



AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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This research is an investigation focused on general labor unskilled employees and job retention. The purpose of this study is to consider the construct of readiness to work as a screening tool to address high turnover rates of these employees. Areas discussed which negatively impact applicants include stress and external locus of control. Social support is considered as a buffer against negative effects. Motivational interviewing, after obtaining an individual's readiness to work, is used to increase readiness to change. By understanding, an individual's current level of readiness to work, applicants can be better assigned to a person-environment fit. These considerations will benefit managers and applicants due to a more consistent workforce and provide a way to increase understanding. For the focus of this research the topics of readiness to change, person-environment fit, motivation, social support, locus of control, and turnover intention will be discussed. The practical application of this research is general labor unskilled employees, but there is a high generalizability among other populations.

Keywords: Readiness, Change, Person-Environment Fit, Motivational Interviewing, Social Support, Locus of Control, and Turnover Intention

GENERAL LABOR EMPLOYEES' SELF PERCEIVED READINESS TO WORK:  
DOES IT RELATE TO JOB RETENTION?

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by

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

General labor and unskilled employees are the hardworking backbone of the economy. However, yearly turnover rates can easily exceed 50% up to 100% annually for organizations who employ mostly low-wage and low-skill employees (McElroy, Morrow, & Rude, 2001). The current research, through a culmination of different constructs, is striving towards developing an argument integrating an instrument to gauge an individual's readiness to work prior to placement. This instrument would be a cost-effective tool for human resource professionals who frequently combat high turnover rates.

The main incentive behind testing for employee readiness is the amount of potential money, effort, and time companies will save through decreasing hiring, training, and paying employees who don't want to work. Through understanding applicant's readiness, they will hire and train employees who stay with a company for longer, since they are actually ready to work. Understanding an individual's readiness may avoid hiring candidates who wouldn't have shown up for orientation, due to their current state of readiness. However, that is not to say, someone who may not be ready to work now, can't become ready to work later.

Another specific area of interest for the current research is turnover intention among general unskilled labor employees. Roberts and Pratt (2007) found that unemployed individuals expressing a desire for employment also show dissatisfaction with their current circumstances. Voluntary turnover is seen as significantly correlated

with a readiness to change in employees who are unhappy with their current work environment.

A general state of readiness can be a transferrable trait. One study's central hypothesis stated that there is no difference in mean self-directed learning readiness scores regardless of occupational category (Durr, Guglielmino, & Guglielmino, 1996). Self-directed learning has been shown as a promising way to effectively substitute classroom learning in situations where individuals possess readiness. This study indicated that employees in most occupational categories are higher than average in readiness for self-directed learning. However, one shortcoming of this study was the small sample size of manufacturing employees. Therefore, the generalizability of this population's validity is questionable. This lapse in data supports a call to action for research that focuses on general labor and unskilled employees.

The potential usefulness of developing a device capable of effectively measuring readiness will be beneficial to multiple fields and general personnel selection practices. The effects of utilizing a readiness to work questionnaire in work rehabilitation programs within the welfare community shows promise as a cost-effective way to better allocate resources (Lam, Wiley, Siu & Emmett, 2010). The idea being if individuals are grouped by their level of readiness, they can be better assisted throughout the process of re-entry into the workforce (Ellingson, Tews, & Dachner, 2015). Once an individual's level of readiness is understood, motivational interviewing can be used to provide appropriate guidance and improve upon readiness levels.

Thus, instilling the concept of successful self and peer evaluation is critical. Self-evaluation refers to assessing goal progress by comparing one's current level of

knowledge or performance with that of a desired goal state (Sitzmann & Ely, 2011). Individuals tend to react negatively and are less likely to try and improve when errors are attributed to stable personal behaviors such as their own lack of ability. Generally, honest self-evaluators attribute failure to low effort and reduced use of learning strategies on their own part. The thought being, "I didn't achieve the goal because I didn't try hard enough" (Sitzmann & Ely, 2011). These individuals exhibit a higher internal locus of control allowing changes in their current behavior to become more likely.

Sustainable change is not an overnight process. Therefore, fostering a readiness to change and a readiness to work takes time. However, if the present organizational environment supports a change, the time needed will be considerably less (Cole, 2008). If an organization can instill belief in their culture, that fosters growth and development through productive and proactive change, they will logically elicit a better organizational fit towards assisting new hires and helping current hires navigate different phases of their readiness to work.

When assisting an individual with low readiness to change, it is crucial to work towards breaking down and compartmentalizing concerns into smaller more manageable pieces. Readiness is not well defined however; many clinicians explain the success or failure of a client's unwillingness to change, or reluctance to comply with a new medical regimen, as an overall lack of readiness. (Dalton & Gottlieb, 2003) The concept of readiness is widely used and understood in the clinical sector; however, there have been few systematic studies of this construct in the general work environment.

Another purpose of the current research is to gain a deeper understanding as to why general labor and unskilled employees have such high turnover rates. If this

underlying issue has any potential to be addressed, it would save major manufacturing companies significant time and money by sustaining more competent and longer lasting constituents. There is also the potential for the construct of readiness to be generalized to more skill-based jobs. Understanding an individual's state of readiness is most beneficial when you can have separate job types with different responsibilities to fill. For example, if you have an individual who may not be ready for a full-time position, perhaps a temporary job or an internship with a mentor might be a better fit for them.

Some unemployed individuals believe they are unable to change, and it stands to reason that supervisors might believe their subordinates are unable to change. Through training and motivation, an individual has the capacity of becoming more ready sustainably over time. Many individuals may exhibit or perceive an overall lack of readiness. It is important to note that an individual's current state of readiness is highly situational (Lam et al., 2010). Readiness, self-perceived or peer-perceived, is a highly subjective construct susceptible to different biases and prejudices.

Self-perceived readiness is determined by an individual's belief in potential benefits of change and whether or not the individual believes that such a change is even possible. Peer-perceived readiness is based on outside observations: timing, biases, and general prejudices can cloud these observations. Furthermore, opportunities for self-perceived benefits or loss of benefits based on outcomes of specific observations might deter honest record keeping (Dalton & Gottlieb, 2003). For example, a supervisor will likely be more lenient on subordinates' ratings when the subordinates' ratings impact the supervisor's own performance ratings.

## Levels

To discuss readiness and all connected constructs, a clarification of Prochaska's stage of change model, the definitive model used in change literature, will be necessary since readiness is the main focus of the current research. The three stages include pre-contemplation, contemplation, and action. Change is something that everyone experiences; interestingly the original model was derived from work on smoking cessation, substance abuse, and addiction (Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992). These behaviors are considered some of the most difficult to change. However, the concepts derived from this research are transferrable to all applications of readiness to change and enduring behavioral change.

Varying adaptations of Prochaska's model have surfaced since its original debut. The self-directed learning readiness scale (SDLRS) utilized an adapted version for the purpose of focusing on different levels of SDLRS and how they might affect different occupations (Durr et al., 1996). The University of Rhode Island Change Assessment (URICA) refers to known problem behaviors associated with a lack of readiness and is a scale used to measure an individual's readiness to change those behaviors (Napper, Wood, Jaffe, Fisher, Reynolds, & Klahn, 2008). The URICA scale has scored acceptable internal validity and test-retest reliability scores and uses a four stage of readiness to change approach by adding the fourth stage of maintenance (See Appendix A). When an individual exhibits high readiness, they both want and are willing to put in the work to actively make a change happen. Thus they are much more likely to take action to do so.

There are many other conceptualizations considering the abstract concept of readiness. The Lam Assessment on Stages of Employment Readiness (LASER) was

designed to discover an individual's employment readiness pre-entry specifically as a return to work measurement (Lam et al., 2010). The purpose of Lam's original study was twofold; first to describe the development of an assessment instrument for readiness to change, and second to validate the psychometric properties of the LASER to establish its utility in assessment and treatment matching (See Appendix B). Their sample showed promising findings as to why welfare mothers might struggle in returning to work. Disabilities were said to be found among one-half to two-thirds of welfare recipients sampled in their study. They found that welfare mothers are two to three times more likely to experience significant depression and substance abuse problems than the comparable national sample observed.

Readiness to change has also been considered via a group setting, which might additionally buffer change through social support. The Group Readiness Questionnaire (GRQ) was originally used as a clinical approach to gauge readiness within the group setting. The GRQ is a reasonably short questionnaire, having only 19 items, and this self-report tool assesses three separate domains of readiness (See Appendix C). The three domains are positive interpersonal skills, negative interpersonal skills, and generalized expectations. The thought being that individuals who expect to benefit from group therapy tend to consider the approach more effective and tend to benefit more from a group setting of treatment. This measure is designed to screen individuals and inform therapists of a client's fit for different therapy styles. The GRQ has been utilized among several different areas of research (Baker, Burlingame, Cox, Beecher, & Gleave, 2013). These core concepts can be transferred to the workplace by assessing an individual's readiness to work and adapt to a new environment. Lastly, the Psychological Assessment

of Work Readiness (PAWR) builds upon past research by including a preparation stage, which originated from a vocational counseling version of the URICA, and also considers the rare URICA profile of inauthentic action, which is considered a separate level for the purposes of this research. Coppin (2017) found only 23% of pre-contemplation jobseekers to have employment six to nine months after completing the PAWR survey. Employment outcomes increased to 31% for those in contemplation, 36% with inauthentic action jobseekers, 43% for preparation, and 47% in the action stage of change. For clarity and brevity purposes, the current progression of these stages is established via different areas of research and broken down in the following section.

### **Pre-Contemplation**

Pre-contemplation, also referred to as the indifferent group, is the level where an individual may be unaware that there is an issue. Jobseekers in this stage of readiness may have no desire to attain a job or no belief that they can sustain employment. Lam et al. (2010) found that after six months "no show" and "dropout rates" varied between 15%-50% for these individuals from one work program to the next; thus illustrating the ineffectiveness of current work programs for individuals in the pre-contemplation stage of readiness. To make work programs more beneficial, taking the time to individualize complimentary treatments to a client's level of readiness will be a more effective approach to work rehabilitation. Individualizing interactions can be a way to significantly decrease turnover among employees that might currently not want to work, but they could be enticed if given the proper attention, understanding, and resources.

