

## CHAPTER 10

# Motivation

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BACKGROUND	225
Definition	225
The Big Picture	226
Our Coverage	227
MOTIVATION IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR LITERATURE	227
Expectancy Theory	228
Self-Efficacy	229
Goal Setting	231
Hot Theories: Mood, Emotion, Affect	236
Need Theories	238
Dispositions	239
Reinforcement	241
Justice	242
Summary: Overall Perspective	244
DISCUSSION	245
CONCLUSIONS	246
REFERENCES	246

Motivation is a core construct. To understand why people behave the way they do in organizations, one must know something about motivation. It is not the only cause of behavior or always the most important one, but it is usually part of the picture. Motivation is a component of most human activity, and the literature on the topic is vast. O'Reilly (1991) in his Annual Review article said that it is the "most frequently researched topic in micro organization behavior" (p. 431), and Cooper and Robertson (1986) estimated that the topic of motivation and related issues fills one third of our journal space. Pinder's (1998) book is the best overall recent source on the topic, and recent reviews by Kanfer (1994), Mitchell (1997), and Ambrose and Kulik (1999) give good but slightly narrower perspectives.

Given what is available, we have decided to approach this review with a few clear objectives. First, we cover the motivational landscape. We believe that most major approaches to the topic have a corner of the truth. Some of the time, or for some of the people or to some degree the motivational approach discussed in an article, makes an important contribution to behavior. On some occasions, people's needs are key, or their goals, their friends at work, rewards, or the task at hand. We cover these different points of view.

Second, we highlight some of the variables that differentiate when, where, and how certain motivational factors operate. We discuss issues related to time, the extent to which these motivational mechanisms are malleable or changeable, and what factors are needed to use these strategies in the workplace. We close with a discussion of the

implications of what we have reviewed for theory, research, and practice.

## BACKGROUND

As an introduction to the concept of motivation, we shall use a context with which many of us are familiar: the selection and subsequent performance of graduate students. Universities often use some sort of cutoff point on standardized test scores such as the GRE or GMAT to select students. Suppose a university admits three students who all score from 680 to 690. We then observe their behavior and performance over time, and we note that (a) the three individuals differ substantially among each other with an agreed-upon rank order and (b) each individual has ups and downs as well. Because ability (as assessed by our standardized tests) is seen as relatively similar for all three students, we are likely to attribute the variance within and across the three individuals at least partly to their motivation.

### Definition

The previous example points out some important aspects of motivation. First, motivation varies across and within individuals. Second, it seems to combine with ability to produce behavior and performance. Because abilities are often seen as innate or accomplished through arduous and lengthy training and development activities, we often view motivation as

discretionary or willful—something that one chooses to expend. Pinder's (1998) initial simple definition is “the energy a person expends in relation to work” (p. 1), whereas Dowling and Sayles (1978) maintain that “motivation means an inner desire to make an effort” (p. 16). Examining what constitutes this “energy” or “inner desire” leads to a more detailed description of motivation.

Most recent authors have associated motivation with three general psychological processes (Bandura, 1986; Ford, 1992; Kanfer, 1990; Mitchell, 1982; Pinder, 1998). First, there is an arousal component. Most researchers see arousal as caused by a need or desire for some object or state that is at least partially unfulfilled or below expectation. This discrepancy initiates action. Second, there is a directional component. Personal goals are universally seen as providing direction. Locke (1997) suggested that goal directedness is “a cardinal attribute of the actions of all living organisms” (p. 376). Third, there is an intensity dimension. Some needs are more important than others. Some goals are more difficult to attain than others.

What are the results of these three processes? In terms of specific behavior, four things are usually mentioned. First, motivation focuses attention on particular issues, people, task elements, and so on. It has a riveting directional aspect.

Second, motivation produces effort. People work harder when they are motivated. Third, motivation results in persistence. The higher the motivation, the longer we will sustain our effort. Fourth, motivation results in what we call **task strategies**, patterns of behavior produced to reach a particular goal.

In summary, motivation is an internal set of processes—what we call a hypothetical construct. It is complex in that it involves multiple processes and multiple behaviors. It is personal: different people have different needs and different things that they think are important. Furthermore, it is goal directed. Goals (and goal discrepancies) are seen as major goads to attention and action, whereas goal difficulty and importance are associated with motivational intensity. Goals are clearly the major psychological mechanism associated with motivation.

### The Big Picture

Given the complexity just described above, some sort of big picture is necessary as a guide to the rest of this review. Figure 10.1 presents such an overview. This diagram captures some, but not all, of the complexity and detail involved in understanding motivation. It suggests that both individual

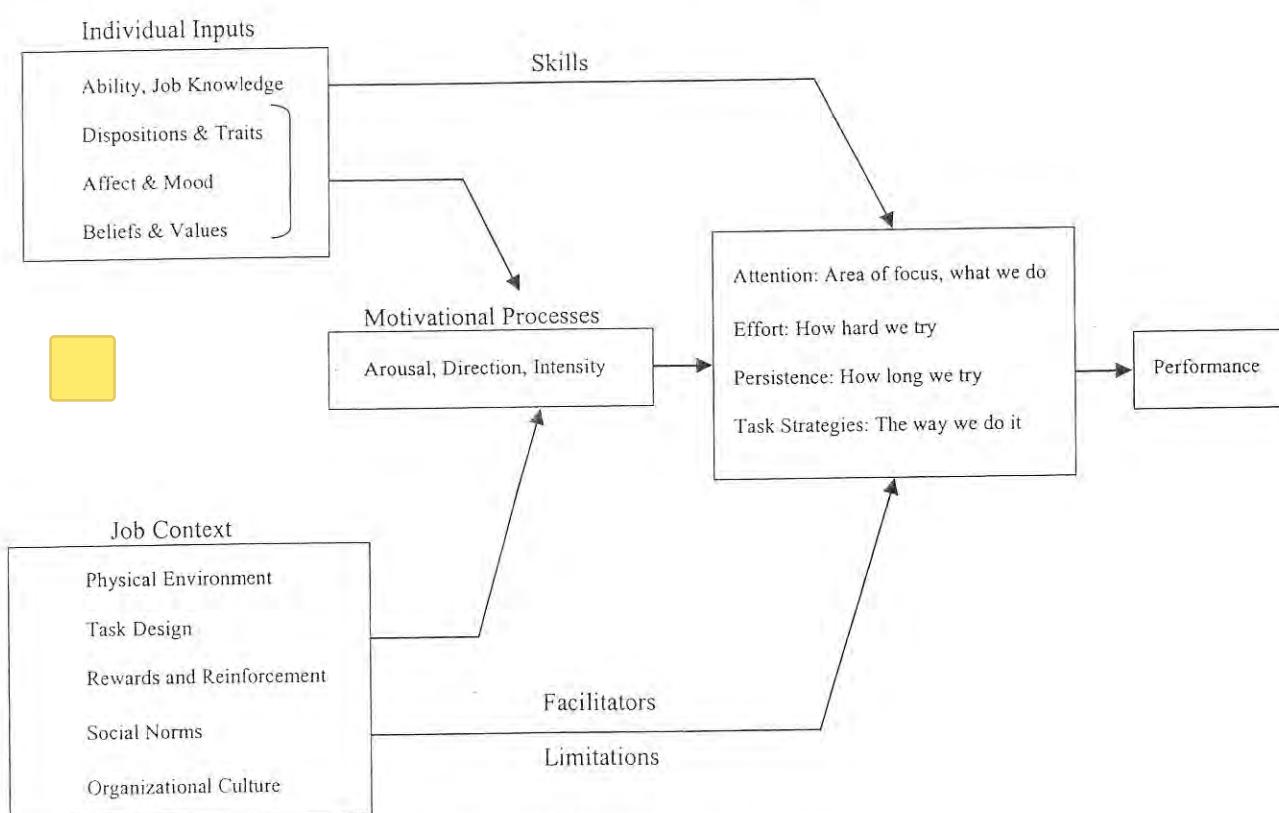


Figure 10.1 An overall model of motivation.

attributes and the context in which one works influence motivational processes. Abilities and skills combine with motivation and the enabling or limiting aspects of the environment to produce task-relevant behaviors. Over time and contexts these behaviors contribute to individual performance.

Some other important distinctions should be mentioned. First, note that motivation differs from behavior. The psychological state is motivation; the outcome or result of that state is behavioral (e.g., effort). Second, note that behavior differs from performance. The latter is an outside standard that is determined by the organization and usually assessed by others. Third, note that personal factors and the work setting can influence behavior either directly or through motivation. For example, your actual ability can influence your behavior, and knowledge of your ability can influence your motivation, which can influence your behavior. Task interdependencies can influence your actual behaviors as well as your motivation to engage in these behaviors. Finally, note that behavior is caused by multiple factors: personal, social, technological, and contextual. Thus, motivation may play a huge role in determining some behaviors, whereas ability or technology may be important for others (Ford, 1992).

It is important to point out that motivation is dynamic and unfolds over time. Motivational processes lead to intentions that result in behavior. However, the mechanisms driving that behavior, such as need discrepancies or goal level currently attained, change over time. Things happen while we are engaged in a particular task (e.g., successes and failures, social input) that may increase or decrease subsequent motivation (Kuhl, 1984). People often decide to exert more or less effort at the moment, while they are involved in an activity, or to switch to another activity. This “on-line” motivational process is receiving increased attention in the literature (e.g., Frese & Zapf, 1994), and we will cover it in more detail in our review.

### Our Coverage

We made a number of decisions with respect to this review. First, we wanted to provide broad coverage. Most of the major theories are reviewed (we have omitted the job design and social influence—i.e., teams and culture—work because they are covered in other chapters in this volume). We try to summarize the prevailing wisdom (mostly through the use of narrative summaries and meta-analyses, which are available for almost every topic) and then concentrate on what has been written in the last few years. Second, our major focus is on work-related issues and the field of organizational behavior. Finally, as mentioned earlier, we try to highlight dimensions or aspects of motivational topics that help us to sort out

the complexity of when, where, and how a particular factor is operating or is important.

## MOTIVATION IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR LITERATURE

Before we begin our review of motivation in the organizational behavior literature, we need to provide an organizing framework for the various theoretical approaches that we will be discussing. Because there is no agreed-upon integrative theory of motivation (although some have been suggested; e.g., Locke, 1997) and very few middle-range theories, we consequently have no universally accepted way of presenting the various approaches to motivation. When reviewing research for this chapter, we categorized articles according to the major theoretical positions that they represented (e.g., goal setting, rewards and reinforcement, dispositions and traits, etc.). We then began to see some contrasts or tensions that were represented. For example, some theoretical approaches are internal to the individual (cognitive approaches, dispositional approaches), whereas others are clearly more external (task design, reinforcement). Some theoretical approaches are more cognitive in nature (self-regulation, expectancy theory, goal setting, self-efficacy), whereas others have very little to do with cognitions (genetic disposition, emotion, affect). Some are more distal or distant from the immediate causes of action and reflect one's accumulated history (e.g., needs). Others are more proximal or directly associated with behavior (e.g., goals). The more we looked, the more we realized that nearly every theoretical approach had an alternative that was in tension with it. Although these alternative approaches did not necessarily contradict one another, each provided a different lens through which to view motivation. We decided to organize our review around these various tensions. Figure 10.2 provides a schematic of these contrasts in the literature.

