

Lopper, Elisa; Zhang, Fangfang; Tims, Maria

Article — Published Version

The bright and dark side of avoidance crafting: How work design matters

Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology

Provided in Cooperation with:

John Wiley & Sons

Suggested Citation: Lopper, Elisa; Zhang, Fangfang; Tims, Maria (2025) : The bright and dark side of avoidance crafting: How work design matters, Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, ISSN 2044-8325, Wiley, Hoboken, NJ, Vol. 98, Iss. 3, <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.70056>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/330152>

Standard-Nutzungsbedingungen:

Die Dokumente auf EconStor dürfen zu eigenen wissenschaftlichen Zwecken und zum Privatgebrauch gespeichert und kopiert werden.

Sie dürfen die Dokumente nicht für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, öffentlich zugänglich machen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Sofern die Verfasser die Dokumente unter Open-Content-Lizenzen (insbesondere CC-Lizenzen) zur Verfügung gestellt haben sollten, gelten abweichend von diesen Nutzungsbedingungen die in der dort genannten Lizenz gewährten Nutzungsrechte.

Terms of use:

Documents in EconStor may be saved and copied for your personal and scholarly purposes.

You are not to copy documents for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the documents publicly, to make them publicly available on the internet, or to distribute or otherwise use the documents in public.

If the documents have been made available under an Open Content Licence (especially Creative Commons Licences), you may exercise further usage rights as specified in the indicated licence.



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The bright and dark side of avoidance crafting: How work design matters

Elisa Lopper¹  | Fangfang Zhang²  | Maria Tims³ 

¹Department of Psychology, Humboldt-Universität Zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany

²Center for Transformative Work Design, Future of Work Institute, Faculty of Business and Law, Curtin University, Western Australia, Australia

³Department of Management and Organisation, School of Business and Economics, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Correspondence

Elisa Lopper, Department of Psychology, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Unter den Linden 6, 10099 Berlin, Germany.
Email: elisa.lopper@hu-berlin.de

Abstract

To address the growing challenges in today's workplace, employees may use avoidance crafting to reduce high job demands or avoid situations low in job resources. However, previous research links avoidance crafting positively—rather than negatively—to exhaustion, potentially due to an overemphasis on avoidance *behavioural demands* crafting, neglecting avoidance cognitive forms and their focus on job demands and resources. This study refers to the hierarchical job crafting conceptualization, distinguishing between behavioural and cognitive changes in job demands and resources, to investigate the links between avoidance crafting dimensions and exhaustion at both between and within-person levels. We also explore the moderating effects of general job autonomy and time pressure. Daily diary data ($N_{\text{between}} = 78$, $N_{\text{within}} = 377$) revealed that avoidance cognitive demands crafting was negatively associated with exhaustion at both levels, highlighting that altering perceptions of job demands is more effective than targeting low job resources. Moreover, work design matters: at the day level, avoidance cognitive demands crafting was particularly effective in reducing exhaustion when employees generally faced low job autonomy and high time pressure. These findings emphasize the importance of differentiating avoidance crafting dimensions and suggest that avoidance cognitive demands crafting seems particularly useful in demanding work environments.

KEYWORDS

avoidance crafting, between-person level, exhaustion, within-person level, work design

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2025 The Author(s). *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of The British Psychological Society.

Practitioner points

- Employees who self-initiated mental distance from negative aspects at work report lower levels of exhaustion.
- In low-autonomy jobs, daily proactive efforts to avoid high job demands are related to higher exhaustion.
- When employees are faced with a demanding work environment, characterized by low autonomy and high time pressure, daily avoidance cognitive demands crafting is related to decreased exhaustion.

INTRODUCTION

In today's changing work environment, the growing emphasis on proactive job crafting by employees complements existing top-down work design approaches. Through job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), employees can proactively enhance positive job aspects (approach crafting) or reduce negative aspects at work (avoidance crafting) (Zhang & Parker, 2019). The increasing challenges of today's work, such as increasing time pressure and coordination needs (Grant & Parker, 2009), can prompt employees in particular to escape from challenging or demanding aspects at work. Such actions are called avoidance crafting, where employees take initiative to move away from negative aspects of their job, such as those low in job resources or high in job demands (e.g., postponing tasks that potentially involve clashes with others at work, or stepping away from mentally and emotionally draining tasks; Lopper et al., 2024; Zhang & Parker, 2019).

Avoidance crafting is theorized to lead to better well-being and lower strain (Tims et al., 2013) as employees proactively decrease their hindering demands (Tims et al., 2012). However, a recent meta-analysis of 58 cross-sectional samples including 20,347 employees (Holman et al., 2024) found the opposite: hindrance demands crafting was positively associated with job strain, and this relationship was explained by higher perceptions of hindrance demands. Additionally, studies suggest that employees experience difficulty in actually reducing job demands (Harju et al., 2021; Tims et al., 2013) and that dealing with negative aspects at work induces stressful reactions and demands regulatory focus (Elliot, 2006). Taken together, these findings may suggest that—in contrast to theoretical expectations—avoidance crafting is more likely to increase exhaustion and thus could be harmful for employee well-being (Petrou et al., 2018; van Wingerden et al., 2017).

However, before embracing this conclusion, it is important to note that at least three alternative explanations may first need to be explored. First, previous research has solely focused on avoidance *behavioural* crafting, aimed at actually reducing hindering job demands. Considering recent conceptual developments of avoidance crafting (Lopper et al., 2024; Zhang & Parker, 2019), which differentiates between behavioural and cognitive changes in either job demands or job resources, we might be able to provide a more nuanced answer to the value of avoidance crafting for employee well-being. Using these distinctions, we theorize—using the cognitive activation theory of stress (CATS; Ursin & Eriksen, 2004)—that particularly avoidance cognitive crafting, in which employees proactively perceive and reframe their job demands and/or job resources differently (Lopper et al., 2024), may reduce exhaustion. Cognitive reframing can enable a positive outcome expectancy for addressing negative job aspects, which is critical for avoiding prolonged stress responses. Furthermore, reframing a lack of job resources might promote positive thinking and a focus on relevant work tasks such that the job seems to be less demanding (Hommelhoff et al., 2021). Given that job demands form the core

of one's job (without demands there is no job), and the inherent difficulty of changing them (Harju et al., 2021), avoidance *cognitive* crafting may offer a valuable strategy to cope with these demands and thus reduce exhaustion.

A second alternative explanation is that the effects of avoidance crafting may depend on the work design context in which it occurs (Doden et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2025). Work contexts shape and/or constrain work behaviour (Griffin et al., 2007), and demanding work environments may require avoidance crafting. We study low autonomy and high time pressure as they represent a demanding work situation in which employees likely perceive limited opportunity to influence their work situation (e.g., Bakker et al., 2020; van Wingerden & Niks, 2017; Zhang et al., 2025). Autonomy—a key job resource—supports proactive behaviours (e.g., Berg et al., 2010; Oldham & Hackman, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013; Zhang et al., 2025) and helps buffer against exhaustion (Bakker et al., 2005, 2020). Time pressure, in contrast, represents a major job demand linked to exhaustion (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007) and restricts opportunities for job crafting (Knight et al., 2021). As a result of working in a demanding environment, it may be difficult to observe actual changes in hindering demands (i.e., avoidance behavioural crafting). In contrast, avoidance cognitive crafting may represent an opportunity to decrease exhaustion in these situations as it facilitates a positive reframing of the negative work aspects. Thus, in demanding work situations, avoidance cognitive crafting may again be beneficial as it may lower the stress activation introduced by a demanding work design (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004).

A third important nuance to make is whether avoidance crafting applied at the day level (i.e., within-person) has different consequences for exhaustion compared to general levels of avoidance crafting (i.e., between-person). At the between-person level, we maintain that avoidance behavioural crafting may be associated positively with exhaustion due to the complexity of changing hindering work aspects (Tims et al., 2013). Currently, there is relatively little research on within-person avoidance crafting and what does exist reveals non-significant effects of avoidance behavioural crafting on exhaustion (Demerouti et al., 2015; Harju et al., 2021). However, again drawing on CATS (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004), we can theorize that avoidance behavioural crafting may reflect a short-term regulatory behaviour through which, at least temporally, exhaustion is reduced. Similarly, avoidance cognitive crafting may facilitate a more positive perception of negative work aspects and thus eliminate an ongoing negative cognitive representation. In short, we expect a potential bright side of avoidance behavioural and cognitive crafting particularly at the within-person, day level.

This study aims to consider these issues and contributes to our understanding of avoidance crafting in several ways. First, we provide a more comprehensive picture of avoidance crafting by empirically testing the four recently conceptualized dimensions of avoidance crafting (Lopper et al., 2024): avoidance behavioural demands/resources crafting and avoidance cognitive demands/resources crafting. Importantly, we examine their relationships with exhaustion to shed light on the applicability of different forms of avoidance crafting on employee well-being. Second, by examining whether avoidance crafting may reduce exhaustion depends on the work context, we contribute to a more nuanced view of avoidance crafting and highlight work situations in which avoidance crafting is more likely to emerge and be successful (Lazazzara et al., 2020).

Finally, to better understand the link between avoidance crafting and exhaustion, we add to the temporal understanding of avoidance crafting with a diary study that allows one to distinguish between within- and between-person effects. At the between-person level, we expect that avoidance behavioural crafting may be associated positively with exhaustion due to the complexity of changing hindering work aspects, whereas avoidance cognitive crafting may reduce exhaustion. At the within-person level, we theorize a potential bright side of both avoidance behavioural and cognitive crafting. By identifying potential short-term benefits of avoidance behavioural crafting, our study challenges the dominant dark side and advances theoretical understanding that the outcomes of avoidance crafting differ depending on the temporal context.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Job crafting

Job crafting refers to employee-initiated actions at work to improve their job for themselves (Bruning & Campion, 2018). Traditionally, two prominent job crafting conceptualizations have existed alongside one another. Employees can either modify their task, relational and cognitive boundaries of their jobs (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) or try to balance job resources and job demands with their abilities and needs (Tims et al., 2012). In the latter approach, changes refer to an increase or decrease in job characteristics. Recent research has integrated the two conceptualizations and highlighted the importance of distinguishing between approach and avoidance crafting as higher-order factors (Lopper et al., 2024; Zhang & Parker, 2019). Approach crafting refers to actions through which employees aim to gain positive aspects at work, whereas avoidance crafting includes actions to reduce or escape from negative aspects at work (Zhang & Parker, 2019). A growing body of research demonstrates that avoidance crafting has distinct effects on work-related outcomes (e.g., exhaustion, work engagement) compared to approach crafting (see for a meta-analysis Holman et al., 2024). Therefore, it is important to consider approach and avoidance crafting as two independent factors (Lopper et al., 2024) that share a proactive, individual-level approach to job redesign.

