

Job Crafting in an Active Work Environment

MASTER THESIS

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Abstract

When employees in active jobs engage in job crafting, they can redesign their jobs in a way that it could ensure job satisfaction, work engagement, resilience and thriving at work. While some researchers argue that job crafting in active jobs can be supported by work pressure and autonomy, other researchers argue that job crafting in active jobs is limited by the same characteristics. This thesis provides a more elaborated view on job crafting in active jobs by using a deeper understanding of active jobs called the active work environment including work pressure, autonomy and a social climate.

In this thesis, the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes was examined using an inductive research approach and by conducting 10 interviews with consultants. The results of this study show how the active work environment can either support or limit job crafting processes by providing detailed insights in the underlying dimensions of work pressure, autonomy and social climate and their relations with several job crafting processes. In addition, during data analysis it became clear that the social climate and personal characteristics of employees can moderate the relation between the active work environment and job crafting processes in several ways.

Key words

Active work environment, job crafting processes, job crafting in active jobs

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction to job crafting

For a long time, studies on job redesign were mainly focused on managerial job redesign interventions representing a top-down approach (Holman, Axtell, Sprigg, Totterdell & Wall, 2010). However, recent studies focus on a more bottom-up approach of job redesign where employees themselves have an influence on their job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Berg, Dutton, & Wrzesniewski, 2013; Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2013; Petrou, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2015; Harju, Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2016; Espenes & Giæver, 2017). This process where employees themselves redesign their job is called job crafting. When employees craft their job, they independently adapt job aspects to improve the fit between job characteristics and their own motives, strengths, and passions (Berg, Dutton, & Wrzesniewski, 2008; Tims et al., 2013). Job crafting enables employees to redesign their jobs in a way that it could ensure job satisfaction, work engagement, resilience and thriving at work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

When an employee engages in job crafting, the employee becomes a job crafter who is changing the boundaries of the job (Berg, Dutton & Wrzesniewski, 2013). This could change how the employee experiences the work and could influence employee well-being in a positive way (Tims et al., 2013). Through job crafting, employees can prevent job boredom and can achieve their job to be more meaningful, engaging, and satisfying (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Demerouti, 2014; Harju, Hakanen, & Schaufeli, 2016).

Job crafting is an ongoing process in which the context in which employees do their work could play an important role (Berg, Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2010). Berg et al. (2010) studied 33 employees at different ranks in profit and non-profit organizations to examine how employees perceive and adapt to challenges in job crafting processes. Berg et al. (2010) found that higher-rank employees could feel constrained in job crafting despite their formal autonomy and power, whereas lower-rank employees could experience relatively more autonomy in job crafting. They found that higher-rank employees therefore often settle for the opportunities of job crafting that are available only at that moment. This means that job crafting could be challenging for employees despite their high formal autonomy to craft their jobs (Berg et al., 2010).

On the contrary, other research suggests that employees who experience high job autonomy especially engage in job crafting processes (Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli & Hetland, 2012). Petrou et al. (2012) found that employees in active jobs engage more in job

crafting processes because of their high job autonomy and high work pressure. Therefore there seems to be some contradiction in literature about the role of high autonomy in job crafting. Berg et al. (2013) claim that still relatively little is known about factors that enable or limit job crafting and more research is needed to get a more elaborated view on how job crafting takes place.

1.2 Framing of problem

The contradiction mentioned above refers to job crafting in active jobs. An active job refers to a job that includes high demands and that provides the employee with high job control (Karasek & Theorell, in Petrou et al., 2012) or in other terms a job that includes high work pressure and high autonomy (Taris, Kompier, De Lange, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2003; Petrou et al., 2012). Some researchers suggest that employees in active jobs are challenged and even limited in the possibilities for job crafting because of their high autonomy and high work pressure (Berg et al., 2010), whereas others suggest that an active job could enable employees to engage even more in job crafting processes because of the same characteristics (Petrou et al., 2012).

To get more insights in these contradictory results and to examine how job crafting takes place in active jobs, it could help to look at this relation from a broader perspective. Earlier research uses the term active work environment instead of active jobs (Petrou, Demerouti & Xanthopoulou, 2017). This could suggest a broader perspective on job crafting including characteristics of the work environment. However, Petrou et al. (2017) describe the active work environment as an environment that involves work pressure and ensures adequate autonomy to deal with these demands (Petrou et al., 2017). This definition seems to stem from the definition of active jobs and does not suggest a broader view on job crafting including more aspects besides autonomy and work pressure.

However, earlier research mentions there could be other important aspects besides the aspects of the active work environment mentioned above, which play a role in job crafting processes. Berg et al. (2010) give examples of possible aspects that might play a role in job crafting processes including the nature of job responsibilities and interdependence. These aspects could cause different perceptions and reactions of employees to challenges in job crafting because job crafting is a socially embedded process (Berg et al., 2010). However, an elaborated view on the active work environment including more aspects besides autonomy and work pressure is currently lacking in literature and more research is needed to get more insight in important characteristics of the active work environment and their role in job crafting. This master thesis will therefore focus on job crafting processes of employees in active jobs to get a

more elaborated view on how job crafting takes place in active jobs, using a deeper understanding of active jobs called the active work environment.

1.3 Objective and research question

The objective of this master thesis is to provide insight in what role the active work environment has in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs, in order to contribute to existing literature by providing a more elaborated view on job crafting in active jobs using a deeper understanding of active jobs called the active work environment. The research question of this master thesis will therefore be: *'What is the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs?'*

1.4 Research approach

In this master thesis qualitative research methods and an inductive approach will be used to answer the research question. There are already studies known about job crafting in active jobs but these studies show contradictive results. In addition, earlier research suggests that there might be other important aspects that could play a role in job crafting that have not been studied yet (Berg et al., 2010). Therefore this master thesis can be seen as an exploratory study in which an inductive approach is used to explore other important characteristics of the active work environment, besides autonomy and work pressure, and to examine what their role may be in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs.

This thesis will focus on the consultancy branch were one case, a consultancy firm, will be studied. By performing a case study, it is possible to examine job crafting processes of employees in depth within the specific context of an active work environment (Buchanan, 2012). The case for this master thesis is Coppa Consultancy BV, from now on called Coppa. Coppa is a specialized procurement consultancy firm in the sectors healthcare and government (Coppa.nl, n.d.). The organization consists of 80 employees including business consultants and procurement consultants (Coppa.nl, n.d.). Being a consultant at Coppa requires being flexible, willingness to travel, delivering high quality services and working project-based (Coppa.nl, n.d.). Consultants at Coppa often work independent and experience a high level of autonomy.

Consultancy work is characterized by complex interactions and relationships, whereas the performance of the consultant relies on the relationship with the client (Vieira & Proença, 2010). This relationship is characterized by many things, for example trust, commitment and cooperation (Vieira & Proença, 2010). In addition, consultants can feel high work pressure because of the high demands of the customer and the need to deliver high quality service. Work

pressure can also occur from challenges in coping with conflicting demands of competing client groups (Sturdy, 1997).

Because of the high work pressure and high autonomy of the consultants of Coppa, the consultants are working in active jobs. This makes it a suitable case to examine how job crafting takes place in active jobs, what important characteristics of the active work environment are and what their role may be in job crafting processes.

1.5 Theoretical, practical and societal relevance

As discussed earlier, literature shows us some contradiction about how job crafting takes place in an active work environment. Some research suggests that employees in active jobs are challenged and even limited in the possibilities for job crafting because of their high autonomy (Berg et al., 2010), while others suggest that an active job including high autonomy could enable employees to engage even more in job crafting processes (Petrou et al., 2012). This thesis examines job crafting processes of employees in an active work environment more in depth. Characteristics of an active work environment and how these characteristics support or limit job crafting processes of employees will become clear. Therefore this thesis will provide relevant insights in what the active work environment entails, how job crafting takes place in an active work environment, and contributes to existing literature by providing these insights which may give an explanation for the current contradiction that is presented in literature.

In addition, this thesis will provide relevant insights for managers in organizations who are concerned with employees in an active work environment. When employees engage in job crafting, this can ensure positive outcomes for organizations such as job satisfaction, work engagement, resilience and thriving at work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). However, some characteristics of an active work environment could limit the job crafting processes of employees in an active work environment. When job crafting is limited, this may also limit the positive outcomes for organizations mentioned above. By providing insights in the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes, it becomes clear what possible bottlenecks of this environment are in job crafting of employees. In addition, it also becomes clear what supports job crafting processes and what needs to be strengthened to stimulate job crafting among employees even more. By providing these insights, managers can take measures so employees can deal with these characteristics of the active work environment to ensure possibilities for job crafting and eventually to ensure positive organizational outcomes.

For society, this master thesis will gain insight in how employees in active jobs can engage in job crafting to make their job more engaging, satisfying, and meaningful

(Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Demerouti, 2014; Harju, Hakanen, & Schaufeli, 2016). This thesis provides insights in possible bottlenecks for employees in job crafting but also shows what enables job crafting. It shows what employees themselves can do when they are not satisfied in their current active job to achieve a job that is more in line with their own motives, strengths, and passions (Berg et al., 2008). In addition, some employees who might find it difficult to craft their job can get insights from this thesis and see how others craft their job. This might help in exploring all options of job crafting they have and make use of these options. Therefore this master thesis will provide relevant insights in how employees themselves can craft their job in an active work environment in order to improve their own well-being in a positive way (Tims et al., 2013).

1.6 Outline of the thesis

This master thesis consists of five chapters. In the next chapter relevant literature regarding the active work environment and job crafting processes will be discussed. In addition, the contradiction in literature about the role of an active work environment in job crafting processes of employees will be further explained. In chapter 3 the qualitative research methods used in this thesis are presented and the case used for this thesis is explained more in depth. Chapter 4 gives an overview of the results, followed by a conclusion and discussion in chapter 5. In this last chapter, this thesis provides an overview of the limitations of this thesis, considers its contributions to theory and practice and discusses opportunities for future research.

2. Theoretical background

In this chapter relevant literature regarding the active work environment and job crafting processes will be discussed. First of all, this chapter tries to define the concept active work environment and explains the related concepts active jobs and work environment more in depth. The second section contains a definition of job crafting and describes related job crafting processes. Thirdly, this chapter will give an overview of current literature that gives insight in the role of an active work environment in job crafting processes of employees. The last section of this chapter lists the sensitizing concepts derived from earlier sections which will be used for data collection.

2.1 Defining active work environment

Little research has focused on defining the active work environment. As discussed earlier, earlier research defines an active work environment as the environment that not only involves work pressure but also ensures adequate autonomy to deal with these high demands (Petrou et al., 2017). This definition seems to stem from a definition of active jobs, where an active job is defined as a job that includes high work pressure and high autonomy (Taris et al., 2003; Petrou et al., 2012). Besides the definition of Petrou et al. (2017) no other clear definition is provided of the active work environment.

This paragraph will try to develop a deeper understanding of an active work environment by discussing important literature regarding the concepts active jobs and work environment. Important characteristics of the work environment are discussed and are related to the characteristics of active jobs. In this way important characteristics of an active work environment, including work pressure and autonomy, are examined. In addition, it becomes clear if the definition of Petrou et al. (2017) is comprehensive or that there may be other important characteristics of the active work environment that are missing in this definition.

2.1.1 Characteristics of active jobs

A widely-used model that characterizes jobs by certain job aspects is the job strain model (Karasek, 1979), also known as job demand-control model (De Rijk, Blanc, Schaufeli & De Jonge, 1998; Häusser, Mojzisch, Niesel & Schulz-Hardt, 2010). The job demand-control model characterizes jobs based on the level of job demands and the level of job control. According to this model, active jobs contain a high level of job demands and a high level of job control

(Karasek, 1979; Karasek & Theorell, in Petrou et al., 2012). Here, job control refers to the employees' control over their tasks and conduct during an working day (Karasek, 1979). This can be for example task variety, use of intellectual skills, or the employee's responsibility over the work process (Karasek 1976). It is often also called job decision latitude and job autonomy (Karasek, 1979; Baillien, De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011). Job demands refer to stress sources that are present in the work environment, for example work load demands or bustle at work (Karasek, 1976; Karasek, 1979).

Later studies describe an active job as a job that includes high work pressure and high autonomy (Taris et al., 2003; Petrou et al., 2012). Within this definition, work pressure refers to quantitative demanding aspects of a job (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, in Petrou et al., 2012). These demanding aspects can be for example the pace of work, workload, length and scheduling of work hours, safety of work conditions or job security (Gallie & Russel, 2009; Evers, Kreijns, Van der Heijden & Gerrichhauzen, 2011). When a job provides high work pressure, this can lead to several negative consequences such as stress or a decrease in performance (Roe & Zijlstra, 2000; Aditya & Kusuma, 2019)

Job autonomy refers to the control employees have over task execution (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, in Petrou et al., 2012). Job autonomy provides the employee freedom, independence and control in for example scheduling the work and in determining which procedures to use (Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Galup, Klein & Jiang, 2008; Bontis, Richards & Serenko, 2011). When a job provides high autonomy, it enables opportunities for learning what can give the employee a feeling of mastery which can help in coping with high demands (Karasek & Theorell, in Petrou et al., 2012).

2.1.2 Characteristics of work environments

Many studies try to describe the work environment. In some research the work environment is seen as a physical work environment that includes tangible aspects such as structure, practices and policies (Stalpers, Brouwer, Kaljouw & Schuurmans, 2015). Other research sees the work environment more as a social construct and describes it in terms of commitment, sense of community at work, quality of leadership, and feedback (Kristensen, Borg & Hannerz, 2002). But most research tries to define the work environment in terms of both physical aspects as well as social aspects (Karasek, 1976; Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989; Edwards & Rothbard, 1999; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007; Bai, Zhang, Wang, Yu, Pei, Cheng & Hsu, 2015).

One main way of describing the work environment is developed by Karasek (1976) who describes the work environment by distinguishing three work environment dimensions called

job demands, job discretion and job social relationships. Job demands and job discretion are the two main concepts that formed the basis for the earlier described job demand-control model (Karasek, 1979). As mentioned earlier, job demands can be either physical or psychological job aspects and conditionally induce stress to the employee (Karasek, 1976; Karasek, 1979). Job discretion, in later studies called job control or job autonomy (Baillien, De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011; Karasek & Theorell, in Petrou et al., 2012), refers to the job-prescribed freedom in employees' decision making (Karasek, 1976; Karasek, 1979).

In describing the work environment, Karasek (1976) also mentions the concept job social relationships which is more related to the relations employees have with others at work. For example the way employees deal with co-workers or possible friendship opportunities (Karasek, 1976). More recent studies, using the Work Environment Scale, also note that social relationships are a part of the work environment (Tracey, Hinkin, Tannenbaum & Mathieu, 2001; Goddard, O'Brien & Goddard, 2006; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007). They describe the social relationship dimension in terms of the interpersonal factors in a work environment, such as social interaction and cohesion among workers, friendship and support provided by co-workers and management (Westerman & Yamamura, 2007).

Others take it a step further and define the work environment as a social climate of an organization (Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989), where it is seen as an accumulation of attitudes, feelings and behaviours which characterize life in the organization. It develops by the ongoing interactions between individuals and the organizational setting. Each employee perceives the climate and is able to describe it in light of his or her own perceptions (Ekvall, in Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989). More recent studies use the term work climate (Vardaman, Gondo, & Allen, 2014) and define it as: *"a relatively enduring characteristic of an organization which distinguishes it from other organizations and (a) embodies members' collective perceptions about their organization with respect to such dimensions as autonomy, trust, cohesiveness, support, recognition, innovation, and fairness; (b) is produced by member interaction; (c) serves as a basis for interpreting the situation; (d) reflects the prevalent norms, values and attitudes of the organization's culture; and (e) acts as a source of influence for shaping behavior"* (Moran & Volkwein, 1992, p. 20).

Thus, many definitions of the work environment can be found but most research describes the work environment in terms of both physical aspects as well as social aspects (Karasek, 1976; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007; Bai, Zhang, Wang, Yu, Pei, Cheng & Hsu, 2015). Furthermore, some studies argue that it is possible that there is some sort of climate in which employees find themselves which can be seen as an important part of the work

environment (Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989; Moran & Volkwein; 1992; Vardaman, Gondo, & Allen, 2014).