The first contrast we make is between internally and externally focused motivational theories. Internally focused theories can be broken down into those that are more cognitive or “thoughtful” (including goals, self-efficacy, expectancy) and those that are not controlled at a cognitive level. The thoughtful motivational theories differ from one another in terms of those that are focused on the cognitive processes that occur before a task is undertaken and those that occur while one is actually working on a task. We differentiate between these two theoretical approaches as those that are *proactive* and *on-line*, respectively. In contrast, the nonrational theories can be distinguished as those that are *hot* in nature, or more in

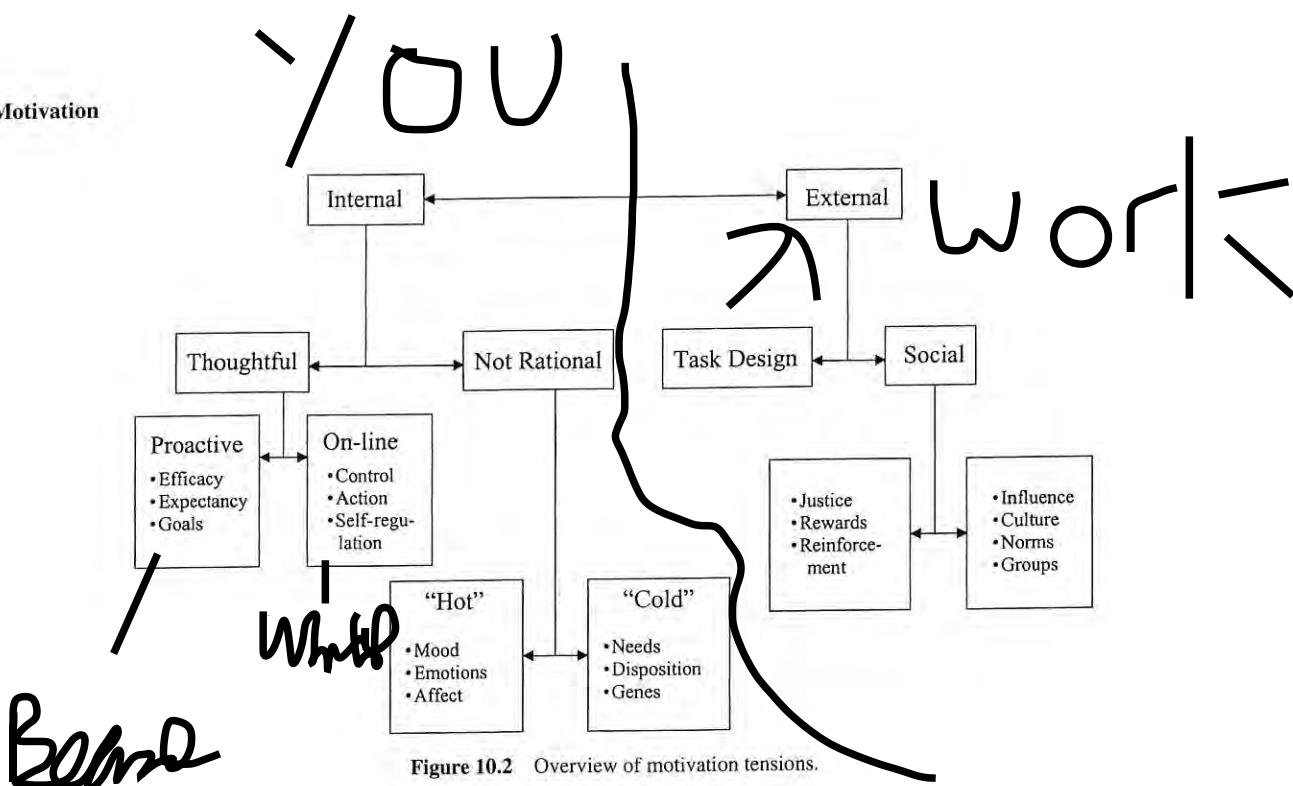


Figure 10.2 Overview of motivation tensions.

the moment (i.e., mood, emotions, affect), compared with those that are *cold* and less malleable (i.e., needs, genes, personality).

At the other end of the spectrum, the external theories of motivation focus on aspects of the situation that influence the amount of effort that one is likely to put forth. The external theoretical approaches can be separated into those that are focused on the task itself (job design theories, covered elsewhere) and those that are focused on the social aspects of the situation. In this latter category there is a contrast between the culture and norms of the group (covered elsewhere in this volume), which create expectations for performance and motivation, and the perceived fairness of the outcomes that one receives (a perception that is socially determined). We recognize that these external approaches have an impact on internal processes. But the reason we differentiate them is that the focus of the theory is on how these external factors operate on the person (e.g., job design) rather than the internal state (e.g., goals).

In this section we review the literature in each of these theoretical categories, with particular emphasis on advances that have been made since Kanfer's (1990) handbook chapter. For each theory we review what we know, as well as the new directions that research is taking, and highlight what we do not yet know as important areas for future research. We begin our review with those theories that are more internal—that is, theories focused on the thoughts, feelings, or personality of the individual. We then move to the external theories of motivation, which focus on outcomes such as reinforcement and justice.

The first category consists of theories that are thoughtful: those that are more internal to the individual and are based on a cognitive approach to understanding human behavior (see Figure 10.2). We begin with theories that are more proactive in that they entail judgments about future performance, including expectancy, self-efficacy, and goal setting. We then move to the more on-line or in-the-moment approaches to understanding motivation, including control theory, action theory, and self-regulation.

### Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory is one of the earliest cognitive approaches to understanding motivation. It was first articulated by Vroom (1964), who suggested that people tend to make rational decisions about whether to exert effort based on their perceptions of whether their effort will lead to outcomes that they value. The theory is sometimes referred to as *VIE theory*, referencing its three major constructs: valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. Expectancy is a probability assessment reflecting an individual's belief that a given level of effort will lead to a given level of performance. Instrumentality refers to the subjective assessment that a given performance level will result in one or more secondary outcomes, such as pay or promotion. Finally, valence refers to the value that an individual places on a given secondary outcome. Vroom (1964) argued that individuals subjectively combine these three constructs, summing across outcomes, to determine the extent to which they should exert a particular level of effort. He referred to this as motivational force.

### **What We Know**

Many studies have been directed at refining expectancy theory and trying to assess its validity. Much of this research seems to support Vroom's (1964) ideas. For example, expectancy theory has been shown consistently to predict job effort and occupational choice, accounting for 5% to 30% of the variance in these criteria (Mitchell, 1997). However, numerous reviews have also highlighted important methodological problems associated with the tests of the theory. For example, the theory relies on an explicit mathematical model of motivational force, but it is clear that people seldom make such mental calculations. Perhaps the biggest area of debate surrounding expectancy theory is whether it should be used to predict outcomes within subjects or between subjects (see Pinder, 1998, for a concise review). Although both methods have provided evidence in support of expectancy theory (Westaby, 1999), a large majority of the research shows that the theory predicts outcomes better within subjects than it does between subjects (see VanEerde & Thierry, 1996).

### **New Directions**

Expectancy theory initially generated a substantial amount of research and debate, but it is no longer doing so. Its lack of direct influence on the motivational field today may be attributed to the rise of other cognitive theories, during what has been referred to as the cognitive revolution in the field of organizational behavior (Ilgen, Major, & Tower, 1994). In particular, the current emphasis on goal setting, self-efficacy, and self-regulation may have subsumed some of the major concepts within VIE theory. As Locke and Latham (1990) pointed out, "In practice, many expectancy measures are probably equivalent to self-efficacy measures, or at least partially so" (p. 68). It is to the theory of self-efficacy that we now turn our attention.

### **Self-Efficacy**

The concept of self-efficacy is a relative newcomer to the field of motivation. It was developed by Bandura (1986, 1997) in the context of his work on social cognitive theory and defined by Wood and Bandura (1989) as "beliefs in one's capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to meet given situational demands" (p. 408). Most of the research on self-efficacy has focused on one of two things: (a) understanding the mechanisms through which self-efficacy influences performance and (b) understanding its antecedents in order to know how better to change self-efficacy (and ultimately performance) in the workplace.

### **What We Know**

There is substantial research demonstrating a link between self-efficacy and performance. The results from two separate meta-analyses indicate that the link between self-efficacy and performance is strong, with a mean  $r = .37$  in one (Hysong & Quiñones, 1997) and  $r = .38$  in the other (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). As Gist and Mitchell (1992) noted, "People who think they can perform well on a task do better than those who think they will fail" (p. 183).

There has been some debate in the literature about whether self-efficacy truly has a generative component; that is, does it actually cause high levels of motivation and subsequent performance, or are the correlations between self-efficacy and performance due simply to the fact that people are pretty good at assessing their own ability levels and predicting their future performance levels? Chen, Casper, and Cortina (1999) reported in their meta-analyses that mental ability and conscientiousness are both related to self-efficacy (corrected  $r$  of approximately .20) and that self-efficacy partially mediates the relationships between ability and conscientiousness and subsequent performance. Self-efficacy is also highly correlated with past performance. Because of this, Vancouver, Thompson, and Williams (1999) suggested that perhaps self-efficacy is simply a by-product of past performance that by itself contributes nothing to motivation and future performance. This issue is difficult to tease out statistically; examining the effect of self-efficacy on performance by controlling for past performance may overcorrect for the problem because self-efficacy is likely to be at least partly responsible for past performance as well (Bandura, 1997). If all of the work on the relationship between self-efficacy and performance were correlational in nature, we would be at an impasse over how to understand self-efficacy's role in the motivational process. However, thanks to the programmatic research on the Pygmalion/golem effect conducted by Eden (e.g., 1992) over the past decade, we can present a causal picture of the effects of self-efficacy on performance.

The *Pygmalion effect* refers to the idea that communicating high expectations can improve self-efficacy, which in turn improves performance. Its opposite is the *golem effect*, in which low expectations are communicated and self-efficacy and performance decrease as a result. Eden and his colleagues have shown that self-efficacy can be manipulated and that doing so influences performance (Eden, 1992). Telling Israeli Defense Force candidates that they would do well in Special Forces resulted in increases in volunteering (Eden & Kinnar, 1991); self-efficacy training for the unemployed increased their job-search skills and activities, as well as the likelihood of finding a job (Eden & Aviram, 1993); and

having positive expectations for military trainees initially low in ability raised their self-efficacy and subsequent scores on a physical fitness test (Oz & Eden, 1994). There have been two recent meta-analyses of Pygmalion effects. McNatt (2000) reported an average corrected  $d$  (average difference between experimental and control groups) of .62, and Kiernan and Gold (1998) reported an average of .76. Both papers reported that these effects are relatively strong, and both suggest that men and people in the military are more susceptible than women and nonmilitary subjects.

There are multiple mechanisms through which self-efficacy works. Those with higher self-efficacy tend to exert more effort and to persist at a task longer than those with lower self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). In addition, self-efficacy helps individuals focus their attention and reduce distractions (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1996). Those with higher self-efficacy tend to choose more difficult goals and commit to those goals than do low self-efficacy individuals (Locke & Latham, 1990). Self-efficacy may also encourage people to seek feedback (Tsui & Ashford, 1994) and to choose more efficient task strategies (Wood, George-Falvy, & Debowski, 1999).