If they are ever going to become ready to work, pre-contemplators need first to take ownership or at least acknowledge that there is a problem. One such way to

accomplish this is to increase the individual's understanding of the negative aspects of their unseen behavioral problems and to help assist them in moving forward in their state of readiness to work (Lam et al., 2010). The pre-contemplation state can raise an employee's consciousness of current problems, if not working, and potentially provide understanding about the world of work and information regarding specific benefits of working. An example of presenting the negative aspects of unemployment would be, "how not working affects one's family and its members". Framing of this information is important because pre-contemplators tend to have an external locus of control, and they tend to blame the environment not themselves. Therefore developing ownership of issues may be a beneficial way of addressing these issues.

### **Contemplation**

For those in the contemplation stage, vocational exploration and planning are suggested. Contemplation is the stage where an individual recognizes there is an issue and begins to weigh the pros and cons of changing bad behaviors. These job seekers know they should find jobs, but they are not quite committed to taking action (Lam et al., 2010; Coppin, 2017). Questions that can be asked during this stage include: "what would it be like if I work" and "how will I be better off if I work"?

People in this stage are more likely to be aware of their work-related problems and have begun considering change prospects. It is prevalent for individuals in this stage to weigh the pros and cons of changing their current lifestyles (Lam et al., 2010).

However at this stage, they are not taking any action to improve their situation. When the balance of pros and cons finally begins to tip in favor of the positive aspects of working, an individual starts to become ready to move towards the action stage of change.

## **Preparation**

Preparation is worth mentioning, as a stage of change, because it best exemplifies the transition between contemplation and action. These job seekers are planning on taking action soon, maybe in the next month. They also may have unsuccessfully tried to make changes within the last year. These individuals have learned from past mistakes, and they are taking the necessary steps to prepare for change. Small reductions in their problem behaviors may have been addressed, and they currently wish to take action (Coppin, 2017). These preparation jobseekers may benefit from support programs and take interest in activities such as resume improvement writing, mock interviews, job search, and even vocational or certification courses.

## **Inauthentic Action**

This stage is most beneficial to consider from the hiring manager's perspective. It is important to be mindful of individuals: who might be applying for positions, going to interviews, and taking action based steps, but ultimately they lack the desire, belief, or confidence in their ability to obtain employment. Furthermore, it is likely these individuals might be peer pressured into looking for jobs or may lose unemployment benefits if they do not attempt to find employment. It is important to ask the question, “do these jobseekers actually want a job, and are they really job-seeking”? Inauthentic action individuals tend to score high on pre-contemplation and action scores while scoring low on contemplation. It is also possible that these individuals have jumped into the action stage without doing the appropriate preparatory work (Coppin, 2017). One might conjecture that inauthentic action jobseekers are not completely committed to re-entering

employment and are the most likely to not show up for interview opportunities or drop out of employment early.

### **Action**

The Action stage is the stage of readiness where individuals are ready to overtly modify their behaviors towards an appropriate change. At this stage, individuals have started the process of engaging in job seeking behaviors, and they have started removing public and personal barriers preventing their return to the workforce. Individuals in this stage are generally open to looking for assistance in developing strategies to help expedite the process.

Lam et al. (2010) found that after six months 25% of individuals in the pre-contemplation stage kept their job, 38% in the contemplation stage, and a whopping 56.3% of individuals found and kept employment in the action stage group. It can be surmised that individuals in the action stage are finally ready to launch into skill-based training, effectively utilize work programs, and to begin interviewing and utilizing job search methods. In short, they are prepared to make work-related changes in their lives.

Dalton and Gottlieb (2003) surmised that the action stage can be expanded to include five steps: showing interest in change, setting goals, visualizing a plan, preparing to seek help, and developing the confidence to make change happen. Their article went on to state that people who do not exhibit high readiness lack the confidence to even test the waters. It doesn't matter so much what job an individual applies for if throughout their life they've been told that they are incapable of entering the workforce. This negative self-fulfilling prophecy is something that can stick with an individual throughout their life.

## **Maintenance**

Finally, the maintenance stage is where individuals try to incorporate the change and integrate this change into their lifestyle. These individuals also take active measures towards preventing recursive slips or relapse into earlier stages of change in behavior. This stage is not crucial to the process of becoming ready to work. However, it can be seen as the most critical process when sustaining behavioral change (Bellack & DiClemente, 1999). Also, it is imperative that individuals across all stages have good behaviors reinforced through social support to encourage better job seeking behaviors later on. With the appropriate reinforcement, these individuals will be more likely to maintain new positive behaviors while they find and continue employment.

This study focuses on the construct of readiness as a screening tool to address high turnover rates in general labor employees. Stress and an external locus of control are seen as the main barriers to change. Social support, internal locus of control, and environmental fit can be used to buffer stress and bolster progress. It is theorized that by first determining an individual's level of readiness and utilizing motivational interviewing practices, turnover intention can be decreased. For the focus of this research the topics of readiness to change, person-environment fit, motivation, social support, locus of control, and turnover intention will be discussed.

## **Chapter 2**

### **CONSTRUCTS**

If the issue of high turnover, within a company, can be addressed, a significant amount of resources would be better utilized. Many new hires leave an organization within the first three months logically improved selection procedures might be a great way to address this problem. There are many reasons why an employee chooses to leave an organization; such as stress, lack of control, and poor fit. Furthermore, stress, among workers, can increase absenteeism and turnover, while decreasing productivity and morale. Individuals with an internal locus of control see stronger connections between their actions and resulting consequences. These individuals also tend to have lower stress and perform better. Fit matters to applicants, recruiters, and current employees. Lower levels of stress are generally associated with higher levels of person-organization fit. Job satisfaction, commitment, attraction, and intent to hire are all positively affected by person-organization fit. Fortunately, these negative factors have the potential to be addressed.

Social support is one of the strongest buffers against stress. In fact, social support is seen as beneficial regardless of the stress experienced. This social support can even come from fellow coworkers or even managers. Manager involvement is crucial for molding locus of control, but to change locus of control it is important to understand the individual. One way to understand an applicant or employee's locus of control is through considering their readiness to change. If an applicant or employee scores low on readiness to change, or by extension readiness to work, that doesn't mean they can't change. Specifically motivational interviewing has been shown to increase readiness on

average of one stage forward and has been validated as a useful approach for behavioral change across a spectrum of topics. By understanding, readiness managers can provide the best most personalized assistance for applicants and employees.

### **Change**

Roughly 10% of all training dollars result in attempting to promote "enduring behavioral change" (Cole, 2008). To better understand a readiness to work, it is crucial first to understand readiness. The term readiness itself is relatively abstract, and many different theorists have posited different definitions. Some say readiness is based on a subjective feeling or a perceived ability. However, for our purposes, readiness is a state, a process, and a level. For individuals to create lasting sustainable change, they first need to become ready to change (Dalton & Gottlieb, 2003). As a self-assessed construct, the assessment can only be as good as the assessor. Therefore to get consistently accurate results and control for biases, it is essential to provide detailed instructions to assessors of readiness (Napper et al., 2008). The bulk of readiness research agrees on separating readiness into three to five levels that follow a flowing recursive process.

In Coppin's (2017) study jobseekers were split 29% action stage, 20% preparation stage, 23% inauthentic action stage, 12% contemplation stage, and 15% pre-contemplation stage via their responses. This sample represents a fairly even spread of applicants. Overall, 49.7% of applicants indicated a willingness to enter employment (preparation and action stages) while 50.4% of responders indicated a low intention or belief in returning to employment (pre-contemplation, contemplation, and inauthentic action stages). Readiness to work is a state based around readiness to change where an individual feels they are ready to take on new work-related tasks: be that a new job, new

aspects of current employment, or a continuation of changing work responsibilities for the individual.

Readiness to change considers five factors: an individual's need for change, an individual's personal commitment to change, an individual's awareness of alternative employment options, a willingness to develop social bonds that foster change, and an individual's self-awareness of skills. Examples of these skills include: interests, values, and preferences (Roberts & Pratt, 2007). Readiness levels are most commonly attained through self-report measures making them highly subjective. Even though readiness is somewhat easy to conceptualize, it can be challenging to quantify. Readiness by itself is greatly influenced by three factors: experience, awareness, and sense of beneficial opportunities becoming available. Forces that resist readiness are valuable sources of information (Coleman, 1997). Understanding the forces that resist or prohibit readiness are just as, if not more beneficial, than understanding the forces that aid in readiness.

The process of readiness involves recognizing a need to change through weighing the costs and benefits and finding out that benefits outweigh the costs. A general desire to change and to take action determines an individual's degree of readiness. With that said, an accurate assessment of an individual's current stage of change is most important (Napper et al., 2008). Readiness within learning can be personal, situational, and contextual all at the same time. In the readiness literature, it is essential to consider how negative aspects and not just positive aspects can aid in fostering readiness for change. Consider critical incident reports or personal loss that necessitates an individual to change (Lickel, Kushlev, Savalei, Matta, & Schmader, 2014). If a two income household supporting a family with children loses one source of income, by the death of a spouse or

divorce, the remaining parent must support the family with just one source of income. In this scenario the needs of the family unit necessitate change.

It is fair to argue that welfare recipients, who do not see work as a viable or necessary option, will not receive the maximum benefit from any current return-to-work program. Lam and his colleagues studied individuals with traumatic brain injuries, persons with chronic mental illness, and with substance abuse. They noted that a substantial amount of these rehabilitation clients did not believe that they had any problems that needed interventions, or they believed interventions were highly unnecessary (Lam et al., 2010). Intuitively it would be more effective and efficient if the rehabilitation interventions matched a client's level of readiness to change.

