

**The Practice of Virtue in Organizations:
Meaningful Work and Persons with Disabilities**

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ABSTRACT

This paper applies the concept of virtue to the treatment of persons with disabilities (PWD). Historically, PWD have been underemployed within society and discriminated against in the workplace. We suggest that examining the employment challenges of PWD within the context of virtuousness can provide a framework for both future research on PWD as well as organizational action to create a supportive environment. First, we provide an overview of the virtue as well as meaningfulness of work literature. Second, literature on the work experiences of persons with disabilities (PWD) is detailed. Next, a framework that suggests how combining the virtue and the meaningfulness of work literature facilitate positive work experiences for PWD is presented. The paper concludes with suggestions for future research and recommendations for how organizations can become more virtuous to support the employment of PWD.

THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUE IN ORGANIZATIONS: MEANINGFUL WORK AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Recent crises in ethical leadership have focused attention on responsibility and ethics within organizations (Knights & O’Leary, 2006). As a result, there is a growing area of research discussing the concept of virtue within organizations (cf., Cameron, Bright & Caza, 2004; Chun, 2005; Flynn, 2007). Chun (2005) suggests that virtues are the ethical characteristics of organizations. Research in this area proposes links between virtuous behavior, often a topic in philosophical discussions, and both corporate leadership and organizational performance. This work, to some extent, is an outgrowth of the positive organizational scholarship movement (POS) (Cameron & Caza, 2004). For example, according to Cameron and Caza (2004), POS focuses on developing strength, producing resilience and fostering vitality such that organizations and their members can flourish. Similarly, the literature on virtuousness looks at flourishing, meaningful life purpose and resilience (Cameron, et al., 2004). To extend the discussion, this paper will apply the concept of virtue to the treatment of persons with disabilities (PWD). Historically, PWD have been underemployed within society (Markel & Barclay, 2009). In addition, there is evidence that PWD are discriminated against in the workplace (Colella & Stone, 2005). Examining the employment challenges of PWD within the context of virtuousness may provide a more positive framework than what has been previously suggested in existing research. First, we provide overviews of the virtue as well as meaningfulness of work literature. Second, relevant literature on the work experiences of persons with disabilities (PWD) is detailed. Next, we develop and illustrate a framework that suggests how combining the virtue and the meaningfulness of work literature facilitate positive work experiences for PWD. Last,

we provide recommendations for how organizations can become more virtuous to support the employment of PWD.

OVERVIEW

Virtue and Positive Organizational Scholarship. While virtue is a concept often discussed in philosophy, it has only recently appeared in the organizational literature, specifically in the area of Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS). Cameron, Bright and Caza (2004) suggest that the lack of empirical research on virtue has made some organizational scholars uncomfortable. To this end, researchers are now proposing to link virtue to constructs within the traditional realm of organizational research such as performance (Cameron, Bright & Caza, 2004), culture (Gavin & Mason, 2004), and leadership (Flynn, 2008; Whetstone, 2005). Although having a slightly different focus, researchers in the POS movement complement the Positive Organizational Behavior (POB) movement (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). Luthans, et al. (2007) suggest that POS is a macro level approach that includes considerations of virtue, while POB is a micro level approach that is more state like. It focuses on the impact of positive psychological capacities on performance, job satisfaction, work happiness and commitment (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Both approaches contribute to our proposed framework; the treatment of PWD has both societal (macro) and internal organizational (micro) components.

Knights and O'Leary (2006) have detailed events (c.f., corporate scandals, global warming, terrorism) that change the business environment and call for academics and practitioners to adopt an ethical framework that considers responsibility to others. Similarly, Caza, Barker and Cameron (2004) suggest that increasing levels of environmental change and complexity require ethical grounding for organizations, and they indicate that calls for ethical

and responsible behavior have led to regulation. However, they also indicate that it is impossible in such a complex world to develop rules for every possible situation. The call for a framework of virtuousness in organizations shifts the discussion from externally applied rules such as laws to an internationalization of a code of responsibility based on virtue to be adopted by organizational members. This discussion point is relevant to the experience of PWD. Laws regulating the treatment of PWD exist; however, discriminatory behavior still occurs. Caza, et al. (2004) state that preventing bad behavior does not necessarily generate good behavior. Hence, they propose the use of virtuousness as a guide for action. They define virtuousness as what “individuals aspire to be when they are at their very best (p. 173).” In addition, they posit that virtuousness can both amplify positive performance effects and buffer possible negative outcomes. That is, the authors state that when people see others acting virtuously, they will be inspired to reproduce such acts (amplification), thus creating a virtuous environment. And, importantly for our framework, Caza et al., (2004) suggest that behaving virtuously leads to feelings of affiliation and meaningfulness. Lastly, the authors suggest that virtuousness protects (buffers against) psychological distress and dysfunctional behavior.