This study focuses on avoidance crafting, motivated by the desire to escape from negative aspects at work (Elliot, 2006). Previously, avoidance crafting was primarily understood as reducing hindering job demands or withdrawing from tasks and relationships at work (Hu et al., 2020; Tims et al., 2012). However, avoidance crafting goes beyond merely reducing job demands, encompassing actions that allow employees to *cognitively* distance themselves from negative aspects of their work (Lopper et al., 2024; Zhang & Parker, 2019). Recent job crafting literature has renewed its focus on cognitive (avoidance) crafting (e.g., Costantini, 2022; Hommelhoff et al., 2021; Melo et al., 2021), as it provides an important strategy for dealing with negative job demands or a lack of job resources (Zhang & Parker, 2019). Research further shows that behavioural and cognitive crafting are distinct factors, each exerting different effects on outcomes (e.g., performance, meaningfulness, exhaustion; Bindl et al., 2019; Geldenhuys et al., 2021; Ikeda et al., 2024; Weseler & Niessen, 2016).

Moreover, negative job aspects may reflect either a lack of job resources or high job demands. Thus, employees are motivated to not only reduce job demands but also to address situations where resources are lacking (Lopper et al., 2024; Zhang & Parker, 2019). Indeed, a low level of job resources does not simultaneously imply that job demands are high (e.g., Biron & van Veldhoven, 2016). For instance, a customer service representative might have a low level of resources (limited decision-making authority) but also low job demands (routine tasks). Considering the above theorizing, four different avoidance crafting dimensions have been proposed (Lopper et al., 2024; Zhang & Parker, 2019). First, *avoidance behavioural resources crafting* refers to reducing aspects at work that are low in job resources (e.g., spending less time on tasks in which skills cannot be used). Second, *avoidance behavioural demands crafting* refers to avoiding aspects at work that are high in job demands (e.g., less communication with people at work who are distracting). This dimension reflects the job crafting strategy decreasing hindering job demands as proposed by Tims et al. (2012). Third, *avoidance cognitive resources crafting* includes cognitive actions to mentally reframe and keep away from aspects at work in which job resources are low (e.g., taking tasks not seriously for which no feedback will be received). Finally, *avoidance cognitive demands crafting* means to reframe and keep mental distance from job aspects that are high in job demands (e.g., taking mental distance from stressful tasks).

In the following sections, we will use the term *avoidance behavioural crafting* when referring to both avoidance behavioural demands crafting and avoidance behavioural resources crafting. Similarly, we summarize both cognitive dimensions as *avoidance cognitive crafting*. Although the four avoidance crafting dimensions have been shown to exist separately (Lopper et al., 2024), for our theoretical rationale, we summarize the dimensions based on their form (i.e., behavioural vs. cognitive) to explore how the way one crafts (behaviourally or cognitively) might influence the potential bright side of avoidance crafting. For completeness, we differentiate between the four dimensions in the analysis.

AVOIDANCE CRAFTING AND EXHAUSTION

Between-person level

Research has shown that behavioural and cognitive crafting exert different effects on work-related outcomes such as performance and meaningfulness (e.g., Bindl et al., 2019; Geldenhuys et al., 2021; Weseler & Niessen, 2016). Drawing on the cognitive activation theory of stress (CATS; Ursin & Eriksen, 2004), we examine how avoidance behavioural and cognitive crafting differently relate to exhaustion, applying the same assumptions to the demands and resources dimensions. First, we address the between-person level, followed by the within-person level. In doing so, we examine whether the mechanisms triggered by avoidance behavioural and cognitive crafting differ between general employee tendencies (i.e., between-person) and short-term actions (within-person).

CATS offers a theoretical framework for understanding how stress responses are initiated and sustained. A central tenet of the theory is the role of individual outcome expectancies in managing stressors, such as high job demands or low resources. If an individual expects to manage a stressor effectively (positive outcome expectancy), the physiological activation triggered by the stressor is transient and adaptive (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004). For example, postponing a stressful task (i.e., avoidance behavioural demands crafting) may give employees the sense that they can handle it later, fostering a positive outcome expectancy. In contrast, negative outcome expectations arise from feelings of helplessness or hopelessness, reflecting a perceived lack of control over the situation and its outcome. As a result, the physiological activation becomes sustained (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004), leading to prolonged strain and, ultimately, exhaustion. Brosschot et al. (2005) further propose that this sustained activation results from perseverative cognition—that is, the ongoing cognitive representation of stress-related content—regarding negative job aspects and their associated negative outcome expectancies.

Initially, scholars proposed that avoidance crafting (e.g., decreasing hindering job demands) may help prevent negative well-being outcomes, such as exhaustion (Tims et al., 2015; Tims & Bakker, 2010). Exhaustion, a core symptom of burnout, refers to feelings of strain, fatigue and tiredness at work due to prolonged exposure to a demanding work situation that depletes employees' energy (Maslach et al., 2001). Thus, if employees use avoidance *behavioural* crafting to reduce high job demands, their exhaustion should decrease compared to those who do not use avoidance crafting. This proposition can be explained by CATS: decreasing hindering job demands (or avoidance behavioural crafting) would provide employees with control over their job demands and therefore offer a way to alleviate these demands (positive outcome expectancies) and ultimately reduce their exhaustion. Paradoxically, previous research has shown that avoidance behavioural crafting is associated with more exhaustion (e.g., Petrucci et al., 2015). Additionally, the aforementioned meta-analysis reported that avoidance behavioural crafting has positive effects on strain via *increases* in job demands (Holman et al., 2024).

There are several possible explanations for this positive relationship between avoidance behavioural demands crafting and exhaustion. Addressing negative aspects at work can be stressful in itself (Elliot, 2006) and does not necessarily lead to an increase in positive outcomes (Zhang & Parker, 2019). If avoidance behavioural crafting fails to address the underlying problems, the accumulation of negative aspects at work may heighten employees' perception of high demands at work (Boehnlein & Baum, 2022), ultimately leading to adverse consequences such as exhaustion (Demerouti et al., 2001). At the same time, persistently avoiding demanding or resource-poor situations can hinder successful experiences in managing job demands or a lack of job resources, thereby sustaining a sense of helplessness. Engaging in avoidance behavioural crafting may also come at the cost of losing important resources (e.g., energy; Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019). The feeling of losing resources may be accompanied by sustained negative outcome expectancies in the form of hopelessness (e.g., being unable to protect resources when dealing with specific demands or a lack of resources). Thus, when engaging in avoidance behavioural crafting, individuals may remain in a latent state of unresolved demands or a lack of resources, which, according to CATS, results in an elevated physiological activation that contributes to exhaustion. Thus, employees who have the general tendency to use avoidance behavioural crafting (compared to those who do not) may therefore experience higher levels of exhaustion.

In contrast, avoidance *cognitive* crafting refers to employees mentally distancing themselves from negative job demands and a lack of resources at work (Lopper et al., 2024). Because avoidance cognitive crafting does not involve physically changing the job, CATS suggests it may help employees reduce psychophysiological arousal by altering their perceptions at work (Unsworth et al., 2004). For example, it could lower the threshold for stressor recognition or diminish negative outcome expectancies related to demands or a lack of resources, thereby deactivating sustained physiological activation (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004). When employees maintain an active cognitive representation of stressors in a positive way (i.e., reframing), an ongoing physiological activation could be suspended (Brosschot et al., 2005). Moreover, cognitively reframing demands or a lack of resources in an avoidance-oriented manner may allow one to solve the issue and thus reduce psychophysiological arousal. This, in turn, can restore the resources needed for functioning at work (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989). Avoidance cognitive crafting may thus help to avoid or neutralize sustaining an active cognitive representation of negative aspects at work (Romeo et al., 2020). By interrupting these perseverative cognitions, avoidance cognitive crafting may effectively downregulate sustained arousal. Additionally, the deliberate mental distance from negative aspects at work could induce a sense of control over these demands and make them manageable (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2016).

Due to the different outcome expectancies and control perceptions when dealing with negative aspects at work, we posit distinct effects for the two avoidance behavioural crafting dimensions and the two avoidance cognitive crafting dimensions on exhaustion. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. Individuals who engage in high levels of avoidance behavioral crafting are more likely to experience exhaustion (H1a), whereas individuals who engage in high levels of avoidance cognitive crafting are less likely to experience exhaustion (H1b).¹

Within-person level

Our previous arguments focused on differences between employees (i.e., the between-person level). However, because work situations can vary across short periods (e.g., day to day), we are also interested in within-person, day-level differences—specifically, whether exhaustion varies on days when employees engage in more avoidance crafting compared to days when they use less or none. We theorize that the potential bright side of avoidance crafting is best observed at this daily, within-person level. Consistent with earlier distinctions, we differentiate between avoidance behavioural and avoidance cognitive crafting and draw on CATS (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004) to develop our hypotheses.

Recent research suggests that avoidance behavioural crafting may be a helpful daily stress management strategy (Sanz-Vergel et al., 2024). Daily avoidance behavioural crafting reflects a transient regulatory behaviour in which employees adjust their outcome expectancies regarding demands or a lack of resources. In other words, when employees consciously take actions to reduce negative work aspects on a given day—providing at least temporary relief, such as lower time pressure—they can benefit from reduced physiological activation on that day. Moreover, because avoidant actions can have short-term adaptive effects and reduce strain (Suls & Fletcher, 1985), daily avoidance behavioural crafting may serve as a strategy to manage taxing aspects at work, thereby preventing resource loss within the same day. For example, on days when employees put less effort in tasks that are emotionally draining, they expend less energy and time (i.e., resources) on these tasks. Indeed, avoidance behavioural crafting (i.e., decreasing hindering demands) related negatively to fatigue at the end of the day via a decrease in resource depletion (i.e., ego-depletion; Shi et al., 2021).

