Chapter Title
Prosocial Motivation at Work: When, Why, and How Making a Difference Makes a Difference

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Abstract and Keywords
This chapter examines the nature, contextual and dispositional antecedents, contingent behavioral consequences, and moderating effects of prosocial motivation at work. Prosocial motivation, the desire to protect and promote the well-being of others, is distinct from altruism and independent of self-interested motivations. Key antecedents include relational job design, collectivistic norms and rewards, and individual differences in other-oriented values, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Prosocial motivation more strongly predicts persistence, performance, and productivity when it is intrinsic rather than extrinsic; citizenship behaviors when it is accompanied by impression management motivation; and performance when manager trustworthiness is high. Prosocial motivation strengthens the relationship between intrinsic motivation and creativity, core self-evaluations and performance, and proactive behaviors and performance evaluations. Future directions include studying the conditions under which prosocial motivation fuels unethical behavior and harmdoing, collective prosocial motivation, behavior as a cause rather than consequence of prosocial motivation, new organizational antecedents of prosocial motivation, and implications for social entrepreneurship, corporate social responsibility, and the natural environment.

Keywords: work motivation, prosocial behavior, job design, organizational citizenship, other-orientation

"It really makes a difference if you have a good anesthesiologist in the operating room… I've had so many important moments, incidents where I helped someone… And many of these trauma cases have happened where I've thought, I'm glad I was there to make a difference, you know? I really, really enjoy taking pain away from people… my favorite operation is childbirth. Because you give something to the patient. You take away pain and help give them a baby." –Anesthesiologist (Bowe, Bowe, & Streeter, 2000, pp. 620-621)

"This is a dream job for me. It's the best job in the world. It doesn't change the world for the better, but it's at least giving people some enjoyment for a couple of hours a day… I'm all for education but I'm also for entertainment. I'm for a balanced life, you know? And these things are really entertaining. People love them and it's such a great feeling to make something that people love." –Video game designer (Bowe et al., 2000, pp. 377-378)

Introduction

What motivates employees like the two quoted above to care about making a positive difference in the lives of others, and what actions and experiences does this motivation fuel? Our chapter focuses on prosocial motivation, the desire to have a positive impact on other people or social collectives (Batson, 1987; Grant, 2007). Theoretically, research on prosocial motivation begins to illuminate when, why, and how employees' thoughts, feelings, and actions are often driven by a concern for benefiting others, answering calls to explain the motivations underlying individual and organizational behavior through perspectives other than rational self-interest (Kahn, 1990; Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004; Shamir, 1990, 1991). Practically, prosocial motivation is a timely topic given the international growth of the service sector and the rise of teamwork; both of these trends have increased employees' interpersonal interactions and provided new work relationships in which employees can experience and express prosocial motivation (Grant, 2007; Kanfer, 2009).

Furthermore, prosocial motivation is a theoretically and practically significant phenomenon because it has a substantial influence on employees' work behaviors and job performance. Recent research suggests that prosocial motivation can drive employees to take initiative (De Dreu & Nauta, 2009), help others (Rioux & Penner, 2001), persist in meaningful tasks (Grant et

al., 2007), and accept negative feedback (Korsgaard, Meglino, & Lester, 1997). Evidence also

indicates that prosocial motivation can enable employees to receive more credit for proactive

behaviors such as helping, voice, issue-selling, and taking charge (Grant, Parker, & Collins,

2009); prevent employees with positive self-concepts from becoming complacent (Grant &

Wrzesniewski, 2010); channel the efforts of employees who care about managing impressions

toward becoming better citizens (Grant & Mayer, 2009); direct intrinsically motivated employees

toward greater task persistence, performance, and productivity (Grant, 2008a); and focus

intrinsically motivated employees on developing ideas that are not only novel, but also useful,

thus fostering greater creativity (Grant & Berry, 2010).

Our chapter unfolds in the following steps. We begin by discussing definitional and

dimensional issues: what are the key features of prosocial motivation? Second, we turn our

attention to the contextual and dispositional antecedents of prosocial motivation at work. Third,

we consider the behavioral consequences of prosocial motivation at work, with particular

reference to the contingencies that moderate whether prosocial motivation leads to higher levels

of persistence, performance, productivity, citizenship, and initiative. Fourth, we discuss research

on prosocial motivation as a moderator of the effects of other traits, states, and behaviors on

performance and creativity. Finally, we identify unanswered questions and new directions to be

explored in future research. We hope that our chapter will motivate other scholars to pursue new

lines of inquiry that advance knowledge about—and provide practical implications for

managing—prosocial motivation at work.

Definition and Dimensions

Motivation denotes a desire or reason to act, and "prosocial" literally means for the

benefit of others or with the intention of helping others (Oxford English Dictionary, 2009). As

such, prosocial motivation is the desire to benefit other people or groups (Batson, 1987; Grant, 2007). In order to gain a deeper understanding of the construct, it is useful to situate our view of prosocial motivation in basic frameworks of motivation. Psychologists have argued that motivation operates at three hierarchical levels of generality: global, contextual, and situational (Vallerand, 1997). Global motivation focuses on an employee's relatively stable dispositional orientation toward particular goals and actions across time and situations. Contextual motivation focuses on an employee's motivation toward a specific domain or class of behavior, and is moderately variable across time and situations. Situational motivation focuses on an employee's motivation toward a particular behavior in a particular moment in time, and is highly variable. Thus, at the extremes, global motivation can be viewed as a traitlike concept, while situational motivation matches prototypes of psychological states (Chaplin, John, & Goldberg, 1988).