Cameron, et al. (2004) expand on the idea of amplification and buffering. They indicate that, “when organizational members observe compassion, experience gratitude...a mutually reinforcing cycle begins” (771). They also suggest that these amplifying effects result in social capital. This in turn enhances commitment, involvement and performance. Lastly, such activities result in prosocial behavior or behavior that benefits other people. One of the problems established with the integration of PWD into the workplace is that employment dynamics sometimes work against such prosocial activities. With regard to the buffering effect of virtuousness, Cameron, et al. (2004) suggest that it helps organizations adapt to unanticipated

situations. In our examples, we will show how this is relevant to the concept of the accommodation of PWD.

Lastly, Chun (2005) suggests that organizations use virtue ethics to determine “what kind of organization should we be?” (p. 269). This approach is multidimensional and includes consideration of the values of integrity, empathy, courage, conscientiousness, and zeal. Chun (2005) states that an organization can have distinctiveness in virtue that can be related to strategic positioning. Some organizations that have been proactive in their integration of PWD have found that these decisions help with overall business strategy. Markel and Barclay (2009) provide examples of organizations that have realized a competitive advantage in their business environment by being proactive in the recruitment of PWD.

Meaningfulness at Work. Virtue is suggested as a framework where members of an organization can thrive or flourish. Some PWD may suffer from access discrimination and be unable to secure a job (Perry, Hendricks & Broadbent, 2000). In addition, if a PWD is hired, they may be isolated or marginalized at work (Barclay, 1982). Organizations may provide less enriching work experiences for PWD, resulting in less meaningful work. Before we can construct our framework, it is necessary to consider the literature of work meaningfulness, and explore the outcomes of meaningfulness in the workplace.

Research on meaning in the work context exists in two areas: the meaning of work (e.g., Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and meaningfulness at work (e.g., Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Research is needed to address the sense of purpose derived from work and work tasks that are perceived as meaningful. The meaning of work encompasses the overarching goals or purpose for working. This can involve working to serve a greater purpose (i.e., making a prosocial difference), or to achieve success and status may provide meaningful experiences (Grant, 2007;

Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Both the meaning of work and meaningfulness at work have demonstrated the significant impact of meaningfulness on job satisfaction, job engagement and employee well-being (Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin & Schwartz, 1997; Wrzesniewski, Dutton & Debebe, 2003).

Job characteristics theory proposes one framework for understanding the effects of meaningfulness on work attitudes and behavior (Hackman & Lawler, 1971; Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976). This theory suggests that the psychological state of perceived meaningfulness partially mediates the relationship between task characteristics and critical outcomes such as motivation and satisfaction. Five core task characteristics include skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. In addition to perceived meaningfulness, these characteristics also contribute to two other psychological states: experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work, and knowledge of the actual results of the work. Skill variety, task identity, and task significance are particularly important in creating a meaningful work experience.

Experienced meaningfulness in turn contributes to critical outcomes of job performance, motivation and satisfaction and employee motivation (Champoux, 1991; Hackman & Oldham, 1976); and has been found to be the most predictive of the three psychological states (Spector, 1997). Meaning creation may not only be a function of the work environment. Further work on meaningfulness at work suggests that individual differences such as personality, intelligence and vocational interests may interact with job characteristics to determine the meaningfulness experienced and meaning of work (Brief & Nord, 1990; Wrzesniewski, et al., 2003). For example, research on job characteristics theory has found that the relationship between task characteristics, meaningfulness and outcomes is stronger for people with a greater need for

growth (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Indeed, we know that people across jobs, industries, and eras have expressed different conceptualizations of paid employment (Ciulla, 2000), and also find meaning in different aspects of working (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler & Tipton, 1985; Brief & Nord, 1990; MOW International Research Team, 1987; Wrzesniewski, et al., 1997). Understanding the characteristics that create meaningfulness and allows PWD to create meaning from work is a critical step in understanding how PWD can thrive in organizations. This meaningfulness and meaning from work may also serve to minimize the challenges PWD may face in employment.