Because self-efficacy appears to be an important influence on motivation and performance, quite a bit of research has focused on understanding its antecedents, as well as on implementing effective training programs for improving self-efficacy. Bandura (1982) suggested that self-efficacy is developed through four mechanisms: enactive mastery, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal. More recent research suggests that the effects of these types of experience on self-efficacy are moderated by who or what is providing the information, as well as by an individual's belief in his or her ability as a state or trait variable. Parsons and his colleagues found that the self-efficacy of military trainees learning to pilot helicopters was strongly influenced by negative peer feedback at the beginning of their training program, but by the end of the training program it was more likely to be affected by feedback from the task itself and from supervisors (Parsons, Fedor, & Herold, 1999). Martocchio (1994) showed that people who believe that ability does not change (trait) have lower self-efficacy and higher anxiety than do those who view ability as something that can be acquired with experience (state). In addition, those who have a state view of ability have higher affect, higher goals, and higher performance than do those who hold to a trait view of ability (Tabernero & Wood, 1999).

Building on these ideas, Stevens and Gist (1997) conducted a study in which they trained MBA students on negotiation skills. They showed that mastery-oriented training (which assumes a state view of ability and focuses on enhancing task competence) led to more skill-maintenance

activities, more planned effort, and more positive affect than did performance-oriented training (which assumes a trait view of ability and focuses on demonstrating high task performance). In addition, they showed that mastery training overcame the effects of initial low self-efficacy; that is, low self-efficacy subjects in the mastery-oriented training condition performed at the same level as did their high self-efficacy counterparts.

### New Directions

Three areas of research are relatively new in the self-efficacy field. First, recently there has been quite a bit of effort to understand the similarities and differences among self-efficacy and related constructs. Second, there has been interest in the concept of group efficacy. Finally, some research has highlighted some of the negative effects of high self-efficacy. We discuss each of the areas next.

Mitchell (1997) pointed out that self-efficacy is similar to concepts discussed by others using other terms, including personal agency beliefs (Ford, 1992), personal efficacy (Gurin & Brim, 1984), capacity beliefs (Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990), and perceived competence (Deci, 1980). Self-efficacy has been differentiated from self-esteem, which tends to be a stable value judgment that people make about themselves (Pinder, 1998); and although low self-efficacy on a given task may influence self-esteem, it does not necessarily do so. Brockner (1988) introduced the idea of task-related self-esteem, which is similar to the concept of self-efficacy. Confidence is another construct that has much in common with self-efficacy. Trafimow and Sniezek (1994) did studies of performance estimation for items on a general knowledge test. They found that subjects' general confidence (a trait measure) was positively related to their item confidence (similar to self-efficacy). Some confusion has arisen over the difference between self-efficacy and expectancy. Both constructs are subjective estimates of personal capability, but expectancy relates to a particular performance level on a given task, and self-efficacy is broader in that it can cover multiple performance levels. From a practical perspective, however, the operational measures for expectancy and self-efficacy are often indistinguishable.

More recently, Eden forwarded his conceptualization of *means efficacy*, which he defined as a person's belief in the tools available to do the job (Eden & Granat-Flomin, 2000). Eden differentiated means efficacy from self-efficacy in that the former is based on beliefs about factors external to the individual, and the latter is more about internal factors (Eden, 1996). He suggested that self-efficacy together with means efficacy make up a construct referred to as subjective

efficacy, which is a better estimate of future performance than is either means efficacy or self-efficacy alone. Self-efficacy has traditionally been understood to include some component of means efficacy (cf. Gist & Mitchell, 1992), but this new distinction between internal and external sources of efficacy may be useful.

The last constructs we address in this section are *role-breadth self-efficacy* (RBSE; Parker, 1998) and *global, or general, self-efficacy* (GSE). RBSE is a more global construct than is self-efficacy, which is always related to a given task. RBSE relates to people's judgments about their ability to carry out the broader and more proactive roles on the job (beyond the technical requirements). Parker (1998) found that RBSE can be influenced by job-enrichment activities. GSE is broader yet, in that it assesses people's beliefs in their capabilities to perform a wide variety of tasks. It is a more trait-like, dispositional variable than is self-efficacy (Eden, 1999). At this point, exactly how GSE differs from self-esteem or other more general constructs is unclear.

A number of researchers have begun examining the concept of group efficacy. Guzzo and his colleagues conducted an excellent review of the various ways in which group efficacy can be conceptualized and measured (Guzzo, Yost, Campbell, & Shea, 1993). Like self-efficacy, group efficacy is consistently related to group performance (Mulvey & Klein, 1998; Prussia & Kinicki, 1996). In addition to its impact on performance, group efficacy has been shown to predict job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Riggs & Knight, 1994) and to moderate the impact of long hours and work overload on experienced physical and psychological strain (Jex & Bliese, 1999). Group efficacy may be a better predictor of group performance than individuals' self-efficacy. Feltz and Lirgg (1998) found that team efficacy was related to a hockey team's win record, but individual efficacy was not. The antecedents of group efficacy appear similar to those of individual self-efficacy: Enactive mastery, vicarious experience, and verbal persuasion have all been shown to influence group efficacy. Group efficacy appears to have its strongest effects on performance in certain circumstances. For example, Gibson (1999) found group efficacy to be most strongly related to performance when there was low uncertainty and high collectivism and when people worked interdependently. More research is needed to understand how group and individual efficacy interact. That is, what happens when an individual has a high (low) level of self-efficacy, but the group has low (high) collective efficacy?

Most of what we have reviewed to this point highlights the positive impact of efficacy on performance. However, there are situations in which high self-efficacy or group efficacy may have a detrimental impact. When initial self-efficacy

estimates are too high and performance does not match expectations, people tend to become discouraged and use avoidance strategies (Stone, 1994). Those with high levels of self-efficacy may be more likely to reject negative feedback (Nease, Mudgett, & Quiñones, 1999). This may in turn make it more likely for them to fall prey to escalation of commitment and have decreased performance (Goltz, 1999). Whyte (1998) argued that in a group context, overly high group efficacy may be the instigating factor causing groupthink, which may lead to performance decrements. Gibson and Holzinger (1998) supported this notion. They found that in some situations group efficacy was actually negatively related to group effectiveness. They attributed this unexpected finding to the way in which they measured group efficacy: namely, by asking the group to make a collective estimation of efficacy. They suggest that this measure was likely influenced by group-induced attitude polarization, in which group members' individual estimates were swayed by the input from their peers.

Although there are some potential downsides to high levels of self-efficacy and group efficacy, in general the research supports the idea that efficacy is an important component of motivation and a strong predictor of performance. Furthermore, research supports the idea that self-efficacy is malleable and provides several demonstrated ways of improving it. One of the ways in which self-efficacy influences performance is through its influence on self-set goals.

## Goal Setting

The theory of goal setting is quite easily the single most dominant theory in the field: Over a thousand articles and reviews have been published on the topic in a little over 30 years (Mitchell, Thompson, & George-Falvy, 2000). Rather than reviewing all of this research we focus on the basic premises of goal setting and then turn our attention to the current areas of interest and future research directions.

## What We Know

Goal setting is based on the idea that most of human behavior is the result of a person's consciously chosen goals and intentions. Locke and Latham (1990) provided an excellent and extensive summary and review of the goal-setting literature. Their conclusion, backed up by a plethora of persuasive evidence is that goal setting works. Indeed, the research is uniform in its verdict that difficult and specific goals result in higher levels of performance than do easy or vague, "do your best" goals. In addition to the importance of difficult and specific goals, the goal-setting research is also clear that several

other factors are necessary for goal setting to work. First, in order for goal setting to impact performance, feedback that enables people to gauge their progress toward goal attainment is required (Erez, 1977). Second, goal commitment is necessary for a goal to have motivational effects (Tubbs, 1994). Finally, ability and knowledge are important; giving someone a specific and difficult goal, providing feedback, and ensuring commitment will not result in increased performance if that individual does not have the requisite skills and abilities to perform the task.

Goal setting influences performance through four mechanisms (Locke, Shaw, Saari, & Latham, 1981). Compared with those who do not have goals, individuals with goals are more likely to (a) focus their attention and action toward the accomplishment of the goal, (b) exert more effort, (c) persist on tasks even in the face of failure, and (d) develop strategies that aid in accomplishing the goal. More recent research in the area of goals typically focuses on extending these traditional findings by understanding the various antecedents and consequences of goal setting, explicating the various moderating factors of the goal-performance relationship, and expanding the application of goal setting to the group level (Mitchell, 1997).

Research on self-set goals has tried to explain why people set the goals that they do. This is particularly important to understand because the evidence shows a linear relationship between goal difficulty and performance: The more difficult the goal, the higher the performance level will be as long as goal commitment remains high (Locke, 1997). Two different meta-analyses of goal difficulty—Mento, Steel, and Karren (1987) and Wright (1990)—reported similar effect sizes for the effects of goal difficulty on performance ( $d = .58$  and  $.55$ , respectively).

An excellent review of the antecedents of goal setting by Wofford, Goodwin, and Premack (1992) found that the major determinants of an individual's goal level were past performance and ability. External factors such as providing a performance bonus also increase goal difficulty (Wood, Atkins, & Bright, 1999). After demonstrating that individuals with high task-specific self-esteem chose more difficult goals under piece-rate than hourly payment plans, Moussa (1996) concluded that these internal and external factors interact with each other. In a group context, collective efficacy has also been shown to influence group goal difficulty (Mulvey & Klein, 1998). In addition, self-efficacy, expectancy of goal attainment, and task difficulty were the best predictors of an individual's goal commitment (Wofford et al., 1992).

The performance consequences of goals are also clear: Goals increase performance, whether it is individual performance (Locke & Latham, 1990), group performance

(Durham, Knight, & Locke, 1997; O'Leary-Kelly, Martocchio, & Frink, 1994; Wegge, 1999; Weingart, 1992), or organizational performance (Thompson, Hochwarter, & Mathys, 1997). Pritchard's PROMES system shows promise as an application of goal setting principles designed to increase individual and group performance (Pritchard, 1995). Other outcomes of goal setting have also been explored. For example, Ludwig and Geller (1997) found that participative goals among pizza delivery drivers not only increased performance on a targeted behavior (complete stops at intersections) but also generalized to other driving behaviors that had not been targeted (turn signal and safety belt use). Goals have been used to reduce accidents and improve safety in the construction industry (Cooper, Phillips, Sutherland, & Makin, 1994). Brunstein, Schultheiss, and Grassmann (1998) demonstrated that goals that are congruent with an individual's personal dispositions can increase well-being and life adjustment. Although increased performance is arguably the most important outcome of goal setting, it is not the only outcome.

Perhaps the most commonly studied moderator of the goal-performance relationship is goal commitment. Tubbs (1994) defined goal commitment as the force or strength of attachment to a personal goal. Work throughout the early 1990s focused on the appropriate measures of goal commitment (Hollenbeck, Williams, & Klein, 1989; Wright, O'Leary-Kelly, Cortina, Klein, & Hollenbeck, 1994).