Prosocial motivation can be conceptualized and studied at all three levels of generality. Global prosocial motivation refers to an employee's tendency to care about benefiting others, and is thus perhaps best conceptualized in terms of prosocial values, or placing importance on protecting and promoting the well-being of others in general (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). Contextual prosocial motivation refers to an employee's desire to benefit a particular category of other people through a particular occupation, job, or role. For example, contextual prosocial motivation would capture a nurse or doctor's concern for helping patients, a musician's quest to entertain and move audiences, a banker's goal of helping clients finance the purchase of a home, or a teacher's passion for educating students. Situational prosocial motivation refers to an employee's desire to benefit a specific group of other people in a specific situation. For example, returning to the previous examples, situational prosocial motivation would capture the nurse or doctor's desire to cure the patient in room 231, the musician's desire to entertain the audience at

an 8 o'clock show, the banker's desire to help Lois and Clark afford a home, and the teacher's

desire to help her classroom of 25 kindergartners learn to read today.[1]

Relationship with self-interest. These distinctions help to resolve a debate about whether

prosocial motivation is the opposite of, or independent of, self-interested motivations. A number

of scholars have assumed that high prosocial motivation assumes low self-interested motivation,

and vice-versa (e.g., Cialdini et al., 1997; Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001).

However, other scholars have argued that these motivations are independent or even orthogonal

(Bolino, 1999; Crocker, 2008; De Dreu, 2006; Deutsch, 1973; Grant, 2007, 2008a, 2009;

McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992). For example, Shamir (1990, p. 314) explained:

> between totally selfish work behaviors and pure altruistic behaviors that are specifically
> performed for the benefit of others, many organizationally relevant actions are probably
> performed both for a person's own sake and for the sake of a collectivity such as a team,
> department, or organization… with a wide range of motivational orientations that are
> neither purely individualistic (concerned only with one's satisfaction) nor purely altruistic
> (concerned only with maximizing the other's satisfaction).

We propose that the relationship between prosocial and self-interested motivations is

likely to vary as a function of the hierarchical level of motivation under consideration. The

negative, bipolar relationship between the two motivations is most likely to occur at situational

levels, where there are moments and circumstances in which prosocial motivation and self-

interested motivation guide employees toward conflicting courses of action. For example, social

dilemma situations are explicitly defined as those in which employees are required to choose

between personal and collective welfare (e.g., Weber, Kopelman, & Messick, 2004). It is worth

noting that even in these situations, prosocially motivated employees are sometimes able to

identify integrative solutions that "expand the pie," aligning their goals with others' (e.g., De

Dreu, Weingart, & Kwon, 2000). However, we recognize that there are inevitably situations in

which employees face conflicts between expressing prosocial and self-interested motivations.

At the contextual and global levels, these conflicts appear to disappear—or at least become resolved. Over time and across situations, employees can make choices to pursue actions that benefit others independent of—and often in conjunction with—their choices about actions that benefit themselves. For example, Sheldon, Arndt, and Houser-Marko (2003) found that over time, individuals gravitate toward, and self-select into, situations that allow them to simultaneously benefit others and themselves. Similarly, McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992) presented evidence that individuals with strong communal (prosocial) and agentic (self-interested) motivations achieve generativity by selecting activities that allow them to express both sets of motivations. In addition, studies have shown that contextual prosocial motivation in work settings is independent of—and even positively correlated with—self-interested motivations such as self-concern (De Dreu & Nauta, 2009) and impression management motivation (Grant & Mayer, 2009). Finally, studying dispositional values, Schwartz et al. (2001) found a manifold of weak correlations between prosocial and self-interested values. Thus, although prosocial motivation is often confused with altruism, Grant and Berry (2010) summarized that "prosocial motivation can involve, but should not necessarily be equated with, altruism; it refers to a concern for others, not a concern for others at the expense of self-interest."

Building on these arguments, Batson and colleagues have proposed that prosocial motivation can be based on one or more of four different ultimate goals (Batson, 1994; Batson, Ahmad, Powell, & Stocks, 2008): altruism, egoism, principlism, and collectivism. Prosocial motivation serves altruistic goals when it protects or promotes the well-being of other individuals without the intention of personal benefit. It serves egoistic goals when it increases positive affect, reduces negative affect, boosts self-esteem, provides material rewards, or prevents material punishments. It serves principlistic goals when it advances a moral value or ethical cause. And it

serves collectivistic goals when it defends or strengthens one's bond with a group. In short, Batson and colleagues (2008) suggest that employees can be prosocially motivated for any combination of these four reasons: to protect and enhance their egos, to genuinely help another in need, to uphold moral principles, and to defend or advance one's relationships with a group.

Now that we have clarified the nature of prosocial motivation, what are the dimensions along which it varies? Motivation is typically viewed as encapsulating three core psychological processes: the direction, intensity, and persistence of effort (Kanfer, 1990; Mitchell & Daniels, 2003). From a directional standpoint, prosocial motivation can be experienced and expressed toward different domains and beneficiaries of impact (Grant, 2007). In terms of domains, employees can be prosocially motivated to protect and promote others' physical well-being (health and safety), developmental well-being (learning and growth), psychological well-being (happiness and enjoyment), or material well-being (economic and financial status). In terms of beneficiaries, prosocial motivation can vary in whether it is directed toward other individuals, groups, or larger social collectives such as organizations, nations, or societies. It can also vary in whether it is directed toward ingroup or outgroup members, and toward others inside the organization (coworkers, supervisors) or outside the organization (clients, customers, suppliers).

Prosocial motivation can also vary in terms of its intensity and persistence. From the standpoint of intensity, the more extreme the prosocial motivation, the more likely it is to be governed by the "hot" experiential system rather than the "cool" cognitive system (Loewenstein & Small, 2007; Metcalfe & Mischel, 1999; see also Grant & Wade-Benzoni, 2009). From the standpoint of persistence, prosocial motivation can be very short in duration, lasting only a few moments or hours when a particular beneficiary is in need (Batson 1998), or much longer in duration, such as in the case of an engineer's enduring lifetime commitment to helping mankind

(e.g., Sieden, 1989). Finally, prosocial motivation is distinct from intrinsic motivation in terms of being outcome-focused rather than process-focused, future-focused rather than present-focused, and requiring greater conscious self-regulation and self-control (Grant, 2008a). As will be discussed in more detail later, prosocial motivation can vary in the degree to which it is intrinsic (autonomous) and extrinsic (controlled) in origin. Employees can autonomously choose to be prosocially motivated based on its identification or integration with their values, or feel pressured into prosocial motivation by feelings of guilt, obligation, and external control (e.g., Gebauer, Riketta, Broemer, & Maio, 2008).

