**Coaches' Experiences of Job Crafting Through Organizational Change in High-Performance Sport**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore coaches' experiences of job crafting through a climate of organizational change in high-performance sport environments. Semi-structured interviews ($M$duration $= 83.86$ minutes, $SD = 26.28$ minutes) were conducted with seven coaches ($M$Experience $= 22$ years, $SD = 7.55$) who had experience of coaching sport performers at international, Olympic and professional level. Guided by Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the findings revealed that "the climate of organizational change" for these coaches encapsulated 'job turnover' at various stages of organizational change and 'working in a vacuum and losing sight of the process'. Four subordinate themes were generated to highlight coaches' experience of "crafting the job in a climate of change". These themes included 'motives for job crafting'; 'appraising and re-appraising aspects of the job'; 'mobilizing social and structural resources'; and 'withdrawal from aspects of the job'. The findings advance job crafting theory by demonstrating how organizational change can both constrain *and* stimulate coaches' job crafting efforts in particular ways. Identifying opportunities for autonomy and support resources to craft their jobs helped coaches to maintain enthusiasm, job satisfaction and continue in one's job. To our knowledge, this is the first study in sport psychology literature to explore coaches' experiences of job crafting within a climate of organizational change in sport. We conclude by outlining some recommendations on how job crafting may be optimized to improve well-being and performance in the elite sport working context.

*Keywords*: Coaching, coping, IPA, job demands, job resources, occupational stress

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46                                    **Performance Sport**

47          In the last decade, elite and professional sport organizations in the United Kingdom

48    have observed a host of unforeseen, rapid and continuous changes in the way that these

49    organizations and their personnel function (Wagstaff et al., 2015; 2016). In this way,

50    organizational change can be considered from an emergent approach (Weiss, 2009), in which

51    change is viewed as a dynamic, turbulent and contested process that emerges in an

52    unpredictable and unplanned fashion. At the same time, organizational change in high-

53    performance sport has been orchestrated by leadership and management teams (Gibson &

54    Groom, 2018), in the belief that changes will result in improved organizational effectiveness.

55    Organizational effectiveness for elite and professional sport organizations may include

56    improving athletic performance, successful delivery of core services to its members and

57    achievement of key organizational performance indicators (Thompson & Parent, 2021). In

58    this high-performance sport context, coaches are important stakeholders whose well-being,

59    career development needs and retention are critical for facilitating organizational

60    effectiveness. Insofar that coaches are often tasked with leading, managing and supporting

61    organizational change initiates (Gibson & Groom, 2018), they are also expected to adjust

62    their job roles and service delivery to support the achievement of organizational goals

63    (Wagstaff et al., 2016). In the knowledge that high-performance coaches typically experience

64    high workloads (e.g., Norris et al., 2017), job insecurity (e.g., Bentzen, Kenttä, Richter et al.,

65    2020), limited organizational support (e.g., Kilo & Hassmén, 2016), and a poor work-life

66    interface (e.g., Knights & Ruddock-Hudson, 2016), working within a climate of

67    organizational change has the potential to place further demands on coaches' capacity to

68    adapt effectively. A sustained inability to adapt proactively to organizational change may

69    influence experiences of burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001), a lack of satisfaction in one's role

70    (Petrou et al., 2018), turnover intentions (Cunningham, 2006), and in turn influence

71    organizational survival (Russell & McGinnity, 2014).

72        One way in which coaches may proactively adapt their role when experiencing

73    organizational change is to craft their job in line with their personal needs and resources as a

74    way to experience greater purpose, motivation and satisfaction in their work. Job crafting is

75    broadly defined as the physical and mental changes that individuals make in their job roles to

76    achieve greater personal meaning and satisfaction (Demerouti, 2014). Job crafting is

77    considered a bottom-up job redesign approach which describes how individuals change the

78    type and number of tasks they do, the way they interact with others, and how they cognitively

79    frame the significance of their work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), with the aim of

80    improving person-job fit (Tims & Bakker, 2010). While crafting one's job role(s) in high

81    performance sport has the potential to simultaneously improve stakeholders' work

82    engagement and organizational effectiveness, to date there is a scarcity of research that has

83    explored the phenomena of job crafting in sport stakeholder (e.g., coaching) contexts.

84    **Job Crafting**

85        Job crafting involves making physical and mental changes to one's job task demands

86    and the resources available to them to support their individual needs in undertaking their job

87    role (Demerouti, 2014). Workplaces that support employees' ability to modify how and when

88    work is achieved do so in the knowledge that this increases workers' engagement, job

89    satisfaction and productivity. Job crafting research in the organizational and occupational

90    psychology literature is dominated by two theoretical perspectives. The first is Wrzesniewski

91    and Dutton's (2001) theory of job crafting which refers to the process by which individuals

92    shape their jobs to find greater personal meaning at work. This theory distinguishes between

93    three forms of crafting: task, relational and cognitive crafting. Task crafting includes

94    modifying the task boundaries of one's job role, such as making changes to the type, content,

95   or number of job tasks that an individual is involved in at work. Relational crafting refers to

96   changing who one interacts with and in what fashion whilst completing their job tasks.

97   Cognitive crafting refers to changes workers make in how they view and appraise various

98   aspects of their job. In crafting some or all these aspects of one's work, workers are re-

99   designing their job and work environment (Demerouti, 2014) to better fit their personal needs

100  and capabilities without changing the core of their work (Tims & Parker, 2020).

101          The second theoretical perspective of job crafting builds on the Job Demands-

102  Resources (JD-R) model of burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001). The JD-R suggests that

103  employees experience strain, burnout and poor performance when limited job and personal

104  resources are available to manage the job demands that are encountered. Within work

105  environments where individual control and support are high, it is argued that employees have

106  the greatest potential for job crafting. In line with the JD-R model, job crafting has been

107  conceptualized as reducing hindering job demands and increasing challenging job demands

108  and job resources (Tims & Bakker, 2010). In summarizing the occupational psychology

109  literature on job crafting across a variety of non-sport occupations (e.g., surgeons, nurses,

110  police officers, teachers, construction managers, accountants, civil engineers), research

111  suggests that seeking job resources (e.g., feedback, advice from colleagues) is linked to

112  achieving goals, greater engagement in one's work, improved well-being and performance

113  (Gordon et al., 2018). In addition, seeking challenges (e.g., seeking new challenging tasks in

114  one's role, asking for more responsibility) has been related to improved motivation at work

115  and an increased sense of personal accomplishment (Petrou et al., 2012). In comparison, job

116  crafting by way of reducing hindering job demands (e.g., disengaging from cognitively,

117  emotionally or physically taxing tasks, procrastination) has been linked to a greater

118  perception of work overload, and burnout (Lazazzara et al., 2020).

119          Although these theoretical perspectives highlight distinct ways in which job crafting

120     may be linked to well-being and performance outcomes, the strategies individuals employ to

121     job craft depend on the working context (Lazazzara et al., 2020), and context (e.g.,

122     organizational change experiences) influences hermeneutics of phenomena (Smith et al.,

123     2009). Furthermore, the meaning individuals attach to job crafting may depend on how one's

124     work context (e.g., organizational change) and job role provide constraints or autonomy in

125     how they can behave and function in their work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Therefore,

126     it has been recommended that future research should continue to redefine and update the key

127     characteristics of job crafting in diverse working contexts (Demerouti, 2014). Coaching in

128     high-performance sport environments represents a complex and unique working context in

129     which the phenomena of job crafting may be interpreted differently for optimizing coaches'

130     well-being and reducing turnover intentions in the future.