Second, similar to the between-person level, daily avoidance cognitive crafting helps to mentally detach oneself from negative work aspects. According to Ursin and Eriksen (2004), how individuals interpret and approach potential demands or situations lacking in resources plays a crucial role in how they handle negative work aspects. More specifically, daily detachment from negative aspects resembles

¹ Although we expect similar results for avoidance behavioural demands/resources crafting and cognitive demands/resources crafting, they will be tested separately.

eliminating perseverative cognition (i.e., rumination; Kinnunen et al., 2017), thereby reducing ongoing psychophysiological activation (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004). For instance, when employees take mental distance from stressful tasks on a particular day, they stop thinking about these tasks and may feel less exhausted on these days. Simultaneously, consciously reframing negative aspects at work is likely to enhance perceived control over them on a daily basis, fostering a transient positive outcome expectancy (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004). Furthermore, on days when employees proactively reframe negative aspects of their work, they create a better work environment in which such aspects are, at least temporarily, less visible. As a result, these aspects become less prominent or negative in the short term and may not trigger exhaustion (Demerouti et al., 2001). Based on our theorizing about daily avoidance behavioural and cognitive crafting, we hypothesize that

Hypothesis 2. On days when individuals engage in higher avoidance behavioral crafting (H2a) and avoidance cognitive crafting (H2b), they experience lower levels of exhaustion.

HOW WORK DESIGN MATTERS

Although avoidance crafting is individually driven, it occurs within the broader context of work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) and is therefore likely shaped—along with its outcomes—by that context (Dierdorff & Jensen, 2018; Tims & Parker, 2020). We focus on two features of the work context—autonomy and time pressure—as critical boundary conditions that shape when and how avoidance crafting can be successfully enacted (e.g., Bakker et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2025). Autonomy represents a key job resource that generally facilitates proactive behaviours (e.g., Berg et al., 2010; Oldham & Hackman, 2010; Tornau & Frese, 2013; Zhang et al., 2025) and buffers against negative outcomes such as exhaustion (Bakker et al., 2005, 2020). Time pressure, in contrast, represents an important job demand that has been associated with exhaustion (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007) and limits opportunities for job crafting (Knight et al., 2021). Previous research recognizes the importance of these job characteristics for most employees (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Both autonomy and time pressure are measured at the between-person level and thus reflect the general work context, which is known to shape and constrain work behaviour (e.g., Griffin et al., 2007). Moreover, by examining these job characteristics at the between-person level, we avoid the risk that assessing them at the same level as employees' perceptions would partly capture some crafting (Zhang & Parker, 2019). In the following, we theorize the same moderating effects of low autonomy and high time pressure on both daily avoidance behavioural and cognitive crafting and their two associated demands/resources dimensions.

Overall, we expect the daily negative association between avoidance crafting and exhaustion to be stronger in a demanding work environment. Drawing on CATS (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004), low autonomy and high time pressure may reduce employees' general sense of control, perceived ability to influence work situations (van Wingerden & Niks, 2017), and possibly generate helplessness (Parker et al., 2025); thereby diminishing outcome expectancies. Under these conditions, daily avoidance crafting unleashes its potential in dealing with demands. From a resource perspective, a demanding work environment characterized by either a low level of autonomy or high time pressure increases the possibility of resource loss (Hobfoll, 1989). When resources are depleted, securing resources becomes even more valuable (Hobfoll, 1989). Thus, resources gained or preserved through daily avoidance crafting may help reduce exhaustion in demanding environments. For example, call centre employees often face a demanding work environment, with calls prompted and phone time monitored and restricted (e.g., Grebner et al., 2003; Zapf et al., 2003). In these situations, conserving resources through avoidance crafting (behavioural: cutting-off negative conversations earlier; cognitive: reframing that this helps to speak to as many people as possible) may reduce the exhaustion experienced on that day. Furthermore, in highly demanding work environments where employees' energy is already depleted, reducing job demands or aspects low in job resources (i.e., avoidance

crafting) on a given day may be perceived as especially impactful, resulting in lower exhaustion. We therefore expect the daily negative effects of avoidance crafting on exhaustion to be stronger when autonomy is low or time pressure is high.

Hypothesis 3. Autonomy moderates the daily relationship between avoidance crafting and exhaustion, such that the negative effects of the daily avoidance crafting dimensions on daily exhaustion are higher when autonomy is low.

Hypothesis 4. Time pressure moderates the daily relation between avoidance crafting and exhaustion, such that the negative effects of the daily avoidance crafting dimensions on daily exhaustion are higher when time pressure is high.

METHOD

Procedure and sample

The study was conducted with German employees in 2019, recruited through the first author's personal contacts, newsletters and social media posts (e.g., LinkedIn). The study was carried out in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the first author's university Ethics Committee. Data were collected with online surveys using the tool SoSci Survey (Leiner, 2019). Participants were informed about the study's goal, procedure and data confidentiality through online materials and were guaranteed anonymity as well as the right to withdraw and request data deletion at any time. Consent to the data security agreement was required for participation. A baseline questionnaire assessed trait levels of the variables, after which participants took part in a daily diary study over one work week. Each day, short online surveys were sent via email immediately after work hours. Participants chose the working week to ensure five consecutive working days. In the baseline survey, participants also specified their usual work end time so daily surveys could be sent at the appropriate time.

From the initial participant pool ($N=79$), one participant was excluded for completing only the baseline questionnaire. From the final sample ($N=78$), we excluded daily assessments from participants who completed a page more than twice as fast as the median completion time (Leiner, 2019) on a day. Thus, from a potential total of $k=390$ ($78 \text{ participants} \times 5 \text{ days}$), we removed $k=13$ daily assessments, resulting in $k=377$ daily observations for analyses. The sample consisted of 77% female participants with a mean age of 36.9 years ($SD=9.4$; range 22–57). The minority held a supervisor position (42.9%) and worked in part-time jobs (10.3%). They had an average job tenure of 14.9 years ($SD=10.8$) and worked on average 38.1 hours per week ($SD=6.3$, median = 40).

Measures

Daily assessments

Avoidance crafting dimensions were measured with the state scale of the Approach-Avoidance Job Crafting Scale (AAJCS; Lopper et al., 2024). The state scale consists of eight items, two for each avoidance crafting dimension. The items referred to the current day and were answered on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). Examples are ‘Today, I spent less time working on tasks that didn't really interest me’ (avoidance behavioural resource crafting, reliability estimator Omega $\Omega^2 = .515$), ‘Today, I put tasks that I found too demanding to the bottom of the

²Omega is a better reliability estimator in daily diary studies because it makes less restrictive assumptions (e.g., allows different factor loadings of items on the same latent variable), can be adapted to hierarchical data structures, and allows more realistic models of item correlations (e.g., Geldhof et al., 2014; McNeish, 2018).

pile' (avoidance behavioural demands crafting; $\Omega = .459$), 'Today, I took mental distance from tasks that did not help me to advance professionally' (avoidance cognitive resource crafting; $\Omega = .661$) and 'Today, I took mental distance from tasks that put emotional strain on me' (avoidance cognitive demands crafting; $\Omega = .597$). Multilevel confirmatory factor analysis was calculated to provide evidence for factorial validity (see [Appendix S1³](#)). Fit indices of different measurement models were compared. The four-factor model showed the best model fit ($\chi^2(14) = 19.912$; CFI = .991; RMSEA = .049; SRMR = .030) compared to a one-factor, two two-factor models (resources vs. demands & cognitive vs. behavioural), and a second-order factor model with cognitive and behavioural crafting as higher-order factors. Thus, the four avoidance crafting dimensions were analysed separately.

Exhaustion was assessed with the German version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-GS-D; Büssing & Glaser, 1998). We used three items measuring emotional exhaustion that fit to the daily context ('I feel totally exhausted by my work today'; $\Omega = .752$). Participants were able to answer the items on a 5-point rating scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

Baseline measures

Autonomy was assessed with nine items from the work design questionnaire (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). The scale includes the three aspects regarding freedom of (a) work scheduling (e.g., 'My job allows me to plan how I do my work'; $\Omega = .917$), (b) decision-making, and (c) work methods. The items were answered on a 5-point rating scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

Time pressure was measured with the German 4-item time pressure scale validated by Semmer et al. (1999). An example question is 'How often are you under time pressure at work?' ($\Omega = .807$), and the answering scale ranged from 1 (very rarely) to 5 (very often).

STATISTICAL APPROACH

We analysed the data using a hierarchical linear modeling approach in RStudio (version 4.3.1) with the lme4-package (Bates et al., 2015). Daily measures were nested within employees, resulting in two-level models. The avoidance crafting dimensions were group-mean centred (i.e., at the person's mean) so that the scores reflect how much an employee deviated on a given day from their average level of the avoidance crafting across the work week. The hierarchical approach allows us to compare a null model with a series of nested models. First, we ran an intercept-only model (Model 1) to specify the variance decomposition of exhaustion at the different levels. Second, the control variables were included (Model 2). Third, we evaluated the within-person effects of the four avoidance crafting dimensions (Level 1) on daily exhaustion (Model 3), including also the predictors at the between-person level (Level 2). Random intercepts were included to capture variability across employees in their level of exhaustion. Fourth, the moderators autonomy and time pressure at Level 2 were integrated (Model 4). Finally, we entered the cross-level interactions between the moderators and the four avoidance crafting dimensions (Model 5). Due to the model complexity combined with sparse data and the avoidance of an overestimated random factor structure, the predictors were modelled as fixed effects (e.g., Bates et al., 2015). Following previous theorizing and evidence revealing that age and gender are correlated with exhaustion (e.g., Brewer & Shapard, 2004; Purvanova & Muros, 2010), we included both variables as control variables.