Specifically, in the clinical sector, it is agreed that there are five assumptions related to readiness. Readiness is fundamentally fluid, and even if the individuals are ready in one aspect of their life that doesn't mean that they are ready in other aspects of their life. Over time an individual's level of readiness can change. Readiness level can be associated with perceived illness or a belief in personal insurmountable circumstances. This construct of readiness can even naturally be related to the passage of time (Roberts & Pratt, 2007). It is important to note that readiness to change doesn't always translate to successful change and readiness assessments, at their current state, shouldn't be used to deny individual services or employment, but instead should be used as an informational blueprint of an individual regarding personalized additional services that may be required.

The concept of readiness is widely used, specifically in the clinical sector, but there have been very few systematic studies of this construct with emphasis focused on

the workforce (Lam et al., 2010). For our purposes, it is important not to confuse readiness to work with work readiness. The work readiness literature is geared towards potential employees having job-specific knowledge, skills, and abilities required for a position. However, since the current body of research is geared towards general labor and unskilled employees work readiness will not be considered further.

The involvement of managers in practice development is extremely crucial to a successful implementation of developing lasting change and sustainability among individuals (McCormack, Dewing, Breslin, Coyne-Nevin, Kennedy, Manning, Peelo-Kilroe, & Tobin, 2009). If individuals are molded to view readiness to work as within their control, they are much more likely to change their perspective to reflect a more contemplative or action based level of readiness to work.

Technology with its benefit of attributing to a greater connection among communities and cultures, due to much more connected globalization of minds via the internet, can elicit benefits to individuals who struggle with unemployment. This is best explained through increased perspective and improved understanding of other cultures, lifestyles, and perspectives. This can also inadvertently increase openness to learning and understanding different viewpoints (Erez, Lisak, Harush, Glikson, Nouri, & Shokef, 2013). Understanding an individual's readiness to change is essential for any drastic change to make a significant impact.

Development of cultures that are flexible and adaptable enough to sustain continuous improvement can come about through understanding readiness to change. With a focus on the development of person-centered cultures readiness to change can become more likely (McCormack et al., 2009). Potentially there is even more capacity for

a benefit if change agents are the grassroots general unskilled labor force. Who knows the way to technically perform a task better than the subject matter experts who perform the tasks every day? Any change initiative should reflect what is best for the company. Without, the input of unskilled general laborers, change can be unsuccessful and even detrimental to the company. That is why it is most beneficial if agents of change are spread throughout a company culture, which in turn actively fosters a positive change mentality.

Understanding an individual's readiness level can be beneficial in developing potential interventions to personalize assistance. When an individual crosses the threshold into readiness, the forces that previously acted to resist a change can shift to support the new change and commitment (Coleman, 1997). Understanding both the issues and the benefits can help supervisors better observe subordinates and help them as needed.

## **Stress**

The stress literature suggests that a lack of control over a situation makes the situation more stressful and creates strain. Therefore the structured nature of some jobs and the highly inflexible work schedules, of large organizations, can withhold control from their employees and contribute to time-based work-family stressors. Stress-related loss of productivity among organizationally employed women is estimated at \$40 billion a year (Parasuraman & Simmers, 2001). Logically an individual who feels unable to work would reasonably be stressed by decreased access to general resources required to survive (Franke & Felfe, 2012). It is impossible to have a healthy work-life balance without work. Without the resources from a steady income, life becomes more difficult.

Job stress and job satisfaction are interactive (Cummins, 1990). Experiences of a stressful job lead to job dissatisfaction and job dissatisfaction can increase the likelihood of experiencing job events as stressful.

A number of undesirable employee behaviors can contribute to dysfunctional organizational consequences and can be attributed to stress. These behaviors can contribute to lower levels of performance and well-being, lower productivity and morale, higher levels of job dissatisfaction, job-related tension, anxiety, and a greater likelihood of turnover and absences. These behaviors are all thought to be caused by organizational stress (Beehr & Newman, 1978; Briner & Reynolds 1999; Cummins, 1990; Schuler, 1980). Reasons for stress or stressors can include almost anything: a high workload, low control, dangerous job conditions, lack of support, role conflict, ambiguity, underutilization of skills, resource inadequacy, and lack of participation to name a few. Strain can include any state a person finds as being negative such as depression, physical illness, or increased absence.

A specific example of a stressor is the need to spend time with family while continually being required to work overtime. Unskilled general labor employees typically make lower wages than more skill based positions. So it can be challenging to rationalize working hard for such little pay. If these individuals have access to benefits, they are generally expensive, and often don't allow for substantial health coverage (Ellingson et al., 2015). At many companies, there is also a general lack of respect from supervisors. Some supervisors believe they can disrespect subordinates merely due to subordinates being hierarchically beneath them. Similarly, issues can arise when a good employee

becomes a manager. Even though they were a good employee, without the proper training they might not necessarily be a good manager.

Unfortunately, stressors are rarely clean separate issues. Likewise, job redesign interventions to address stressors are likely to affect other areas than just the area trying to be addressed (Briner & Reynolds, 1999). That is why considering the causes of stress are seen as more productive than just treating the symptoms of stress. In other words, cure is better than prevention. Organizations which actively encourage and enable individuals to use trained principles on the job are more likely to foster the transfer of learned behaviors and to benefit from enduring behavioral change and combating stress (Franke & Felfe, 2012). If individuals can learn how to address problems in their life proactively, there is potential for a snowball effect where improvements, due to fewer stressors and more resources, can be seen across all aspects of their life. Results have shown that when individuals join organizations that match their values they exhibit lower levels of job stress and blood pressure than their mismatched peers (Kristof, 1996). A lower level of work-related stress has also been associated with higher levels of person-organization fit.

### **Person-Environment Fit**

Fit is one of the more widely researched areas among psychological constructs. In fact, there are many conceptualizations, analytical approaches, and measures which make fit an elusive multidimensional construct. Specifically, person-environment fit, the most inclusive level of fit, is defined as the compatibility between an employee and a work environment that exists when characteristics between both parts are well matched (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Two distinct ways of clarifying match

are supplementary and complementary fit. Supplementary fit occurs when a person: supplements, embellishes or possesses characteristics which are similar to other individuals. Complimentary fit occurs when a person's characteristics make whole the environment or add to it what is missing. Characteristics of the organization may include culture, climate, values, goals, and norms; while, personal characteristics include values, goals, personality, and attitudes. Slightly less all-encompassing is person-organization fit which is defined as the compatibility between people and organizations occurring when at least one entity provides what the other needs and or they share similar fundamental characteristics (Kristof, 1996). Need fulfillment theories share the idea that if needs are met job attitudes are generally positive. Furthermore, person-organization fit addresses compatibility between people and entire organizations, primarily through value and goal congruence.

After that levels of fit become more easily observable by measuring smaller ecosystems. For example, person-job fit, defined by Edwards (1991), is the fit between the abilities of a person and the demands of a job (i.e., demands-abilities) or the desires of a person and the attributes of a job (needs-supplies). From the needs supplies perspective, fit occurs when an organization satisfies needs, desires, or preferences of an individual. In contrast, demands abilities perspective suggests fit occurs when an individual has the required abilities to meet organizational demands (Kristof, 1996). Additionally, person-job fit is outlined by two ideas. The first being demands-abilities fit, where employees' knowledge skills and abilities are matched with what the job requires. Second, person-job fit can occur when employees' needs, desires, or preferences are met by their job. This level of fit, often entitled needs supplies or supplies values fit, has been the focus of

theories of adjustment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Person group fit focuses on the compatibility between individuals and their work groups. Most studies examine person group fit on specific personality traits as well as goals and values.

Lastly, person supervisor fit covers leader-follower value congruence and supervisor-subordinate personality similarity. In these instances, supervisors' characteristics represent the environment. Value congruence theory implies actual beliefs, and resultant interactions, dominate attitudes regarding an interactive environment. It would make sense that if actual value congruence is high, attitudes should be positive regardless of perceived fit based on experienced interactions. Employees with co-worker goal incongruence perceive higher levels of workplace politics, which in turn leads to decreased focus and reduced commitment. Perceived person-organization fit is supported as a moderator between team politics and cohesion. Also, high levels of supervisor-subordinate and peer goal congruence can negatively relate to intention to quit. Therefore employees with lower levels of value congruence are more likely to report an intention to quit than peers with higher congruence levels (Kristof, 1996). Value congruence was a significant determinant of actual employee turnover within two years of the initial assessment of fit.

Similar to the readiness research it is important to differentiate between self-perceived, subjective, and objective fit. Perceived fit occurs when an individual assesses compatibility between self and the environment. Subjective fit is assessed indirectly through a comparison of the individual and their environment. Objective fit is calculated indirectly through comparing person and environmental variables (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Raylin and Ritchie (2006) found perceptions of fit to have positive relationships

and outcomes beyond any effects of actual fit, caused by social construction efforts. The thought being that if employees believe they fit well with their organization positive attitudes result. Whereas if they believe they are a poor fit with an organization environment their attitudes tend to be poor unless perceptions are overridden by actual positive interactions with fellow employees (high actual congruence). High perceived fit individuals generally respond as though they are congruent with top management values. It is also supported that perceived, rather than actual fit, is more influential during the selection process.

Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) found many thought-provoking significant correlations in their meta-analysis. Job satisfaction was most strongly related to PJ fit (.56) when compared to PO (.44), PG (.31) or PS fit (.44). Organizational commitment was most strongly related to PO fit (.51) followed by PJ fit (.47) and weakly related to PG fit (.19) and PS fit (.09). Satisfaction among coworkers was highest for PG fit (.42) compared to PJ (.32) and PO fit (.39), and satisfaction with supervisor was highest for PS fit (.46) compared to PJ (.33), PO (.33) and PG fit (.28). Organizational attraction was influenced comparably by PJ fit (.48) and PO fit (.46), and intent to hire was somewhat more strongly related to PJ fit (.67) than PO fit (.61), intent to quit (PJ -.46, PO -.35, PG -.22), and turnover. In short, job satisfaction was most strongly influenced by PJ fit, organizational commitment by PO fit, satisfaction with coworkers by PG fit, and satisfaction with supervisor with PS fit.