The construct of prosocial motivation is important to positive organizational scholarship (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003) for three core reasons. First, research on prosocial motivation challenges the often-cynical assumption that employees' goals are exclusively self-interested and egoistic, opening up a more balanced, pluralistic, and comprehensive approach to exploring and explaining the forces that guide and constrain individual and organizational action. Second, prosocial motivation can serve as a lens for understanding employees' quests to create "positive" outcomes for others, providing insight into how employees experience and pursue the desire to protect and promote the well-being of coworkers, customers, and communities. Third, prosocial motivation can operate as an enabling condition for outcomes that are often viewed as "positive" for employees, such as meaningful work and strengthened social bonds, and for organizations, such as effort, persistence, performance, creativity, citizenship and proactive behaviors.

Antecedents of Prosocial Motivation: When Employees Want to Make a Difference

Having defined the dimensions along which prosocial motivation can vary, we turn our attention to its antecedents: what causes it? Existing research on the antecedents of prosocial motivation can be organized into four categories: relational job design, collectivistic rewards,

leadership, and individual differences. In the following sections, we discuss representative findings from key studies and summary themes from relevant literatures.

   Relational job design. Job design has received the most explicit attention as a driver of prosocial motivation. Recent theory and research suggests that job design plays an important role in shaping employees' prosocial motivation. Grant (2007) developed a conceptual framework to explain how the relational architectures of jobs—the structural characteristics that affect employees' relationships with other people—influences prosocial motivation. He proposed that when jobs are designed to connect employees to the impact they have on the beneficiaries of their work (such as clients, customers, and patients), they experience higher levels of prosocial motivation, which encourages them to invest more time and energy in their assigned tasks and in helping these beneficiaries. Grant (2007) identified two relational job characteristics that connect employees to their impact on beneficiaries: task significance and contact with beneficiaries. Task significance is the extent to which a job provides opportunities to have an impact on other people (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), and contact with beneficiaries is the extent to which a job provides opportunities to communicate with these people (Gutek, Bhappu, Liao-Troth, & Cherry, 1999).

   Grant (2007) proposed that task significance provides employees with knowledge about how their work affects beneficiaries, strengthening *perceived impact on beneficiaries*, and contact with beneficiaries enables employees to identify and empathize with beneficiaries, strengthening *affective commitment to beneficiaries*. These two psychological states fuel prosocial motivation, thereby increasing effort, persistence, and helping behavior. In the language of expectancy theory (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996; Vroom, 1964), perceived impact constitutes instrumentality beliefs (my performance has consequences for beneficiaries), and affective commitment constitutes valence beliefs (I care about beneficiaries). As such, prosocial

motivation—and thus effort, persistence, and helping behaviors directed toward having a positive impact on beneficiaries—should be highest when jobs are relationally designed to provide both task significance and contact with beneficiaries. For example, an automotive engineer should experience the strongest prosocial motivation when she is responsible for designing safety mechanisms that have the potential to prevent deaths and serious injuries *and* has the opportunity to meet actual drivers of her company's cars.

To test these hypotheses, Grant et al. (2007) conducted a field experiment and two laboratory experiments. The field experiment focused on fundraising callers responsible for soliciting alumni donations to a university. The callers had no contact with student scholarship recipients, the primary beneficiaries of the funds they raised. In the contact condition, callers spent five minutes interacting with a scholarship recipient, learning about how he received his scholarship and how it had improved his life. In the control condition, callers had no contact with the scholarship recipient. The callers in the contact condition showed substantial increases in task persistence and performance over the following month: meeting a single scholarship student motivated the average caller to spend 142% more weekly time on the phone, resulting in average increases of 171% in weekly revenue raised. More specifically, the average caller increased in weekly phone time from 1 hour and 47 minutes to 4 hours and 20 minutes, and in weekly donation money raised from $185.94 to $503.22 (Grant et al., 2007). Notably, in this experiment, the callers were contacting non-donors who rarely gave money to the university. The effects were even more dramatic in a subsequent experiment in which callers were contacting repeat donors who gave in higher frequencies and amounts. When callers contacting repeat donors met a single scholarship recipient, their average weekly revenue increased more than fivefold from

$411.74 to $2,083.52 (Grant, 2008c). In both field experiments, callers in the control condition showed no statistically significant changes in either persistence or performance.

To rule out Hawthorne effects by demonstrating that these effects were caused by the human connection with the scholarship recipient, not by extraneous factors such as increased managerial attention, Grant et al. (2007) included a third condition in which the callers read a letter by the scholarship recipient but did not meet him in person. Thus, the callers received equivalent information content across the two conditions; the only difference was the physical presence of the scholarship recipient. The callers' persistence and performance increased only in the interpersonal contact condition. However, subsequent experiments showed that the letter, if it contained adequately vivid and emotionally evocative cues, was sufficient to increase perceived impact and thus motivate higher performance (Grant, 2008b). Finally, the Grant et al. (2007) experiment involved callers who knew each other, which raises the possibility of implementation threats related to callers in one condition changing their behavior as a result of learning about the treatment given to those in another condition (see Cook & Campbell, 1979). To prevent these threats, the Grant (2008c) experiment took place in different shifts so the callers did not interact with each other and thus could not learn about alternative treatments. Such a balance of randomization within a single organization and stratified randomization at the site level strengthened conclusions about internal validity.

Another limitation of a randomized, controlled field experiment is that the involvement of researchers (Argyris, 1975), or even their mere presence (Rosenthal, 1994) can change participants' experiences, threatening the external validity of the results by calling into question whether the effects will generalize to organizations in which researchers are not involved. Thus, whereas the original field experiment was a randomized, controlled experiment designed by

researchers (Grant et al., 2007), the next field experiment was a naturally occurring quasi-experiment (Grant, 2008c). While planning the original experiment, the research team learned that the manager at university's call center had spontaneously invited a fellowship recipient to address callers during a shift. This was not a perfect experiment, as the callers were not randomly assigned to this treatment condition, but the manager did not make an announcement about the fellowship recipient's arrival, which prevented callers from self-selecting into the treatment condition. The results replicated the effects from previous experiments, demonstrating performance increases in the experimental group but not the control group.