Persons with Disabilities. The employment gap between people with and without disabilities is a major focus of government programming and advocacy efforts. However, there is a lack of understanding as to why individuals with disabilities are still at a disadvantage in the employment arena. According to the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics, in 2005, the gap between the employment rates of working-age people with and without disabilities was 40.3 percentage points in the United States. In that same year, the difference in median labor earning between working age people with and without disabilities who worked full-time during a full year was \$6,000 in the United States (Markel & Barclay, 2007). This paper will use the American's with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) to provide a legal context for our discussion. Most other developed countries have similar human rights legislation. Our intent is not to review all such laws, but to provide a starting point for the development of a framework that considers the practice of virtue in organizations with regard to PWD.

In the United States, the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) was passed to protect individuals with a disability from discrimination. However, despite its passage, PWD

continue to experience problems in gaining equal access to employment opportunities as well as reasonable treatment (or accommodation) once they are gainfully employed. Unlike other equal employment opportunity legislation in the United States (e.g. Equal Pay Act of 1963, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967), the ADA is unique in that it directs employers to alter workplace conditions to enable PWD to participate on an equal basis as non-disabled individuals performing the job (i.e. reasonable accommodation). Other protected classes of employees (e.g. race, gender, age) do not have personal characteristics that may change their ability or method to perform a job. The ADA doesn't mandate the same treatment for people with disabilities. That is, two people with the same type of physical disability might require different types of accommodation based on the physical layout of the organization, the degree to which they have symptoms, etc. The law acknowledges that work environments are the result of choices about how work is accomplished and that employers can make different choices about how work is accomplished, the degree of flexibility in the work environment and even tolerance in the workplace (Harlan and Robert, 1998).

Many factors contribute to the relatively low levels of employment and earning of individuals with disabilities. Stone and Colella (1996) identified three major factors that affect the treatment of disabled individuals in organizations: person characteristics (e.g. individual attributes), environmental factors (i.e. legislation) and organizational characteristics (e.g. norms, values, policies) (Stone and Colella, 1996, p. 1). That is, the type of disability (attribute) exhibited by an individual may influence how they are viewed by an employer or co-worker. For example, employers have been found to hold more positive workplace attitudes toward workers with physical or sensory disabilities than those with intellectual or psychiatric disabilities (Greenwood and Johnson, 1987; Johnson, Greenwood and Schriener, 1988). The laws

(environment) that apply to the employment situation are relevant as there are differences in court interpretation of the ADA (Markel and Barclay, 2009). Lastly, the values (characteristics) held by the organization can facilitate or hinder the experience for the PWD. Robitaille (2008) reports that some organizations actively recruit PWDs, while Braun (2009) reports that individuals with disabilities are still finding it difficult to secure employment.

Crampton and Hodges' (2003) report that disability discrimination claims occur not at the point-of-hire, but after a hiring decision has been made. During the employment relationship, employer behaviors or actions, whether exhibited by the organizational leaders or other organizational members, can precipitate feelings of exclusion or perceived hostile treatment in PWD. Crampton and Hodges (2003) report that twenty-three percent of the employment problems faced by disabled workers are related to reasonable accommodation (i.e., work adjustment to assist employee with disability in performing their core job responsibilities) and 50% are related to discharge. This suggests that while employers are making good faith efforts by hiring persons with disabilities, they may not be monitoring organizational, supervisory support or interpersonal interactions with those employees once the relationship starts. As mentioned earlier, Caza, et al. (2004) state that virtuous behavior has an amplifying effect. Employees seeing others behave virtuously towards PWD can lead to these employees engaging in additional behaviors of inclusion. Additionally, the authors suggest that virtuousness serves as a buffer against dysfunctional behavior. Therefore, a virtuous culture could result in the PWD being better able to put inappropriate behavior in context as well as motivating other employees to impose sanctions for dysfunctional behavior.

Some research on perceived employment discrimination has focused on the area of help seeking (Tessler & Schwartz, 1972; Williams & Williams, 1983). This work suggests that

individuals who need help might not ask for it. Therefore, extending this finding to employees with disabilities, it may be that such individuals are hesitant to ask for accommodation for fear of negative perceptions relating to their work behavior or performance. If an employer does not know that an individual has a disability, there could be negative attributions (i.e., the person is perceived as incompetent rather than a person who needs an assistive accommodation) about poor performance that could lead to termination (Sheffield, 2005).

