tasks outside their normal duties.⁴² To achieve balance and afford opportunity for recovery, there is a commensurate need to strategically and appropriately disengage from one's job and work role on a periodic basis. The effective management of energy in response to one's job and work role leads to both high performance and personal renewal. Thus, although the design of work is important, the human spirit's response to job characteristics and work design features is equally important.

Alternative Approaches to Job Design

Because each of the traditional job design approaches has limitations, several alternative approaches to job design have emerged over the past couple of decades. This section examines four of these alternatives that are in the process of being tried and tested. First, it examines the social information processing model. Second, it reviews