Early goal-setting research assumed that goal commitment was necessary for assigned goals to work (Locke & Latham, 1990). A meta-analysis by Donovan and Radosevich (1998) challenged the moderating role of goal commitment on the relationship between goal difficulty and performance. Their work found that the interaction effect of goal difficulty and commitment on performance was low. However, the number of studies they examined was small (12), and their work did not capture the perspective over time. Another meta-analysis (Klein, Wesson, Hollenbeck, & Agle (1999), using a larger sample (83 studies), found evidence for a stronger moderating effect of goal commitment on the relationship between goal difficulty and performance (mean corrected  $r$  of  $.23$ ), and this effect of commitment on performance was stronger for difficult goals than for easy goals.

Like the research on goals themselves, the emphasis in goal-commitment research over the past decade has been on the antecedents and consequences of goal commitment. Locke and Latham (1990) suggested that goal commitment can be strengthened with monetary incentives that are tied to goal attainment (assuming that the goal is not impossible). Wright (1992) found this to be the case with easy goals, but

with difficult goals Wright found that making incentives dependent on goal attainment actually led to lower commitment (rejection of goal). In contrast, Lee, Locke, and Phan (1997) found no effect of incentives on commitment. Clearly, more research is needed in this area to determine what the relationships between commitment and incentives are. In addition to incentives, the specificity of goals has been examined as an antecedent of goal commitment. Wright and Kacmar (1994) found that specific goals were more likely to result in goal commitment on an anagram task than were vague goals. Normative information may also influence goal commitment. Martin and Manning (1995) found performance increases in high-commitment subjects when they had information that others performed a task well. In addition, Hinsz, Kalnbach, and Lorentz (1997) found that using outrageous anchors to increase self-set goals did not reduce goal commitment.

A couple of studies indicate that individual differences may influence goal commitment. Hollenbeck et al. (1989) found that students' need for achievement and locus of control influenced their commitment. Barrick, Mount, and Strauss (1993) found that sales representatives with high conscientiousness were more likely to be committed to sales goals. Situational constraints and leader-member exchange have also been found to influence goal commitment (Klein & Kim, 1998). Finally, goal commitment can be impaired if people are allowed to set their own goals and then are assigned goals instead (Austin, 1989).

Task complexity appears to be another moderator of the goal-performance relationship. For the last two decades research has been accumulating that indicates that goal effects are less strong, or even detrimental, to performance on complex tasks (Wood, Mento, & Locke, 1987). Other research has indicated that goal setting is not as effective when a task is novel but has a stronger relationship to performance when a task becomes well learned (Mitchell, Hopper, Daniels, George-Falvy, & James, 1994). Research by Kanfer, Ackerman, Murtha, Dugdale, and Nelson (1994) showed that goals helped performance during spaced practice but hurt performance during massed practice on their air traffic controller task. One explanation for these various results may be that the primary mechanisms through which goal setting works—attention, effort, and persistence—may not be effective for accomplishing tasks that are complex or novel. In these cases, developing task strategies may be more effective—working smarter, not harder (Wood & Locke, 1990). Understanding how to use goals to improve strategy is a newer area of goal-setting research. One lab study found that the type of goal assigned can influence goal strategy (Audia, Kristof-Brown, Brown, & Locke, 1996). Another study showed that goals can help on explicit learning of

complex tasks (DeShon & Alexander, 1996). Finally, George-Falvy (1996) showed that participatively set goals may be more effective than assigned goals on complex tasks because they encourage effective strategy development.

Interest in applying goal setting to the group level has increased dramatically during the past decade. The basic findings in this area are very similar to individual-level goal setting; a meta-analysis by O'Leary-Kelly et al. (1994) confirmed that group goals have a strong and positive effect on performance. Several studies have shown that more difficult goals result in higher performance than do easier goals (Durham et al., 1997; Weingart, 1992). In addition, these studies found that group goals influence performance through their effect on effort, planning, and tactics.

As with individual-level goal-setting research, there has been much attention to the goal commitment construct at the group level. In particular, research has focused on how goal commitment is related to group cohesion. In terms of assigned goals, Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Ahearne (1997) conducted two studies demonstrating that goal acceptance moderates the relationship between group cohesion and performance. With self-set goals, however, more cohesive groups are more likely to self-select more difficult goals (Klein & Mulvey, 1995).

### New Directions

More and more recent research in goal setting has been examining how individual-difference factors such as conscientiousness, goal orientation, and emotion influence the goal-performance relationship. Several studies have highlighted the link between conscientiousness and both self-set goals and goal commitment (Barrick et al., 1993; Gellatly, 1996), emphasizing that individuals with higher levels of conscientiousness are more likely to self-select difficult goals and to be committed to difficult goals.

Numerous recent studies have also focused on the relationship between one's goal orientation (as defined by Dweck, 1986) and performance. Briefly, Dweck (1986) described two different goal orientations that people have: learning-goal-oriented individuals are more concerned with mastering the task, and therefore set goals related to learning, whereas performance-goal-oriented individuals are more interested in performing well on the task and therefore self-set goals related to task outcome, regardless of mastery level. VandeWalle (1999) reviewed this literature and found that a learning-goal orientation is related to higher self-set goals, seeking training, and feedback-seeking behavior. A study by Harackiewicz, Barron, Carter, Lehto, and Elliot (1997) found that students with a *workmastery* achievement motivation

(i.e., learning-goal orientation) were more likely to adopt mastery goals and be more interested in course material, whereas students with competitiveness achievement motivation (i.e., performance-goal orientation) were more likely to set performance goals and work-avoidance goals and had less intrinsic interest in course material. Similarly, Colquitt and Simmering (1998) found that having a learning-goal orientation was related to the motivation to learn and to performance in a management course. Those with a learning-goal orientation are also more likely to use more complex learning strategies than their performance-goal orientation counterparts (Fisher & Ford, 1998). In a study where the subjects' goal orientation was manipulated, those with learning-goal orientations had higher self-efficacy, self-set goals, and intrinsic motivation on complex tasks, whereas those with performance-goal orientations had higher levels of the same constructs on simple tasks (Hoover, Johnson, & Schmidt, 1998). One potential reason for these effects is that those with learning-goal orientations tend to see ability as malleable, whereas those with performance-goal orientations view ability as immutable (Button, Mathieu, & Zajac, 1996). Other research has demonstrated that viewing ability as malleable lowers anxiety but leads to increases in self-efficacy, satisfaction, goals, and ultimately performance (Martocchio, 1994; Tabernero & Wood, 1999).

Although the impact of goal orientation on self-set goals is clear, their impact on performance is not. Whereas some studies have found that learning-goal orientations lead to higher performance (e.g., Tabernero & Wood, 1999; Vandewalle, 1999), others have found no difference in performance between learning- and performance-goal-oriented individuals (Hoover et al., 1998), and still others have found performance-goal-oriented individuals to have higher performance (Harackiewicz et al., 1997). Preliminary evidence seems to indicate that these disparate findings might be explained by the type of task: A learning-goal orientation is more likely to lead to increases in performance when the task is complex, whereas a performance-goal orientation is more likely to improve performance if the task is simple (Winters & Latham, 1996). Regardless of what future research will determine on this issue, it is clear that the study of individual differences is making its mark in the goal-setting literature.

Emotions have also been examined recently for their relationship to the goal-setting process. For example, Brunstein et al. (1998) conducted two studies using a thematic apperception test (TAT) to measure students' need orientations. They also asked these students to list the goals toward which they were working. When the students' goals were congruent with their need orientations (e.g., focused on task

achievement for students high on need for achievement), the students had better emotional well-being; incongruency between one's goals and need orientation on the other hand was associated with declining emotional well-being. Anticipated emotion and framing also appear to impact the goal-performance relationship. Roney, Higgins, and Shah (1995) found that when performance goals on an anagram task were framed positively (21 out of 25 right), subjects had better persistence and higher task performance than when the goal was framed negatively (4 of 25 wrong). Another study of sales persons' goals found that anticipated emotions associated with goal achievement helped predict behavior and sales (Brown, Cron, & Slocum, 1997). Finally, Brunstein, Dangelmayer, and Schultheiss (1996) found that individuals' perceptions of their significant others' support of personal goals was positively related not only to goal achievement but also to relationship satisfaction and mood 1 month later. An interesting picture of the relationship between affect and goals is emerging, but we have quite a bit of work to do in this area fully to understand the various connections between the goal-setting process and emotion.

The overwhelming evidence for goal setting is positive; that is, goal setting works to improve performance across a variety of contexts and on numerous tasks (Pritchard, 1995). However, whereas we know quite a bit about the relationship between goals and quantifiable task-performance outcomes, we do not necessarily have a clear picture of the effects of goals on affect, extrarole behaviors, performance quality, complex or novel tasks, and interdependent tasks to name a few. For example, we know that goal achievement can lead to feelings of satisfaction (Thomas & Mathieu, 1994), but we know little about the affective consequences of failure to reach a goal (Pinder, 1998). Research by Brunstein and Gollwitzer (1996) concluded that failure to achieve goals can lead to lowered motivation and performance on future tasks, particularly if the goal is relevant to the person's self-definition and if he or she ruminates on the failure. Some tantalizing research indicates that specific goals in conjunction with bonuses for goal attainment may have a negative impact on employees' extrarole behaviors (Wright, George, Farnsworth, & McMahan, 1993). Incentives can also decrease performance when they are linked with goals that are viewed as unattainable (Lee et al., 1997). We know that quantity and quality goals sometimes interfere with each other (Gilliland & Landis, 1992); however, goals can improve creativity when people work alone and expect their work to be evaluated (Shalley, 1995). We know that goals can decrease performance on complex or novel tasks (Mitchell et al., 1994; Wood et al., 1987), that they may increase anxiety (Wegge, 1999), that they may hinder cooperation and decrease performance on interdependent tasks

(Mitchell & Silver, 1990), and that this effect appears to increase as the group size increases (Seijts & Latham, 2000). Are there other negative impacts of goals? How do we balance the clear positive performance outcomes associated with goal setting with some of these potential downsides? In what situations are these negative outcomes associated with goal setting most likely to be observed? Although none of these downsides are likely to call into question the fundamental findings of goal setting, these areas of research are worth pursuing to understand more fully the boundary conditions of the theory. There is still fertile theoretical ground to be explored in the field of goal setting.

The last issue we address in the area of goals is one that has received relatively little attention until recent years: What happens after a person selects a goal and begins working toward it? More than 50 years ago Lewin recognized that there are two stages to the motivational process: *goal setting* and *goal striving* (Lewin, Dembo, Festinger, & Sears, 1944). What we have discussed up to now pertains mostly to the first aspect of this process. Goal setting is by nature forward looking; it anticipates performance levels that are to be achieved in the future. The goal-striving or in-the-moment aspect of motivation has not been examined in anywhere near the same depth as has the more proactive and forward-looking goal setting. This is not to say, however, that it has been ignored. Several researchers have begun to examine this concept, though often under different rubrics, including action theory (Wilpert, 1995), control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1990; Klein, 1989), and self-regulation theory (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989). Although there is no consensus in the literature on what to call this active-processing component of goal achievement, we refer to this body of work as *on-line motivation*.

### **On-Line Motivation**

Most of the researchers in the area of on-line motivation focus on the motivational process after a goal has been accepted. Work by Gollwitzer (1999) and Bargh (1999; Bargh & Gollwitzer, 1994) suggests that people move toward their goals by utilizing *implementation intentions*, or strategies about when, where, and how goal attainment will be reached. This concept of implementation intentions appears to be very similar to the goal-setting mechanism of strategy development. Indeed, recent research by Diefendorff and Lord (2000) shows that there are two outcomes associated with planning. The first is intellectual—planning leads to conscious strategy development; the second is volitional—planning leads to increased persistence and confidence and decreased distractibility. Both of these effects are captured in the concept of implementation intentions. Diefendorff and

Lord also showed that the intellectual effects of planning occur before the task is undertaken, whereas the volitional effects are in the moment, frequently in response to changes in the environment.