Even during relatively brief pre-entry encounters, attitudes and decisions are strongly influenced by various types of fit. When comparing the relationship between fits, PJ and PO fit were the most similar constructs (.72), followed by PO and PG (.54) fit and

PJ and PG fit at (.49). The weakest relationships were with PS fit and PO (.46) and PS and PG (.37). Relationships between PS fit and the other types were small overall, suggesting employees do not view superiors as exact representations of their organization (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Taken together, these results suggest that overall PE fit is a multidimensional concept consisting of multiple subtypes of fit.

There is conclusive evidence that fit matters to recruiters, applicants, and employees. It influences attitudes, decisions, and behaviors regarding the company. Poor fit can be a predictor of turnover, and in an environment where human talent is increasingly viewed as a competitive advantage, organizations will find PO fit a useful tool for reducing turnover (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Studies have shown that as individuals stay with a company longer, they learn and tend to accept the goals and values of their organization. Furthermore, it is speculated that tenure leads to better fit between individuals' personal beliefs and organizational beliefs (Kristof, 1996; Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Interestingly employees tend to make decisions about staying with an organization based on perceived fit, rather than on maximizing personal resources.

### **Social support**

In an attempt to buffer against the negative effects of stressors, attention has been directed at several different variables, and of particular interest is the role of social support. Studies have indicated a main effect for social support, suggesting that support is beneficial regardless of stress level experienced. Additionally, an interaction between stress and social support has been found. Such that the stress-strain relationship is lower under conditions of high support. For these reasons, social support is said to buffer individuals from the detrimental influences of stress (Cummins, 1990). These findings

are beneficial to several aspects of the current research, and they can even better establish the importance of framing when delivering news. An employee's supervisor can personally contribute to higher levels of social support, and external pressures to change can be a very conducive part of the readiness process for instituting a need to change (Roberts & Pratt, 2007). Both personal emotions and having an external support group can be beneficial factors increasing readiness and longer-lasting self-change.

When social support is ineffective, work-family conflict may arise from incompatible pressures between work and family roles. There are two dominant types of work-family conflict: time-based conflict and strain-based conflict. Time-based conflict occurs when time devoted to one role makes it difficult to fulfill the requirements of another. Whereas, strain-based conflict occurs when strain in one role spills over into other roles. Symptoms of strain such as fatigue, irritability, and depression experienced from one role may increase the difficulty of participating effectively in other roles. Prior research has demonstrated the stressfulness of work-family conflict and the negative effects on psychological health and well-being experienced for employed persons. Dual-earner relationships, parenthood, and the presence of children greatly increase the time demands of the family role. Parental demands, family involvement, and time commitment to home are considered sources of role pressure for the family (Parasuraman & Simmers, 2001). Furthermore, parental demands are thought to be highest when caring for infants and pre-school children, lower for school-age children, and least for adult children not living at home. Understanding personal stressors is the best way to combat their negative effects. Perceptions of organizational support increase attachment to an organization and strengthen expectations that higher effort entails more reward (Prabhu, 2013). Employees

who believe their organizations support them put forth increased effort increasing employees' job performance.

For social support to be effective it is crucial to consider social circles within a company. If a large group of employees are let go, it is likely that the remaining employees have lost a certain degree of trust in the company as well as a decrease in their social support system at work (Ellingson et al., 2015). The concept of resistance is withholding support for plans or ideas. It can either be intentional or unintentional, covert or overt. To combat resistance it must first be discovered. Unintentional resisters don't realize that they are withholding support (Connor, 1993). This can occur when subordinates receive poor communication about what is expected and act in ways that resist change efforts. Discovering precisely who is resisting and why is the real task when managing change. One way to counteract resisters is through the process of socialization. The purpose of socialization is to facilitate learning about the organizational environment, including performance proficiency, people, politics, organization-specific language, organizational history, organizational goals, and values (Kristof, 1996). Organizational tenure and socialization practices may also lead to increased levels of supplementary person-organization fit.

Narayan, Steel-Johnson, Delgado, & Cole (2007) found a significant negative relationship between social support and readiness to change, within the pre-contemplation stage. These findings indicate higher levels of social support are related to less resistance to change. Some social support measures include: "how easy is it to talk with your supervisors and your coworkers" and, "how much can your supervisors and coworkers be relied upon when things get tough at work" (Cummins, 1990). Krause,

Dainger, Deegan, Rudolph, and Brand (2001) found employees with poor supervisory support, and high job demands were 20% less likely to return successfully to work while those with high levels of control were 30% more likely to return to work.

Results indicated by Cummins (1990) indicate that differences in levels of supervisory support may have stress-management implications for those individuals who are relationship oriented. The establishment of mentor relationships might be an appropriate intervention for relationship-oriented individuals. However, interventions which target relationship issues may be ineffective or unnecessary for task-oriented individuals. For these employees, a different strategy for stress management may be more appropriate. These differences further illustrate the importance of tailoring treatment practices to better match the individual.

### **Locus of control**

Locus of control is defined as the extent individuals believe they have control over their own destiny. People with an internal locus of control believe they can influence their environment, and that their actions affect what happens to them. Individuals with an external locus of control believe they have little influence over their environment, and what happens to them is due to external factors such as luck, or the actions of others. This locus of control construct emerged from social learning theory (Rotter, 1996). More specifically, locus of control is an aspect of personality that deals with generalized expectancies, and whether the individual can or cannot control reinforcements (Asiedu-Appiah, & Addai, 2014). In other words, locus of control refers to the circumstances that individuals attribute to their success and failures.

Work locus of control represents the extent to which employees attribute rewards at work to their behaviors. Examples of internal work locus items include, "people who perform their jobs well generally get rewarded", and "most people are capable of doing their jobs well if they make the effort" (Spector, 1988). Specifically, work locus of control is related to rewards or outcomes within the organization such as promotions, bonuses, salary increases, and job perks. Analysis has shown that the external locus of control individuals have significantly greater turnover intention than internal locus of control groups. Furthermore, those with an external locus of control tend to see problems as global such as the organization itself is bad. Where an internal locus of control person tends to see issues as specific motives; for example, I wish my company offered more vacation time. Logically this makes sense considering the specific motive individuals have a clear issue to address where an external view can see the problem as overwhelming (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). Individuals with an internal locus of control seem to better adapt to varying situations in a more functional way than people with an external locus of control. Spector (1982) found individuals with an internal locus of control appear more motivated, perform better on the job, and express higher levels of satisfaction than individuals with an external locus of control.

Locus of control has been credited as having a relationship with many work-related behaviors and attitudes. This makes locus of control particularly relevant to the present research given that internally controlled individuals are more prone to take self-initiated action than externally controlled individuals when in undesirable environments (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). Individuals with an internal work locus of control tend to show higher performance initiative while individuals with an external work locus of

control show a higher tendency to complain (Asiedu-Appiah & Addai, 2014).

Additionally, individuals with an internal work locus of control tend to have a stronger relationship with self-development and have higher satisfaction with their jobs than individuals with an external work locus of control.

A desired version of self can aid in fostering a long term view of self-regulation to develop a broader understanding of one's actions. Stronger negative emotions towards a behavior can lead to a higher internal locus of control when considering changing said behavior. For example, if you know you struggle with keeping your home clean, you are aware of the problem and are therefore more likely to change (Lickel et al., 2014).

Consider welfare recipients cycling between work and welfare and not keeping a job over any substantial period. To outsiders, these welfare recipients are seen as, "playing the system" or outsiders may view the individual as having an overall, "unwillingness to work." Conversely, individuals within the welfare system might see the difficulty as more of an inability to work due to a disability or a broken system (Lam et al., 2010).

Therefore it is fair to surmise that an issue of internal versus external locus of control might elicit a partial explanation for the gap in understanding between those viewing the welfare system from the outside and those who have actively participated or know someone who has had to utilize welfare systems.

Individuals in the pre-contemplation stage are usually unaware or under-aware of their issues concerning work. It's not that they don't know the solution to their problems, but it is more they don't understand that a problem exists. These individuals express a desire to change the broken system or environment but not to change themselves.

Individuals with an external locus of control believe that they do not have control of their

destiny and consider their situation as being a passive role dictated by their environment (Asiedu-Appiah & Addai, 2014). However, individuals with an internal locus of control see a strong relationship between their actions and the potential consequences of those actions.

Research has found that individuals with an internal work locus of control have lower levels of job stress and generally perform better. Employees with an external work locus of control find work environments to be more threatening and stressful (Asiedu-Appiah & Addai, 2014). Therefore it is understandable that individuals with an external work locus of control are more likely to experience work strain. Also, external work locus of control is related to increased levels of job insecurity (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). Findings indicate voluntary turnover individuals have an external locus of control. It makes sense that external locus of control individuals are unable to initiate the change in culture required to deal with their feelings regarding the organization. They believe that they are not in control of the situation. That is not to say that these individuals have an external locus of control in regards to other aspects of their life. More so, they felt the changes required at their prior position were specifically not within their own control.

### **Motivation**

Employee motivation is a widely researched construct in the psychological literature. Motivation is the desire on part of the individual to achieve a specific outcome, most commonly referred to as goals (Narayan et al., 2007). With unskilled general laborers, who tend to have lower motivation levels, it is important to address how these levels can be increased. With consideration for the person-organization fit literature, value congruence has been shown to support increased job satisfaction, organizational

commitment, motivation, and increased social support through group cohesion (Kristof, 1996). Earlier it was discussed that perceptions of a high degree of fit between oneself and the job environment will exhibit the same benefits of actual fit. This perceived fit may have the added bonus of motivating employees to act on their own goals and values (Raylin & Ritchie, 2006). In an effort to increase an individual's value congruence, managers could explore client goals and values, by reinforcing the client's motivation to achieve these goals and values. Managers should remain cognizant to map out how the client's behavior matches and mismatches the goals and values of the organization (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). Then develop a change plan that better aligns and enables the individual to live in a more value-congruent manner with the organization.

