CHAPTER 5

WORK ENGAGEMENT

An Emerging Psychological Concept and Its Implications for Organizations

Wilmar Schaufeli
Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Marisa Salanova
Universitat Jaume I, Castellón, Spain

ABSTRACT

In this chapter, we introduce an emerging psychological concept, work engagement, and discuss its relevance for optimal functioning of employees in organizations. The appearance of work engagement coincides with the rise of the so-called positive psychology that focuses on human strengths and optimal functioning. Work engagement is characterized by high levels of energy and vigor, dedication and enthusiasm while working, and being pleasantly absorbed or immersed in work activities. Based on various empirical studies, we discuss its viability, as well as its implications for Human Resource Management and occupational health in modern organizations. After setting the stage, the validity of work engagement as a psychological construct is addressed. We start with defining the construct and its measurement as well as discussing its causes and conse-

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quences. In addition, the collective nature of engagement in teams is considered. The first part closes with a model of employee well-being that integrates positive aspects (engagement) and negative aspects (burnout). The second part focuses on the practical implications of work engagement for modern organizations. More particularly, we discuss how organizational strategies such as personnel assessment and evaluation, job (re)design, leadership, and training can be used to increase work engagement.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT: WILL THEIR GOALS EVER MEET?

Our starting point is that we believe that recent developments in Occupational Health Psychology (OHP) may contribute to the innovation of Human Resources Management (HRM) policies. Since organizations consider their employees as their most valuable asset, they are by implication interested not only in their performance, as promoted by HRM, but also in their health and well-being, as promoted by OHP. The current chapter is about an emerging psychological concept that, we believe, is highly relevant for organizations, both from an OHP and from a HRM point of view: *work engagement.*

We will make the case that work engagement may bridge the gap that exists between OHP and HRM and may thus play a crucial role in linking these two domains. Our basic tenet is that in order to prosper and to survive in a continuously changing environment, organizations need healthy and motivated employees, which can only be achieved when occupational health and human resources policies are integrated. Table 5.1 illustrates

Table 5.1. Changes in Modern Organizations Requiring Knowledge of Psychology

From	*To*
Cost reduction	Customer satisfaction
Efficiency	Effectiveness
Employee satisfaction	Employee motivation
Control	Empowerment
Short-term focus on cash flow	Long-term focus on vision, planning, and growth
Vertical structure (chain of command)	Horizontal networks (collaboration in interdependent chains)
Dependence from company (e.g., company training)	Personal responsibility (e.g., employability)

the kinds of changes in modern organizations that force them to rely more and more on psychological knowledge and experience.

Essentially, these changes boil down to a "psychologization" of organizations. Instead of traditional organizational structures (i.e., control mechanism, chain of command) and a strong emphasis on economic principles (i.e., cost reduction, efficiency, cash flow), the focus in modern organization is on the management of human capital. Currently, organizations expect their employees to be proactive and show initiative, collaborate smoothly with others, take responsibility for their own professional development, and be committed to high quality performance. This is also illustrated by Ulrich (1997), who writes in his seminal book *Human Resources Champions*:

> Employee contribution becomes a critical business issue because in trying to produce more output with less employee input, companies have no choice but to try to engage not only the body but the mind and soul of every employee. (p. 125)

Obviously, this objective is not achieved with a workforce that is "healthy" in the traditional sense, meaning that employees do not suffer from job stress and are not absent because of sickness. Something more is needed and this is where the emerging "Positive Organizational Psychology" comes in.

However, before turning to this alternative, positive approach we will first outline what the traditional occupational health paradigm looks like, and further argue why this no longer suffices. OHP is concerned with the application of psychology to improve the quality of working life and to promote the health, safety, and well-being of employees. Despite its precursors, OHP was only recently established in the 1990s as a specific psychological field (Barling & Griffith, 2003). As an applied area, OHP draws heavily upon other psychological fields, which are mainly concerned with negative aspects of human behavior. As has been lamented by Seligman (1992):

> My profession spends most of its time (and almost all of its money) trying to make the troubled less troubled. Helping troubled people is a worthy goal, but somehow psychology almost never gets around to the complementary goal of making the lives of well people even better. (p. 96)

This prevailing negative bias of psychology is illustrated by the fact that the number of publications on negative states exceeds the number of publications on positive states by a ratio of 14:1 (Myers, 2000). For instance, since 1887 70,000 scientific articles appeared on depression against only 3,000 on happiness and 850 on joy. An earlier estimation of Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999) revealed an even poorer ratio of 17:1. These numbers clearly demonstrate the rather one-sided negative focus of psychology.

Hence, it comes as no surprise that, despite its name, Occupational *Health* Psychology is predominantly concerned with *ill*-health and *un*well-being. By way of illustration, we counted the number of articles on positive and negative issues that have appeared in the leading *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* since it was established in 1996. Up through 2004, 233 articles have appeared, of which only 14 are exclusively related to positive aspects of health or well-being. This corresponds to a ratio of 16:1 in favor of negative aspects, which is strikingly similar to the above-mentioned ratios. Put differently, it means that 94% of the articles that were published in this leading journal dealt with negative issues.[1] Hence, academic OHP is mainly concerned with disease, disorder, damage, and disability. Interestingly, this focus on human defects and malfunctioning is at odds with the reality of working life since over 70% of employees typically indicate that they are satisfied with their jobs, about 25% feel very satisfied, whereas only 1% is dissatisfied. (Veroff, Douvan, & Kulka, 1981). But what is more, this negative focus is also at odds with the self-image of OHP that emphasizes a more positive approach, namely to *improve* the quality of working life, and to *promote* the health, safety, and well-being of workers (Tetrick & Quick, 2003). Obviously, there is some tension between what occupational health psychologists preach and what they practice. Although they claim to focus on health improvement and health promotion, they usually write about health impairment and health deterioration.

Compared to the downside of employee functioning, our knowledge on optimal functioning is still very limited. Therefore, the challenge is to develop a truly Occupational *Health* Psychology that includes both negative as well as positive aspects of employee health and well-being (Schaufeli, 2004). Failing to recognize the positive aspects of work is inappropriate, and as Turner, Barling, and Zachartos (2002) have argued:

> ... it is time to extend our research focus and explore more fully the positive sides, so as to gain full understanding of the meaning and effects of working. (p. 715)

Moreover, Tetrick (2002) argued that it is very unlikely that the same mechanisms that underlie employee ill-health and malfunctioning constitute employee health and optimal functioning. Hence, the traditional medical model needs to be supplemented by a distinct wellness model that focuses on positive occupational health. The recent scientific movement toward a more positive psychology may stimulate this endeavor.

Quite symbolically at the brink of the new millennium, in January 2000, a special issue of the *American Psychologist* sparked interest in Positive Psychology. In that issue, its most prominent advocates, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), stated that the purpose of Positive Psychology

> ... is to begin to catalyze a change in the focus of psychology from preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building positive qualities. (p. 5)

This should also apply to work organizations, as argued by Luthans (2003) who called for a positive approach to organizations and management in both research and practice. In his view, this is

> ... the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace. (p. 179)

In a similar vein, Cameron, Dutton, and Quinn (2003) introduced a new discipline, *Positive Organizational Scholarship*, that is concerned with "... the study of especially positive outcomes, processes, and attributes of organizations and their members" (p. 4). Therefore, the current development of a positive (occupational) psychology stimulates the emergence of a truly Occupational *Health* Psychology that includes the entire spectrum of employee health and well-being, ranging from ill-health, unwell-being, and poor functioning to positive health, well-being, and optimal functioning. The objectives of this new type of OHP are to investigate and to improve employee health and well-being, and to promote their optimal functioning in groups and occupational settings. As such, this comes close to the major objective of HRM, which is to ensure organizational success by acquiring, motivating, developing, and managing the organization's human resources. Put simply, the practical objectives of this new type of OHP and of HRM are quite similar—to optimize employee, as well as organizational, functioning. However, the focus of OHP and HRM differs; the former aims at promoting employee health, whereas the latter aims at promoting organizational health. When optimized, both domains potentially benefit mutually: What is good for the employee's health and well-being is generally good for the organization, and often vice versa. The best strategy for reaching the common objective—healthy employees in a healthy and successful organization—is the integration of this new and positive OHP and HRM. We believe that the concept of engagement may play a key role in this endeavor since, on the one hand, engagement entails a positive definition of employee health (in contrast to the traditional negative definition as the mere absence of illness), and on the other hand, engagement is expected to be related to positive outcomes that contribute decisively to organizational success, such as high quality performance, low absenteeism, and organizational commitment. Therefore, we may conclude that, when a truly Occupational *Health* Psychology evolves, it will eventually meet with HRM, and work engagement may play the role of linking the two.

