

Personal Initiative and Attachment Styles

Kristina Krause, M.A.¹

"People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them."

George Bernhard Shaw
(Mrs. Warren's Profession 1893)

"There are three types of people in the world: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who wonder what happened."

(Ash, 1995, p. 151)

1: Department of Psychology, Graduate Faculty, New School University, New York, USA

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Address correspondence to Kristina Krause, KrauK721@newschool.edu

Introduction

In distinguishing the go-getters from the bystanders in any given workplace the construct of personal initiative has proven very effective. Personal initiative is one of the so-called extra-role behaviors. Extra-role behaviors are behaviors exhibited by employees that exceed their official duties and are not part of their job description. Van Dyne, Cummings and Parks (1995) make a distinction between four types of extra-role behaviors. They distinguish along two dimensions between promotive (encouraging something to start) or prohibitive (encouraging something to stop) behaviors that are either affiliative (concerned with relationships and cooperation) or challenging (change-oriented, concerned with ideas and issues). Personal initiative is promotive and challenging.

Personal initiative is becoming a more important issue for organizations as well as the individual. With increasing efforts towards a globalized economy and market and new concepts of production such as lean- and just-in-time-production more responsibility for service, quality and organization of production procedures are placed upon the shoulders of the individual employee. This has also led to a change of the job concept in general (Bott et al., 2000). An increasing number of employees find themselves working in different companies for the duration of a project only rather than in a permanent job. To enhance their employability it is necessary for the individual employee in many industrial branches (e.g. software development, engineering) to consistently acquire new skills and further knowledge to keep up with the developments of the global market (Gnahs, 2001). A high level of personal initiative is positively related to dealing successfully with all these issues (Katz, 1964; Motowidlo & Scotter, 1994; Organ, 1988). Individuals with a high level of personal initiative tend to be more effective employees and more successful entrepreneurs (Koop et al., 2000). In addition, they are inclined to

overcome unemployment faster than people with low personal initiative and give a more positive impression of their employability during interviews (Frese et al. 1997).

So far personal initiative has mostly been studied in an organizational context, preferably the work place. But when do people develop initiative and which developmental factors play a role in the development of high levels of personal initiative? The objective of this paper is to investigate if there is a relation between attachment styles and the degree of personal initiative exhibited in the workplace, in other words, does attachment style have any predictive value with regard to initiative behaviors in the workplace?

What is personal initiative?

Initiative behavior is aimed at the benefit of the organization, long-term improvement and leads to positive consequences such as a rise in the profitability of an organization. Personal initiative is always pro-company (Fay & Frese, 2001).

Personal initiative is "a behavioral syndrome resulting in an individual's taking an active and self-starting approach to work and going beyond what is formally required in a given job" Frese et al. (1996). This definition emphasizes the action-orientation and pro-active nature of personal initiative. The opposite of personal initiative would be a passive approach to work, meaning an employee who is just taking orders, and following others.

Personal initiative is based on the concept of action sequence (Dörner & Schaub, 1994; Frese & Zapf, 1994). From this theory Frese and Fay (2001) developed facets of personal initiative and the notion that humans are active by their very nature (Frese & Zapf, 1994). Both are aspects of action theory (Frese & Zapf, 1994; Hacker, 1998). Although this theory is remarkable as an

approach, I will not go into further details in order not to divert attention from the actual subject of personal initiative. Table 1 displays the relationship between action sequence and aspects of personal initiative.

One aspect of their theory is self-starting, which implies that the elements of action sequence are active, while pro-activity (second column) suggests an orientation towards future problems and opportunities. Finally, overcoming barriers is concerned with protection of goals in the face of obstacles and interference. This implies a need to have back up plans as well as having action plans for opportunities ready. It also involves an understanding and a development for pre-signals of potential problem areas and opportunities (good mental model) before they occur. The anticipation of barriers can lead to the development of knowledge for alternative routes of action in spite of complexity and negative emotions. In addition, as the model suggests, a person displaying initiative has elevated expectations and/or self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1986).