### Placing Job Crafting in the Work Context of High-Performance Coaching

131

132           Sport coaches who work in elite and professional sport organizations require the skills

133     to adapt to a multitude of job demands. These demands include managing performance

134     scrutiny from a range of internal and external stakeholders, erratic working patterns, high

135     workloads and regular organizational change (for a review, see Norris et al., 2017). In recent

136     times, there has been an exponential growth in research literature highlighting that coaches

137     are not coping well with the ongoing demands that they encounter and require support

138     resources to better manage their job roles for optimized motivation, well-being, and

139     performance (Chroni et al., 2019; Didymus et al., 2019). Moreover, coaches operating in elite

140     and professional sport occupations have been found to suffer from burnout and as a result

141     often resign prematurely from their coaching roles (Galdino et al., 2022; Kilo & Hassmén,

142     2016). This is problematic since their ill-being and burnout could have deleterious

143     consequences for the health and performance development of those who coaches support

144     (e.g., athletes, sport personnel). By optimizing job crafting within coaches' working contexts,

145    there is the potential to enhance their well-being and productivity, and in turn, achieve greater

146    organizational effectiveness. Despite this, currently we know little about coaches' experience

147    of job crafting in sport working contexts and the extent to which experience of specific

148    contexts in high-performance sport (i.e., organizational change) may constrain or facilitate

149    the ability for coaches to job craft in distinct ways. The phenomenological, hermeneutical and

150    idiographic foundations of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) are suitable to

151    explore and interpret coaches' lived experience of job crafting. In line with theoretical

152    perspectives on job crafting (Demerouti et al., 2001; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), IPA

153    maintains a commitment to the individual, which promotes the illumination of personal

154    meaning and experiential accounts from a contextualist (e.g., organizational change

155    experiences) position (Smith et al., 2009). Moreover, given the breadth of recurring,

156    interrelating and often unpredictable changes that coaches experience, IPA suits an

157    idiographic exploration of how coaches' holistic experience of organizational change may

158    influence how they make sense of job crafting in this working context. Specifically, IPA

159    provided a detailed, nuanced analysis (Smith et al., 2017) to address the study's purpose of

160    exploring coaches' experiences of job crafting through a climate of organisational change in

161    high-performance sport.

**Method**

**Research Design and Philosophical Underpinning**

164        The present study adopted a semi-structured interview approach that was guided by

165    the principles of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA, Dwyer et al., 2019). The

166    use of IPA was consistent with the study's aim of exploring coaches' experiences of job

167    crafting (Larkin et al., 2011) within a climate of organizational change. In addition, the

168    idiographic and phenomenological nature of IPA allowed the present study to explore the

169    individual lived experiences of the coaches within their jobs and working context (Newman

170    et al., 2021). To maintain idiographic commitment of IPA, convergences and divergences

171    were explored both within and across the participants' accounts (Smith et al., 2021). As part

172    of this process, the researcher and participant also engaged in a "double hermeneutic" which

173    allowed the participant to make sense of their experiences (Dwyer et al., 2019). By adopting

174    these approaches the study was consistent with recommendations that IPA research remains

175    grounded in an interpretivist paradigm (Quilico et al., 2021). This was exemplified by the

176    interest shown in the meanings the coaches created and credited to their experience of job

177    crafting within the context of organizational change. In doing so, the present study

178    maintained a contextualized position of IPA (Larkin et al., 2011) whilst adopting a social

179    constructionist stance (Shinebourne, 2011).

180    **Participants and Procedure**

181         Purposive sampling was used to recruit national head coaches who had experienced

182    organizational change in sport. In addition, to protect the anonymities of coaches and their

183    respective sport organizations, we used maximum variation to recruit national head coaches

184    from different sport organizations (e.g., acrobatic, water, multi-discipline, team invasion).

185    This served the purpose of exploring common and unique experiences of job crafting during

186    organizational change (Langdridge, 2007). The participants were seven coaches (Five male,

187    two female; $M_{age}$ = 49.14 years, $SD$ = 6.74) who had worked for UK sport national

188    governing body (NGB) organizations. The coaches were of English ($n$ = 6) and Swedish ($n$ =

189    1) nationalities. These coaches were currently coaching sport performers at international,

190    Olympic and / or professional level. Coaches had between 14- and 35-years' experience of

191    coaching ($M$ = 22 years, $SD$ = 7.55), and had been undertaking a lead coaching job for their

192    sport organization for at least 2 years. Whilst their main job role was to coach sport

193    performers, all coaches previously held a range of leadership and coaching roles in UK and

194    international sport organizations. Table 1 provides an overview of the coaches' demographic

characteristics and organizational change events encountered. Following institutional ethical

approval [blinded for review], head coaches and the sport organizations in which they were

employed were contacted by email and social media (e.g., LinkedIn) and informed of the

purpose of the study. Coaches were then recruited for the research if they believed that they

had current or prior experience of organizational change in sport. Prior to each interview,

participants were contacted by telephone to discuss the study purpose in more detail and to

confirm that each participant had experienced organizational change in sport.[1] Before each

interview, participants were given written and verbal information as to the purpose of the

study. Once coaches had been assured of voluntary participation, anonymity, and the freedom

to withdraw at any time, coaches had the opportunity to ask questions before completing a

consent form.

### *Interview Guide*

A semi-structured interview guide was used to facilitate each discussion. The

interview guide was generated from a range of sources. Firstly, background questions were

developed to stimulate discussion with the coaches about their job role and organizational

change experiences (e.g., "can you tell me about any experiences that you have had of

changes that have occurred in your sport organization?"). Secondly, in line with previous

research that has explored the nature of organizational change in sport (e.g., Gibson &

Groom, 2018) and other workplace settings (e.g., Cunningham, 2006), we probed coaches on

their lived experience of the organizational changes that were discussed (e.g., "Who do you

think was involved in communicating and implementing the change?").

Thirdly, we drew on broader conceptualizations of job crafting from the work

psychology literature (Tims & Bakker, 2010; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) to explore how

coaches had attempted to craft their job roles during organizational change (e.g., "In your

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[1] Organizational change was outlined to represent any positive or negative changes that have occurred within the sport organization that coaches have worked, and have had an impact on coaches' role.

219 opinion, what do you think is the best way to manage organizational change?"; "Were there

220 any times when you put plans in place to manage the change better?"; How important is it to

221 have support resources when going through this change?"). Finally, coaches were encouraged

222 to summarize their views and elaborate on any issues relevant to organizational change and

223 ways in which sport organization stakeholders can job craft effectively. It should be noted

224 that to best "get at" the participants' experiences this semi-structured interview guide was

225 intended merely as a stimulus and was only used flexibly (Smith, 2019). This afforded the

226 participants freedom to explore relevant parts of their experiences as they saw them. Piloting

227 of the interview guide with different coaches ($n = 2$) to the current sample revealed that the

228 interview questions were well-understood and generated appropriate data. To provide the

229 participants with some comfort and security from discussing organizational change at their

230 workplace, the first author conducted five interviews by telephone and two interviews were

231 conducted in a private meeting room at a university.[2] The interviews ranged from 59 to 133

232 minutes (*Mduration* = 83.86 minutes, *SD* = 26.28) and were transcribed verbatim, with

233 participants' names being replaced with pseudonyms.