Further research on implementation intentions indicates that they cause action initiation to become automatic when the appropriate situation arises (Gollwitzer, 1999). That is, implementation intentions effectively create instant habits, or automatic scripts, that are called up given the appropriate environmental prime. It is here that the on-line motivation research appears to diverge a bit from the goal-setting research. Whereas goal setting assumes that most human behavior is consciously goal directed, on-line motivational researchers have found evidence that there is much less under volitional control than we may realize. Bargh and Chartrand (1999) argued that most of daily life is driven by nonconscious mental processes, which free up cognitive capacity for conscious self-regulation. Wegner and Wheatley (1999) demonstrated that people perceive behavior to be conscious and willful more frequently than it actually is. In other words, although we may believe that much of our behavior is conscious and goal directed, it is possible that we are really on autopilot most of the time, behaving in ways that are consistent with cognitive scripts developed long before the situation we are currently encountering.

Action and control theorists have emphasized the feedback loop process through which people compare their current state with their *referent standard*, or goal (Klein, 1989). Control theory assumes that when there are discrepancies between one's current state and goal, individuals want to resolve those discrepancies by moving closer to the goal (Carver & Scheier, 1990). Consistent with the concept of implementation intentions, control theories posit the recall of automatic scripts for frequently encountered situations (Klein, 1989). When a novel or unexpected situation is encountered, however, more conscious cognitive processing occurs. Work on self-regulation by Kanfer and Ackerman (1989) proposed that given a fixed amount of cognitive capacity, performance is likely to decrease when more cognitive processing is required.

Goal-setting theorists have not received control theory warmly. One of the major areas of disagreement between the two theories relates to the nature of human beings: Do we seek to reduce feedback-loop discrepancies as control theorists propose, or are we actively involved in setting goals that require us to stretch (create discrepancies) as goal-setting theorists argue? Phillips, Hollenbeck, and Ilgen (1996) found that most people set positive discrepancies for themselves, even after a task is well learned. While this finding does not negate the value that control theory has added to the field, it

does raise the question of where one's goals (or referent standards) come from. Control theorists suggest that people have goal hierarchies and that goals at one level are determined by higher order goals, which are in turn determined by yet higher order goals. Locke (1991) argued that this explanation simply "pushes the tension-reduction problem back a step further" (p. 13).

There do appear to be a few philosophical and methodological differences between goal setting and action-control theory, but they are remarkably similar in much of their content. Rather than focusing on areas of disagreement between the two approaches, theoretical development might be better served if researchers viewed goal setting as applicable to the preaction phase of human behavior and parts of control theory as more applicable to the on-line active processing phase of human behavior.

Like the "thoughtful" theories of motivation, those approaches that we have labeled "not rational" examine motivation from a perspective that is internal to the individual. Unlike the thoughtful theories, however, this not-rational approach focuses on who people are (including traits and dispositions) and what they feel and need, rather than on what they think and believe. These approaches to motivation are not irrational in any sense, but they do not emphasize the cognitive approach to understanding human motivation and behavior that marked the theories of the previous section. Within this not-rational grouping, research can be further subdivided into "hot" and "cold" categories. The hot theories focus more on transitory mood states and emotions, which have a more direct and proximal impact on motivation and performance. The cold theories emphasize dispositions, genetic traits, and needs—more stable, indirect, and distal influences on motivation and performance.

### **Hot Theories: Mood, Emotion, Affect**

Before we move into a discussion of what we know about mood, emotion, and affect, it is important that we define these terms. We borrow from George and Brief (1996) the definition of mood as a pervasive and generalized affective state, which is influenced by situational factors but is not directed at specific targets. Mood is distinct from emotion, which is directed at someone or something. Affect, on the other hand, is generally agreed to include components of both mood and emotion (Weiss & Brief, in press). Thus, we can think of affect as being a more general term for feelings, and we can think of mood and emotion as particular kinds of feelings: The first is a more generalized overall feeling state, and the second is a more intense feeling that is directed at some target.

### **What We Know**

Historically, the prevailing paradigm in psychology has swung back and forth between a cognitive and behaviorist approach to understanding human behavior. Neither of these perspectives has done much to encourage research on feelings. Consequently, since the 1930s affect has played a very minor role in the study of organizational behavior (Pinder, 1998). Recently, however, there have been some hopeful signs that the study of affect is beginning to take a more prominent place in our understanding of human motivation.

In 1996 two major theoretical pieces were published that served both to focus attention on the underemphasized area of affect and to provide others with a foundation for future research. The first, Weiss and Cropanzano's chapter on affective events theory, proposed a close link between singular, discrete events on the job and one's emotions at any given moment. That is, they suggested that moods and emotions can and do fluctuate widely in a relatively short span of time and that this has some important implications for on-the-job behavior. The second piece, by George and Brief, reviewed research suggesting that mood can enhance or decrease ongoing motivation.

There is a growing body of literature showing that affect can influence cognitive processes and performance on some tasks. For example, positive affect has been shown to improve memory recall (Isen, Shalker, Clark, & Karp, 1978), improve creativity (Estrada, Isen, & Young, 1997), facilitate decision making (Staw & Barsade, 1993), increase prosocial behaviors (George, 1991), encourage coping behavior in the face of stressful events (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997), and increase the use of constructive approaches to conflict resolution (Carnevale & Isen, 1986). Research by Mitchell et al. (1994) showed that mood influenced self-efficacy judgments once a task was well learned. Another study demonstrated that psychological well-being predicts job performance (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000). Psychological well-being is defined as an individual's propensity to feel positive emotion but not feel negative emotion (Cropanzano & Wright, 1999); that is, it can be thought of as the propensity for being in a "good mood." Finally, research by Erez, Isen, and Purdy (1999) induced a positive mood in subjects and found a corresponding increase in persistence and performance on an anagram task; this relationship was mediated by an increase in the subjects' valence, instrumentality, and expectancy perceptions, suggesting a link between affect and other motivational constructs.

Weiss and Brief (in press) conducted a review of affect at the workplace and concluded that for most of the past century the study of affect in organizations was equivalent to the

study of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction includes not only an affective component (cf. Locke, 1976) but also a belief component (Weiss, Nicholas, & Daus, 1999). Because job satisfaction incorporates both feeling and thought, it should be a better predictor of motivation and performance than a construct including only one or the other. Indeed, two different meta-analyses seem to support this notion. Kraus (1995) reviewed 88 different studies that examined the link between attitude and behavior, where attitude is defined as incorporating affect and belief concepts. He found that attitude consistently predicted future behavior (mean  $r = .38$ ). Williams, Gordon, McManus, McDaniel, and Nguyen (2000) reported a meta-analysis showing that pay satisfaction is positively related to commitment and performance ( $r = .37$  and  $.10$ , respectively) and negatively related to intent to leave and turnover ( $r = -.24$  and  $-.12$ ). Until very recently (cf. Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001), however, industrial and organizational (I/O) psychologists have by and large dismissed the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance. Judge et al. attributed this dismissal in large part to the meta-analysis by Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985) that found a very weak relationship between the two constructs.

For the apparently weak relationship between job satisfaction and performance, one explanation is that job satisfaction and task behavior do not correspond in their target and action elements (Kraus, 1995). That is, job satisfaction is too general and global to predict a very specific action such as performance on a given task. Another explanation is that affect and job satisfaction may predict performance at the individual, within-persons level but not at the between-persons level. This is consistent with findings by Fisher and Noble (2000), who showed that people experience more positive affect than is usual when they are performing better than usual for them and less positive affect when they are performing worse than usual for them, and that this is true on a moment-to-moment basis (i.e., not aggregated over time). Other explanations are reviewed in Weiss and Brief (in press). Most of these relate to the levels at which the satisfaction-performance relationship has been measured. The argument is that examining the relationship at an aggregate, group level would be more appropriate and lead to stronger findings.

A final explanation is forwarded by Judge, Thoresen, Bono and Patton (2001), who conducted a meta-analysis of the relationship between job satisfaction and performance on 312 independent samples (combined  $N = 54,417$ ). Using newer analysis techniques than those used by Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985), they reported a mean corrected correlation between job satisfaction and job performance of  $.30$ . They suggested that previous findings of a null relationship

between the two constructs were based on limitations in analyses and on misinterpretation of findings.

The research to date is clear that affect has an influence on certain kinds of performance and that this influence is both direct and indirect through the mediating effect of cognitive motivational constructs. It is also clear that affect has been understudied. In the next section we look at some areas that future research on the hot area of affect should explore.

### New Directions

One issue that is not well understood relates to the sequence of events surrounding mood, emotion, motivation, and performance. For example, some research has found that affect is influenced by and follows performance (Locke & Latham, 1990). Other research has found that affect influences performance (e.g., Erez et al., 1999). Most likely there is a reciprocal relationship between affect and performance, in which some types of emotion and mood are more likely to be antecedent to performance-related constructs and other types are more likely to be consequences of them. Some of the discrepancy in findings in this area may be due to the time frame used in measuring affect. Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) suggested that the impact of affect is immediate: It influences a person in the moment. The influence of some kinds of affect is also much stronger than rational analysis at a given moment in time (Loewenstein, 1996). Therefore, research that examines affect and other constructs needs to take a more immediate, moment-by-moment perspective, rather than a cumulative one. The use of experience sampling and mood diaries (e.g., Weiss et al., 1999) should be encouraged to tease out some of these relationships.

In general, the research on affect has focused very narrowly on only a few moods and emotions, and most of these moods and emotions have been positive in nature. A couple of intriguing studies have examined the influence of negative affect on work-related outcomes, but these are the exception. For example, George (1990) found that negative affect was a stronger predictor than positive affect of whether prosocial behaviors would be exhibited. Raghunathan and Pham (1999) showed that different kinds of negative moods led to different kinds of decision making: Sadness resulted in high-risk and high-reward preferences, whereas anxiety led to low-risk and low-reward choices. Recent research has also begun to examine the links between anger or frustration and violence on the job. Negative affect is not the only area that needs to be studied. The negative effects of the expression of positive emotions are also worthy of future study. A good review by Morris and Feldman (1996) examined some of the dysfunctional effects of emotional labor and showed that

when there is a discrepancy between felt and expressed emotion, there can be high personal and social costs. Overall, we still know little about the motivational influences of a wide variety of affective states, including envy, fear, guilt, depression, love, compassion, pride, and gratitude, to name a few. Future research needs to help us understand the spectrum of mood and emotion and how these influence both motivation and performance.

Although we do not know as much about the more transient hot theories, we do know quite a bit about the more stable theories of individual difference (i.e., the cold theories), to which we now turn our attention. At a broad level, individual differences can be thought of as stable internal characteristics that make each individual unique in behavior and attitude (Ozer & Reise, 1994). In this category are both need theories and dispositional theories. Dispositional theories can be further divided into those that are affective and those that are nonaffective. Although affective dispositions are similar to the hot theories (which, after all, include "affect"), they differ in that they are more long-term and stable individual characteristics. In the following section we review what we know as well as new directions of research for these theories of individual difference.