In order to assess personal initiative in the work place I use the six-item personal initiative scale by Frese et al. (1996) rated on a 7-point Likert-scale and a behavior-oriented questionnaire by Frese and Krause (2002).

Attachment Style

Attachment style refers to the quality of the relationship between an infant and his/her caregiver. John Bowlby (1979) and Mary D.S. Ainsworth et al. (1978) are the pioneers of this approach in developmental psychology and make a distinction between secure and insecure attachment. Secure attachment is linked to a number of positive developmental outcomes such as being able to explore one's environment more actively, because one can always return to one's caregiver who serves as a secure base

(Bowlby, 1988). People with a secure attachment style are less distressed when left to their own devices and are not preoccupied with seeking proximity to a person for support, because they rest in the knowledge and trust that there is someone available to turn to if things get out of hand (Ainsworth, 1970). Attachment style influences formation of a working model of self and others that remain relatively stable throughout the lifespan (Bowlby, 1951). They are not restricted to mother-infant relations, but also play a role in other interactions with one's environment.

Based on these results Bartholomew and Griffin (1994) created a four-category model depending on the scores of two dimensions, which renders four categorizations of attachment styles. This self-rating scale helps to determine a person's anxiety-avoidance score and his or her model of self and others.

A positive model of self and others in combination with low anxiety and low avoidance is characteristic of a secure attachment pattern. A positive model of self and a negative model of others in addition to high avoidance and low anxiety characterizes a dismissive pattern. Individuals of this type prefer to keep a safe distance from others not only in order to avoid rejection and disappointment, but also to prevent interference from others in what they are doing (Bowlby, 1973). With regard to an interaction with personal initiative I predict a negative correlation, because this attachment pattern seems unlikely to promote challenging behaviors due to fear of rejection. There should be a tendency not to get involved in things that do not pertain to oneself directly.

A negative model of self and a positive model of others in combination with high anxiety and low avoidance renders a preoccupied attachment pattern. This pattern is characterized by a constant preoccupation with worries about the partner's fidelity or one's own worthiness of love. People with this attachment style constantly seek proximity and positive feedback from their

respective partner, being worried that their secure base might vanish unpredictably. This attachment pattern is highly likely to be negatively related to personal initiative, because challenging and promotive behaviors are likely to repel people whose esteem is so necessary for one's psychological survival.

Similarly people with a fearful attachment pattern - characterized by a negative model of self and others and high levels of anxiety and avoidance--are not likely to engage in initiative behaviors, because they do not want to lose other people's approval and at the same time want to try to minimize contact due to fear of rejection.

In this study I chose to use the Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ) by Griffin and Bartholomew (1994), because it combines the advantages of dimensional, categorical and prototypical approach. It is at the same time a very economic measure to use. RSQ scores are calculated by computing the mean of the items representing each prototype. Only eighteen of the thirty items are actually considered. Four items contribute to the score for the preoccupied and fearful patterns, five for secure and dismissing.

Hypothesis 1a: Personal initiative is positively related to a secure pattern of attachment.

Hypothesis 1b: Personal initiative is negatively related to insecure attachment styles.

Additional Measures

Proactive personality

Bateman and Crant (1993) deliberately call their construct proactive personality, because they consider it to be a relatively stable personal disposition that is aimed at change rather than adaptation. Proactive personality was measured on a seven-point-self-

rating-scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). They state that

"...consistent with the broad perspectives of interactionism, people are assumed capable of intentionally altering situations in ways other than selection, cognitive restructuring, (unintentional) evocation, or (intentional) manipulation of social responses by others. People can intentionally and directly change their current circumstances, social or nonsocial (including their physical environment; Buss, 1987). This is the essential characteristic of proactive behavior." (Bateman, and Crant, 1993; p.104).

Proactive orientation is equivalent to subjective personal initiative (Fay & Frese, 2001) and is therefore expected to be positively related to personal initiative. This is an indication of convergent validity. Similarly, it should also be related to a secure attachment style. The secure person would be operating from a secure base, leaving all energies to the task at hand instead of worrying about losing standing in the eyes of co-workers or showing detachment or indifference towards a situation that requires some initiative. Therefore, proactive personality should hence also be negatively related to a fearful attachment style.

