

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

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“The Relationship Between Individual Well-Being and Collaborative Processes and Performance: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations”

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Tepper Quad 4242

Organizations increasingly require employees who can collaborate effectively. Recent research estimates that the percentage of working hours that employees spend collaborating (i.e. in meetings, on phone calls, or in multi-person online environments) has swelled to as high as 50% to 80%. Given these demands, organizations must prioritize not only how employees perform individually, but also how they perform interpersonally—that is, how they can communicate effectively, establish and maintain professional relationships, coordinate work on complex tasks, negotiate priorities across functional boundaries, and cooperate toward common goals. In this dissertation, I examine a substantial, largely overlooked opportunity to support the collaborative work of employees and management: by fostering their individual well-being.

In three chapters, I theorize and empirically test mechanisms by which individual well-being facilitates collaborative performance. A primary contribution of this work is investigating the impact of individual well-being from a multilevel perspective—that is, how individual well-being impacts the work of dyads and teams.

In Chapter 1, I review the prior research on the variety of individual well-being constructs from the extant literature and provide a unifying framework and definition of individual well-being that integrates perspectives from personality, social, developmental, and clinical psychology with organizational theory. Second, I propose several organizational mechanisms by which individual well-being is expected to positively influence collaborative performance in organizations.

In Chapter 2, I empirically examine how individual well-being facilitates collaborative performance in two separate projects. In one, I investigate the impact of individual well-being on interpersonal conflict expression and provide preliminary evidence that individual well-being predicts lower preference for conflict expression that is expected to cause conflict to escalate and stagnate. I propose to extend this project with a lab experiment in which I will examine the impact of individual well-being on actual conflict expression behavior and integrative performance in a multiparty negotiation task. In a second project, I investigate the impact of individual well-being on team dynamics in a lab experiment and provide evidence that individual well-being positively influences a variety of team processes that are linked to performance: transactive memory, psychological safety, workload sharing, team satisfaction, and reduced relationship conflict.

In Chapter 3, I propose to study individual well-being and the performance of teams in a field study. A field study advances the work of Chapters 1 and 2 of this dissertation in two important ways: one, it enables the

study of well-being on pre-existing teams, whereas the prior work in this dissertation investigates newly formed teams, and two, it extends our theoretical and empirical findings (from online environments and the lab) to team performance on work with actual organizational consequences.