In two laboratory experiments, Grant et al. (2007) demonstrated that perceptions of impact on and affective commitment to beneficiaries—the two psychological states that undergird prosocial motivation—mediated the effects of contact with beneficiaries on persistence in a letter-editing task. Participants spent more time editing a student's job application cover letter when they had a brief conversation with him or even only saw him, which increased their beliefs that additional effort would benefit the student (perceived impact) and that they cared about benefiting the student (affective commitment). In one of the experiments, the effects of contact with beneficiaries on persistence were moderated by task significance, such that contact with beneficiaries only motivated higher persistence when participants learned that the student was in dire need of a job.

In summary, this research demonstrates how jobs can be relationally structured to enhance prosocial motivation (for reviews, see Fried, Levi, & Laurence, 2008; Grant & Parker, 2009; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2008; Parker & Ohly, 2008; Vough & Parker, 2008). Rather than focusing on enriching task characteristics such as autonomy, variety, and feedback, as traditionally done in job design research (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), this research highlights

the important role that relational characteristics of employees' jobs play in shaping their prosocial motivation. As Kanfer (2009) summarizes, these findings "suggest that organizations may strengthen work motivation by elaborating the employee–client relationship in particular ways" (p. 120) and "The notion of a relational contract between the employee and the customer or client who is affected by the employee's work is particularly germane to work motivation in the service sector and represents an important new direction in the field" (p. 122).

Further reinforcing the relational nature of task significance, Grant (2008b) has shown how, in jobs that are high in potential task significance but employees rarely have the opportunity to experience this potential, stories can serve as "corrective lenses" that reinforce and sharpen employees' perceptions of impact. In a field experiment with lifeguards who had never performed a rescue, those who read stories about other lifeguards performing rescues increased in perceived impact, which motivated them to spend more time working in the subsequent month, and increased in perceptions of social worth (feeling valued by guests), which motivated them to spend more time engaging in helping and safety behaviors to benefit guests, as rated by supervisors blind to the experimental design and conditions. Lifeguards in a control condition read stories about how other lifeguards had benefited personally from the job, and did not show any changes in job perceptions or behaviors.

Thus, prosocial motivation can be enhanced not only by designing jobs to be high in significance, but also by connecting employees directly to the beneficiaries of these jobs and providing vivid information about potential impact on beneficiaries. Across these studies, it is interesting to observe that Grant and colleagues have connected employees to their impact on future beneficiaries (lifeguards), past beneficiaries (fundraisers), and current beneficiaries

(editors). These different enactments of relational job design may serve different functions of inspiration, gratitude, and empathy.

Connecting employees to future beneficiaries may serve the function of *inspiring* employees to focus on higher goals and standards by highlighting that their work has the potential to advance a more significant purpose (e.g., Shamir, Zakay, Breinin, & Popper, 1998; Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). A sports agent described how exposure to the potential financial disasters that befall professional athletes after retirement inspires him to care about making a difference in their lives: "to help guys like that… really motivates me… The young players, when they choose representation, are making one of the most important decisions of their young lives. It can mean the difference between leading a life of financial security and being a twenty-eight-year-old guy with no money in the bank and no real way of getting any" (Bowe et al., 2000, pp. 416-417).

Connecting employees to past beneficiaries may serve the function of communicating *gratitude* to employees by highlighting how their efforts have been appreciated and valued (Grant & Gino, 2010). As a construction foreman explained, "A lot of times you'll build a house for a family, and you see them move in, that's pretty gratifying. There's one particular family I've had dinner numerous times with after we did their project… I'm proud of that" (Bowe et al., 2000, p. 36). Similarly, an assistant director of a boys and girls club expressed, "What I get out of it is the personal satisfaction of watching them grow up into mature young adults… you end up over a period of time developing relationships with certain kids. There's an impact on their life, and they'll come down to me when they're adults to talk to me about it. The reward is teaching a kid a new skill" (Colby, Sippola, & Phelps, 2001, p. 476). These examples convey

how meeting past beneficiaries can cultivate prosocial motivation by reminding employees of how their work is appreciated.

Connecting employees to present beneficiaries may serve the function of cultivating feelings of *empathy* by highlighting how beneficiaries are currently in need or distress (Batson, 1998). As a police officer in a Chicago housing project articulated, "I extend myself quite a bit for people through my job. I spent three years trying to help this one girl and her kids… She was a witness in a murder case; I was there for her, took her shopping every week… People are hungry" (Colby et al., 2001, p. 477). This example illustrates how meeting present beneficiaries can cultivate prosocial motivation by fostering feelings of empathy. Indeed, a recent experiment with radiologists showed that when patient photos were included with x-rays, radiologists reported more empathy and achieved greater diagnostic accuracy (Turner, Hadas-Halperin, & Raveh, 2008).

Collectivistic norms and rewards. Research also suggests that employees are more likely to experience prosocial motivation when organizations maintain collectivistic rather than individualistic norms and rewards. Norms influence motivation by specifying shared standards and expectations for appropriate behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Hackman, 1992). Collectivistic norms emphasize the importance of contributing to group goals, while individualistic norms emphasize the importance of prioritizing self-interest (Chatman & Barsade, 1995). When collectivistic norms are prevalent, employees are more likely to experience and express prosocial motivation (Batson, 1994; Miller, 1999) because they feel it is appropriate and legitimate to feel concerned about the well-being of others. For example, when engineering companies emphasize collectivistic norms, it appears that employees are more likely to experience prosocial motivation toward helping colleagues (e.g., Perlow & Weeks, 2002).

On the other hand, when individualistic norms are prevalent, self-interest is descriptively and prescriptively dominant—there is a shared belief that employees do and should pursue their own independent interests (Miller, 1999). Individualistic norms can signal to employees that expressing prosocial motivation is inappropriate, which may lead them to suppress their desires to benefit others and the organization, and focus on taking actions that advance their personal utility (Ferraro, Pfeffer, & Sutton, 2005; Miller, 1999). For example, when an accountant notices a marketing manager appearing dejected during a discussion of a new product launch, if the company maintains individualistic norms, she may withhold inquiring about the problem because she wishes to avoid appearing overly concerned about an issue in which she has no vested interest (Ratner & Miller, 2001). As an illustration of the power of norms, Kay and Ross (2003) demonstrated in laboratory experiments that the mere title of a "prisoner's dilemma" task was sufficient to influence participants' construals of appropriate responses and their actual behaviors. When the prisoner's dilemma task was introduced using prosocial labels (e.g., the "Community Game" or the "Team Game"), participants construed the labels as more appropriate and acted more cooperatively as compared to when the game was called the "Wall Street Game", "Battle of Wits", or "Numbers Game".