## Need Theories

### What We Know

Most need theorists and researchers agree that needs are an unobservable force (some category of "wants") internal to the person, which creates a tension when the need is not being met. People try to reduce or eliminate this tension through some action. Because this tension directs attention, effort, and persistence, needs are thought to be motivating.

One of the most prominent need theories is Maslow's (1943) need hierarchy, which posits five categories of human needs arranged in hierarchical order. While Maslow's (1943) theory is quite possibly the most well known theory of motivation in popular culture today, it is garnering little research attention. This is largely because the early research related to this theory (most of which was conducted in the 1950s and 1960s) was not able to demonstrate a strong link between people's need levels and their subsequent behavior. Early findings also provoked questions about many of the underlying assumptions of the theory (e.g., people move from lower to higher levels and move only when a need is filled).

Another early need-theory approach to human motivation was McClelland's (1961) focus on need for achievement, need for power, and need for affiliation. For the purposes of

organizational researchers, the most fruitful area of study flowing from McClelland's (1961) theory has focused on the need for achievement. Achievement motivation emphasizes the need to achieve success and avoid failure. Those with a high need for achievement have an approach-oriented tendency to select tasks with an intermediate level of difficulty—those on which they are likely to succeed about 50% of the time. On the other hand, those with a high fear of failure are characterized by having avoidance-oriented tendencies. The concept of approach and avoidance orientations has lead to more recent research, which while not explicitly need theory, certainly has its roots in these concepts.

## New Directions

Perhaps one of the best examples of new research that draws from need theory ideas is work by Kanfer and her colleagues (Kanfer, Ackerman, & Heggestad, 1996; Kanfer & Heggestad, 1997, 2000). Drawing on their research on the self-regulatory process, Kanfer et al. (1996) proposed that differences in self-regulatory ability might be due to individual differences in terms of motivational skills. Further research indicated that these skills are influenced by motivational traits that fall into two primary trait clusters: achievement and anxiety (Kanfer & Heggestad, 1997). These two trait clusters are remarkably similar to McClelland's ideas of approach and avoidance orientations. And like the research surrounding McClelland's theory, Kanfer and Heggestad (1997) showed support for the idea that ideally motivated employees have high-achievement and low-anxiety traits. More recently, Kanfer and her colleagues have focused on the development of two versions of the Motivational Trait Questionnaire (MTQ), which measures three motivational traits that fall into the two primary trait clusters: competitive excellence and personal mastery (both achievement traits) and achievement anxiety (Kanfer & Heggestad, 2000).

Several others have conducted research that is also consistent with these findings. VanEerde (2000) developed a model that views procrastination in the larger context of self-regulation: The tendency to procrastinate results from an avoidance orientation toward unattractive long-term goals and the simultaneous approach orientation toward attractive short-term goals. Bateman and Crant (1993) studied an approach-oriented personality trait referred to as the proactive personality, which is demonstrated by those who "show initiative, take action and persevere" (cited in Parker & Sprigg, 1999, p. 926). Their findings indicate that this individual difference can moderate the relationship between job demands and job control when predicting strain. That is, people with a proactive personality are less likely to experience strain

when the demands of the job are high, as long as control over managing those demands is also high.

Although most current research on individual differences does not directly assess needs as Maslow, McClelland, and others originally conceptualized them, some new trends indicate that need-theory concepts are being examined in other theoretical contexts.

## Dispositions

While we were reviewing the literature for this chapter, it became apparent that although the topic of personality and disposition was not the single biggest area of review (goal setting has that distinction), it is the fastest growing area of research in the field of motivation. Researchers are currently paying great attention to individual differences, and there is every indication that this will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future. As Mount and Barrick (1998) stated, "Understanding individual differences and their implications for behavior at work is one of the central tenets of our field, and personality characteristics are central to understanding individual differences" (p. 851). Dispositions can be categorized into both nonaffective and affective dispositions, as we discuss next.

### What We Know

Beginning with several reviews and meta-analyses in the early 1990s (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Tett, Jackson, & Rothstein, 1991), it became quickly apparent that the topic of personality was garnering attention. Prior to this time, individual differences were seen largely as secondary in importance to the situation (Mitchell, 1979) or to a person's ability in causing behavior. While it is true that the relationship between personality and performance is moderated by situational strength (Liu & Weiss, 2000), these meta-analyses demonstrated that if personality is viewed using a consistent conceptualization, such as the Big Five, there are clear relationships between certain personality traits and job performance (cf. Hogan, Hogan, & Roberts, 1996). In particular, there appears to be a consistent link between conscientiousness and performance across a variety of different jobs.

Research throughout the 1990s has confirmed the ability of conscientiousness to predict not only performance but also other on-the-job behaviors. For example, conscientiousness has been shown to be positively related to selection and performance appraisal ratings (Dunn, Mount, Barrick, & Ones, 1995), training performance (Martocchio & Judge, 1997), students' classroom performance (Mone, Moss, & White, 1999), sales levels (Barrick, Stewart, & Piotrowski,

2000; Vinchur, Schippmann, Switzer, & Roth, 1998) truck driver performance and retention (Barrick & Mount, 1996), and group performance (Neuman & Wright, 1999). The conscientiousness-performance relationship has also been confirmed in a meta-analysis using a sample of 36 studies only from the European Community (Salgado, 1997). This research found conscientiousness and emotional stability to be valid predictors of job performance across a variety of occupations. Although conscientiousness predicts many job related outcomes, it does not necessarily predict everything. One recent study found no link between conscientiousness levels of Home Depot employees and the integrity or safety behaviors of these workers (Fallon, Avis, Kudisch, Gornet, & Frost, 1998).

The conscientiousness-performance connection appears robust across time, place, and job types, but some of the other Big Five traits appear to be connected with performance only in certain contexts or on certain jobs (cf. Dunn et al., 1995). Extraversion, for example, is consistently related to sales performance (Barrick et al., 2000; Vinchur et al., 1998), but it is not necessarily related to performance in other occupations. In some jobs, emotional stability shows connections with performance (Barrick & Mount, 1996; Salgado, 1997), and in some group contexts agreeableness is linked with performance (Neuman & Wright, 1999). In general, none of these effects are as large or as consistent as the conscientiousness-performance relationship.

Because the connection between personality and performance has been clearly established, more recent research has begun to look at the mechanisms through which personality has its impact on performance. Clearly, personality is a relatively distal influence on performance; what are the more proximal influences? Several studies have recently examined some of the mediating factors between personality and performance. Martocchio and Judge (1997) found that employees' conscientiousness levels were related to their self-efficacy, which was positively related to their learning. Similarly, Mone et al. (1999) found that self-efficacy mediated the relationship between Big Five traits and psychology students' classroom performances. They found that personal goals, goal commitment, and behavioral strategies were also mediators. Finally, Barrick et al. (2000) found that two motivational orientations, status striving and accomplishment striving, mediated the relationship between extraversion and conscientiousness and the performance of 164 telemarketing sales representatives. These motivational orientations appear to have much in common with McClelland's need conceptualization, as well as with Kanfer's motivational traits.

In contrast to the nonaffective dispositions, affective dispositions have reflected the tendency for an individual to be

in a more positive or negative state of mind. Some people appear consistently happier than others, regardless of circumstances. Watson and Clark (1984) referred to this tendency as positive affectivity (PA) and to the opposite (consistent distress, unhappiness, or other negative emotions) as negative affectivity (NA). There are numerous specific measures of dispositional affect, but in general they appear to fall into these two categories.

Although the concept of affect is relatively short-term, affective dispositions are not. Several lines of evidence seem to indicate that they are indeed dispositional. First, affective dispositions can predict attitudes and performance over time. Steel and Rentsch (1997) found that job satisfaction measured at one point in time controlled about 20% of the variance in job satisfaction measures taken 10 years later. Similarly, Wright and Staw (1999) conducted a longitudinal study with social welfare employees and found that happiness dispositions were good predictors of performance over time. A second stream of research identified the genetic basis for positive and negative affectivity. Arvey and Bouchard's twin research found evidence of a genetic cause of job satisfaction (Arvey, Bouchard, Segal, & Abraham, 1989; Bouchard, Arvey, Keller, & Segal, 1992) and of attitudes (Arvey & Bouchard, 1994).

In reviewing the literature, we believe that core self-evaluations can be considered a positive affective disposition. The concept of core self-evaluations has been developed by Judge and his colleagues as a higher order or broad personality construct in which self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and neuroticism (reverse scored) all load onto it. Like other studies examining the long-term effect of PA, core self-evaluations predict job and life satisfaction (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998) as well as task motivation and performance (Erez & Judge, 2001), and these relationships are stable over time. In one study, core job evaluations measured in childhood and early adulthood were linked to job satisfaction measured in middle adulthood (Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000). Like measures of nonaffective disposition, core self-evaluations seem to have their impact on performance through self-regulatory mechanisms such as activity level, goal setting, and goal commitment (Erez & Judge, 2001).

### *New Directions*

In some ways, all of the research in the area of dispositions is something of a new direction. However, at least two topics in this field stand out as needing more attention before researchers can draw any firm conclusions. First, there is no

clarity about whether the personality-performance findings discussed earlier are consistent across cultures. While Salgado's (1997) European meta-analysis concluded that conscientiousness predicted performance in the European Union, as it does in the United States, there is no evidence demonstrating this link in non-Western cultures. A cross-cultural study examining several personality scales between the United States and India found that whereas the scales themselves exhibited similar psychometric properties across the two groups, Indian respondents reported lower self-esteem and internal locus of control than did their U.S. counterparts (Ghorpade, Hattrup, & Lackritz, 1999). The authors attributed this in part to India's collectivistic culture, in which esteeming the self is viewed as self-aggrandizement. But this also means that assuming similarities of personality traits across cultures may be inappropriate. More comparative studies must be conducted before researchers can say anything with confidence on this topic.

A second topic that is currently generating quite a bit of research is the area of genetic influence on personality, including the effects of evolutionary psychology (Buss, Haselton, Shackelford, Bleske, & Wakefield, 1998). As previously discussed, Arvey and Bouchard (1994) showed that there is a heritable component to affective dispositions. And the genetic research is also clear that nonaffective dispositions including work values (Keller, Bouchard, Arvey, Segal, & Dawes, 1992) and Big Five traits including extraversion and neuroticism (Viken, Rose, Kaprio, & Koskenvuo, 1994) also have high heritability coefficients (up to .50). More recent research in psychology has turned toward understanding behavior from an evolutionary perspective. Nicholson (1997) argued persuasively for a gene-based understanding of personality and behavior including gender differences, in-group/out-group, and status seeking. Because of the strong genetic influence that has been documented for so many individual differences, it would seem a relatively short step for an evolutionary psychology perspective to be applied in this domain.

Up to this point our review of motivation theories has centered on those that emphasize internal attributes of the individual. Now we shift conceptual gears away from these internal theories of motivation and toward those theories that focus on external aspects of the task or situation. It is apparent in Figure 10.2 that the external approaches have an initial tension between what we call task or job design and more social approaches to understanding motivation. Two external elements that people focus on when working are the task itself and their social, interactive context. As mentioned, job design is covered elsewhere in this volume. However, it is important to say that tasks have motivational properties and

that many people exert large amounts of effort and persist for a long time when working on tasks that they find enriching and intrinsically satisfying.