³https://osf.io/32jpt/?view_only=192166caa08d479daf70d1591a1cd074.

RESULTS

Descriptive results

The means, standard deviations, reliabilities, intraclass correlations and zero-order correlations of the study and control variables are presented in [Table 1](#). The intraclass correlations ranged from 38% (for avoidance behavioural demands crafting) to 63% (for avoidance behavioural resource crafting; see [Table 1](#)). Thus, the four avoidance crafting dimensions and exhaustion demonstrated substantial within-person variability. The two avoidance behavioural dimensions ($r = .408, p < .001$) and the two avoidance cognitive dimensions ($r = .304, p < .001$) correlated positively to each other at the day level. The daily avoidance behavioural and cognitive dimensions showed no significant correlations (respectively, $r_{Arbr} = .100, p = .114$; $r_{Arbd} = .118, p = .080$; $r_{Aver} = -.013, p = .859$; $r_{Aved} = -.112, p = .214$). To address potential common method bias, we applied a latent method factor (LMF) approach, comparing models with and without an LMF. Fit indices indicated no substantial differences between the models (CFI = .936, RMSEA = .089, SRMR = .063, AIC = 4887.598, BIC = 4959.990; CFI_{LMF} = .935, RMSEA_{LMF} = .091, SRMR_{LMF} = .063, AIC_{LMF} = 4889.598, BIC_{LMF} = 4965.137), suggesting that common method bias is unlikely (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

Hypotheses testing

In Hypothesis 1, we expected that avoidance behavioural crafting would be positively related to exhaustion (1a), whereas avoidance cognitive crafting would be negatively related to exhaustion (1b). [Table 2](#) summarizes the results of the multilevel regression analyses of Model 5. At the between-person level, we found support only for the negative relationship between avoidance cognitive demands crafting and exhaustion ($b = -.362, SE = .144, p = .014$). We found no significant relationships between avoidance cognitive resources crafting ($b = .024, SE = .168, p = .887$), avoidance behavioural demands crafting ($b = .288, SE = .175, p = .105$), avoidance behavioural resource crafting ($b = .139, SE = .184, p = .453$) and exhaustion. Thus, H1b was supported only for avoidance cognitive demands crafting. Running the model without control variables did not change the results.

Hypothesis 2, focusing at the day level, stated that the two avoidance behavioural crafting dimensions (H2a) and the two avoidance cognitive crafting dimensions (H2b) would be negatively related to exhaustion. We found a negative association between daily avoidance cognitive demands crafting and daily exhaustion ($b = -.189, SE = .071, p = .009$). In contrast, the other avoidance crafting dimensions did not show a daily association with exhaustion ($b_{Arbr} = .160, SE_{Arbr} = .093, p_{Arbr} = .089, b_{Arbd} = .129, SE_{Arbd} = .070, p_{Arbd} = .066, b_{Aver} = -.003, SE_{Aver} = .070, p_{Aver} = .964$), thus H2b was supported only for daily avoidance cognitive demands crafting.

In Hypothesis 3, we expected that low levels of autonomy would strengthen the negative relationship between avoidance crafting and exhaustion. The following three (out of four possible) cross-level interactions were found (1) the relationship between daily avoidance behavioural demands crafting and daily exhaustion was positive when autonomy was low ($b = .284, SE = .096, p = .004$) and non-significant when autonomy was high ($b = -.047, SE = .102, p = .647$; see [Figure 1](#)); (2) for avoidance cognitive resource crafting, the interaction effect was supported ($b = .185, SE = .091, p = .004$). However, simple slope analysis showed that for both low ($b = -.140, SE = .091, p = .125$) and high autonomy ($b = .152, SE = .110, p = .167$), the daily associations between this dimension and exhaustion were non-significant. The slopes were in opposite directions and may have cancelled each other out on average (see [Figure 2](#)); (3) daily avoidance cognitive demands crafting was negatively associated with daily exhaustion (see [Figure 3](#)) when autonomy was low ($b = -.348, SE = .096, p < .001$) and non-significant when autonomy was high ($b = -.008, SE = .098, p = .932$). Hypothesis 3 was partly confirmed. Note that the findings are not counterintuitive as we showed that avoidance behavioural crafting seemed to reach its limits when

TABLE 1 Means, standard deviations, intraclass correlations, and correlations between the study variables.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Ω^b	Ω^c	ρ
Level 1—variables													
1. Avoidance behavioural resource crafting	2.548	1.058		.408***	.380***	.196	.100				.515	.858	.627
2. Avoidance behavioural demands crafting	2.338	1.066	.765***		.138	.283**	.118				.459	.607	.384
3. Avoidance cognitive resource crafting	2.632	1.086	.842***	.574***		.304***	-.013				.661	.979	.473
4. Avoidance cognitive demands crafting	2.804	1.063	.812***	.628***	.752***		-.112				.597	.937	.475
5. Exhaustion	2.229	.938	.058	.201	.031	-.093					.752	.964	.620
Level 2—variables													
6. Job autonomy	3.860	.785	-.078	.143	-.035	.057	-.063				-	.917	-
7. Time pressure	.3.277	.927	-.010	.160	-.002	-.033	.453***	-.035			-	.807	-
8. Gender ^a	1.231 ^a	.422	.189	.300*	.173	.094	-.076	-.118	-.024		-	-	-
9. Age	36.897	9.420	.049	.226	.108	.128	.274*	.188	.282**	.078	-	-	-

Note: *N* (within) = 295, *N* (between) = 78. Ω = Omega, ρ = ICC. Within-person correlations above the diagonal. Between-person correlations below the diagonal.

^a1 = female, 2 = male.

^bOmega estimators at the within-person level.

^cOmega estimators at the between-person level.

p* < .05. *p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

TABLE 2 Results of multilevel regression analyses with cross-level interactions of autonomy and time pressure (Model 5).

	Exhaustion		
	<i>B</i> (SE)	95% CI for <i>B</i>	<i>p</i>
Fixed effects			
<i>Level 1</i>			
Intercept	.062 (.460)	−.858; .974	.893
AVBR_within	.160 (.093)	−.025; .344	.089
AVBD_within	.129 (.070)	−.008; .266	.066
AVCR_within	−.003 (.070)	−.140; .135	.964
AVCD_within	−.189 (.071)	−.330; −.048	.009
<i>Level 2</i>			
AVBR_between	.139 (.184)	−.226; .502	.453
AVBD_between	.288 (.175)	−.060; .636	.105
AVCR_between	.024 (.168)	−.309; .358	.887
AVCD_between	−.362 (.144)	−.649; −.076	.014
Job autonomy	−.070 (.122)	−.313; .172	.570
Time pressure	.308 (.104)	.101; .515	.004
Age	.011 (.010)	−.009; .032	.288
Gender	−.330 (.228)	−.782; .125	.153
<i>Cross-level interactions</i>			
AVBR × job autonomy	−.170 (.123)	−.412; .072	.167
AVBD × job autonomy	−.209 (.089)	−.384; −.034	.020
AVCR × job autonomy	.185 (.091)	.005; .365	.044
AVCD × job autonomy	.215 (.084)	.050; .380	.011
AVBR × time pressure	.014 (.103)	−.189; .218	.891
AVBD × time pressure	.013 (.082)	−.150; .175	.879
AVCR × time pressure	.115 (.073)	−.029; .259	.116
AVCD × time pressure	−.177 (.073)	−.322; −.032	.017
Random effects	Variance		Std. Dev.
Intercept (ID)	.464		.681
Residuals	.341		.534
AIC	568.7		
BIC	647.8		
Deviance	522.7		

Note: Due to parsimony, only the results of the final model (Step 5) were reported. Model results of Step 1 to Step 4 can be found in the supplemental material (Appendix S2; https://osf.io/32jpt/?view_only=192166eaa08d479daf70d1591a1cd074). Abbreviations: AIC, Akaike information criterion; AVBD, Avoidance behavioural demands crafting; AVBR, Avoidance behavioural resource crafting; AVCD, Avoidance cognitive demands crafting; AVCR, Avoidance cognitive resource crafting; BIC, Bayesian information criterion.

autonomy was low, whereas avoidance cognitive crafting was helpful in reducing daily exhaustion under low autonomy.

Turning to Hypothesis 4, in which we expected that the negative relationship between avoidance crafting and exhaustion will be stronger under high time pressure, the results revealed one (out of four possible) cross-level interaction effect with avoidance cognitive demands crafting ($b = -0.177$, $SE = .073$, $p = .017$). That is, daily avoidance cognitive demands crafting was negatively related to daily exhaustion

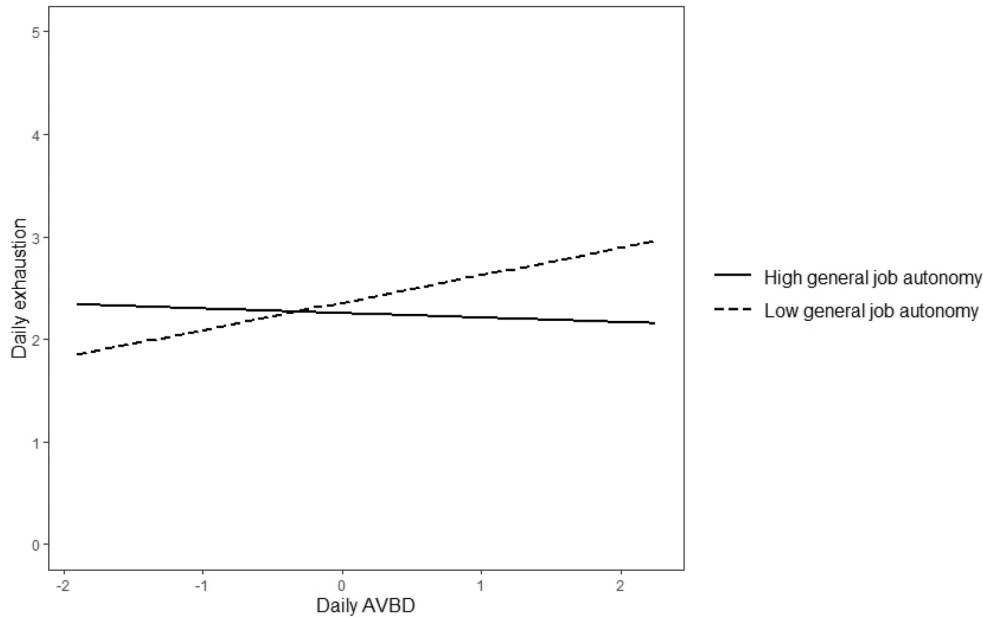


FIGURE 1 Interaction effect of general autonomy on the relationship between daily avoidance behavioural demands crafting and daily exhaustion. AVBD, avoidance behavioural demands crafting.

when time pressure was high ($b = -.350, SE = .091, p < .001$) and non-significantly related when time pressure was low ($b = -.023, SE = .106, p = .826$). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported for avoidance cognitive demands crafting only (see Figure 4).