A new, but related stream of research, examines the social consequences of repeatedly asking for accommodation. Baldrige and Veiga (2006) examine this help seeking behavior and their research indicates that by repeatedly asking for accommodation, the employee may be viewed as imposing on the organization. This could be evidenced in both co-workers exerting pressures to stop accommodation requests, and supervisors holding negative opinions because of perceived repeated monetary costs. This dynamic suggests that an organizational culture can develop that leads to an unsupportive environment. Therefore, organizations where a PWD feels uncomfortable asking for an accommodation as well as organizations where accommodation requests are viewed negatively could benefit from adopting virtuousness as a guide for action (Caza et al., 2004).

Braun (2009) suggests that employers have fears about the costs of accommodation, sick leave use and workers' compensation. If an organization holds stereotypic beliefs about PWD, and believes that the employment of PWD will lead to additional costs, it is unlikely that that organization would have a culture of virtue. That is, the process of stigmatization of PWD may generate ethical disengagement (Barclay & Markel, 2009). We suggest that an organization that promotes and practices the use of virtue will have moved beyond such fears and have developed a culture of thriving and inclusion for all employees including PWD.

THE FRAMEWORK

Extant work on positive organizational scholarship, positive organizational behavior, meaningfulness and work, and virtue in organization does not address the integration of persons with disabilities into the workplace. By practicing virtue, organizations might increase the support for both employment opportunities and reasonable accommodation in order for PWDs to thrive and find meaningfulness at work. Within this framework, we suggest that not only could PWD gain confidence, but also organizational outcomes such as productivity and process could be improved. Figure 1 outlines the framework we will address in this section of the paper.

Insert Figure 1 About Here

As mentioned earlier, Positive Organizational Behavior is a stream of research that is complementary to POS. Positive Organizational Behavior (POB) developed from the seminal work in positive psychology (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Luthans (2002a) defines POB as “the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities...” (p. 59). A POB approach to the integration of PWD into the workplace would focus on finding ways to help people prosper in their work environment. This is counter to traditional approaches in the disability literature that focus on the costs of accommodation, social isolation of the individual with a disability or disparate treatment.

With regard to POS, if an organization is grounded in virtue, ethics, values, principles, and integrity, organizationally acceptable behavior will be based on these core tenants (Cameron, 2003a). While these values may help an organization to be more successful overall, one of the most important impacts of this framework is that they allow people to trust, and to make sense of situations (Cameron, 2003a). If an individual has more faith in the organization because of these

core beliefs, we propose that they will be more likely to accept the employment of a disabled individual (regardless of type of disability) as well as that individual's competence.

In order to understand how the proposed framework links organizational virtue and meaningful work to the experience of PWD, this article will provide an illustration. In this illustration, we consider a PWD who is a woman with a disability that is not visible and is mitigated by medication. She has limited work experience; however, she has attended college and completed an undergraduate bachelor's degree in general studies. She is considering applying for a job at a large retail organization. The organization is currently recruiting part-time retail clerks. The organization does have a history of trying to promote from within. At each step, a decision is made by the PWD or by a member of the organization. These decisions are grounded not only in the culture of the organization, but also in the PWD's psychological capacities.

Applying for the Job. The PWD must make a decision whether to apply for this job or not. There are a variety of disincentives that could affect the decision. First, the PWD could be receiving government-sponsored disability payments that could be reduced if she secured employment. This could provide a disincentive to seek employment if the cost of employment results in reduced income levels. Second, the fact that this is a part-time retail job may not be viewed as meaningful work by the PWD. She has a college degree and may consider this type of job to be one that does not provide enough growth opportunities or help her to own identity within society. In addition, the applicant may consider how the organization is viewed by the environment. The organization may not be viewed as supporting diversity. The individual may not wish to enter this type of culture. There are however, organizations that have good

reputations for hiring PWD (Krepcio & Cooper, 2008). If the person does in fact apply for the job, then a new set of decision points arises.