Hypothesis 2a: Proactive personality is positively related to personal initiative.

Hypothesis 2b: Proactive personality is positively related to a secure attachment style.

Hypothesis 2c: Proactive personality is negatively related to insecure attachment styles.

Taking Charge

In addition to elevated expectations, a person likely to exhibit ini-

tiative behavior is also likely to have feelings of obligation towards change within the organization. In this study the peer-rating scale for taking charge (Morrison and Phelps, 1999) was converted into a self-rating scale. This has been done successfully in the past showing that there is correspondence between the self-rating and the peer-rating. **Taking charge** is measured by seven items on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) and is also expected to be positively related to personal initiative. In fact the two constructs are quite similar and differ only in a few aspects. Just as personal initiative it is change-oriented, aimed at improvement and discretionary (not formally required). According to Morrison and Phelps (1999; p.403) "taking charge is characterized by voluntary and constructive efforts, by individual employees, to bring about organizationally functional change with respect to how work is executed within the contexts of their jobs, work units or organizations and so is personal initiative". In contrast to personal initiative it is not considered to be a stable disposition, but more dependent on a given situation. However, they are both counted among the promotive and challenging extra-role behaviors.

Hypothesis 3a: Taking charge is positively related to personal initiative.

Hypothesis 3b: Taking charge is positively related to a secure attachment style.

Hypothesis 3c: Taking charge is negatively related to insecure attachment styles.

Climate for Innovation

Climate for innovation is a measure created by Scott and Bruce (1994). It is rated on a five-point-self-rating-scale (1 = not at all, 5 = to an exceptional degree). Although findings by Frese et al. (1999) in a Dutch and a German sample did not show the influ-

ence of perceived managerial support on personal initiative, a study on taking charge by Morrison and Phelps (1999) - a concept that shares a wide range of features with personal initiative - illustrated that top management openness to changes and new ideas was a factor that contributed to taking charge. Scott and Bruce (1994) refer to James, James, & Ashe (1990) who define (psychological) climate as a cognitive interpretation of an organizational situation by individuals in that particular organization. Scott and Bruce (1994) state that employees are more likely to engage in innovative processes, if they perceive a climate for innovation. Innovation has a strong link to personal initiative. In this study climate for innovation is used as a control measure. The recognition of a problem and generation of ideas however is considered to be only one part of a multistage process that ranges from the actual generation or adaptation of an idea to its implementation. This is where innovation and personal initiative meet, and therefore, a climate for innovation should be positively related to personal initiative.

In this study climate for innovation serves as a control variable to account for why people chose a non-initiative approach. If they perceive support for innovative behaviors as low they should be less likely to engage in initiative behaviors.

Hypothesis 4a: Climate for innovation is positively related to personal initiative.

Hypothesis 4b: Climate for innovation is positively related to a secure attachment style.

Hypothesis 4c: Climate for innovation is negatively related to insecure attachment styles.

Methods

Subjects

Out of 60 questionnaires distributed 29 were returned, yielding a response rate of 49%. The subjects were 29 graduate students from the New School University and other New York-based universities, such as Columbia and NYU. All subjects except for one had a university degree such as a B.A. (N = 22) or M.A. (N = 6). The majority of participants was female (23:6). Only one participant has not had a job in the past and 23 are currently employed. The majority of participants work as company employees and 6 of them supervise between 2 to 15 other employees. On average participants in this sample have 6 years of experience in a job and have been working in their current job for a year. Participants are between 23 and 40 years of age.

Materials and Procedure

All subjects completed a questionnaire consisting of two parts. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of eight vignettes of situations which could occur in a work place. Each vignette was in an open-ended format and followed by the instruction to describe what the person would do in a situation such as this. Each vignette described a problem which if left unresolved will result in a loss in productivity and hence be harmful for the organization. The situations were then presented in a closed-ended format in order to see, if there was correspondence between the open-ended answers and the choices in the closed-ended scale. This would serve as another validity check for the closed-ended scale.