234 **Data Analysis**

235 Interviews were analyzed by the second author in accordance with Smith et al.'s

236 (2021) guidelines for IPA. This aligned with a bracketing approach in so far that the second

237 author was not familiar with the research literature on organizational change or job crafting.

238 Nonetheless the second author was a sport psychologist who is experienced in IPA. After the

239 audio files were transcribed, each interview was analyzed separately to maintain the

240 idiographic commitment of IPA (Newman et al., 2021). The transcripts were read and re-read

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[2] All interviews were conducted in 2017. At the time of conducting the interviews, all participants were cognizant that UK Sport had recently faced significant scrutiny from the British media based on unanticipated funding cuts to some 'high profile' elite sport national governing bodies (BBC, 2017a), in addition to scrutiny surrounding claims of bullying in UK elite sport organizations (BBC, 2017b). On this basis, prior to being interviewed every coach was reassured that their data would be kept confidential and anonymous, and that the research study was not part of a UK sport-commissioned investigation.

241    so that the second author could immerse themselves in the lifeworld of the participant (Dwyer

242    et al., 2019). After this, exploratory comments were made in the right margin of the transcript

243    to facilitate a close analysis of the text. These notes highlighted the linguistic (e.g., "it's the

244    way it is" encapsulated Ted's acceptance of limited support to develop other people,

245    including himself) and experiential (e.g., "I've either dodged bullets or maneuvered") nature

246    of the participants' accounts. Then the left margin of the text was used to document emerging

247    theme titles which took the initial notes to a higher level of abstraction. This process drew on

248    psychological concepts where relevant to capture the essential meaning in the account (Smith

249    & Osborn, 2006). Through the processes of abstraction and subsumption, the emergent

250    themes were clustered into subordinate themes to illustrate participants' accounts (Newman

251    et al., 2021). At this stage, the first author reviewed the subordinate themes with the second

252    author and framed them at the superordinate level in line with the extant occupational

253    psychology literature on job crafting. QSR NVIVO was used as a storage for the participants'

254    quotes and emerging themes, and to assist with the process of developing themes with

255    common meanings.

256    **Research Quality**

257           In accordance with the latest guidance for achieving excellence in IPA (Nizza et al.,

258    2021), the present study was guided by four quality indicators of IPA. A "compelling,

259    unfolding narrative was conducted" carefully both within and across themes. Within each

260    theme there was an alternation between carefully selected quotes and analytic interpretation

261    which went beyond the narrative. Consistent with Nizza et al.'s (2021) guidance this was

262    presented at the subtheme level. To achieve coherence each theme contributed to the

263    narrative in an interconnected fashion. Through explicitly engaging with the experiential and

264    existential significance of what the participants were reporting and paying particular attention

265    to their meaning-making a "vigorous experiential account" was developed. For example, the

266    existential significance for coaches trying to take pride and shape their job role within change

267    cultures, which often involved poor leadership and communication, was exemplified through

268    strong data and interpretation. To maintain IPA's commitment to interpretation and

269    idiographic depth a "close analytic reading" of the participants' quotes took place. Quotes

270    were not left to speak for themselves and a full meaning to the data was achieved by focusing

271    on what was going on in the immediate quote as well as the context of the wider transcript.

272    "Attending to convergence and divergence" was demonstrated by the present study

273    illustrating similarities and differences both between and within the participants. Through a

274    balance between commonality and individuality the present study highlighted the coaches'

275    higher order qualities, whilst keeping a focus on their idiosyncratic characteristics (Smith et

276    al., 2021). This can be seen by Matt's account of taking time off during the season.

277    **Transparency and Openness**

278         Audio recorded interviews and transcripts are not publicly available as sharing this

279    information risks breaching participant anonymity and confidentiality. Due to the nature of

280    this research, participants did not agree for their data to be shared publicly. The information

281    presented in this article complies with the APA Style Journal Article Reporting Standards—

282    Qualitative (JARS-Q). The present study was not preregistered. A copy of the interview

283    guide is available as an electronic supplementary material.

284                                              **Results**

285         Consistent with recently highlighted evidence for achieving excellence in IPA studies

286    (Dwyer et al., 2019; Nizza et al., 2021), two themes are presented which firstly outline the

287    experience of organizational change in elite sport and secondly "capture the heart" of the

288    participants' lived experiences of job crafting in this context (see Table 2). A summary of

289    "The climate of organizational change" is provided to foreground detailed coach accounts of

290    "Crafting the job in a climate of change" and its subordinate themes.

**The Climate of Organizational Change**

Within the theme of "The climate of organizational change", the participants

discussed a climate within elite sport which left them feeling lost and to some degree that

they were working in a vacuum. This environment was characterized by what they viewed as

poor leadership, which operated without consultation. As Peter highlighted:

[Changes were] announced with not a lot of notice, and implemented very quickly

without a lot of consultation. It was "this is happening" and "this is the way it is".

They said there was consultation in terms of meeting with the relevant people. But

they met with them to tell them what was happening as opposed to discussing how

they could improve or change. It was the hard line so to speak, "this is the line, this is

what we're doing and don't cross it".

Peter's account depicted the feeling of an authoritarian "hard line" approach to change

which did not engage stakeholders in their organization. This conferred a sense of deflation

within the participants' accounts, and in the meantime led to chaotic circumstances which

Ted articulated, "we've got this worse case of 'you can't do this', [then] 'we're gonna do it',

and then it doesn't get done, and that just leads to frustration." Ted's account evoked not only

an emotional impact in terms of frustration, but it also inferred that this feeling resulted from

the "top-down" nature of how change was thwarted, promised, and then ultimately not

delivered. This conferred an authoritarian, conforming culture where several of the coaches

felt the power was concentrated in too few hands. Tristian's account exemplified this:

They're all yes people…they put in people that they know will tolerate it and do as

they're told, and I don't think that's been good for the sport. [It's] a bit like the (car)

company who centralized their departments which was ok for them because it sparked

creativity. But when they started to separate, one in (country) or wherever it was, they

had the two marketing companies that had two different ideas and when they came

316          together it built a quality car. But when they centralize everything then you just

317          conform to that one thought pattern, and I think that's not a good way to do it.

318          Tristian emphasized a belief that change was delivered in a conforming fashion which

319   displayed a lack of contextual intelligence for the sport. Moreover, by drawing on parallels

320   with other industries he implied that this process may not have been delivered in such a way

321   that encourages creativity, diversity, and ultimately guarantees quality performance. Set

322   against this backdrop of a conforming culture and the deflating feelings around organizational

323   change in high performance sport that appear to result from issues around leadership, the

324   coaches portrayed a challenging, insecure context within which to craft their role.