Screening. Once the PWD applies for the job, the organization makes the decision to hire or not hire her. While this individual has a hidden disability, there are cases where individuals with visible disabilities are not hired often because of access discrimination and discussed earlier by Braun (2009). In addition, the organization could decide not to hire her for a reason unrelated to her disability. For example, she has limited work experience. In a virtuous organization, we propose that not only are the values of the organization made clear as part of recruitment, but an assessment of the relative meaningfulness of the job for the applicant may even be a part of the screening process. If the organization hires the individual for the position, additional aspects of the organization's culture of the organization can come into play.

To Ask or Not Ask for Accommodation. If the individual is hired by the organization, she may ask for accommodation. Regardless of a request for accommodation, she will either meet or not meet performance goals. If performance goals are met and there is no accommodation requested, the organization would continue to function without knowledge of her disability status. From the PWD's view, there may have been past experiences where sharing her disability status led to stigmatization or she may not need any accommodation either due to the type of disability or its mitigation (e.g., through medication). For example, Laden and Schwartz (2000) report on a case of a nurse who had a psychiatric illness. When her co-workers learned of this disability, they stigmatized her as a threat. Such a person may not ask for accommodation. If their performance goals are not met, several scenarios are possible. First, the person may not have been successful because they really needed accommodation and did not ask for it. Second, the person did not need accommodation, but the job is a bad fit with her interests

or abilities. (lack of person-job fit). In either case, the organization would then have to decide whether to engage in remedial training or to terminate the individual. In a virtuous organization regardless of employee disability or accommodation request, the organization's culture would encourage employee thriving and be pro-active in trying to develop the individual as a first step. In a non-virtuous organization, the person could be terminated without investigating the reasons for bad performance. Warnings could be issued and termination threatened or implemented.

If the newly hired individual asks for accommodation, we suggest that two other scenarios are possible dependent on whether the organization has a culture of virtuousness. In the virtuous organization, the culture is one of empathy. Accommodation would not be seen as a cost, but rather as a way to build meaningfulness into work for the PWD. However, if the organization does not have a virtuous culture, the PWD could be viewed as an annoyance (causing more work for others). Continued requests may be resented by supervisors or coworkers who feel the PWD is noticeably slowing the pace of work or asking for special considerations. This tension negatively affects the organization. Accommodations that are provided under this scenario could lead to isolation for the person and less meaningful work. In our example, the PWD does not have a visible disability. Employees and supervisors may make attributions concerning their performance if an accommodation is necessary. An accommodation by definition is an adjustment to the work context (e.g. wheelchair accessibility, screen magnification) to support the employment of a PWD who can otherwise perform the major duties of the job. Often, others may initially perceive any accommodation is an inability to perform the job, regardless of actual productivity. Peers may spend less time with them and the person would not be fully integrated into the organization. This person would then be experiencing treatment discrimination as suggested by Crampton and Hodges (2003). It has been

observed that a virtuous organization can buffer stressors in the workplace, causing less resentment amongst individuals in stressful situations, including those as drastic as downsizing (Cameron, 2003b). Therefore, asking for accommodation in this type of organization allows for empathy and a buffer from co-worker resentment. Additionally, Foster and Lloyd's (2007) work argues that a more positive environment causes employees to be more generative, creative, tolerant, and receptive.

Another specific way to gauge inclusion and success of organization members is the concept of thriving. Rather than being a general positive feeling, such as virtuousness, thriving has a much more specific implication that an individual feels that they are learning at work, and feels as though they have the momentum to continue doing what they are doing (Spreitzer, et al, 2005). This has much more to do with actual work and knowledge, and much less to do with the emotions associated with positivity. Thriving is viewed as having a heavy emphasis on "self adaptation" and setting ones' own goals within the workplace. Accommodation could be viewed as a means to thrive at work. For disabled employees in particular this may be a double-edged sword. There needs to be enough structure so that the employee does not feel adrift or out of the touch with the company through the accommodation, but also enough freedom to allow the employee to feel as though they are adding substantive value. Thriving is based around the concept of eudaimonic satisfaction, in which a worker may choose to seek high potential work and focus on self improvement (Spreitzer, et al, 2005).

Once thriving is achieved within the organization by entering a specific mental state, this may also create a positive impact on an individual's personal life. How work contexts influence individuals' mental states has not yet been well studied (Spreitzer et al, 2005), but a disabled individual may actually experience help with their condition from a productive work

environment. When individuals feel a sense of vitality at work, they may be less likely to be anxious or depressed; possible symptoms of psychiatric disabilities (Spreitzer et al, 2005). Though this health benefit may help the organization due to less absenteeism or fewer health care costs, this may also benefit the employee, creating a positive organizational construct that is mutually beneficial.