2.1.3 Characteristics of an active work environment

As shown earlier, recent research defines the active work environment as an environment that not only involves work pressure but also ensures adequate autonomy to deal with these high demands (Petrou et al., 2017). Petrou et al. (2017) developed this definition based on the definition of active jobs of Karasek (1979) which states that active jobs contain a high level of job demands and a high level of job control. In later studies, researchers used the terms high work pressure and high autonomy to describe active jobs (Taris et al., 2003; Petrou et al., 2012). These two terms can be recognized in the definition of the active work environment by Petrou et al. (2017).

Besides the two main characteristics of active jobs, the active work environment may exist of other important characteristics. In §2.1.2, important characteristics of a work environment were examined. Karasek (1976) describes the work environment in terms of job demands, relationships and control. Job demands and job control can be found in the definition of Petrou et al. (2017) in terms of work pressure and job autonomy as described earlier in §2.1.1. Social relations may also be part of work pressure and autonomy. For example when supervisors or other colleagues are highly demanding this could be seen as a form of work pressure. Or for example when employees can work autonomously, less social interaction is needed because they can decide by themselves comparing to employees who cannot work autonomously and always have to ask others for making decisions.

However, it is possible that there may be another important characteristic of the work environment called a social climate that for example embodies employees' perceptions of the organization (Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989; Moran & Volkwein; 1992; Vardaman, Gondo, & Allen, 2014). This characteristic is not recognized in the definition of an active work environment by Petrou et al. (2017). The social climate gives insight in the perceptions of employees that they have about for example their work or the organization which is produced by member interaction (Moran & Volkwein; 1992). It gives insight in how employees interpret situations and insight in underlying norms, values and attitudes to certain behavior of the employees (Moran & Volkwein; 1992).

In this master thesis the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees is examined. Earlier research also suggests that job crafting is a socially embedded process (Berg et al., 2010; Sekiguchi, Li & Hosomi, 2017). Despite the fact that a social climate

is not examined in job crafting in active jobs, recent studies did examine a social climate of a team in shared job crafting (Quinlan, Leach & Robinson, 2014; Mäkikangas, Aunola, Seppälä, & Hakanen, 2016). Therefore, it could be possible that there is some sort of social climate within active jobs that could play a role in job crafting processes.

However, it still remains unclear in literature what this social climate may look like in an active work environment and what the active work environment actually is. In addition, it remains unclear if the social climate in which active jobs are performed may play a role in job crafting processes of employees. This master thesis will therefore examine further what the active work environment entails, including autonomy and work pressure and a possible social climate, by providing empirical data that gives insight in the active work environment and its role in job crafting processes. In this way, this master thesis explores what an active work environment actually is by using an inductive research approach (which is further discussed in chapter 3) resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the active work environment which is currently lacking in literature.

2.2 Defining job crafting

Since the 80's, studies started to see employees as active agents who take charge in changing their jobs (Bell & Staw, 1989). The idea of employees who redesign their job by themselves is used in many recent studies on job crafting (Berg, Dutton & Wrzesniewski, 2013; Tims et al., 2013; Petrou et al., 2015; Harju, Hakanen & Schaugeli, 2016; Espenes & Giæver, 2017), but the concept job crafting itself was introduced by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001). According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) employees craft their jobs by changing cognitive, task and/or relational boundaries of the work to shape interactions and relationships with others at work. Later studies elaborated on this concept and defined job crafting as the way how employees utilize opportunities to modify their jobs by actively changing their tasks and interactions with others at work (Berg et al., 2008; Harju, Hakanen & Schaugeli, 2016) to incorporate their own motives, strengths, and passions into their job (Wrzesniewski, Berg & Dutton, 2010; Tims et al., 2013).

According to this definition, there are at least three forms of job crafting called: task crafting, relational crafting and cognitive crafting (Berg et al., 2008; Berg, Dutton & Wrzesniewski, 2013; Espenes & Giæver, 2017). Task crafting involves changing the boundaries of job tasks. Employees can choose to change the number, scope, or type of tasks of the original job description (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Relational crafting involves how, when or with which persons employees want to interact when performing tasks (Berg et

al., 2008). Employees can change the quality of interaction by for example choosing how to interact. In addition, employees can choose the amount of interaction by choosing how frequently they want to interact with others in performing tasks (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Cognitive crafting involves changing the cognitive task boundaries of the job where employees change their view on their job (Berg, Dutton & Wrzesniewski, 2013; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). This form of job crafting enables employees to change their perception of tasks and relationships that are included in their job (Berg et al., 2008).

In more recent studies, a different definition of job crafting is developed where job crafting is seen as a specific form of proactive behavior in which the employee initiates changes in the level of job demands and job resources (Tims & Bakker, 2010). It enables employees to fit their jobs to not only their personal knowledge, skills and abilities, but also their preferences and needs (Tims & Bakker, 2010). In this way employees can optimize their personal (work) goals, for example making their job more meaningful, engaging, and satisfying (Tims et al., 2012; Demerouti, 2014). This definition does not focus on changing the cognitive, task, and/or relational job boundaries but focuses on changing job demands and job resources. Job demands and job resources are part of the Job Demands-Resources model, also called JD-R model (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner & Schaufeli, 2001; Petrou et al., 2012). Job demands are job characteristics that require sustained (physical or psychological) effort from employees and are associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Tims et al., 2013). These characteristics can be physical, psychological, social, or organizational, for example high work pressure or an unfavourable physical environment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job resources are job characteristics that contribute toward achieving work related goals, reduce the effect of job demands and associated costs, and stimulate personal development (Tims et al., 2013), for example high autonomy and feedback (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

2.2.1 Comparing the different definitions of job crafting

As shown above, the two ways of defining job crafting and possible job crafting processes are quite different. Both ways of defining job crafting include the personal aspect of job crafting that indicates that job crafting enables employees to adapt their jobs to personal preferences, needs and capacities. However, the two definitions differ in what job aspects are changed when engaging in job crafting. The definition of job crafting as changing job boundaries involves three different forms of job crafting called task crafting, relational crafting and cognitive crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Berg et al., 2008). The second definition of job

crafting is based on changing job demands and job resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Tims et al., 2013). This definition does not focus on changing the actual job aspects like tasks or relations at work. It focuses on changing job aspects in a more open sense. Employees can change job aspects that may require sustained (physical or psychological) effort and certain costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Tims et al., 2013). Or they can change job aspects that can help in achieving work related goals, reducing the effect of job demands and associated costs, and stimulating personal development (Tims et al., 2013). This definition focuses more on the employee itself and shows what job aspects are not in line with their preferences, needs, and capacities and therefore need to be changed, instead of focusing on the actual job aspects themselves.

In this master thesis the definition of job crafting as changing job resources and job demands will be used (Tims & Bakker, 2010; Tims & Bakker 2012; Demerouti, 2014). Recent studies claim that defining job crafting according to the JD-R model offers an advantage in studying job crafting behaviours because it is a more open approach containing a wide list of demands and resources that can be applied to many occupations and jobs (Petrou et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2013). In addition, using the JD-R model still enables to study the three different forms of job crafting defined by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) (Petrou et al, 2012).

This master thesis examines the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes. Because of the contradiction in literature regarding the role of an active job in job crafting processes and a lacking comprehensive definition of an active work environment, it is possible that an active work environment could include many job aspects (including many job demands and resources) that play a role in job crafting processes. Using the definition of job crafting as changing job resources and job demands stimulates to have a more open approach in examining the role of an active work environment in job crafting processes because it includes more job aspects than only relational, tasks and cognitive boundaries. It gives insight in all kind of aspects of the active work environment that play a role in job crafting processes which also helps in getting a more comprehensive understanding of the active work environment which is needed as discussed in §2.1.3. Therefore the definition of job crafting as changing job resources and demands will be used instead of the definition of job crafting as changing job boundaries.

2.2.2 Job crafting processes

In this master thesis job crafting is defined as a specific form of proactive behavior in which the employee initiates changes in the level of job demands and job resources. It enables

employees to fit their jobs to not only their personal knowledge, skills and abilities, but also their preferences and needs (Tims & Bakker, 2010). In this way employees can optimize their personal (work) goals, for example making their job more meaningful, engaging, and satisfying (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012; Demerouti, 2014).

Tims et al. (2012) developed three underlying processes of job crafting according to the JD-R model. The first process of job crafting is seeking job resources. Within this process, employees are searching for ways to reduce the effect of job demands, reduce associated costs and to stimulate personal development (Tims et al., 2013). Examples of this process are asking advice from colleagues or supervisors, asking feedback or looking for learning opportunities (Petrou et al., 2012). For job demands, there are two underlying processes which are seeking challenging job demands and reducing hindering job demands. Seeking for challenging job demands includes seeking for job opportunities that require sustained effort from employees but are not necessarily experienced as hindering. For example when an employee is looking for new tasks or wants to take on more responsibilities (Petrou et al., 2012). However, a job could be too demanding and then increasing challenges are not wanted by the employee. In that case, the employee can reduce hindering job demands, which can be seen as a necessary health-protecting coping mechanism (Petrou et al., 2012). Reducing demands includes actions that try to minimize emotional, mental or physical demanding job aspects or to reduce the workload and time pressure (Petrou et al., 2012).

2.3 Job crafting in an active work environment

As shown earlier, a contradiction in literature can be found regarding the role of active jobs in job crafting processes. However, only limited studies have tried to examine the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes. Petrou et al. (2017) propose that job crafting is more likely to take place in an active work environment that entails high work pressure and high autonomy. This corresponds with earlier research which states an active job enables employees to engage in job crafting processes (Petrou et al., 2012). Petrou et al. (2012) claim that when employees experience high job autonomy and high work pressure they engage more in the job crafting processes seeking job resources and reducing hindering job demands.

Petrou et al. (2012) used quantitative research methods and used a heterogeneous sample to examine the role of active jobs in job crafting processes. They mention that they did find an effect on job crafting processes seeking job resources and reducing hindering job demands. However, they mention that they did not find any effect on the process seeking challenging job demands. The explanation they give is that their research design including a heterogeneous

sample might not be ideal to detect such an effect (Petrou et al., 2012). In addition, they state that it is very likely that certain active work environments are so demanding that they could make the search for more challenges impossible or even counterproductive (Petrou et al., 2012). It is therefore possible that there are certain active work environments that may limit job crafting processes. However, Petrou et al. (2012) do not mention what certain active work environments may look like and what other important factors may be.

Other research does suggest that employees in active jobs are challenged and even limited in the possibilities for job crafting (Berg et al., 2010). Although employees have the autonomy to craft their job, they can feel more psychological constraints in job crafting than employees who do not have the autonomy to craft their job (Berg et al., 2010). To explain these results of their study, Berg et al. (2010) state that employees could face a tension between their expectations of how they should spend their time and how they would like to spend their time. Employees may perceive relatively less freedom for adapting to challenges in job crafting because they feel obligated to focus their efforts on meeting prescribed end goals (Berg et al., 2010). In addition, they mention that interdependence may be a limiting factor of job crafting. When employees could feel highly interdependent with others when trying to engage in job crafting, it may be possible that the challenges they face are perceived as insuperable and employees therefore settle for the opportunities available at that moment (Berg et al., 2010).

The findings in literature given above show that there is some contradiction in literature regarding the role of an active job in job crafting processes. The main focus in earlier research on job crafting in active jobs focused only on the characteristics high autonomy and high work pressure of the active work environment (Petrou et al., 2012; Petrou et al., 2017). In addition, earlier research mentions that there may be other factors of an active work environment that could play a role in job crafting processes that are not examined yet (Berg et al., 2010; Petrou et al., 2012). Furthermore, in earlier research on job crafting in active jobs, different definitions of job crafting were used. Berg et al. (2010) see job crafting as changing job boundaries, while Petrou et al. (2012) see job crafting as changing job resources and job demands. This could play a role in their contradictory findings regarding job crafting in active jobs.

As argued before, a comprehensive understanding of the active work environment is still lacking in literature and it may be possible that there are other important characteristics of an active work environment, besides autonomy and work pressure, could play an important role in job crafting processes. This research will therefore try to develop a deeper understanding of the active work environment in which more characteristics are examined, to provide more

insight in the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs.

2.4 Sensitizing concepts

This master thesis makes use of sensitizing concepts to examine the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs. Sensitizing concepts can help in examining unclear concepts such as the active work environment. They give the researcher a general sense of reference and guidance in data collection (Blumer, in Bowen, 2006). Sensitizing concepts do not actually provide prescriptions of what to see but merely suggest directions along which to look (Blumer, in Bowen, 2006). In this master thesis, the sensitizing concepts are tentatively defined in appendix A and may be adapted in the analysis. This will be further discussed in chapter 3. The sensitizing concepts and topics are shown in table 2.1 and will be explained next.

The first important sensitizing concept is the active work environment. As discussed earlier, a comprehensive definition is lacking in literature and it remains unclear what the active work environment actually is. Petrou et al. (2017) define an active work environment in terms of work pressure autonomy, which are characteristics of active jobs (Taris et al., 2003; Petrou et al., 2012), but it is possible that there are other important characteristics of an active work environment that are not known yet. As discussed earlier, some research describes the work environment in terms of a social climate (Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989; Moran & Volkwein; 1992; Vardaman, Gondo, & Allen, 2014). However it remains unclear if the active work environment entails a certain climate and what it may look like. Therefore, the active work environment is tentatively described in terms of work pressure, autonomy and a possible social climate and will be further explored in data collection.

Secondly, another important concept of this thesis is job crafting. To examine the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes, it is necessary to understand what job crafting itself is. Therefore job crafting itself is used as a sensitizing concept. In addition, as argued earlier in §2.2.1, defining job crafting in terms of job demands and job resources could help in examining the concept active work environment. It could be seen as an open approach to job crafting which considers many possible job aspects (Petrou et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2013). Certain job demands and job resources could therefore indicate characteristics of the active work environment.

The last sensitizing concept is job crafting processes. It has been decided to define job crafting in terms of changing job demands and job resources (Tims & Bakker, 2010). This

resulted in three underlying job crafting processes which are: seeking job resources, seeking challenging job demands, and reducing hindering job demands (Tims et al., 2012). These processes are also shown in table 2.1.

Important to note is that all concepts, including not only the active work environment but also job crafting and job crafting processes, are tentatively described. This means that their definitions can be seen as directions along which to look. They provide a starting-point for data collection and analysis and understanding job crafting in the active work environment, but will not lead the data collection and analysis. This approach is chosen because it helps exploring unclear concepts and unclear relations between concepts to gain new insights. As mentioned earlier, this open approach will be further discussed in the chapter 3.

Sensitizing concepts	Topics
Active work environment	Work pressure Autonomy Social climate
Job crafting	Job demands Job resources
Job crafting processes	Seeking job resources Seeking challenging job demands Reducing hindering job demands

Table 2.1: Sensitizing concepts

3. Methodology

As mentioned earlier in the introduction and theoretical background, this master thesis examines the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs. This chapter starts with a description of the chosen research strategy followed by the case description. In addition, this chapter makes explicit how data is collected and analysed. Lastly, relevant quality criteria and research ethics are discussed.

3.1 Research strategy

The objective of this master thesis was to provide insight in what role the active work environment has in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs, in order to contribute to existing literature by providing a more elaborated view on job crafting in active jobs using a deeper understanding of active jobs called the active work environment. The research question was formulated as: *'What is the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs?'*

In this master thesis inductive research methods are used to answer the research question. Inductive research methods can be seen as the approaches through which researchers attempt to generate theory from data (Eisenhardt, Graebner, & Sonenshein, 2016). Within inductive research, it is possible to begin with a research question but it does not require predefined concepts and theoretical relationships (Eisenhardt et al., 2016). For this master thesis, this was an important benefit of this approach because a comprehensive definition of the active work environment is lacking and the role of active work environment in job crafting processes is unclear. Using an inductive research approach could lead to new ideas about the active work environment and its role in job crafting, because this kind of research is likely to explore unusual settings and unexpected perspectives which are often the situations in which new ideas exist (Eisenhardt et al., 2016). In this way, this research is not led by earlier perspectives on job crafting in active jobs or active work environments and remains an open view on the current contradiction in literature. In addition, using inductive research methods enabled combining openness and methods in order to explore new ideas. This thesis relied on certain research methods (e.g. data collection protocols) but when new insights and opportunities emerged they could be changed (Eisenhardt et al., 2016). Another benefit of inductive research was that it enables exploring concepts that are difficult to identify and

measure, which was in this research the concept active work environment (Edmondson & McManus, 2007).