WORK ENGAGEMENT: AN EMERGING PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPT

Paradoxically, the interest in work engagement grew out of previous research on occupational burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). By studying burnout, a negative work-related state of mind characterized by exhaustion and mental distancing from work, researchers became more and more interested in its opposite positive pole—work engagement. After investigating burnout for over a quarter of a century (for an overview see Schaufeli & Buunk, 2003), it seemed logical to ask the question, "What about the other side of the coin?" And more specifically: Can employees be identified who work vigorously and who are highly involved and immersed in their jobs? If so, what is driving them? Are the same, albeit inverse, factors involved that cause employees to burn out? What kind of effects does engagement have? How can it be increased? And last but not least, what psychological processes are involved? With these and similar questions in mind, researchers at the turn of the century started to investigate the opposite of burnout more systematically. As indicated in the previous section, this coincided with the emergence of the so-called positive psychology movement. Furthermore, it coincided with broad organizational trends (see Table 5.1) which underscore the importance of "positive" psychological characteristics of employees. As explained previously, today's organizations require their employees to be motivated, proactive, responsible, and involved. Instead of just "doing one's job," employees are expected "to go the extra mile." Evidently, those who are burned out are not able to do so, but for those who are *not* burned out, this is perhaps asking too much. The traditional negative approach falls short here, and a new positive approach is needed, in which the concept of work engagement plays a crucial role, not only to understand positive organizational behavior, but also to guide HRM and occupational health policies in organizations.

In this section, we introduce the concept of work engagement, including its measurement, and summarize research that has been conducted on its likely causes and consequences. Furthermore, we discuss its collective nature and present an overall framework that integrates the positive (work engagement) and negative aspects (burnout) of employee well-being, and that emphasizes the role that work engagement plays in motivating employees.

What is Work Engagement?

Contrary to those who suffer from burnout, engaged employees have a sense of energetic and effective connection with their work activities. In

addition, they see themselves as able to deal well with the demands of their job. Work engagement is defined as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002a, p. 74). That is, in engagement, fulfillment exists in contrast to the voids of life that leave people feeling empty as in burnout. Rather than a momentary, specific emotional state, engagement refers to a mood: A more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior. Furthermore, engagement, which reflects an employee's current state of mind in the immediate present, should be distinguished from a personality trait, which being a durable disposition, reflects a person's typical reaction (see Gray & Watson, 2001). *Vigor* is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. *Dedication* refers to being strongly involved in one's work, and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. *Absorption* is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work. Accordingly, vigor and dedication are considered direct opposites of exhaustion and cynicism, respectively, the two core symptoms of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). The continuum spanned by vigor and exhaustion has been labeled "energy," whereas the continuum spanned by dedication and cynicism has been labeled "identification" (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001). Hence, work engagement is characterized by a high level of energy and strong identification with one's work, whereas burnout is characterized by the opposite: a low level of energy and poor identification with one's work. Figure 5.1 graphically illustrates the relationships between the components of work engagement and burnout.

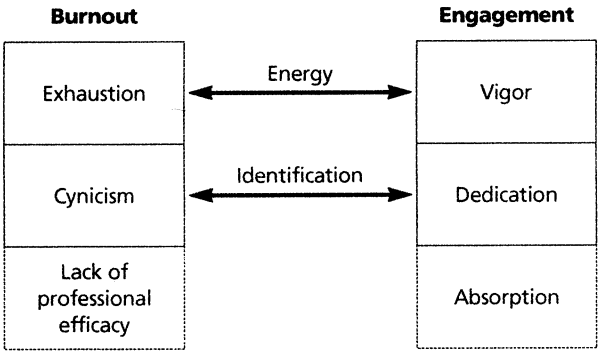

Figure 5.1. The relationship between burnout and work engagement.

It is noteworthy that the direct opposite of the third aspect of burnout—lack of professional efficacy—is *not* included in the engagement concept. There are two reasons for this. First, there is accumulating empirical evidence that exhaustion and cynicism constitute the core of burnout, whereas lack of professional efficacy seems to play a different and less prominent role. For instance, exhaustion and cynicism are much more strongly related to each other, compared to efficacy that is much less strongly related to the other two burn-out dimensions (for a meta-analysis, see Lee & Ashforth, 1996). In addition, it seems that employees who feel exhausted become cynical about their jobs in an attempt to cope with their job-related tiredness, whereas, lack of efficacy appears to develop relatively independently and in parallel (Maslach et al., 2001). Finally, exhaustion and cynicism are particularly related to job demands, such as time pressure and role problems, whereas inefficacy is typically related to lacking job resources, such as performance feedback and social support (cf. Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Second, it appeared from interviews and discussions with employees and supervisors that rather than by efficacy, engagement is particularly characterized by being immersed and happily engrossed in one's work, a state that we have labeled absorption. Accordingly, absorption is a distinct aspect of work engagement that is *not* considered to be the opposite of professional inefficacy. Being fully absorbed in one's work comes close to what has been called "flow," a state of optimal experience that is characterized by focused attention, clear mind, mind and body unison, effortless concentration, complete control, loss of self-consciousness, distortion of time, and intrinsic enjoyment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). However, flow is typically a more complex concept that includes many aspects and refers to rather particular, short-term "peak" experiences—also from outside the realm of work—instead of a more pervasive and persistent state of mind, as is the case with work engagement. More recently, Peterson, Park and Seligman (2005) argued that engagement, which in their conceptualization is similar to absorption, together with meaning and pleasure, constitutes a basic orientation to happiness. Indeed, they showed that those who were most satisfied with their lives scored high on each of these orientations, with engagement being the strongest predictor of happiness.

Building on earlier ethnographic work of Kahn (1990), who conceptualized engagement at work as "... the harnessing of organizational members' selves to their work roles" (p. 694), May, Gilson, and Harter (2004) introduced a similar three-dimensional concept of engagement as described above. Although their labels differ slightly, their operationalization is strikingly similar, as can be seen by comparing their items with those of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) that is discussed in the next section. More specifically, May et al. (2004) distinguish between a physical component (e.g., "I exert a lot of energy performing my job"), an emo-

tional component (e.g., 'I really put my heart into my job"), and a cognitive component (e.g., "Performing my job is so absorbing that I forget about everything else"), which correspond to vigor, dedication, and absorption as measured by the UWES (see Appendix). Furthermore, Shirom (2003) introduced the concept of vigor, defined as the employees' physical strength, emotional energy, and cognitive liveliness. Consistent with the view discussed above, Shirom (2003) considers vigor to be the opposite of burnout which is characterized by physical fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and cognitive weariness according to his definition. The three-dimensional Shirom-Malemed Vigor Measure[2] (SMVM) is used to assess the construct, whereby the physical fatigue scale (e.g., "I feel energetic," "I feel vigorous") is quite similar to the physical component of May et al. (2004) and to the vigor scale of the UWES. Finally, Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002) describe engaged employees in terms of cognitive vigilance and emotional connectedness. According to them, engaged workers

> ... know what is expected of them, have what they need to do their work, have opportunities to feel an impact and fulfillment in their work, perceive that they are part of something significant with coworkers they trust, and have chances to improve and develop. (p. 269)

Harter et al.'s (2002) concept of engagement is assessed with a 12-item questionnaire. At this point, we conclude that work engagement as conceptualized in this chapter closely resembles the way in which other authors have defined and operationalized the construct, although Harter et al. (2002) use a somewhat broader concept, and Peterson et al. (2005) seem to equate engagement with absorption.

Structured qualitative interviews with a heterogeneous group of Dutch employees who scored high on the UWES (see the assessment of work engagement) showed that engaged employees are active agents, who take initiative at work, and generate their own positive feedback loops (Schaufeli, Taris, Le Blanc, Peeters, Bakker, & De Jonge, 2001). For instance, engaged employees keep looking for new challenges in their jobs, and when they feel no longer challenged, they change jobs. In addition, because of their involvement they are committed to performing at a high quality level, which usually generates positive feedback from supervisors and the organization (e.g., praise, promotion, salary raise, fringe benefits) as well as from customers (e.g., appreciation, gratitude, satisfaction). Furthermore, the values of engaged employees seem to match quite well with those of the organizations they work for, and they seem to be engaged in other activities outside their work. Although the interviewed engaged workers indicated that they sometimes felt tired, unlike burned-out employees who experience fatigue as being exclusively negative, they

described their tiredness as a rather pleasant state because it was associated with positive accomplishments instead of failure. Some of the interviewed engaged employees indicated that they had been burned out before, which points to a form of resilience as well as to the use of effective coping strategies. Finally, engaged employees do not seem to be work addicted; they enjoy other things outside work and, unlike workaholics, they do not work hard because of a strong and irresistible inner drive, but because for them working is fun. In a similar vein, Konstantellou (2001) interviewed 30 engaged workers from Britain and Greece who scored high on the UWES. She asked them about their most positive job features and found that engaged workers particularly valued intrinsic aspects of their jobs (e.g., the nature of the job itself, its meaningfulness and creative potential, and its responsibility), job resources (e.g., variety, feedback, autonomy, opportunities for learning, development and skill use, and good career prospects), interpersonal aspects (i.e., contact with other people, teamwork, humor, sense of belonging), and rewards (e.g., social recognition, financial rewards, expressed company interest, goal-achievement, and self-confirmation). As we will see below, many of these qualitative results are confirmed by quantitative studies that employed a psychometrically validated questionnaire to assess work engagement.