Exploratory results

To assess potential lagged effects of avoidance crafting on exhaustion, we conducted an additional analysis testing whether avoidance crafting dimensions (day N) were associated with exhaustion the next day (day N+1). Avoidance behavioural resources crafting related negatively ($b = -.319, p = .005$), whereas avoidance behavioural demands crafting ($b = .181, p = .029$) related positively to next day exhaustion. There were no next-day effects of avoidance cognitive crafting (see Appendix S3:⁴ Table C3). Thus, on days individuals engage more in avoidance behavioural resources or demands crafting than usual during the workweek, they reported a lower or higher level of exhaustion, respectively, on the next day. For the sake of completeness, we have also calculated reverse lagged effects in which exhaustion (day N) was associated with the avoidance crafting dimensions 1 day later (day N + 1). Detailed results can be seen in Appendix S3 (Table C2).

DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how employees navigate their work environments using avoidance crafting and how this relates to their exhaustion. By separating between avoidance behavioural and avoidance cognitive crafting dimensions and examining their effects on exhaustion at the within- and between-person level, we explored which and when avoidance crafting

⁴https://osf.io/32jpt/?view_only=192166caa08d479daf70d1591a1cd074.

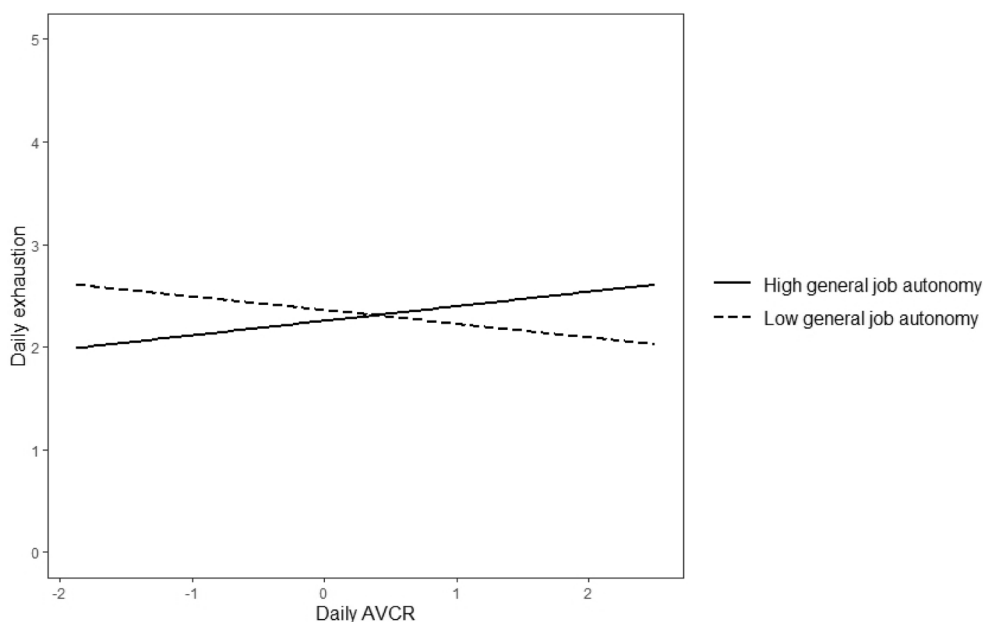


FIGURE 2 Interaction effect of general autonomy on the relationship between daily avoidance cognitive resource crafting and daily exhaustion. AVCR, avoidance cognitive resource crafting.

dimensions may have a dark or bright side. Overall, avoidance cognitive demands crafting appeared beneficial in terms of reducing exhaustion, especially under high time pressure and low autonomy. In contrast, avoidance behavioural crafting seemed to be maladaptive under low autonomy by increasing daily exhaustion. Below, we discuss the main implications of our study.

Theoretical implications

Our findings advance job crafting theory in several key ways. First, our study empirically distinguished and tested the effects of both avoidance behavioural crafting and avoidance cognitive crafting on employee exhaustion. Unlike previous research that primarily found negative associations between avoidance behavioural (demand) crafting and well-being indicators (see for a meta-analysis; Holman et al., 2024), our study also included avoidance cognitive crafting and uncovered a bright side of avoidance crafting. Specifically, the observed negative relationships between avoidance cognitive demands crafting and exhaustion, both at the between- and within-person levels, underscore the importance of cognitive strategies in managing work demands. This finding suggests that cognitive strategies may offer a viable way to reduce exhaustion in the short (i.e., daily) and longer term (i.e., weekly).

The bright side of avoidance cognitive crafting shown in our study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of cognitive regulatory processes at work. The benefits of this crafting strategy may arise from two distinct, yet complementary, pathways. On the one hand, the cognitive reappraisal facet of avoidance crafting involves actively re-engaging with a negative job aspect to change its meaning. This aligns with concepts like problem-solving pondering (Cropley & Zijlstra, 2011), where individuals neutralize or reinterpret stressors (Ikeda et al., 2024). By framing a negative aspect as more manageable or less threatening, employees can foster a sense of control (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2016; Ursin & Eriksen, 2004), which in turn mitigates the sustained arousal that leads to exhaustion. On the other hand, the mental distancing facet of avoidance cognitive crafting operates through cognitive disengagement. This strategy is akin to psychological detachment, where the goal is to interrupt the cycle of perseverative cognition and rumination about stressors (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). By intentionally

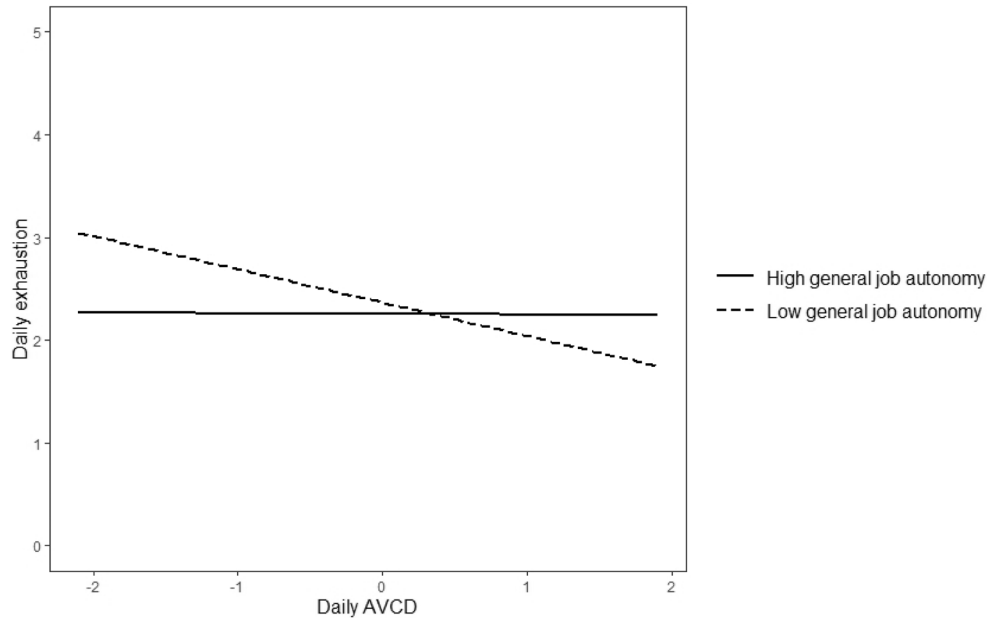


FIGURE 3 Interaction effect of general autonomy on the relationship between daily avoidance cognitive demands crafting and daily exhaustion. AVCD, avoidance cognitive demands crafting.

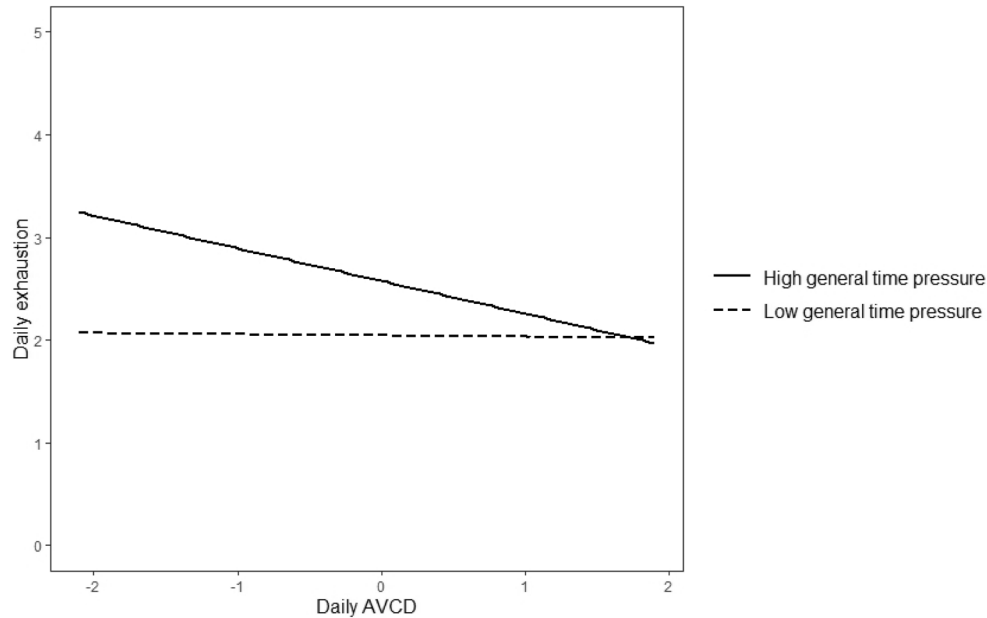


FIGURE 4 Interaction effect of general time pressure on the relationship between daily avoidance cognitive demands crafting and daily exhaustion. AVCD, avoidance cognitive demands crafting.

directing attention away from negative work aspects, employees conserve finite cognitive and emotional resources that would otherwise be depleted by ongoing worry (Kinnunen et al., 2019). Our findings highlight that these cognitive processes, particularly in the form of avoidance cognitive demands crafting, can function as beneficial regulatory mechanisms for employee well-being.