Feedback loop. Depending on the path taken within the proposed framework, several feedback loops could occur to continue the cycle. First, if the individual is terminated because she did not meet goals after asking for accommodation, the organization can use this behavior to support their beliefs that hiring PWD is an unnecessary cost. As the culture lacks empathy, it is unlikely that they will make a decision to actively recruit PWD. The PWD may also determine that employment is not worth pursuing, especially if the financial disincentive is present.

If the organization exhibits a virtuous culture this could result in positive experiences for both the PWD and the organization. The PWD will experience meaningfulness at work and the organization can strategically gain (Markel& Barclay, 2009) If an individual has more faith in the organization because of core beliefs centered on virtue, he/she may be more likely to trust the employment of a disabled individual and that individual's competence. Investigations have been done into the role of positive or negative affect within an organization (Kaplan et al, 2009). Positive affect has been shown to improve an individual's task performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and eliminate counterproductive work behaviors (Kaplan et al, 2009). These positive experiences for both the organization and PWD may create a new belief and support for employing additional PWD; an additional benefit to society.

DISCUSSION

The framework illustrated using the above example demonstrated how a virtuous organization may provide both the necessary support and reduced discrimination of PWD in employment. Legislation alone cannot eliminate the real discriminatory behavior that often arises in these employment situations. Future research must center on the roles of organizational virtuousness as well as the relative meaningfulness of work in creating an environment where PWD can be a part of a thriving environment. These environments may have lower levels of prejudice and stereotyping of PWD and therefore may provide more opportunities in the selection process. For example, future research could examine whether the level of perceived meaningfulness of the job outweighs disincentives for securing employment on the part of PWD. In addition, research that centers on how requests for accommodation are perceived in organizations with varying levels of virtue could support the growing literature on the relationship of virtue and improved organizational performance. Lastly, research could also examine whether higher levels of displayed empathy towards PWD relate to PWD's feelings of meaningfulness and affiliation.

CONCLUSION

Cameron et al. (2004) reported that virtuous organizations rate higher on objective measures such as innovation, customer retention, turnover, quality, and profitability. Part of this higher performance could be due to better integration of all types of individuals into the organization. That is, we suggest that virtuous organizations perform better because they are better at including all talents into the organization in a supportive environment. Virtue is perceived as optimism, trust, forgiveness, compassion and integrity in an organization (Cameron, et al., 2004). If an individual is optimistic, trusting, and forgiving they will be much more apt to welcome a

disabled individual in the workplace and maintain a sense of positivity that the PWD will effectively contribute to organizational goals.

Overall, there are several key aspects from the field of positive organizational behavior that may impact the effectiveness of an organization at supporting disabled individuals. First, the emphasis of individual positive outlook that exists in positive organizational behavior may on its own help to supplement the persistence of a disabled individual in staying with an organization. Furthermore, an emphasis on virtue at the organization level may better equip individuals to deal with the accommodations that need to be made for disabled individuals. If the organization can better support supervisors and other members of the organization, they will in turn exhibit citizenship behaviors through empathy, courage and conscientiousness that will aid the other members of the organization.

A positive outlook at the individual level may improve both personal and work life, as positive experiences build upon themselves. Making sure that perceived organizational support is high for a PWD may influence the employee's immediate supervisor. According to Porras and Berg (1978), awareness of each role within the company through planned interventions can also create a more developed organization through groups that are more aware of their interconnections. Appreciation of individuals can also be shown in other ways. For instance, in *Wired to Care*, Patnaik (2009) relates the example of the housekeeping staff in the Joie de Vivre hotels. By having housekeepers stop giving extra-special touches, Joie de Vivre found how much customers changed their behavior based on the housekeepers' less caring behavior. Through this experiment, housekeepers learned the importance of their work. This example, while not directly related to PWD, shows the impact of meaningfulness at work. Overall,

making sure each individual is supported and aware of their relations to other individuals can contribute to the overall level of positivity within the environment.

Ideas centering on positive organizational behavior and virtue can be studied for specific applications for disabled individuals. It is our position that the development of a framework based on virtue will provide more meaningful work for PWD and help to address the problem of the continued underemployment of PWD.

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