This thesis focused on one single case in the consultancy branch. By performing a case study, it is possible to examine a phenomenon in depth within the specific context (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Buchanan, 2012). Currently, research shows that certain aspects of the active work environment, namely high work pressure and high autonomy, enable employees to craft their jobs (Petrou et al., 2012; Petrou et al., 2017). However, there is also research which indicates that high work pressure and high autonomy can limit job crafting (Berg et al., 2010). By focusing on one single case in examining the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees, it was possible to get in-depth information about how job crafting takes place within the specific context of an active work environment. In this way it was possible to spot interesting and new information regarding the role of the active work environment and regarding the concept active work environment itself.

3.2 Case description

As mentioned in the introduction, the organization for this master thesis is Coppa. Coppa is a specialized procurement consultancy firm in the sectors healthcare and government (Coppa.nl, n.d.). The organization consists of 80 employees including the partners, management team, business consultants, procurement consultants, P2P-specialists, procurement officers, and project assistants (Coppa.nl, n.d.). This master thesis examines job crafting processes of procurement consultants and business consultants because they have an active job as argued earlier in §1.4. Although it is not known in advance what an active work environment exactly entails, these consultants have an active job and it is very likely that they are located within an active work environment. After all, the characteristics of an active job (work pressure and autonomy) are also part of the active work environment so these concepts are closely related (Petrou et al., 2017). This makes it a suitable case for examining what the active work environment entails, besides work pressure and autonomy, and examining its role in job crafting processes.

This paragraph will give more insight in what kind of work the consultants do, which can be seen as background information, and will highlight the differences between the procurement consultants and business consultants. First of all, the work of procurement consultants will be explained. Procurement consultants can work in the sectors healthcare and government (Interview 6). They often work as interim procurement advisor at a client organization for 1 or more days a week for several months. Often they are responsible for

purchasing issues of a certain department or domain within the client organization. In addition, they often have individual procurement projects. For example, an organization needs a new supplier for office supplies. Procurement consultants guide these individual projects and after contracting a new supplier, their work is done (Interview 2, 5 & 6). Often, the procurement consultants have multiple projects at the same time (on interim basis or individual projects) but it differs per consultant how many and what kind of projects they have. They often have their own projects and do not work together with another colleague of Coppa.

The business consultants often work within the healthcare sector. These consultants are more widely deployed. They often have projects regarding system implementations, re-implementations, optimization of systems and processes (Interview 2, 5 & 6). They are more concerned with processes within healthcare organizations, purchasing related or not, and improving these processes. In addition, sometimes they also work as a procurement advisor within a client organization. However, they often have other projects as shown above. They have multiple projects at the same time but here it also depends how many and what kind of projects they have per person (Interview 2 & 5). In addition, they often have their own projects and do not work together with another colleague of Coppa.

Besides the different types of work, one main distinction can be made between the working as consultant in the healthcare sector or in the government sector. In the government sector the consultants have to take tendering procedures into account, especially regarding an European tendering. In healthcare, the business and procurement consultants have more freedom to negotiate (Interview 9 & 10).

3.3 Data collection

This section gives insight in how data was collected. This thesis made use of interviews which will be described next.

3.3.1 Interviews

Interviews were conducted to collect data. Interviews can vary in how structured they are. In this master thesis is chosen for lower degrees of structure, also called loosely-structured interviews (Alvesson & Ashcraft, 2012). Lower degrees of structure enable the researcher to determine the focus on a certain theme but still proceed quite freely (Alvesson & Ashcraft, 2012). It makes it possible to elicit different viewpoints and obtain deeper insights and to follow new leads (Alvesson & Ashcraft, 2012). Therefore, loosely-structured interviews enabled the researcher to ask questions around the theme job crafting and the role of the active work

environment in job crafting processes with the possibility to ask follow-up questions to obtain deeper insights. It provided the opportunity to explore characteristics of the active work environment that were not known in advance because it was possible to ask questions freely within the theme. The topic list used for the interviews is shown in appendix A and will be further discussed in §3.4.

A purposive sampling technique was used to choose participants. In qualitative research, and also in this master thesis, only a relatively small number of participants is studied. Purposive sample techniques enable the researcher to answer the research question despite the small number of participants because they rely on the judgement of the researcher in choosing participants (Saunders, 2012). It enables the researcher to choose participants that will provide enough data to answer the research question and meet the research objective (Saunders, 2012). Homogeneous purposive sampling has been used, which relies on the researchers judgement to choose participants with quite similar characteristics to provide the opportunity to explore and obtain in-depth information (Saunders, 2012). This approach was chosen because it enabled examining the active work environment in depth and obtaining new insights on what the active work environment actually is and how its characteristics play a role in job crafting processes. Therefore, this research only focused on employees of Coppa and no other organizations, and chose employees that were located within an active work environment. In this way the variation of different active work environments was minimized, so the active work environment was explored in depth and a clear understanding of the active work environment was obtained. As described earlier in the case description, the business consultants and procurement consultants of Coppa were employees in active jobs and were located within an active work environment. In addition, it was not possible to focus on one type consultants because this would not result in enough consultants who wanted to participate. Therefore a small number of business consultants and procurement consultants was chosen to participate and did want to participate.

The number of interviews conducted was based on the principle of data saturation which refers to the point that no new information or themes are obtained by conducting more interviews (Saunders, 2012). However, because of the short time period of this master thesis it was not possible to search for the exact point that no new information was obtained. Therefore it was tried to pursue data saturation but it is possible that more interviews were needed to reach the exact point of data saturation. This will be further discussed in chapter 5. For this master thesis 11 interviews were conducted which are shown in the table 3.1. The first interview was held to get more insight in the TOP Program that is used within Coppa. The other interviews were held with consultants and were based on the topic list that was developed beforehand.

Interviewee	Function	Duration of interview
Interviewee 1	Management Team Member (Explanation TOP Program)	44 minutes
Interviewee 2	Business Consultant 1	50 minutes
Interviewee 3	Business Consultant 2	41 minutes
Interviewee 4	Business Consultant 3	66 minutes
Interviewee 5	Business Consultant 4	76 minutes
Interviewee 6	Business Consultant 5	44 minutes
Interviewee 7	Business Consultant 6	59 minutes
Interviewee 8	Procurement Consultant 1	55 minutes
Interviewee 9	Procurement Consultant 2	58 minutes
Interviewee 10	Procurement Consultant 3	60 minutes
Interviewee 11	Procurement Consultant 4	47 minutes

Table 3.1: Overview interviews

3.4 Topic list used for data collection

As described earlier, this thesis makes use of interviews to collect data. There has been chosen for lower degrees of structure, also called loosely-structured interviews (Alvesson & Ashcraft, 2012). At the end of chapter 2 sensitizing concepts were given which were used in data collection. They were used as topics in the interviews. This enabled the researcher to focus on the theme of job crafting in an active work environment, but the researcher was still able to act freely (Alvesson & Ashcraft, 2012). The sensitizing concepts and their tentative definitions can be found in appendix A. They formed the basis for the interview which can be found in appendix C (initial interview) and D (final interview).

Important to note is the overlap between the concepts. For example, work pressure and job demands are overlapping because work pressure can be a part of job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Therefore, some topics were quite similar and answers on one topic already answered another topic. This made it also easier to start the conversation around a certain theme and decreased the need of asking questions that were developed beforehand. Furthermore, the topic list was merely used as a starting point for the interviews to ask around a certain theme. When the conversation led to new opportunities and new information it was possible to proceed freely and to let go of the interview format. Follow-up questions were asked to explore the job characteristics mentioned by interviewees and to obtain deeper insights. Therefore, the

interview format was only used as a tool to start the conversation but did not determine the whole course of the interview.

To minimize socially desirable responding in interviews, it was made clear to the interviewees that the interview was anonymous and information was treated confidentiality (Krumpal, 2013). In addition, most interviews were conducted in private rooms in one of the three headquarters to prevent interruption of others. In the interviews, follow-up questions were asked for clarification and to get more insight the reasoning of interviewees. In this way, socially desirable responding was considered and minimized as much as possible.

To test the interview, the researcher did a pre-test with a business consultant. After this pre-test some adjustments were made in the interview protocol. The sections job crafting and job crafting processes were combined and called job crafting and related processes. These two concepts were linked together and combining them made it easier to ask questions about them by looking at one section instead of looking at two sections. In addition, two questions were added after a few interviews because these questions seemed to help in tracking down other kinds of characteristics than very content related characteristics of the work. More information about these adjustments can be found in the interview memos of appendix G (separate document). The final interview format can be found in appendix D.

3.5 Data analysis

Grounded theory approach was used to analyse the collected data. Grounded theory does not focus on hypothesis testing but is interested in discovering theory in data (Kenealy, 2012). It does not require a detailed review of literature (Kenealy, 2012), which was beneficial for this master thesis because only little was known in literature about the concept active work environment and its relation to job crafting processes. The concepts job crafting and job crafting processes are known in literature and dimensions of these concepts could be recognized. This thesis made use of sensitizing concepts (see §2.4) which were used to develop some themes in advance called a priori themes that were derived from theory. However, these themes were used tentatively with the possibility considered that any a priori theme may need to be redefined or even discarded (King, 2012). These a priori themes can be found in appendix E and provided a starting point for understanding the active work environment and its role in job crafting processes but did not lead the analysis.

The grounded theory method knows three phases of coding. The first step was open coding which refers to the generation of an emergent set of categories (Kenealy, 2012). Events or components were examined in the collected data and categorized under conceptual labels.

During this phase every interview fragment that seemed relevant or could be recognized in the a priori themes was labelled with a code representing a summary of the interview fragment. This was done to stay as close to the interview fragment as possible to prevent misinterpretations and conclusions that were drawn too quickly. This resulted in around 40 quotes per interview. This process continued until no new codes were developed and events fitted under the earlier developed codes (Kenealy, 2012).

The next step was selective coding. Within selective coding, the open codes were compared and similarities between the codes were identified. In this phase, the codes were merged into high level categories (Kenealy, 2012). During this phase some codes seemed not as relevant as they seemed at first sight. While getting more abstract and merging codes into higher level categories, all irrelevant codes were deleted. Examples of the deleted codes were codes that were too content-related or contained an opinion of someone who was dissatisfied with the work and was therefore not representative for all the consultants. In addition, some open codes were overlapping and therefore combined. For more detailed information about this process see appendix H for the coding memos (separate document). After erasing, adjusting and combining open codes, 20 quotes per interview remained. At the end of this phase, this process resulted in many open codes (see appendix F for all final open codes) and 9 selective codes.

The last step was axial coding in which the selective codes were related to each other and were conceptualized (Kenealy, 2012). This resulted in 3 axial codes representing the main themes and concepts of this thesis including a new theme which will be further explained in the results chapter of this thesis. A first conceptual model was made which can also be found in appendix H (separate document) representing how concepts were related to each other. This will be further discussed in the results chapter where the conceptual model is build step by step.

3.6 Quality criteria

In this paragraph relevant criteria for the quality of this master thesis are described and explained. The criteria developed by Guba and Lincoln (1989) will be used to assess the quality of this master thesis, representing a constructivist view on research (Symon & Cassell, 2012). The four criteria of Guba and Lincoln (1989) are well known criteria specified for qualitative research instead of quantitative research (Symon & Cassell, 2012).

First of all, this master thesis is assessed on the criterion of credibility which means that the researcher tries to demonstrate a good fit between ‘constructed realities of participants and the reconstructions attributed to them’ (Guba & Lincoln, in Symon & Cassell, 2012). It is

important that the researcher does not misinterpret the data they receive from participants. To ensure this, member checks were used. Member checks are a way of testing the interpretation of data with the research participants throughout the research process (Symon & Cassell, 2012). This was done several times. During the interview, follow-up questions were asked to clarify what the participant actually means. Next, the researcher tried to summarize the information given by the participants and checked if this interpretation is right. In this way, interpretations were tested throughout the interview. In addition, the interview transcript was shown to the participant and the participant was asked if he/she wanted to check misinterpretations or if he/she wanted to exclude something. Therefore, the interpretation or reconstruction of the researcher was checked several times by the participants during the interview and after the interview.

In addition, this master thesis is assessed on the criteria of dependability and confirmability. Dependability refers to the demonstration of methodological changes and shifts in constructions, whereas confirmability refers to the detailed demonstration of data collection and analysis processes (Symon & Cassell, 2012). These two criteria require the research to be explicit on the choices that are made and the arguments for these choices. In this master thesis it was made explicit why certain definitions were chosen (§2.2.1), which research approach was used and why this research approach was appropriate (§3.1). The ways of data collection and data analysis were described and arguments were given why these methods were appropriate (§3.3 and §3.5). In addition, the researcher made memo's during interviewing and coding to remember which methodological shifts were made. This made it possible to discuss in §3.4 why data collection methods were adapted after the pre-test. These memo's made it also possible to mention in §3.5 how the initial coding template resulted in a final code template. Therefore choices regarding methodology and shifts in methodology and constructions were demonstrated and made explicit.

The last criterion is called transferability which refers to the researcher providing enough information about a specific case so the findings can be used in other (similar) contexts (Symon & Cassell, 2012). This master thesis was focused on a specific context of a specific case, which was the active work environment of consultants at Coppa. The findings provided relevant insights for literature, management and society (see §1.5) but it remained unclear if the findings are usable in other contexts. There is little known yet about the active work environment and this master thesis provides new insights to get a more deeper understanding. However, it is possible that the active work environment entails many aspects that are specific for certain other contexts. To increase the transferability of this master thesis, a detailed case

description and analysis was provided which can be used in other research to examine the active work environment in similar contexts. This provides a starting point for understanding job crafting in active work environments by comparing this detailed case description and analysis with similar contexts and to examine if findings of this research are confirmed in other contexts or new insights can be added.

3.7 Research ethics

As a researcher it is important to understand that doing research in a certain way has an influence on those who are involved (Holt, 2012). It is therefore important to think about the ethical issues that might occur and how to deal with these issues. Therefore, this paragraph provides insight in ethical issues of this thesis and reflects on the reaction to these issues.

First of all, there were some ethical issues regarding data collection that needed to be considered. Two important issues regarding research ethics are confidentiality and anonymity (Pimple, 2002). In the introduction of the interviews was made clear that the data was going to be treated confidentially and that the interviewee would remain anonymous (see appendix D). To ensure anonymity, the names of the interviewees were not mentioned in this thesis and it was not shared who participated. The interviewees were labelled with numbers and functions (see table 3.1, §3.3.1). These labels were also used in data analysis. In addition, it was made sure that the data gathered was treated confidentially. The interviews in the appendixes used for this thesis were only shown to the researcher, supervisor and second examiner. They were only shared with the consultant him/herself for the member check and were not shared on any medium or shown to other organizational members of Coppa.

Another important ethical issue regarding data collection is informed consent (Pimple, 2002). Informed consent refers to the information given to the participant beforehand about what the research entails and what participation would mean (e.g. how much time does it cost), so the participant can decide freely whether, and on what terms, to participate or not (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). In the beginning of this research, the contact person asked if there were consultants of Coppa willing to participate in this research to make sure that Coppa could facilitate this master thesis. However, when the actual participants were asked if they were willing to participate this was done by the researcher herself. The consultants were individually asked by mail if they wanted to participate and to plan the interview (see appendix B). In this way, participants were not pushed by management and had the opportunity to withdraw. Finally, a short introduction of the research was given at the start of the interview and here it was mentioned again that the research was without obligations (see appendix D). Participants

were therefore informed about the research beforehand and could freely decide whether or not to participate or even to withdraw.

After the interviews, the participants were asked to read the interview transcripts and give comments. This was done to respect the dignity of the participants and to avoid causing discomfort or anxiety among the participants (Bell & Bryman, 2007). By giving the participants the opportunity to give feedback on the interview transcripts, not only misinterpretations were recognized (Symon & Cassell, 2012), but it also became clear if participants wanted to change certain parts or wanted some information excluded. When this excluded information would be used in data analysis, it could harm the participant or give a feeling of discomfort. Therefore, participants had the opportunity to react on the interviews and their wishes were respected.