325          In concluding the superordinate theme of the "The climate of organizational change",

326   coaches often highlighted the fluidity of change, which echoes previous research that has

327   highlighted the repeated non-linear nature of change in high-performance sport (cf. Wagstaff

328   et al., 2016). This fluidity seemingly left many cynical of whether they could legitimize

329   change, which often was poorly delivered and caused a lot of upheaval, as a consequence of

330   poor team and organizational functioning. Linked to this, involuntary (e.g., redundancies) and

331   voluntary job turnover was a common constant spanning several sport cycles which framed

332   how coaches made sense of organizational change. For example, many participants pointed to

333   incidents where coaches had been made redundant, suggesting this was in response to

334   crafting (e.g., resisting or slowing down change, or challenging leadership over top-down

335   decisions). When colleagues voluntarily left their organizations, some coaches appeared to

336   rationalize this as a clash between personal values and the change initiatives being driven by

337   leadership teams. In most of these cases, coaches implied that a 'backs against the wall' or

338   'we are all in this together' mentality amongst athletes and staff was required to protect one

339   another from 'top-down' driven change. Yet, some coach accounts reflected a realization of

340   the potentially destructive effect that this could have on individual, team and organizational

341    functioning.

**Crafting the Job in a Climate of Change**

343         Despite the inherent challenges posed by the coaches within a climate of

344    organizational change, they outlined a variety of approaches to shaping their job role within

345    this context. These included, from a cognitive perspective, appraising and re-appraising the

346    way they viewed aspects of their job. On a social level, they focused on mobilizing structural

347    and social resources to facilitate growth and functioning. Focusing on well-being,

348    withdrawing from negative aspects of the job was also prioritized. At the heart of this,

349    though, was the importance placed on their motives for job crafting.

*Motives for Job Crafting*

351         An essential part of any attempts the coaches made to shape their job role was their

352    motives (i.e., reasons) for doing so. Across their accounts, the participants highlighted their

353    reasons to shape their role, whilst also drawing on some of the potential barriers which might

354    thwart these aspirations. For Tristian the need for control over the job was clear:

355         If you're in control of your environment and you're not having to go cap in hand to a

356         national governing body…if you strive for autonomy, you can control the

357         environment, learn and continue to progress yourself as you would, but if you're in

358         any way cap in hand for some of this stuff then you're always going to be handcuffed

359         to an extent.

360         Tristian's continued reemphasis in this extract around the need to obtain "control" and

361    "strive for autonomy" highlighted the importance of job crafting within high-performance

362    sport for this reason (Buonocore et al., 2018). Moreover, his account alluded to a sense that

363    relying on support from wider sporting institutions and governing bodies to job craft could

364    confer a feeling of having this need for control thwarted. One consistent motive for job

365    crafting according to work psychology literature is to improve one's person-job fit

366    (Demerouti, 2014). However, when person-job fit is regularly compromised, as Peter

367    highlights, there may be little motivation to job craft during change initiatives in the future:

368            I have definitely had to compromise my own values and beliefs, several times … and

369            I have expressed those with people in the organization. But with the same point if

370            you're working for an organization and you're employed or contracted to do work for

371            them, then by signing that contract you're agreeing to their philosophy, ethos, values

372            and beliefs. So, you know, you're almost a shining beacon for that organization, you

373            can't then go against them and apply your own personal values and beliefs.

374            Despite occupying the same type of role and years in the position as Tristian (see

375    Table 1), Peter highlighted less of a sense of latitude to be able to craft his role in line with

376    his values, within the potentially authoritarian context of sport. A perceived inability to "go

377    against" the organization suggested a much less empowered position than Tristian, though

378    both participants echoed a perception that national sport organizations could be problematic

379    to liaise with in the quest for job crafting during a climate of organizational change.

380            Whilst experiencing organizational change, Verity appeared to point to individual and

381    work-related goals as motives for job crafting:

382            For me personally I've never got a lot of financial gain like the head coach they got a

383            lot of money so once the funding was gone they [head coach] were gone but I, I've not

384            ever been in it for the financial side of it. I do it, it is a great honor for me and I

385            appreciate every time, I'm still cutting that rope, so you know for me it was like

386            "right, is there going to be a [national] team?" And that's still a question you know,

387            we can't not have a [national] team, you know an international team and that's the sort

388            of [motivation] … "what can I do to ensure this continues?".

389            In this case, Verity expressed a desire to maintain a positive work identity as one of

390    the national coaches. Verity also highlighted a motive to job craft which centered around

391    accomplishment of personal goals, rather than material items such as money. The honor and

392    appreciation she felt suggested something more self-determined and potentially fueled a

393    sense of competence. It is worth considering compared to the other participants that this may

394    be grounded in her position as an assistant national head coach rather than in a lead role. This

395    raises a question whether the requirements of this position may lead to a slightly different

396    lived experience in elite sport. Nonetheless, the uncertainty with which she spoke about the

397    future of the national team was familiar to the potentially need thwarting nature of the other

398    coaches' organizational change climates and the impact this can have on individual job

399    crafting. This was the case for Verity especially, as within her context the lack of resources

400    available seemingly led to questions around whether the national team, and therefore her role,

401    would cease to exist. Yet, she demonstrated motives to job craft regardless of the lack of

402    resources, in identifying ways to ensure that the national team continues.

403    *Appraising and Re-appraising Aspects of the Job*

404         Throughout the coaches' accounts of organizational change, at some stage all of them

405    appeared to change the way in which they viewed carrying out aspects of their work as a

406    consequence of organizational changes. In turn, this can change how individuals and groups

407    of workers approach their jobs (Petrou et al., 2018). Although the coaches outlined the

408    challenging and somewhat problematic nature of organizational change in elite sport, some

409    such as Adrian cognitively emphasized the positives for improving collaborative working:

410         You know it's starting to be much more cohesive and we have access to the senior

411         program now. The senior coaches are coming to see what we do more frequently to

412         have an understanding and probably a real understanding of what does the

413         environment that we work in look like.

414         From Adrian's perspective change seemed to facilitate a more integrated "cohesive"

415    system which resulted in developing greater shared understanding with other coaching staff

416    about each other's job roles. For others, change provided the ideal springboard for them to

417    shape an organization's philosophy within their personal vision. Matt highlighted how he was

418    "fascinated to see if I can… put my knowledge and what I believe a successful organization

419    [should] look like from not necessarily winning trophies but also the culture and the

420    environment that you create." However, it is important to highlight that Matt's views may be

421    a consequence of him transitioning from a high-profile professional club environment where

422    his personal vision towards ways of working clashed with the organization's, to a new club

423    where he could shape his vision.

424            Interestingly, though Adrian and Matt occupied similar positions in terms of their time

425    in their current roles (see Table 1), they seemed to be supported by more long-lasting coaches

426    (e.g., Verity) in reframing the need for change to benefit everyone's roles. Verity's account

427    below implies that she appraised the positive outcomes and opportunities to improve when

428    the national team she coached received an increased team of support staff:

429            What was really good were the support staff, the S&C guy. He was employed for the

430            full year and normally you're just employed for the time in camp. So, the coach knew

431            these players had to be in the best shape they've ever been in. That just doesn't

432            happen over a six-week camp that has to be over the entire season for two, three years

433            so you know that was a really positive change.