There is also a distinction within the social category between an outcome orientation and a social-influence orientation. The outcome-oriented theories (justice, reinforcement) suggest that our evaluations of our outcomes and social comparisons are important, whereas the social-influence approaches argue that much of our motivation comes from trying to fulfill the explicit and implicit expectations of those around us (team pressure, norms, social influence, culture). These latter topics are also covered elsewhere in this volume, but again it is important to point out that motivation can be strongly influenced by the perceived expectations of others.

Reinforcement and equity-justice approaches to motivation have a focus on outcomes, or what a person receives as a result of his or her behavior. Although both approaches share an outcomes orientation to motivation, they differ significantly in terms of their underlying assumptions about human behavior. Reinforcement looks at behavior as a function of its consequences and virtually ignores the psychological mechanisms that might mediate environmental stimuli and behavior. Reinforcement has also traditionally been concerned with learning; that is, reinforcement has been examined as a way to improve how and what people learn. Equity and justice approaches, on the other hand, examine a person's perceptions of fairness as a determinant of motivation. Clearly, psychological and perceptual characteristics are key for these approaches.

## Reinforcement

As it was originally conceptualized, reinforcement theory, or behavior modification, does not really fit in a discussion of motivation. That is, reinforcement purists would argue that there is no such thing as motivation as an unobservable psychological process (cf. Skinner, 1990). On the other hand, reinforcement works, and it has provided the basis for many organizational practices from pay to discipline. Komaki, Coombs, and Schepman (1991) described reinforcement theory as a motivation theory emphasizing the consequences of behavior. At a very basic level, reinforcement theory is based on the idea that some behavioral consequences increase the likelihood that a behavior will be exhibited again, whereas other behavioral consequences decrease the likelihood that the behavior will be exhibited. The implications for managers are that they should reward behavior that they would like repeated, and make sure that undesirable behavior is not rewarded.

## What We Know

In 1964 Vroom wrote, "without a doubt the law of effect or principle of reinforcement must be included among the most substantiated findings of experimental psychology and is at the same time among the most useful findings for applied psychology concerned with control of human behavior" (quoted in Luthans & Stajkovic, 1999, p. 13). While organizational behavior theory and practice have changed substantially over the past several decades, the idea that reinforcement influences performance continues to be demonstrated today. Reinforcement programs have been shown to decrease absenteeism (e.g., Landau, 1993), increase safety behaviors (e.g., Sulzer-Azarof, Loafman, Merante, & Hlavacek, 1990), increase procedure-following behaviors (Welsh, Luthans, & Sommer, 1993), and increase the friendly behaviors of customer service representatives (Brown & Sulzer-Azarof, 1994).

By definition, a reinforcer is anything that increases the frequency of the demonstration of a desired behavior. Reinforcement theory also argues that reinforcers need to be presented consistently and in a timely manner. In practice, organizations reward desired behavior with two primary types of reinforcement: (a) financial, including pay for performance, merit pay, profit sharing, and gain sharing, and (b) nonfinancial, including feedback and recognition (Luthans & Stajkovic, 1999). Both types of reinforcement appear to have positive organizational impacts, based on the results of three meta-analyses conducted within the last decade.

The first, a meta-analysis of financial incentives on performance presented by Kluger and DeNisi (1996), shows an averaged effect size of .41 (with substantial variation across studies), suggesting a moderate effect. In addition, the types of incentives and the type of task had moderating effects. For example, negative or discouraging incentives (too hard to attain) had negative effects on performance. A more recent analysis by Jenkins, Mitra, Gupta, and Shaw (1998) reported an average weighted  $r$  of .34 between financial incentives and performance quantity, with slightly stronger effects in field studies than in lab studies. It is important to note that this research did not find any relationship between financial incentives and performance quality. Finally, a review and meta-analysis conducted by Stajkovic and Luthans (1997) showed that the effect of using a systematic reinforcement approach increased performance. The average  $d$  across different organizations and different types of reinforcement was .51 (a 17% increase), suggesting a reliable and moderate positive effect. Although this last meta-analysis found similar performance effects for nonfinancial and financial reinforcement,

the practical importance of financial reinforcement is seen in many organizational compensation systems, which seek to enhance employee motivation. Reinforcement is not the only viable theoretical approach to understanding compensation (see Bartol & Locke, *in press*, for a good review of others), but it is clearly important in helping us understand the compensation-performance link.

### New Directions

The meta-analyses on reinforcement just cited confirm that reinforcement theory has something to add to our knowledge of motivation. However, much of the organizational research on reinforcement has examined the link between financial incentives and desired behaviors. More recent work has been highlighting the importance of nonfinancial reinforcers. Although research shows that reinforcement can be an effective motivational tool, some have criticized the emphasis on external reinforcement in many organizations. In part this is due to the difficulty of accurately assessing individual-level performance in organizations, which is a necessary precursor to implementing financial incentives such as merit pay (Campbell, Campbell, & Chia, 1998). But there have also been questions about the effectiveness of external incentive rewards in general. For example, Heath (1997) documented what he referred to as the *extrinsic incentives bias*, or the tendency that people have to believe that others are more motivated than themselves by extrinsic incentives, and less motivated by intrinsic incentives such as learning new things. In a similar vein, Beer and Katz (1998) asked a sample of executives from 30 countries to respond to a questionnaire assessing their perceptions of financial incentives. Their results indicated that these executives did not find incentives to be particularly motivating. Thus, it would appear that even though most of us believe that external incentive rewards can be reinforcing (especially for other people), we also tend to value work-related outcomes that are not financial. This is consistent with Luthans and Stajkovic's (1999) work showing that nonfinancial reinforcement has performance effects similar to those of financial reinforcement. Researchers may want to examine the work-related implications of these findings, particularly in relation to organizational compensation and reward systems.

Historically, reinforcement research has focused on those consequences that encourage certain desired behaviors. That is, reinforcement research has typically examined the effects of reinforcement. However, the theory of operant conditioning includes the application of punishment in order to decrease undesirable behaviors. The concept of punishment has not been well examined in the organizational behavior

literature. Some recent grounded research using an interview methodology examined how managers think and feel about punishing subordinates (Butterfield, Trevino, & Ball, 1996). Among other things, this research emphasized that punishment in organizational contexts is common and that managers feel that its instrumentality varies: It works only sometimes. Other research by Liden and his colleagues demonstrated that different kinds of punishments are more likely depending on the role of the person instigating the punishment. That is, managers' and groups' disciplinary decisions were more severe than were individual group members' decisions (Liden et al., 1999). Although we know much about what kinds of reinforcements are effective, we do not know as much about punishment.

### Justice

The topic of organizational justice, or people's perceptions of fairness in organizations, has received substantial interest over the past decade (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997). Justice perceptions are based on what a person receives in an organizational context, including tangible outcomes as well as less tangible interpersonal factors. Because justice perceptions are determined almost exclusively in relation to others ("How much did so-and-so get?" or "Was I treated fairly?") we consider it within the social category of motivational theories.

### What We Know

The major organizing framework in the justice literature is the distinction between distributive and procedural justice. Distributive-justice judgments relate to people's evaluations of their outcomes, whereas judgments about procedural justice relate to people's perceptions of how fairly they were treated in a given process. Both types of justice have important implications for organizations; however, whereas distributive justice was the focus of much of the early work in this area, more recent research has focused more on procedural justice issues.

The theory surrounding distributive justice developed from Adams's (1965) work on *equity theory*. In brief, this theory predicts that people will evaluate the fairness of their situation in an organization based on a comparison of the ratio of their own inputs and outcomes with some referent's ratio of inputs and outcomes. When these ratio comparisons are not equal, people are motivated to change the situation by either modifying their inputs and outcomes, changing their referent other, distorting their perceptions, or quitting.

Adams's (1965) equity theory predicts that people will be motivated to create a situation of equity or fairness. Recent research examining the psychological processes underlying this fairness motive has shown two interesting phenomena. First, work by Thierry (1998) demonstrated that outcomes, particularly in relation to pay, communicate information that influences people's self-concepts. For example, those who are paid more tend to believe that their performance is better than others and that they have more control over organizational outcomes than do others. Second, research examining how people form justice judgments has shown that even mild personal experiences of injustice have a much stronger influence on impressions of justice than do reports from others of more severe injustice (Lind, Kray, & Thompson, 1998). These research findings would seem to indicate that justice judgments are very personal. Not only are these judgments likely to be based on people's own personal experiences, but their motives for making them are at least in part to enhance or preserve their self-concepts.

The research testing equity theory has been generally supportive across a variety of contexts. We know, for example, that outcomes that are perceived as unfair can lead to poor performance (Greenberg, 1988), increased turnover and absenteeism (Schwarzwald, Koslowsky, & Shalit, 1992), and lowered commitment to the organization (Schwarzwald et al., 1992). However, the effects of *positive inequity* (i.e., situations in which a person is overrewarded relative to referent others) do not appear to be as strong as those of *negative inequity* (i.e., a person is underrewarded relative to others). For example, Bloom (1999) found that higher pay dispersion on professional baseball teams (a recipe for higher inequity perceptions) led to lower individual performance for those on the low end of the pay scale. Those at the high end of the pay scale actually had higher performance; however, this effect was not enough to offset the lowered performance of the underpaid players, and the overall impact of higher pay dispersion led to lower team performance. Others have found similar results across a range of organizational contexts (e.g., Greenberg, 1988).

Research on equity theory expanded substantially with the introduction of the concept of procedural justice. That is, was the process for making a distributive decision fair? Several criteria appear to be involved in making an evaluation of procedural fairness. Thibaut and Walker (1975) identified voice as an important determinant of whether a procedure was considered fair. This is consistent with research showing that people who have choice in determining which task to engage in are more likely to view the process as fair (Cropanzano & Folger, 1991). Leventhal (1980) proposed that fair procedures are those that meet six different criteria: consistently

applied, free from bias, accurate, correctable, representative of all concerns, and based on prevailing ethical standards. Subsequent research has supported these criteria for procedural justice and has shown a link between them and satisfaction (Taylor, Tracy, Renard, Harrison, & Carroll, 1996).

When processes are perceived as fair, the benefits to the organization are high. Procedural justice has been shown to influence the acceptance of human-resources interventions ranging from pay systems (Schaubroeck, May, & Brown, 1994), to smoking bans (Greenberg, 1994), to parental leave policies (Grover, 1991), to disciplinary actions (Ball, Trevino, & Sims, 1994). When people believe that the process was fair, they are more likely to cooperate with those in authority, even when the outcome may be less than positive for them personally (Tyler & DeGoey, 1995). Greenberg (1990) showed that theft as a response to pay cuts can be minimized with processes that are perceived as fair. Commitment and job satisfaction can be enhanced with procedural justice (Takeuchi, Tekleab, & Taylor, 2000), which is at least one of the mechanisms through which participation in goal setting affects satisfaction (Roberson, Moye, & Locke, 1999). Higher perceptions of procedural justice lead to lower levels of turnover (Dailey & Kirk, 1992) and lower likelihood of litigation (Bies & Tyler, 1993). Perhaps most widely researched is the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs).