4. Results

In this chapter, the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes will be discussed. The first section gives insight in the results regarding the concept active work environment itself. Secondly, job crafting processes of consultants at Coppa will be discussed. Thirdly, the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of consultants at Coppa will be described. Finally, during the interviews a new concept emerged which plays a role in the relation between the active work environment and job crafting processes. This new concept will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

4.1 Active work environment

As described earlier, this thesis made use of the concept active work environment instead of active jobs to examine job crafting processes of employees in active jobs. This was done because the active work environment could provide a broader view on job crafting in active jobs and could provide more characteristics besides the characteristics of active jobs, which were work pressure and autonomy as described in chapter 2. However, as argued in §2.1, the current definition of the active work environment seems the same as the definition of active jobs. In addition, it was argued based on earlier research that the active work environment includes another characteristic called a social climate. Therefore, the active work environment was tentatively described in §2.4 in terms of work pressure, autonomy and a social climate. These three characteristics also emerged during the analysis of the data and will be discussed next.

4.1.1 Work pressure

First of all, work pressure was a returning theme mentioned by all interviewees. Almost every interviewee described certain forms of work pressure. Work pressure of consultants at Coppa can be divided into three categories; work pressure related to the work itself, work pressure related to clients, and work pressure related to management. These three work pressures will be discussed next.

First of all, the work itself can create certain work pressures. Consultants work project-based and have to figure out how an organization works in a short time period. After completing one project, they switch to another project at an organization which can be completely different. The consultancy work of consultants at Coppa can be illustrated by the following quote:

“Yes actually every day is different.. That is actually very typical. And that you do relatively short assignments, often, so you have to get to know a client in a very short period of time. You need to know very quickly how the wheels spin, and, uh, and how you can get results quickly. So that you can go on and go to another client afterwards.” (BC2Q11, Interview 3, Business Consultant 2)

As mentioned by this consultant every day is different. The consultants work in different organizations with different people, different structures and different cultures. The consultants often have to figure out how the organizations work over and over because this differs per organization. This variety in projects can be experienced as difficult sometimes, but nevertheless many consultants mention they like having this variety in projects (BC3Q27; BC2Q4; BC2Q11; BC5Q23; PC3Q9; PC3Q17).

Furthermore, the consultants work on multiple projects of several clients at the same time. For example, one day they work for one client, the other day they work for another client. It varies how many projects they have, but most consultants explicitly mention that they have multiple projects at the same time (BC2Q3; B4Q9; BC5Q10; PC1Q15; PC2Q2; PC3Q1). In addition, these projects often involve deadlines that need to be met (BC2Q26). However, this is not necessarily seen as a form of work pressure:

“R: And it's actually nice, isn't it? I am now at 6 or 7 contracting authorities, so that's fine.

I: Isn't that a lot of projects side by side or is it doable?

R: No, I think this is doable. There are now 2 or 3 that are granted. So there are about 4 running now.” (P1Q15, Interview 8, Procurement Consultant 1)

Here, the interviewee mentions that 6 or 7 projects at the same time is not necessarily a problem. The explanation for this is related to the phases of projects. Some phases of projects are experienced as peak moments while others are not (BC5Q14). Consultants experience more work pressure before deadlines but these deadlines are often not all at the same time and they can often be planned in advance (BC2Q27; BC6Q15; PC3Q24). In addition, multiple consultants mention that they like having multiple projects at the same time because they like the variety in their workdays (BC2Q4; BC6Q13; PC4Q10).

However, multiple projects at the same time often becomes work pressure when ad hoc problems occur at clients or consultants have to work overtime. Multiple consultants mention

that there are moments that they have to work overtime (in the evening for example) because something has to be solved or finished (BC1Q21; BC3Q10; PC4Q19), or ad hoc situations occur and need to be solved on the same day when the consultants are at other organizations. This can be illustrated by the following fragments:

“Yes, that almost always happens when you are at a client organization. Sometimes I am at a department where everyone is sitting together. So arranging things like that in that department is not very useful. If you are at a client and you are busy other things. Ehm. But all the meeting rooms et cetera are always full. So yes I am just calling in the hallway a bit. That is not always very useful.” (BC6Q12, Interview 7, Business Consultant 6)

“And then you have those phone calls and emails saying it is urgent. That you really think seriously haha, when? Because we all say that we want that balance between work and private life. But if I really want my mailbox empty, that means I have to work at home two days a week. Because there is always something urgent again.” (BC3Q18, Interview 4, Business Consultant 3)

As shown in the fragments above, the consultants mention that sometimes urgent situations have to be solved despite where consultants are or their available time. Therefore, these ad hoc situations can be very inconvenient or frustrating for the consultants. In addition, working overtime to solve ad hoc situations or finish certain tasks is not something consultants actually want to do (BC1Q21; BC3Q10). Therefore, the number of projects running simultaneously and the variety of projects will only become a problem if the consultant experiences pressure from ad hoc situations and perceives a lack of time to solve them or has to work overtime to finish tasks or solve urgent situations.

In addition, consultants can experience work pressures caused by clients. Not all clients are the same and some clients are more involved or expect more from consultants than others. As mentioned earlier, consultants like the variety of clients, but clients can become a problem when there are political games within the client organization (BC1Q4; BC5Q11), clients are not transparent to the consultant (BC1Q5), or when clients decide to work behind the back of the consultant (PC2Q7; PC3Q2). This can be illustrated by the following fragment:

“R: Well, so quite often we are backed into a corner. Then they come to us and say we purchased this and this and we have already spent 40,000 euros. But actually we have to spend

another 40,000 euros. And the limit for 1 to 1 is actually 50,000 euros. And well then indeed, they say yes we have spent 40,000 euros, but we need him and he has already done everything. We cannot choose someone else now. Well, then you are standing there.. backed into the corner..

I: What can you do in that case?

R: Well, not much, you cannot do anything about it anymore. " (P2Q7; Interview 9, Procurement Consultant 2)

As shown in the fragment, when a client decides to work behind the back of the consultant, this can be very frustrating. The consultant cannot do anything about it because it has already happened. Often, the consultant is responsible for a department and those actions of clients may have serious legal consequences for the organization. Clients can therefore create work pressure when they create a situation which can be experienced by the consultant as frustrating and creates a feeling of pressure.

Lastly, the consultants can experience work pressure related to management. Some consultants often receive a request from management to ‘extinguish a fire’ (BC3Q17; BC6Q11). For example, problems occurring at old clients or mistakes of other consultants (BC3Q22; BC6Q11). It is possible that a consultant has to do a certain project because there are no other projects available (BC6Q14), moreover it also happens that management wants a certain consultant for the project (BC4Q2; PC3Q22). All these requests of management can create work pressure when consultants have to take on a project even if they do not want to or do not have the time (BC3Q17). For example, one consultant mentions ‘extinguishing fires’ is not in that person's nature and would rather prefer a long-term solution (BC3Q18). In these situations management can create work pressure for the consultants because they have to do something that is not in line with what they actually want.

4.1.2 Autonomy

All the consultants give the impression that they experience high autonomy. They often have the choice where to work (BC1Q3; BC3Q15; BC6Q15; PC1Q9; PC4Q11), how to work (BC3Q12; BC4Q6; BC5Q2; BC6Q15; PC1Q6; PC3Q4; PC4Q11), when to work (BC2Q8; BC4Q8; PC1Q13; PC4Q11), which projects they want to do (BC1Q13; BC2Q19; BC3Q1; BC4Q3; PC2Q13; PC3Q5; PC4Q4), and to quit certain projects (BC1Q14; B2Q18; PC2Q3). This feeling of autonomy can be illustrated by the next fragment:

“Yes, of course I have my client, who has given me that assignment in a hierarchical sense and with which I occasionally have some coordination. Ehm. Well, how are the tasks doing, how do things stand and, well, that they are actually very little in general.. yes that I actually work very independently.” (BC6Q7, Interview 7, Business Consultant 6)

The consultant mentions that he/she gets a project from a client but there is only little contact between those two. It is explicitly mentioned that the consultant works independently. This resembles a high feeling of autonomy. Consultants mention that they have to work together with other people and that they are dependent on others agenda (BC2Q7; BC5Q8), but that they decide how to organize it (BC2Q7). In addition, if they want to change or achieve something, they take the initiative to organize it (BC5Q21). They tell their preferences to sales or their supervisor if they want other projects or want to work less (BC2Q19; PC2Q13). This resembles the feeling of being in charge for the consultants.

4.1.3 Social climate

The social climate was difficult to examine because the consultants work separately and do not see other colleagues very often. In addition, it was not known in advance what the social climate may look like in an active work environment, which made it also difficult to explore the social climate within Coppa. The results regarding the social climate within Coppa were therefore limited but will be discussed next. In chapter 5, a reflection will be given regarding the results of this concept.

The social climate within Coppa could be characterized in different ways. First of all, among the consultants there is a feeling of autonomy and independency which was argued in §4.1.2. This seems to be also an important part of the social climate that is present within Coppa. Consultants mention that management does not have any clue about what a consultant does for clients (P2Q15; PC3Q12). This can be illustrated by the following fragment:

“Coppa actually has no idea what I am doing here if I don't say anything. There are no other lines from this organization to Coppa. But that is also the case at other clients. If it does not go well, then they will report it. As for the rest, you are actually quite free to do whatever you want.” (PC3Q12, Interview 10, Procurement Consultant 3)

They experience that supervisors or management is not telling them how to do their work and feel like they can decide it on their own. Both supervisors mention that they see the consultants

as professionals who can work independently (BC2Q1; BC2Q24; BC6Q2). They mention that they do not actually lead the consultants and often do not know what consultants do for clients. If problems occur then they contact each other (BC2Q25). This reflects perceptions of trust and autonomy. The supervisors are less involved in projects of consultants because they see them as professionals who do not need any guidance. This resembles trust within the organization. By giving the consultants their freedom, the consultants experience a high feeling of freedom and autonomy. This is very distinctive for the social climate within Coppa.

One other important theme that emerged during the interviews is the perception that they can always ask a colleague for help. The social climate seems therefore not only characterized by perceptions of trust and autonomy, but also by perceptions of support. This can be illustrated by the following fragment:

“Well, what I really like about Coppa is that you can actually just call anyone. And that everyone is very friendly and helpful.” (BC1Q8, Interview 2, Business Consultant 1).

It is mentioned that they can always call anyone and that they are always friendly and helpful. Every consultant does ask a colleague for help from time to time. But they also have the perception that other colleagues want to help. One consultant mentions that despite everybody being busy, they are still willing to help others. It is mentioned that although it may take some time to get help, they can always ask for help and will get help eventually (BC3Q24).

Despite these perceptions of support, there also seems to be separation between the consultants in healthcare and the consultants in government. Two years ago, Coppa took CBP over and there still seems to be some separation between the consultants:

“And that was specific to the government side, and therefore you can still see that most people here in this building are busy doing specific government work on Friday. And I consider them a bit more as my own colleagues, because I see the healthcare side only once every 6 weeks during the academic days.” (PC4Q23, Interview 11, Procurement Consultant 4)

CBP had other traditions within the organization than Coppa. One main tradition was that employees of CBP often worked from the office every Friday. This is something that the procurement consultants of the government side still do, even though they are not all former employees of CBP. Some business consultants have no idea why the procurements consultants do this (BC5Q22). Furthermore, one procurement consultant mentions that the business

consultants are another type of consultants who are more commercially orientated (PC2Q21). Others mention that CBP was characterized by another type of persons (BC3Q5). Therefore, there seems to be two sides of consultants existing within Coppa characterizing two separate groups. They have other traditions of which the other side of consultants do not know how these traditions emerged. In addition, the consultants see the other side of consultants as other ‘types of consultants or person’. Thus, this separation causes different perceptions and traditions between the procurement consultants and business consultants within the social climate of Coppa.

4.1.4 Active work environment of consultants at Coppa

To summarize, the active work environment of consultants at Coppa exists of work pressure, autonomy and a social climate. Work pressure differs per person and can be caused by the work itself, clients or management. It depends on the situations in which the consultants find themselves and which pressures they experience. Some consultants experience more pressure of management while others are experiencing pressure from clients.

The consultants do however experience a high level of autonomy and have the power to change certain aspects of their work. This can help in dealing with their work pressures. They have the autonomy to choose how many projects they want, what kind of projects they want and to quit with a project. This feeling of autonomy is also recognized in the social climate. The social climate at Coppa resembles trust, autonomy and support. Consultants experience a feeling of freedom and feel like they can always ask others for help.

However, there also seems to be a separation between the consultants in healthcare and the consultants in government. They do not see each other often and they have certain perceptions about what type of persons the other consultants are. In addition, they do not understand the traditions of the consultants of the other side. This characterizes a certain separation between the consultants healthcare and government within the social climate.

4.2 Job crafting processes

As mentioned earlier in §2.4, this master thesis focuses on three underlying processes of job crafting which are: seeking job resources, seeking challenging job demands and reducing hindering demands. These three job crafting processes of consultants at Coppa will be described next.

4.2.1 Seeking job resources

The consultants seek job resources in many different ways. They all search for ways to develop themselves, search for knowledge, learn new things and achieve work related goals (Tims et al., 2013). Some consultants start an education to develop themselves but the most common way of consultants to seek job resources is to consult others. For example when they find something difficult they ask others for help:

“I: And can you ask for help with things like this that you find difficult? How can you ask for help within Coppa or here for example?”

R: Hmm. Yes, here too. But also at Coppa indeed. I always brainstorm with colleagues a lot.” (PC2Q11, Interview 9, Procurement Consultant 2)

In this fragment it is mentioned that the consultant asks not only colleagues from Coppa but also asks colleagues on location for help. This is something that is mentioned by multiple consultants. They search for the right people who can help them and not only ask fellow consultants but also ask supervisors (BC2Q17; BC5Q15), partners (BC5Q15), colleagues from the knowledge center (BC4Q14; BC6Q20; PC1Q1; PC3Q15), colleagues on location from the client organization (PC2Q11; PC3Q14), or even the client himself (BC5Q15; PC1Q1). They choose by themselves who they want as a sparring partner or who they need to get the right information. Therefore, they seek for job resources by using other people as a sparring partner to gain knowledge and develop themselves.

In addition, other consultants want to develop themselves by trying to work together in a project with another colleague of Coppa. This can be illustrated by the next fragment:

“I: And how do you try to develop yourself within your work? You actually pick up a lot of things? Do you do it that way?”

R: Yes ehm, I like to seek certain colleagues for that matter and I also try not to do assignments alone. So if it is possible, whether it is with a junior or senior or with a partner. Not doing it alone.” (BC4Q18, Interview 5, Business Consultant 4).

In this fragment it is explicitly mentioned that the consultant want to work together with colleagues of Coppa to develop him- or herself. This is also something that other consultants mention. They want to learn from others who have more experience and have other ways of

working. Despite the fact that the consultants are not always working together in projects, they try to work together and to learn from each other to develop themselves.

Lastly, consultants seek for job resources by searching for own projects. Important to mention is that this is not a task within their function, it is something they do by themselves. Some consultants know exactly what kind of projects they like or want and therefore search for own projects (BC3Q26). Others get a boost when a certain lead becomes an actual project:

“Is fun too, and look if it works once then it gives a boost of course, that is the case with everything. Look, and if you call 10 or 15 leads in one day, and you are unable to make an appointment, then you can decide not to do it tomorrow. Then you decide two days later I'll just do it again.” (PC1Q3, Interview 8, Procurement Consultant 1)

As shown above, ‘searching new projects’ is a task that is not actually a part of a function and not all consultants search for own projects. It is their choice if they do it and when to do it. If they do not feel like doing it today they can decide to drop it and focus on other tasks. But some consultants apparently want to search for own projects because of several personal reasons. Some consultants see searching new projects as a challenge and get a boost if they succeed (PC1Q3). In addition, others search for own projects because they want projects they like and these projects give them energy (BC3Q6). Thus, searching for own projects gives the consultants a certain form of energy. Therefore, searching for new projects can be seen as a way of seeking job resources.