The lack of associations between avoidance behavioural crafting and exhaustion may call for a re-evaluation of the role of avoidance behavioural crafting within the job crafting literature. Scholars have highlighted the complexity of avoidance behavioural crafting, noting that its proactive or withdrawal-oriented nature may depend on the underlying goals and the extent to which it is combined with approach crafting (e.g., Hu et al., 2020; Tims & Bakker, 2010; Zhang & Parker, 2019). For example, employees may reduce demands to have the capacity to take on other interesting tasks (i.e., approach crafting); these employees may not feel exhausted as they use this crafting strategy to create a stimulating and resourceful environment for themselves. Conversely, employees might reduce demands to simply decrease their workload, potentially leading to exhaustion as this crafting can make employees' work less motivating and resourceful (Petrou et al., 2012; Petrou & Xanthopoulou, 2021). Zhang et al. (2025) found that avoidance crafting was less detrimental or beneficial for employees' well-being when jointly used with approach crafting.

Furthermore, because avoidance behavioural crafting and exhaustion were unrelated at both the between and within-person levels, previously observed negative effects of avoidance behavioural crafting on well-being may not consistently emerge. While the avoidance behavioural crafting dimensions may not necessarily result in positive work outcomes (Boehnlein & Baum, 2022; Holman et al., 2024; Zhang & Parker, 2019), they also do not appear to substantially deplete employees' resources. Another idea derived from the CATS perspective is that employees may get used to not having control (i.e., learned helplessness) when using avoidance behavioural crafting, which reduces physiological activation and avoids negative effects (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004). However, this implies a longer time frame which we cannot address in our study. Following our arguments, long-term avoidance behavioural crafting is more likely to be positively associated with exhaustion through an ongoing dealing with negative job aspects and consequently a sustained arousal (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004).

At the within-person level, daily avoidance behavioural crafting did not serve as a temporal regulatory strategy. Because daily avoidance behavioural crafting requires energy (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019), it could potentially negate any proposed benefits. Alternatively, the non-significant relationship might be contingent on unmeasured moderators, such as personal supportive or constraining factors (e.g., personality, personal resources; Lazazzara et al., 2020). For instance, when personal resources are high (e.g., self-efficacy, resilience), employees may be better at dealing with short-term fluctuations in resources due to daily avoidance behavioural crafting (Wang et al., 2024), such that the effortful daily actions may not increase exhaustion. In contrast, personality traits might hinder the proposed positive effect of avoidance behavioural crafting. For example, employees high in neuroticism are less likely to take advantage of a relief initiated through daily avoidance behavioural crafting, as they report more perseverative cognitions (Foucreault et al., 2016). Consequently, the proposed daily negative effect on exhaustion could be reduced. In addition, the effect may not have been observed because avoidance behavioural crafting may have repercussions for colleagues (Tims & Parker, 2020). Specifically, avoidance crafting actions may give rise to conflicts at work, which would not necessarily reduce exhaustion. In sum, avoidance behavioural crafting does not attenuate employee exhaustion at either the between-person or within-person level, potentially due to a complex interplay of underlying goals, individual differences (e.g., personality or personal resources), contextual factors (e.g., social consequences) and invested energy that does not yield a corresponding payoff.

Beyond the distinction between avoidance behavioural and cognitive crafting, our study also provides interesting insights into avoidance resources crafting. Neither dimension of avoidance resource crafting exhibited significant relationships with exhaustion at either the between- or within-person level. Avoidance resources crafting focuses on employees' efforts to behaviourally or cognitively step away from work aspects low on job resources. According to the JD-R theory, job demands are the unique predictors of exhaustion, while job resources are the unique predictors of dis/engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Therefore, it is possible that avoidance resources crafting primarily impacts aspects of employee well-being related to motivation and engagement,

rather than exhaustion. Moreover, this finding suggests that a lack of job resources might not be equivalent to the perception of high job demands and may not necessarily trigger psychophysiological activation in employees.

A second contribution of our study is that avoidance cognitive demands crafting is particularly beneficial in demanding work environments characterized by low autonomy and high time pressure. The moderating effects of autonomy and time pressure on the negative relationship between avoidance cognitive crafting and exhaustion were in line with our expectations (i.e., under low levels of autonomy and high levels of time pressure the negative relationship is stronger). Low autonomy and high time pressure create an environment of constraint, limiting an employee's latitude for behavioural modifications (Tims & Bakker, 2010). In this constrained context, avoidance cognitive demands crafting becomes a uniquely valuable, low-cost strategy. It does not require altering the objective situation but instead changes one's perception of it (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). By mentally reframing or detaching from the pressure of demands, employees can conserve valuable cognitive and emotional resources, interrupt the cycle of sustained physiological activation induced by a highly demanding environment (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004) and thereby mitigate exhaustion.

Furthermore, our findings reveal a critical contextual distinction in how work design moderates the effects of avoidance behavioural demands crafting on daily exhaustion. Specifically, avoidance behavioural demands crafting was associated with higher exhaustion under low autonomy, whereas this relationship was non-significant under high time pressure. These diverging patterns suggest two theoretically distinct mechanisms: one likely rooted in structural constraints, the other in temporal constraints. In low-autonomy contexts, employees encounter rigid structural barriers that constrain their ability to implement meaningful changes in their work (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Under such conditions, avoidance behavioural demands crafting (e.g., postponing emotionally taxing tasks) is likely to be ineffective, as employees lack the discretion to reallocate or modify work responsibilities. This cycle of ineffective action and persistent strain may deplete resources and may contribute to increased exhaustion. Such a pattern reflects an effort–failure mechanism that aligns with the cognitive activation theory of stress (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004), wherein sustained physiological activation arises from repeated negative outcome expectancies and lack of perceived control.

In contrast, high time pressure represents a temporal rather than a structural constraint. Under such conditions, avoidance behavioural demands crafting may provide temporary relief by delaying or reducing exposure to stressful tasks. However, this relief is offset by escalating concerns about impending deadlines and unfinished work. These competing processes—short-term reduction in workload versus heightened anticipatory stress—are likely to neutralize one another, resulting in no significant net effect on exhaustion. Thus, under high time pressure, avoidance behavioural demands crafting appears to be an ineffective rather than harmful strategy. In sum, the distinct interactive effects of avoidance behavioural crafting and avoidance cognitive crafting with autonomy highlight the advantages of avoidance cognitive crafting, especially in challenging work environments where behavioural crafting is limited and may not be effective. This finding extends job crafting theory by emphasizing the importance of considering the work context and cognitive crafting.

A third contribution is that by employing a daily diary study, our research addresses calls for more dynamic investigations of job crafting (Sanz-Vergel et al., 2024). Contrary to the prevailing view of avoidance crafting as predominantly maladaptive, our findings reveal a bright side for (daily) avoidance crafting—particularly the cognitive form—which can serve as an adaptive, situation-responsive strategy and represent a daily well-being-protecting strategy for employees (Demerouti et al., 2015). Integrating CATS (Ursin & Eriksen, 2004) into the job crafting literature enabled us to have a more nuanced view such that avoidance actions might reflect short-term strategic, energy-preserving cognitive responses to daily demands and may coexist with positive outcome expectancies. Overall, our findings underscore that the effects of avoidance crafting may vary depending on the temporal frame—highlighting the importance of distinguishing between day-to-day variability and stable individual tendencies when evaluating its impact on exhaustion.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

Our study offers valuable insights, but some limitations are worth considering. First, while the diary study design effectively captured the day-to-day dynamics of avoidance crafting and exhaustion, it cannot definitively establish causality between these variables. In this study, we focused on the relationship between avoidance crafting and exhaustion and developed our hypotheses based on theories. However, our study design does not rule out reverse effects; that is, exhausted employees are more likely to use avoidance behavioural crafting. To address this, we have conducted additional analyses in which exhaustion predicted avoidance crafting 1 day later (see [Appendix S3: Table C2](#)). Although none of these reverse time-lagged effects was significant, future research could adopt within-day shortitudinal or experimental designs, providing stronger evidence for the causal pathways and temporal sequence between avoidance crafting, work design elements, and various indicators of employee well-being.

A second limitation is that we did not directly examine the psychological mechanisms that may mediate the relationship between avoidance crafting and exhaustion. While we theorized that avoidance cognitive demands crafting could reduce exhaustion by adjusting outcome expectancies and reducing the psychophysiological activation, the specific processes that facilitate this change remain unexplored. Future research could investigate these, and perhaps other, potential mechanisms by which avoidance crafting influences exhaustion such as cognitive appraisal, psychophysiological activation and perceptions of control to provide a comprehensive understanding of the pathways involved. Additionally, future research could adopt a broader perspective when exploring the outcomes of avoidance crafting dimensions, particularly those of avoidance resources crafting and could also consider long-term effects. Expanding the scope to include a wider range of work-related outcomes, such as work engagement, could offer a more holistic view of avoidance crafting's impact on employee well-being, potentially revealing further advantages or disadvantages of avoidance crafting.

Third, a further limitation concerns the specific operationalization of avoidance cognitive crafting in our daily diary design. While our theoretical framework positions avoidance cognitive crafting as a multifaceted construct including both cognitive reappraisal and mental distancing, the specific state-level items used in this study (e.g., “Today, I took mental distance from stressful tasks”) primarily capture the mental distancing facet. Consequently, the beneficial effects we report should be interpreted with this precision: they are the effects of daily mental distancing. This highlights a crucial avenue for future research. Studies should test daily measures that specifically tap into the cognitive reappraisal facet of avoidance crafting. Doing so would allow for a direct comparison of the daily effects, dynamics and potential differential outcomes of these two cognitive strategies, providing a more complete picture of how employees cognitively craft their work to protect their well-being.