How is Work Engagement Assessed?

Based on the above definition, a self-report questionnaire called the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) has been developed that includes the three constituting aspects of work engagement: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Originally, the UWES included 24 items, but after careful psychometric evaluation in two different Spanish samples of employees and students (Schaufeli et al., 2002a), seven items were determined to be unsound and were eliminated so that 17 items remained (see Appendix). Six items assess vigor; those who score high on this aspect have much energy, zest, and stamina when working. Five items assess dedication; those who score high identify strongly with their work because they experience it as meaningful, inspiring, and challenging. In addition, they feel enthusiastic and proud about their work. Absorption is measured by six items; those who score high are happily engrossed in their work and have difficulties detaching themselves from their work because it carries them away. As a consequence, all else is forgotten and time seems to fly.

Currently, the UWES is available in 17 languages[3] and an international database exists that includes engagement records of about 30,000 employees. A test-manual (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) that includes these language versions and provides detailed psychometrical analyses of the UWES is

available via the internet (*www.schaufeli.com*; see also Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004a). In addition to the UWES-17, a shortened version of nine items, with three scales of three items each, is available that shows similar encouraging psychometric features (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003; Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006). Below we summarize the most important psychometric results of the UWES, drawing upon the test-manual as well as on other recent articles.

Factorial Validity

Confirmatory factor analyses show convincingly that the hypothesized three-factor structure of the UWES is slightly superior to the one-factor model and fits the data of various samples from all countries involved well (Salanova, Schaufeli, Llorens, Peiró, & Grau, 2000; Schaufeli et al., 2002a, Schaufeli, Martínez, Marques-Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker, 2002b; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, 2004a, 2004b; Schaufeli, Taris, & Van Rhenen, 2005; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Kantas, & Demerouti, in press). However, in one exception (using exploratory factor analyses), Sonnentag (2003) did *not* find a clear three-factor structure and decided to use the total, composite score of the UWES as a measure for work engagement. Despite this single exception, we conclude that three different aspects constitute work engagement: vigor, dedication, and absorption.

Inter-Correlations

Although results of confirmatory factor analyses of the UWES suggest a three-dimensional structure, the three dimensions are very highly correlated. Correlations between the three scales usually exceed .65 (e.g., De Vries, Peters, & Hoogstraten, 2004; Demerouti, Bakker, Janssen, & Schaufeli, 2001a; Durán, Extremera, & Rey, 2004; Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006; Salanova et al., 2000; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, 2004a, 2004b; Schaufeli et al., 2002a, 2006), whereas correlations between the latent variables range from about .80 to about .90 (Salanova et al., 2000; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, 2004a, 2004b; Schaufeli et al., 2002a, 2006). Therefore, it seems that for practical purposes, the total score of the UWES can be used just as well.

Cross-National Invariance

Confirmatory factor analyses using the so-called multiple group method in which samples of two or more countries are simultaneously included, show that the three-factor structure of the UWES is invariant across nations (Llorens, Salanova, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2005; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003; Schaufeli et al., 2002b, 2006; Xanthopoulou et al., in press). That is, the factor *structure* of the UWES is essentially similar and does not differ between countries. However, the *size* of the factor loadings and the correla-

tions between latent factors slightly differs across nations. In a similar vein, Storm and Rothman (2003) concluded that the equivalence of the UWES is acceptable for White, Black, Colored, and Indian members of the South African Police Service, and that no evidence was found for item bias in these race groups.

Internal Consistency

The internal consistency of the three scales of the UWES is good. That is, in virtually all studies, values of Cronbach's α not only exceed the critical value of .70 (Nunnaly & Bernstein, 1994), they also exceed the more stringent criterion of .80 (Henson, 2001). Usually values of Cronbach's α for the UWES scales range between .80 and .90 (Demerouti et al., 2001a; Durán et al., 2004; Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006; Montgomery, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Den Ouden, 2003; Salanova, Bresó, & Schaufeli, 2005; Salanova, Grau, Llorens, & Schaufeli, 2001; Salanova, Llorens, Peiro, & Schaufeli, 2005; Salanova et al., 2000; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004a, 2004b; Xanthopoulou et al., in press). The 3-item scales of the shortened 9-item version show somewhat lower, but still acceptable, values of Cronbach's α, typically ranging between .70 and .80 (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003; Schaufeli et al., 2006).

Stability

Scores on the UWES are relatively stable across time. In two longitudinal studies carried out in Australia and Norway, stability coefficients of the three UWES scales ranged between .50 and .60 across a one-year time-interval (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Unpublished results from a sample of 364 Dutch middle managers and executives of a telecom company indicate slightly higher one-year stabilities, ranging between .66 and .75. Similar stability coefficients result for burnout (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998, pp. 51–52).

Engagement and Burnout

The three aspects of burnout—as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996)—are negatively related with the three aspects of work engagement (Demerouti et al., 2001a; De Vries et al., 2004; Durán et al., 2004; Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006; Montgomery et al., 2003; Salanova et al., 2000; Schaufeli et al., 2002a; 2002b; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004a, 2004b, 2003; Xanthopoulou et al., in press). However, the pattern of relationships slightly differs from what was expected: instead of positively loading on the MBI burnout factor, lack of professional efficacy loads negatively on the UWES engagement factor. This result has been replicated in a number of studies using confirmatory factor-analyses (De Vries et al., 2004; Salanova et al., 2000; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, 2004a, 2004b; Schaufeli et al., in press). Demerouti et al. (2001a)

obtained a similar result using discriminant analyses. In this study, the three engagement scales *plus* lack of professional efficacy loaded on one discriminant function, whereas both other burnout scales loaded on the second remaining function. A possible explanation for these unexpected findings may be that lack of professional efficacy is measured with items that are positively formulated and that are subsequently reversed to constitute a "negative" score that is supposed to be indicative of lack of professional efficacy. Recently, it was demonstrated that the relatively low negative correlations between lack of professional efficacy and both other burnout dimensions change dramatically into much higher positive correlations when instead of reversing positively formulated items, *negative* items are used to tap lack of efficacy (Bouman, Te Brake, & Hoogstraten, 2000; Bresó, Salanova, & Schaufeli, in press). In addition, Schaufeli and Salanova (2005) showed that a factor-analytic model with *in*efficacy (i.e., the negatively reworded MBI efficacy scale) loading on burnout, and efficacy (i.e., the original MBI efficacy scale) loading on engagement fit the data of two samples of employees and students from both Spain and the Netherlands. It remains to be seen, however, whether professional efficacy should be considered as a constituting element of work engagement, or as a separate element of a motivational process that is related to work engagement (see also the section about antecedents and consequences of work engagement). Finally, and consistent with our theoretical expectations, vigor and exhaustion—as well as dedication and cynicism—appear to be each other's opposites (see Figure 5.1). That is, using a nonparametric scaling technique, González-Romá, Schaufeli, Bakker, and Lloret (2006) showed that two sets of items, exhaustion-vigor and cynicism-dedication, are scalable on two distinct underlying bipolar dimensions (energy and identification, respectively). Thus, as shown in Figure 5.1, the core burnout and engagement dimensions can be seen as opposites of each other along two distinct bipolar dimensions dubbed energy and identification.

Engagement and Workaholism

Work addiction or workaholism is the irresistible inner drive to work very hard; that is, workaholics work excessively and compulsively. A recent study shows that engagement and workaholism are hardly related to each other, with the exception of absorption which correlates moderately positively with the workaholism scale that assesses excess work (Schaufeli et al., in press). On the other hand, vigor and dedication are negatively, albeit weakly, correlated with the second defining characteristic of workaholism, compulsiveness. Thus, although work engagement and workaholism seem to share the element of absorption, the underlying motivation to be completely engrossed in one's work is different: engaged employees are absorbed because their work is intrinsically motivating, whereas workahol-

ics are absorbed because of an inner drive they cannot resist. This interpretation agrees with the observations made in an earlier interview study (Schaufeli et al., 2001). The study by Schaufeli et al. (in press) also showed that work engagement and workaholism are related to different variables: both types of employees work hard and are loyal to the organization they work for, but in the case of workaholism, this comes at the expense of the employee's mental health and social contacts outside work, whereas engaged workers feel quite good, both mentally as well as socially.

Engagement and Personality

Despite the fact that the Big-Five model of personality is most widely used in psychology (John & Srivastava, 1999), only two of the five personality dimensions have been studied in relation to work engagement: neuroticism and extraversion. The former refers to the general tendency to experience distressing emotions such as fear, depression, and frustration, whereas the latter refers to the disposition towards cheerfulness, sociability, and assertiveness. Using discriminant analysis, engaged and burned-out employees could be distinguished from their nonengaged and nonburned-out counterparts based on their personality profiles (Langelaan, Bakker, Van Doornen, & Schaufeli, 2006). Burned-out employees are characterized by high levels of neuroticism, whereas engaged employees are characterized by low levels of neuroticism in combination with high levels of extraversion. In addition, a high level of mobility (i.e., the ability to respond adequately to changes in stimulus conditions, adapt quickly to new surroundings and switch easily between activities) is typical for engaged employees but not for burned-out employees. Thus, it appears that the personality profiles of engaged and burned-out employees differ whereby neuroticism is low in those who are engaged and high in those who feel burned out.