There is parallel evidence that collectivistic rewards can increase prosocial motivation. In a series of laboratory experiments, primarily using negotiation role-plays, psychologists have shown that providing collective incentives increases participants' prosocial motivation (De Dreu et al., 2000). For instance, De Dreu, Giebels, and Van de Vliert (1998) found that when negotiators were rewarded as pairs rather than as individuals, experienced more concern for each other's outcomes and exchanged more information. Similarly, Weingart, Bennett, and Brett (1993) found that when negotiators were told that their success—and thus their payoffs—

depended on maximizing group rather than individual outcomes, reported more concern for group outcomes and thus engaged in more cooperative behaviors, experienced greater trust, and enacted more perspective-taking. These experiments highlight how rewarding employees in groups, rather than as individuals, can increase their prosocial motivation to benefit each other.

Transformational leadership. Although this link has rarely been made explicitly, theory and research suggests that transformational leadership may also play an important role in shaping prosocial motivation. Broadly speaking, transformational leadership refers to a behavioral style of inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999). Scholars have proposed that transformational leaders motivate employees by linking their work to their core values (Bono & Judge, 2003; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Insofar as this leads employees to prioritize the interests of the organization over and above their own self-interests (Bass, 1999), we can infer that transformational leadership has the potential to increase employees' prosocial motivations to benefit the organization and the causes valued by its members. Transformational leaders act as role models by exhibiting commitment to the greater organizational good, using symbolic and emotional appeals to foster a stronger sense of collective identity and impact among followers (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000), which may enhance their prosocial motivation to help one another and the organization. In addition, through individualized consideration, they provide support to their followers, who reciprocate by committing to the goals of the organization and engaging in behaviors that helps the organization attain these goals.

However, the effects of transformational leadership may vary as a function of the type of charismatic relationship that employees have with their leaders. Scholars have distinguished between two forms of charismatic relationships: socialized and personalized (Howell & Shamir,

2005). Socialized charismatic relationships are based on a strong sense of identification with leaders' goals and strategies, which provides a pathway for expressing shared values. Personalized charismatic relationships are based on a strong sense of identification with leaders themselves, which may provide self-esteem but leave employees dependent on and vulnerable to leaders. As such, socialized charismatic relationships may inspire prosocial motivation directed toward benefiting the organization, while personalized charismatic relationships may inspire prosocial motivation directed toward benefiting the leader, even at the expense of others.

Individual differences: which employees are prosocially motivated? Employees also differ in their dispositional tendencies to experience prosocial motivation. Meglino and Korsgaard (2004, 2006) have developed an interesting theory focusing on individual differences in other-orientation—akin to the notion of global, value-based prosocial motivation discussed earlier. One of the broad implications of their theory is that employees react differently to contextual influences as a function of the strength of their other-oriented values. For example, Korsgaard et al. (1997) found in laboratory experiments that participants with stronger other-oriented values were more receptive to negative feedback, whereas participants with weaker other-oriented values found negative feedback ego-threatening and were thus less able to benefit from it. As another example, Grant (2008b) conducted a field experiment with fundraising callers showing that the performance of those with strong other-oriented values was more dependent on task significance cues than those with weak other-oriented values, as the former were more concerned about doing work that benefits others. Schwartz and colleagues have distinguished between two types of other-oriented values: *benevolence values* refer to placing importance on protecting and promoting the well-being of others with whom one is in personal contact, and *universalism values* refer to placing importance on broader concerns such as social

justice and equality and protecting the environment (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). This distinction suggests that employees with strong benevolence values will primarily experience prosocial motivation directed toward familiar beneficiaries, and their levels of prosocial motivation will be especially sensitive to contact and relationships with beneficiaries. Employees with strong universalism values may have a broader circle of concern that is less dependent on personal contact and more sustainable in the face of abstract information about task significance.

Beyond values, researchers have identified two broad personality traits that have implications for employees' proclivities toward prosocial motivation: agreeableness and conscientiousness. Agreeableness refers to a positive orientation toward others, and is manifested in higher tendencies toward altruism, cooperation, sympathy, trust, morality, and modesty (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Costa, McCrae, & Dye, 1991). Conscientiousness refers to dependability, and is manifested in higher tendencies toward dutifulness, competence, self-discipline, achievement striving, orderliness, and cautiousness (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Costa et al., 1991). We expect that these two traits tend to foster prosocial motivation toward different targets. Agreeable employees typically focus on relationships with other people, and thus tend to direct their prosocial motivation toward individuals (Graziano, Habashi, Sheese, & Tobin, 2007; LePine & Van Dyne, 2001). Conscientious employees typically focus on being responsible and complying with rules, and thus tend to direct their prosocial motivation toward contributions that "are more impersonal, i.e. not directed to specific persons but constitute commendable, constructive forms of supporting the larger context of organized efforts" (Konovsky & Organ, 1996: 255). Indeed, conscientiousness is a better predictor of citizenship behaviors directed toward benefiting the organization than other people (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Contingent Consequences of Prosocial Motivation: When Making a Difference Makes a Difference

Researchers have often assumed that prosocial motivation directly increases task effort, persistence, and helping and citizenship behaviors (e.g., Grant, 2007; Rioux & Penner, 2001). More recently, however, researchers have begun to challenge this assumption by examining contingencies that moderate the effects of prosocial motivation on behavior and performance outcomes. Below, we review evidence about intrinsic vs. extrinsic forms of prosocial motivation, impression management motivation, and manager trustworthiness as important contingencies.