434            On the surface this appeared to positively reflect Verity outlining the need for change,

435    yet later she struck a cautionary note:

436            They [the elite performance director] were wasteful, they were trying too hard

437            sometimes because we needed help and support, you know, we were limited…I think

438            they were trying to look at [one percent gains] all of the time, where instead of really

439            sitting down and trying to work out [appraise] what we could do, they just kept seeing

440            these ideas and bringing them in without a discussion.

441        In contrast to some of the other participants Verity was in a situation where the sport

442  received a sudden injection of funding and described some of the perils of this. By perceiving

443  the change as "wasteful" with limited discussion, her account suggests that an apparent

444  positive stimulus in the change context can be more problematic than first imagined and

445  thwarting in terms of coaches expressing their viewpoints.

446        Within a different sudden organizational change context, Ted appeared to initially

447  construct a lack of fairness (Lazazzara et al., 2020) when finding out third hand that the

448  National Governing Body (NGB) had withdrawn from hosting a home world championship

449  in the lead up to the competition. Through reflecting on his ability to utilize meta-cognition,

450  he forecasted personally meaningful outcomes (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) in learning

451  how to approach his interactions with NGB staff differently in the future:

452        I'm not precious about how I get it [the information], if it had been a text message I

453        wouldn't have really given a toss, but I didn't receive anything [from the NGB]… It's

454        a pretty glaring indication that the governing body don't see fit to engage me in

455        decision making … so understanding those, you know meta-cognitive processes, it's

456        how do we think, how do we interpret the world, how do we make decisions, why do

457        we make the decisions that we do … if you don't reflect you don't learn, you don't

458        develop, you don't grow, you don't change … But it's perhaps making it more action-

459        oriented, it's well, now knowing what I know about myself, how I'm perceived by

460        others, how do I change that? How do I then assess what's working well, what's not

461        working, and putting changes into place.

462        Ted's account offered a key insight into the importance of developing meta-cognition

463  within sporting stakeholders, so that they can approach their job roles differently and

464  positively shape the social environment they work within (Demerouti, 2014).

465  ***Mobilizing Social and Structural Resources***

466         One means by which the participants felt they could effectively shape characteristics

467    of their work during organizational change was by drawing on social resources. This included

468    proactively building and maintaining effective relationships with performers, support staff,

469    coaches and leadership within their organizations. It also represented searching for advice

470    and counsel from other coaches external to their sport organization. At an individual level,

471    mobilizing social resources included tailoring relationships with performers and sport staff to

472    alter the quality of interactions during change. For Arla, this process was described

473    systemically in terms of working with various external partners during an ongoing cultural

474    change in philosophy towards performance development. During this change, sharing

475    knowledge and ideas with external partners about ways of working collaboratively led to a

476    sense that it was possible for all parties to "get a lot of things done" through collective

477    problem solving. Through outcomes such as "getting a lot of things done" Arla described

478    building relationships as a process where sharing ideas and collective problem solving over

479    issues preventing goal progress appeared to be a very successful crafting strategy for

480    achieving work goals for various partners during a change culture. In addition, to remedy

481    some of the demands of group working, Arla appeared to suggest dedicating more time than

482    usual to understand individuals and their ways of working. Arla neatly summarized this in

483    relation to changes pertaining to rules and regulations in their sport, "Every person is unique

484    and…every person…is worthy of being treated with respect." Even though Arla was facing

485    challenging circumstances with this organizational change context, it demonstrated the

486    importance placed on a bespoke process to actively changing relationships. By spending

487    more time with some individuals and getting to know them despite the presence of

488    organizational changes, Arla highlighted how it is important to reinforce the value placed on

489    individuals, with the benefit that this may mobilize them as a resource. Matt echoed similar

490    sentiments placing salience on being "player owned, [letting] them take the initiative" in his

491     approach. In contrast, in the context of developing a new professional team franchise, Matt

492     revealed a slight divergence in highlighting that this tailoring of relationships needs to occur

493     at a departmental, as well as individual level:

494          I am the boss but it's not going to be "tell, tell, tell," we're gonna figure out what we

495          want as a club and then as a department, then we're gonna figure out where you stand

496          with your own [job] responsibilities. So that their roles will be crystal clear but they

497          can take ownership as well … I think that was really powerful for where we were

498          going.

499          The requirements Matt outlined around avoiding a "tell, tell, tell" approach with

500     individuals suggested organizational challenges faced by coaches who are trying to work

501     collaboratively, which may be reflecting the typically authoritarian nature within high-

502     performance sport. Despite this, his account offered hope in terms of the power of this

503     approach. It is noteworthy that despite the relative difference in Matt's time in post (see Table

504     1) compared to Arla's, this notion of working with individuals (people and/or departments)

505     was strong. However, their ability to do this instead may be stimulated in reaction to the

506     organizational changes in rules and regulations.

507          In contrast, other participants had to make greater efforts to maneuver (i.e., alter the

508     quality of relationships) into the ingroup of the leadership hierarchy of their organization.

509     Peter explained this within the context of the national squad training structure that was being

510     centralized:

511          I can maybe voice my opinion and it would be heard and hopefully that would make

512          an impact. But maybe me being on the inside a little, whereas when you're on the

513          outside [of the leadership hierarchy], you have no impact, you can't change the

514          problem.

515          Peter's references to having influence as an "insider" showed awareness of mobilizing

516     social resources through understanding the micro-politics of their organization. For example,

517     through working on the "inside" of the organization Peter demonstrated the micro-political

518     perspective by using his influence to further his interests (Gibson & Groom, 2018). This also

519     offered potential for how adopting a micro-political perspective can be a successful, proactive

520     relationship building approach, even within cultures which are undergoing rapid change.

521        For some participants, mobilizing resources involved modifying their social resources

522     as well as optimizing their structural resources to achieve work goals and / or opportunities

523     for development. Mobilizing structural resources in the main consisted of prioritizing

524     collective learning at a team and organizational level, but it also included physical and

525     financial resources such as sport science support. During the lead up to an Olympic Games,

526     Tristian had to exert efforts to alter how they negotiated (e.g., social resources) with the NGB

527     to receive continued sport science support (i.e., structural resource).

528        So going into [Olympics Games], the biomechanist, [sport NGB] pulled him from

529        pillar to post, his hours [contract] were done by February … So I went to [NGB

530        leader] "where is my biomechanist going? Because that's the guy I've worked with

531        for seven years" … Now I know they are leaving in a week, and the [NGB leader]

532        knows this, but the [NGB leader] has specifically told [the biomechanist] not to tell

533        me. So when [biomechanist] finally left, the [NGB leader] took huge umbrage with

534        him and said nobody can use him, but I'd already made another arrangement with

535        [biomechanist] and said "look, we still want to use you, this is what we want to do,

536        can you do these dates?" and [biomechanist] was like "yeah, that should be fine." …

537        I've got someone who can win a gold medal and I'm having to, you know, not only

538        am I having to supplement [national lottery] funding, I'm having to negotiate and

539        make this happen, and that is the huge frustration that I have with the governing body.

540       While altering the nature of the relationship with the NGB and sport scientist support

541   may have achieved the end goal of facilitating their performer's pre-Olympic training

542   preparation, Tristian's account seemingly reflected a frustration, exhaustion and futility of

543   trying to negotiate and personally work around the apparent micro-politics of their NGB.