Fourth, reliability estimators (i.e., Omega) of the avoidance crafting dimensions at the day level were lower compared to the reliability of exhaustion. Although statistical power in detecting effect sizes could be constrained, reliability estimators (e.g., Omega) at the within-person level can be lower than the commonly used .70 when using two-item scales (Yang et al., 2022)—as was the case for measuring the avoidance crafting dimensions. Furthermore, similar reliability estimators have been reported in other job crafting studies conducted at the day level (e.g., Tims et al., 2014). There are several reasons for these findings. First, not all avoidance crafting actions could be experienced every day (Tims et al., 2014) and additionally, situational cues influence the daily use of avoidance actions. Both could increase the residual variance on the one hand and reduce the covariance between items on the other hand, thereby affecting reliability estimators (e.g., Geldhof et al., 2014). Second, each avoidance crafting dimension was assessed using only two items, compared to five items in the trait-level measurement.

Fifth, the relatively small and homogeneous sample size, including predominantly female Germans, limits the generalizability of the findings across different cultural norms and workplace practices. For instance, in cultures that emphasize individual autonomy, such as Germany, avoidance actions may be seen as a self-protection strategy (Sanz-Vergel et al., 2024) that supports employees' well-being. In contrast, in more collectivistic cultures, those actions may be interpreted as withdrawal behaviour, diminishing work-related well-being. As research showed that job crafting's effects are affected by cultural practices

(Boehnlein & Baum, 2022) or gender differences (Lyu & Fan, 2022), future studies could enrich our understanding by employing a more diverse demographic profile, including a balanced representation of genders, various industries and cultural backgrounds. This would allow for a deeper examination of the universality of the avoidance crafting concept and its applicability across different work contexts.

Finally, recent research highlights a beneficial role of avoidance behavioural crafting in combination with approach crafting (e.g., Petrou & Xanthopoulou, 2021; Zhang et al., 2025). Despite or precisely because of the independence between approach and avoidance, employees are able to use both crafting directions simultaneously (Lopper et al., 2024). Future research should explore configurations and sequencing of avoidance and approach crafting in relation to well-being indicators. That is, combining longitudinal and experience sampling designs could help disentangle whether specific crafting combinations promote short-term relief, long-term well-being or both. Understanding the dynamic interplay would offer valuable insights into how various crafting combinations impact work-related well-being.

Practical implications

Our findings offer valuable insights for organizations and managers aiming to protect employee well-being, especially in demanding work environments. First, our results emphasize the role of avoidance-oriented cognitive crafting in reducing exhaustion, particularly when employees face high time pressure and limited autonomy. In such contexts, opportunities for behavioural job crafting may be restricted, making it important for managers to support employees in developing cognitive strategies. Encouraging employees to reframe demanding tasks as challenges rather than threats during stressful times, or to redirect attention towards more controllable aspects of their work, can help them conserve psychological resources and maintain well-being.

Second, organizations can offer job crafting interventions that equip employees with knowledge and skills to adjust one's work. Existing interventions often focus on behavioural changes, such as altering tasks or relationships (e.g., van Wingerden et al., 2017), but cognitive approaches have been less systematically addressed (Oprea et al., 2019). Managers could implement workshops or coaching that provide employees with tools for mentally reframing stressful demands or detaching from overwhelming aspects of their job. These interventions not only equip employees to cope more effectively with current demands or low-resource situations but also build long-term skills for managing uncertainty and pressure at work.

Finally, while cognitive crafting can act as a valuable strategy, it should not be viewed as a substitute for organizational responsibility in managing job demands. Persistent and excessive (hindering) job demands can undermine well-being regardless of individual regulatory strategies (Bakker et al., 2023). Therefore, managers should ensure that demands are kept at an appropriate level and balanced with sufficient job resources (Bakker et al., 2005), such as autonomy, social support and recovery opportunities. By combining organizational efforts to optimize job design with interventions that strengthen employees' cognitive crafting capabilities, organizations can foster a more resilient and sustainable workforce.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, our study includes a broader perspective on avoidance crafting and shows that particularly avoidance cognitive demands crafting can have a protective role for employees working in demanding environments. By exploring the moderating effects of autonomy and time pressure, we contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the contextual conditions under which avoidance crafting can be most effective at the day level. These findings underscore the importance of cognitive job crafting dimensions and top-down work design in promoting employee well-being.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Elisa Lopper: Conceptualization; methodology; software; data curation; formal analysis; visualization; project administration; writing – original draft; writing – review and editing; investigation; validation. **Fangfang Zhang:** Conceptualization; writing – original draft; writing – review and editing; validation. **Maria Tims:** Conceptualization; writing – original draft; writing – review and editing; validation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Open Access funding enabled and organized by Projekt DEAL.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available upon request from the corresponding author.

ETHICS APPROVAL STATEMENT


Data were collected in line with the guidelines of the first author's university Ethics Committee.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Informed consent was obtained from all participants in the study.

ORCID

Elisa Lopper  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7676-7799>

Fangfang Zhang  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5511-7001>

Maria Tims  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9588-4333>

REFERENCES

- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands–resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 22(3), 273–285. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000056>
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Euwema, M. C. (2005). Job resources buffer the impact of job demands on burnout. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 10(2), 170–180. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.10.2.170>
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Sanz-Vergel, A. (2023). Job demands–resources theory: Ten years later. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 10, 25–53. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-120920-053933>
- Bakker, A. B., Hetland, J., Olsen, O. K., Espevik, R., & De Vries, J. D. (2020). Job crafting and playful work design: Links with performance during busy and quiet days. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 122, 103478.
- Bakker, A. B., & Oerlemans, W. G. M. (2019). Daily job crafting and momentary work engagement: A self-determination and self-regulation perspective. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 112, 417–430. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.12.005>
- Bates, D., Mächler, M., Bolker, B., & Walker, S. (2015). Fitting linear mixed-effects models using lme4. *Journal of Statistical Software*, 67(1 SE-Articles), 1–48. <https://doi.org/10.18637/jss.v067.i01>
- Berg, J. M., Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J. E. (2010). Perceiving and responding to challenges in job crafting at different ranks: When proactivity requires adaptivity. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 31(2–3), 158–186. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.645>
- Bindl, U. K., Unsworth, K. L., Gibson, C. B., & Stride, C. B. (2019). Job crafting revisited: Implications of an extended framework for active changes at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104(5), 605–628. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000362>
- Biron, M., & van Veldhoven, M. (2016). When control becomes a liability rather than an asset: Comparing home and office days among part-time teleworkers. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 37(8), 1317–1337. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2106>
- Boehnlein, P., & Baum, M. (2022). Does job crafting always lead to employee well-being and performance? Meta-analytical evidence on the moderating role of societal culture. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 33(4), 647–685. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2020.1737177>
- Brewer, E. W., & Shapard, L. (2004). Employee burnout: A meta-analysis of the relationship between age or years of experience. *Human Resource Development Review*, 3(2), 102–123. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484304263335>
- Brosschot, J. F., Pieper, S., & Thayer, J. F. (2005). Expanding stress theory: Prolonged activation and perseverative cognition. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 30(10), 1043–1049. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psyneuen.2005.04.008>

- Bruning, P. F., & Campion, M. A. (2018). A role–resource approach–avoidance model of job crafting: A multimethod integration and extension of job crafting theory. *Academy of Management Journal*, 61(2), 499–522. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2015.0604>
- Büssing, A., & Glaser, J. (1998). Managerial stress und burnout. A collaborative international study (CISMS). Die deutsche Untersuchung [The German study]. *Report No. 44. Technische Universität*.
- Costantini, A. (2022). Rethinking work: How approach and avoidance features of cognitive crafting are linked with job crafting behaviors and work engagement. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 30, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2022.79>
- Cropley, M., & Zijlstra, F. R. H. (2011). Work and rumination. In J. Langan-Fox & C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Handbook of stress in the occupations* (pp. 487–501). Edgar Elgar Publishing.
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., & Halbesleben, J. R. B. (2015). Productive and counterproductive job crafting: A daily diary study. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 20(4), 457–469. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039002>
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 499–512. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.499>
- Dierdorff, E. C., & Jensen, J. M. (2018). Crafting in context: Exploring when job crafting is dysfunctional for performance effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 103(5), 463–477. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000295>
- Doden, W., Bindl, U., & Unger, D. (2024). Does it take two to tango? Combined effects of relational job crafting and job design on energy and performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 45(8), 1189–1207. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2820>
- Elliot, A. J. (2006). The hierarchical model of approach-avoidance motivation. *Motivation and Emotion*, 30(2), 111–116. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-006-9028-7>
- Foucreault, A., Ménard, J., & Stevens, C. (2016). A diary study on work-related perseverative cognition and employees' need for recovery: The role of emotional support from family and neuroticism. *International Journal of Psychological Studies*, 8(4), 77–90.
- Geldenhuis, M., Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2021). How task, relational and cognitive crafting relate to job performance: A weekly diary study on the role of meaningfulness. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 30(1), 83–94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2020.1825378>
- Geldhof, G. J., Preacher, K. J., & Zyphur, M. J. (2014). Reliability estimation in a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis framework. *Psychological Methods*, 19(1), 72–91. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032138>
- Grant, A. M., & Parker, S. K. (2009). Redesigning work design theories: The rise of relational and proactive perspectives. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 3(1), 317–375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520903047327>
- Grebner, S., Norbert, S., Luca Lo, F., Stephan, G., Wolfgang, K., & Elfering, A. (2003). Working conditions, well-being, and job-related attitudes among call centre agents. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 12(4), 341–365. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13594320344000192>
- Griffin, M. A., Neal, A., & Parker, S. K. (2007). A new model of work role performance: Positive behavior in uncertain and interdependent contexts. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(2), 327–347. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2007.24634438>
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1980). *Work Redesign*. Addison-Wesley.
- Harju, L. K., Kaltiainen, J., & Hakanen, J. J. (2021). The double-edged sword of job crafting: The effects of job crafting on changes in job demands and employee well-being. *Human Resource Management*, 60(6), 953–968.
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524.
- Holman, D., Escaffi-Schwarz, M., Vasquez, C. A., Irmer, J. P., & Zapf, D. (2024). Does job crafting affect employee outcomes via job characteristics? A meta-analytic test of a key job crafting mechanism. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 97(1), 47–73. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12450>
- Hommelhoff, S., Weseler, D., & Niessen, C. (2021). The role of cognitive job crafting in the relationship between turnover intentions, negative affect, and task mastery. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 34(6), 704–718. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2021.1892653>
- Hu, Q., Taris, T. W., Dollard, M. F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2020). An exploration of the component validity of job crafting. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 29(5), 776–793. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2020.1756262>
- Ikeda, M., Tanaka, S., & Kido, K. (2024). Relationship between job crafting and emotional exhaustion: Focusing on the difference between effects of physical and cognitive crafting. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 39(5), 601–612. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-04-2023-0233>
- Kanfer, R., & Ackerman, P. L. (1989). Motivation and cognitive abilities: An integrative/aptitude-treatment interaction approach to skill acquisition. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 74(4), 657–690. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.74.4.657>
- Kinnunen, U., Feldt, T., & Bloom, J. (2019). Testing cross-lagged relationships between work-related rumination and well-being at work in a three-wave longitudinal study across 1 and 2 years. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 92, 645–670. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12256>
- Kinnunen, U., Feldt, T., Sianoja, M., de Bloom, J., Korpela, K., & Geurts, S. (2017). Identifying long-term patterns of work-related rumination: Associations with job demands and well-being outcomes. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 26(4), 514–526. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2017.1314265>
- Knight, C., Tims, M., Gawke, J., & Parker, S. K. (2021). When do job crafting interventions work? The moderating roles of workload, intervention intensity, and participation. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 124, 103522. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103522>
- Lazazzara, A., Tims, M., & de Gennaro, D. (2020). The process of reinventing a job: A meta-synthesis of qualitative job crafting research. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 116, 103267. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2019.01.001>