The moderating role of intrinsic motivation. Researchers have begun to examine whether the relationship between prosocial motivation and persistence, performance, and productivity varies as a function of whether the source of prosocial motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic. Building on self-determination theory (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2000), Grant (2008a) distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic forms of prosocial motivation. Intrinsic prosocial motivation is autonomous and self-determined, and is associated with the pleasure-based feeling (Gebauer et al., 2008) of "wanting to help" (Cunningham, Steinberg, & Grey, 1980). Extrinsic prosocial motivation, on the other hand, is more externally controlled, and is associated with the pressure-based feeling (Gebauer et al., 2008) of "having to help" (Cunningham et al., 1980). Grant (2008a) proposed that intrinsic motivation is more sustainable than extrinsic motivation, as the pressure associated with the latter causes stress and depletes energy. He thus hypothesized that prosocial motivation would be more positively associated with persistence, performance, and productivity when it was accompanied by intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation, and studies of both firefighters and fundraisers supported this hypothesis

(Grant, 2008a). This research identifies the source of prosocial motivation—intrinsic or extrinsic—as an important moderator of its effects.

The moderating role of impression management motivation. Research has also investigated whether another type of motivation—impression management motivation, the desire to protect and enhance one's image—moderates the relationship between prosocial motivation and organizational citizenship behaviors. Grant and Mayer (2009) reconciled conflicting findings about whether prosocially motivated employees engage in more citizenship by arguing that impression management motivation encourages employees to express their prosocial motivation toward affiliative citizenship behaviors such as helping, courtesy, and initiative. They proposed that in the absence of impression management motivation, prosocially motivated employees may be more inclined to undertake self-sacrificing citizenship behaviors, engaging in challenging forms of citizenship such as voice that run the risk of threatening their reputations. When impression management motivation is also present, employees may express their prosocial motivations in the form of affiliative citizenship behaviors that both do good and look good. In two field studies, they found support for this hypothesis: impression management motivation strengthened the relationship between prosocial motivation and the affiliative citizenship behaviors of helping, courtesy, and initiative (Grant & Mayer, 2009). Whereas previous research (Bolino, 1999; Rioux & Penner, 2001) suggested that some employees engaged in citizenship based on prosocial motivation (good soldiers) and other employees did so based on impression management motivation (good actors), this research shows that these two motivations can coexist in the same employee, interacting to increase the likelihood of affiliative citizenship. More generally, this research reinforces our earlier point that prosocial motivation should not be equated with altruism and is independent of self-interested motivations: Grant and Mayer found

that the relationship between prosocial motivation and citizenship can be strengthened by a form of self-interested motivation such as the desire to protect and promote one's image.

The moderating role of manager trustworthiness. Moving beyond other motivations as moderators, research has also addressed manager trustworthiness as a contingency. Grant and Sumanth (2009) proposed that trustworthy managers, whose values emphasize benevolence and integrity, are more likely to share information with employees about how their work benefits others and serves an important mission. This information will increase employees' perceptions of task significance, and since prosocially motivated employees place particular importance on doing work that benefits others, such employees will display higher performance when they perceive their managers as trustworthy. In three field studies of fundraisers, they found that manager trustworthiness strengthened the relationship between prosocial motivation and performance. Two of these studies showed that this moderating relationship was mediated by stronger perceptions of task significance. Furthermore, two of these studies also showed a three-way interaction between prosocial motivation, manager trustworthiness, and employees' dispositional trust propensities in predicting performance. When employees perceived their managers as trustworthy, prosocial motivation predicted higher performance. However, when employees questioned whether their managers were trustworthy, they appeared to rely on their own trust propensities as a cue to resolve the uncertainty inherent in this weak situation, and having a strong dispositional propensity toward trust compensated or substituted for low perceptions of manager trustworthiness to strengthen the relationship between prosocial motivation and performance. This research shows how manager trustworthiness, by enhancing employees' perceptions of task significance, plays an important role in strengthening the relationship between prosocial motivation and performance. It also indicates that manager

trustworthiness is a particularly important facilitator of the performance of prosocially motivated employees whose dispositional inclinations toward trusting others are low.

Prosocial Motivation as a Moderator

The previous series of studies focused on the role of intrinsic motivation, impression management motivation, and manager trustworthiness as moderators of the effects of prosocial motivation on employees' behaviors and performance. Research has also begun to focus on the role of prosocial motivation in moderating the effects of other factors on employees' behaviors and performance. In this section, we review research indicating that prosocial motivation strengthens the relationship between intrinsic motivation and creativity, proactive behaviors and supervisor performance evaluations, and core self-evaluations and job performance.

Prosocial motivation strengthens the relationship between intrinsic motivation and creativity. A rich history of field studies and laboratory experiments reveals inconsistent effects of intrinsic motivation on creativity: "now you see it, now you don't." To resolve this conflicting evidence, Grant and Berry (2010) proposed that prosocial motivation moderates the effect of intrinsic motivation on creativity. Creativity is the production of ideas that are both novel and useful (e.g., Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005), and Grant and Berry argued that intrinsic motivation encourages a focus on ideas that are novel but not necessarily useful. In essence, intrinsic motivation cultivates a desire to explore, learn, and pursue one's curiosities by focusing on ideas that are original and personally interesting and viewing the process of producing novel ideas as an enjoyable end in and of itself. Prosocial motivation encourages employees to take the perspectives of others, which draws their attention toward how their novel ideas can also be useful to others. By fostering perspective-taking, prosocial motivation may encourage employees to develop useful applications of their novel ideas, and to filter out their

least useful novel ideas and select the most useful of their novel ideas. In two field studies of

U.S. military employees and water treatment employees, and a laboratory experiment with

participants generating ideas to help a band create sources of revenue, prosocial motivation

strengthened the relationship between intrinsic motivation and independent ratings of creativity

(Grant & Berry, 2010). Moreover, in the field study with water treatment employees and the

laboratory experiment, perspective-taking mediated this moderating relationship: prosocial

motivation encouraged employees to take others' perspectives, which in turn enhanced the

association between intrinsic motivation and creativity. This research extends the interaction of

prosocial and intrinsic motivations to the new domain of creativity, and introduces perspective-

taking as a new mechanism for channeling intrinsic motivation in a useful direction.