544   Tristian's account therefore seems congruent with the notion that mobilizing resources can

545   help to address organizational demands and achieve performance goals (Demerouti et al.,

546   2001), but at what cost for the coach's job satisfaction and well-being?

547       The degree to which creating opportunities for collective learning was supported

548   within a climate of organizational change in sport varied, showing significant divergence

549   within the accounts. For Arla, putting education at the forefront of their national coach role

550   was pivotal:

551       We have had mentor programs. We have supported the coaches. We have done a lot

552       of work. We have five workshops a year with these coaches, and these programs have

553       been supported by the [national sport organization] … and I think that's been massive

554       [for growth]. That's one of the key things we've been able to do to develop the players

555       because we [the coaching staff] are speaking the same language, we are wanting the

556       same things for the players' development and for the clubs' development.

557       The repeated use of the word "we," suggests that Arla placed value on the trickle-

558   down effect of mobilizing a team (i.e., a support resource) to develop players, to achieve

559   greater organizational effectiveness. Indeed, work psychology literature indicates that

560   individuals do not only job craft on their own, but they may also decide how work is

561   organized and conducted together with colleagues (Tims & Parker, 2020). This collective

562   crafting strategy was reflected systemically at both an individual and organizational level,

563   suggesting that mobilizing both structural and social resources was supported within this

564   change climate. Notably this was grounded in Arla's position as the oldest most established

565     participant, in terms of the time spent within their current organization, which may have

566     conferred greater decision latitude to shape her leadership role over coaches, support staff and

567     sport performers. This was in direct contrast to Ted, who although occupying a similar role

568     was afforded much less opportunity to seek advice or feel supported by the NGB:

569          I'm currently in theory being supported by our governing body to do a [sport

570          qualification] but I don't receive any financial support for that. I don't receive any

571          feedback [or] mentoring from the governing body…Maybe it's on me to go out and

572          push for it but unfortunately the person that [feedback] would be coming from is the

573          [stakeholder], who I don't think could tell me how to move my coaching forward so

574          it's a sad state of affairs but it's the way it is.

575          This was a contrasting experience to Arla's and highlighted the potentially deflating

576     experience of organizational environments which were not supportive on either a financial or

577     developmental level. Inherent in Ted's sadness is perhaps a realization that some change

578     initiatives (e.g., a change in performance director) can represent a constraining context

579     (Lazazzara et al., 2020) by which they can create and maintain opportunities to develop their

580     knowledge and skills or seek social support. Verity echoed similar sentiments around the

581     importance they place on developing the self, "I do it because it's something I've been

582     interested in and developing myself, but I don't think there is a culture of that [development]

583     within [sport]". Importantly though, Verity described this is a process that needs to be driven

584     individually. Despite Verity also occupying her role for a significant length of time, her

585     account suggests that she had much less of a structural support resource than Arla had

586     previously outlined, to drive this within their organization. The importance Verity places on

587     developing the self perhaps characterizes a 'promotion-orientation' to crafting her role

588     (Petrou et al., 2018), in demonstrating proactive attempts to complete training that satisfy a

589     desire for learning and personal growth during financial instability within their sport.

590    ***Withdrawal from Aspects of the Job***

591         Considering the energy that was required to shape coaches' job roles, it was

592    unsurprising that they explored the need to rest within their account, which appeared to

593    constitute as a form of demand reduction (Demerouti, 2014). Matt in particular highlighted

594    how the unrelenting nature of player turnover, coupled with his "problem that I couldn't

595    switch the engine off when I was at home, so the brain was still ticking" drove a "need to take

596    time off during the week." In emphasizing a "need" rather than a "want", this seemed to

597    reflect an entrapment-commitment profile in which the only other alternative to taking time

598    off would be to transition out of their coaching role (cf. Knight et al., 2015). Elsewhere he

599    described how this manifested itself, but then this also led to reflection for shaping his role

600    going forwards:

601         It was engulfing my life … sometimes you can't see the 'wood from the trees', so you

602              try to work even harder, it's easier to see it now, I'm not doing it… But if I got back

603              into the boiling pot again I'd definitely say "no", I need time off during the season.

604         The divergence in Matt's account was clear from the potentially intoxicating totality

605    of the institution of high-performance sport, through to a growing sense of identity and

606    perspective around having greater decision latitude in their role and meeting their own work-

607    life needs (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). His movement from being "engulfed" to

608    "definitely saying no" to taking on more work during organizational changes communicated a

609    change in belief around how he could take more control in this situation (e.g., McEwen &

610    Rowson, 2023). This may in part be explained by Matt's relatively small time in his current

611    role (see Table 1) compared to the other participants. Potentially messages taken from time

612    spent reflecting after being sacked may still have been fresh in his mind here.

613         Adrian had spent a similar time in post to Matt but described a different set of

614    circumstances which might prompt a need to withdraw from his role during an organizational

615    staff restructure rather than take time away:

616        [There is] fear around "am I having to reapply for my own job" or "my job doesn't

617        exist in the [organizational] restructure moving forward so I've got to apply for

618        something else". I've been fortunate enough that I've either dodged bullets or

619        maneuvered my way through the process to where I am now, but there's been close

620        colleagues and good friends that have either decided to depart because of what is

621        coming or, with the uncertainty, "I'll depart on my own terms and take a redundancy

622        package".

623        This outlined a much different perspective to Matt's around Adrian's potential to

624    shape the role, which may result from their differing roles as national and professional club

625    coaches (see Table 1). While he described how others have "departed on their own terms" the

626    fortune he described to "dodge bullets" alluded to him finding ways to 'maneuver' in the

627    sport organization. This included avoiding direct conflict with key decision makers, and

628    removing himself from the 'firing line' by ensuring the roles he undertook were still required

629    after an organizational restructure. Adrian's insights seem to be congruent with the way

630    workers distance themselves from risky work situations or negative interactions with other

631    workers to protect their well-being or tenure (Demerouti, 2014). For Adrian, this need to be

632    reactive may result from the "funding pot not being as large as it was in previous Olympic

633    cycles." In contrast for Matt the club environment (where he had just experienced the off-

634    season, as he was interviewed during pre-season) may have provided more opportunity and

635    resources for him to feel secure, rest, and reflect on the rest periods needed in the future. This

636    highlights that attempts to manage well-being and seek new job opportunities may very much

637    be localized to different sport organizations, reinforcing the salience of organizational

638    leadership and management contexts on individuals' crafting strategies.