4.2.2 Seeking challenging job demands

Consultants seek for certain job demands that may be challenging but not necessarily seen as hindering, this can be seen as seeking challenging job demands (Petrou et al., 2012). Several ways of how consultants at Coppa do this, is taking on internal responsibilities of which they think they are important, searching for variety in projects or something new in projects, and searching for new tasks. These tasks are perceived as challenging and may require effort but are not seen as hindering because the consultants like to do it and see it as a way to develop themselves. This can be illustrated by the next interview fragment:

“I pick the jobs that I like. And because of that, because I look for that variety, I develop myself. So let me say it that way, because then I experience a lot of situations.” (BC3Q26, Interview 4, Business Consultant 3)

Here the consultant mentions that he/she likes to have variety in projects to develop him- or herself. By searching for different kind of projects the consultants experience all kinds of situations but this also means new situations or more difficult situations. Multiple consultants try to find something new in projects to develop themselves (BC5Q18; PC3Q16). But when asked if it is not difficult to have so much variety in projects, the answer was that it was indeed difficult but that it is what they like (BC5Q24). It gives them a challenge which is not necessarily seen as hindering (PC3Q16). Therefore this way of searching new tasks, new projects, things that may require more effort are seen as seeking challenging job demands because the consultants actually want to do it by themselves and see it as a way to gain new knowledge (e.g. about new situations) and to develop themselves.

4.2.3 Reducing hindering job demands

The consultants experience work pressures which are seen as job demands. Not all of those job demands/work pressures are seen as hindering as discussed earlier. However, the consultants do have ways to reduce hindering job demands. The main way to reduce pressure from busy workdays, long working hours, or working overtime is to take enough moments of rest. Consultants mention that they want to keep their free moments free (e.g. weekends, evenings, or vacations) and try to prevent working these free moments to enjoy their time off. However sometimes they have to work overtime in these moments:

“No, there are times when I say I can work 2 evenings over for you. But I also indicate what we are solving with it and, eh, that is always less in my view than what they think they are going to solve. And I say we compensate it by not working another day.” (BC3Q19, Interview 4, Business Consultant 3)

“But if it is very urgent, then first I will indicate the next moment I can deal with it and provide clarity and then I just look at the reaction that follows. And if they say fine then I know it is all right and I will pick it up at that other moment. But often things get mixed up and in practice I'm just too often.. when I have been with a client during the day.. I pick it up in the evening. Yes. But then I compensate that as much as possible that same week.” (PC4Q18, Interview 11, Procurement Consultant 4)

When working overtime happens the consultants are compensating this with other moments. So if they have to work one evening they compensate it with another free afternoon later that

week or the next week (PC4Q12). This can be seen as a way of reducing hindering job demands because it is their health-protecting coping mechanism (Petrou et al., 2012). These moments of rest are valuable to them and they ensure keeping enough time-off (BC6Q18).

Another way to reduce hindering job demands is to reduce the work pressure they suffer from difficult situations at work. For example political games within an organization (BC1Q4; BC5Q11), not been taken seriously by a client (BC1Q22), or dealing with resistance within a project. These situations are difficult for the consultants and can cause pressure for the consultant. Consultants can have several ways to deal with these situations:

“I: And can you ask for help when you find yourself in a difficult situation, such as a political game?”

R: Yes, well sometimes it helps that I just don't do anything at that moment. And think about what to do on a later moment. Because reacting immediately it is not always handy. Eh, sometimes I also call colleagues or my supervisor to discuss what is useful in that situation. Or I am literally talking to the client about it. So um. Yes. There is no right way. I always check if I can solve it myself or who I need to find my way around.” (BC5Q14, Interview 6, Business Consultant 5)

As shown in the fragment above, consultants can search for their own way how to reduce a hindering job demand. The consultant finds it difficult to deal with political games and mentions that he/she sometimes thinks about what to do at a later moment, asks a colleague for advice, or talks about it with the client himself. In this way, the consultant tries to solve the situation which caused pressure and therefore tries to reduce the hindering job demand.

As shown in §4.2.1, §4.2.2 and §4.2.3, the consultants engage in different ways of seeking job resources, seeking challenging job demands and reducing hindering job demands and therefore engage in many job crafting processes.

4.3 The role of the active work environment in job crafting processes

Earlier, the active work environment and job crafting processes of Coppa were described. In this paragraph, the concepts are elaborated and their relations will be visualized. To this end, a conceptual model is build step by step.

4.3.1 Autonomy, social climate and job crafting processes

The consultants experience a high level of autonomy (see §4.1.2). They experience the feeling that they can choose where to work, how to work, when to work, which projects they want to do, and to quit certain projects. In addition, the consultants have their own ways to develop themselves or to do things they want to do, for example choosing who to ask for help, starting an education, working together with other consultants, searching for variety in projects or searching for new tasks. Furthermore, they have several ways of reducing work pressure they suffer of the active work environment. For example ensuring moments of rests or asking help in difficult situations. This shows that the consultants have the autonomy to engage in job crafting processes and do craft their job in ways that it fits to their needs (see figure 4.1 below).

In addition, the social climate gives them perceptions of trust and autonomy (see §4.1.3) which supports the feeling of freedom and autonomy experienced by the consultants. This is shown in figure 4.1 below:

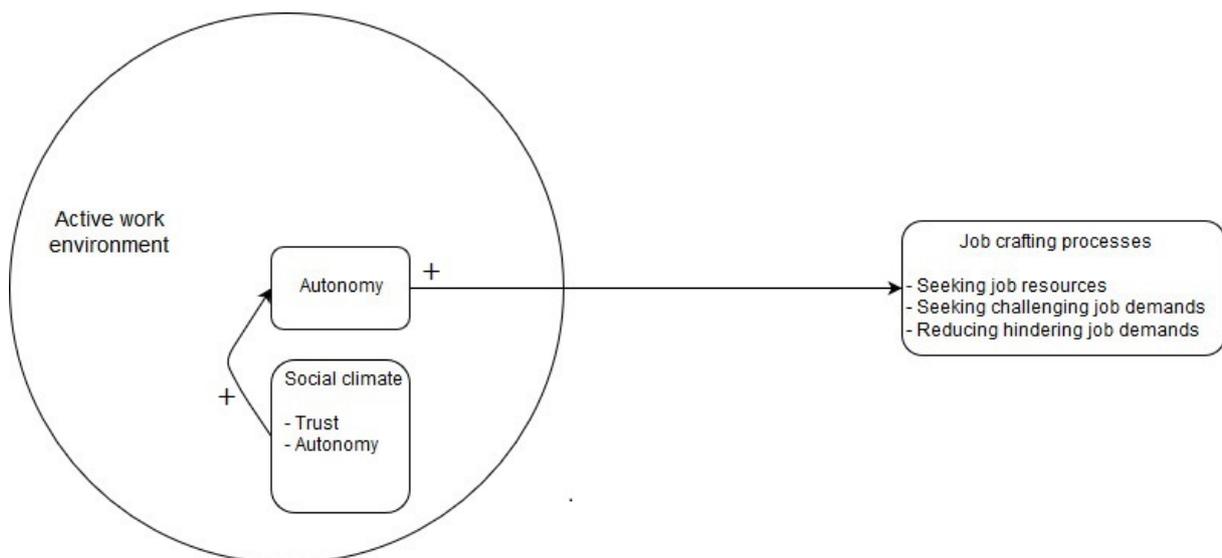


Figure 4.1: Autonomy and social climate (including trust and autonomy)

Important to note, the conceptual model above shows the two main concepts of this thesis: the active work environment and job crafting processes. However, the active work environment is characterized by several aspects such as the dimensions of active jobs (work pressure and autonomy) and a social climate. In addition, within the concepts social climate and work pressure there are also several dimensions as described in §4.1. Therefore, this conceptual model zooms in on the active work environment and on the characteristics of this environment to provide deeper insight in the relation between the active work environment and job crafting

processes. Therefore, autonomy, work pressure and social climate are displayed separately to give a clear view on the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes.

Furthermore, the social climate was characterized by support and separation. The consultants have the autonomy to craft their job and seek for resources by asking other colleagues for help. The perception of support within Coppa affects the perception of consultants who they can ask for help when seeking for job resources. They have the perception that everyone within Coppa is willing to help and that they can ask whoever they need (see §4.1.3). However, the social was also characterized by separation between the consultants government and the consultants healthcare (§4.1.3). They can choose which persons they want to ask for help but because of the separation within the social climate, they can choose not to ask help from consultants of the other sector:

“I: Do you also have a meeting with consultants from both the government side as well as the healthcare side? That are many people I think?”

R: Well, that is once every 6 weeks, but generally you sit together with your own team or cluster yes. But you do have joint presentations and joint other things. So you do see each other and you can learn from each other. And you also get to know each other, which is of course convenient that you know who everyone is. If you do not know someone, you are also less likely to contact them.” (PC3Q25, Interview 10, Procurement Consultant 3)

This interview fragment shows that the consultants of government and healthcare do not see each other very often. They have an academy day once every 6 weeks with the whole organization but have meetings with their own team during this morning (Interview 1 and 5). Only in the afternoon they have activities with the consultants in the other sector. Thus, they do not see each other often and may have no clue what these other consultants do. But all consultants have certain expertise about certain procurement issues and can learn from each other. However, they can be less likely to ask a consultant from another sector for help because they do not know them very well.

Therefore the perception of support within the social climate affects the relation between autonomy and job crafting processes in a positive way. However, the separation within the social climate may limit this same relation. This is shown figure 4.2:

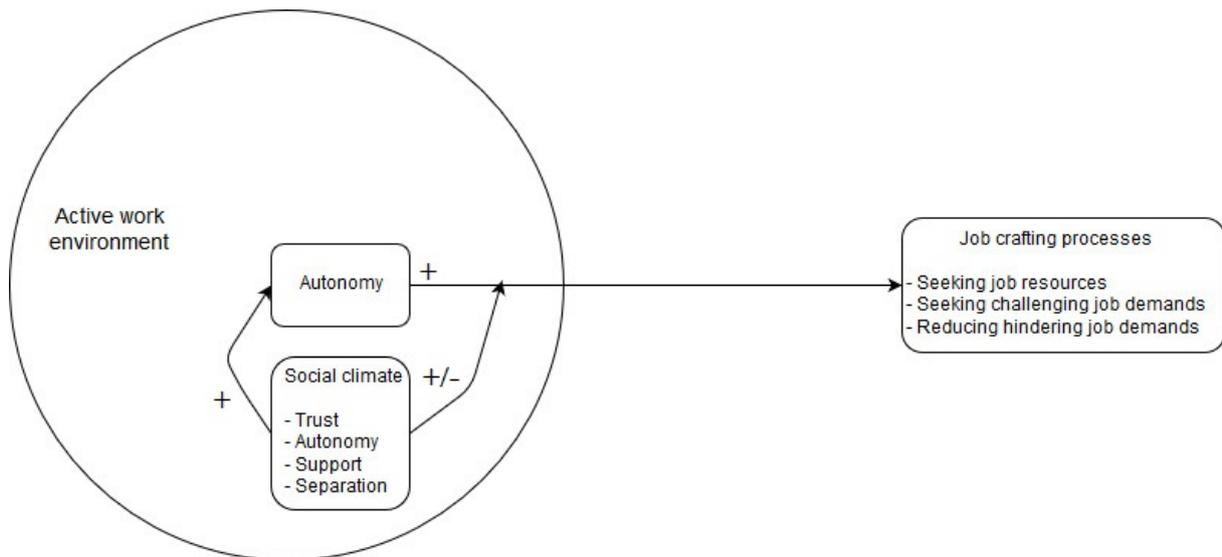


Figure 4.2: Autonomy and social climate (including support and separation)

4.3.2 Work pressure and job crafting processes

Despite their feeling of autonomy, the consultants mention that their autonomy within projects depends on the client. Some clients enable the consultant to determine how, when and where to work while other clients do not. This can be illustrated by the following fragment:

“Yes, I get a lot of freedom. But it depends on each client. Where I am now, I get a lot of freedom and confidence that I am doing well, let's just say. And if I have questions, they expect me to come and ask for things.” (BC1Q6; Interview 2; Business consultant 1)

This consultant explicitly mentions that it differs per client how much trust and freedom they get. It depends on the client if they can work from home or have to work on location (BC5Q22). Others mention that the freedom at a client regarding the projects they want to do is limited because they are responsible for a certain department or product category and therefore do not have the choice which tasks they want to do (PC2Q18; PC4Q5; PC4Q14). Therefore autonomy can be limited at certain clients. This can make it also more difficult to engage in job crafting processes. For example if they want to take on new tasks, it depends on the client if this is possible (B1Q24). Or if they want to work from the office then the client must give them the permission to do so (BC1Q3). For some projects it is not possible to work from home (PC2Q1; BC5Q22). In addition, some colleagues would like to work together with other colleagues from Coppa. But it depends on the client if they need two consultants or only one (BC4Q21; BC6Q6).

In these ways, the client can limit the autonomy of the consultant and the possibility to craft their job.

Secondly, their autonomy depends on management. As mentioned earlier consultants give the impression that they get the freedom from Coppa to choose which projects they want to do. However, they also mention that sometimes they do not get a choice from management:

“Yes and so it may be for some client, that you think there may be some potential, then it can be a strategy that you sometimes have to do something that you do not actually want, but you can also prove your added value as your, ehm, if you come up with another lead from your assignment. And I can do more or I can do something extra or I can add another colleague. So from there, the partners often think if that consultant is available then he or she has to be on it even when that person might not actually want to do it.” (BC4Q2, Interview 5, Business Consultant 4)

Choosing their own projects depends partly on their own availability and available projects (BC5Q1), but sometimes it happens that management wants to put a consultant on a certain project for specific reasons as shown above. The consultants can express their preferences but it may be possible that they agree with doing a certain project because they feel pressure from management and not because they actually want to. Because consultants can feel limited in their autonomy due to management, they can also feel limited in certain job crafting processes. This can be illustrated by the following fragment:

“Of course, sometimes you also need the right assignments to be able to develop yourself and achieve your goals. I think you just have to pay attention to that continuously. And I try, sometimes it gets too little attention because of other things, but I usually try to do that.” (BC5Q20, Interview 6, Business Consultant 5)

Here the consultant mentions that he/she needs the right projects to develop him/herself. But it can be difficult to get the right project because they do not always have the choice. In this way job crafting processes can be limited sometimes. Another example can be that a consultant wants to take on some tasks within Coppa but this has to be coordinated by management (PC3Q21). This makes it more difficult to craft their jobs because they do not have the autonomy to do so.