Prosocial motivation enhances the association between core self-evaluations and job

performance. Recent research has examined how prosocial motivation influences the

performance of employees with high core self-evaluations. Research shows variability in

whether employees with high core self-evaluations—positive self-concepts based on high self-

esteem, general self-efficacy, emotional stability, and an internal locus of control—attain higher

performance (Judge & Bono, 2001). Although high core self-evaluations can provide employees

with the confidence necessary to be effective, they can also cause complacency. Grant and

Wrzesniewski (2010) examined whether prosocial motivation prevents complacency by fostering

anticipatory feelings of guilt and gratitude: because prosocially motivated employees are more

concerned about benefiting others, they are more prone to feeling guilty if they fail and

recognizing that others will feel grateful if they succeed. Anticipating these feelings leads those

with high core self-evaluations to invest greater effort in their tasks, enhancing their

performance. In two field studies with professional fundraisers and public service employees,

prosocial motivation strengthened the relationship between core self-evaluations and job performance. In a third field study with outbound call center employees, this moderating relationship was mediated by anticipated guilt and gratitude (Grant & Wrzesniewski, 2010). This research shows how prosocial motivation can channel confidence in productive directions, and introduces anticipatory social emotions as important mediators toward this end.

Prosocially motivated employees get more credit for proactive behavior. Research has also explored whether prosocial motivation enhances the degree to which supervisors give employees credit for proactive behaviors in performance evaluations. Although proactive behaviors such as voice, issue-selling, taking charge, and offering help can make important contributions to organizational effectiveness, these behaviors have the potential to threaten others. Grant, Parker, and Collins (2009) proposed that supervisors make more benevolent attributions for the proactive behaviors of prosocially motivated employees, whose actions and communications signal that their proactive behaviors are driven by good intentions. In addition, prosocially motivated employees may actually express their proactive behaviors more constructively. As such, supervisors will evaluate proactive behaviors more favorably when employees are prosocially motivated. In two field studies with working executive masters students and firefighters, employees' proactive behaviors were more positively associated with supervisors' performance evaluations when employees were prosocially motivated (Grant et al., 2009). This research shows how prosocial motivation can not only directly increase performance; it may also enhance the credit that employees receive for taking initiative to engage in anticipatory, change-oriented behaviors.

Summary

The research reviewed above provides insights about the antecedents, contingent consequences, moderating effects, and mediating psychological mechanisms associated with prosocial motivation. In terms of antecedents, relational job design, collectivistic norms and rewards, and individual differences in other-oriented values, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are important influences on prosocial motivation. In terms of contingent consequences, prosocial motivation is a stronger predictor of persistence, performance, and productivity when it is accompanied by intrinsic motivation; a stronger predictor of affiliative citizenship behaviors when it is accompanied by impression management motivation; and a stronger predictor of job performance when managers are trustworthy. In terms of moderating effects, prosocial motivation can enhance the creativity of intrinsically motivated employees, the performance of employees with high core self-evaluations, and the performance evaluations of proactive employees. In terms of psychological mechanisms, prosocial motivation accomplishes these effects by increasing the importance placed on task significance, encouraging perspective-taking, and fostering anticipatory social emotions of anticipated guilt and gratitude.

Future Directions

Although these findings provide useful insights, there are many exciting questions about prosocial motivation that have yet to be explored. In this section, we call attention to five key categories of future directions: studying effects on unethical behavior and harmdoing, examining collective prosocial motivation, reversing the causal arrow between prosocial motivation and behavior, considering novel organizational influences on prosocial motivation, and studying prosocial motivation in the context of social entrepreneurship, corporate social responsibility, and the natural environment.

Ties that blind: unethical behavior and harmdoing. In our view, the most important new direction for inquiry involves gaining a deeper understanding of the dark sides of prosocial motivation. Although little research has explicitly explored this idea, we believe that prosocial motivation is a double-edged sword: many acts of harm and unethical behavior are committed under the guise of the desire to make a difference. We encourage researchers to begin studying when, why, and how prosocial motivation can lead to an unwillingness to perform tasks that do not align with the particular causes and beneficiaries that one values (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009); a form of "benevolent narcissism" that involves positive illusions about one's capabilities to make a difference and vulnerability to social control (e.g., Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999; Fineman, 2006; Lofland, 1977; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1996; Pratt, 2000), such that managers and leaders mistakenly or purposefully exploit prosocially motivated employees by overworking or underpaying them (e.g., Bunderson & Thompson, 2009); a tendency to give unwanted help that leaves beneficiaries feeling incompetent, dependent, or embarrassed (Beehr, Bowling, & Bennett, 2010; Deelstra et al., 2003; Fisher, Nadler, & Whitcher-Alagna, 1982); and meaning-manageability tradeoffs (McGregor & Little, 1998) that may encourage employees to focus on small wins (Weick, 1984) and incremental changes (Meyerson & Scully, 1995) at the expense of more radical, dramatic changes. There are also risks of selective moral disengagement (Bandura, 1999), single-minded convictions (McGregor, 2007), a willingness to break rules to benefit others (Morrison, 2006), nepotism toward favored beneficiaries coupled with discrimination and prejudice toward others (Batson, Klein, Highberger, & Shaw, 1995; Gino & Pierce, 2010), excessive loyalty toward beneficiaries that interferes with recognizing and reporting violations of justice and ethics (Somers & Casal, 1994), and ends-justify-the-means thinking that gives rise to a willingness to do harm in the interest of a perceived "greater good" (Margolis & Molinsky,

2008; Molinsky & Margolis, 2005). In short, prosocial motivation has the potential to both discourage unethical behavior and provide a moral justification for this behavior, and may lead employees to craft their jobs (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) in harmful as well as helpful ways. Gaining a deeper understanding of these mixed effects represents an important opportunity for future research.