Scale Development

The close-ended scale was developed by the author for a graduate school thesis. The measure is meant to complement the Likert-type personal initiative questionnaire by Frese et al. (1996) and the interview measure by Frese et al. (1997). The

design with the situations and the alternative behaviors was created with the intention to design a measure that would combine the economic advantages of a self-rating measure with the high reference to real-life and actual behaviors of an interview. The validation study using a multi-trait-multi-method approach (Campbell & Fiske, 1959) rendered a set of items that fulfilled statistical requirements for valid and reliable items and also showed sufficient discriminant and convergent validity with a number of other different measures.

In developing this behavior-oriented scale I followed the procedure chosen by Morrison and Phelps (Morrison, E.W., & Phelps, C.C., 1999) except for a few variations. Morrison & Phelps used a multistage process in designing their scale for Taking Charge at work. The process by Morrison and Phelps consisted of four stages.

In the first stage of the development process a set of participants completed an open-ended survey asking them to think of a person with whom they had worked and who had tried to bring about improvement within the organization's respective departments. They were asked to describe efforts that went beyond what was formally required of them in their job and they were also asked to list specific behaviors that illustrated these efforts.

Then Morrison and Phelps sorted behaviors and efforts into groups by similarities. They deleted all those answers that were either too vague or simply redundant and were able to retrieve ten prototypical activities by finding a general statement that represented the essence of each group they had clustered.

In designing these items people who held a full-time job or had done so in the past were asked to complete an open-ended survey. Out of 50 people from various kinds of jobs (teachers, salespersons, bank accountants, etc.), 30 returned a completed questionnaire. This survey was supposed to collect information about dif-

difficult situations in the work place in which an employee (the person answering the questionnaire or a colleague of theirs) might have to find a solution to a work-related problem and therefore get involved in initiative behaviors.

Participants were then asked to think of a person whom they had worked with or were still working with closely and who had actively tried to bring about an improvement within the company. If they did not work with any coworkers they could as well give examples of what they had done to bring about an improvement in their workplace. It was not important which part of his or her work they were addressing. The improvement could have affected the job itself, as well as work in the department or organizational politics and/or procedures. The participants had to describe such a difficult situation at work and what they did to improve it. They were also asked to list obstacles that occurred while they tried to solve the problem and what they did (or could have done) to overcome those obstacles. I was looking for concrete behaviors, which did not belong to their actual tasks at work to overcome problems as well as behaviors.

Unlike Morrison and Phelps, I was not looking for the underlying similarities between the problems and solutions. Instead, my focus was on the scope of answers and the extent to which employees showed or did not show personal initiative in their work place, and in what manner. I tried to ensure the ecological validity of my items by creating an original list of 20 situations I retrieved from the open-ended survey. Each of these situations would result in a loss in productivity to the organization/company, if left unresolved. Some of the situations were too specific to a certain work place or company and had to be modified. Most of these situations usually occurred in a white-collar working environment.

I created some of the behavioral alternatives, but I was also able

to use some of the behaviors from the survey, which had actually been shown by real employees. Two of the five behaviors were meant to be examples of personal initiative while the others were non-initiative behaviors. In order to enhance the ecological and content validity of my items I tried to obtain an expert rating. I therefore handed out a questionnaire that contained the 20 situations and five possible behaviors to 15 people who were familiar with the concept of personal initiative and asked them to rate the list of items on a five-point Likert-scale (1= very likely to 5 = very unlikely) to judge how good chances are that someone in a company might get involved in behaviors as stated in the item and if my items were useful and understandable. The eight situations used in this study represent a "best of" selection of 20 original situations.

Situations (Open-Ended):

1. Time and again there are new colleagues who do not know the exact procedures in your department. Your workload is very heavy and in addition to that you also have to interrupt your work in order to explain things to the newcomers or correct their mistakes.
2. It is wintertime and the company's heating system, has not been well adjusted. The temperature in your office dropped down making it uncomfortable to work in. A lot of co-workers have already had colds and complained about the situation, but nobody has done anything so far.
3. The atmosphere in your department is rather tense because some of your co-workers do not get along with each other. Although you are not directly involved, the tension is bothering you.