A large number of studies have shown that procedural justice is an antecedent of OCBs (for a review, see Morgeson, 1999). This relationship is mediated by satisfaction (Moorman, 1991) and perceived organizational support (Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, 1998), and this is especially true for reciprocity-wary employees—those who believe that they may be exploited by others (Lynch, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 1999). Another recent study seems to indicate that procedural justice has its strongest influence on employees who feel that they have been treated unfairly in the past (Taylor, Masterson, Renard, & Tracy, 1998). In other words, processes that are procedurally just may have their biggest impact on those employees who are currently most dissatisfied.

An interesting finding is that subordinates appear to play a role in the extent to which procedural justice is used. Two studies have shown that employees who are assertive (Korsgaard, Roberson, & Rymph, 1998) or who use supervisor-focused impression management tactics (Dulebohn & Ferris, 1999) can increase the procedural justice behaviors on the part of their managers. Finally, it appears that it is possible to train leaders in procedural justice. Skarlicki and Latham (1997) showed that union leaders who had been trained in organizational justice principles were perceived by their union members as more fair and that these union

members exhibited increased OCBs directed toward the union and fellow union members.

Although procedural justice is clearly important, it may not be any more or less important than distributive justice. Brockner and Wisenfeld (1996) found that when distributive justice is high, procedural justice does not control much variance in the evaluation of exchanges. On the other hand, when procedural justice is high, distributive outcomes do not control much variance. A more recent study by Skarlicki, Folger, and Klimiuk (2000) found similar results: When procedural justice was high, distributive justice was unrelated to performance; however, with low procedural justice, distributive justice became predictive of performance. Apparently, employees are concerned about justice, but either procedural or distributive justice will do. Two meta-analyses have been conducted recently between justice constructs and various organizational attitudes and behaviors (Bartle & Hayes, 1999; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Both papers report strong and significant relationships between both procedural and distributive justice and attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction and trust). Corrected mean  $r_s$  ranged from .48 to .68. There are also positive but less strong effects on types of organizational citizenship behaviors ( $r$  from .15 to .32) and on performance ( $r = .15$  in both papers).

Other theoretical work in the area of equity theory has highlighted an individual difference factor related to equity perceptions, namely, *equity sensitivity*. Huseman, Hatfield, and Miles (1987) developed a measure for this construct, which has been tested in a variety of settings. The research on equity sensitivity suggests that people can be categorized along a continuum as benevolents, equity sensitives, or entitleds (King, Miles, & Day, 1993). *Benevolents* are defined as having a higher tolerance for negative inequity, and they have been shown to have relatively high levels of satisfaction regardless of reward condition. *Equity sensitives* are most likely to conform to the predictions of equity theory, showing aversion to both conditions of under- and overreward. *Entitleds*, on the other hand, prefer situations of positive inequity, or overreward. They tend to value tangible extrinsic outcomes more than they value the intrinsic work outcomes.

### New Directions

A new concept in this area that is currently generating quite a bit of research is that of interactional justice, or the idea that how decision makers in the organization treat people is important in determining equity perceptions. Two aspects of interactional justice are discussed in the literature: the extent to which people believe that they have been treated with dignity and respect and the extent to which people believe that they

have been given appropriate information about the procedures that affect them (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997). There is some debate over whether interactional justice is a subset of procedural justice or whether it is a third category of justice distinct from distributive and procedural justice. While social aspects of procedural justice are highly related to interactional justice (Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991), there is also evidence that procedural and interactional fairness have different antecedents (Schminke, Ambrose, & Cropanzano, 2000).

Regardless of its position in the nomological net, perceptions of interactional justice do have positive outcomes. In particular, such perceptions increase OCBs (Moorman, 1991), particularly supervisor-focused OCBs (Skarlicki et al., 2000), and decrease retaliation behaviors (Greenberg, 1994). A recently developed and validated interpersonal treatment scale shows that this measure is related to satisfaction with supervisor, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (Donovan, Drasgow, & Munson, 1998).

Another new direction in the justice literature relates to retaliation and violence in response to perceptions of inequity. In the early 1990s Greenberg (1993) demonstrated that people are likely to act in ways that harm the organization in response to unfair treatment. Similarly, Skarlicki and Folger (1997) showed that the interaction of low distributive, procedural, and interactional justice led to retaliation behaviors including taking supplies, damaging equipment, calling in sick, or leaving a mess. Although equity theory does a good job of explaining negative behaviors based on restitution (e.g., theft), it does not do as well in explaining retaliatory behaviors, which have no clear positive outcome for the individual engaging in them. Such destructive behavior makes more sense when viewed through the lens of the psychological contract (Rousseau & Geller, 1994) or of social exchange literatures (Greenberg & Scott, 1996). Essentially, employees who are treated in ways that do not meet their expectations view their situation as a violation of the psychological contract that they have with the organization and tend to react negatively toward the organization as a result (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). It may help to think of these negative behaviors as being the opposite of OCBs (cf. Pawar & Eastman, 1999): When employees are treated fairly, they engage in OCBs; when they are treated unfairly, they engage in deviant and destructive behaviors.

### Summary: Overall Perspective

Our review of the literature is now complete. As promised, the field of motivation is vast and complex. One can focus on the person or the context, proximal or distal factors, organizational or social outcomes, thoughtful or more routinized

activities, or cognitive or more emotional processes. Based on our narrative review and the meta-analyses we uncovered, it is clear that all of these perspectives have some validity. As a result, there are some underlying principles about which most researchers agree.

First, goals are a major factor on the motivational landscape. Almost every approach to this topic includes goals. We humans are goal setters and goal seekers. We also prefer pleasure to pain and will seek positive outcomes and states and avoid negative ones. Third, we prefer mastery and control to uncertainty and ambiguity. Mastery and control are direct antecedents of our expectations, confidence, and efficacy. We also prefer interesting, stimulating, and satisfying to boring, stressful, and repetitious activities. In addition, we are constantly involved in social interaction and social comparison. We want to have a positive view of ourselves and be liked by others and be treated fairly. The social context is a major source of such information. Finally, we are all unique with genetic and personal backgrounds that shape our wants, desires, and reactions to events. These individual differences play a crucial role in understanding motivation and variation in motivation.

## DISCUSSION

Given these different principles and perspectives it seems unlikely that a general theory of motivation will emerge. More likely, orientations will evolve around different perspectives. Ambrose and Kulik (1999), for example, suggested that we should focus on classes of behavior such as effort or citizenship behaviors. Mitchell (1997) discussed how different theories could be grouped around the motivational processes of arousal, attention and direction, and intensity and persistence. Others have suggested that we should focus either on the intention/choice activities (prior to action) or the actual on-line behavioral activities (Wilpert, 1995).

The idea of tensions, which we presented in this paper, incorporates some of these orientations. Included are the internal-external, task-social, thoughtful-not rational, hot-cold and prechoice-on-line distinctions. Presumably, elements of the person and context will help to determine the extent to which one or the other (or both) side of these dichotomies is operating.

But after doing this review, a number of other "perspectives" occurred to us. Different theories come to mind based on the type of questions we ask. Here are four such questions:

1. What is the underlying dynamic? It seemed to us that we could classify theories according to an overall theme. More specifically, some theories clearly revolve around

discrepancy ideas. Needs are activated based on this idea, as are feelings of injustice. In addition, there is the discrepancy between one's goal and one's current level of goal attainment. Supposedly, such discrepancy states are unpleasant and aversive, and we strive to reduce them.

Another theme might be called a pull orientation. We wish to please others (conform to social norms), and we are attracted to positive rewards, outcomes, and the attainment of goals. Motivation in this sense seems to be centered in the external context. A contrasting theme might be labeled a push orientation. Theories that focus on our genes, personality, expectancies, efficacy, and self-set goals could be seen as fitting this description. These factors help to shape our preferences, expectations, and orientations.

2. What is the effect of time? Obviously, people and contexts change over time. Tasks become easier, activities become routinized, groups become cohesive, goals are attained, rewards change, and so on. We suspect that different motivational theories and principles operate as these changes take place.

A different way to think about time is to look at the orientation of the theories themselves. All of the theories are meant to predict behavior that will follow one's current motivational state. However, the information that they use or the constructs that they employ are time related and time dependent. For example, both reinforcement theory and equity theory use information from the past. Reinforcement histories supposedly influence current action, as does our assessment of our past outcomes relative to the outcomes of others. Fairness judgments are based on past actions and activities.

Some approaches are more in the moment and are not particularly reflective in nature. Our personalities (consistent and persistent behavioral tendencies) seem to emerge in context. Our moods are fleeting and variable. In addition, social, interpersonal interaction and the social context can change constantly over short periods of time. Such changes in mood or context can lead to very different norms or personality traits being salient.

Finally, much of what we do is motivated by anticipation. Expectancies, self-efficacy, and goals are reflections of what we think we will do, can do, and want to do with respect to upcoming activities (Daniels & Mitchell, 1995). These constructs suggest that what we do now is partially determined by our view of the future.

3. How malleable are these states? Both internal and external motivational orientations vary in terms of how easy it is to influence the underlying motivational process. Internally, our genes and personality are hard to change. Our mood

may be partly personal and partly contextual. While mood may change frequently, it is not exactly under personal or external control. On the other hand, goals, expectancies, and efficacy appear to be much more malleable.

Looking at external factors presents a similar picture. Changing the design of jobs often involves a major change in how tasks get done. New technology or methods may be needed. Social norms are also hard to change, but perhaps less so than redesigning tasks. On the other hand, new reward or reinforcement practices can be adopted somewhat more readily. Thus, it may be tougher to change a person's reaction to work through job design than it would be to change that same person's reinforcement expectations.

- How easy are these theories to use or implement? An earlier paper by Mitchell (1997) examined this question in detail. Some theories, such as goal setting or equity, require ongoing monitoring, assessment, feedback, and revisions and are individually focused. Many resources are needed. Job design or social norms, on the other hand, are implemented and put in place and persist over time with less need to monitor and maintain them. They are also focused on everyone, not individuals. Selection strategies designed to bring in people with certain needs or traits focus on attributes that persist over time and do not usually require monitoring or feedback.

Not all theories are equally effective, however. Goal setting may require huge amounts of resources to do well, but the goal setting–performance relationships are strong. Job design, on the other hand, has a less strong impact on performance. Nor are all theories equally appropriate to particular jobs or people. Thus, before choices are made about which approach or approaches to use, one needs to assess the context, resources needed, and outcomes desired (Mitchell, 1997).

## CONCLUSIONS

The field of motivation is still vibrant and interesting. We researchers have confidence about the meaning of the construct and how it operates. We have a good idea of the mechanisms that create and sustain it. Recently, the areas of affect, goal setting (especially self-regulation and on-line behavior), individual differences, and justice have captured our attention, whereas need theories and expectancy theory have received less attention.

There are also areas in need of more research. How do thoughtful processes become more routine? What mechanisms are involved with the allocation of effort and time over

tasks? How do emotions such as anger and guilt (e.g., over injustice) influence constructs such as goal acceptance or self-efficacy? How do distal constructs such as personality influence more proximal states such as expectancies or goal commitment? How does the task and social context influence one's mood? Answering these and many other questions requires more research.

In closing, we want to point out that practical issues are important as well. More field and longitudinal research is needed to assess the effects of individual motivational interventions and combinations of interventions. We need better diagnostic models and theories evolving from applications. Such research will help us answer the important questions of when and where particular motivational interventions work as well as why they work.

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