Because of these pressures from clients and management, consultants can feel limited in their autonomy. In addition, it is argued that if their autonomy is limited they can also be limited in their job crafting processes because they do not have the autonomy to do certain things. In all these ways, management and clients can be seen as work pressure which could limit the autonomy of consultants and therefore also limit certain job crafting processes. This is shown in figure 4.3:

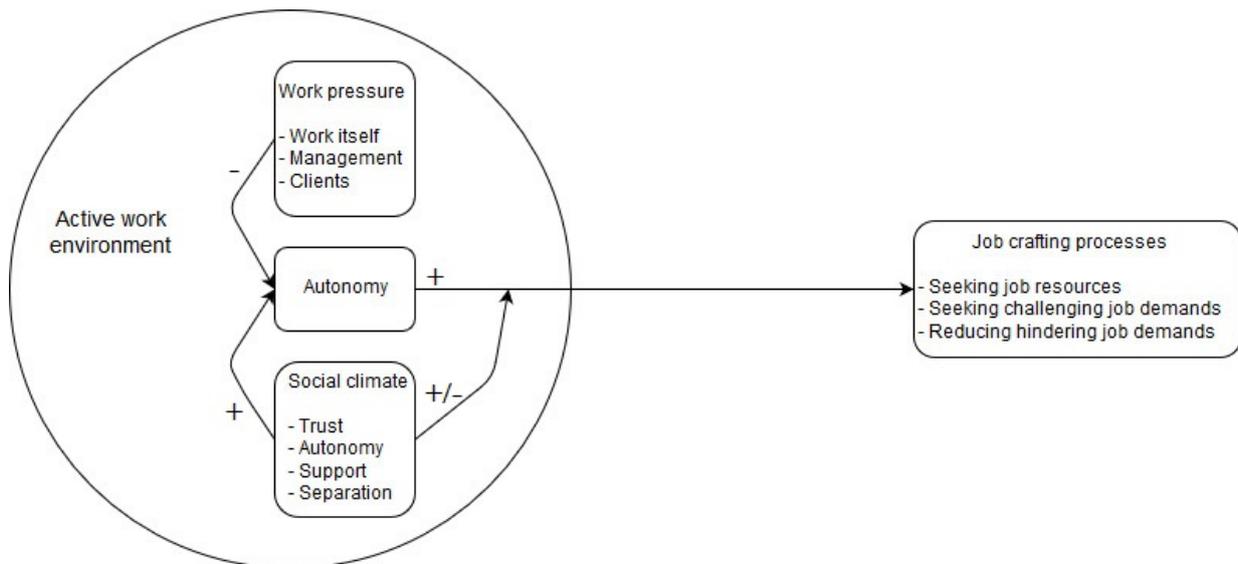


Figure 4.3: Work pressure and autonomy

4.3.3 Work pressure and job crafting processes

Work pressure does not only affect the autonomy of consultants, it also affects job crafting processes in a more direct manner. This happens when work pressure does not actually affect their autonomy but directly limits the ability to engage in certain job crafting processes. This can be illustrated by the next interview fragment:

“Yes, that is also a bit of what we expect from ... Look, I actually just don't have enough time to actively search for projects.. But, well, I always say to the people that they also have to look around and not wait until we come up with something like if this is something for you.” (BC6Q4, Interview 7, Business Consultant 6)

Here one consultant mentions that he/she has not enough time to search for the right projects. He/she mentions that consultants therefore should also try to search for the right projects by themselves. This illustrates that searching for own projects may not be possible for consultants

who are very occupied because of all their other tasks or projects. They might feel time pressure and need their time for other tasks. In this way work pressure can directly influence the ability of consultants to engage in job crafting processes. This relation is shown in figure 4.4:

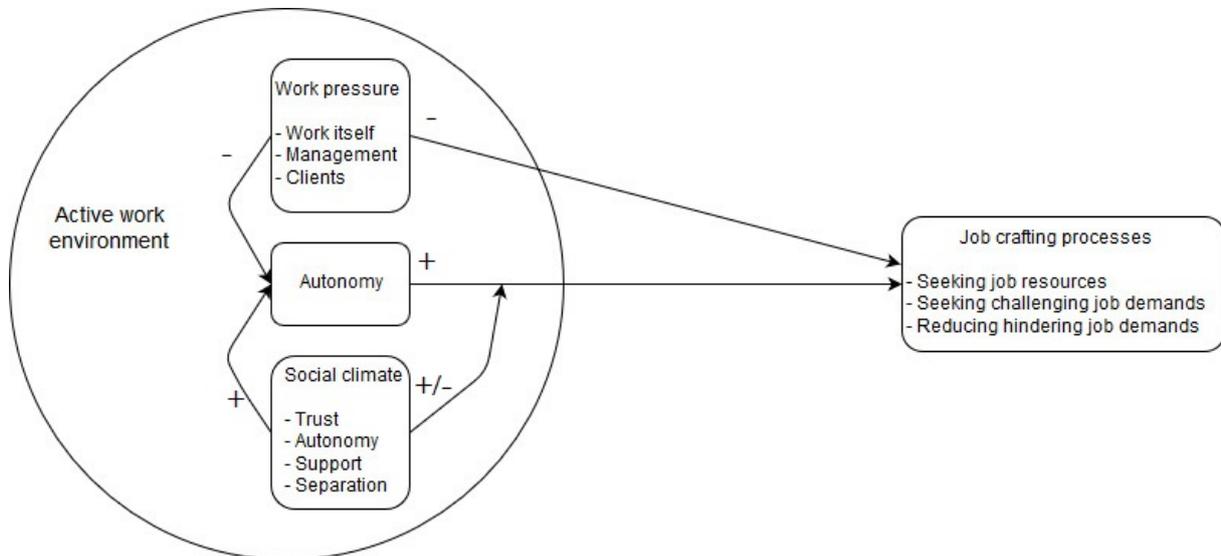


Figure 4.4: Work pressure and job crafting processes

4.4 The role of personal characteristics

During the interviews the role of the active work environment was examined in job crafting processes. During those interviews it seemed to be that the consultants differ how they handle work pressure. Some consultants are more sensitive to work pressure and let it influence their job crafting processes while others do not. This can be illustrated by the following two interview fragments:

“That is also really my personality that first I think about the client and only then think about myself, because I want to solve it for him or her. And then sometimes I make it too difficult for myself. That's just what is inside of me, and I can't get that out easily either. I couldn't do it. First think of myself and then the client.” (BC3Q21, Interview 4, Business Consultant 3)

“R: Ehm, no haha, but I eh. I don't know... I always neglect the things of which I think I will get away with it haha. It is not how it should be. But I don't mind letting things run high for myself either. So I am not very impressed when something suddenly has to be done for tomorrow. Or oh this is not possible now and it is urgent, or this should already have happened, then I think yeah oops.

I: Another day tomorrow?

R: Yes I had 5 things and the other 4, well, I should have finished that sooner.” (BC4Q17, Interview 5, Business consultant 4)

These two interview fragments show two completely different ways of how to handle work pressure. The first consultant mentions that he/she puts the client first and this can make things difficult for him/her. The second consultant mentions that he/she is not really impressed by something that has to be solved before tomorrow. He/she is not that impressed by work pressure and remains calm. Thus, some consultants do everything for clients or management because they feel responsible. Other consultants remain calm and do not let feelings run high. This resembles the different characters of persons and their stress sensitivity. Therefore personal characteristics regarding their stress sensitivity affect what consultants see as work pressure and how they handle work pressure and may let it influence their job crafting processes. This relation is shown in figure 4.5 below:

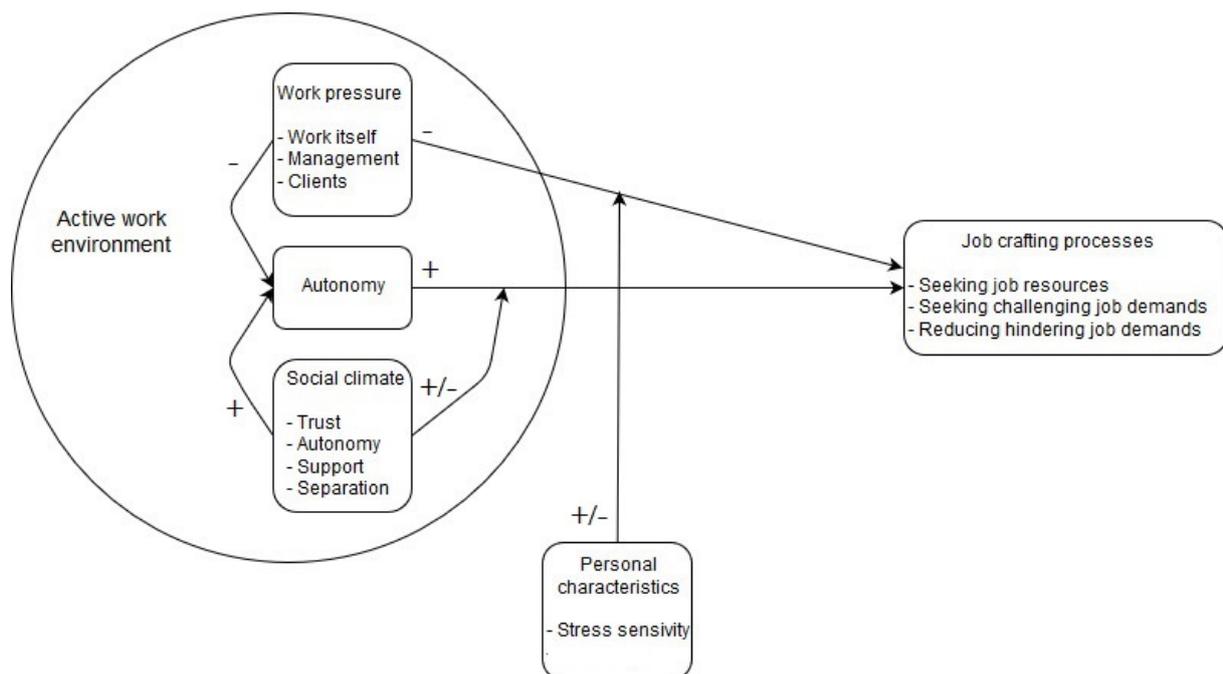


Figure 4.5: Personal characteristics (including stress sensitivity)

During the interviews it also seemed to be that other personal characteristics affect job crafting processes. Some consultants engage more in job crafting processes than other consultants while they all have the autonomy to engage in job crafting. This could be partly traced back to their proactivity and involvement in own development. This could be illustrated by the next two interview fragments:

“I: Ehm. Let me see, and how do you develop yourself?”

R: Well, if something happens that I like doing, then I will.” (PC2Q23, Interview 9, Procurement Consultant 2)

“I: And ehm, in terms of development, how do you try to develop yourself within your work?”

R: Well more, even more to the legal side. And I think an education because I will be following a procurement law course at the VU in Amsterdam. So that is also a way to develop myself, and in the long run I also want to develop myself more in procurement. For example the NEVI training that you can do. So I would like to do that in the long run.” (PC4Q20, Interview 11, Procurement consultant 4)

The first consultant mentions that he/she develops him/herself when a development opportunity arises. However, as shown in the second fragment, some consultants are more involved in their own development. They are searching for ways to develop themselves proactively. Some consultants mention that they find it more difficult to say what they actually want (BC1Q17) or need help from others to find out what they actually want in their job (PC2Q20). Furthermore, these differences in personal characteristics show that some persons find it more difficult to craft their job because they do not actually know what they want while others know exactly what they want and craft their job to make it fit to their needs. This last relation completes the conceptual model of this master thesis and is shown in figure 4.6 below:

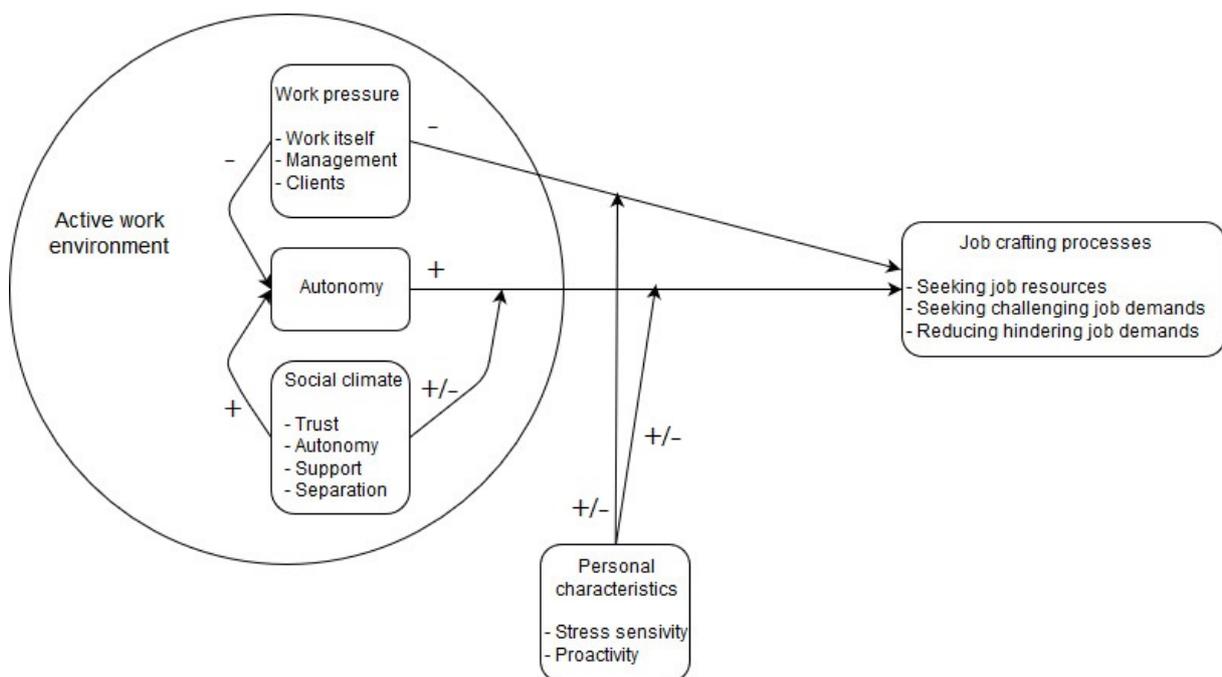


Figure 4.6: Personal characteristics (including proactivity)

5. Conclusion and Discussion

This chapter is divided in two paragraphs. The first paragraph (§5.1) provides an answer to the research question developed in chapter 1. The second paragraph (§5.2) discusses the methodology used and the limitations of this master thesis. In addition, §5.2 gives insight in the theoretical and practical contributions of this master thesis and provides recommendations for future research.

5.1 Conclusion

The objective of this master thesis was to provide insight in what role the active work environment has in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs, in order to contribute to existing literature by providing a more elaborated view on job crafting in active jobs using a deeper understanding of active jobs called the active work environment. The research question of this master thesis is: *'What is the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs?'*

The active work environment was described in terms of autonomy, social climate and work pressure. Autonomy and work pressure were dimensions of active jobs which were in this thesis also seen as dimensions of an active work environment, elaborated with a new dimension of the active work environment called the social climate. As shown in the last chapter, the active work environment affects job crafting processes in two ways.

First of all, the active work environment includes a high level of autonomy which enables employees to engage in job crafting processes. The employees feel like they are in charge if they want to make adjustments to fit their job to their needs. Secondly, the social climate supports autonomy by bringing forward perceptions of trust and autonomy. Thirdly, the social climate can moderate the relation between autonomy and job seeking resources by bringing forward perceptions of support and separation. Perceptions of support can affect the relation positively, while perceptions of separation can affect the relation negatively. Thus, the social climate can support or limit job crafting processes in different ways.

However, the active work environment can also bring forward work pressure that can limit the autonomy of employees and also their ability to engage in job crafting processes. Work pressure can be caused by the work itself, management or clients. In addition, these work pressures of the active work environment can also directly limit job crafting processes without

affecting the autonomy of employees. In summary, the role of the active work environment can therefore be supporting or limiting the job crafting processes of employees.

This supporting or limiting role of the active work environment can sometimes depend on the personal characteristics of employees. Some employees are more sensitive to work pressure in the active work environment and may let it affect their job crafting processes while others do not. In addition, some employees are more proactive than others and therefore engage in job crafting processes more often. Personal characteristics of employees in active jobs can therefore affect how employees handle the active work environment and might let it influence their job crafting processes.

Therefore, the active work environment can be supporting or limiting job crafting processes of employees in active jobs depending on work pressure, autonomy and social climate. Furthermore, personal characteristics of employees in active jobs can moderate the relation between the active work environment and job crafting processes.

5.2 Discussion

First of all, a reflection of the methodology and research process will be given in §5.2.1 and §5.2.2. Secondly, the contributions of this study will be discussed in §5.2.3 and §5.2.4, followed by recommendations for future research in §5.2.5.

5.2.1 Methodological reflection

As mentioned in chapter 2, it was unclear what the active work environment actually is, besides autonomy and work pressure, because only one definition of this concept is known in literature (Petrou et al., 2017). It was argued that the active work environment includes a social climate, but it remained unclear what this social climate entails in an active work environment. To examine the active work environment more in depth, consultants at Coppa were studied. These consultants work in active jobs as shown in §3.2. However, it was difficult to examine the social climate because it was unclear what this climate entails in active jobs. Inductive research methods were used to explore the concept active work environment and to explore the social climate. However, the results regarding the social climate of Coppa were limited. This can be explained by two reasons. The first reason is the number of interviews conducted. Only 10 interviews with consultants were conducted due to the short research period and willingness of consultants to participate. It was difficult to reach the point of data saturation within these 10 interviews, especially because the social climate is a complex concept and includes perceptions, norms and values of people (Moran & Volkwein; 1992). Therefore, it is possible that more

interviews were needed to ensure data saturation and to get a clear view on the social climate within Coppa. In addition, the consultants often work individually so observations of the social climate were not possible. It is difficult to observe a social climate when someone works alone and has only superficial interactions with other members of the organization (such as phone calls). Consultants often see colleagues during an academy day only once per 6 weeks. Therefore, results regarding the social climate of Coppa were limited and data saturation was not reached.

As mentioned in chapter 3, this master thesis made use of qualitative research methods. The choice for qualitative research methods automatically has consequences for the research quality. To ensure the research quality, the criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability were discussed and ensured in §3.6. The main problem was the transferability of this research. This research focused on one single case of consultants at Coppa. However, the results of this study may be difficult to transfer to another case. Job crafting can be done in many ways depending on personal knowledge, skills, abilities, preferences and needs (Tims & Bakker, 2010). As shown in chapter 4, some consultants have other ways of job crafting than other consultants. It depends on what the consultant wants in his or her job. This makes it more difficult to transfer. To ensure transferability as much as possible, a detailed case description and analysis including extensive quotes were provided and can be used in other research to examine the active work environment in similar contexts. This provides a starting point for understanding job crafting in active work environments by comparing this detailed case description with similar contexts and to examine if findings of this research are confirmed in other contexts or new insights can be added.