Furthermore, motivational beliefs play a critical role in an individual's willingness and capacity to return to work. Individuals may experience psychosocial barriers to return to work including pain, fear avoidance, lack of confidence, and low social support (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). These psychosocial emotional factors can impact an individual's confidence, motivation and willingness to return to work. Factors and barriers impacting return to work need to be addressed to facilitate more effective outcomes. Shame, guilt, embarrassment, and regret are a class of emotions that are relevant in motivating self-change. Clinical research proposes there are three ways to deal with negative events avoidance, approach, and repair. Lickel et al. (2014) found when comparing these negative emotions with change that guilt was only weakly predictive of motivation to change self (.18), shame ratings were predictive of motivations to distance from the event (.25) and to change the self (.33), and embarrassment on the far end was only predictive of the motivation to distance oneself from an event (.23). With this

research in mind, if an individual wants to change him or herself, shame is a better predictor than guilt when it comes to bridging the gap towards readiness to change (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). By identifying how an attitude effects motivation we can better understand the attitude's function for the individual. Through this understanding, we can more accurately regulate effects in how attitudes present themselves through behavior.

Understanding the reasoning behind behavior is of the utmost importance to psychological research. A more effective course of action might be to screen an individual's readiness before attempting to learn new behaviors. If they score within an appropriate readiness to change spectrum, it would stand to reason that they would be more likely to exhibit enduring behavioral change after the training has been completed, since they tested positively for being ready to change (Cole, 2008; Roberts & Pratt, 2007). Coincidentally if individuals reside within the lower levels of readiness to change, pre-contemplation or contemplation, motivational interviewing could be utilized to monitor and adjust an individual's readiness considering work locus of control (Narayan et al., 2007). Individuals who are given a choice generally report higher levels of motivation and are more positive about training, receive higher test scores, and are more committed to a situation or decision.

Motivational interviewing is a collaborative, person-centered approach to motivate positive behavioral change. The goal of motivational interviewing is to reinforce and elicit an individual's personal motivation to change. This is achieved through reflective questioning and active listening which can help an individual to see how changes in behavior will allow them to achieve important life goals. Interestingly enough,

motivational interviewing, just like readiness to change, was first developed to treat substance abuse in the 1980s by clinicians and therapists (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). Motivational interviewing is an empirically validated approach of treating a client that may be particularly useful in a return to work context. Particularly motivational interviewing is useful in situations where an individual may be ambivalent towards behavioral change (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). Motivational interviewing has been shown to promote behavior change across a diverse spectrum of problem areas.

There is a developing body of research that explores the use of motivational interviewing for improving return to work and employment outcomes (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). Research indicates a negative relationship exists between the length of time an individual has been off work and the likelihood of them ever returning to work (Vestling, Tufvesson, & Iwarson, 2003). Fortunately, if these individuals are able to return to work, in some capacity, they report significantly higher life satisfaction and subjective wellbeing when compared to those who have not returned to work.

Pre-training influences choice, social support, and motivation to learn (Narayan et al., 2007). Motivational interviewing is considered to work best with individuals stuck or resistant to change. That is why it is important to work towards reinforcing a client's natural strengths and resources while respecting self-determination. These considerations play a key role in the motivational interviewing process. Individuals who believe change is possible due to their own actions are more likely to be successful in their change efforts. Motivational interviewing has been shown to be useful with motivating individuals towards increased readiness for change, on average of one stage further (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). Furthermore, motivational interviewing can strengthen a client's

confidence, readiness, and commitment to take action. In so doing, the change that is elicited comes about in a way that aligns with the client's own values, goals, and desires rather than the values, goals, or desires of others (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014; Lam et al., 2010). Motivational interviewing can be used as a technique to move individuals who exhibit a pre-contemplation state of readiness to a contemplation state of readiness or even help them move from a contemplation state of readiness to an action state of readiness.

It would be most beneficial for interviewers to take an active role in clarifying and understanding interviewee expectations when discussing hiring opportunities. Then interviewers can provide appropriate feedback to foster behavioral change during and after motivational interviewing so as to enhance an individual's awareness of their current state and to strengthen their change potential. This enhancement can be accomplished by highlighting and focusing on the potential benefits of change.

### **Turnover Intention**

The construct of turnover is highly relevant to Industrial-Organizational Psychology as a whole. As mentioned previously organizations that employ low-wage or low-skill employees can face high yearly turnover rates that can exceed 50% or even 100% annually (McElroy et al., 2001). If hiring professionals are able to find individuals who are more likely to stay with a company, they will be able to save substantial amounts of time and money. Not only can high turnover be extremely costly in the long run, but time lost continually training new employees to do the same work can be overwhelmingly expensive. Turnover intention refers to individuals' own estimated subjective likelihood that they will permanently leave their current organization at some

point in the near future (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). The relationship between intention and actual turnover has received strong research support over the years.

The research has established three separate types of turnover: voluntary, involuntary, and turnover due to downsizing. In previous research, downsizing has been considered a form of involuntary turnover from the individual's perspective. Downsizing is largely avoidable, from an organization's point of view, and can be either functional or dysfunctional depending on the individuals who are lost due to downsizing. Considering voluntary turnover, individuals leave a company for many reasons. However, there are generally some consistencies as to why an employee might voluntarily leave a company. Some individuals leave to escape poor working environments, while others are pulled away from an organization due to more attractive opportunities (Ellingson et al., 2015). Turnover affects every organization. Statistically, general unskilled labor forces tend to have the highest turnover rates.

There is a significant difference between involuntary turnover and voluntary turnover. Cases of involuntary turnover are highly attributed to how an organization views an employee's performance. If an individual's performance is seen as inadequate, this legitimizes the main reasoning behind the organization's decision to choose termination of employment for that individual (Ellingson et al., 2015). Voluntary turnover, on the other hand, can have many different reasons. These reasons can be as specific or global.

McElroy et al. (2001) measured voluntary turnover by assessing organizational records approximately one year following survey administration. Turnover was identified as voluntary or involuntary based on the company's records. Turnover was then coded

dichotomously as 1 for leavers and 0 for those who stayed. After this itemization, the surveyors found the annual voluntary turnover rate to be 44%, whereas the voluntary turnover rate for the first three months was 24%. These findings add merit to the idea that voluntary turnover can be attributed to a lack of readiness to work. If half of the employees, who leave within a year, leave within the first three months, then a more stringent selection process would logically benefit the company. Evaluating employee's readiness to work before hiring may be a way to weed out individual's who would be more likely to leave within the first three months.

One reason for an employee leaving a company is the monotonous nature of most unskilled labor jobs. Every day employees are expected to come in and do the same thing with very few interruptions or opportunities to physically or cognitively change positions. Another reason is overload due to inadequate staffing within the company and frequent loss of fellow coworkers (Ellingson et al., 2015). Also, suddenly losing fellow employees can lead to unpredictable business demands making the job unbearable for the remaining employees.

Lam et al. (2010) found that women who have received welfare generally only work 60% as often as women who have never received welfare. These lower rates of employment, over any given year, and shorter periods of work, when employed, contribute to welfare recipients spending substantially less time in the labor force than non-recipients of welfare. Klaas and DeNisi (1989) found that employees who filed and won grievances against their supervisors tended to regularly receive lower performance ratings, despite evidence that their production hours had not changed significantly.

Withdrawal perspective is an interesting area of turnover research. It implies that those with poor attendance records gradually select themselves out of an organization and are therefore not available for promotional consideration. Bycio (1992) found a modest but significant tendency for frequently absent employees to be poor performers. Furthermore, frequent absentees may run the risk of being labeled as troublemakers or deviants. Morley (2007) found a statistically significant relationship between person organizational fit and job satisfaction. Their findings indicated that as job satisfaction increases intention to turnover decreases. Perceived job mobility is found to be a moderator in the relationship between job satisfaction and intent to turnover. Decreases in an individual's organizational fit will lead to decreases in job satisfaction, and thus increasing an individual's intent to turnover. This is especially true if the individual perceives an abundance of alternative job opportunities.

When considering voluntary turnover, one primary reason employees leave is a general perception concerning the availability of alternative jobs. If an individual feels they could be making more money working a less stressful job, then why would they have any reason to stay with their current organization? These jobs will, in turn, draw employees away to consider other external opportunities. This desirability of movement, or turnover intention, represents an individual's level of dissatisfaction with their current position. If their satisfaction is low, thoughts of leaving a work environment go up (McElroy et al., 2001). However, some employees leave organizations without considering alternatives; their choice is to stay or leave their present company not to quit for another organization (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Achieving a higher understanding of these dimensions has the potential to save companies a lot of time and money.

Job alternatives, not job satisfaction, might have a substantial direct effect on turnover specifically among marginal and temporary employees. In contrast, both job alternatives and satisfaction have significant effects on turnover among permanent and full-time employees (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Some discrepancy between turnover intention and turnover rates might be due to not all individuals being capable of acting upon their high intention. However, empirical evidence supports the idea that people generally do not state a high intention unless perceived opportunities are available to act upon. Also, an individual looking at perceived opportunities does not account for differences between individuals which may also affect intentions to act, even when perceived employment opportunities are available. Vandenberg and Jodi's (1999) findings suggest that high turnover intention does not automatically result in actual turnover behavior. The motives for stating a high intention of quitting an organization is different for each individual. This intention can be lowered if the source of individual discontent is dealt with. Still, motives account for some of the intention-behavior relationship. Personal difference variables, such as locus of control, need to be considered when studying work processes where control over some aspect of the situation is a focal point.

