

# Task flexibility through individualized work redesign – Probing a three-pronged approach

Severin Hornung,\* Thomas Höge\* & Denise M. Rousseau\*\*

---

\* University of Innsbruck, Institute of Psychology

\*\* Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA

## ABSTRACT

This study investigates three individual-level aspects of work flexibility, a) active use of task autonomy, b) self-initiated job crafting, and c) negotiation of task-related idiosyncratic deals (i-deals) authorized by superiors. It tests their interaction in predicting individual self-reported quality of working life and occupational health using a survey of 279 German-speaking workers. Psychometrically robust 4-item scales operationalized task-focused autonomy, crafting, and i-deals. Moderated linear regressions, controlling for gender, age, and additional work characteristics, assessed the main and interaction effects of these three aspects of work flexibility on indicators of the quality of working life, including positive work-related states, work-home interactions, and health-impairment. Task autonomy was consistently associated with beneficial effects, while i-deals related to some but not all positive indicators. Effects of task crafting were mostly spurious, except from an unexpected adverse relationship with work-home conflict. In contrast, 2-way interactions of i-deals and crafting indicated positive effects on four outcomes while 3-way interactions were found for three outcomes – affective commitment, meaning of work, and work-home enrichment. Results suggest synergy between task i-deals and crafting, especially under conditions of high autonomy, with positive interaction effects on favorable work-related experiences and states.

## Keywords

Work design – job crafting – idiosyncratic deals – control at work – quality of working life – stress and health – interaction effects