Relations With Socio-Demographics

Work engagement correlates weakly and positively with age, meaning that older employees feel slightly more engaged than younger employees. Perhaps this reflects a selection bias known as the "healthy worker effect": Only those who are healthy "survive" and remain in their jobs, whereas unhealthy (i.e., not engaged) employees drop out. However, the strength of the relationship between engagement and age is very weak and usually does not exceed .15 (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, 2004a; Schaufeli et al., 2006). Men score slightly higher on engagement than women, but again the differences are very small and hardly bear any practical significance (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, 2004a). As far as professional groups are concerned, managers, executives, entrepreneurs, and farmers score relatively high on engagement, whereas blue-collar workers, police officers, and

home-care staff score relatively low (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, 2004a; Schaufeli et al., 2006). This result agrees with the fact that engagement is related with proactivity, initiative, and commitment, characteristics that are key for the self-employed (entrepreneurs and farmers) as well as for high-ranking officials (executives and managers).

In sum, psychometric results confirm the factorial validity of the UWES. As expected, work engagement consists of three highly related aspects—vigor, dedication, and absorption—that can be assessed by three internally consistent and stable multi-item scales. These three aspects are so highly correlated that for practical purposes the total score of the (shortened) UWES may also be used as a single indicator of work engagement. Engagement relates negatively to burnout, and it can be discriminated from workaholism despite the fact that absorption seems to play a role in both. Moreover, engagement seems to be related to personality factors, including extraversion, low neuroticism, and the ability to easily adapt to environmental changes. No systematic differences in work engagement have been observed between men and women or across age groups. However, in some occupational groups, engagement levels were higher than in other groups (e.g., executives versus blue-collar workers). Similar psychometric results were observed among different samples from various countries, which confirms the robustness of the psychometric findings.

What Are the Antecedents and Consequences of Work Engagement?

It is important to emphasize that we are dealing with *possible* causes and consequences of work engagement, since causal inferences can be made only occasionally because the majority of studies is cross-sectional in nature. Work engagement is positively associated with job resources; that is with those aspects of the job that have the capacity to reduce job demands, are functional in achieving work goals, and may stimulate personal growth, learning, and development. For instance, work engagement is positively related to social support from coworkers and superiors, performance feedback, coaching, job control, task variety, and training facilities (Demerouti et al., 2001a; Salanova et al., 2001; Salanova, Llorens, Cifre, Martínez & Schaufeli, 2003; Salanova & Schaufeli, in press; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004b; Schaufeli et al., in press). Hence, the more that job resources are available, the more likely employees will feel engaged. But do job resources also *predict* levels of employee engagement? A longitudinal study (Bakker, Euwema, & Van Dieren, 2004) among employees from a pension fund company showed indeed that social support from one's colleagues and job autonomy related positively to levels of engagement measured two years

later. In addition, a reversed causal link was observed in this study, namely that over time, engaged employees are successful in mobilizing their job resources. This suggests a reciprocal relationship between job resources and engagement. As we will see below, such reciprocal relationships are often observed.

These results on the positive relationship between job resources and engagement are in line with Job Characteristics Theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). This theory assumes that particular job characteristics such as skill variety, autonomy, and feedback have motivating potential and predict positive outcomes, of which intrinsic motivation is close to our concept of work engagement. In a similar vein, self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) posits that job resources fulfill basic human needs, such as the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Consequently, work contexts that provide resources such as job control (autonomy), feedback (competence), and social support (relatedness) enhance well-being (e.g., vitality) and increase intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Frederick, 1997).

Sonnentag (2003) showed that the level of experienced work engagement is positively associated with the extent to which employees recover from their previous working day. Employees who felt that they sufficiently recovered during leisure time experienced higher levels of work engagement during the subsequent workday. Moreover, work engagement mediates the effects of recovery on proactive behavior, meaning that recovered employees not only feel more engaged the next day, but also they show more personal initiative at work. Recently, Salanova and Schaufeli (in press) confirmed a similar mediating role of work engagement in a Dutch and a Spanish employee sample, but now with respect to the relationship between job resources (i.e., control, feedback, and variety) and proactive behavior. It appeared that the availability of resources increased work engagement, which, in turn, fostered proactive organizational behavior. Taken together, these results suggest that there is an underlying motivational process that might link job resources with engagement (see the section on how engagement and burnout can be linked).

It has also been shown that work engagement is positively related with self-efficacy (Salanova et al., 2001). According to Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), self-efficacy is defined as the "...beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Quite interestingly, it seems that self-efficacy may precede, as well as follow, engagement (Llorens, Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, in press; Salanova, Bresó, & Schaufeli, 2005; Salanova, Grau, Cifre, & Llorens, 2000a). This suggests the existence of an upward spiral: self-efficacy fuels engagement, which, in turn, increases efficacy beliefs, and so on. Such a pattern is in line with Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2001) which predicts reciprocal relationships between self-efficacy and positive affective-cognitive

outcomes, such as work engagement. In a similar vein, this reciprocal relationship is compatible with the notion of so-called "gain spirals" as described by Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2000). According to COR theory, people strive to obtain, retain, and protect their resources, including personal resources such as self-efficacy. Such resources are likely to accumulate across time; that is, self-efficacy breeds self-efficacy.

In addition, self-efficacy beliefs have been observed to mediate the relationship between positive emotions (i.e., enthusiasm, satisfaction, and comfort) and work engagement (Salanova et al., 2005). This is compatible with the Broaden-and-Build theory (Frederickson, 2001) which posits that experiencing positive emotions broadens people's momentary thought-action repertories, which, in turn, fosters the accumulation of resources, such as building one's self-efficacy. Since the accumulation of these resources is associated with positive emotions, the broaden-and-build cycle is closed.

Taken together, these results suggest a complex interplay of job resources, efficacy beliefs, positive outcomes, and engagement. It seems that these are all elements of a self-perpetuating motivational process, whereby work engagement plays a mediating role; that is, it acts as both an antecedent (of proactivity and self-efficacy) as well as an outcome (of self-efficacy and positive emotions). This also means that rather than being a constituting element of work engagement (as suggested by the confirmatory factor analytic studies discussed above), efficacy beliefs play an independent role in boosting work engagement by perpetuating a positive gain spiral.

Possible causes of work engagement do not lie only in the work situation. For instance, it appears that employees who take positive experiences from home to work (or vice versa) exhibit higher levels of engagement, compared to those for whom there is no positive transmission between the two different life domains (Montgomery et al., 2003). In other words, a positive interplay between work and home is associated with engagement. In a somewhat similar vein, in a study among working couples it was shown that wives' levels of vigor and dedication uniquely contributed to husbands' levels of vigor and dedication, respectively, even when controlling for several work and home demands (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2005). The same applies to husbands' levels of engagement that are likewise influenced by their wives' levels of engagement. This means that engagement is "contagious," it crosses over from partner to spouse, and vice versa. Likewise, it has been demonstrated that "flow"—as measured by a combination absorption, work enjoyment, and intrinsic work motivation—crosses over from music teachers to their students (Bakker, 2005).

The crossing-over of engagement from one person to another suggests that a process akin to emotional contagion takes place. According to Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson (1994), emotional contagion is

> ...the tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize facial expressions, vocalizations, postures, and movements with those of another person, and consequently, to converge emotionally. (p. 5)

Interestingly, the contagious nature of engagement seems to mirror that of burnout symptoms. Namely, Bakker et al. (2005) found that burnout crosses over from partners to spouses, and vice versa. Moreover, the infectious nature of burnout has been observed in various occupational groups such as teachers (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2000), physicians (Bakker, Schaufeli, Sixma, & Bosveld, 2001), nurses (Bakker, Le Blanc, & Schaufeli, 2005), and white-collar workers (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003). Therefore, it seems that positive as well as negative work-related moods might spread among employees: As far as emotional contagion is concerned, engagement and burnout seem to mirror each other.