Any decision an employee would make, that is as significant as leaving a job, is usually determined by a myriad of personal factors. These factors range from economic, social, or even psychological reasoning (Larkin, Brasel, & Pines, 2013). Some forms of turnover are desirable such as losing poor performing employees. However, most practitioners and researchers generally refer to the loss of employees as a negative outcome (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). Assume that low performers are generally replaced

with higher performers; it would make sense that organizational performance should be enhanced through this turnover (Ellingson et al., 2015). However, this is not always the case. Significant delays in performance can be translated from lost human capital and lag time from training new employees. Another partial explanation for this would be the introductory training required before new employees can outperform the individuals that they are replacing (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Regardless, corresponding costs can be substantial regarding multiple employees quitting an organization and the subsequent hiring of replacements.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **DISCUSSION**

Governments spend a significant amount of their budget on reemployment and rehabilitation programs to help unemployed citizens return to work. For example, the Obama administration spent over \$270.5 billion of the Federal budget in 2015 on Income Security, Welfare, and Social Services (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2016). Results regarding pre-training influences under non-optimal conditions highlight the benefit of using a multidimensional measure of readiness to change (Narayan et al., 2007). By better understanding the individuals taking part in these programs, resources can be utilized more effectively. Individuals are more likely to initiate change in the presence of others who are helpful, encouraging, understanding, and provide social support. If someone is struggling with rehabilitation programs, taking the time to understand their concerns through motivational interviewing is a better way to develop a roadmap to help adjust their locus of control regarding a potential change.

Pre-contemplation is the readiness to change stage where an individual may be unaware there is an issue. Individuals in this stage can be advised on personal barriers they face and how they can take proactive steps to address these problem areas in their lives. Through this understanding, applicants can consider personal setbacks with a higher level of internal locus of control. Contemplation is the stage where individuals recognize there are issues and begin to weigh the pros and cons of changing bad behaviors to address those issues. Individuals stuck in this stage can be better guided on weighing the pros and cons toward considering taking the best course of action. Preparation job seekers are planning on taking action soon. They are actively preparing

themselves physically and mentally for a change. Inauthentic action job seekers appear to be in the action stage, but they lack the desire or confidence to obtain employment. These individuals are likely pressured to take action and are not choosing to take action on their own. Individuals in the action stage begin to take the active steps necessary to modify problem behaviors, and if successful they will move towards an appropriate change. Individuals in the action stage can be appropriately guided on which course of action to take. These individuals could be singled out for advancement within the company or given exit interviews that show areas where the company can improve. Finally, the maintenance stage is where individuals try to incorporate change and integrate this change into their lifestyle and take active measures towards preventing recursive slips or relapse into earlier stages in regards to the new changes in behavior. Individuals found in the maintenance stage can be surveyed as a means to better understand those stuck in a stage and help the company as a whole successfully sustain change after implementing new change initiatives.

If an organization's resources can be better allocated by improving selection processes the savings would be considerable. Furthermore, if this issue is even partially addressed by better understanding the employee's state of readiness the amount of better allocated resources would greatly benefit a company. Hiring professionals would therefore hire and train employees that stay with the company longer and avoid hiring candidates who may not even show up for orientation. These innovations can allow for a potential snowball effect of improvements can reverberate through a company since resources are better allocated.

According to Prochaska et al. (1992), people approach any decision to change with a variety of internal turmoil regarding their readiness and willingness to change. Managers need to be aware of potential stress issues during any change project. This research suggests that individual and situational differences are an important consideration in change programs (Cummins, 1990). When combined with the construct of person-environment fit, through value-congruence, this perspective is especially beneficial.

It is reasonable to assume that some individuals will obstruct productive change within a company. Furthermore not all change initiatives are successful, so it is essential to consider all the risks involved in making a change. Both personal emotions and having an external support group can be beneficial factors in readiness and long-lasting, sustainable self-change. By fostering an appropriate change positive culture, individual concerns regarding change can be addressed and utilized to develop better change initiatives in the future through collaborative efforts. Any readiness to change effort is improved drastically when an individual has a reliable social support system to reinforce a change. An example would be having a close social support system to aid during transitional periods such as being between jobs or struggling with the difficulties of a lengthy unplanned period of unemployment.

Individuals with an internal locus of control have the capacity to become more ready to work sustainably over time. To make a program more beneficial, taking the time to individualize complimentary treatments to a client's stage of readiness would be a much more effective approach to work rehabilitation. Through utilizing motivational interviewing individuals can be primed to better approach appropriate stages of readiness

for their given situation. Employee knowledge can be lost due to voluntary and involuntary turnover. This lost knowledge can translate to significant costs for a company. Absenteeism and low performance are seen as the best predictors of turnover (Bycio, 1992). That is why it is vital to incorporate succession planning and develop efforts towards retaining knowledge when employees are lost.

The main argument for this research is if hiring professionals are able to find and select employees who will stay with their company for longer periods, then these new employees will be able to save the company substantial time, effort, money, and resources that can be better distributed elsewhere. Not only can high turnover be extremely costly in the long run, but time lost continually training new employees, for the same position, can be costly as well. With all of the costs related to high turnover and low job retention, it is easy to envision how resources will be better allocated by making these changes.

### **Knowledge that can Help**

Several useful concepts were discovered while reviewing the research. For example, gauging an individual's readiness to work, before placement, can potentially be a cost-effective tool for hiring professionals. This idea can be generalized to managers as well who are looking to develop succession planning programs to accommodate a company's needs. With more informative knowledge about an employee's readiness level, individuals seeking an employment change, by considering more attractive options, can be addressed before they leave the company. Many contributing factors greatly influence readiness. Experience, awareness, and a sense of beneficial opportunities becoming available are just a few of the factors affecting an individual's readiness. Another factor is

an individual's commitment to change. This commitment to change can be affected by a willingness to develop new social bonds or strengthen old ones.

Eisenberger, Mitchell, and Masterson (1985) theorized that readiness to work hard could be gained by increasing the level of effort required in one or more work-related behaviors, in a sense raising an individual's generalized readiness. The thought is that by increasing one's work difficulty, to be an achievable stretch goal, an individual can be seen as competent at implementing a successful challenging change. Employers can use an individual's readiness to work as a way of retaining good employees and fostering more internalized control viewpoints among employees. This practice can be introduced at a lesser degree for the unemployed. However, stretch goals can still be used with the unemployed to increase internal locus of control. The greatest benefit for this practice is the potential to effectively retain a good employee who feels they have reached a plateau with their current position. Additionally, an employee that is willing to go the extra mile will be an excellent candidate for succession planning within the organization. So by discovering individuals who are ready to take action, a supervisor can potentially retain good employees while finding appropriate individuals to fill more technically challenging roles.

In the readiness literature developing an understanding of negative aspects can aid in fostering readiness for change. Think of critical incident reports or personal loss that necessitates an individual to change. Also, consider that many individuals may exhibit, from an outsider's perspective, an overall lack of readiness. Assuming that poor performers are replaced with better performers, it makes sense that organizational performance should be enhanced through turnover. However, people can change, just like

people can become ready to work, even if they don't believe they can. It is essential to realize that sustainable change for an individual or a company is not an overnight process. Change is not easy, and if it is to be sustainable, the change should be performed slowly and concisely. Negative reactions from individuals, when discussed in the right environment, can lead to constructive information regarding change.

Recruiters and managers would be wise to highlight which jobs and organizations provide best fit perceptions (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Coincidentally an employee who incorrectly has strong beliefs in their congruence with an organization may actually influence coworkers toward alternative value systems through misplaced confidence in their beliefs. Organizations with this problem should better clarify value priorities, not only to enhance action toward organizational goals but to avoid the proliferation of subcultures within an organization (Raylin & Ritchie, 2006). This is accomplished by identifying core values within the organization, outlining priorities, and then communicating to team members in such a way that relates to job behavior throughout all levels of the organization (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). As the business world continues to require managers to do more with less, criteria such as turnover becomes more important.

It is important to note that individuals who have voluntarily left many jobs will likely experience and explain voluntary turnover differently than someone who has had fewer voluntary departures. For example, some professors choose to move from one university to another every few years as a means of increasing their salary more rapidly. Other professors choose to remain with the same university for many years knowing that salary increases will likely come more slowly (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). One study

theorized that voluntary turnover is highly correlated with a readiness for change in employees who are unhappy with their current employment. External pressures to change can be a very conducive part of the readiness process for instituting a need to change (Roberts & Pratt, 2007). Also, it is crucial to consider social circles within a company, and if a large group of employees is let go, it is possible that employees who are still there might have lost a certain degree of trust with the company. If downsizing is the only option, it is vital to address concerns of remaining employees to avoid building resentment. Employees may be able to change the current work environment through bargaining with their supervisors. It should not be assumed that a high intention to quit automatically results in the subject's voluntary turnover (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). Furthermore, once expressed it should not be assumed that turnover intention cannot be lowered as well.

Core motivational interviewing techniques include collaboration, evocation, and autonomy. Collaboration is utilized through working with a client in a non-confrontational way, where the client's perspective, rather than the practitioner's perspective is discussed. Evocation focuses on change coming from within, drawing on the individual's resources and expertise, as opposed to the client being taught by a practitioner. Through autonomy, the clients become their own expert and are encouraged to make decisions and take action in an independent and self-directed manner (Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Miller & Rose, 2009). By communicating and better understanding, a situation the best course of action can be more accepted by everyone involved.