Furthermore, there were some measurement issues that need to be addressed. First of all, interviewees had a free choice to participate. This resulted in 10 consultants who volunteered. During the interviews it became clear that one person thinks very negative about the work and maybe wants to quit. This can be seen as an extreme case which is not representative for all consultants. The researcher recognized this interviewee as an extreme case and was careful in using quotes for the analysis. Quotes of this interview were compared with quotes of other interviews to check if they did not deviated extremely from other interviews, because most quotes of other interviews were overlapping and consistent. If certain codes deviated extremely from other interviews they were not used in analysis. In this way it was prevented that one extreme case may harm the credibility of the research because this one extreme case was not representative for all the other interviewees.

Lastly, the researcher asked the interviewees to reserve a private room for the interviews. The researcher was not able to do this by herself because the interviews were held at client organizations and headquarters of Coppa where it was not allowed to reserve a room if you are not an employee. However, not all interviewees reserved a private room for the interview. To ensure privacy, the interview was held in the back of the personal restaurant with no other people around the researcher and interviewee.

Given these points regarding the methodology, it can be concluded that this thesis tried to ensure the quality of the research as much as possible. Even though some issues, for example the private rooms, could not be solved completely the researcher tried to search for the best possible solution and explains why this choice was made. In addition, this research includes a high level of credibility, dependability, and confirmability as discussed in §3.6. In this research, all choices regarding theory and research methods are elaborately explained and memos were kept to give insight in shifts during the interview and coding phases. Furthermore, using an inductive research methods enabled gaining in-depth insights regarding the active work environment and its role in job crafting processes, and enabled providing elaborate data. As mentioned earlier, this resulted in a very detailed case description including extensive quotes which can be used in future research.

5.2.2 Personal reflection on the research process

The researcher herself also plays a part in the research process. During the interviews it was difficult to ask around the concept work pressure because interviewees were mentioning that they do not experience work pressure for example. It could be possible that they do not experience work pressure but by asking follow-up questions and indirect questions about work pressure it became clear that they do experience work pressure. Experiencing these difficulties in getting an answer on work pressure could be explained by two reasons relating to the role as a researcher.

First of all, the researcher did not know the consultants very well. The relationship between the interviewee and the researcher was superficial because they only saw each other once or twice. This does not resemble an open relation in which it is easier to talk about more difficult things at work such as work pressure. It would have been more convenient if the researcher wrote this research on location and saw the consultants multiple times to build a more open relation. However, this was not possible because the consultants work individually at all kinds of client organizations. To build a better and more open relation, the researcher tried to show more interest in the interviewee. The interviewees were enthusiastic about certain

topics, for example earlier work experiences. Even though these topics were not relevant for this research, the researcher still asked follow-up questions to make the interviewee talk. This helped in getting the interviewee to open up and getting more elaborate answers on questions about work pressure.

Secondly, the researcher herself is of a young age and almost graduated. This could have played a role in this research and in getting answers on questions of work pressure. The consultancy firm is looking for new employees and the researcher is interested in having a consultancy job. The researcher was asked multiple times by several consultants and management what kind of job she wants after she has graduated, if she wants to be a consultant and if she wants to work at Coppa. These questions indicate that the interviewees might have the impression that the researcher wants to apply for a job at Coppa. This made it more difficult for the researcher to keep her distance. Themes like work pressure could therefore have been more difficult to explore because they might have seen the researcher as a possible candidate. For example, some interviewees did not really mention work pressure but described how a person should handle the work pressure they experience. They described a certain profile for a consultant instead of giving examples of how they experience work pressure. This made it more difficult for the researcher to get the right answers. Follow-up questions were used to get more personal answers from the interviewee. In addition, the researcher tried to avoid talking about her job preferences until after the interview to prevent the impression that the researcher wants to apply of a job at Coppa.

5.2.3 Theoretical contributions

This thesis contributes to literature in several ways. First of all, literature shows contradictory results regarding job crafting in active jobs. As shown in chapter 1, some research suggests that employees in active jobs are challenged and even limited in the possibilities for job crafting (Berg et al., 2010), while others suggest that an active job could enable employees to engage even more in job crafting processes (Petrou et al., 2012). This thesis contributes to literature by giving insights that might explain this contradiction. In this thesis, characteristics of an active work environment became clear (autonomy, work pressure and a social climate) and it became clear how these characteristics can support or limit job crafting processes of employees in active jobs. It confirms both sides of the contradiction of literature and has added value to literature by showing under what circumstances job crafting is limited or supported by the active work environment.

In addition, this thesis mentions that personal characteristics play a role in job crafting processes. This is in line with earlier research that also addresses the role of personality in job crafting processes (Roczniewska & Bakker, 2016; Bipp & Demerouti, 2015). During the interviews it became clear that some consultants were more proactive than others and engage more in job crafting processes. This is in line with earlier research which states that employees with a proactive personality are most likely to craft their own jobs (Bakker, Tims & Derks, 2012). Earlier research also mentions that proactivity can serve as a moderator in job crafting (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Although earlier research mentions the role of several personal characteristics in job crafting (Bakker et al., 2012; Bipp & Demerouti, 2015; Peeters & Demerouti, 2016; Roczniewska & Bakker, 2016), results of this study regarding the moderating effect of stress sensitivity on work pressure (as a part of the active work environment) and job crafting processes were not mentioned in earlier research.

Finally, this thesis gave a more comprehensive understanding of the active work environment. In literature, the active work environment was only described in terms of autonomy and work pressure (Petrou et al., 2017) and this was the only definition of the active work environment known. This thesis confirms that the active work environment includes work pressure and autonomy but adds the characteristic of a social climate. In this way, this thesis contributes to literature by giving more insights in what the active work environment actually entails, besides autonomy and work pressure, and these insights can be used in further research.

5.2.4 Practical contributions

This thesis provides relevant insights for the supervisors and partners of Coppa who are concerned with their employees in the active work environment. As described in chapter 1, employees engaging in job crafting can ensure positive outcomes for organizations such as job satisfaction, work engagement, resilience and thriving at work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). All consultants mention that they experience a high feeling of autonomy and craft their jobs in all kind of ways. This is a very positive result for Coppa because this means that employees are able to engage and are engaging in job crafting processes.

However, as shown in chapter 4, some characteristics of an active work environment limit the job crafting processes of employees and therefore may also limit the positive outcomes for organizations mentioned above. For management of Coppa (supervisors and partners) it is important to know how their employees want to craft their job and how they feel limited in doing so. Some consultants mention that they do not always have the choice to do certain projects. This partly depends on their own availability and availability of projects. In addition,

it also became clear that certain consultants receive requests by management to do certain projects and may feel obligated to do these projects even if it is not a project they actually want to do. This shows that consultants are limited in choosing their projects even when mention that they are able choose the projects they want. To create a better match between projects and consultants, it could be possible to organize searching and assigning projects on a more strategic level. As mentioned by some consultants, the sales team currently does not really search for projects. They often search for the right consultant within Coppa for the project requests they receive from clients. However, it would be beneficial if sales searches for projects and clients that meet the wishes of the consultants instead of the other way around. This makes it possible to create a better fit between the consultants and the projects they do.

Furthermore, it became clear that certain consultants find it difficult to say what they want in their job and find it more difficult to craft their job. Some consultants are more proactive and others are more reactive in job crafting which refers to the personal characteristics of consultants. But there are also consultants who want to craft their job but do not exactly know what their needs or preferences are. In addition, some consultants do not know how they can craft their job or may not make use of all options they have. This is important for management of Coppa and here they could step in. Some employees need more help in finding out what they actually want in their job and they mention that the TOP program itself is not enough to help them finding out. It is important to create awareness among employees how they can craft their job to help them exploring all options and exploring their actual preferences and needs. It might be difficult for certain consultants to talk about this with management because supervisors and partners themselves may exactly know what they want in a job. They need someone who can think along and makes them feel comfortable. For example setting up a coaching program could help. Or talking with other colleagues about how they craft their job. In this way, they can learn from each other and get help in exploring all options they have. This applies not only for Coppa but also for other managers in other organizations who are concerned with employees in an active work environment.

5.2.5 Recommendations for future research

This research examined the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs. As mentioned earlier, the active work environment was only described in terms of work pressure and autonomy in literature (Petrou et al., 2017). This research elaborated the concept active work environment and examined it in terms of work pressure, autonomy and social climate. Although the concept social climate is not new in

literature and others mention that job crafting is a socially embedded process (Berg et al., 2010; Sekiguchi, Li & Hosomi, 2017), the social climate is not yet examined in job crafting in active jobs. The social climate gives insight in the perceptions of employees that they have about their work or the organization which is produced by member interaction (Moran & Volkwein; 1992). It gives insight in how employees interpret situations and insight in underlying norms, values and attitudes to certain behavior of the employees (Moran & Volkwein; 1992). As discussed in §5.2.1, the results regarding the social climate at Coppa were limited and provided only a few insights in underlying perceptions. But as shown in the definition above the social climate includes more aspects and this thesis has therefore only provided a starting point for examining the social climate in job crafting. Therefore, future research needs to explore the social climate more in depth by conducting more interviews and if possible observations.

Secondly, a social climate could differ per organization. At Coppa, the social climate represents feelings and perceptions of trust, autonomy and support which is supporting employees to engage in job crafting processes. In other organizations it is possible that the social climate may represent something else and may even limit job crafting processes. To gain more insight, further research needs to examine the social climate of an active work environment in other (consultancy) organizations and examine its role in job crafting processes.

Furthermore, the consultants within Coppa mentioned several forms of work pressure from the work itself, clients and management. However, they did not mention fellow colleagues as a source of work pressure while they all often consult and are consulted by fellow colleagues. They receive requests of colleagues to help by mail or via a phone call. But this does not seem to bother many consultants. This could partly be explained by the social climate resembling support within Coppa. But it would be interesting to examine this result in other active work environments in other organizations to see if this differs among employees in other organizations.

Lastly, this thesis could be seen as an explorative study which provided new insights for theory in the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs. A conceptual model was developed showing multiple relations and moderating variables. However, this model still needs to be tested empirically. Future research could therefore test the results of this study regarding the role of the active work environment in job crafting processes using quantitative research methods to see if these relations will stand in other organizations with employees located in other active work environments.

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Appendix A: Topics used for interviews

<i>Concept</i>	Definition	Related concepts	Definition
<i>Active work environment</i>	An environment that not only involves work pressure but also ensures adequate autonomy to deal with these high demands (Petrou et al., 2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work pressure - Autonomy - Social climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work pressure refers to quantitative demanding aspects of a job (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, in Petrou et al., 2012). These demanding aspects can be for example the pace of work, workload, length and scheduling of the hours of work, safety of work conditions or job security (Gallie & Russel, 2009; Evers, Kreijns, Van der Heijden & Gerrichhauzen, 2011). - Job autonomy refers to the control employees have over task execution (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, in Petrou et al., 2012). Job autonomy provides the employee freedom, independence and control in for example scheduling the work and in determining which procedures to use (Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Galup, Klein & Jiang, 2008; Bontis, Richards & Serenko, 2011). - <i>“a relatively enduring characteristic of an organization which distinguishes it from other organizations and (a) embodies members' collective perceptions about their organization with respect to such dimensions as autonomy, trust, cohesiveness, support, recognition, innovation, and fairness; (b) is produced by member interaction; (c) serves as a basis for interpreting the situation; (d) reflects the prevalent norms values and attitudes of the organization's culture; and (e) acts as a source of influence for shaping behavior.”</i> (Moran & Volkwein, 1992, p. 20).
<i>Job crafting</i>	specific form of proactive behavior in which the employee initiates changes in the level of job demands and job resources which enables employees to fit their jobs to not only their personal knowledge, skills and abilities, but also their preferences and needs (Tims & Bakker, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job demands - Job resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job demands are job characteristics that require sustained (physical or psychological) effort from employees and are associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Tims et al., 2013). These characteristics can be physical, psychological, social, or organizational, for example high work pressure or an unfavorable physical environment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). - Job resources are job characteristics that contribute toward achieving work related goals, reduce the effect of job demands and associated costs, and stimulate personal development (Tims et al., 2013), for example high autonomy and feedback (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

<i>Job crafting processes</i>	There are three underlying job crafting processes: seeking job resources, seeking challenging job demands, and reducing hindering job demands (Tims et al., 2012).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seeking job resources - Seeking challenging job demands - Reducing hindering job demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Searching for ways to reduce the effect of job demands, reduce associated costs and to stimulate personal development (Tims et al., 2013). Examples of this process are asking advice from colleagues or supervisors, asking feedback or looking for learning opportunities (Petrou et al., 2012). - Seeking for job opportunities that require sustained effort from employees but are not necessarily experienced as hindering. For example when an employee is looking for new tasks or wants to take on more responsibilities (Petrou et al., 2012). - A necessary health-protecting coping mechanism (Petrou et al., 2012). Reducing demands includes actions that try to minimize emotional, mental or physical demanding job aspects or to reduce the workload and time pressure (Petrou et al., 2012).
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Appendix B: E-mail to the consultants

Beste ... ,

Allereerst wil ik u bedanken voor uw bereidheid om deel te nemen aan mijn thesis onderzoek. Mijn naam is Tamara Schoeman en momenteel ben ik bezig met het afronden van de master Organizational Design & Development in Nijmegen.

In mijn thesis onderzoek ik de rol van een actieve werkomgeving in job crafting processen van medewerkers in actieve banen. Job crafting houdt in dat medewerkers zelf hun baan herontwerpen om het beter aan te laten sluiten bij hun kennis, vaardigheden, capaciteiten, voorkeuren en behoeften. Aan de hand van interviews probeer ik meer inzicht te krijgen in hoe job crafting plaatsvindt in een actieve werkomgeving.

Ik wil graag een interview met u inplannen ergens in de weken 17 t/m 21. Zelf woon ik in ... maar ik ben flexibel om ergens naar toe te komen. Daarnaast wil ik graag nog melden dat het onderzoek geheel vrijblijvend is en gegevens vertrouwelijk zullen worden behandeld.

Ik hoor graag de mogelijkheden die u heeft voor dit interview. Ik ben te bereiken via dit e-mailadres of via mijn mobiel (...).

Alvast bedankt voor uw reactie!

Met vriendelijke groeten,

Tamara Schoeman

Appendix C: Initial Interview Format

- Introduction** • I want to thank you for your time and your participation. Before we start, I would like to introduce myself and give you a short introduction of the research. As you might know already, I am Tamara Schoeman, a master student from Nijmegen, studying the master Organizational Design and Development.
- Introductie*

This research examines the role of an active work environment in job crafting processes of employees in active jobs. Job crafting refers to employees who redesign their jobs by themselves in order to fit their job better to their personal knowledge, skills, abilities, preferences, and needs.

Before we start, I want to ask your permission to record the interview. This recording is only listened by me and will be used to transcribe the interview. I want to mention that the interview is completely anonymous and that information is treated confidentially. In addition, I want to mention that participation is without obligation, and that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions.

- *Allereerst wil ik u bedanken voor het vrijmaken van deze tijd en voor uw deelname. Voor we beginnen zou ik mij graag nog even kort voorstellen en nog een korte introductie geven van het onderzoek. Zoals u misschien al weet, ben ik Tamara Schoeman en studeer ik momenteel de master Organizational Design & Development in Nijmegen.*

Dit onderzoek gaat over de rol van een actieve werkomgeving in job crafting processen van werknemers in actieve banen. Job crafting houdt in dat werknemers zelf hun baan herontwerpen om het beter aan te laten sluiten bij hun kennis, vaardigheden, capaciteiten, voorkeuren en behoeften.