The possible consequences of work engagement pertain to positive job-related attitudes, individual health, extra-role behaviors and performance. Compared to those who do not feel engaged, those who feel engaged are more satisfied with their jobs, feel more committed to the organization, and do not intend to leave the organization and look for an alternative job elsewhere (Demerouti et al., 2001a; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, 2004b). In a similar vein, a recent study among Swedish ICT-workers showed that work engagement, job involvement, and organizational commitment are empirically distinct constructs. In addition, engaged workers seem to enjoy good mental and psychosomatic health (Demerouti et al., 2001a; Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006; Schaufeli et al., in press). Furthermore, they exhibit personal initiative, proactive behavior, and learning motivation (Salanova & Schaufeli, in press; Sonnentag, 2003), whereby engagement seems to play a mediating role between the availability of job resources and these positive organizational behaviors, as discussed above. Taken together, the results concerning positive organizational behavior suggest that engaged workers are able and willing to "go the extra mile." This is also illustrated by the finding that (compared to nonengaged employees) engaged employees work more overtime (Beckers, Van der Linden, Smulders, Kompier, Van Veldhoven & Van Yperen, 2004). Finally, and most importantly, those who are engaged perform better. Recently, Salanova, Agut, and Peiró (2005), showed that levels of work engagement of contact employees from hotels and restaurants related to service quality, as perceived by customers. More specifically, the more engaged the employees, the better the service climate, the better employee performance (as assessed by customers), and the more loyal customers were. In a similar vein, using a somewhat broader measure, Harter et al. (2002) showed that levels of employee engagement were positively related to business-unit performance (i.e., customer satisfaction and loyalty, profitability, produc-

tivity, turnover, and safety) across almost 8,000 business-units of 36 companies. The observed correlation of engagement with a composite performance measure was .22, and increased to .38 when corrected for measurement error and restriction of range. The authors conclude that engagement is "... related to meaningful business outcomes at a magnitude that is important to many organizations" (p. 276). Finally, a positive relationship was also observed between engagement and academic performance: The more engaged that students were, the more exams they passed during the prior semester. This retrospective result was found in Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands (Schaufeli et al., 2002b). Moreover, levels of engagement also *predict* future academic performance; that is, the more engaged the students feel the higher their next year's grade point average (Salanova, Bresó, & Schaufeli, 2005; Salanova, Martínez, Bresó, Llorens, & Grau, 2005). In addition, it seems that past success increases students' efficacy beliefs and levels of engagement, which, in turn, increase future academic success (another illustration of a gain-spiral).

Taken together, not only have possible antecedents (i.e., job resources and positive home experiences) and possible consequences (i.e., positive attitudes, extra-role behaviors, health, and job and academic performance) been identified, but research has also suggested the existence of such underlying psychological processes as emotional contagion and motivation. As far as the latter are concerned, results point to a complex reciprocal relationship between resources, engagement, and positive outcomes that may result in an upward gain spiral. More specifically, it seems that job resources and personal resources (efficacy beliefs) increase positive outcomes via work engagement, *and* that these positive outcomes and high levels of engagement have a positive impact on both types of resources.

Does Collective Work Engagement Exist?

Work engagement is not only an individual phenomenon, but it also occurs in groups; that is, it seems that employees in some teams or parts of organizations are more engaged than in other teams or parts (Salanova, Agut, et al., 2005). As we have seen in the previous section, these observations suggest the existence of a process of emotional contagion. This is also supported by yet unpublished results from over 80 Dutch home care organizations (total N about 26,000). It appeared that in teams of each of these organizations, those with either high levels or with low levels of work engagement tended to cluster. Thus, it seems that team members feel engaged because they converge emotionally with the engagement of others in their work team. This process of emotional contagion, by which one team member "catches" the high level of engagement of the other team

members, may be responsible for the emergence of collective forms of engagement: The more engaged the team, the more engaged its members, and vice versa. As noted above in the section on the antecedents and consequence of engagement, a similar process of symptom contagion has also been observed for negative states, such as burnout.

The relevance of collective engagement was investigated in a laboratory study by asking individual team members about the level of collective team engagement (Salanova et al., 2003); To what extent do they perceive *the team* to be vigorous, dedicated, and absorbed in performing a collaborate laboratory task? The results indicated that the teams who had to carry out the task under time pressure reported higher levels of collective engagement, but only when the team felt competent to solve the task. When the team felt that it lacked the competence to do so, levels of collective engagement were low. Put differently, efficacy beliefs moderated the effect of stressors (i.e., time pressure) on engagement. This means that efficacy beliefs not only play a role in fostering individual engagement, but in collective engagement as well.

Can Work Engagement and Burnout Be Linked?

Is it possible to link work engagement and burnout and to design an overall conceptual model that integrates negative and positive employee well-being? As concluded from the previous section, work engagement seems to play a crucial role in the process of work motivation, which is an important area of HRM. Likewise, burnout seems to play a key role in a process of energy depletion and health impairment (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001b), which is traditionally the main focus of OHP. Linking both processes is important because it could reinforce the integration of HRM and OHP, both conceptually as well as practically (see the first section). Therefore, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004b) tested a dual-process model of positive and negative employee well-being including:

1. An *erosion process* of energy depletion in which job stressors and lacking job resources are associated with burnout, which, in turn, is related to health complaints and negative work attitudes.
2. A *motivational process* in which available job resources are associated with work engagement, which, in turn, is associated with positive work attitudes (see Figure 5.2).

Schaufeli and Bakker's (2004b) study included workload and emotional demands as job stressors. Job resources included social support from colleagues, coaching from the supervisor, and performance feedback. Psycho-

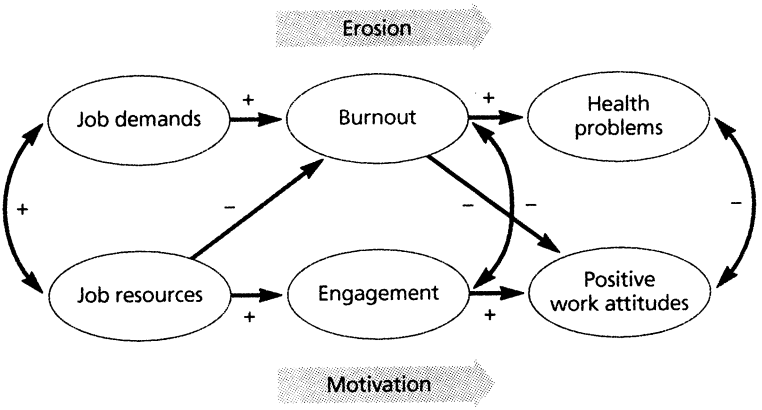

Figure 5.2. The dual-process model of positive and negative employee well-being.

somatic health problems and turnover intentions were included as indicators of employee health and work-related attitudes, respectively. The dual-process model was successfully fitted to the data of employees from four different service organizations. As indicated by Figure 5.2, burnout and engagement played mediating roles in the erosion and the motivation processes, respectively. In addition, various cross-links between both processes were observed, meaning that both processes are interconnected. For instance, job demands and job resources are negatively related: When high job demands are perceived, resources are perceived to be poor, and vice versa. Likewise, burnout and engagement (see the section on the assessment of engagement), and health problems and favorable work attitudes are negatively related.

Essentially, the results of Schaufeli and Bakker (2004b) have been replicated among Finnish teachers (Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006) and Spanish and Dutch ICT-workers (Llorens, Salanova, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2007). Future research could further validate the model by including personal resources (i.e., efficacy beliefs) in the motivational process and by including extra-role behaviors and job performance as additional outcomes. Not only was the dual-process model successfully tested on the data from various samples, but from a somewhat broader perspective, it may also serve to integrate results from other studies. For instance, the studies reviewed in the sections about the assessment and about the antecedents and consequences of engagement reported similar relationships as those depicted in Figure 5.2 between engagement, resources, and organizational outcomes. In addition, relationships between burnout on the one hand and job demands, *lacking* resources, and negative health and organizational attitudes on the other hand (see Figure 5.2) have also been observed (for a review, see Schaufeli &

Enzmann, 1998). Thus, for the time being, the dual process-model that links positive and negative employee well-being serves as a heuristic integrative framework that may guide future research efforts.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS: BUILDING ENGAGEMENT

After introducing the concept of work engagement, we will now elucidate the implications for organizations. How can HRM and OHP be used to build engagement? The shift from the prevailing traditional, negative approach that focuses on sickness and unwell-being toward a more positive approach that focuses on health and wellness provides the opportunity for HRM and OHP to join forces. After all, organizational health, the domain of HRM, and employee health, the domain of OHP, are co-dependent (Cooper & Williams, 1994), meaning that increasing the former also increases the latter, and vice versa. This notion of codependence is in line with Schabracq and Cooper (2000) who argue that the way modern organizations manage their employees' health and well-being is a critical factor in their global competitiveness. In addition, codependence is illustrated by the growing recognition that the organization's financial health correlates with investments in employee well-being (Goetzel, Guindon, Turshen, & Ozminskowski, 2001). Hence, analogous to the classical adage "a healthy mind in a healthy body," one could formulate as a common goal for OHP and HRM to promote "a healthy employee in a healthy organization."

As argued above, work engagement may be considered an essential, positive element of employee health and well-being. Moreover, engagement is essential for today's organizations, given the changes they are currently facing (see Table 5.1). Therefore, the crucial question for organizations is how to increase levels of engagement among their employees. By building engagement, synergy is created between individual employees and the organization as a whole, meaning that optimal outcomes for both occur. As we have seen in section 2, for engaged employees these outcomes might include: (a) positive job-related attitudes and a strong identification with one's work; (b) good mental health, including positive emotions and a lower risk of burning out; (c) good performance; (d) increased intrinsic motivation; and (e) the acquisition of job resources and personal resources, particularly self-efficacy. Most of these individual outcomes are, directly or indirectly, beneficial for the organization as well. In addition, for organizations, high levels of employee engagement might result in: (a) the retention of valued and talented employees (e.g., the "loyalty effect"; Reichheld, 1996); (b) a positive corporate image (e.g., a nomination for

"Best places to work"; see http://www.eu100best.org); (c) a healthy, competitive, and effective organization (Bennett, Cook, & Pelletier, 2003).