## **Manager Communication**

Conducting performance appraisals and making recommendations regarding pay and promotability are often part of the supervisor's job. Logically absenteeism impacts these decisions (Bycio, 1992). Managerial communication is the process where companies can prepare employees for change by addressing potential issues relevant to a change. Communication helps employees understand the rationalization for change. Process perspective suggests that employees who receive justification for and information regarding a change, with timely feedback, will have better attitudes towards a change. Also, this open communication indirectly impacts employees' intention to stay with an organization (Prabhu, 2013). There are a few diagnostic questions managers can ask in reference to resisters to change. For example; "Do these people who are asked to implement a change understand that it is based on a serious need?", "Do those involved in the change understand the need in the same way?", "Is there a common end goal for change to which everyone can agree?", "Does everyone believe the goal is attainable and helps the company?", and, "Is their unanimous confidence in the person selected to manage the change?" (Connor, 1993). By better understanding the resisters to change, a change initiative can be more effective.

For those in the contemplation stage, vocational exploration and planning are suggested. People in this stage are usually more likely to be aware of their problem areas and have begun considering potential change options. However, at this stage, they are not taking active steps towards improving their current situation. If a hiring manager notices an employee or applicant speaking in these terms a nudge in the right direction would greatly benefit the employee with crossing the threshold into the action stage of change.

Individuals in the action stage have begun the process of engaging in job seeking behaviors and have also begun removing public and personal barriers related to preventing a return or continuation in the workforce. Individuals in this stage are open to looking for assistance in developing strategies to help expedite the process of rejoining the workforce. However, the Maintenance stage is just as important. Managers need to be aware of employees in this stage to help prevent old habits and unwanted behaviors from coming back. After an individual has successfully transitioned to a new work environment, it is vital for managers to assist with maintaining employees more productive behaviors. Quarterly or monthly check-ins would be an excellent way to monitor these improvements. If this increased self-perceived readiness can be sustained over a substantial period, then employees will be able to better sustain employment. This idea further demonstrates how individuals can be influenced by their superiors when approached appropriately (Kalil, Schweingruber, and Seefeldt, 2001). That is why it is important to foster cultures that promote appropriate responses to individuals. By understanding an individual's state of readiness, you can more effectively and efficiently address their problem areas (Morley, 2007). Some individuals believe they are unable to change. Likewise, some supervisors believe their subordinates are unable to change. When blaming an outside force for a lack of capacity, it is easy for these individuals to express a desire to replace a broken system or environment, but not to change their own actions. An example of a harmful bias for managers is, "the greatest predictor of future behavior is past behavior." The bias here is that if individuals are not currently ready to work, it is unlikely that they ever will be.

Motivational interviewing can be used as a technique to transition individuals who exhibit a pre-contemplation state of readiness to a contemplation state of readiness or even help an individual move from a contemplation state of readiness to an action state of readiness (Lam et al., 2010). Through communication, managers have the power to enhance the applicant's awareness of their current state and strengthen potential change sustainability (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). It is also the role of the motivational interviewer to work with, rather than against, a client's resistance to change. It would be most beneficial for interviewers to take an active role in clarifying and understanding interviewee expectations when discussing hiring opportunities.

Some examples of motivational interviewing include: "What happened just before you started to think of changing X?", "What were your thoughts and feelings at the time when you began seeing things in this way?", "Tell me that you don't want to change X as you look away and become quiet?", and "Could you tell me what you are thinking about now?". These questions can help interviewers attain a glimpse at the potential root of an individual's problem. These findings are beneficial to several aspects of the current research, and can better establish the importance of framing when delivering news to employees and applicants. Even though readiness shifts, there is power in believing you are capable of accomplishing your goals.

### **Implications for Practice**

Managerial training has the potential to add benefits that lead to behavioral changes at the personal level as well as benefits in behavioral change across the organization. If managers are actively trained to foster and keep a lookout for readiness to change among employees, they have a better chance of decreasing turnover by providing

social support as needed (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). Not only are the benefits of a longer lasting workforce great for companies, but this would also help the unemployed struggling to find and keep work. If appropriately used, individuals and managers would get a better understanding of readiness levels so as to gauge the best course of action for a given situation.

Individuals can flux between stages of readiness and locus of control. Temp to hire positions, internship opportunities, and short term assignments would be better utilized for applicants, with required skills, wavering on lower levels of change. If approached appropriately, individuals in lower levels of readiness can be molded through motivational interviewing to better appreciate the employment they have and create higher perceived organizational fit while decreasing turnover intention. It is only natural for individuals to be apprehensive towards change. However, by better explaining the pros and cons of a given situation an individual stuck in a lower level of readiness can have their sources of stress and strain addressed. Once these sources of stress and strain are addressed these individuals can develop a higher internal locus of control. If individuals have a better understanding of their readiness to work, before interviews, they can be more receptive and better prepared for the process and their own ability in creating lasting change through an increased internal locus of control.

These improvements can be made by training supervisors to become better at deducing which employees are ready to take action within or outside of the organization. By better understanding subordinates, managers can address concerns of poor fit before these concerns become reasons for turnover intention by providing social support and motivational interviewing. It is, very important to conduct these practices correctly to

elicit the greatest amount of benefit. Instilling the concept of successful self and peer evaluation is paramount to appropriately using readiness to work and motivational interviewing effectively within the workplace.

Any readiness to change effort is improved drastically when an individual has a reliable social support system to reinforce beneficial change. Readiness, either self or peer perceived, can be a highly subjective construct susceptible to a multitude of different biases and prejudices. When applicants believe they have higher internal control changing their current behavior becomes more attainable. Regardless of an individual's personal beliefs they are tapping into self-fulfilling prophecy (Coppin, 2017). Therefore, a valid assessment of an applicant's readiness to return to work would help managers more effectively help with the transition to employment and independence.

The potential usefulness of developing a device capable of effectively measuring readiness will be beneficial to multiple fields and general personnel selection practices. As a construct, readiness describes the intent and not the capacity. Individuals with the intent tend to have a higher internal locus of control, because they see personal change as achievable. Readiness is fundamentally fluid, and even if an individual is ready in one aspect of their life that doesn't mean that they are ready in other aspects of their life. Stressors and support don't just come from work, they can come from family and friends as well. Over time an individual's level of readiness will change. The difficulty of developing readiness comes from an individual's locus of control regarding the situation.

Managers wishing to maximize the benefits of fit are encouraged to attend to all aspects of the environment with which fit can occur. A company's, just like an individual's, values can shift. It is not enough to increasingly refine job descriptions or

use socialization tactics to acclimate employees into a company's culture (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Use of a structured interview is one of the most effective ways to assess an applicant's fit within an organization (Kristof, 1996). Furthermore, a structured interview can contain motivational interviewing and readiness to work questions to better understand the applicant.

If an individual's current environment is receptive to change, then the individual wavering on whether or not to make a change is more likely to make a successful change. When considering voluntary versus involuntary turnover, performance improvements don't happen just by replacing poor performers. All new employees have to be trained before they can outperform the individuals they are replacing. Return to work interventions can help to reduce the duration and cost of work disability. This reduced duration will help prevent the negative effects of long term absences (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). Parasuraman and Simmers (2001) findings suggest that organizational employees, compared to small business owners, experience less emotional investment in the work role which translates to decreased stress at work. This enables organizational employees to achieve a better balance between their work and family. They obtain this balance due to having less at stake when considering the success or failure of the company.

Making resistance acceptable can lead to discussion which stimulates collaborative change rather than threatening change initiatives (Connor, 1993). Voicing different opinions to gain a common understanding of stressors and strain is the best and least expensive way to deal with resistance. An open-minded atmosphere and free debate can actually minimize stressors even though comments and reactions to change sound

negative and even destructive. By taking the time to explain change initiatives and discuss concerns has the benefit of increasing perceived fit within an organization. If upper management takes the time to explain why something is happening this respect shows employees that the organization is actively considering concerns and trying to do what is best for everyone involved.

Some managers react forcefully to resistance, in an attempt to make it go away. This response doesn't work because it is essentially resisting resistance. To more effectively resolve resistance, a manager must willingly explore what causes it. This can be achieved by creating a culture that provides social support and utilizing motivational interviewing to create change. First by understanding underlying resistance motives managers may uncover easily changeable sources of dissatisfaction, which if dealt with, can help prevent the loss of valued employees. Second, this information can indicate areas that are easily changed or have a low probability of changing from a human resource planning perspective (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). By uncovering problem areas a change initiative can actually be improved through the voicing of subject matter experts' concerns. Once an individual understands the forces working against them, a metaphorical light can shine on areas where unnecessary energy and resources are being locked up within their current situation. Once they are aware of these inefficiencies, they are ready to make changes to reallocate those resources.

Individuals tend to react negatively and are much less likely to try and improve when errors are attributed to stable personal behaviors such as lack of ability. One such way to improve this is to increase an individual's current understanding of the negative aspects of their unseen problems. Then the individuals can be assisted by managers in

moving forward with their state of readiness to work through fostering a more internal locus of control. The focus shouldn't be on you "can't" do that, but rather on you "could" do it this way as a way of presenting different options for completing a task that is within the employee's control. With the appropriate social support, these individuals will maintain positive behaviors while they seek and continue their employment.

Understanding both the issues and the benefits perceived by employees can help supervisors observe subordinates and provide help as needed. Becoming self-aware of readiness levels can help individuals, and groups of individuals, with making positive changes towards collective goals. Heatherton and Nichols (1994) asked people to recall and write about an experience of self-change, or of wanting to change but not being able to do so. They theorized that by fostering a deeper understanding of personal negative factors, one could be lead to discontent of circumstances allowing negative aspects to be seen as interrelated with positive outcomes. When assisting an individual towards achieving the appropriate readiness to change state, it is essential to work towards breaking down and compartmentalizing the individual's stressors into smaller more manageable parts. By shifting viewpoints of stressors from global to more specific concerns, managers can elicit higher internal locus of control among subordinates to address the subordinates' stressors. This has the added benefit of decreasing turnover intention through fostering a viewpoint of change being within the employee's control.