Voor we beginnen wil ik graag toestemming aan u vragen om het interview op te nemen. Deze opname wordt alleen door mij beluisterd en wordt gebruikt om het interview te kunnen uittypen. Ik wil daarbij graag zeggen dat het interview geheel anoniem is en gegevens vertrouwelijk zullen worden behandeld. Daarnaast is dit onderzoek geheel vrijblijvend, en wil ik graag melden dat er geen goede of foute antwoorden zijn.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| General information | • What is your current function at Coppa?
<i>Wat is uw huidige functie binnen Coppa?</i> |
|----------------------------|---|

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Algemene informatie | • Which tasks do you perform regarding your function?
<i>Welke taken voert u uit binnen uw functie?</i> |
|----------------------------|--|

- Which parties are involved in performing your tasks?
Welke partijen zijn er allemaal betrokken bij het uitvoeren van uw taken?
- Active work environment**
- Can you give me an example of an ordinary workday?
Kunt u mij vertellen hoe een werkdag er uit kan zien?
- Actieve werk omgeving**
- How would you describe your work?
Hoe zou u uw werk omschrijven?
 - What are important characteristics of your work?
Wat zijn belangrijke karakteristieken van uw werk?
 - How many control do you have over task execution?
(key terms: freedom, independence, autonomy)
Hoeveel controle heeft u over het uitvoeren van uw taken?
(belangrijke termen: vrijheid, onafhankelijkheid, autonomie)
 - (Pay attention to characteristics of a social climate):
 - perceptions about the organization with respect to autonomy, trust, cohesiveness, support, recognition, innovation, and fairness
 - produced by member interaction
 - basis for interpretation
 - reflects norms, values and attitudes of the organization's culture
 - source of influence for shaping behavior.*(Besteed aandacht aan kenmerken van een sociaal klimaat):*
 - percepties over de organisatie met rekening houdend met autonomie, vertrouwen, cohesie, ondersteuning, erkenning, innovatie en eerlijkheid
 - wordt geproduceerd door interactie tussen werknemers
 - basis voor interpretatie
 - reflecteert de normen, waarden en houdingen van de organisatie cultuur
 - bron van invloed voor veranderen van gedrag
- Job crafting**
- Job crafting**
- What are characteristics of your work that ask sustained effort (physical or mental) from you?
Wat zijn karakteristieken van het werk die vragen om aanhoudende inspanning van u (zowel fysiek als mentaal)?
 - Do you experience (a certain form of) work pressure (physically or mentally)?
Ervaart u (een bepaalde vorm van) werkdruk tijdens uw werk (fysiek of mentaal)?
 - What helps you to deal with (these) demanding characteristics within your work?
Wat helpt u binnen uw werk om met (deze) veeleisende karakteristieken om te gaan?

- What characteristics of your job that can help in achieving your work related goals?
Wat zijn karakteristieken of uw baan die helpen in het bereiken van werk gerelateerde doelen?
- What stimulates your personal development?
Wat stimuleert u binnen het werk om uw verder te ontwikkelen?
- How can u adapt characteristics of your work to create a better fit with your personal knowledge, skills, abilities, preferences, and needs?
Hoe kunt u karakteristieken van uw werk aanpassen om dit beter te laten aansluiten met uw kennis, vaardigheden, capaciteiten, voorkeuren en behoeften?

Job crafting processes

Job crafting processen

- How do you search by yourself for opportunities to develop yourself?
Hoe zoekt u zelf naar mogelijkheden om uzelf verder te ontwikkelen?
- How do you reduce the effect of demanding job characteristics by yourself?
Hoe probeert u zelf het effect van veeleisende werkkarakteristieken te verminderen?
- How do you search by yourself for ways to deal with demanding job characteristics or reduce them?
Hoe probeert u zelf om te gaan met veeleisende werkkarakteristieken, of hoe probeert u deze karakteristieken te verminderen?
- Note: Ask question about the Talent Development Program.
Opmerking: Vraag naar het Talent Ontwikkel Plan.

End of interview

Afsluiting

- (Giving a short summary of the main points of the interview, and checking this with the interviewee)
(Een korte samenvatting geven van de belangrijkste punten van het interview en deze punten nagaan bij de geïnterviewde)
- Do you have any other remarks, questions or additions?
Heeft u nog eventuele andere opmerkingen, vragen of toevoegingen?
- I want to thank you for the interview. In the upcoming week I will transcribe the interview. I would like to ask you to read the transcribed interview and leave remarks (for example check if I did not misinterpret anything). After your feedback, I am going to process the interview and analyze all the interviews.
Ik wil u graag bedanken voor dit interview. In de aankomende week ga ik dit interview helemaal uittypen. Ik zou u graag willen

vragen of u dit uitgetypte interview na wilt lezen en eventuele opmerkingen wilt geven (bijvoorbeeld als ik iets verkeerd heb geïnterpreteerd). Na deze feedback ga ik het interview verder uitwerken en ga ik alle interviews analyseren.

Appendix D: Final Interview Format

- Introductie**
- Allereerst wil ik u bedanken voor het vrijmaken van deze tijd en voor uw deelname. Voor we beginnen zou ik mij graag nog even kort voorstellen en nog een korte introductie geven van het onderzoek. Zoals u misschien al weet, ben ik Tamara Schoeman en studeer ik momenteel de master Organizational Design & Development in Nijmegen.

Dit onderzoek gaat over de rol van een actieve werkomgeving in job crafting processen van werknemers in actieve banen. Job crafting houdt in dat werknemers zelf hun baan herontwerpen om het beter aan te laten sluiten bij hun kennis, vaardigheden, capaciteiten, voorkeuren en behoeften.

Voor we beginnen wil ik graag toestemming aan u vragen om het interview op te nemen. Deze opname wordt alleen door mij beluisterd en wordt gebruikt om het interview te kunnen uittypen. Ik wil daarbij graag zeggen dat het interview geheel anoniem is en gegevens vertrouwelijk zullen worden behandeld. Daarnaast is dit onderzoek geheel vrijblijvend, en wil ik graag melden dat er geen goede of foute antwoorden zijn.

Algemene informatie

- Wat is uw huidige functie binnen Coppa?
- Welke taken/werkzaamheden voert u uit binnen uw functie?
- Welke partijen zijn er allemaal betrokken bij het uitvoeren van uw taken?

Actieve werk omgeving

- Kunt u mij vertellen hoe een werkdag er uit kan zien?
- Hoe zou u uw werk omschrijven?
 - Wat is echt kenmerkend voor uw werk?
- Wat zijn belangrijke kenmerken van uw werk?
 - Hoeveel controle heeft u over het uitvoeren van uw taken? (belangrijke termen: vrijheid, onafhankelijkheid, autonomie)
 - Ervaart u (een bepaalde vorm van) werkdruk tijdens uw werk (fysiek of mentaal)?
Bijvoorbeeld: het tempo van werk, werklast, lengte en planning van de werkuren, veiligheid van werkomstandigheden of werkzekerheid
- (Besteed aandacht aan kenmerken van een sociaal klimaat):
 - percepties over de organisatie met rekening houdend met autonomie, vertrouwen, cohesie, ondersteuning, erkenning, innovatie en eerlijkheid
 - wordt geproduceerd door interactie tussen werknemers
 - basis voor interpretatie

- reflecteert de normen, waarden en houdingen van de organisatie cultuur
- bron van invloed voor veranderen van gedrag

Job crafting en bijbehorende processen

- Wat zijn kenmerken van het werk die om meer inspanning van u vragen (zowel fysiek als mentaal)?
Denk aan dingen die meer energie kosten of moeilijker voor u zijn.
Bijvoorbeeld: hoge werkdruk of een ongunstige fysieke omgeving
- Wat helpt u binnen uw werk om met (deze) veeleisende kenmerken om te gaan?
 - Hoe probeert u zelf deze kenmerken te verminderen?
Bijvoorbeeld: verminderen van werklast of tijdsdruk
- Wat vindt u uitdagend aan uw werk?
- Wat zijn kenmerken van uw baan die helpen in het bereiken van werk gerelateerde doelen?
Bijvoorbeeld: hoge autonomie en feedback
- Wat stimuleert u binnen het werk om u verder te ontwikkelen?
- Hoe zoekt u zelf naar mogelijkheden om uzelf verder te ontwikkelen?
Bijvoorbeeld: advies vragen aan collega's of leidinggevenden, feedback vragen of zoeken naar leermogelijkheden, zoeken naar nieuwe taken of meer verantwoordelijkheden aannemen
- Hoe kunt u kenmerken van uw werk aanpassen om dit beter te laten aansluiten met uw kennis, vaardigheden, capaciteiten, voorkeuren en behoeften?
Bijvoorbeeld: het Talent Ontwikkel Plan

Afsluiting

- (Een korte samenvatting geven van de belangrijkste punten van het interview en deze punten nagaan bij de geïnterviewde)
- Heeft u nog eventuele andere opmerkingen, vragen of toevoegingen?
- Ik wil u graag bedanken voor dit interview. In de aankomende weken ga ik dit interview helemaal uittypen. Ik zou u graag willen vragen of u dit uitgetypte interview na wilt lezen en eventuele opmerkingen wilt geven (bijvoorbeeld als ik iets verkeerd heb geïnterpreteerd). Na deze feedback ga ik het interview verder uitwerken en ga ik alle interviews analyseren.

Appendix E: Initial Coding Template

A priori theme	Includes	Possible open codes (examples)
Active work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work pressure - autonomy - social climate - maybe other characteristics? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pace of work, workload, length and scheduling of the hours of work, safety of work conditions, job security - freedom, independence, control - perceptions about the organization with respect to such dimensions as autonomy, trust, cohesiveness, support, recognition, innovation, and fairness - maybe other possible codes?
Job crafting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - job demands - job resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - high work pressure, unfavorable physical environment - high autonomy, feedback
Job crafting processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - seeking job resources - seeking challenging job demands - reducing hindering job demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - asking advice from colleagues or supervisors, asking feedback, looking for learning opportunities - looking for new tasks, wanting to take on more responsibilities - actions that try to minimize emotional, mental or physical demanding job aspects, reduce the workload and time pressure

Appendix F: Final Coding Template

Axial codes	Selective codes	Open codes
Active work environment	Work pressure	<p><i>Work pressure related to the work itself:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hoeveelheid opdrachten tegelijk - Overwerken - Mailbox nooit echt leeg - Agenda zit zo snel weer vol dat je echt moet plannen - Werken met deadlines - Ad hoc situaties tussendoor - Rekening houden met veel belangen - Elke klant zijn eigen uitdagingen - Continu schakelen, mensen op de hoogte houden, tevreden houden, voortgang boeken, - Afhankelijk van andermans agenda - Geen dag is hetzelfde - Snel weten hoe een organisatie werkt - Elke keer nieuwe omgeving <p><i>Work pressure related to clients:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weinig feedback vanuit opdrachtgever - Politieke spelletje - Transparantie vanuit klant - Betrokkenheid opdrachtgever - Verwachtingen opdrachtgever - Achter de consultant om inkopen <p><i>Work pressure related to management:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vol qua uren maar toch verzoeken vanuit management - Brandjes blussen - Sommige dingen moeten - Soms moet je een opdracht doen - Niet altijd zelf projectplan schrijven
	Autonomy	<p><i>Autonomy characterized by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eigen keuze vanuit waar te werken - Zelf initiatief moeten nemen om dingen te bespreken - Keuze in opdrachten - Keuze om van opdracht af te gaan - Regie over eigen agenda - Zelf verantwoordelijk voor eigen ontwikkeling - Keuze om minder te werken - Keuze in hoeveel opdrachten tegelijk - Keuze in hoeveel dagen op locatie - Zelf kiezen of langzamer gaat in je project - Keuze om eigen projectplan te schrijven - Zelf betrokken bij uitvragen/offertes

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keuze wanneer te werken - Werk heel zelfstandig - Vrijheid waarop ik het doe en organiseer en vanuit waar ik werk - Vrijheid en vertrouwen vanuit opdrachtgever - Veel vrijheid in jouw project en hoe jij het regelt <p><i>Autonomy can be limited by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zelfstandigheid hangt af van de kaders die je vooraf afspreekt - Verschilt of je opdracht zo krijgt of meehelpt met offertes - Soms wel keuze in project, soms niet - Tijd op kantoor afhankelijk van project of functie - Opdracht in bepaalde mate eigen maken - Vrijheid bij opdrachtgever is minder
	Social climate	<p><i>Perceptions about independence consultants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultants zijn professionals - Kijk zelf ook rond bij een klant - Leidinggevende nauwelijks in contact met opdrachtgever consultants - Leidinggevende weet niet waar consultant mee bezig is - Coppa ziet niet waar consultant mee bezig is <p><i>Perceptions everyone helps each other:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open cultuur collega's onderling - Iedereen is behulpzaam binnen Coppa - Wij zijn nogal van het brandjes blussen <p><i>Perceptions old CBP and old COPPA:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBP best wel een ander type mens - Verandering type mens met overname - Business consultant ander type consultant - Business consultants commerciëler - Overheidskant meer mijn collega's
Job crafting processes	Seeking job resources	<p><i>Seeking job resources in the following ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sparren met collega's op locatie - Hulp vragen aan collega's (of leidinggevende) - Ondersteuning vanuit kenniscentrum - Zelf opdrachten zoeken - Via synergie mensen vinden die je kunnen helpen - Collega's opzoeken en niet alleen op opdrachten zitten - Terugkoppeling vragen bij opdrachtgever - Het is goed om NEVI opleiding te hebben, al mis ik het zelf niet - Nieuwe opleiding doen

		<p><i>Can be limited by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vaak niet de keus om samen te werken - Geen tijd om actief opdrachten te zoeken - Samen met collega Coppa afhankelijk per opdracht
	Seeking challenging job demands	<p><i>Seeking challenging job demands in the following ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intern dingen oppakken die diegene belangrijk vindt - Zoeken naar afwisseling van type projecten, type organisaties, type mensen - Zoeken naar iets nieuws in een project - Ander soort taak oppakken <p><i>Can be limited by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aangeboden om see your talents op te pakken, maar niet nodig - Ander soort taken oppakken afhankelijk van opdrachtgever - Interne coaching opstarten moeilijk door inzet van mensen
	Reducing hindering job demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weekend echt vrij houden - Overwerken compenseren met andere vrije momenten - Maximaal gebruik maken van mogelijkheid er even tussenuit te gaan - Met opdrachtgever in gesprek over moeilijke situatie - Iemand van hogere hand inschakelen bij weerstand - Deadlines zelf een beetje te plannen - Ik verwaarloos hetgeen waarvan ik denk dat ik ermee weg kom - Aangeven op een ander moment oppakken - Omgaan met lastige dingen (onderhandelen) binnen het werk - Soort standaard dat werkt het beste - Even niks doen en op ander moment verder bij moeilijke situatie
Personal Characteristics	Stress sensitivity	<p><i>Perceptions about themselves:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gevoel collega's bij opdrachtgever controleren me - Mensen zien je liever gaan dan komen - Sommige mensen vinden je vervelend, andere vinden je een reddende engel - Gevoel dat het nooit goed is - Hoge verwachtingen aan mezelf - Lat die ik mezelf op leg, dat doe ik puur zelf - Maak ik het mezelf moeilijk mee <p><i>Having troubles saying no:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ik hou mezelf niet aan mijn afspraak - Voelt verantwoordelijkheid om bepaalde dingen op te pakken

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zegt niet snel nee tegen opdrachten - Je kan ergens weggaan als je wilt, maar als je beetje meebeweegt kies je er wel voor om er te blijven <p><i>Easier to switch-off:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Het werk moet je een beetje liggen - Zelf niet zo onder de indruk als het ineens morgen moet - Soms op het laatste moment iets maar als het niet in te passen is, hebben ze pech. Termijnen zijn niet aan de consultant. - Het is een beetje hoe je zelf met werkdruk omgaat - Ik ben wel eens overzicht kwijt maar ik kan het wel uitschakelen thuis - Zelf waken voor overwerken
	Proactivity	<p><i>Proactive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zit in expertise team in vrije tijd - Organiseert Coppa uitje in vrije tijd - Ik maak hele tijd wel kenbaar wat ik wil - Je moet een beetje proactief zijn vind ik - Opdrachten werven niet bij functie, maar eigenlijk zou elke consultant het moeten doen <p><i>Reactive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weinig wensen aangeven - Niet snel feedback vragen als er niks mis is - Kijkt naar opdrachten die langskomen - Als iets zich voordoet dan vind ik dat wel leuk om te doen - Vooral doen, nieuwe dingen op je pad komen - Als er ondersteuning nodig is, laat het maar weten
	Involved in own development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moeilijk zeggen wat wil ik nou echt - Lastig doelen op lange termijn te stellen - Meer handreiking nodig - Normaal om steeds meer van jezelf te eisen