4. Some of your co-workers keep on having extended lunch breaks, although they have a great deal of work on their desks. Eventually it turns out that a lot of times you are stuck with their unfinished work.
5. Your department has regular meetings. You and a lot of your co-workers feel that most of these meetings are a waste of time, because they are poorly structured, inefficient and mostly off subject.
6. Your manager seems to be indifferent about the development of his staff, even when you specifically ask him about your own career opportunities.
7. Tasks in your department are assigned rather unfairly. It is common that those who have been with the company for a long time do the convenient tasks only.
8. Your staff consists of five people and you meet regularly to co-ordinate your work. Every now and then some people on your staff do not comply with basic agreements and try to make their work look better at the expense of the entire group. This causes a lot of mistakes, which could otherwise be prevented.

The initiative behaviors were correctly identified by the experts as initiative behaviors and the worst (least likely to be selected by a real employee and/ or worst to understand) alternative of non-initiative behaviors was deleted from the questionnaire. I then contrasted the two initiative behaviors with a non-initiative behavior.

I also tried to make sure that all the items were understood in the same way by the persons answering the questionnaires by asking a random sample of ten persons to tell me the meaning of the

items in their own words.

I chose a layout in which an initiative behavior contrasts with a non-initiative alternative, because I assumed that a Likert-type format would encourage test takers to answer in a socially desired way. I further assumed that the contrast design did not immediately reveal the expected answer, because most people are not familiar with the scientific definition of personal initiative. Selecting an initiative and a suitable non-initiative behavior however was quite difficult in some cases, because behaviors that are directly opposite to personal initiative make the initiative alternative seem more socially desirable. Blaming others, waiting, ignoring problems and withdrawal behaviors are less attractive to a test taker than an active alternative. I therefore included alternatives that were more attractive, but still non-initiative or less initiative behaviors, because they did not meet all criteria for initiative behavior. The initiative behavior was always characterized by having a long-term focus, being pro-company, and being (more) active respectively; and by being proactive, anticipatory and likely to prevent future problems and/or to contribute to overall organizational effectiveness.

The responses were rated by two raters with regard to the different dimensions of personal initiative (for a complete view of the items see appendix). The dimensions were mostly taken from the personal initiative interview mentioned above in which the participants' description and solution of problems in their workplace was being assessed. The first ten items are given on a semantic differential ranging from 1 to 5 and beginning with the passive/negative dimension moving towards the active/positive dimension. Also a rating in regard to the amount of quantitative and qualitative initiative on a Likert-scale from 1 to 5 and how pro-active and how pro-company the suggestion was. In addition a count was taken of the words and number of suggestions was made in order to control for effects of position since the order of

the situations was not varied due to the small sample size. The criteria for the rating were mostly taken from the personal initiative interview by Frese et al. (1996), but had to be slightly modified for use in this study.

One can make a distinction between quantitative and qualitative initiative (Frese et al., 1996; Frese et al., 1997). This distinction is the foundation of the general initiative at work scale from the interview measure. According to Frese et al. (1997) quantitative initiative is concerned with the question of how much energy went into the activity. Delegating a problem to somebody else would be considered less active in contrast to trying to solve a problem on one's own, although passing a problem on to a specialist (a lawyer, repairs person, etc.) is in many cases more effective in the short run. Qualitative initiative is concerned with the question of how much the activity went beyond what is expected of that person in his or her job. This includes addressing new problems, new ideas and planning in order to prevent the problem from occurring again in the future and helping others in your environment to prevent a mistake from happening. This implies making goals with a long term-focus and outside of role requirements, which allows a person to develop behaviors that are proactive and self-starting or, in other words, initiative behavior (Frese et al., 1996). The initiative behavior is superior to the non-initiative behavior with regard to one or all of the following aspects: it has a long-term focus, is pro-company and proactive, and it anticipates preventable future problems, thus contributing to overall organizational effectiveness.