The most effective way to improve an individual's lack of readiness would be through motivational interviewing. First, practitioners can assess a worker's readiness for change prior to engaging in motivational interviewing. Then practitioners can apply motivational interviewing tactics as a way of supporting employees through the

appropriate stages of change (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). This specific application of motivational interviewing will help increase a client's readiness to change unwanted behaviors that block reentry into the workforce or barriers in promotability. It is important to note that an individual may reenter the change process at any stage. For purposes of effectiveness, it is crucial that those learning motivational interviewing techniques do so thoroughly and with appropriate supervision and follow up (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014; Coppin, 2017). Through the use of readiness measures, applicants will be better guided through employment interventions. By understanding what maintains employee retention, one can more accurately predict when voluntary turnover might increase due to an organization de-emphasizing a source that previously promoted employee retention behavior (Vandenberg & Jodi, 1999). Through motivational interviewing hiring managers can maximize jobseeker engagement and effectiveness.

### **Implications for Future Research**

If clients are screened for readiness to work, it would make sense that voluntary turnover would decrease with statistical significance. Furthermore, why do general labor employees have such low job retention rates? If this underlying issue has any potential to be addressed, it would save manufacturing companies significant time and money by sustaining a more competent and longer lasting workforce. If an organization can instill the belief, in their culture, that fosters growth and development through productive and proactive change, they would logically be a better culture to help potential hires navigate through the fluctuating phases of readiness to work. A straw poll of 42 unemployment advisors suggests that 72% of interventions with job seekers are "action-oriented", such as resume writing, interview skills, vocational qualifications, and job-search skills.

However, their data suggests that only 29% of job seekers are in the action stage of change (Coppin, 2017). This is a significant and costly mismatch of resources and interventions that could be further investigated. One study's central hypothesis stated that there is no difference in mean self-directed learning readiness scores regardless of occupational category (Durr et al., 1996). Therefore the transferrable nature of readiness to work among different tasks is another potential area of research.

Readiness can be considered synonymous with a motivation to change and is a necessity for effectively training individuals to believe they have a higher internal locus of control over their current work environment. It is theorized that by fostering a deeper understanding of negative behaviors, an individual can be lead to feelings of discontent with current circumstances. Stronger negative emotions towards a behavior can also lead to greater feelings of control about a behavior. If an unemployed individual actively wants to change, shame may be a better predictor than guilt when it comes to bridging the gap towards readiness to change (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Employee turnover intention occurs over time; only through developing methods to assess how the process evolves can researchers and managers understand the reasons behind why individuals chose to leave or stay.

Fostering a more in-depth understanding among employees and employers in regards to readiness to change might be a way to combat different types of turnover within a company. Motivational interviewing was designed to support clients who may be resistant or ambivalent towards change, and that motivation plays an important role in the return to work process. Still, no studies have examined motivational interviewing in a return to work context (Page & Tchernitskaia, 2014). Furthermore, only a handful of

research has empirically investigated the use of motivational interviewing outside of clinical or health settings.

### **Conclusions and Future Directions**

There are some major potential limitations to consider with this area of research. One limitation would be the overall generalizability of readiness to work for general laborers versus more diverse populations of different socio-economic classes. Another limitation would be the willingness of individuals and their respective employers to allow tracking of employment status. A third major limitation would be the potential for bias based on setting, which would most likely occur during possible hiring environments where applicants might feel pressured to embellish readiness responses. Dishonest responses are always a concern however; by implementing control questions within the surveys hiring professionals, who use a readiness to work selection procedure, might better be able to weed out inauthentic action individuals who do not intend to stay with the company they are applying for.

There is also great potential for the construct of readiness to work to be generalized to other more skill based job positions. For these positions person-organization fit is more relevant due to the more complex nature of the positions (Morley, 2007). If person-organization fit and readiness to work are to be used for employment decisions, then measures of person-organization fit and readiness to work must be held to the same legal standards as other selection tests. The concept of readiness is widely used and generally understood; however, there have been few systematic studies of this construct in relation to the work environment. If individuals are screened before attempting to learn new information, and they score within the readiness to change

spectrum it would stand to reason that they would be more likely to exhibit enduring behavioral change. If individuals are molded to view readiness to work as within their control, they are more likely to change their viewpoint to reflect a more contemplative or action based readiness to work perspective.

This idea of measuring an individual's readiness to change can even be pushed as far as the education system. If teachers could find a way to actively gauge a student's readiness to learn before the classroom, the professor could elicit a more personalized response to the presentation of information. Therefore the school systems could more adequately train students for the workforce and actively become more efficient and more individualized as needed (Alcaraz & Thiruvattal, 2010). For business schools to address change sustainability is to invest in the immediate future, and better foster a culture that promotes readiness to not only change but to sustain change. If managers are actively trained to foster and keep a lookout for readiness to change in their employees, they will have a better chance at decreasing turnover. Significant delays in performance can be traced back to lost human capital as well as lag time from training new employees. By fostering an environment that advocates readiness to change through social support and motivational interviewing hiring managers can better promote a readiness to work, and a readiness to learn among their employees.

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## Appendix A

## URICA Questionnaire

**University of Rhode Island Change Assessment Scale-URICA**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This questionnaire is to help us improve services. Each statement describes how a person might feel when starting therapy or approaching problems in their lives. Please indicate the extent to which you tend to agree or disagree with each statement. In each case, make your choice in terms of how you feel right now, not what you have felt in the past or would like to feel. For all the statements that refer to your "problem", answer in terms of problems related to your drinking (or illegal drug use). The words "here" and "this place" refer to treatment or the program. Please read the following statements carefully. For each statement, circle the number that best describes how much you agree or disagree with each statement. **You must complete one scale for alcohol use and a separate scale for drug use.**

**Key:** **SD** = No Strongly Disagree **D** = No Disagree **U** = Undecided or Unsure **A** = Yes Agree **SA** = Yes Strongly Agree

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
1. As far as I'm concerned, I don't have any problems that need changing.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
2. I think I might be ready for some self-improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
3. I am doing something about the problems that had been bothering me.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

4.	It might be worthwhile to work on my problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
5.	I'm not the problem one. It doesn't make much sense for me to be here.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
6.	It worries me that I might slip back on a problem I have already changed, so I am here to seek help.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
7.	I am finally doing some work on my problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
8.	I've been thinking that I might want to change something about myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
9.	I have been successful in working on my problem but I'm not sure I can keep up the effort on my own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
10.	At times my problem is difficult, but I'm working on it.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
11.	Being here is pretty much a waste of time for me because the problem doesn't have to do with me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
12.	I'm hoping this place will help me to better understand myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
13.	I guess I have faults, but there's nothing that I really need to change.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
14.	I am really working hard to change.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
15.	I have a problem and I really think I should work at it.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
16.	I'm not following through with what I had already changed as well as I had hoped, and I'm here to prevent a relapse of the problem.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5

17.	Even though I'm not always successful in changing, I am at least working on my problem.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
18.	I thought once I had resolved my problem I would be free of it, but sometimes I still find myself struggling with it.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
19.	I wish I had more ideas on how to solve the problem.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
20.	I have started working on my problems but I would like help.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
21.	Maybe this place will be able to help me.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
22.	I may need a boost right now to help me maintain the changes I've already made.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
23.	I may be part of the problem, but I don't really think I am.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
24.	I hope that someone here will have some good advice for me.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
25.	Anyone can talk about changing; I'm actually doing something about it.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
26.	All this talk about psychology is boring. Why can't people just forget about their problems?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
27.	I'm here to prevent myself from having a relapse of my problem.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
28.	It is frustrating, but I feel I might be having a recurrence of a problem I thought I had resolved.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
29.	I have worries but so does the next guy. Why spend time thinking about them?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5

30.	I am actively working on my problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
31.	I would rather cope with my faults than try to change them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5
32.	After all I had done to try to change my problem, every now and again it comes back to haunt me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1	2	3	4	5

(Napper et al., 2008)

## Appendix B

## The LASER Questionnaire

The LASER consists of 14 questions 5 point Likert scale

1. I think I might be ready to look for some kind of job (C)
2. I am doing something to get ready to look for a job(A)
3. It might be worthwhile to work on finding a job(C)
4. I am not able to work. I do not see why I have to be here.(PC)
5. I am finally doing something about finding a job.(A)
6. I have been thinking that it might be time for me to find a job.(A)
7. Getting myself ready to find a job is pretty much a waste of time because I can't work anyway (PC)
8. I guess being out of work is not good, but there is nothing I can do about it right now. (PC)
9. I know I need to get a job and really think I should work on finding one (C)
10. People tell me that I should get a job, but I don't think so. (PC)
11. Anyone can talk about wanting to find a job, but I am actually doing something about it. (A)
12. All this talk about work is boring. Why can't people just leave me alone? (PC)
13. I am actively doing something to find a job (A)
14. It's pretty much a waste of time getting ready to find a job because I really don't want to work. (PC)

(Lam et al., 2010)

## Appendix C

## Group Readiness Questionnaire

- 1 when you are with a group of people who are talking about a topic you feel strongly about how likely are you to express your opinion?
  - 2 I like to share my feelings with others
  - 3 I avoid talking in groups
  - 4 I often feel like an outsider in group discussions
  - 5 I typically dominate group discussions
  - 6 I hardly ever say what I'm thinking when I'm with a group of people
  - 7 If I disagree with what someone is saying I interrupt them before they can finish what they are saying
  - 8 When I first meet someone. I like to share things about myself, including quite personal information
  - 9 I am very private and hardly ever share how I feel
  - 10 I think that working in a group will really help me
  - 11 If I participate in a group, I expect to feel quite a bit better when we are finished.
  - 12 I think that sharing my feelings with others will help me feel better
  - 13 I am abrupt with others if I feel strongly about what I'm saying
  - 14 I tend to keep to myself in groups
  - 15 I often contribute to group discussions
  - 16 I am an open person
  - 17 I argue for argument's sake
  - 18 I am the life of a party
  - 19 Others tend to see me as withdrawn
- 5 point likert type scale/higher scores indicating less readiness for group participation (Baker et al., 2013)

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