Essential for building engagement is the initiation and maintenance of so-called gain spirals. As we have seen, these are upward spirals that are sparked by job resources and personal resources (self-efficacy beliefs), and may result in various positive outcomes via work engagement. In turn, these positive outcomes increase resources and foster high levels of engagement, and so on. Following the logic of these gain-spirals, work engagement may be increased by stimulating each link of the spiral, be it resources or positive outcomes. Below, we outline how this can be achieved, using strategies that focus on assessing and evaluating employees, designing and changing work places, leadership, and training and career management.

Assessment and Evaluation of Employees

The ultimate purpose of personnel assessment and evaluation is "the right person in the right job." In other words, the purpose is to create an optimal balance in terms of a good fit between personal values and goals, and those of the organization. More particularly, personnel assessment and evaluation is about increasing identification, motivation, and commitment—from the perspective of the organization—as well as about personal and professional development—from the perspective of the employee. Work engagement may play a crucial role because, on the one hand it fosters employee identification, motivation, and commitment, and on the other hand it might play a role in the employee's development; for instance by increasing the level of self-efficacy which is an important prerequisite for organizational learning (Bandura, 1997). An essential tool for successful personnel assessment and evaluation is systematic, tailor-made, and preferably positive, feedback. Three strategies can be distinguished that may enhance work engagement: establishing and monitoring the psychological contract, periodic wellness audits, and interactive workshops on work engagement.

The notion of *psychological contract* refers to the expectations held by employees about the nature of their exchange with the organization (Rousseau, 1995). It reflects the employees' subjective notion of reciprocity: The gains or outcomes from the organization are expected to be proportional to one's own investments or inputs. These outcomes refer to tangible aspects such as money, or economic benefits but also refer to more intangible aspects such as self-esteem, dignity, or promotion. The same applies for the investments; for example, time, effort, or skills (tangible), and commitment, loyalty, or involvement (intangible). When the psychological con-

tract is violated and reciprocity is corroded, this might not only lead to burnout (Schaufeli, 2006), but also a host of other negative work outcomes, including the intention to quit, turnover, job dissatisfaction (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994), cynicism (Anderson, 1996), poor organizational commitment (Guzzo & Noonan, 1994), and absenteeism (De Boer, Bakker, Syroit, & Schaufeli, 2002). Hence, in order to avoid these negative individual and organizational consequences and to build engagement, a satisfactory psychological contract must be created. Ideally, the psychological contract should reflect an optimal fit between employee and organization in terms of mutual expectations.

The challenge is how to draft this contract. We propose a procedure that consists of three steps:

1. Assessing the employee's values, preferences, and personal and professional goals.
2. Negotiating and drafting a written contract (provisionally dubbed "Employee Development Agreement" [EDA]) that acknowledges (some of) these goals and provides the necessary resources to be supplemented by the organization (e.g., training, coaching, equipment, budget).
3. Monitoring this written agreement in terms of goal achievement, including the readjustment of goals and the provision of additional resources.

Essentially, we propose to install a system of goal setting (Locke, 1968) that might be integrated into existing systems of performance appraisal and evaluation. However, instead of organizational goals (e.g., productivity, quality, efficiency), our EDA entails *personal* goals (e.g., development of skills and competencies, promotion, mastery of particular tasks or duties), and it includes the necessary *resources* to achieve these personal goals. Essentially, the EDA optimizes the fit between employee and organization, and hence it creates the desired synergy. This EDA is expected to be successful because, as is illustrated by the dual-process model of employee well-being (see Figure 5.2), job resources drive the motivational process that increases work engagement and eventually leads to positive outcomes for the organization. By providing the necessary resources to meet valued individual goals, an upward gain cycle is set in motion, as high levels of engagement and success tend to accumulate resources, and so on.

Wellness audits are similar to employee satisfaction surveys or psychosocial checkups that are acknowledged tools for HRM and occupational health policies, respectively. However, they differ in that a wellness audit is more comprehensive since it focuses on *positive* aspects such as resources, engagement, and positive individual and organizational outcomes. The

aim of wellness audits is to inform individual employees, as well as the organizations they work for, about the levels of wellness and all associated aspects, including engagement. This information is important for making decisions about measures that should be taken for improvement, either individually or organizationally. The dual-process model of employee well-being has been used for drafting wellness audits in Spain and in the Netherlands. These audits include job stressors (e.g., work overload, conflicts, role problems, emotional demands, work–home interference), job resources (e.g., variety, feedback, social support, job control, career development), burnout, engagement, negative personal and organizational outcomes (e.g., depression, distress, absenteeism, turnover intention), and positive personal and organizational outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, extra-role performance). In addition, personal and job information is included as well as personal resources such as self-efficacy, and mental and emotional competencies. Depending on the particular job and organization under scrutiny, stressors, resources, or outcomes can be included or eliminated. Online Spanish and English versions of such wellness-audits are available at http://www.wont.uji.es/.

In the Netherlands, the leading national Occupational Health and Safety Service has recently introduced a comprehensive wellness audit which offers individually-tailored feedback to employees and—on an aggregated level—to management. As far as reporting to management is concerned, both internal benchmarks (teams or departments) as well as external benchmarks (other organizations) are used. Usually, the results of the wellness audit are fed back to work teams and departments that are encouraged to come up with suggestions for improvement—the so-called Survey Feedback Method. The results of this survey feedback are included in the report for management. By performing the audits periodically (for example, every year), trends in wellness can be spotted and effects of interventions to increase engagement may be evaluated.

Workshops are structured group meetings of employees to promote health and well-being, including work engagement, usually by augmenting personal resources. Traditionally, such workshops have been used more or less successfully to prevent or reduce job stress in general (Van der Klink, Blonk, Schene, & Van Dijk, 2001) and burnout in particular (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998, pp. 179–182). However, in order to build engagement, a shift in focus from decreasing stress and burnout symptoms toward optimizing the quality of work and the level of employee functioning, is needed. In that sense, workshops that aim to build engagement are similar to so-called Quality Circles, except that they focus on the enhancement of *personal* resources, such as cognitive, behavioral, and social skills (e.g., positive thinking, goal-setting, time-management, and life-style improvement). Another feature of workshops is that they might act as a tool for the trans-

mission of corporate culture, thus contributing to the successful integration and socialization of employees. As such, they might be used for emphasizing the organization's commitment to work engagement as an element of corporate culture. Besides, the fact that employees have the opportunity to participate in workshops, and thus to learn and to develop themselves, is likely to be interpreted positively in terms of the psychological contract so that employee loyalty and commitment to the organization might increase.

Job (Re)Design and Work Changes

The (re)designing of jobs serves two purposes—from an occupational health perspective it reduces the exposure to psychosocial risks, whereas from an HRM perspective it increases employee motivation. At least in the European Union, adapting and changing workplaces in order to promote employee safety, health, and well-being is a legal issue as well. Since 1989, employers in the EU must comply with the European Framework Directive on Health and Safety at work (89/391/EEC). According to this framework, employing organizations have the duty to ensure the safety and health of their employees by taking preventive measures such as minimizing the exposure to safety and health risks, and designing work in such a way that it is adapted to employees (see Kompier, 2003).

It follows from the dual-process model of employee well-being (see Figure 5.2) that, in order to be effective in reducing burnout and other job related stress reactions, two avenues may be followed. First, reducing exposure to job stressors such as work overload, role problems and conflicts; and second, providing job resources such as job control and support from coworkers and supervisors. In contrast, in order to increase engagement, reducing the exposure to job stressors is *not* an option; instead, the motivating potential of job resources should be exploited. Resources are not only necessary to deal with job demands and to "get things done," but they also are important in their own right because they stimulate the personal growth, learning, and development of employees. Moreover, as we have seen in the section on antecedents and consequences, job resources may spark gain spirals that increase work engagement. In contrast, the lack of organizational resources has a detrimental effect on workers' motivation and performance (Wong, Hui, & Law, 1998) since it precludes actual goal accomplishment, and undermines employees' learning opportunities (Kelly, 1992). Although several psychological theories document the motivating potential of job resources (see the section on antecedents and consequences), Job Characteristics Theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) is most explicit in predicting that particular strategies of redesigning jobs

(such as job enrichment, job enlargement, and job rotation) have positive effects on employee well-being, motivation, and performance.