Results

Looking at the associations between the different measures and the ratings for the responses to the open-ended questions/situations, we find a significant positive correlation between Situation 3 and climate for innovation. Situation 3 is also positively asso-

ciated with the behavior-oriented personal initiative scale at the 6% level. The personal initiative scale is also significantly and positively correlated with Situations 5 and 7. None of the other correlations are significant even when a less conservative 10% level is used.

No associations between the individual situations and any of the attachment styles could be found.

Personal Initiative and Attachment Styles

Hypothesis 1a: Personal initiative is positively related to a secure pattern of attachment.

Although the results were not significant there was a trend showing that a secure attachment style correlates positively with the personal initiative questionnaire by Frese et al. (1996) at the 10% level and with the behavior-oriented scale by Frese and Krause (2002) at the 12% level.

Hypothesis 1b: Personal initiative is negatively related to insecure attachment styles.

This hypothesis could not be confirmed. There were a few negative correlations, but none of them are significant.

Proactive Personality and Attachment Styles

Hypothesis 2a: Proactive personality is positively related to personal initiative.

This hypothesis could be confirmed for the Frese et al. (1996) scale by means of a highly significant correlation, The correlation between the personal initiative scale by Frese and Krause (2002) is not significant at the 5% level, but at the 10% level.

Hypothesis 2b: Proactive personality is positively related to a

secure attachment style.

This hypothesis could not be confirmed. There is no significant correlation between a secure attachment style and proactive personality. However there is a highly significant correlation between a dismissive attachment style classification and proactive personality.

Hypothesis 2c: Proactive personality is negatively related to insecure attachment styles.

This hypothesis could not be confirmed. Instead there is the counterintuitive result for dismissive attachment style as stated under hypothesis 2b.

Taking Charge and Attachment Styles

Hypothesis 3a: Taking charge is positively related to personal initiative.

This hypothesis could be confirmed. There is a highly significant positive correlation between taking charge and both scales on personal initiative.

Hypothesis 3b: Taking charge is positively related to a secure attachment style.

This hypothesis could not be confirmed. There is a very low correlation between taking charge and a secure attachment style classification.

Hypothesis 3c: Taking charge is negatively related to insecure attachment styles.

There is no significant negative correlation between any of the insecure attachment styles and taking charge. However there is a

positive correlation between dismissive attachment style and taking charge at the 10% level.

Climate for Innovation and Attachment Styles

Hypothesis 4a: Climate for innovation is positively related to personal initiative.

There is a significant positive correlation between climate for innovation measure and the scale by Frese and Krause (2002), but no association between climate for innovation and the measure by Frese et al. (1996)

Hypothesis 4b: Climate for innovation is positively related to a secure attachment style.

No significant association between secure attachment style and climate for innovation was to be found.

Hypothesis 4c: Climate for innovation is negatively related to insecure attachment styles.

There is indeed a significant negative correlation between fearful attachment style and the climate for innovation measure. For the other two insecure attachment styles no significant associations were to be found.

Inter-Rater Reliability

All situations were rated on the dimensions discussed previously on a scale from 1 to 5. A second rater did the same and in order to assess agreement between the two ratings I used an Intraclass correlation (1) (Bryk & Radebush, 1982) to determine inter-rater reliability. According to Bryk and Radebush (1982) ICC (1) can be interpreted as proportional consistency or the proportion of the total variance that can be explained by group membership. In

case of good inter-rater reliability little should be explained by group variance, which implies relative consistency of responses among raters (Kozlowski & Hattrup, 1992). ICC (1) measures within-group agreement or in other words the degree to which ratings from individuals are interchangeable, if raters provide essentially the same rating. My study represents case (3,4) of typology Shrout & Fleiss (1979), which is a two-way mixed model meaning that judges are fixed and targets are a random effect. There are two versions of this case. They differ concerning the unit of analysis. The unit of analysis could be an individual rating which SPSS calls single measure reliability or the unit of analysis could be the mean of all ratings. SPSS calls this version average measure reliability and it represents the version I chose, because I am analyzing the ratings of two raters (Yaffee, 1998).