639                                                **Discussion**

640      The purpose of this study was to explore coaches' experiences of job crafting within a

641      climate of organizational change in high-performance sport. In doing so, we extend on

642      previous calls in occupational psychology to redefine and update the key characteristics of

643      job crafting in diverse working contexts (cf. Demerouti, 2014). In the main, experiences of

644      organizational change constrained the capacity for high-performance coaches to craft their

645      job role in particular ways, leaving them feeling lost and working in silos under authoritarian

646      leadership. This climate of organizational change made the coaches feel insecure about their

647      jobs and disengaged from interactions with their leadership teams. Despite previous theories

648      highlighting that job crafting behaviors in the workplace are difficult to enact when personal

649      control and support resources are limited (Demerouti et al., 2001), our findings extend these

650      theoretical tenets by illustrating that many coaches in the present study still found ways to job

651      craft. While these findings offer a unique contribution in sport psychology literature, the

652      challenges of job crafting in constraining contexts such as organizational change have been

653      recently documented in other working domains. For example, in a meta-synthesis of

654      qualitative studies, Lazazzara et al. (2020) identified from a small sample of studies that

655      organizational change typically resulted in workers having reactive motives for job crafting

656      and operating in a constraining context. These constraining contexts included workers'

657      perceiving low social support in their workplace and pressure to adhere to authoritarian

658      leadership. Moreover, these constraining contexts led to workers enacting more maladaptive

659      methods of job crafting (e.g., reducing hindering job demands). However, in extending these

660      occupational psychology findings to the elite sport working context, some coaches were

661      involved as drivers of change at a micro- or macro-level, and, therefore appeared more likely

662      to initiate proactive motives for crafting their job. The participant accounts in this study

663      highlight the importance of leadership and organizational support for coaches during

664      organizational change, particularly when the coaches may not be delivering the change

665    initiatives. In collaborating with and supporting coaches during change, the findings highlight

666    the potential for organizations to encourage coaches' efforts to adapt their job characteristics

667    in line with their personal needs (Demerouti, 2014). Consistent with the JD-R model, altering

668    job characteristics such as personal and work resources may prevent burnout or poor

669    performance when encountering a high degree of job demands (Demerouti et al., 2001).

670         Central to the participants' accounts of job crafting was the importance placed on

671    motives for job crafting, in which a desire for control, person-job fit, accomplishment of

672    goals, and to maintain a positive work identity drove coaches' proactive job crafting efforts.

673    Conversely, when control and support was thwarted by organizational factors (cf. Demerouti,

674    2001), this led some coaches to feel less empowered and compromise their personal values to

675    remain employed under authoritarian leadership. This led to coaches withdrawing from the

676    negative aspects of their work (i.e., reducing hindering demands; Petrou et al., 2018). These

677    findings are in line with research in organizational psychology which argue the importance of

678    personal needs in driving the process of job crafting (Lazazzara et al., 2020), advocating the

679    individual needs for control in how people can behave and function at work (Wrzesniewski &

680    Dutton, 2001). As noted from the coach accounts proactively finding ways to mobilize one's

681    job resources (e.g., searching for advice, sharing knowledge, altering the quality of work

682    relationships) can fulfil one's psychological needs in one's work (Gordon et al., 2018).

683         Within coaches' accounts of appraising and re-appraising aspects of the job, many

684    cognitively emphasized the positive aspects of change for personal and organizational

685    functioning purposes and trying to foresee positive outcomes. In addition, coaches saw the

686    benefit of metacognition to explore how aspects of organizational change practices and their

687    responses to them could be improved in the future. While some of these experiences can be

688    explained by Wresniewski and Dutton's (2001) theory of job crafting, in which individuals

689    change how they view their working conditions (i.e., for better or worse), contextualizing job

690     crafting to the elite sport working context highlights a preference for coaches to proactively

691     appraise their work as a meaningful whole for others operating in the sport system (Lazazzara

692     et al., 2020). This is rather than coaches passively accepting how change might personally

693     impact their job role (e.g., Bentzen, Kenttä, & Lemyre, 2020).

694          It was evident from the coach accounts that mobilizing social and structural resources

695     was a key approach *and* avoidant method of job crafting. Coaches approached a range of

696     sport stakeholders in and outside of their organization for guidance and counsel on how best

697     to cope with organizational changes. At the same time, they also developed stronger personal

698     relationships in sport to foster greater individual and collective goal attainment in relation to

699     completing important job tasks (cf. Demerouti, 2014). Conversely, some coaches seemed to

700     alter the quality of work interactions with members of organizational leadership, such as

701     "dodging bullets" during top-down organizational change. These findings can be explained

702     theoretically in several ways. Firstly, according to Wresniewski and Dutton (2001), relational

703     crafting is an important element of re-designing who one interacts with at work and in what

704     frequency to aid completing their job tasks. Secondly, job roles and tasks are embedded in an

705     interpersonal structure (Berg et al., 2010), and others may influence how co-workers craft

706     their roles or decide how their own work is organized and conducted as part of a team (Tims

707     & Parker, 2020). Thirdly, the JD-R model of job crafting and burnout suggests that workers

708     modify the job demands and resources available to them to carry out their work meaningfully

709     (Demerouti et al., 2001). This may include seeking support resources from others to tackle

710     job demands effectively or reducing hindering interpersonal demands that protect one's well-

711     being or prevent job tasks from being completed (Tims & Bakker 2010).

712          In line with previous conceptualizations that advocate modifying one's job task

713     boundaries (task crafting; Wresniewski & Dutton, 2001) and seeking new challenges

714     (Demerouti et al., 2001; Tims & Bakker, 2010) to develop new knowledge and skills, the

715 findings in the current study highlighted mobilizing structural resources (often combined with

716 increasing social resources), such as creating collective opportunities for learning and

717 tangible support as a prominent method of job crafting. By the repeated reference to 'we' in

718 this context, developing oneself and others revises individual and collective work identities

719 (Wresniewski & Dutton, 2001). In the context of organizational change, framing this as

720 another opportunity for growth represents a shared work identity that allows coaches to

721 reinforce a collective sense of 'wanting the same things' for individual and organizational

722 improvement. Collective crafting in this way may enable coaches to experience greater

723 readiness to change whilst remaining committed to their organization (Demerouti, 2014).

724 The final theme that encapsulated the way coaches' made sense of their job crafting

725 experiences was withdrawal from aspects of the job, which represented efforts to reduce the

726 aspects of their work that were cognitively, emotionally, or physically taxing. Many of the

727 coaches alluded to feeling exhausted from the ongoing commitment to adapting to

728 organizational change, citing 'engulfed', 'wheeling and dealing', 'dodging bullets' and

729 'manoeuvring through the process'. Job crafting theory and work psychology literature

730 suggests that withdrawing oneself from work, leaving jobs prematurely and 'saying no'

731 typically represent maladaptive methods of job crafting (Demerouti et al., 2001; Lazazzara et

732 al., 2020). However, in the coaches' accounts (e.g., Matt) finding time for rest was designed

733 to improve their well-being and protect work-life balance, particularly when they felt

734 addicted to their work ('I couldn't switch the engine off when I was at home'). Therefore, the

735 present findings challenge the degree to which withdrawing from negative aspects of the job

736 are maladaptive for well-being, and may sometimes be beneficial for restoring one's health.