Taken together, in order to build engagement, employees should be provided with the necessary resources. Which resources are most important depends not only on the nature of the job, but also on the values, preferences, and goals of individual employees, as was elucidated in the section about assessment and evaluation where the EDA was discussed. The Vitamin Model of Warr (1987) lists nine types of job resources ("vitamins") that are related to employee health and well-being: (a) opportunity for control; (b) opportunity for skill use; (c) externally generated goals; (d) variety; (e) environmental clarity; (f) availability of money; (g) physical security; (h) opportunity for interpersonal contact; and (i) valued social position. Each of these categories may be further broken down. For instance, opportunity for interpersonal contact includes the amount of social interaction (i.e., level of contact), the quality of the interaction (i.e., support), and privacy and personal territory. These nine categories serve as a short-list to assess the profile of resources in a particular job so that lacking resources can be tracked down and, if necessary, provided. Each job has its particular profile of resources and not all resources apply equally to each job. Nevertheless, by using the classification of Warr (1987), a systematic assessment of the available job resources is provided.

Another related strategy is to implement *work changes*. In doing so, job resources are not additionally provided or increased, but they are merely changed, for example, when jobs are rotated, when employees are temporarily assigned to carry out special projects, or when they are replaced to entirely other jobs. As argued by Schabracq (2003) work changes challenge employees; increase their motivation, flexibility, and employability; and spur learning and professional development. Based on qualitative research on engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2001), we may add that, most likely, changing work also increases work engagement. This will be the case particularly when employees are highly challenged in their new jobs and at the same time possess the necessary competencies to meet these challenges (Salanova et al., 2001). However, positive effects of changing work are only expected when the change is carefully planned and in accordance with the preferences, goals, and personal resources (knowledge, skills, competencies) of the employee. If this is not the case and work changes are exclusively used as a means to solve organizational problems, it will do employees more harm than good. Ideally, work changes should be agreed upon in the Employee Development Agreement.

Leadership

An important task of leaders is to optimize the emotional climate in their team. A "good" leader is able not only to prevent job stress and burn-

out among group members, but also to enhance motivation and engagement. Results from research suggest that engagement is "contagious," it crosses over not only from partner to spouse, but also from one employee to another (see the section on the antecedents and consequences of engagement). It was argued that a process akin to symptom contagion might be responsible for the spreading of engagement in work teams. That is, team members feel engaged because they converge emotionally with the engagement of other members in the work team. Moreover, it appeared that engagement is a collective phenomenon as well, meaning that teams may feel "engaged" when their members closely collaborate to accomplish particular tasks (see the section on collective engagement). Hence, social psychological group processes seem to be involved in maintaining and enhancing work engagement. It follows that team leaders might have a positive impact on levels of individual and collective engagement depending on the way they manage these processes. For example, Aguilar and Salanova (2005) found that "Selling" leaders (those who are high in task and support behavior) were more effective at increasing individual work engagement than those displaying other patterns of leadership behaviors.

In order to stimulate a positive socio-emotional climate, and thus to enhance engagement, leaders should (see also Schabracq, 2003):

- Acknowledge and reward good performance instead of exclusively correcting substandard performance. Thus, also provide *positive* feedback to employees.
- Be fair towards employees because this will strengthen the psychological contract; they should not act out of self-interest, favoritism, or nepotism.
- Put problems on the agenda and discuss these in an open, constructive, and problem solving way, both in work meetings and in more informal individual exchanges.
- Inform employees about important issues on a regular basis and as early and completely as possible in face-to-face meetings. This helps build trust.
- Coach employees by helping them with setting goals, planning their work, pointing out pitfalls, and giving advice as necessary. Offer emotional support when necessary.
- Interview employees on a regular basis about their personal functioning, professional development, and career development. Provide timely and clear performance feedback by closely monitoring the Employee Development Agreement (EDA) and other performance arrangements.

These considerate leadership behaviors not only stimulate a favorable group climate that is characterized by fairness, trust, openness, and con-

structive problem solving, but they are important resources in and of themselves as well (e.g., feedback, coaching, social support).

According to Bass (1985), transformational leadership goes one step beyond this considerate, employee-centered leadership style by offering employees, in addition, a purpose that transcends short-term goals and focuses on higher-order intrinsic needs. This kind of leadership is of special importance for today's organizations that go through profound changes (see Table 5.1) and that are therefore in need of charismatic, inspiring, and visionary leaders, who are able to motivate employees and build engagement. More specifically, transformational leadership is a form of leadership that occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and the mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group (Bass, 1998). The four main elements of transformational leadership are: (Avolio, 1999): (a) charisma (i.e., behaving in admirable ways that cause the followers to identify), (b) inspirational motivation (i.e., the articulation of an appealing vision that is inspiring). (c) Intellectual stimulation (i.e., challenge assumptions, take risks, and solicit followers' ideas), and (d) individualized consideration (i.e., attending to the followers' needs and acting as a mentor or coach). This means that transformational leaders display conviction, take stands, challenge followers with high standards, communicate optimism about future goal attainment, stimulate and encourage creativity and innovation, and listen to the followers' concerns and needs. Not surprisingly, this leadership style has a positive impact on followers' health and well-being (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999; Turner, Barling & Zacharatos, 2002), as well as on their job satisfaction, performance, and motivation (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Based on these results, one might speculate that transformational leadership also increases followers' work engagement, particularly because of the individualized consideration and inspirational motivation elements. The former is expected to stimulate a favorable socio-emotional group climate and provide social resources (see also above), whereas the latter enhances self-efficacy as high challenges are linked with optimism and confidence about the desired results.

Training and Career Development

Work training and career development are traditional HRM strategies in organizations, and the challenge is how to use them to enhance employees' levels of engagement. Schabracq (2003) has argued that in addition to being purely directed at the job content, training programs that promote employee health and well-being should be directed at personal growth and

development. For instance, they should include time management, stress management, personal effectiveness, and self-management. The last two are particularly relevant for enhancing engagement. In our view, increasing efficacy beliefs is the cornerstone for the promotion of work engagement via work training and career development.

Work training is a learning process across the entire life span that relates ultimately to the employee's job performance. The objective of work training is to modify behaviors that are relevant for job performance via changes in attitudes, beliefs, and values (Salanova & Grau, 1999). A powerful tool for achieving this is to increase employee's efficacy beliefs, or "the power to believe that you can." According to SCT, self-efficacy lies at the core of human agency and is important because it influences employee's behavior, thinking, motivation, and feelings (Bandura, 2001). First, it affects the type of work behavior that is displayed; that is, employees select those behaviors for which they anticipate success. Second, levels of self-efficacy determine how much effort and persistence is mobilized for overcoming obstacles; the more efficacious employees feel, the more motivated they are. Third, self-efficacy influences the way we think; high levels of self-efficacy are associated with optimism, whereas lack of efficacy is associated with pessimism. Finally, high levels of self-efficacy make us feel good, whereas low-levels make us feel depressed.

Overlooking these effects of self-efficacy, it does not come as a surprise that job burnout has been considered a "crisis of self-efficacy" (Chernis, 1993: Leiter, 1992) because burned-out employees are characterized by lack of accomplishment, poor motivation (i.e., cynicism), pessimism, exhaustion, and depression. In contrast, research on engagement (see the section on collective engagement) has shown that it is related to high levels of self-efficacy (e.g., Salanova et al., 2001). Even more so, research suggests an upward gain-spiral in which self-efficacy boosts engagement, which in its turn increases efficacy beliefs, and so on (e.g., Llorens et al., in press; Salanova, Bresó, & Schaufeli, 2005). In this sense, efficacy beliefs serve as a kind of self-motivating mechanism: As a consequence of observing their own competence, employees set new goals that motivate them to mobilize additional effort, focus, and persistence. Engagement seems to fulfill two roles in this dynamic process, namely being an antecedent that fosters self-efficacy as well as a consequence that is associated with successful goal attainment.

But how may self-efficacy—and therefore work engagement—be enhanced? According to SCT, efficacy beliefs may be enhanced by mastery experiences, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and positive emotional states (Bandura, 1997, 2001). Hence training programs should include these elements, for instance, practical exercises to provide experiences of vocational success (mastery experiences), role models of good

performance (vicarious experiences), coaching and encouragement (verbal persuasion), and reducing fear of rejection or failure (managing emotional states). According to Bandura (1997), mastery experiences are the most powerful tool for boosting efficacy beliefs. The best way to evoke mastery experiences in employees is therefore by tackling work problems in successive, attainable steps. While successes build a robust belief in one's job self-efficacy, failures undermine it, especially in the earlier phases of training. Therefore, in order to achieve resilient self-efficacy, experiences in overcoming obstacles through persistent and increased effort are required. In a similar way, if people see similar others succeed by sustained effort, they come to believe that they also have the capability to succeed (vicarious experiences). Trainers and supervisors may also use social persuasion in order to convince employees that they have what it takes to succeed, and so they make more effort and are more likely to persevere if they have self-doubts when obstacles arise. Finally, employees also rely on their emotional states, and the physiological arousal associated with them, to evaluate their own capabilities. Negative emotions such as tension, anxiety, and depression are signs of personal deficiency. In this case, it is appropriate to enhance the employee's mental and physical condition, reduce the employee's negative emotional states, and correct misinterpretations of somatic sources of information. Although we discussed the principles for increasing self-efficacy in the framework of work training, supervisors may equally well apply them when coaching employees.