I computed a mean score combining the 15 dimensions on which each situation was rated into one for both raters. Analysis of the situations showed that there was no interaction effect caused by the different raters in all situations except for situation 5.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to check for serial effects in questionnaire completion. The number of words and the number of suggestions was counted for each response to the open-ended questions. The idea being that no significant differences between the situations with regard to number of words and number of suggestions would indicate that the participants were as diligent and committed in responding to each situation alike. A likely picture would be that respondents write more and give more suggestions for the first situations and as they get tired produce less for the later situations. There is a significant effect for number of suggestions ($F= 3.02, p = .00$), but no effect regarding the number of words ($F=1.636, p = .13$). Quantitatively the participants' responses did not decrease, but they used more words to describe fewer solutions to the problem at hand.

Discussion

Although not all hypotheses could be confirmed the results are overall very much in favor of the suggested relationships between variables with the exception of a few surprises. For example a preoccupied attachment style was not associated with any of the other measures although a negative correlation would have been expected. The reasons for this remain unclear, but might be due to the small sample size.

The most surprising outcome was the strong significant correlation between a dismissing attachment style and pro-active personality. There was also a trend towards a positive association with the other proactivity focused construct of taking charge. In spite of dismissive attachment style being associated with withdrawal behaviors which would indicate a diminished tendency to get actively involved in issues at work, there might be a possible explanation based on theory. A dismissive attachment style can be viewed as adaptations to two conditions. On the one hand it can serve to protect oneself from getting rejected, but on the other hand it is also viewed in terms of a defense against intrusion and interference (Ainsworth, 1970 & Belsky, Garduque & Hrcir,1984). A person with a dismissive attachment style might take charge of the situation before anybody else would to avoid interference from supervisors or other colleagues. Or they might get active to avoid being rejected for mistakes that happen due to suboptimal conditions at work that could be attributed to their performance. This would be another interesting topic for a study. To see, if these results can be replicated and turn out to be stable and to explore the underlying motivation and function of this constellation.

Relatively strong correlations between a secure attachment style and both measures of personal initiative were found. These find-

ings would also be in accordance with theory (Bowlby, 1988). A self-reliant, securely based individual would be most likely to not stand around and wait, but to actively create the conditions needed for his/her success and advancement.

In terms of a validity assessment of the scales the highly significant correlations between the convergent measures personal initiative, taking charge and climate for innovation -in spite of the small N- are strongly in favor of the validity of the Frese and Krause scale.

Encouraging is also the finding that the ratings for three of the situations (3, 5 and 7) are actually associated with the scores on the close-ended formatted scale.

Unfortunately there is a significant serial effect for the situations with regard to the number of suggestions which decreases towards the later situations. The more of the situations the participants have answered the less creative they seem to get. Although the average number of words per situation does not vary significantly. Participants make fewer suggestions, but seem to go more into details regarding why they would do such and such. In future studies the succession of situations would have to be altered systematically to control for such a serial effect.

Due to the lack of time a detailed analysis of the responses to the open-ended questions was not possible. However from rating the responses I was left under the impression that in situations in which a personal conflict or confrontation of co-workers would be required participants often resorted to passive, evasive or resigned strategies. Some participants' answers could even be rated as passive-aggressive, e.g. when they let mistakes happen in order to point out their colleague as the culprit afterwards (e.g. Situation 4, participant 7, Situation 8, participant 17). In addition many participants often use conditions under which they would act. There seems to be a slight difference between participants

that state conditions under which they would become active ("If I was in charge....") and those that state conditions in anticipation of possible barriers and how to overcome them ("If this didn't work, I would...").

In sum this study rendered quite a few interesting results and a replication with more subjects might be of interest since the small N is the most salient disadvantage of the study. Also the succession of situations would have to be altered to prevent the serial effect and get a clearer picture of the effect of the situation itself.

The fact that none of the situations corresponded with any attachment style and that only two measures actually correlated with them indicated that a different way of rating the situations might be necessary. Developing a different coding scheme based on the qualitative analysis of the responses to the situations might prove to be more beneficial than simply transferring the coding scheme of the personal initiative interview to rate the responses.

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