737 **Applied Implications**

738 From an applied perspective, the current findings suggest that in a potentially

739 constraining context of organizational change in high-performance sport, coaches still find

740    ways to persevere in crafting their job roles. However, the continued 'dodging of bullets' and

741    'wheeling and dealing' to improve person-job fit may come at a cost to coaches' health, well-

742    being and performance (McEwen & Rowson, 2023). Job crafting is a bottom-up job redesign

743    approach to improving working conditions (Demerouti, 2014). However, the coach accounts

744    highlight the key role management teams and wider sport NGB organizations can have in

745    emphasizing the value they place on supporting individual and collective job crafting. From

746    the current findings and previous research exploring coach well-being (e.g., Norris et al.,

747    2017), an inability to job craft in one's sporting role may have deleterious consequences for

748    coaches' job satisfaction, experiences of burnout, and turnover intentions, which can all

749    impact on athlete performance development and organizational effectiveness (Thompson &

750    Parent, 2021). Organizational support for job crafting may equip leaders, managers, and other

751    sport personnel with the tools to proactively re-define and modify their job roles in line with

752    their personal needs. Alongside this recommendation, clearly and openly communicated top-

753    down changes, with the space to collaborate, can help coaches make sense of the parameters

754    in which they are aided to job craft for improved personal and organizational productivity. In

755    contexts like ongoing organizational change, leaders and managers may also need to re-

756    evaluate their unrealistic expectations for coaches to job craft excessively to protect their

757    well-being and performance.

758    **Limitations and Future Research Directions**

759        Although this study makes an original contribution to sport psychology and coaching

760    literature by eliciting how coaches experience job crafting in a climate of organizational

761    change, some limitations should be acknowledged. The primary limitation of this study

762    includes the retrospective analysis of coaches' accounts regarding their experiences of job

763    crafting through organizational change. As one reviewer of the current study critiqued,

764    coaches' perceptions of organizational change may have changed post the COVID-19

765    pandemic. Although the research was conducted in 2017, to date limited research in sport

766    psychology has explored the phenomena of job crafting in high-performance sport. In

767    addition, researchers can study lived experience in retrospect since it still has meaning for the

768    individuals in question even though events (e.g., organizational change) may have taken

769    place a while ago (Jones et al., 2013). Secondly, we acknowledge the extensive range of

770    experiences that coaches had in relation to organizational change in sport. Although lived

771    experiences of organizational change were drawn on in this study to foreground experiences

772    of job crafting, the broad scope in which experiences of organizational change were explored

773    could have been further delimited to specific organizational change events. Moreover,

774    although organizational change can typically represent a constraining factor for facilitating

775    autonomous job crafting attempts (Lazazzara et al., 2020), it was clear from coaches'

776    accounts that not every organizational change initiative they encountered was necessarily

777    negative for their job roles, organizational functioning, or overall governance of the sport at a

778    national level. It could therefore be considered both a strength and limitation of the current

779    research that the study illustrates coaches' experiences of proactively and passively trying to

780    job craft in a potentially reactive and constraining climate of organizational change. In this

781    way, our findings cannot be generalized to other sport working contexts that may be

782    considered as proactive rather than reactive reasons for job crafting, or contexts in which

783    coaches feel supported or limited in their decision latitude to craft their job role.

784         We recommend that future research continues to explore and understand how

785    members of leadership and management in sport organizations can job craft in different

786    sporting working and personal contexts. Moreover, future research should look to better

787    understand personally effective and ineffective job crafting efforts under additional

788    leadership and management contexts in high-performance sport. Finally, although the

789    participant accounts alluded to how job crafting efforts may be linked to burnout[3], well-being

790    and turnover intentions, it was not the goal of this paper to examine these links. Insofar that

791    coach job turnover can occur annually and unsettle sport performer and team dynamics,

792    future research should explore how job crafting throughout sport seasons may be linked to

793    greater health, well-being and productivity in the longer term, irrespective of broadly

794    experiencing organizational change or specific work event contexts. Leadership support for

795    job crafting could also be explored regarding developing job crafting interventions in sport

796    organizations or, assessing how perceptions of leadership support influence sport personnel's

797    job crafting efforts for enhanced well-being and performance.

**Conclusion**

799         In conclusion, this paper makes an important theoretical contribution to the job

800    crafting literature by exploring coaches' lived experience of job crafting in a climate of

801    organizational change. Organizational change often represented a poor person-job fit for

802    coaches who work in high-performance sport environments. Contrary to some job crafting

803    theories (Demerouti et al., 2001; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and research literature

804    (Lazazzara et al., 2020), coaches still found ways to job craft despite a poor person-job fit.

805    Coaches' motives for job crafting were influenced by the constraining and reactive nature of

806    experiencing organizational change, which influenced proactive and passive job crafting

807    behaviors. These findings may provide important information to leaders in sport on how they

808    can support job crafting to achieve greater organizational effectiveness. We hope our findings

809    provide a stimulus for exploring job crafting in sport working contexts in the future.

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[3]Although we did not explore burnout in this study, some of our findings align closely to strategies that have been broadly proposed in the sport coaching literature to minimize burnout and optimize well-being. These include considering time for rest and recovery, counteracting a lack of control, and prioritizing self-care (e.g., see Altfield et al., 2018; Bentzen, Kenttä, & Lemyre, 2020; Higham et al., 2023; McEwen & Rowson, 2023; Pankow et al., 2022). However, we also extend the findings on organizational change, well-being and ill-being in sport coaches by highlighting that within high-performance sport contexts where coaches may lack control, resources or a positive person-job fit, coaches can still find proactive ways to adapt their job demands and resources for improve or restore personal meaning and purpose within their roles.

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**Table 1**

*Table of Participant Demographics*

| Participant Pseudonym | Gender | Age | Coach Status | Years in Current Role | Job Roles Previously Held | Organizational Change Events Encountered | Time of Season | Interview Length |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Peter | Male | 36 | Olympic-level individual coach | 5 years | Technical advisor, coach education committee role, national coach | Change of national coach, changes to competition structure, centralization of national squad training and coaching structure | Start of season | 59 mins |
| Tristian | Male | 50 | Olympic-level individual coach | 5 years | National coach, club coach | Change of performance director, change of CEO, sport science support being withdrawn by the National Governing Body (NGB), training facilities being shut down, being sacked | End of season | 133 mins |
| Arla | Female | 56 | National team coach | 12 years | National coach, national assistant coach, professional club coach | Rules and regulations, rise in the quality of squad performers to work with, change in philosophy towards performance development | Pre-season | 90 mins |
| Ted | Male | 46 | National team coach | 4 years | National assistant coach, player/club coach, NGB development officer | NGB withdrawal from hosting the world championships, change of performance director, rise in the international competition profile, national squad training tour being cancelled by the NGB. | End of season | 100 mins |
| Adrian | Male | 44 | National team coach | 3 years | National assistant coach, Academy coach, sport development officer, talent development officer | Organizational staff restructure, turnover of staff, change in talent development pathway, centralization of national performance center | End of season | 76 mins |
| Matt | Male | 52 | Professional club coach | 2 years | Performance director, elite national coach, professional club head coach, professional club assistant coach, player-coach | The development of a professional club franchise, player turnover, change of chief executive, being sacked | Pre-season | 64 mins |
| Verity | Female | 53 | National team assistant coach | 10 years | National team head coach, professional club head coach, | New Olympic cycle, funding cuts, change of national head coaches, injection of funding, increased team of support staff | Pre-season | 65 mins |

**Table 2**

*Master Table of Experiential Themes for Job Crafting and Organizational Change*

| Superordinate themes | Subordinate themes |
| --- | --- |
| The climate of organizational change | Job turnover |
| | Working in a vacuum |
| Crafting the job | Motivation for job crafting |
| | Appraising and re-appraising aspects of the job |
| | Mobilizing social and structural resources |
| | Withdrawal from aspects of the job |