Collective prosocial motivation. Existing research has primarily examined prosocial motivation at the level of the individual employee. However, it is noteworthy that interventions to increase prosocial motivation have often taken place with groups of employees. For example, each scholarship recipient thanked groups of fundraisers together (Grant et al., 2007; Grant, 2008c), and both fundraisers and lifeguards met in groups to read stories about the past and potential impact of their jobs (Grant, 2008b). As another example, the medical technology company Medtronic holds an annual party at which patients whose lives have been changed by the company's products address more than 30,000 employees together (George, 2003). This raises important questions about whether prosocial motivation is contagious and exists at the group level. Do employees who experience prosocial motivation together develop shared identities, goals, and missions that reinforce and enhance their collective prosocial motivation? Is prosocial motivation more potent when activated and experienced in groups than among isolated individual employees? Given the focus of positive organizational scholarship on enabling group and organizational flourishing (Cameron et al., 2003), it will be both theoretically interesting and practically important to explore the development and impact of collective prosocial motivation.

Enacting your way into prosocial motivation. Although the vast majority of research has focused on the effects of prosocial motivation on behavior, there is good reason to believe that there are reciprocal effects of behavior on prosocial motivation. To the extent that employees

engage in prosocial behaviors such as helping and giving, theories of self-perception (Bem, 1972) and sensemaking (Weick, 1995) suggest that they may develop stronger prosocial motivations toward the particular beneficiaries to whom they have given. Social psychological research has shown that individuals often make sense of the act of giving help by coming to believe that they care about the recipient (Flynn & Brockner, 2003; Jecker & Landy, 1969). In addition, Grant, Dutton, and Rosso (2008) found in qualitative and quantitative studies that when employees at a Fortune 500 retail company gave time or money to coworkers in need, they developed stronger prosocial identities as caring, compassionate individuals. There is also evidence that the act of volunteering fosters prosocial role identities as a person who is committed to helping a particular group of beneficiaries, such as AIDS victims, or furthering particular causes, such as fighting cancer (Grube & Piliavin, 2000; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998; Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005). A fascinating question in this area concerns how individuals cross the boundary from developing these specific role identities toward viewing themselves in more general prosocial terms as caring, compassionate people who are motivated to make a positive difference in the lives of a wide range of others and advance a broader set of causes. The distinction between benevolence values emphasizing concern for close others vs. universalism values emphasizing concern for the wider world (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001; see also Reed & Aquino, 2003) is again relevant here. Are employees with strong universalism values more likely to develop broader, more generalized prosocial identities and motivations after enacting prosocial behaviors than employees with strong benevolence values? Through what processes do behaviors foster more universalistic values?

Sparking, supporting, sustaining, and stifling prosocial motivation. Finally, we hope to see more research on how organizations initiate, maintain, and suppress prosocial motivation. Do

organizations encourage employees to express prosocial motivation in productive ways when they provide autonomy to pursue unanswered callings through job crafting (see Berg, Grant, & Johnson, 2010)? Do organizational responses to death affect prosocial motivation? Grant and Wade-Benzoni (2009) argued that when employees are exposed to mortality cues, those who reflect on death—as opposed to experiencing existential anxiety about it—come to think about the meaningfulness of their contributions, which triggers prosocial motivation. In the face of tragedies and accidents, how do organizations walk the tightrope of encouraging employees to engage in meaningful reflection without distracting their attention away from work and interfering in their private lives?

Researchers may also wish to explore how prosocial motivation influences—and is influenced by—psychological contracts, which capture the unwritten obligations and expectations that employees use to understand what they will give and receive as organizational members (Schein, 1980). Scholars have identified three basic types of psychological contracts: transactional, relational, and principled. Transactional contracts are based on economic currency, as employees give time and energy in exchange for pay and benefits (Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993). Relational contracts are based on socioemotional currency, as employees give loyalty in exchange for belongingness, personal growth, and security (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Principled contracts are based on ideological currency, as employees give initiative and dedication in exchange for the opportunity to contribute to a valued cause or mission (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). We expect that employees with relational contracts are more likely to experience prosocial motivation toward the organization and its members, where they define their community, while employees with principled contracts are more likely to view the organization as a vehicle for expressing prosocial motivation toward valued beneficiaries. For

instance, many employees have principled contracts with Google. As research director Peter Norwing explained, "we're all here because we want to discover and build useful things that will change the world" (Google Research Blog, 2006). Employees with transactional contracts, on the other hand, may experience and express prosocial motivation primarily outside the domain of work, such as toward their families or causes for which they volunteer.

Prosocial motivation, social entrepreneurship, CSR, and the natural environment. Research to date has principally focused on the impact of prosocial motivation on how employees enact their jobs. However, it is likely that prosocial motivation has broader organizational and social implications. Indeed, research in public management has shown that prosocial motivation can affect the very types of jobs, careers, and industries that individuals pursue (Perry & Hondeghem, 2008). We hope to see researchers begin to study the role of prosocial motivation in solving problems of growing social and societal importance. For example, is prosocial motivation one of the driving factors that distinguishes social entrepreneurs from business entrepreneurs? Do firms run by prosocially motivated executives engage in more corporate social responsibility and philanthropy? How can social movements increase or tap into employees' prosocial motivations? The recent movement to "go green" provides a ripe context for studying the intersection of social movements and prosocial motivation. As concerns about protecting the planet and preventing climate change rise, how does prosocial motivation influence individual and organizational actions toward the environment? For individuals who care about the planet primarily because it provides a home for current and future generations of people (e.g., McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992), is prosocial motivation a catalyst behind care for and action to protect the environment? All of these questions merit wider and deeper

investigation, and prosocial motivation may be a fruitful conceptual lens for pursuing them. As

an environmental protection agency specialist reflected (Bowe et al., 2000, pp. 578-579):

> I've always felt a personal obligation to be doing something that is for the betterment of everyone. And the environment is like, well, what could be more important than that? So even though it's frustrating sometimes, I couldn't just stop and follow something that might be extremely interesting to me but didn't help the world… I have this deep-rooted need to feel that my job is of public service.

Endnote

[1] As organizational psychologists, our interest is in understanding how prosocial motivation at work can change, but also in how these changes can be sustained. As such, we find it most fruitful to focus on contextual prosocial motivation, which operates at a desirable middle range (Weick, 1974; see also Little, 2005) between global and situational motivation for achieving a balance between malleability and sustainability. In this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, our use of the term "prosocial motivation" will refer primarily to contextual prosocial motivation.

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