Finally, we would like to address the relevance of *career development* as a strategy to optimize employee engagement. Although most employees still favor life-long job stability and vertical, upward mobility, current changes in organizational life make this perspective no longer a self-evident one. For instance, organizations are now frequently assigning employees to projects and not to jobs. In such cases, there may be no regular working hours and employees are accountable to their project team, which is, in turn, accountable to the larger project. When the project ends, employees move to another project. In addition, the number of temporary employed workers has drastically increased in the past years. To illustrate this point, *Manpower*, the largest temporary agency in the Unites States, is the country's largest single employer with nearly 600,000 employees (Rifkin, 1995). Hence, in order to remain competitive in the labor market, individual employees need continuously to develop their knowledge, competencies, and skills. In other words, because employees have to adapt to changes in organizational life (see Table 5.1), they have to increase their employability. Instead of a fixed career path, of which each step requires specific predefined experience and expertise, nowadays employees have to cope with a much more unstable job situation. Although career development is still a fit process that involves HRM planning, organizational strategic needs, and employee's

future career planning (Schein, 1976), over the years, the emphasis has shifted more toward the latter. That is, more than before, employees have to rely on their own initiative to develop themselves continuously, both professionally and personally, in order to remain "employable."

In our view, employability also includes a high level of engagement, because it makes employees more fit and successful to do the job. However, following the upward gain-spiral of engagement, the reverse might also be true: By carefully planning one's career, that is, by successively selecting those jobs that provide many opportunities for professional and personal development, it is likely that levels of engagement will remain high. In order to monitor levels of engagement, an online career monitor has been developed for physicians, who, as members of the Dutch Medical Association, may voluntarily complete the computerized tool on the association's website (Bakker, Schaufeli, Bulters, Van Rooijen, & Ten Broek, 2002). Based on the feedback, measures can be taken when levels of engagement drop markedly.

The key issue for employees to remain engaged in their jobs is to keep developing themselves throughout their careers. For this purpose, the EDA can be used (see the section on the assessement and evaluation of employees) which includes the development of specific skills or competencies that increase the employee's employability. Also, jobs can be redesigned, or work can be changed (see the section on job (re)design and work changes) in order to foster employee development and associated flexibility. Finally, work training (see the section on training and career development) may serve the same purpose. In other words, many tools that have been previously described to increase levels of engagement might also be used for increasing employability. The reason for this is obvious: work engagement, and professional and personal development, are intimately related.

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, we argued that the emerging concept of work engagement might bridge the gap between OHP and HRM. Traditionally, the former uses a negative approach focusing on employee illness and unwell-being, whereas the latter uses a more positive approach focusing on the contribution that employees make to organizational success. In order to survive and prosper in a continuously changing environment, modern organizations do not merely need "healthy" employees—that is, employees who are free of symptoms—but employees who are vigorous, dedicated, and absorbed in their work. In short: They need *engaged* employees.

We introduced the concept of work engagement that has recently emerged, and discussed its empirical underpinnings. In addition, we

explored how work engagement may be enhanced in organizations using various strategies. In doing so, we tried to illustrate the usefulness for HRM of a concept that evolved from the positive turn that OHP is currently taking.

Seven main conclusions can be drawn from the brief overview of empirical studies onwork engagement:

1. Psychometric evaluation of a self-report questionnaire (UWES) showed satisfactory validity and reliability in a wide range of different samples in various national contexts using different language versions. Hence, work engagement can be assessed by a self-report instrument that is available in more than a dozen languages.
2. Work engagement is positively associated with various job resources such as social support, performance feedback, job autonomy, coaching, and task variety. In addition, a positive interplay between work and home is associated with work engagement (and vice versa).
3. Work engagement is associated with positive organizational outcomes at the attitudinal and behavioral level, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, extra-role behavior, and high performance. In addition, work engagement is associated with good mental health.
4. As hypothesized, work engagement is the positive opposite of burnout. Although engagement and workaholism seem to share the element of absorption, the underlying motivation to be completely engrossed in one's work differs between these two psychological states. Moreover, engagement, burnout, and workaholism are related to different variables. So, rather than three of a kind, they are three different kinds of employee well-being.
5. A process of emotional contagion seems to be responsible for transmitting work engagement among spouses and coworkers, and for the emergence of collective engagement in work teams.
6. A positive upward spiral seems to exist for resources, self-efficacy, work engagement, and success. The availability of resources and high levels of self-efficacy motivate employees to be engaged and, therefore, successful. Because of these successes, resources accumulate and self-efficacy and engagement are further enhanced.
7. The so-called dual-process model assumes that work engagement mediates the positive effect of job resources on organizational outcomes, whereas burnout mediates the negative effects of job demands on employee health.

In the second part of this chapter, we considered the practical implications of work engagement for current organizations. The main objective

was to explore what organizations can do to increase work engagement among their employees, using HRM-strategies such as personnel assessment and evaluation, job (re)design, leadership, training, and career development. Based on this overview, we may draw the following five conclusions:

1. The assessment and evaluation of employees may contribute to their identification with the job and to further personal and professional development, and hence stimulate engagement. Wellness audits inform employees (online) about their current levels of engagement and other associated factors so that they can take action when necessary. By drafting and monitoring a so-called EDA, that includes personal goals for future development as well as organizational resources that are necessary to accomplish these goals, employee engagement is likely to be increased. In addition, participative workshops might be helpful in building engagement and increasing organizational effectiveness.
2. Job (re)design may enhance work engagement by making use of the motivating potential of job resources. According to the dual process model of employee well-being, increasing job resources is likely to result in higher levels of work engagement. Hence, (re)designing jobs in order to promote engagement boils down to increasing job resources. In addition, job rotation and changing jobs might result in higher engagement levels because they challenge employees, increase their motivation, and stimulate learning and professional development.
3. Since engagement seems to be contagious and may spread across members of work teams, leaders have a special role in fostering work engagement among their followers by managing the social psychological processes involved. It is to be expected that considerate leadership, and more particularly transformational leadership, is successful in accomplishing this. Moreover, research suggests that leaders are key social resources for the development of employee engagement, for instance in their role as coach.
4. Training programs in organizations that aim at increasing work engagement should focus on building efficacy beliefs that serve as a kind of self-motivating mechanism. That is, high levels of self-efficacy set in motion an upward gain-spiral that boosts engagement and subsequent performance, which in its turn increases efficacy beliefs, and so on. Mastery experiences are the most powerful tools to enhance efficacy beliefs, followed by vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and positive emotions.
5. Career planning and development in modern organizations basically boils down to increasing employability. This is achieved by ensuring

continuous personal and professional development, whereby employees have to rely more and more on their own initiative. To the extent that employees are able to keep developing themselves throughout their careers, their levels of engagement are likely to remain high.

To sum up, we believe that the emerging concept of work engagement that results from a recent shift in OHP from a negative disease-oriented approach toward a positive wellness approach is a viable construct that is firmly rooted in empirical research. What is more, work engagement may play a crucial role in the development of the organization's human capital. Being an essential, positive element of employee health and well-being, it may help to create synergy between positive outcomes for individual employees and for organizations. This is expressed by the slogan, "A healthy employee in a healthy organization."

NOTES

1. For instance, (in alphabetic order): aggression, alcoholism, anti-social behaviour, burnout, cardiovascular disease, chronic fatigue syndrome, depression, discrimination, downsizing, drug abuse, emotional dissonance, exhaustion, fatigue, harassment, hypertension, incivility, injury compensation, interpersonal conflict, job insecurity, mobbing, musculoskeletal disorders, post-traumatic stress syndrome, psychosomatic complaints, repetitive strain injury, sexual harassment, sickness absenteeism, sleep problems, smoking, turnover, unemployment, violence, workaholism, work—home conflict, and work injury.
2. The SMVM is available on: http://recanati.tau.ac.il/faculty/shirom_arie.htm
3. Afrikaans, Chinese, Czech, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish.

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APPENDIX
Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)©

The following 17 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, write "0" (zero) in the space preceding the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

1. _____ At my work, I feel that I am bursting with energy* *(VI1)*
2. _____ I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose *(DE1)*
3. _____ Time flies when I'm working *(AB1)*
4. _____ At my job, I feel strong and vigorous *(VI2)**
5. _____ I am enthusiastic about my job *(DE2)**
6. _____ When I am working, I forget everything else around me *(AB2)*
7. _____ My job inspires me *(DE3)**
8. _____ When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work *(VI3)**
9. _____ I feel happy when I am working intensely *(AB3)**
10. _____ I am proud of the work that I do *(DE4)**

11. _____ I am immersed in my work *(AB4)**
12. _____ I can continue working for very long periods at a time *(VI4)*
13. _____ To me, my job is challenging *(DE5)*
14. _____ I get carried away when I'm working *(AB5)**
15. _____ At my job, I am very resilient, mentally *(VI5)*
16. _____ It is difficult to detach myself from my job *(AB6)*
17. _____ At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well *(VI6)*

* Shortened version (UBES-9); VI = Vigor; DE = Dedication; AB = Absorption