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

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Abstract

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

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

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In the last decade, elite and professional sport organizations in the United Kingdom have observed a host of unforeseen, rapid and continuous changes in the way that these organizations and their personnel function (Wagstaff et al., 2015; 2016). In this way, organizational change can be considered from an emergent approach (Weiss, 2009), in which change is viewed as a dynamic, turbulent and contested process that emerges in an unpredictable and unplanned fashion. At the same time, organizational change in high-performance sport has been orchestrated by leadership and management teams (Gibson & Groom, 2018), in the belief that changes will result in improved organizational effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness for elite and professional sport organizations may include improving athletic performance, successful delivery of core services to its members and achievement of key organizational performance indicators (Thompson & Parent, 2021). In this high-performance sport context, coaches are important stakeholders whose well-being, career development needs and retention are critical for facilitating organizational effectiveness. Insofar that coaches are often tasked with leading, managing and supporting organizational change initiates (Gibson & Groom, 2018), they are also expected to adjust their job roles and service delivery to support the achievement of organizational goals (Wagstaff et al., 2016). In the knowledge that high-performance coaches typically experience high workloads (e.g., Norris et al., 2017), job insecurity (e.g., Bentzen, Kenttä, Richter et al., 2020), limited organizational support (e.g., Kilo & Hassmén, 2016), and a poor work-life interface (e.g., Knights & Ruddock-Hudson, 2016), working within a climate of organizational change has the potential to place further demands on coaches' capacity to adapt effectively. A sustained inability to adapt proactively to organizational change may influence experiences of burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001), a lack of satisfaction in one's role

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

73   organizational survival (Russell & McGinnity, 2014).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

86   **Job Crafting**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

125   2009). Furthermore, the meaning individuals attach to job crafting may depend on how one's

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

144   2016). This is problematic since their ill-being and burnout could have deleterious

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

163   high-performance sport.

Method

Research Design and Philosophical Underpinning

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

constructionist stance (Shinebourne, 2011).

Participants and Procedure

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

197   characteristics and organizational change events encountered. Following institutional ethical

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

207   consent form.

208   ***Interview Guide***

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

235   participants' names being replaced with pseudonyms.

236   **Data Analysis**

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

238   (2021) guidelines for IPA. This aligned with a bracketing approach in so far that the second

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

257 common meanings.

258 **Research Quality**

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

260 2021), the present study was guided by four quality indicators of IPA. A "compelling,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

279   **Transparency and Openness**

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

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

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

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

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

285   guide is available as an electronic supplementary material.

286   **Results**

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

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

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

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

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

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

293   **The Climate of Organizational Change**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

343   functioning.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

352   *Motives for Job Crafting*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

361   to an extent.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

383   work-related goals as motives for job crafting:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

415   environment that we work in look like.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

where he could shape his vision.

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

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

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

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

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

> What was really good were the support staff, the S&C guy. He was employed for the
>
> full year and normally you're just employed for the time in camp. So, the coach knew
>
> these players had to be in the best shape they've ever been in. That just doesn't
>
> happen over a six-week camp that has to be over the entire season for two, three years
>
> so you know that was a really positive change.

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

yet later she struck a cautionary note:

> They [the elite performance director] were wasteful, they were trying too hard
>
> sometimes because we needed help and support, you know, we were limited…I think
>
> they were trying to look at [one percent gains] all of the time, where instead of really
>
> sitting down and trying to work out [appraise] what we could do, they just kept seeing
>
> these ideas and bringing them in without a discussion.

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

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

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

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

447   thwarting in terms of coaches expressing their viewpoints.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

463   working, and putting changes into place.

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

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

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

467   ***Mobilizing Social and Structural Resources***

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

at a departmental, as well as individual level:

> I am the boss but it's not going to be "tell, tell, tell," we're gonna figure out what we
>
> want as a club and then as a department, then we're gonna figure out where you stand
>
> with your own [job] responsibilities. So that their roles will be crystal clear but they
>
> can take ownership as well … I think that was really powerful for where we were
>
> going.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

organizational changes in rules and regulations.

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

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

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

centralized:

> I can maybe voice my opinion and it would be heard and hopefully that would make
>
> an impact. But maybe me being on the inside a little, whereas when you're on the
>
> outside [of the leadership hierarchy], you have no impact, you can't change the
>
> problem.

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

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

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

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

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

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

For some participants, mobilizing resources involved modifying their social resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

> So going into [Olympics Games], the biomechanist, [sport NGB] pulled him from
>
> pillar to post, his hours [contract] were done by February … So I went to [NGB
>
> leader] "where is my biomechanist going? Because that's the guy I've worked with
>
> for seven years" … Now I know they are leaving in a week, and the [NGB leader]
>
> knows this, but the [NGB leader] has specifically told [the biomechanist] not to tell
>
> me. So when [biomechanist] finally left, the [NGB leader] took huge umbrage with
>
> him and said nobody can use him, but I'd already made another arrangement with
>
> [biomechanist] and said "look, we still want to use you, this is what we want to do,
>
> can you do these dates?" and [biomechanist] was like "yeah, that should be fine." …
>
> I've got someone who can win a gold medal and I'm having to, you know, not only
>
> am I having to supplement [national lottery] funding, I'm having to negotiate and
>
> make this happen, and that is the huge frustration that I have with the governing body.

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

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

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

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

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

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

548   2001), but at what cost for the coach's job satisfaction and well-being?

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

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

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

552   was pivotal:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

592   *Withdrawal from Aspects of the Job*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

602   going forwards:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

617   staff restructure rather than take time away:

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

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

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

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

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

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

624   package".

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

640   leadership and management contexts on individuals' crafting strategies.

641   **Discussion**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

676   2001), this led some coaches to feel less empowered and compromise their personal values to

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

739   **Applied Implications**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

749   2017), an inability to job craft in one's sporting role may have deleterious consequences for

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

759   well-being and performance.

760   **Limitations and Future Research Directions**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

789   understand personally effective and ineffective job crafting efforts under additional

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

800   **Conclusion**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Table 1

Table of Participant Demographics

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

Table 2

Master Table of Experiential Themes for Job Crafting and Organizational Change

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