- Lee, R. T., & Ashforth, B. E. (1996). A meta-analytic examination of the correlates of the three dimensions of job burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 81(2), 123–133.
- Leiner, D. J. (2019). Too fast, too straight, too weird: Non-reactive indicators for meaningless data in internet surveys. *Survey Research Methods*, 13(3), 229–248.
- Lichtenthaler, P. W., & Fischbach, A. (2016). Job crafting and motivation to continue working beyond retirement age. *The Career Development International*, 21(5), 477–497. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-01-2016-0009>
- Lopper, E., Horstmann, K. T., & Hoppe, A. (2024). The approach-avoidance job crafting scale: Development and validation of a measurement of the hierarchical structure of job crafting. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 73(1), 93–134. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12466>
- Lyu, X., & Fan, Y. (2022). Research on the relationship of work family conflict, work engagement and job crafting: A gender perspective. *Current Psychology*, 41(4), 1767–1777. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-020-00705-4>
- Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job Burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 397–422. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.397>
- McNeish, D. (2018). Thanks coefficient alpha, we'll take it from here. *Psychological Methods*, 23(3), 412–433. <https://doi.org/10.1037/met0000144>
- Melo, N., Dourado, D., & Andrade, J. (2021). Reclaiming cognitive crafting: An integrative model of behavioral and cognitive practices in job crafting. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 29(5), 1302–1320.
- Morgeson, F. P., & Humphrey, S. E. (2006). The work design questionnaire (WDQ): Developing and validating a comprehensive measure for assessing job design and the nature of work. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(6), 1321–1339. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.91.6.1321>
- Oldham, G. R., & Hackman, J. R. (2010). Not what it was and not what it will be: The future of job design research. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 31(2–3), 463–479. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.678>
- Oprea, B. T., Barzin, L., Virgă, D., Iliescu, D., & Rusu, A. (2019). Effectiveness of job crafting interventions: A meta-analysis and utility analysis. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 28(6), 723–741. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2019.1646728>
- Parker, S. K., Tims, M., & Sonnentag, S. (2025). Top-down and bottom-up work design: A multilevel perspective on how job crafting and work characteristics interrelate. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-025-10010-1>
- Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., Peeters, M. C. W., Schaufeli, W. B., & Hetland, J. (2012). Crafting a job on a daily basis: Contextual correlates and the link to work engagement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33(8), 1120–1141. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1783>
- Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2015). Job crafting in changing organizations: Antecedents and implications for exhaustion and performance. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 20(4), 470–480. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039003>
- Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2018). Crafting the change: The role of employee job crafting behaviors for successful organizational change. *Journal of Management*, 44(5), 1766–1792.
- Petrou, P., & Xanthopoulou, D. (2021). Interactive effects of approach and avoidance job crafting in explaining weekly variations in work performance and employability. *Applied Psychology*, 70(3), 1345–1359.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2012). Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 63 (Volume 63, 2012), 539–569. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-120710-100452>
- Purvanova, R. K., & Muros, J. P. (2010). Gender differences in burnout: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 77(2), 168–185. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.04.006>
- Romeo, M., Yepes-Baldó, M., Westerberg, K., & Nordin, M. (2020). Cognitive job crafting as mediator between behavioral job crafting and quality of care in residential homes for the elderly. *PLoS One*, 15(12), e0243726. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0243726>
- Sanz-Vergel, A. I., Nielsen, K., Rodríguez-Muñoz, A., & Antino, M. (2024). What happens at work does not always stay at work: Daily job crafting and detachment among colleagues. *Applied Psychology*, 73(2), 776–800. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12499>
- Semmer, N., Zapf, D., & Dunckel, H. (1999). Instrument zur stressbezogenen Tätigkeitsanalyse (ISTA). In H. Dunckel (Ed.), *Handbuch psychologischer Arbeitsanalyseverfahren* (Vol. 14, pp. 179–204). vdf Hochschulverlag Zürich.
- Shi, Y., She, Z., Li, D., Zhang, H., & Niu, K. (2021). Job crafting promotes internal recovery state, especially in jobs that demand self-control: A daily diary design. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 1889. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11915-1>
- Sonnentag, S., & Fritz, C. (2015). Recovery from job stress: The stressor-detachment model as an integrative framework. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 36(S1), S72–S103. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1924>
- Suls, J., & Fletcher, B. (1985). The relative efficacy of avoidant and nonavoidant coping strategies: A meta-analysis. *Health Psychology*, 4(3), 249–288. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-6133.4.3.249>
- Tims, M., & Bakker, A. B. (2010). Job crafting: Towards a new model of individual job redesign. *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 36, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v36i2.841>
- Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2012). Development and validation of the job crafting scale. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 80(1), 173–186. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.05.009>
- Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2013). The impact of job crafting on job demands, job resources, and well-being. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 18(2), 230–240. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032141>
- Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2014). Daily job crafting and the self-efficacy—Performance relationship. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 29(5), 490–507. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-05-2012-0148>

- Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2015). Job crafting and job performance: A longitudinal study. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 24(6), 914–928. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2014.969245>
- Tims, M., & Parker, S. K. (2020). How coworkers attribute, react to, and shape job crafting. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 10(1), 29–54.
- Tornau, K., & Frese, M. (2013). Construct clean-up in proactivity research: A meta-analysis on the Nomological net of work-related proactivity concepts and their incremental validities. *Applied Psychology*, 62(1), 44–96. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2012.00514.x>
- Unsworth, K., Mason, C., Jones, R., & Stream, Q. (2004). A Use for Rose-Coloured Glasses? Cognitive Reframing, Job Crafting & Positive Psychology At Work. *18th Annual Australian New Zealand Academy of Management Conference*, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Ursin, H., & Eriksen, H. R. (2004). The cognitive activation theory of stress. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 29(5), 567–592. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0306-4530\(03\)00091-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0306-4530(03)00091-X)
- van Wingerden, J., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2017). Fostering employee well-being via a job crafting intervention. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 100, 164–174. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2017.03.008>
- van Wingerden, J., & Niks, I. M. W. (2017). Construction and validation of the perceived opportunity to craft scale. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8, 573. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00573>
- Wang, Q., Li, S., & Luan, Z. (2024). The “double-edged sword” effect of job crafting from the approach-avoidance perspective. *Current Psychology*, 43(28), 23846–23858. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-024-06122-1>
- Weseler, D., & Niessen, C. (2016). How job crafting relates to task performance. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 31(3), 672–685. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-09-2014-0269>
- Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J. E. (2001). Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work. *Academy of Management Review*, 26(2), 179–201.
- Xanthopoulou, D., Bakker, A. B., Dollard, M. F., Demerouti, E., Schaufeli, W. B., Taris, T. W., & Schreurs, P. J. G. (2007). When do job demands particularly predict burnout?: The moderating role of job resources. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(8), 766–786. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710837714>
- Yang, L.-Q., Wang, W., Huang, P.-H., & Nguyen, A. (2022). Optimizing measurement reliability in within-person research: Guidelines for research design and R shiny web application tools. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 37(6), 1141–1156. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-022-09803-5>
- Zapf, D., Amela, I., Myriam, B., & Blau, P. (2003). What is typical for call centre jobs? Job characteristics, and service interactions in different call centres. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 12(4), 311–340. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13594320344000183>
- Zhang, F., & Parker, S. K. (2019). Reorienting job crafting research: A hierarchical structure of job crafting concepts and integrative review. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 40(2), 126–146. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2332>
- Zhang, F., Tims, M., & Parker, S. K. (2025). Combinations of approach and avoidance crafting matter: Linking job crafting profiles with proactive personality, autonomy, work engagement, and performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 46(3), 385–400. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2836>

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

Appendix S1.

Appendix S2.

Appendix S3.

How to cite this article: Lopper, E., Zhang, F., & Tims, M. (2025). The bright and dark side of avoidance crafting: How work design matters. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 98, e70056. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.70056>